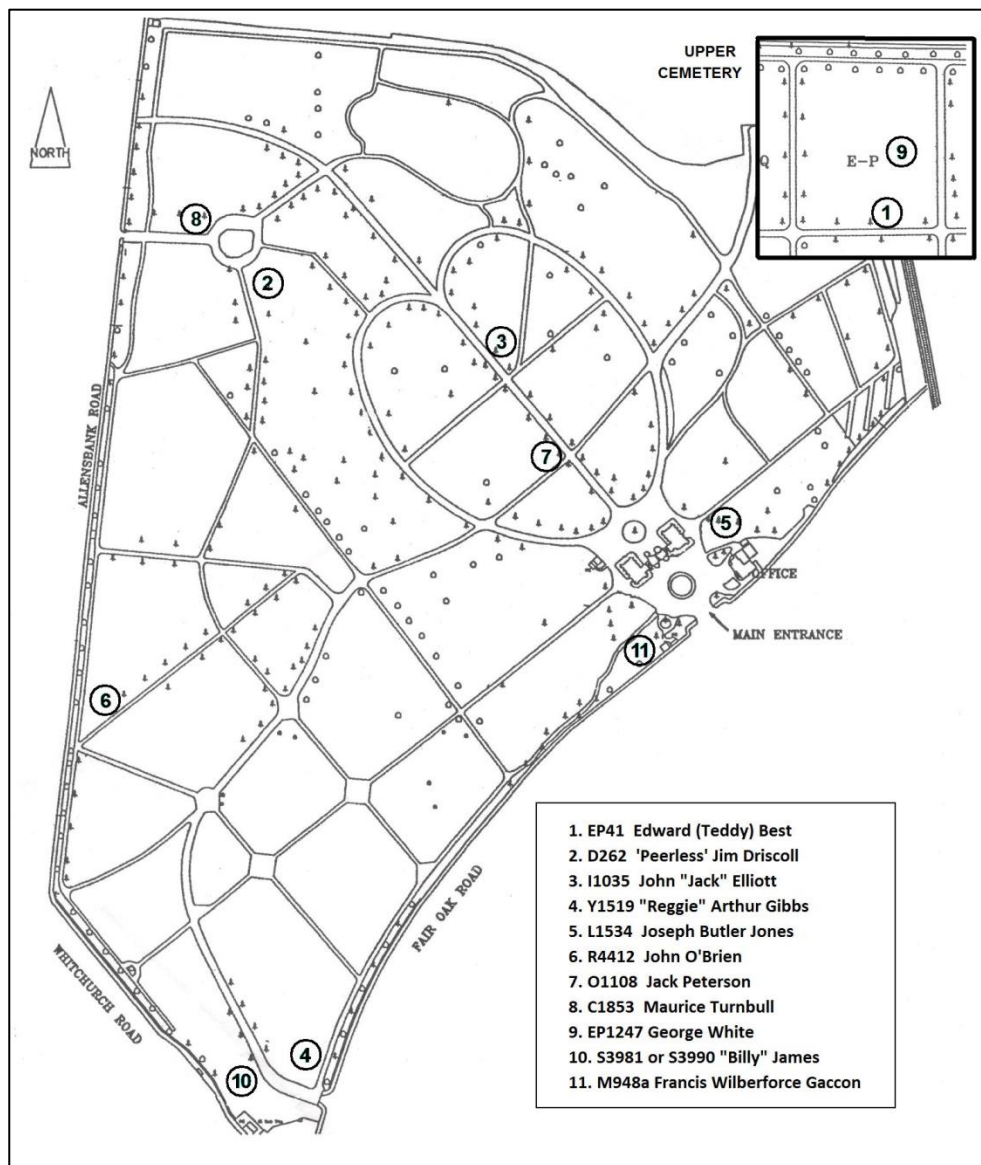


# **SPORTSMEN in CATHAYS CEMETERY**



**The Friends of Cathays Cemetery**





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# 1 Edward (Teddy) Best (1933-2010)

Welsh Lightweight Boxing Champion

PLOT EP41



Teddy was born on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1933 in Adamsdown, Cardiff. His father was from Barbados but died when Teddy was young. His mother was Welsh.

He learnt to box under Fred Newberry at the Cardiff Amateurs club in Grangetown.

Boxing from the age of 11, he won British titles at school and junior level. He also represented the army during his National Service.

Teddy was employed as a wood machinist in a furniture factory and was cousin to the Cardiff City forward Tommy Best. He was managed by Nat Nicholls and trained by Archie Ruler. Becoming a professional, he beat the previously unbeaten Ray Smith but a Welsh Lightweight bout saw him disqualified for holding against Emyrs Jones in Newtown. Teddy also unfortunately lost to Dartford's Dave Charnley in round eight.

On 25th August 1957 Teddy beat Fishguard's Bryan Phillips at Cross Keys, to take the vacant Lightweight title, flooring Bryan 4 times before winning in round 9.

Six years later he faced Brynmawr's Gordon Davies and had a victory against the former British and Empire champion Billy Spider Kelly. Teddy career ended with a fight against Peter Cheevers at Finsbury Park.

Teddy was the Welsh Lightweight Champion from 1957 to 1963. Teddy died on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and was buried in plot EP41 in Cathays Cemetery.

## **2 “Peerless” Jim Driscoll (1880-1925)**

Boxing Champion

PLOT D262

James "Jim" Driscoll commonly known as Peerless Jim was a Welsh boxer who learned his trade in the boxing ring and used it to fight his way out of poverty. He was British featherweight champion and won the coveted Lonsdale belt in 1910. He is a member of the Welsh Sports Hall of Fame, the Ring Magazine Hall of Fame, and the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Driscoll was born in Cardiff on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1880 to Cornelius and Elizabeth, and was brought up on Ellen Street in the Newtown region of the

town. Driscoll's parents were both Irish, and both Catholic and the local St Paul's Church would have been key in his life. Driscoll never forgot his roots; he was a faithful supporter of his church, remained close to his community, and had great affection for the Nazareth House Orphanage, for whom he once gave up the chance of becoming Featherweight Champion of the World.

Driscoll's father died in a goods yard accident before Driscoll was one. His mother was forced to accept parish relief to bring up her four children, and soon the family moved into a boarding house with another five people in 3 Ellen Street. Elizabeth was forced to take a job shovelling vegetables and fish from the hulls of ships at Cardiff Docks. Growing up in poverty, Driscoll took employment while still a boy, becoming a printer's devil for the Evening Express in St. Mary Street in Cardiff.

Driscoll was an apprentice with the Western Mail printing works, when he began boxing in the fairground booths of south Wales. He fought like this for a number of years and had somewhere in the region of 600 fights before turning professional in 1901, and by the end of the year he had secured twelve wins without defeat. The following year, of the seven recorded fights, he only failed to win once, a draw with Harry Mansfield in Cardiff. Between 1903 and 1904 Driscoll continued fighting, mainly in Wales, but on 22 February 1904 he fought his first match at the National Sporting Club in London, a points decision win over Boss Edwards. That year he also suffered his first defeat in a return bout against Mansfield, losing by points in a ten round clash.

On 26<sup>th</sup> February 1906, Driscoll took the British Featherweight title by defeating Joe Bowker in a 15 round contest at the National Sporting Club. He undertook four more fights before his first defence, which included beating Mansfield by knockout in their fourth meet. His first title defence, held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1907, was a copy of his title win, another contest with Bowker at the National Sporting Club in Covent Garden. This time it was a twenty round match and Driscoll stopped his opponent in the seventeenth via a knockout.

The 24<sup>th</sup> August 1907 is recorded as a non-contest fight between Driscoll and fellow Welshman Freddie Welsh. Boxing historians such as Andrew Gallimore have cast doubt on this being a professional contest and instead a display fight at a fairground. Welsh supposedly took advantage of this situation and attacked Driscoll with kidney and rabbit punches. Driscoll never forgave his former friend for taking such liberties.

On 24<sup>th</sup> February 1908, Driscoll faced New Zealander Charlie Griffin for the vacant Commonwealth Featherweight title. Again fought at Covent Garden, the match went the full fifteen rounds with Driscoll declared champion on a points decision.

After claiming the British and Commonwealth featherweight titles Driscoll went to prove himself in the United States. American boxing fans of the era favoured all-action boxers, but they were won over by the Cardiffian's skills, giving him the nickname 'Peerless Jim.' (Another common nickname for him was "Jem," and in his home town he was affectionately called "The Prince of Wales.") Featherweight champion Abe Attell faced Driscoll in 1910; the Welshman dominated the fight, but with the "no decision" rule in place, without a KO he couldn't take the crown. Driscoll declined a rematch in order to attend an exhibition match in aid of the orphans of St. Nazareth House: "I never break a promise." He returned to the United States the next year, but a chest infection and an injury in a road accident sustained just days before meant a poor showing when he faced Pal Moore, losing by newspaper decision. He returned shortly after to Britain, and never got his title shot at Attell.

After becoming the first featherweight to win a Lonsdale Belt, Driscoll prepared for an eagerly-anticipated fight against Freddie Welsh. The match was a disappointment, though, as Welsh's spoiling tactics upset Driscoll's style. By the 10th round, Driscoll's frustration boiled over, and he was disqualified for butting Welsh.

Driscoll's boxing career was interrupted by World War I, where he was recruited as a physical training advisor. In succeeding years, he continued to box despite failing health, relying on his skills to keep him out of trouble. When he died, on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1925, in Cardiff of consumption at the age of 44, over 100,000 people lined the streets for his funeral. He was buried at Cathays Cemetery in Cardiff. Driscoll bequeathed his Lonsdale Belt to his cousin, Tom Burns, who ran the Royal Oak Hotel in Adamsdown, Cardiff. Today the pub is decorated with boxing memorabilia.

A statue was erected in his honour near the Central Boys' Club, where he trained, in 1997.

Driscoll's final official record is 58-3-6, with 39 KO's, however due to the scoring practices of the time, which yields 6 no-contest bouts on his record. Newspapers used to announce a winner in no-contest bouts, and taking that into account, his true record is 63-4-6 with 39 KO's.



### **3 John "Jack" Elliott (1871-1938)**

Wales Rugby Player

PLOT I1035

Born in South Shields, a Welsh rugby union scrum-half who played club rugby for Cardiff and international rugby for Wales, winning three caps.

Although born in the North-East of England, Elliott was living in Cardiff by the time he was a young man. He became the director of the Mountstuart Dry Dock at Cardiff Docks and was also a property owner.

Elliott began his rugby career playing for Llandaff, before switching to local rivals Cardiff. He was first selected to represent Wales when he was brought in at centre to replace Welsh sporting legend and team captain, Arthur 'Monkey' Gould, in the final game of the 1894 Home Nations Championship. Elliott was paired at centre with fellow Cardiff team mate Dai Fitzgerald and completed an all Cardiff three-quarter along with Tom Pearson and Norman Biggs. Wales lost the game by a single penalty goal on a boggy Belfast pitch, and the next season Elliott was replaced by Gould.

Elliott was given the captaincy of Cardiff for the 1896-97 season and four years after his previous international cap was called back into the Welsh team for the 1898 Championship. Elliot played in both Welsh games of the tournament, this time brought in at his more familiar position of scrum-half alongside Selwyn Biggs. Wales won the first game against Ireland, and Elliott was reselected for the final game of the tournament, against England. The next year, Elliott and Biggs were replaced by the Swansea brothers David and Evan James.

After retiring from playing rugby, Elliott continued his connection with the sport by becoming a first class referee. He was also a keen golfer and in 1935 was the captain of Royal Porthcawl Golf Club.

International matches played for Wales; vs England 1898; vs Ireland 1894, 1898.

## **4 Reginald "Reggie" Gibbs (1882-1938)**

Welsh International Rugby Union Player

PLOT Y1519

Reginald "Reggie" Arthur Gibbs was born 7<sup>th</sup> May 1882, becoming a Welsh international rugby union wing that played club rugby for Penarth and Cardiff. He was capped 16 times for his country and captained his team on one occasion. Gibbs is one of five Welsh players to have scored four tries in a single game.

Gibbs was first capped for his country in a game against Scotland on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1906. Wales won the game 9-3, but were completely outplayed by Scotland; the main reason for the Scottish defeat was Gibbs impressive display as a 'rover'. His work with Billy Trew turned the minimal possession Wales had into the three tries the team scored on the day.

In total Gibbs scored 17 tries for his country, establishing a Welsh record which stood until Gareth Edwards broke it in 1976. In his final season, 1911, Gibbs scored five tries as Wales won the Triple Crown and Grand Slam, their last such success for 39 years. He captained Wales once, against Ireland at Lansdowne Road in 1910, scoring a try and leading Wales to 19-3 victory. Gibbs toured Australasia as part of the Arthur Harding's Anglo-Welsh team of 1908. In the 1908 tour, Gibbs played two of the tests and scored the only try for the tourists in the first test.

International matches played Wales; vs England 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911; vs France 1908, 1910, 1911; vs Ireland 1906, 1908, 1910, 1911; vs Scotland 1906, 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911.

Reggie passed away 28<sup>th</sup> November 1938.

## 5 Joseph Butler Jones (1843-1924)

Jockey

PLOT L1534



One gentleman rider who certainly held up the sporting tradition of the Cardiff area was Joseph Butler Jones, known on the racecourse as “Joe the Crwys”. Joseph was the son of Thomas Jones who had a bakery in St Johns Street. He was born in Cardiff in 1843 and was apparently brought up by his Uncle Richard Thomas, inheriting the 190-acre Crwys farm on Richard's death in 1866, which was situated where Maindy Barracks now stands. In 1851 the farm employed 6 labourers, including 2 living on site.

He had many successes over the old racecourse at Heath and later at Ely Racecourse. His grey “Cabin Boy”, running in Joe’s own purple and black racing colours, won the Cardiff Open Steeplechase, later to become the Welsh Grand National, over three-and-a-half miles at Ely Racecourse, which closed in 1939. Cabin Boy belonged to his uncle, Richard Thomas: Joe later owned the horse himself. When his uncle died, the farm was kept going for a while before it was sold.

In 1865, Joe enjoyed a great day at Chepstow when the course was situated at the old Oakgrove, St Arvans (not its present-day site at Piercefield Park). Next, riding Father Pat for Mr E. M. Currie, he won the three-mile Hunt Steeplechase but, in doing so, had to survive an objection for going the wrong side of a flag. Cabin Boy was then brought out again to win the two-mile Farmers' Hunt Steeplechase. Once again Joe had to survive an objection brought, this time, on the grounds that the owner had no land upon which the hounds hunted. Mr Thomas got round this by claiming he had land at Marshfield, near Cardiff.

Finally, Joe took the two-mile Scurry on the appropriately named Quick Silver. He led throughout and, this time, no one dared raise an objection. He also won both the Ely Hurdle and the one-mile Hack Stakes on his chestnut Adrier, coming in for plenty of cheers on the second occasion. Joe was on familiar terms with Lord Glanely and Colonel Henry Lewis of Greenmeadow who, at one time, owned the 1858 Grand National winner, Little Charlie.

In 1881 Joe had moved to 'Woodville Terrace' by the Crwys Pub and is listed as being a 'retired farmer' aged only 37.

During his lifetime, he is said to have won “a magnificent array of valuable trophies”. He died at 19 Woodville Road (earlier known as 10 Woodville Terrace) on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1924, aged 80. Joe was buried in Section L at Cathays Cemetery, Cardiff.

## **6 John O'Brien (1867-1911)**

British Middleweight Boxer

PLOT R4412

Born in Thomas Street, to a father from Cork in Ireland, and his mother from Dublin, he moved with his family to Roath. He was spotted at an early age by Bill Samuel, owner of a boxing booth. He fought Jack Jones, also known as the Shoni Engineer, in Marshfield and knocked him out in 19 rounds before both were arrested and taken to Court for not keeping the Peace.

In Liverpool John fought Felix Scott, and broke his arm in the first round but still managed to win in three rounds. John then moved to London, fighting against Ted Bryant, but losing in 47 seconds, including the count. Not deterred John next fought Ted White at the Soho Pelican Club, beating him without the use of gloves and obtaining the "English" belt. At the National Sporting Club he met another boxer from Cardiff and a former Guardsman, Alf Mitchell, again winning. Next he was scheduled to challenge Bob Fitzsimmons in New Orleans but was struck down with sciatica, an illness to last two years. A similar match with Ted Pritchard a Merthyr-born London was also missed.

The Welsh Heavy championship was played out with Dai St John, who was later to be killed in the Boer War. Again John injured his arm but triumphed in the fifth round. John however met his match in Frank Craig, the Harlem Coffee Cooler, in the second round. A famous incident happened here when John ordered a telegram to his landlady in the first round to start baking his favourite Apple dumplings for Supper as "he wouldn't be long". John and Frank were to have an unscheduled rematch but a drunk John quit in the second round.

John continued boxing but lost his heavyweight crown to Ted James from Aberaman. Rheumatism and drink finally ended his career. He worked at the Channel Dry Dock but died in 1911 of Bright's Disease at the Infirmary at the age of only 43, residing at 18 Milton Street. He had been the British Middleweight Claimant from 1891 to 1895. John was buried in Cathays Cemetery on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1911.

## **7 Jack Peterson (1911-1990)**

Boxer

PLOT 01108

Born as John Charles Peterson in Cardiff on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1911, the son of Thomas Peterson, a massage specialist and his wife Melinda Laura Rossiter. Jack became a Welsh boxer, who held the British heavyweight boxing title on two separate occasions.

Jack took up amateur boxing as a youth and at the age of 18 he reached the Welsh Amateur Boxing Association middleweight and light-heavyweight finals. The following year he won the Welsh ABA titles at light-heavyweight and heavyweight, as well as winning the British ABA title at light-heavyweight.

In 1931 he turned professional and fought under the name of Jack Peterson. A tall man at 6ft 1½in, he was a well proportioned athlete. His first professional fight was in September 1931 at the Holborn Stadium, London, against Bill Partridge. Jack won the fight by a knockout in the fourth round. Jack also won his first sixteen fights. In one he knocked out Dick Power to win the Welsh heavyweight title.

Jack's 17th fight in May 1932 was for the British light-heavyweight title, taking place at Holborn Stadium and he beat Harry Crossley on points over 15 rounds to take his title. Later Jack relinquished this title without defending it. Two months later, in July 1932, Jack fought Reggie Meen for the British heavyweight title, in a fight held at Wimbledon Stadium, London. Knocking Meen out in the second round, Jack became the first Welshman to be British heavyweight champion. He accomplished all this in less than ten months of starting his career.

Jack had one more fight, scoring a knockout, and went on to defend his title against Jack Pettifer on 26 January 1933. The bout was at Olympia in Kensington and Peterson scored a knockout in the 12th round to retain his title.

Peterson had three more fights, winning them all, before defending his title again against Jack Doyle, a young boxer from County Cork. The bout, on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1933, was held at the White City Stadium in front of a crowd of about

30,000. It lasted less than two rounds as Doyle was disqualified for repeatedly punching low.

In his next fight, Peterson made his third title defence, against Len Harvey. The bout was in November 1933, at the Royal Albert Hall, and Harvey won on points over 15 rounds. This was Peterson's first defeat in his 25th fight.

Peterson resumed his winning ways, winning his next 4 fights on knockouts. Three of the victims were top fighters Reggie Meen, Harry Crossley and Ben Ford. Peterson was now ready to try to win back the heavyweight title.

The re-match with Len Harvey was for the British and the British Empire (now Commonwealth) titles. They fought in June 1934 at the White City Stadium, London and this time Peterson was victorious by a twelfth-round technical knockout.

Next, Peterson defended his British Empire title against the Canadian boxer, Larry Gains, in September 1934. The bout was at the White City Stadium and Peterson won by a technical knockout in the thirteenth round.

He then defended his titles against George Cook in December 1934, winning on points over fifteen rounds. He had so far suffered only one defeat in 32 bouts, but he was to suffer two at the hands of the same fighter. Peterson twice fought a young German heavyweight, Walter Neusel at Wembley, in February and June 1935, and lost both bouts by a technical knockout in the eleventh round.

These two defeats were a shock. Throughout his short career he had been managed by his father, but the relationship broke down following his latest defeats and Peterson decided to manage himself in future. Peterson continued to defend his titles successfully. He met Len Harvey for a third title fight in January 1936, at Wembley, and won on points over fifteen rounds.

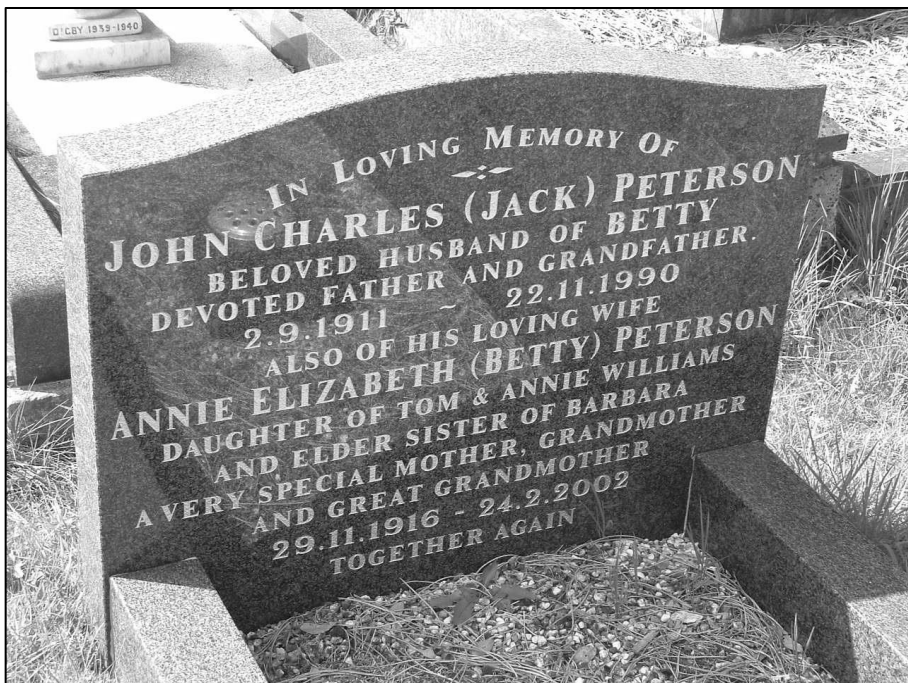
He made a third title defence in April 1936 when he met Jock McAvoy at Earls Court. He again won on points over fifteen rounds. McAvoy was the reigning middleweight and light-heavyweight champion, and in his previous fight had unsuccessfully fought for the world light-heavyweight title.

Jack's fourth title defence was against Ben Foord, whom he had knocked out in thirteen rounds in 1934, when preparing for his re-match with Len Harvey. Foord was a South African, who was qualified by residence to fight for both

titles. The bout was in August 1936 at Leicester, and Peterson lost by a technical knockout in the third round.

Having lost his titles, Jack had one last fight before retiring. He had a third bout against Walter Neusel, at Harringay Arena in February 1937. He lost to Neusel for the third time, by a technical knockout in the tenth round.

He retired at the relatively young age of twenty-five. In his five and a half year boxing career, Jack had won 33 of his 38 fights, 19 of them by knockouts, losing 5 and drawing none. Three of his five defeats had been to the same man, Walter Neusel who later was to be the German heavyweight champion.



In early 1939 during the Second World War Jack joined the Territorial Army being promoted to Honorary Captain by August 1939 and joined the regular army. During his service he was a staff officer with Western Command and served with the Border Regiment. He was transferred to Chester and placed in charge of troop development schemes, becoming Staff Officer in charge of Physical Training for his Division in March 1941 working from a Training School operated on the South Wales coast near Penarth. Jack requested to serve abroad but this was refused.



After the war he became involved with the British Boxing Board of Control, dealing with boxing in Wales. In 1986 he became president of the board and he was awarded an OBE for his services to sport. He was also vice-chairman of the Sports Council for Wales. In October 1935, he married Annie Elizabeth "Betty" Williams, daughter of Thomas Baker Williams, an auctioneer, of Cardiff. One of Jack's sons is the sculptor David Petersen. He was the subject of *This Is Your Life* in 1957 when he was surprised by Eamonn Andrews at the Memorial Hall in Barry, Vale of Glamorgan.

Jack passed away on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1990, at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, of lung cancer.

## **8 Maurice Turnbull (1906-1944)**

Cricketer

PLOT C1853

Maurice Joseph Lawson Turnbull was a Welsh cricketer who played in nine Tests for England from 1930 to 1936. A talented all round sportsman, Turnbull excelled in several sports. In cricket, he captained the Cambridge University team in his final year of college and captained the Glamorgan County Cricket Club for ten seasons. In rugby union he represented Cardiff and London Welsh and gained two full international caps for Wales in 1933. Turnbull also represented Wales at field hockey and was squash champion for South Wales. He is the only person to have played cricket for England and rugby for Wales.

Turnbull was born in Cardiff on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1906 into a large sporting family. His father, Philip, was a Welsh international hockey player, winning a bronze medal with the Welsh team at the 1908 Olympics, and six of his eight sons, including Maurice, played for Cardiff Rugby Club. Turnbull was educated at Downside School near Bath; and the school still has a bar named after him for the use of sixth formers. From Downside he went to Cambridge University and continued his connection with sport by winning sporting Blues in both cricket and hockey.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1939 he married Elizabeth Brooke, only daughter of William Brooke of Scunthorpe. They had three children: Sara, Simon and Georgina.

Christopher Martin-Jenkins reported, that to Turnbull batting, was an adventure. He was a gifted right-hander who made runs when they were

wanted and whose value could not always be assessed on figures. Initially as an on-side player, he developed all the recognised strokes and added some of his own, and he was also a fine short-leg fielder. Always associated in the public minds with Glamorgan, he first appeared for them as a schoolboy in 1924. He captained Cambridge in 1929 and Glamorgan from 1930 until 1939. He passed 1,000 runs in a season ten times and three times hit double-centuries, the highest being 233 against Worcestershire at Swansea in 1937, a season in which Glamorgan finished higher than ever before thanks to his bold leadership and devoted example. He toured Australia in 1929-30 and South Africa in 1930-31, and represented England against the West Indies and India at home.

Turnbull wrote two cricketing books with fellow international Maurice Allom, *The Book of Two Maurices* (1930) and *The Two Maurices Again* (1931). The books gave accounts of their cricket tours to New Zealand and South Africa respectively.

His leadership transformed Glamorgan. Writing in *Wisden* in 1978, Basil Easterbrook said:

*Not the least of Turnbull's achievements was that he was the first man to justify Glamorgan's elevation to first-class status in 1921. By 1929 they had already had the wooden spoon three times under no fewer than seven leaders. When Turnbull took over [in 1930, as captain and club secretary] they were indeed a bedraggled flock without a shepherd.*

Turnbull linked Monmouthshire with Glamorgan, ran a Minor Counties side, improved the membership and by 1937 the improvement had advanced to a point where Glamorgan won 13 matches and finished seventh, in the top half of the Championship for the first time.

Turnbull was an eager sportsman as a youth, and played rugby for Downside School. He matriculated to Cambridge, and at university joined not only the cricket team, but also Cambridge University Rugby Club. One of the earliest rugby clubs he represented was St. Peters in Cardiff. His elder brother, Bernard Turnbull had already represented Wales by this time, and had also played club rugby for St. Peters. During the 1931-32 season, Turnbull played his first senior game for Cardiff, mainly playing at scrum-half, and by 1932 he was representing rugby at county level, playing for Glamorgan.

Turnbull was first selected to play for Wales in the opening match of the 1933 Home Nations Championship, playing away to England. He was one of seven new caps brought into the Welsh team, under the captaincy of Watcyn Thomas, and was paired at half-back with Cardiff and London Welsh regular Harry Bowcott. The game ended in a narrow 7–3 win for Wales, with Ronnie Boon scoring all the Welsh points which finally laid the 'Twickenham bogey', ten losses in ten visits, to rest. The Welsh selectors responded by selecting all 15 players to play the second game of the tournament against Scotland; but several late withdrawals forced the selectors to make last minute changes. Turnbull himself was forced to withdraw because of injury, which saw Bowcott also stand down to allow the introduction of the Swansea half-back pairing of Morris and Evans to take their place. Wales were easily beaten. In the final game of the Championship, Turnbull was declared fit and he and Bowcott returned to the squad. The build-up to the game was over-shadowed by poor player conduct on the boat to Belfast, and then captain Thomas reshuffled some of the player positions against the wishes of the Welsh Rugby Union, during the game. The Irish won 10-5, and the WRU reacted by discarding eleven of the team for the next season. Turnbull was one of the players who never played international rugby for Wales again.

As a Major in the First Battalion of the Welsh Guards Maurice was killed instantly, by a sniper's bullet, during intense fighting for the French village of Montchamp, after the Normandy landings on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1944. His body was recovered from the battlefield by one of his men, Sergeant Fred Llewellyn, and his personal possessions were sent home to his family.

## **9 George White (1878-1936)**

Local Athlete

PLOT EP1247

"Mr George White, of 22 Tintern Street, Canton, Cardiff, who was formerly prominent in South Wales athletics circles has died. He was also a member of the Canton Rugby Football Club, which won the Cardiff Junior Challenge Cup in 1896/7. Mr White, who was in his 59th year, is survived by a widow and seven children." - South Wales Echo dated June 2, 1936

Mr White had been born in Birmingham and he commenced running in cross-country races in 1895 when he joined Cardiff Harriers. He was a versatile

athlete and competed with great success at distances from 440 yards on the track to nine miles cross-country. At the great Cardiff Industrial & Maritime Exhibition of 1896, held at Cathays Park, he won the mile event off a handicap of 112 yards.

He was elected club captain in 1901 and that year won a three-mile race from scratch beating top class runners such as W Holt, AC Marks and WH Dyer. At Sophia Gardens on Boxing Day he won the Bobby Brookes Challenge Cup clocking 28 minutes, 26 seconds for the five-mile course. He later won an eight-mile sealed handicap race from scratch and was third in the Welsh cross-country championships at Ely Racecourse after an exciting struggle with the winner, A Palmer, and the runner-up, A Turner. In 1902 when the Welsh cross-country championships were staged at Caerleon Racecourse, he finished runner-up to A Turner in a field of 72 runners. A local hero indeed. George Harry Edward White, a labourer, was buried in Cathays Cemetery on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1936, aged 58. He had been residing at 22 Tintern Street, Roath, Cardiff. He left a widow, Mary Ann White.

## **10 Billy James (1921-1980)**

**Cardiff City & Wales Footballer**

**PLOT S3981 or S3990**

William John "Billy" James was a Welsh professional footballer. During his career, he represented Wales at amateur level during wartime competitions and played six times in the Football League for Cardiff City before being forced to retire due to the physical effects of his time spent as a prisoner of war during the Second World War.

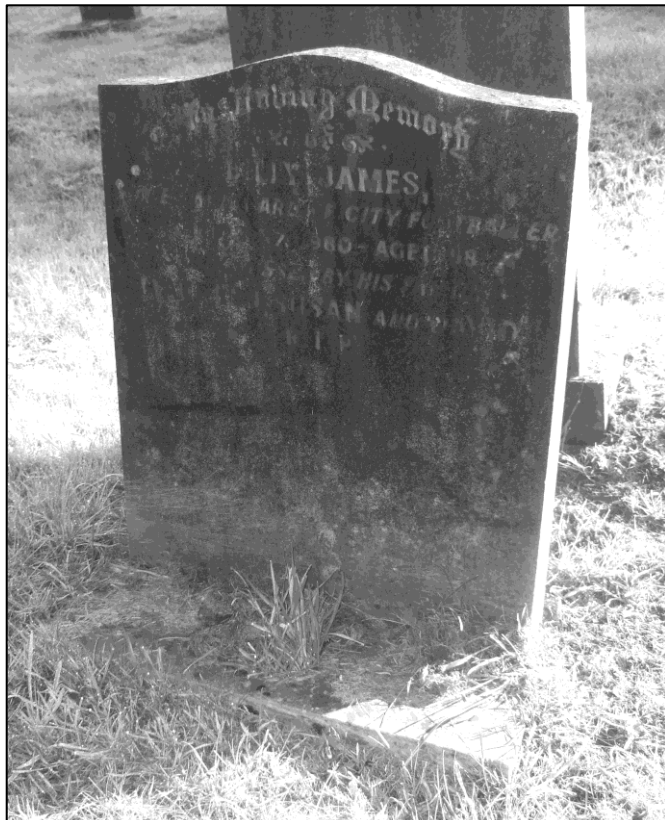
Born in Cardiff, on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1921, James was raised in the Splott area of the city, living in Carlisle Street. He joined his hometown club Cardiff City in 1939 at the start of the Second World War. A prolific scorer for the club during wartime fixtures, he was regarded as an exciting prospect in Welsh football and was chosen to represent Wales in two wartime fixtures against England, scoring in the first match where he played against Stan Cullis.

At the age of 18, James enlisted in the army, joining the 77th HAA Regiment, Royal Artillery. The unit contained a number of footballers including other Cardiff City players Ernie Curtis and Billy Baker and embarked on a journey to North Africa by ship for deployment. However, en route, Japanese forces

launched attacks on Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaya leading the UK to declare war against Japan which saw James and his unit rerouted to the Dutch colony of Java in the Dutch East Indies where British forces suffered heavy losses and James was one of numerous British troops taken prisoner. He spent three years in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp before returning to Britain at the end of the war.

He resumed playing for Cardiff City in the 1946–47 season, scoring in his first two matches in the Football League, a 2–1 defeat to Notts County and a 2–0 victory over Bournemouth. However, his time in the POW camp had seen James suffer from severe malnutrition and the effects had resulted in irreparable damage to his eyesight and he was forced into retirement at the end of the season. The club held a benefit game for James in May 1950 and he later returned to work for the club as a scout.

"Billy" James passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1980 and is buried at Cathays Cemetery.



## **11 Francis Wilberforce Gaccon (1888-1941)**

Welsh International Rugby Union Player

PLOT M948a

Francis Wilberforce Gaccon was born in 1888, the son of Watkin and Alice Charlotte Gaccon and received his engineering training with Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds, of Cardiff. After holding various positions with this firm he joined the staff of Nash's Autocars, Cardiff, and after two years started his own business as Consulting Engineer and Damage Assessor, and subsequently became Assessor to all the leading insurance companies for South Wales, with branch offices in Bristol, Cheltenham, Swansea and Taunton.

By 1901, he was living at 96 Habershon Street, Roath, Cardiff with his parents and brother Evan E C Gaccon. He married Lilian Maud (nee Rodwell), of 153 Cyncoed Road on 11th September 1920, at St Margaret, Roath, Cardiff.

The armistice of the Great War was not signed until 11th November 1918, consequently, the 1918—19 Rugby season was not an official one and those matches played late in the season were to benefit wartime charities. There was however a tour of Britain by the New Zealand Army team which played 13 games in Wales including a match with Cardiff on 29th March 1919 and one with Wales on 21st April. Cardiff, captained by “Frank” Gaccon, drew the match in a no score encounter before a crowd of 10,000. At Swansea the tourists beat Wales by 6 points to three, Frank played, at the time, in the Welsh team.

When war was declared he joined Cardiff Auxiliary Fire Service and became Commander of the Cardiff A.F.S. He was killed by enemy action whilst on duty on 3rd March, 1941 and was 53 years of age.



