

Newport Notes

Charles Morgan Statue

Statue erected in 1850 by friends. Repositioned here in 1992.

Sir Charles Morgan, 1st Baron Tredegar (1760–1846) , was a soldier, wealthy landowner and MP in nineteenth century Newport.

He was taken prisoner at Yorktown, Virginia in 1781.

His company cut the first town dock and constructed Commercial Street, shaping the Newport we now know.

He adopted the name of Morgan in 1792 (used to be Gould), at the same time as his father, and inherited the Tredegar estate of his Uncle John from his mother in 1797

Despite his wealth and status, Morgan's first love was farming and he set up a cattle market in the town.

He also donated land for a Newport Union poor house on Stow Hill.

Newport people are still fond of Sir Charles – his statue is a much-loved landmark.

His grandson was Godfrey Charles Morgan, 1st Viscount Tredegar, fought at the Battle of Balaclava (statue in Cardiff outside City Hall) on his horse Sir Briggs.

Sculptor: John Evan Thomas from Brecon. Also did 'Death of Tewdrig' in the museum in Cardiff (depicts King Tewdrig, the fifth century saint and king of Glamorgan, lying down just before his death) with a harp player above him and the 2nd Marquess of Bute in Callaghan Square, Cardiff.

Originally this work was sited at the corner of High Street and Baneswell Road, then moved to Park Square near St Woolos Cathedral. It was finally re-erected in its present position in 1992.

Untruth: John Evan Thomas visited Charles Morgan one day but Charles thought it was just to discuss the possibilities of a statue, he didn't realize it was for a 'sitting'. If he had known it was a sitting he would have stood up and posed. That's the reason Charles is depicted sitting comfortably in his arm chair and not in some sort of heroic pose.

The Chartist movement

The Chartist movement was the first mass movement driven by the working classes. It grew following the failure of the 1832 Reform Act to extend the vote beyond those owning property.

Chartists' petition

In 1838 a People's Charter was drawn up for the London Working Men's Association (LWMA) by William Lovett and Francis Place, two self-educated radicals, in consultation with other members of LWMA. The Charter had six demands:

All men to have the vote (universal manhood suffrage)

Voting should take place by secret ballot

Parliamentary elections every year, not once every five years

Constituencies should be of equal size

Members of Parliament should be paid

The property qualification for becoming a Member of Parliament should be abolished

Unrest

In June 1839, the Chartists' petition was presented to the House of Commons with over 1.25 million signatures. It was rejected by Parliament. This provoked unrest which was swiftly crushed by the authorities.

A second petition was presented in May 1842, signed by over three million people but again it was rejected and further unrest and arrests followed.

Feergus O'Connor: In April 1848 a third and final petition was presented. A mass meeting on Kennington Common in South London was organised by the Chartist movement leaders, the most influential being Feergus O'Connor, editor of 'The Northern Star', a weekly newspaper that promoted the Chartist cause.

O'Connor was known to have connections with radical groups which advocated reform by any means, including violence. The authorities feared disruption and military forces were on standby to deal with any unrest. The third petition was also rejected but the anticipated unrest did not happen.

Despite the Chartist leaders' attempts to keep the movement alive, within a few years it was no longer a driving force for reform.

Chartists' legacy

However, the Chartists' legacy was strong. By the 1850s Members of Parliament accepted that further reform was inevitable. Further Reform Acts were passed in 1867 and 1884.

By 1918, five of the Chartists' six demands had been achieved - only the stipulation that parliamentary elections be held every year was unfulfilled.

Scholars have distinguished between 'moral' and 'physical' force Chartism: the first covered petitioning, mass meetings, attempting to gain election to Parliament, while the second implied a readiness to take up arms against the state.

The contrast between these two approaches can be overstated, many Chartists believed that the threat of force might be necessary to back up the moral pressure represented by the mobilisation of public opinion, but that did not necessarily mean that they would seriously contemplate rising in rebellion.

Some, however, particularly concentrated in the Monmouthshire and east Glamorgan valleys and in Newport itself, did.

The 'Rising' at Newport in November 1839 was the most serious manifestation of physical force Chartism in the history of the movement.

It is important to note that the Chartists were armed and ready to use force, they were not the passive victims of a massacre.

The Battle of the Westgate was a bloody and not especially brief struggle, but it clearly resulted in the defeat and confusion of the Chartists and discredited the physical force strategy.

On 3–4 November 1839 John Frost, together with William Jones and Zephaniah Williams, led a Chartist march on the Westgate Inn in Newport. The rationale for the set piece confrontation remains opaque, although it may have its origins in Frost's ambivalence towards the more violent attitudes of some of the Chartists, and the personal animus he bore towards some of the Newport establishment who were ensconced in the hotel along with 60 armed soldiers. The Chartist movement in south east Wales was chaotic in this period, after the arrest of Henry Vincent, a leading agitator, who was imprisoned nearby in Monmouth gaol and the feelings of the workers were running extremely high, too high for Frost to reason with and control. One of his contemporaries, William Price described Frost's stance at the time of the Newport Rising as being akin to "putting a sword in my hand and a rope around my neck."

The march, which had been gathering momentum over the course of the whole weekend as Frost and his associates led the protestors down from the valley towns above Newport, numbered some 3,000 when it entered the town. According to the plan, three columns from three directions were to march upon Newport and take the town before dawn. The contingent starting from Blackwood was commanded by Frost, the detachment coming from Nantyglo by Williams and the main body of Pontypool by Jones. The three columns were to meet at Risca, but this did not come to pass; owing to a storm raging in the night, all of them arrived late, and the worst trouble was that the delay gave the Newport authorities ample time to get wind of what was afoot and make ready to confront the coming armed Chartists. Special constables were sworn in hastily, the known Chartists of Newport were arrested and shut up in the Westgate Hotel where the mayor held 30 soldiers in reserve. The Chartist troops led by Frost, proceeding to the hotel at 9:30 am and demanding the surrender of the Chartist prisoners with armed menace, advanced to the door. When the soldiers posted in the hotel started firing, ten to fifteen Chartists died instantly, about 50 were wounded. The bloody event was over in 20 minutes. The Chartist miners were in a very bad strategic position, and the firing took them by surprise. When they withdrew, they met the contingent of Williams and outside the town, the column of Jones. The Times estimated that the strength of the Chartists contingent at 8,000 whilst the chartist Robert Gammage estimated 20,000.

Overall the battle of the Westgate lasted only about 25 minutes, but at its close some 22 people lay dead or dying and upwards of 50 had been injured. An eyewitness report spoke of one man, wounded with gunshot, lying on the ground, pleading for help until he died an hour later.

The subsequent trial for high treason of the Rising's leaders, their conviction, and the commutation of the sentence to transportation to Australia, went some way towards rescuing the cause in that it highlighted the dignity of John Frost in particular, and mobilised sympathy for those on trial.

A reward of £100 was offered for Frost's capture and he was arrested by solicitor and clerk Thomas Jones Phillips (an ancestor of Jack Whitehall and Michael Whitehall) and charged with high treason. Early in 1840, along with Jones and Williams, was tried at Monmouth's Shire Hall.[9] All three were found guilty and became the last men in Britain to be sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered

In 1856, when the residency condition was lifted, Frost was given an unconditional pardon and he straightaway sailed for Bristol, arriving on 12 July

Frost: After his release Frost turned his anger against Prothero's friends and business partners, notably Sir Charles Morgan of Tredegar House and Park, a major Newport and south Wales landowner and industrialist. In a pamphlet of 1830, he accused Morgan of mistreating his many tenants and advocated electoral reform as a means of bringing Morgan and others like him to account. An appreciation both of Frost's literary skill and his mounting exasperation can be gained from his letters, to Sir Charles Morgan himself amongst others. In the early 1830s Frost increasingly became a champion of universal suffrage.

Union, Prudence, Energy, sculpture

Erected in 1991 to commemorate the Chartist Rising. Outside The Westgate Hotel commemorating the Chartist Movement and 1839 Newport Rising

The Westgate Hotel, Commercial Street, Newport, Wales is a hotel building dating from the 19th century. On 4 November 1839 the hotel saw the major scenes of the Newport Rising, when 3,000 Chartists, some of them armed, led by John Frost marched on Newport to attempt to secure the release of five of their number who were being held under arrest at the hotel. In the fighting between about 60 soldiers of the 45th Regiment of Foot and police on one side, and a larger number of Chartists on the other, 10-22 Chartists were killed and more than 50 wounded.

A sculpture group illustrating the desire for political change, marking the 1839 uprising by the Chartists Union, including: Union – the physical appearance of Newport; Prudence – two figures represent the

arts, commerce and industry; Energy – three recumbent figures form the foundation from which the spirit of Chartism (two flying figures) spring; and a small open book with three flying birds. This group has texts explaining the whole.

Union (The Ideal City) - a man and a woman carry a model of Newport surrounded by dancing children. The group refers to the physical appearance of Newport: "The children dance through the space underneath the model, which is a reminder of the many tunnels and fly-overs that weave their way in, around, under and through the land on which Newport is built."

Prudence (Still Life). Two figures representing the arts, commerce and industry which have played an important part in the fortunes of Newport both in the past and present.

Energy (Apotheosis). Three recumbent figures arranged in strata like the soil, they lie seemingly crushed but they form the foundation from which the spirit of Chartism, represented by the flying figures, sprang.

A fourth, smaller, sculpture shows an open book with three birds flying out of the book. This group has texts. On banderoles over the wings of the upper bird:

Sculptor: Christopher Kelly. He also sculpted the Shepherd, sheep and sheepdog at the Royal Welsh showground, Builth Wells, unveiled in 2004.

Newport Market

A traditional Victorian indoor market, opened in 1889. It re-opened in March 2022 as a multi purpose food, retail and office space following a £5-6 million pound renovation, now largely devoid of the traditional butchers, greengrocers, a fishmonger, a traditional confectioner's stalls.

Newport Castle

Though it has largely been swallowed up by the modern-day city, you can still get a sense of Newport Castle's scale by viewing it from the bridge across the River Usk. From here, its central tower with water dock come into view, flanked by two further towers which mark the fortress's north and south ends.

The castle's curtain wall was originally surrounded by a deep moat, which was filled with water at high tide – a key benefit of its riverside location. Built in the 14th century, it replaced an earlier motte-and-bailey castle close to the cathedral on Stow Hill.

It had an "imposing position" above the river and controlled the river crossing and trade upstream

The castle was first documented in 1405, when it was repaired after being sacked in 1402 in the rebellion by Owain Glyndŵr

It was taken by Oliver Cromwell's forces in 1648 in the Civil War.

In about 1796 William Turner made a "picturesque, romantic" painting of the ruin with boats piled up outside the gate on the river.

In the 19th century, the buildings within the ruin were used as a tannery and later as a brewery. The hall's traceried windows were destroyed in that century, and the brewery was destroyed by a fire in 1883

Steel Wave

This award-winning sculpture, created by Peter Fink in 1991, stands in a prominent position on Newport's riverfront. Standing 40 feet high, the sculpture represents steel and sea trades which have played such important roles in Newport's development

Peter Fink: My journey in art started in communist Czechoslovakia. I was born in London to a Welsh mother but was brought up in Prague. In 1965, I failed in my application to Czechoslovakia's only fine art academy; I didn't fit its criteria, which were based largely on figurative art. To avoid being conscripted, I started to study engineering. When the Russians invaded in 1968, I came to London to see what was happening on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

Newport Medieval Ship

Discovered in 2002 when the Riverfront Arts Centre was being constructed. Thought to have been built in 1458. Thought to have sunk when undergoing a refit when the cradle holding it collapsed maybe around 1468.

Lost Sailor by Sebastien Boyesen is a recreation of a skeleton found on the Newport Medieval Ship. He also sculpted the 20m sculpture of a coal miner at Aberbeeg called The Guardian.

Untruth: Forensic pathologists have now discovered the cause of the 'lost sailor's death – he fell into a bacon slicer.

People from Newport

David 'Bomber' Pearce.

Boxer. The Welsh Rocky. Undefeated Heavyweight Champion of Great Britain 1983-85.

Used to train by running up and down the steps of the Transporter Bridge.

Developed epilepsy, forced to retire, and died aged 41.

Statue unveiled in 2018.

In 1983, aged 23, David became British heavyweight champion, stopping Neville Meade, a former heavyweight champion who had conquered him three years earlier, in nine rounds in St David's Hall in Cardiff.

Sculptor: Laury Dizengremel (French/American, lives in UK). Who has also sculpted Capability Brown on the bank of the Thames and Virginia Wolfe

Perce Blackborow (1896–1949) was a Welsh sailor and a stowaway on Ernest Shackleton's ill-fated Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914–1917.

Blackborow and his friend, William Lincoln Bakewell, travelled to Buenos Aires looking for new employment. There, Bakewell was taken on as an able seaman by Shackleton's ship *Endurance*, which was en route to the Antarctic, but Blackborow was not hired; at age 18, his youth and inexperience counted against him. Fearing that *Endurance* was shorthanded, Bakewell and Walter How helped Blackborow sneak aboard, and hid him in a locker amongst piles of clothing. On the third day at sea, once there was no reasonable possibility of turning back, the stowaway was discovered.

Unable to stand, Blackborow had to remain seated in a chair when he met Ernest Shackleton for the first time. Apparently in a fit of genuine rage, Shackleton subjected the stowaway to a most severe and terrifying tirade in front of the entire crew. This had the desired effect and the reactions of the two accomplices were enough to unmask them. Shackleton finished his performance by saying to Blackborow, "Do you know that on these expeditions we often get very hungry, and if there is a stowaway available he is the first to be eaten?" To which Blackborow replied, "They'd get a lot more meat off you, sir." Shackleton hid a grin and after chatting with one of the crew members said "Introduce him to the cook first."

Untruth: Blackborow apparently tasted good with mash and peas.

Blackborow proved an asset to the ship as a steward and was eventually signed on.

Following *Endurance's* entrapment and crushing in the pack ice of the Weddell Sea, the crew relocated to remote, uninhabited Elephant Island in the ship's lifeboats. On arrival, Shackleton thought to give Blackborow, the youngest of the crew, the honor of being the first to step on the island, forgetting that his feet had been severely frostbitten during the wet, cold journey in the boats. Helped over the gunwale, Blackborow fell in the shallows, proclaiming that he was the first man to sit on Elephant Island, and was quickly carried ashore.

Frostbite: After the *Endurance* sank, the crew salvaged what they could, with most of their clothing having been already collected. Blackborow, however, had taken the wrong sort of boots and on the crew's journey to Elephant Island via lifeboat, his feet were continuously exposed to the frigid waters of the Southern Ocean for several days. Both developed severe frostbite.

On 24 April 1916, a small party led by Shackleton set sail in the *James Caird* for distant South Georgia, hoping to return in a few weeks to rescue the others. The rest of the crew, including Blackborow, resigned themselves to waiting on Elephant Island. Almost all were in poor health and spirits. Blackborow had contracted gangrene due to his frostbite, and was surgeon Alexander Macklin's greatest medical concern.

On 15 June, with Shackleton and the *James Caird* crew having been away for a month, Macklin, assisted by James McIlroy, carried out an amputation of Blackborow's left foot, using chloroform for anesthesia. Greenstreet described the operation: "Blackborow had ... all the toes of his left foot taken off ¼ inch

stumps being left ... The poor beggar behaved splendidly and it went without a hitch ... Time from start to finish 55 minutes. When Blackborow came to he was cheerful as anything and started joking directly."^[3]

When the rescue party finally returned in August, Macklin carried Blackborow outside to see the approaching ship.

Blackborow returned to live in Newport, South Wales, and received the Bronze Polar Medal for his service on the expedition. He died in 1949, of chronic bronchitis and a heart problem, at the age of 53.

Johnny Morris

Untruth: A man was once walking his dog up the embankment of the River Usk when he thought he saw a whale in the river. He shouted across to another walker saying 'there's a whale in the river'. His dog turned around quizzically and said, 'mate, I think you'll find that's a walrus'. At this point they heard a voice coming from the river 'actually I'm a seal. You need to get yourself some glasses'. He went down the pub and retold the story but having to do impressions of what he had heard. That man was Johnny Morris.

Ernest John Morris OBE (20 June 1916 – 6 May 1999) was a Welsh television presenter. He was known for his children's programmes for the BBC on the topic of zoology, most notably Animal Magic, and for narrating the Tales of the Riverbank series of stories.

Morris was born on 20 June 1916 in Newport, Monmouthshire, Wales, the son of a postmaster. He learned to play the violin as a child and toured the valleys of South Wales, performing with his cello-playing father. Morris attended Eveswell Junior School and then Hatherleigh School, Newport, and worked as a solicitor's clerk, a timekeeper on a building site, and a salesman before managing a 2,000-acre (810 ha; 8.1 km²) farm in Aldbourne, Wiltshire for 13 years.^{[2][3]}

Morris was discovered telling stories in a pub by the then BBC Home Service West Regional producer Desmond Hawkins.^[4] Morris made his radio début in 1946, and featured in a number of regional series throughout the 1950s. He was often employed on light entertainment programmes as a storyteller, such as in Pass the Salt, or as a commentator on local events.

A natural mimic and impersonator, Morris first appeared on television as The Hot Chestnut Man (1953–1961), a short slot in which he was shown sitting roasting chestnuts. He would tell a humorous yarn in a West Country accent, often ending with a moral.

In 1960, he narrated the imported, Canadian-produced Tales of the Riverbank series of stories about Hammy the Hamster, Roderick the Rat, GP the Guinea Pig, and their assorted animal friends along a riverbank. The show used slowed-down footage of real animals filmed doing humanised things such as driving a car or boat, and living in houses. In the 1960s Morris also narrated books 1–11 of The Railway Stories, recordings of the Railway Series books by the Rev. W. Awdry. The recordings of the first eight

books were re-released in LP format in the 1970s but the other three sets of recordings were never reissued and in the end were rerecorded by Willie Rushton. During the 1980s he also recorded a few audiobooks for Sylvania Families.

Morris's ability to create a world which children could relate to through his mimicry led to his best-known television role, that of the presenter, narrator and 'zoo keeper' for *Animal Magic*. For more than 400 editions, from 1962 until 1983, and with inserts shot at Bristol Zoo Gardens, Morris would create comic dialogues with the animals, whom he also voiced. His regular companion on the show was Dotty the ring-tailed lemur. When the idea of imposing human qualities and voices upon animals fell out of favour the series was discontinued. Morris very rarely worked with spiders, having a phobia that he wished to keep from the public.

Morris carried over his comedic commentary technique into other programmes, such as *Follow the Rhine*, a BBC2 travelogue which included a witty Morris commentary featuring his companion Tubby Foster – actually his producer Brian Patten. *Follow the Rhine* was based on Morris' earlier BBC Radio 4 series *Johnny's Jaunts*. These series chronicled not only the Rhine journey but other worldwide journeys and were broadcast between 1957 and 1976. Included in this series were tales based upon his visits to such places as Austria (a skiing misadventure!), Spain, Hong Kong, Japan, USA, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, South America, South Sea Islands, France; and even a cruise on the River Thames.

Morris was Vice President of the Bluebell Railway in Sussex from its early days in the 1960s until the late 1980s, attending several anniversaries and landmark events over the first few decades of the railway's existence. He also made two promotional LPs for the railway in the 1970s, one of which was released on the Discourses Label (DCM1209), 'Johnny Morris on the Bluebell Railway'. He released other recordings, too: 'Sights and Sounds of Britain', a 1975 Flexidisc (Lyntone 2881) and 'It's a Dog's Life' (Lyntone 2462), a single promoting Winalot dog foods, which, oddly, played at 33½ rpm.

In the 1970s, Morris read children's bedtime stories for the Post Office to be heard via the telephone. Children could dial 150 and hear a different story over the telephone each week; these included the Peter Pixie stories written by Olive Hyett. He was also a presenter on BBC Schools Radio's *Singing Together*, and wrote and read stories on BBC Schools Radio's *A Service for Schools* which was later renamed *Together*.

In a nod to his role with *Animal Magic*, Morris also added his voice to the award-winning *Creature Comforts* series of electricity advertisements, created by Aardman Animations. These advertisements featured animated claymation animals speaking about their life and conditions in a way comparable to the dialogues that Morris had created in the earlier television show.

Although latterly criticised in the 1990s for his anthropomorphic technique of introducing television viewers to animals[citation needed], Morris was active in environmentalism, and in his eighties demonstrated against the building of the Newbury bypass near his home.[2] In June 2004, Morris and Bill Oddie were jointly profiled in the first of a three part BBC Two series, *The Way We Went Wild*, about television wildlife presenters.

Morris was awarded the OBE in 1984. His autobiography, *There's Lovely*, was first published in 1989.

Margaret Haig Mackworth née Thomas, Lady Rhondda (1883 – 20 July 1958)

<https://monumentalwelshwomen.com/lady-rhondda>

was a Welsh peeress, businesswoman and active suffragette who was significant in the history of women's suffrage in the United Kingdom. Her parents were industrialist and politician David Alfred Thomas, 1st Viscount Rhondda (from Aberdare), and Sybil Haig, also a suffragette.

Lady Rhondda was a woman of privilege but she used that privilege in the best way possible - to fight for the rights of all women. She did things few other women of her background would have dared. Born Margaret Haig-Thomas, she was a suffragette who made the fight for the vote front page news. She brought Emmeline Pankhurst to Wales and spearheaded the suffrage campaign among the women of Newport.

She confronted the anti-suffrage Prime Minister Asquith by jumping on his car.

She set fire to a post box and was sent to prison, where she went on hunger strike. In the First World War she ensured women played a vital role, recruiting them into the women's services. She became Commissioner for Wales in the Women's National Service Department, then Chief Controller of women's recruitment at the Ministry of National Service in London.

Crossing the Atlantic, she survived the sinking of the *Lusitania* when it was torpedoed during the war, claiming more than 1,100 lives. Struggling to survive for hours in freezing water, the trauma proved a pivotal moment for Lady Rhondda: "What it did do was to alter my opinion of myself. I had lacked self-confidence...and here I had got through this test without disgracing myself. I had found that when the moment came, I could control my fear." After the war as well as campaigning for the rights of women workers who did not want to be pushed back into the home, she also continued the fight for the final phase of women's suffrage which saw all women get the vote in 1928. She was the greatest global businesswoman of her era.

She sat on the board of 33 companies, chairing seven of them, and oversaw an industrial empire of mines, shipping and newspapers. She also became the first and to date only female to be President of the Institute of Directors. As a journalist she created and edited a ground-breaking and hugely influential weekly paper called *Time and Tide* which featured some of the literary giants of the 20th century – from George Orwell and Virginia Woolf to JRR Tolkien. It had a ground-breaking all-female board but appealed to both men and women. Exploring Welsh, British and international politics as well

as the arts, *Time and Tide* was one of the key journals of the interwar period. Lady Rhondda also used the paper to push her progressive programme called *The Six Point Group*. It made gender equality paramount.

Lady Rhondda argued that women's voting rights must be accompanied by social and economic legislation. Her programme sought legislation for mothers that would give children better protection. It was ahead of its time in demanding strict laws on child assault and it sought to protect widowed mothers with young children and the unmarried mother and child. The other three points dealt with equal rights for men and women, demanding equal guardianship of children for married parents, equality of opportunity in the civil service and equal pay for teachers.

And Lady Rhondda is the reason women of today can sit in the House of Lords. She campaigned for female peers for 40 years – though sadly she died before the law she fought for was changed, too late to take her own seat. Any one of these individual achievements would have secured her place in history – put them all together and Lady Rhondda remains one of the most remarkable figures Wales has ever known.

An only child, she was raised at Llanwern House, near Newport, until the age of 13, when she went away to boarding school, first to Notting Hill High School then St Leonards School, in St Andrews. In 1904, aged 19, she took up a place at Somerville College, Oxford, where she studied history. Despite her tutors providing positive feedback on her academic progress, she returned to Llanwern to live with her family after two terms.

Working for her father at the Consolidated Cambrian company headquarters in Cardiff Docks, she earned a salary of £1,000, a significant sum at that time

She married Newport landowner Humphrey Mackworth in 1908 at 25, joined the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) that year and became secretary of its Newport branch. Between 1908 and 1914, she took the campaign for women's suffrage across South Wales, often to hostile and stormy meetings. Thomas was involved in protest marches with the Pankhursts and, jumping onto the running board of Liberal Prime Minister H. H. Asquith's car in St Andrews, was attacked by a crowd. But she believed that being a member of the women's suffrage movement was a draught of fresh air in what she described as her 'padded, stifled life'.

In June 1913, Thomas attempted to set fire to a Royal Mail letter-box with a chemical bomb as a way of inspiring her WSPU branch to greater militancy. This resulted in a trial at the Sessions House, Usk, and after refusing to pay a £10 fine, she was sentenced to serve a one-month period in jail there. She was released after only five days after she had gone on a hunger strike.

Thomas was given a Hunger Strike Medal 'for Valour' by WSPU.

When Emmeline Pankhurst died in June 1928, it was Kitty Marshall, Rosamund Massey and Lady Rhondda who arranged her memorials. They raised money for her gravestone in Brompton Cemetery and a statue of her outside the House of Commons, which she had frequently been prevented

from entering. Money was also raised to buy the painting that had been made by the fellow suffragette Georgina Brackenbury so that it could be given to the National Portrait Gallery.[6] It was unveiled by Stanley Baldwin in 1930.

First World War and sinking of RMS Lusitania[edit]

On the outbreak of the First World War, she accepted the decision by the WSPU leadership to abandon its militant campaign for suffrage. She was by this time working for her father as his confidential secretary and 'right-hand man'. Thomas had great pride and belief in his daughter, and had argued with her on equal terms since she was twelve or thirteen.[7] She thus went with him when he was sent by David Lloyd George to the United States to arrange the supply of munitions for the British armed forces.

Her father became aware of his daughter's depressive state, and although she brushed her father's concern aside, he became aware of tensions within her marriage. On 7 May 1915, she was returning from the United States on the RMS Lusitania with her father and his secretary, Arnold Rhys-Evans, when it was torpedoed at 14:10 by German submarine U-20. Her father and his secretary made it onto a lifeboat since they had been blown overboard, but she spent a long period in clinging to a piece of board before she was rescued by the Irish trawler "Bluebell", as recalled in her 1933 autobiography, *This Was My World*. By the time she was rescued and taken to Queenstown, she had fallen unconscious from hypothermia. After a period in hospital, she then spent several months recuperating at her parents' home.

During the war Rhondda helped to place Belgian refugees in Monmouthshire and was then employed by the government to encourage women to undertake war work in essential industries, most notably in agriculture. In early 1918 she was promoted to Chief Controller of women's recruitment at the Ministry of National Service in London to advise on women's recruitment policy, experience which she later used to good effect.

Peerage

On 3 July 1918 her father died. While the Rhondda Barony died with him, the title of Viscount Rhondda passed to Margaret by special remainder, which Thomas had insisted on from King George V when he was offered the honour.

After her father's death, Lady Rhondda subsequently tried to take his seat in the House of Lords by citing the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 which allowed women to exercise "any public office". After initially being accepted, the Committee of Privileges membership was altered and her request was rejected. She was supported for many years by Lord Astor, whose wife Nancy had been the first woman to take her seat in the British House of Commons.

Shortly after Lady Rhondda's death in 1958, women entered the Lords for the first time thanks to the Life Peerages Act 1958. Five years later, with the passage of the Peerage Act 1963, hereditary peeresses were also allowed to enter the Lords.

We have so far successfully delivered the iconic Betty Campbell Monument in Cardiff, the beautiful statue of Elaine Morgan in Mountain Ash and the uplifting statue of Cranogwen in Llangrannog - but we have 2 more statues to deliver to complete our mission.

Where will the statue be situated? Lady Rhondda's home was at Llanwern House, and as such we think the location of a statue would be most fitting East of the River Usk. There are very few pieces of public art in East Newport and our preferred site is at the riverside of the Millennium footbridge.