

GCSE (9–1)

Teachers' Guide

HISTORY A ***(EXPLAINING THE MODERN WORLD)***

J410

For first teaching in 2016

Butetown

Version 1



Teachers' Guide

A resource pack for the Historic Environment study that forms part of the OCR 'A' GCSE History unit on Migration, for learners taking the examination in 2018.



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Introduction

This pack provides materials to enable teachers to plan and deliver a ten-hour course to learners. Schools are not expected to use all the resources here, which would take far more than ten hours! Teachers will need to plan a course to suit their own requirements, using selected resources as they see fit. More than enough content has been provided to enable the design of a whole unit, using only materials from the pack, though of course teachers should feel free also to look elsewhere.

The pack starts with an overview of Butetown's migration history, followed by key dates. This is intended as a briefing for teachers, though it - or an adapted version - could be used by learners later for revision.

There are then 14 chapters that are roughly chronological. Each chapter starts with a narrative, followed by a selection of **sources**. Most of the sources are reproduced here, though some - images and video clips - can be accessed by following a hyperlink.

At the end of each chapter are **thinking points**. These encourage learners to examine the sources and compare their value, often with reference to what can still be seen in the built environment. Most chapters then end with **practice questions** which are always structured in the same way as the questions in the OCR exam.

Chapter 15 questions how far Butetown's migration heritage is recorded and recognised. Chapter 16 suggests a walking tour through the area for those who manage a visit: either a whole school group or a reconnoitring teacher. Even if no visit takes place, we recommend all schools to follow the trail in some form - along a map of the area, perhaps, or using Google Streetview, which can give a close up view of all the places mentioned in the tour.

Planning the course

Here are three of many possible approaches.

- A. An approach focused on the key skills for the exam: understanding how and why things happened and assessing the value of sources, including evidence in the built environment.

Keep the basic framework of the pack, narrowing down to key sources and thinking points and a smaller selection of practice questions. Decide when to give learners text to read and when to explain to them or to let them elicit stories from their interrogation of sources.

- B. An approach with a structure similar to the layout of the exam spec, taking in turn each of the five sections:

- When did immigrants arrive, why and from where?
- How were they received by the settled population?
- What were their experiences over the years?
- What were the key events in Butetown's migration history?
- What was their impact?

This allows a more thematic overview rather than a step by step chronological narrative. For each section, select from this pack sources (documentary and in the built environment) that reflect these themes. Use some of the practice questions from the pack.

- C. A more holistic, creative, project-based approach.

Spend a couple of lessons sharing key points of the history with learners to give them a basic framework, then give them creative challenges that will force them to study deeply and to select and judge the value of sources. Suggested examples:

- Using the itinerary and map in Chapter 16 and, with the help of the photos and Google Streetview, learners create a Butetown tourist guidebook that focuses on its migration and multicultural history.
- Two opposing teams prepare evidence for a debate on an underlying question, such as whether the story of Butetown in the 20th century was a negative or positive one.

- Using still photos and sources in the pack, and possibly clips found online, create a 5 minute film history, each group of learners focusing on a particular period.
- Learners write and perform a scripted play telling the story of Butetown, focusing on key dates: 1839, 1848, 1911, 1919, 1925 etc.
- Give learners an edited version of the chapters in this pack. Their task is to select material from the pack for an exhibition in which they address each of the five questions listed in (B) above.
- Give learners many of the sources in the pack. They have to select a restricted number (5, perhaps) that they think tell key aspects of the story over the whole period from 1839 till now, and defend their choice.
- Learners design a memorial to Tiger Bay's merchant seamen and its multicultural community and decide where they would put the memorial and why.

Recommended resources

1. Cassini Past & Present 1:50,000 map of Cardiff and Caerphilly from map shops or at www.cassinimaps.com. It includes maps from 1833, 1899, 1913 and 2007. Good for seeing the changing shape of Butetown and the docks.
2. The Godfrey Edition 1:2500 Old Ordnance Survey Maps of Central Cardiff (1916) and Cardiff South (1915). You need both to cover the whole of Butetown. Every street is marked and named. Very useful for tracking the events of 1911 and 1919 and to compare with a modern map.
3. 'Struggles for Black Community' DVD (1983, remastered 2008) from the Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leake Street, London WC1X 9HS. This DVD includes a 30-minute film, called 'Tiger Bay is My Home', which covers the 1919 riots, the depression of the 1930s and the 1960s redevelopment.
4. A good current large-scale OS map of Butetown.
5. Butetown History & Arts Centre (<http://bhac.org/>) has a fine selection of books including autobiographies, memoirs and photo essays, as well as an extensive oral history and photograph archive.

6. There is a wealth of videos about Butetown on YouTube. Here is a selection:

Archive footage and memories of the old Tiger Bay

Girl from Tiger Bay - about Shirley Bassey - starts with excellent footage and also has film of Peel St Mosque. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7V2Xxh0tbkE>

The 1959 feature film 'Tiger Bay' for its first three and a half minutes in the docks and Loudoun Square. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mz1hCdqf7Q>

Mixed Britannia https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTOSFKs_JpQ with sections on the 1919 riots and mixed marriages in Butetown

Butetown memories. Cardiff children visit the Red Sea House retirement home for Somali elders and interview them. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zqb9SJBa6eg>

The 1960s demolition

1960 ITV programme interviewing residents around Angelina Street: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tfu8bNdfUI>

Butetown in the 1980s

An excellent 1984 edition of Ebony visiting Butetown and meeting some of its people, including Shaikh Said Ismail and campaigners for and against redevelopment plans. Also music from local bands. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2V8wmgvTEY>

A film - made by a young resident - about the planned demolition of the 1960s flats on Angelina Street. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiv2uBQK1il>

Three films about the Butetown Carnival :

Carnival 1987 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWqpbh0zdKqI>

Carnival remembered 2015 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcnjV2Tvnbc>

It's My Shout - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EelJuOhxk8E>

Guided tour

A Stroll Through Tiger Bay. A four-part walk through the Bay, led by Neil Sinclair in the early 2000s. It focuses on the buildings and the docks, not on migration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqu1b84WDis>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqUirIo0bok>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7sJYmL6XUKQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgZiCnzDAac>

7. If you want to supplement this course by carrying out your own local study of migration history in your area, the Runnymede Trust have provided a free online guide which can be downloaded as a PDF. It can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/1M0C2A5>
8. The Runnymede Trust have also produced, in collaboration with Cardiff school learners, an excellent booklet on migration to Cardiff called Cardiff Migration Stories which can be accessed and downloaded from <http://bit.ly/1RKtth6>
9. **#towerlives** was a week-long festival of storytelling and music from Butetown run by the BBC in April 2016. Linked articles include:
 - Rise of towers and fall of Tiger Bay <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-35997410>
 - Haifa Shamsan: High-fashion hijabi <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-36018304>
 - Cardiff Three: Tony Paris' freedom fight <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-36031512>

Overview of Butetown's migration history

In the 1940s some forty-five to fifty nations, and many more ethnic groups, were represented in a population of around five thousand. This population of immigrants and minorities included the following nationalities:

- Greeks, Turks and Cypriots
- Spanish, Italians, Portuguese and Maltese
- Colonial Portuguese (mainly Cape Verdeans)
- Yemenis, Egyptians and Somalis
- Welsh, Irish, English and Scots
- West Africans (Nigerians, Sierra Leoneans and others)
- West Indians (Jamaicans, Barbadians, Trinidadians, St Lucians, St Kittsians and others)
- British Hondurans, Panamanians and Guyanese
- French, Mauritians, Colonial French
- Chinese, Malays and Indians (i.e. people from what is now India, Pakistan and Bangladesh)
- Poles, Ukrainians and Eastern European Jews
- Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians
- Germans, Norwegians, Finns, Swedes and Danes
- North Americans, South Americans
- And a few more...

Source: Glenn Jordan, *Down the Bay* (2001) pp 9-10¹

Who came, why and from where? What was their impact?

People came to Butetown because of coal and ships. Coal powered the machines of the Industrial Revolution and by the end of the 18th century it was becoming the world's most precious commodity. The 2nd Marquess of Bute, a wealthy local landowner, decided to build a dock in Cardiff Bay so that high quality coal mined in the valleys of South Wales could be transported to the sea and then shipped as

an export to the world. He brought over Irish workers to do the digging. West Bute Dock opened in 1839, closely followed by the Taff Vale Railway in 1841. Alongside the dock and along the railway, Bute's labourers built rows of tightly packed houses for the dock workers and elegant terraces and squares for the owners, captains and managers. Butetown was created by Irish immigrants. They were joined by many more in the 1840s, forced by the potato famine to sail from Cork to Cardiff in the hope of survival and a better life. There was also a small group of Jewish shopkeepers and travelling salesmen in these early days.

Over the next 70 years more docks were built, the railway network expanded and the coal industry boomed. As ships carried coal and other goods across the world, men in their ports of call were hired to work as sailors, boilermen and cooks. The very first seamen to arrive were probably Portuguese-speaking Africans from Cape Verde. West Indians and West Africans arrived from the Atlantic routes, Greeks were hired on the Mediterranean steamers and Norwegians worked on the ships taking coal across the North Sea and the Baltic. After the Suez Canal opened in 1869 many Cardiff ships sailed east, bringing back merchant seamen from the Pearl River Delta in China, Aden in Yemen, Berbera in what is now Somaliland, and Egypt. When the British Empire was at its height, Welsh coal was the pumping heart of the country's wealth. The men from across the world working on the coal steamers - usually on low pay and in terrible conditions - made this wealth possible. As these seamen settled in Butetown, so far from home, several of them married women from the South Wales valleys. The area, nicknamed Tiger Bay, was already a mixed multicultural working-class community over a hundred years ago.

When war broke out in 1914 many more Black seamen were hired. After the war, as the coal industry declined and economic depression set in, their ability to find work was controlled and restricted by 'colour bar' laws and some were forced to leave. In spite of another influx of men working the merchant convoys across the Atlantic in the Second World War, immigration levels were low in the 1950s and 60s as the docks closed and most streets and squares were demolished and rebuilt. Since the 1990s, however, many refugees from conflicts in Africa, Asia and the Middle East have been housed in the area.

What were their experiences and how were they received?

In the late 19th century several Christian missions provided shelter and a social life for foreign seamen. Meanwhile, as wealthier residents moved out of the once

¹ Quoted in Jordan, *Somali Elders: Portraits from Wales* (Butetown History & Arts Centre, 2004) p.18

fashionable houses around Loudoun Square, many became lodging-houses for merchant seamen, run by shipping companies and by people from their own communities. Cafes were key meeting points and shops supplied familiar food and other goods. Although lives were extremely hard, this increasingly diverse community was strong and mutually supportive across cultures and faiths. Landmark moments, such as the Greek Orthodox Easter, a Somali funeral or the opening of a Yemeni mosque, were celebrated by everyone.

One thing that united Tiger Bay residents was solidarity in the face of discrimination from the law, the dock unions, police, employers, the press and many Cardiff residents north of the bridge that forms the dividing line between Butetown and the rest of the city. Close to the docks and cut off from the rest of Cardiff by railway lines to the east and north, and the canal to the west, Butetown always felt very separate from the rest of the city. Tiger Bay was portrayed by outsiders as a place of crime and danger, often expressed in racist terms. Facing this hostility and often overt racism, unable to get jobs outside, many residents preferred not to venture out. Going under the railway bridge to the centre felt like crossing a border.

The first anti-foreigner violence was in 1848, with anti-Catholic attacks on migrant Irish families who had fled the famine, sparked off when a Welshman was killed by an Irishman in a street fight. The 1911 'Laundry Riot' targeted the Chinese community at a time of wider industrial and social conflict. The worst violence happened in 1919. During the First World War 1400 'coloured seamen' from Cardiff had lost their lives, but after the war the coal industry was in crisis. With jobs scarce, tensions exploded between demobilised White ex-soldiers and unemployed Black seamen. Mobs shouting racist taunts gathered in Central Cardiff and marched to Butetown, laying siege to some of the boarding houses and ransacking shops and cafes. Residents defended themselves. Both sides were armed and three people - two White and one described as 'Arab', so probably Yemeni or Egyptian - were killed. After the riots, although the report by Cardiff's police chief blamed White attackers for starting the violence, the local authorities organised a process of repatriation and about 600 Black seamen were transported, mainly to the West Indies.

Conditions in Butetown worsened between the World Wars, with high levels of poverty and unemployment, made worse by the Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order of 1925. This excluded all 'coloured' seamen from getting jobs on the ships by registering them as aliens even though most came from places in the British Empire. It was a colour bar. With almost no chance of work, experiencing overt racist

discrimination and living in extreme poverty and hardship, life was very hard for residents of the Bay. Mutual support and solidarity were strong, however, and many became active in political groups, community organisations and through places of worship. Faced with hostility from the National Union of Seamen, Butetown's workers set up their own Coloured Seamen's Union in 1931 and enlisted the help of the London-based League of Coloured People in their pressure for improved conditions.

After the Second World War, as docks began to close, Cardiff's economy was no longer based on coal exports. Racial discrimination was rife in the new service industries and the big department stores in the city centre rarely hired Butetown residents. In the 1960s most of the housing was demolished and replaced by flats. Although the new accommodation was of a better quality, much of the community spirit was damaged. Loudoun Square, where people met and children played, was replaced by two tower blocks where people lived more isolated lives. Newly arrived refugees came with different experiences and traditions from those descended from the merchant seamen and so, although still culturally diverse, from the 1980s onwards Butetown no longer had so strong a shared heritage of intermixing, solidarity and resistance.

After 1987 the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation redeveloped the whole Bay area. The narrow streets close to the docks and the site occupied by the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum were replaced by the Mermaid Quay complex of chain restaurants and tourist attractions and new housing developments. Where the docks, warehouses and railway lines once were, there are now high-end apartments, hotels, entertainment venues and the Welsh Assembly building. Only some of the listed buildings from the coal heyday remain and they - the Coal Exchange, the old post office, banks and shipping offices from the boom years a century ago - are being left to crumble and collapse.

For Tiger Bay's longstanding residents that remain, there are some new parks, a community centre, mosques, a youth centre and - on Angelina Street, for example - newer low-rise houses to replace the black sixties flats. While the brand new Youth Centre built with European funding works closely with the area's young people, old attitudes to Tiger Bay remain: some Butetown young adults with university degrees and professional qualifications leave for England or Dubai in search of work they cannot find in Cardiff.

Key events

- 1839** The West Bute Dock opened, followed by the railway in 1841.
- 1848** Anti-Irish 'riots'.
- 1911** The seamen's strike and the anti-Chinese 'Laundry Riot.'
- 1914-18** Butetown's merchant seamen served on ships across the world and many were killed.
- 1919** Anti-foreigner 'race riots'.
- 1920** The Aliens Order.
- 1925** The Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order.
- 1931** The Coloured Seamen's Union was set up.
- 1939-45** Butetown's merchant seamen served on the Atlantic convoys. The Cardiff Blitz.
- 1950s** The decline and closure of most of the docks.
- 1960s** The demolition of large areas of Butetown.
- 1987** The Cardiff Bay Development Corporation was set up.
- 1988** The Butetown History & Arts Centre started up.
- 2006** The Welsh Assembly opened in Cardiff Bay.

1. 1839: the start of the docks

(Evidence in today's built environment: the Bute East Dock, Windsor Esplanade, Bute Esplanade.)

Irish labourers were brought by John Crichton Stuart, the 2nd Marquis of Bute, to build docks on his land. He wanted to make good money from high quality coal from the Welsh valleys. It could be loaded onto barges pulled by horses along the Glamorganshire Canal down to Cardiff Bay, but the old port where the canal reached the bay, was small and inefficient. A proper dock would mean ships could load up with coal and sell it around the world. The project started in 1836: Bute brought in Irish diggers who came by boat from Cork. They dug out the Bute West Dock which opened in 1839. Two years later the Taff Vale Railway reached the bay, and coal could come quickly from the mining villages to the boats waiting to load up. The Bute East Dock was added in 1859.

Bute had a whole district of housing built for those involved with the docks. For the wealthier company owners, merchants and ships' captains there were three-storey townhouses around elegant Loudoun Square. For the dock workers and seamen there were closely-packed terraced houses. These, too, were built by the Irish migrants, who arrived in ever greater numbers as whole families escaped the potato famine of the 1840s. The Irish labourers and refugees from starvation settled mainly just north of Butetown in Newtown, which was known as 'Little Ireland'.

Irish labourers created Butetown and the docks which, in their turn, would create modern Cardiff.

Source 1.1: the opening of the Bute East Dock in October 1859

For a print published in the *Illustrated London News* in October 1859 go to

<http://bit.ly/22Hn35x>

Source 1.2: sailing ships in the docks, mid 19th century²



Source 1.3: South William Street, looking towards the dock in the late 19th century³



² Butetown History & Arts Centre

³ Butetown History & Arts Centre

Source 1.4: Houses on Windsor Esplanade and Bute Esplanade in 2016.



These houses close to the sea, built for ships' captains and pilots, are similar in design to those that used to be in Loudoun Square. Nearby Bute Esplanade also has a few remaining houses originally built for the wealthy.

Source 1.5: A Visit to Tiger Bay - The Gunboat tavern (go to <http://bit.ly/1ShUAIJ>)

This fascinating print by an unknown artist is undated but appears to be mid-19th century and shows the diversity of the maritime population even at this early stage.

Thinking points

- What impression of the docks do sources 1.1 and 1.2 give?
- Compare the housing in sources 1.3 and 1.4. Who would each have been for?
- Which is more useful for a historian wanting to understand what the early docks were like, the photograph 1.2 or the print 1.5?
- How are contemporary photos such as 1.2 and 1.3 useful to historians and what are their limitations?
- What is the value to a historian of visiting sites such as Windsor Esplanades as they are now?

Practice questions

1. Explain why Irish migrants came to Cardiff in the 1840s. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 1.3 and 1.5. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying 19th century Butetown life? [10 marks]

2. 1848: Riot in 'Little Ireland'

(Evidence in today's built environment: England's Warehouse, Newtown Memorial Garden.)

In the 1840s tens of thousands of refugees from the Irish potato famine arrived in the ports of South Wales, including Cardiff. Many were diseased or starving after suffering terrible conditions on board the 'coffin ships'. Sometimes their sea journeys lasted days or even weeks if the weather was bad. When they arrived they faced a hostile population at their destination. Officials tried to stop them landing and when that failed, they took ship captains to court for carrying too many passengers. In response, captains often unloaded their human cargo on beaches in small inlets along the coast.

Why was there so much hostility directed against the Irish?

It was a time of stress and upheaval for people living in the towns along the Welsh coast. The South Wales railway was being built, cutting through communities. This new form of transport needed large numbers of workers to do the backbreaking work of digging and laying the tracks. Many of these workers - known as 'navvies' - were Irish.

The arrival of large numbers of very poor refugees put pressure on the system of poor relief and disrupted the local economy. Houses built in a hurry in the Newtown area became overcrowded and, as so many of the Irish refugees were sick, there were outbreaks of epidemic disease. 349 people in Cardiff died of cholera.

There were also religious differences between the Protestant Welsh and Catholic Irish.

Welsh people who were afraid of the changes in their society and the threat of disease turned on the Irish, blaming them.

The story of the riot

It started on 11th November 1848 with a street fight near the Catholic church between an Irish navvy called John Connors and a Welshman called John Lewis. Connors stabbed Lewis, who died. Over the next few days there was a manhunt, looking for Connors. Police interrupted Mass in the church and took away the man they thought was hiding the killer. Later a group of Welshmen armed with

stones forced the doors of the church, looking for Connors without success. He was eventually found and arrested.

On the day of Lewis's funeral, angry Welsh people filled the streets and 150 Irishmen armed with pick handles marched into Cardiff to protect their people from attack.

In court Connors was cleared of murder but found guilty of manslaughter. His punishment was transportation and he was taken to Australia in a convict ship.

Source 2.1: Sensational headline in the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, November 1848⁴. In fact, the only damage to the church was a few smashed windows.

DREADFUL RIOT IN CARDIFF: MILITARY CALLED OUT

HORRIBLE STATE OF EXCITEMENT: FURIOUS ATTACK OF WELSH UPON THE IRISH

FLIGHT OF THE CATHOLIC PRIEST: DEMOLITION OF CATHOLIC CHAPEL AND PRIEST'S RESIDENCE

TWO HOUSES BURNT: INTENSE EXCITEMENT OF THE PEOPLE AND VERDICT OF THE JURY

These and other rumours were about in Cardiff today....

⁴ Quoted by John O'Sullivan in *The Green Dragon*, Spring 1999

Source 2.2: Contemporary coverage of the riot in *The Principality* 17th November 1848.

The actual article - telling the story of the murder, riot, inquest and funeral - can be found scanned at Welsh Newspapers Online. It is an engaging account, easily accessible for learners.

<http://bit.ly/1LU5FTv>

There is also a transcript in the right-hand panel, text from which can be copied and pasted.

Thinking point

- Sources 2.1 and 2.2 both appeared in the local press at the time of riots. What might their effect have been? How useful are they as a source for today's historians, and why?

What were conditions like for the Irish migrants?

The six small streets and 200 houses that made up Irish Newtown contained a tight, enclosed community based around the West Dock. Many of the men were navvies, digging the docks and the new railways linking the mining valleys and the coast. The houses had been built quickly to house the workers, and the arrival of famine refugees caused serious overcrowding and disease. People were desperately poor. Sanitary conditions were terrible, crime levels were high and there was a cholera epidemic. According to local historian John O'Sullivan, writing in 1999⁵.

The head of the town's 12-man police force, Superintendent Stockdale, told the health inspector of a visit he made to No. 17 Stanley Street, just a few doors from the church. In one room, measuring just over 17ft by 16ft, he found no fewer than 54 men, women and children, eating and living and sleeping. The room had no windows or rear entrance and the only furniture comprised a few boxes where babies were placed so they would not be crushed. The stinking, unwashed, ragged inhabitants kept their few paltry possessions about them, including salt fish, bones and rotting potatoes. They shared an uncovered privy which was full to overflowing, flooding the outside yard with raw sewage. The street in front of the house was littered with offensive decaying vegetable matter and other rubbish dumped by those who lived in the ghetto.

One of the interactive displays in the Cardiff Story Museum tells the story of Elizabeth Allen, who lived in Mary Ann Street, off Lower Bute Street. Life around the docks at that time was harsh. There were many pubs and drunkenness was a major problem. Elizabeth worked in the 'Cork and Waterford' beer house (named after two Irish cities) and we know about her from court records. On the 5th July 1859 she was arrested for assault and theft. At that time she was about 18 years old.

One famous son of the area, from the Newtown Irish community that had built the docks, was 'Peerless' Jim Driscoll, who grew up in poverty in a boarding house after his father died from an industrial accident, and became British featherweight boxing champion.

None of these streets remain: all were demolished in 1970.

Source 2.3: Edward England's Warehouse in 2016



This is the only remaining building from Newtown's heyday, located at the top of Lloyd George Avenue. From 1842 onwards, this was where many of Newtown's women, including an Irishwoman named Johanna Holland, worked shovelling potatoes from the ships in West Bute Dock for storage in the warehouse. It has been converted into flats.

⁵ Published in *The Green Dragon*, Spring 1999. The full article is at <http://bit.ly/1UWXdnT>

Source 2.4: The Vulcan Hotel

This pub was built in 1853 and refurbished in the early 1900s and the 1950s. When it was demolished in 2013 it was Cardiff's oldest pub. All the materials of the building have been transported to Cardiff's St Fagan's Local History Museum where there are plans to rebuild it and open it as a working pub with staff serving in 19th century costume.

For a photograph of The Vulcan before demolition, go to

<http://bit.ly/1RFjP6Z>

Source 2.5: The Newtown Memorial Garden in 2016



The area where Irish migrants lived is now hotels, flats and roads. The Newtown Memorial Garden was opened in 2005 with a celebration Mass. It is now in the shadow of a budget hotel. The sculpture represents traditional Celtic knotwork designs and the interwoven relationship between Newtown and the docks. The paving includes the names of Cardiff Irish families.

Thinking point

- Sources 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 show three different ways of preserving or commemorating heritage of the past. The warehouse remains in place but has been converted into flats. The pub has been demolished but will be rebuilt in a museum. The memorial sculpture is new but evokes memories of the people who once lived in Newtown. Compare these different approaches to heritage and memory.

Practice questions

- Explain why there were riots between Welsh and Irish residents in 1848.
[10 marks]
- Study Sources 2.1 and 2.3. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the lives of Irish migrants in Cardiff in the 1840s?
[10 marks]

3. “Coal Metropolis”

(Evidence in today's built environment: Bute Street station building, the listed buildings on Bute Street and West Bute Street, Mount Stuart Square, the former post office on James Street, the Pierhead, the Coal Exchange, the Roath Basin and Alexandra Dock.)

The trade-winds blew fair and a merchant-moon dangled
O'er the small chandlers shop - silver sextants displayed,
The Coal Exchange rang as the millionaires' wrangles
Echoed out to old James Street where the poor children played.

And oh, don't you wish you'd been there?
There, brushing steam from your hair,
There with the gulls bickering
On old Cardiff winds.

From 'Old Cardiff Winds' by Mike Johnson⁶

In the second half of the 19th century Cardiff became the biggest coal port in the world. Ship owners from Norway, Greece, Trieste and the West of England set up their headquarters around the docks, in Bute Street and Mount Stuart Square. They ran fleets of tramp steamers that loaded up with Welsh coal and travelled the oceans from port to port, stopping where there were coal storage bunkers.

Business boomed and Roath and Alexandra Docks opened to cope with the trade. In 1857 Cardiff handled 1 million tons a year in exports: just before the start of the First World War that had risen to 12.6 million tons, more than London or Liverpool. Clients included the national railways of Norway, Denmark, Portugal and Egypt. Prosperity was reflected in the shops and services along James Street and Bute Street, such as Bracci's ice cream parlour, opened in 1901 by Welsh Italians. Many of the shops were Jewish owned: watchmakers, jewellers and other trades from a community that had first settled in Cardiff in 1813. For a time there was a synagogue on Bute

Street, as well as 'shuls' (schools) for 'Englishers' and 'Furriner's' [foreigners]. There were Gypsies from the English and Irish Traveller communities, too, surviving by providing door-to-door services such as watch mending, knife sharpening and selling pegs and flowers. The services they provided - also including lace, wedding trousseaux, beating out mattresses and door-to-door fortune telling - were ones that bigger companies could not do profitably. Their clients were mainly from the artisan classes.

One of the offices on Bute Street was 'Aadnesen & Dahl' shipbrokers, set up in the 1880s by two Norwegian immigrants. They sold coal and all the equipment ships needed before sailing. One of the partners, Harald Dahl had a famous son - the writer Roald Dahl, born in Llandaff just north of Cardiff in 1916 and baptized in Butetown's Norwegian church. In 1883 the central garden in Mount Stuart Square was replaced with the imposing Cardiff Coal Exchange, with its massive trading hall where the world price of coal was decided and where, in 1901, the world's first ever million pound trading deal - for coal to France - was agreed.

SOURCES

Source 3.1 and 3.2: Map of Cardiff 1833 and 1899-1900

The growth of the docks and of Cardiff can be seen in the Cassini Past and Present Map: Cardiff and Caerphilly (2007) www.cassinimaps.com.

Source 3.3: The Pier Head with a tramp steamer entering Bute West Dock⁷



⁶ Mike Johnson, *Cardiff Songs - tales from Tiger Bay and beyond* (words and music) (Bayfolk 2015), available from Butetown History & Arts Centre

⁷ Butetown History & Arts Centre

Source 3.4: Opening of the Cardiff Coal Exchange⁸**Source 3.5: The Coal Exchange in 2016, and detail showing a coat of arms with a Baltic Russian dragon and an African lion.****Thinking points**

- Compare the two maps. What changes do they show and how would these have affected the lives of people in Butetown?
- Why are maps such as these useful to historians?
- How can we tell that photo 3.3 was taken later in the century than photo 1.3?
- What impression does photo 3.4 give of the Coal Exchange?
- What aspects of the design on the Coal Exchange seen in photo 3.5 show how important it was seen to be when it was built?
- What do you think the reason was for the design of the coat of arms?

Practice questions

1. Explain why so many businesses came to Butetown. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the growth of Butetown? [10 marks]

⁸ Butetown History & Arts Centre

4. 'The world in a square mile'

(Evidence in today's built environment: very little, as the docks are no longer working and the streets and houses from the time have been demolished. A wealth of evidence is held in the photographs and oral history transcripts held at BHAC. The real evidence though is not in the buildings but in the people of Butetown - their descendants.)

One of the earliest steamer routes was from Cardiff to the Canary Islands, from there to the Cape Verde islands off West Africa, then to Dakar in Senegal and finally across the Atlantic to the West Indies and then New Orleans where the remaining coal would be unloaded and the holds filled with cotton for the journey home. On the way, the ship's captains often hired local men to join the crews, paying them lower wages than the White seamen and putting them to work as firemen and boilermen with the idea that they would be better used to the intense heat.

The very first migrant seamen to land in Butetown were probably Cape Verdeans. They were Portuguese-speaking West Africans. In the 1850s and 1860s a community of Africans and West Indians began to grow. Other routes brought other migrant seamen. Ships plying across the North Sea to Scandinavia and the Baltic to exchange coal for timber came back with Norwegian crew, while steamers on the Mediterranean routes hired Greeks. In 1869 the Suez Canal opened, opening up a faster, cheaper route to Asia. Steamers on their way to India and China stopped off at Port Said in Egypt, Berbera in Somaliland and Aden, a bunkering port on the coast of Yemen. Egyptian, Somali and Yemeni men looking for work (in some cases to escape drought and famine) were hired. The first Somali arrived around 1870.

A system developed for hiring Yemeni men. Many were from the same Shamiri tribe and they were usually recruited in groups of about 12 by local 'representatives' who were subcontracted to shipping agencies or the port authority. The *muqaddam* did the recruiting and the *muwassit* acted as the middleman. Bribery was often involved, too, known as al-haqq al-qahwah - literally or 'the law of the coffee' with reference to the deal done over cups of strong coffee. Yemenis formed this country's oldest continual Muslim presence.

As the merchant routes went further east to Calcutta, Singapore and Hong Kong the crews were joined by Chinese, Malay, Gujarati and Bengali seamen. Gujaratis from north west India were often the engine-room stokers. The Bengalis were hired by *ghat serang* - agents who often took a lot of money in commission. Collectively, the Asian seamen were known as Lascars.

When the steamers returned to Cardiff they discharged their seamen, who now had to compete with others for jobs that came up. Early every morning men would gather outside the post office on James Street, hoping to work. Some looked for jobs that would take them home to their families, but many settled in the Bay area, whether by choice or because they had no option. They were poor, far worse paid than White mariners and with no steady employment, and Butetown was a rough and ready environment. Many of the men married Welsh women and an ethnically mixed community developed.

With work never secure for their fathers, life was hard and poverty was a reality for many Butetown children. The Cardiff Story Museum tells the story of a child called James Dennison who was caught stealing one shilling's worth of coal (modern equivalent £2.93) on the 4th July 1851.⁹ He was sentenced to 7 days hard labour. Former Royal Navy ship HMS Havannah was used as an industrial school for homeless children who could earn 2 shillings a day (£5.71 in modern money) working as porters.

When in port, many seamen stayed in the missions set up by Christian groups. The 'Flying Angel' mission started in 1850 and in 1902 the John Cory Soldiers' and Sailors' Rest Home opened on the corner of Bute Street and Loudoun Square. When it opened richer people were asked to help by giving books, magazines and papers, making mufflers, socks, woollen helmets, mittens - or to have a week of self-denial and pass on the proceeds (the *Self-Denial Fund of the Rest*). Another option for a bed was the lodging houses that offered very cheap rooms, many of them run by former seamen.

During these years, the wealthier residents of Loudoun Square began to move to the upmarket suburbs north of Cardiff, and some of their townhouses became lodging-houses for migrant seamen. By the end of the century the square was the heart of Butetown's diverse community.

Before the docks, Cardiff had been a sleepy market town, a few streets south of the castle. Thanks to 'coal metropolis' it was growing to become a key city for the UK's

⁹ Cardiff Story Museum

industrial wealth. This was built, however, on the labour of thousands of merchant seamen and a few dock workers. It was a time of industrial unrest, class conflict and the rise of labour unions. In Cardiff, as in other ports, seamen were divided. Asian Lascars, Africans and West Indians resented the fact that they endured worse conditions and far worse pay than White crew members. The National Union of Seamen and many of its White members, for their part, felt that migrant workers, by taking jobs on low pay, were undermining their pay and conditions. Union opposition was one reason why so many Lascars found themselves abandoned on arrival, unable to get jobs to take them home. Relations between these two groups of men on low incomes and with insecure employment in dirty, exhausting jobs, worsened at times of crisis. One of those moments came in 1911.

Source 4.1: Crew of a tramp steamer¹⁰



Source 4.2: Extract from the Ship's Register of the SS Dingwall in 1913¹¹

Name	Origin	Address
F. Baker	Penarth, Wales	
E. Thorson	Norway	
Filomeno Joloson	Manila, Philippines	190 Bute Street
Bernadot Lorro	Spain	200 Bute Street
John Bohman	Chile	163 Bute Street
W. Johnson	Darlington, England	

Source 4.3: Bute Street¹²



Source 4.4: Bute Street in 1877, from *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, February 1877

Alive with a motley population ... sailors ashore with their sweethearts strolling by their side in holiday mood ... their manners are somewhat free, and it is to be feared their morals are not always of the best.

¹⁰ Butetown History & Arts Centre

¹² Butetown History & Arts Centre

¹¹ Source: The Cardiff Story Museum

Source 4.5: Donald John, interviewed by Val Wilmer for the National Sound Archive's *Oral History of Jazz in Britain*¹³

I used to sneak down [to Tiger Bay] with my brother Bully - we'd heard it was a wild place with lots of black people there, So one Sunday we went off and we got to Bute Road, a long road with a series of shops and cafes and almost every one was a brothel though we didn't know what a brothel was. There'd be these girls sitting outside on chairs with their legs crossed, they'd say come here darling and they used to rub our heads for luck and give us some coppers.

Thinking points

- What do sources 4.1 and 4.2 suggest about the crews of the tramp steamers?
- Sources 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 all show Bute Street through the eyes of people who visited it at the time - a photographer, a journalist and a Cardiff resident. Do they support each other?
- Although these are all primary sources, what might be the problems in relying on them as evidence of life on Bute Street?

Practice questions

1. Explain why men from so many different parts of the world came to Butetown in the 19th century. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 4.3 and 4.4. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying life on Bute Street in the late 19th century? [10 marks]

¹³ Quoted in Williams, *Miss Shirley Bassey* (2010) and then in Bourne p 137

5. The 1911 'Laundry Riot'

This was a time of bitter conflict in the Welsh mining valleys and ports, between workers organised in trade unions and their employers backed by the police. In June Cardiff dockers and seamen went on strike and, when on 18th July employers brought in non-union workers to unload ships, there was a violent confrontation. Strikers set warehouses on fire and then attacked the firemen trying to put out the blaze. Soldiers and Metropolitan Police from London were brought in to support the police and tensions were high.

Rioters then turned on the Chinese. They were the only group of seamen not striking and although they were not the strike-breakers who had unloaded in the docks, they were blamed. Traditionally, too, many dockers' families had increased their income by the women working as washerwomen. Meanwhile, several Chinese migrants - for the same reasons - had set up laundry businesses. Washerwomen saw the Chinese laundries as a threat to their livelihood. There were already false rumours - stirred up in some of the press - of opium smoking, gambling and even 'white slavery' linked to the laundries.

After police and army escorted the Chinese seamen through Butetown, 30 Chinese laundries and boarding houses in the city were attacked by over a thousand rioters and some were destroyed. Chinese people were attacked in the street as police and soldiers stood by. This scapegoating of the 200-strong Chinese population succeeded in uniting the dockers and seamen and strengthening their strike, which was eventually successful.

After the strike ended another dispute surfaced. Around 400 Black British seamen protested that they had gone up to eight weeks without work while employers had preferred Greek, Spanish and Italian workers. They argued that, as British subjects, they should have been chosen first.

Source 5.1: Broken windows of a Chinese laundry in Cardiff after anti-Chinese riots in 1911

A photo can be found at <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/600x315/1d/e8/e2/1de8e280f2f3cc138a9126e290f3905d.jpg>

Source 5.2: Ben Tillett, general secretary of the Dock, Wharf Riverside and General Workers Union

Chinese and so-called Free-labour must go. ... [there is] ... sound reason for the public to turn the Liberals out of office seeing that they have brought the Chinaman to oust the British worker.

Thinking points

- Why was Tillett, a union leader, so against Chinese seamen?

Practice question

1. Explain why there were anti-Chinese riots in 1911. [10 marks]

A Butetown character: Father Perveau

See the black plumed horses in the funeral parade

Pulling curtained coaches out of Windsor Esplanade

As the ships' horns blare over Cardiff Bay

Saying: "Here comes Father Perveau." ¹⁴

John Joseph Pervoe, born to West Indian parents in Canada in the 1850s, married a White Welsh woman called Mary Ann in the 1880s. According to the 1891 census, they were then living at 36 Peel Street and John Joseph was a baker who also ran a boarding house for West Indian seamen. The 1901 census shows that he then owned three houses in Peel Street and was 'a seaman's lodging house keeper.' Butetown resident Donald John described him to historian Jeffrey Green ¹⁵

[John Pervoe was]... the man who always took the lead in every black funeral procession in Tiger Bay. These were quite spectacular affairs ... Pervoe would be immaculate in black topper and a morning coat, white gloves, spats, and looking quite splendid, as he headed a retinue of quite similarly dressed black men walking in front of the hearse ... sometimes the funerals were not only of the black departed, but of white people ... but such was the respect accorded to every resident that it made no difference.

¹⁴ Mike Johnson, *Cardiff Songs - tales from Tiger Bay and beyond* (words and music) (Bayfolk 2015), available from Butetown History & Arts Centre

¹⁵ *Black Edwardians* (1998) quoted in Bourne p 137

6. 1919: aftermath of war

(Evidence in today's built environment: some of the streets where fighting happened still exist, but not the buildings. The railway bridge that formed the boundary between Butetown and the rest of Cardiff is still here.)

They left a scar on the race relations of the city which took more than a generation to heal.

Evans, *The South Wales race riots of 1919*

At the outbreak of war in 1914, Cardiff's Black population was about 700: by the end of the war it stood at 3,000. During the war, many White merchant seamen were called up to fight, leaving jobs to be filled. Ships on the West Indian route across the Atlantic were requisitioned to carry food and ammunition and many more African, West Indian and Asian seamen were hired. Wages went up, though they were still lower than for White seamen. 1,400 Black Cardiff seamen died in action. *The Times* reported on 13th June 1919 that "it has to be remembered to their credit that during the war they faced the perils of the submarine campaign with all the gallantry of the British seamen."¹⁶ A clergyman who spent time in Cardiff during the war commented that "they were jolly brave those coloured sailors. They brought food to Cardiff at the greatest risk to their lives."¹⁷

Immediately after the war, however, was a time of economic crisis on the docks. Many White ex-servicemen returning to Cardiff from war felt that jobs on the ships should be theirs, even though unemployment was far higher among Black seamen, 1200 of whom had no job. There was also antagonism about the relationships between many of the Black seamen and local Welsh women. The army's Welsh Regiment was brought in secretly in case of trouble.

The violence in Cardiff started when a White crowd attacked Black seamen and their White wives and girlfriends. This developed into rioting in which 2,000 White people attacked migrants' shops and houses. Crowds gathered at the top end of Bute Street. Black citizens of Loudoun Square, Maria Street, Sophia Street and Angelina Street prepared to defend themselves, posting sentries and loading their guns. On both sides, many were in uniform and ready to use combat methods they had learnt when at war. Armed Australians were at the head of the White mobs, while among the Black defenders were members of the British West Indies Regiment.

The mob heading for Butetown was stopped by police. They turned back and attacked Black people living north of the bridge. A Black-owned house was ransacked on the corner of Morgan Street and Adam Street. In Hope Street, police broke into a house and dragged out people who were attacked by the crowd: two Black men, bleeding, and a White woman. Norman Roberts, a Black man, was admitted to hospital with a severe knife wound in the abdomen. Two White men died, one shot through the heart while the other had his throat cut in Caroline Street.

On Bute Street lodging-houses were smashed and a house was looted and set on fire. There was considerable damage to Abdul Sattar's shop and a Malay boarding-house. The boarders, who escaped through a roof skylight, suffered 'a volley of stones.' According to the historian Peter Fryer¹⁸:

A Somali priest, Hadji Mahomet, was prepared to face the mob, but his white wife pleaded with him to hide so he clambered up a drainpipe [and] hid on the roof...One whom the lynch mob did succeed in killing, a young Arab named Mahommed Abdullah, died in hospital of a fractured skull after being savagely beaten in an attack on an Arab restaurant and boarding-house, used chiefly by Somalis, at 264 Bute Street. The mob charged down the street, threw stones into the building from both sides, and smashed the windows. Shots were fired from upstairs. The mob surged in, and police arrived soon afterwards.

The next day soldiers were called in to support the police.

A leader emerged: Dr Rufus Leicester Fennell, a West Indian who had cared for thousands of British soldiers as a war medic and had himself been wounded. He acted as a spokesman for the community, organising protest meetings, accusing the police of racism but also advising Butetown residents to stay within the law. He argued that the government should support victims of racist attack and took up their case with MPs and government offices. He was in touch with a new black civil rights organisation, the Society of African Peoples. He was arrested by the police on a false charge of fraud but released by the court.

¹⁶ Quoted in Bourne p 52

¹⁷ Scobie, *Black Britannia: A History of Blacks in Britain* (1972) p159, quoted in Bourne p 139

¹⁸ *Staying Power - a history of Black people in Britain* (1984)

Source 6.1: Mixed Britannia (Part 1)

There is an account of Cardiff's 'race riot' of 1919 in this BBC documentary which is available on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTOSFKs_JpQ

From 07:00 to 10:30 minutes there is a background introduction to the conflict in port cities including Cardiff, focusing on mixed relationships rather than economic conflict. From 11:30 to 16:00 the Cardiff riot is described, including Neil Sinclair, son of Beatrice (see Source 6.6) telling the story of the attack on his grandparents' house.

Source 6.2: 'Tiger Bay is My Home'

This documentary made in 1983 and remastered for DVD in 2008, is part of *Struggles for Black Community* by Colin Prescod (available from Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leake Street, London WC1X 9HS - Tel 020 7837 0041). The early part of the film covers the 1919 riot through interviews with people who lived through it.

Source 6.3: the railway bridge that formed the divide between Cardiff city centre and Butetown, looking south from Custom House Street, 1927.¹⁹



¹⁹ Butetown History & Arts Centre

²⁰ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

Source 6.4: the railway bridge in 2016.



Source 6.5: Beatrice Sinclair, daughter of James Headley, talking in 1983²⁰. On 11th June 1919 the Headley family in Peel Street, Butetown, were celebrating Beatrice's 9th birthday when their house was attacked by a rioting mob.

We grabbed my father because he didn't want to go. What he should have done was to come down to the Bay - the lodgers that we had had already come down because we'd had wind of the riots. And they took my father out the back and into the next door, and they hid him in the lavatory, And the, bang! The door went down and, oh, there was pandemonium in there. ... Mother, after that, she wasn't much good. ... Men had come home from the war and they had no jobs, he they thought was working, and they weren't, upset them.

Source 6.6: Leslie Clarke, Beatrice Sinclair's daughter, speaking in 1983

My grandparents' home was ransacked and looted, and they had nothing left. My grandmother was badly beaten, and I believe my grandfather would have been killed if my grandmother hadn't persuaded him to escape through the back door and over the garden wall... My mother had to watch her mother being beaten, and when the police eventually arrived at the house, instead of commiserating with her, she was told it was her own fault for marrying a black man.

(The 'black man', Leslie's grandfather, was James Headley from Barbados and her grandmother was Agnes Jolly from Lancashire. A few years earlier, James had been serving in a British ship torpedoed by a German submarine: he had been taken prisoner by the Germans, who treated him well. When he returned to Britain he was awarded two bronze medals for bravery.)

Source 6.7: An account in the *Western Mail*²¹ about events in the former Royal Hotel in Millicent Street

Several Colonial soldiers present constituted themselves the ringleaders of the besieging party, which was largely made up of discharged soldiers... The door of the house was attacked and it was quickly burst in. Men crowded into the narrow hall and began to ascend the stairs ... A revolver shot rang out, and with it the exclamation, 'My God, I am hit! Five other shots quickly followed. ... Once at close quarters, each of the surviving attackers took his man, and soon desperate struggles were in progress around the room.

Source 6.8: From the autobiography of Ibrahim Ismaa'il, a young Somali ship's fireman and poet who had just arrived in Cardiff in 1919. He was a Warsangeli from eastern Somaliland²². HE wrote this in 1928. Here he is describing the same event as in Source 6.7

A Warsangeli named 'Abdi Langara had a boarding house in Millicent Street ... It is there that I used to have my dinner every day. 'Abdi acted as a sort of agent for the Warsangeli, who left their money with him when they went to sea, and also had their letters sent to his place. As soon as the fight started, all the Warsangeli who were in Cardiff went to Millicent Street to defend 'Abdi's house in case it was attacked. ... We could not bear to stay away when our brothers were in danger of being killed ... so we went to the Somali boarding house of Haadzi 'Ali and there we waited, ready for an attack ... Seven or eight Warsangeli defended the house and most of them got badly wounded. Some of the white people also received wounds. In the end, the whites took possession of the first floor, soaked it with paraffin oil and set it alight. The Somalis managed to keep up the fight until the police arrived. One of them was left for dead in the front room and was later carried to the hospital where he recovered; some escaped through a neighbouring house and came to tell us the story of what happened, the others gave themselves up to the police, and we did not see them for a long time.

Source 6.9. The report of the riots sent by David Williams, Chief of Cardiff, to the Director of Intelligence at the Home Office, 9th October 1919.

This can be accessed via the National Archives at <http://bit.ly/1Vb2nhv>. Go to pages 5, 6 and 7. It is typewritten and accessible for learners.

²¹ Quoted in Fryer, *Staying Power - the History of Black People in Britain* (1984) p 305

²² Quoted in Fryer, p

Thinking points

- Source 6.1 presents mixed relationships as a main cause of the riots. Is this accurate? What other causes were there?
- How does the position of the bridge today (Source 6.4) help us understand some aspects of the events of 1919?
- How far do source 6.7 and 6.8 support each other's accounts, and why?
- Sources 6.5, 6.7 and 6.8 are all first-hand accounts of the events of 1919. Only one, however - the newspaper report 6.7 - was written soon after the event. The others were by people remembering later. In the case of 6.5, the memory was over 60 years later. Does this make 6.7 the only reliable account?
- What does the Chief Constable say caused the violence in Source 6.9, and who does he blame? This letter was marked 'SECRET' and will have been based on the first-hand accounts of police officers. How reliable does this make the source for historians? How does it compare with the first-hand accounts in the other sources here?

Practice questions

1. Explain why the 1919 riots happened. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the 1919 Cardiff riots? [10 marks]

7. Repatriation

The response of the Cardiff authorities was to blame the Black seamen and try to force them to leave the country. A Repatriation Committee was set up to organise their removal.

Some left voluntarily. In mid-July 1919 the *SS Porto* sailed east with 205 Black seamen aboard who may have been Somali, as well as 'Hindoos' who may have been Bengali. 600 Black men were repatriated by mid-September. They included 200 Egyptians, Somalis and Yemenis sent to Plymouth by train. According to the magazine *John Bull* they were treated shamefully. They were promised money that was never paid and given nothing to eat on the journey.

Others insisted on their right to stay as British subjects, and many did remain. Still others - angry at their treatment and influenced by black consciousness politics - were willing to be repatriated in order to spread anti-British feeling in their own countries. It was a time of uprising and revolution across the world and British colonial authorities were fearful that West Indian ex-servicemen returning home could lead rebellion. Indeed, the acting British Governor of Jamaica did blame an outbreak of fighting in Jamaica on their treatment in Cardiff and Liverpool. There was also fighting in Trinidad between Trinidadians just arrived from Cardiff and White sailors on *HMS Dartmouth*.

Source 7.1: The Chief Immigration Officer in 1920²³

The presence of colonial seamen is socially very undesirable ... The police are anxious to get rid of them ... It would be safer and better to place these men in concentration camps.

Source 7.2: John Bull, 2 August 1919²⁴

These coloured Britons had all done first-class war work, yet they were treated worse than repatriated enemy aliens.

Source 7.3: Sir Ralph Williams, former British colonial administrator and governor, in a letter to *The Times*, 14 June 1919

It is an instinctive certainty that sexual relations between white women and coloured men revolt our very nature ... What blame ... to those white men who,

seeing these conditions and loathing them, resort to violence? We cannot forcibly repatriate British subjects of good character, but we can take such steps as will prevent the employment of an unusually large number of men of colour in our great shipping centres.

Source 7.4: Felix Eugene Michael Hercules, replying in *The Times*, 19 June 1919. Hercules was an anticolonial political activist.

I do not believe that any excuse can be made for white men who take the law into their own hands because they say they believe that the association between the men of my race and white women is degrading. Sir Ralph Williams and those who think like him should remember that writing in this way gives a stimulus to these racial riots. ... If [he] thinks that the problem can be solved by sending every black or coloured unit forthwith back to his own country, then we should be compelled to see that every white man is sent back to England from Africa and from the West India islands in order that the honour of our sisters and daughters there may be kept intact.

Thinking point

- For each source, explain the writer's attitude to repatriation and the reasons given.

Practice question

- Why were many 'coloured seamen' deported from Butetown after the First World War? [10 marks]

²³ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

²⁴ Quoted in Fryer, p 309

8. 1925: Restriction and control

(Evidence in today's built environment: the offices and meeting places of community and campaigning organisations continuing the antiracist tradition.)

After the First World War, the coal industry went into decline and never recovered. Shipping companies sold off ships and some collapsed. The Emlyn-Jones company, for instance, sold many of its steamers including the *Emlynian* that ended up becoming a Japanese ship sunk by the USA in the Second World War.

The economic depression meant unemployment in the docks, and the 'coloured seamen' were hit hardest by laws aimed at them directly. The Aliens Order of 1920 ruled that any 'coloured alien' seamen who tried to get unemployment benefit within their first year of being jobless could be deported. Then in 1925, the Special Restriction (Coloured Alien Seamen) Order forced them to register with the police even though most were British citizens. Black seamen were treated as aliens, with police frequently confiscating passports and arresting them. In addition, they were paid less unemployment benefit than unemployed White seamen. The authorities' argument was that they needed less money, even though they had to pay the same insurance contribution and often paid higher rents. The drive for repatriation continued, too. In 1935 the authorities, with NUS support introduced a rota system which discriminated against African, Asian and Middle Eastern seamen. The system was a 'colour bar'.

These measures were supported by the National Union of Seamen. In their newspaper *The Seaman* (1st May 1935) the Union suggested that:

'...the rigorous enforcement of the language test and the Aliens Restriction Act would soon solve the entire problem of unemployment among our men.'

By 'our' they meant White British seamen. In response, Black seamen (of whom there were 2179 registered in 1935) set up their own union in 1931 - the Coloured Seamen's Union led by Harry O'Connell, a Guyanese seaman. They brought in the help of the League of Coloured Peoples based in London. In 1936 they succeeded in getting citizenship restored. The Colonial Defence Association, led by Alan Sheppard, another Guyanese, also worked for the rights of Black seamen.

Meanwhile, for those who did get work on the ships, conditions were hard. You could be at sea for a long time, in cramped, dirty, sweltering conditions. For example, in 1934 the *SS Campus* took coal from Cardiff to Genoa in Italy, then travelled on to Aden in Yemen empty of cargo. There it loaded up with salt for Calcutta in India, and was empty again from Calcutta to Saigon in Vietnam. It then loaded up with rice and maize and brought it to Le Havre and Dunkirk in northern France.

Kenneth Trotman, a seaman originally from St Lucia, describes in the 1983 film 'Tiger Bay is my Home' how you had to wash in the toilet and bring your own plates, blankets and bedding. The food was appalling. Abdi Noor, a Somali seaman, describes how they separated the seamen: 'one ship all Somali, another all African, another all Arab.'²⁵

The Yemeni seamen worked so hard that there is even an expression in the Yemeni dialect for someone who wastes money: "He didn't work hard for it in Cardiff."

Another group experiencing restrictions was Cardiff's Gypsy Traveller community. Their way of life was to move their homes between sites around the city, making a living selling door-to-door all over Cardiff, including Butetown. Similar racial attitudes to those that placed restrictions on 'coloured seamen', and a desire to control the movement of minorities, meant that the British government was trying to restrict mobility. In 1937 and 1938 Cardiff Council passed laws that aimed to force Gypsy Travellers to settle in official campsites.

Source 8.1: The Pier Head and Bute East Dock in the 1920s²⁶



(There are also good aerial views of the docks from that period at http://heritageofwalesnews.blogspot.co.uk/2009_12_01_archive.html

and <http://heritageofwalesnews.blogspot.co.uk/2010/08/aerofilms-historic-aerial-photography.html>)

²⁵ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

²⁶ Butetown History & Arts Centre

Source 8.2: From Racism and Resistance: *Cardiff in the 1930s and '40s* by Marika Sherwood, in *Llafur (Welsh Labour History Journal)*, September 1991

I found no-one with a good word to say about the Union, which one ex-member described as “being good at taking your money but bad at paying it out to Black men”. Another man told me that you had to put a 10 shilling note in your discharge book as you gave it to the NUS official when you signed on for a voyage - if you wanted the job. But after a period of unemployment you just didn't have a spare 10 shillings! Other men confirmed that having to buy your job was a common practice. “You were in a slave labour market and you had no protection whatever.”

Source 8.3: From a speech by a Member of Parliament recorded in *Hansard* 1934²⁷

Firing a machine boiler by hand in a temperature of 110 to 120 degrees, no one who knows anything about it would suggest for a moment that it is work a white man ought to undertake.

Source 8.4: Kenneth Trotman²⁸, *Cardiff seaman of St Lucian heritage*

Shepherd, Nurse and Harry O'Connor - they fought and they brought in people to talk, holding meetings to try to make something different. ... When the white man was getting 17s 6d a week, the black man was only getting 15s unemployment benefit, and they fought to get the same level.

Source 8.5: ‘The Coloured Brotherhood’ - one of several Black organisations combating race discrimination, 1920.



²⁷ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

²⁸ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

Source 8.6: The front of the Paddle Steamer Cafe in Loudoun Square, 2016, showing the existence of a Somali community organisation.



Thinking points

- Source 8.2 is written by a historian. Source 8.3 was spoken by an MP. Source 8.4 is from an interview with a retired seaman. Taken together, how do they explain the reasons why Black seamen set up their own union?
- To what extent does Source 8.6 show that there is still some continuity with the way Black residents organised themselves 80 years ago?

Practice questions

1. Explain why ‘coloured seamen’ set up their own union. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 8.2 and 8.3. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the conditions faced by ‘coloured seamen’ in the 1920s and 1930s? [10 marks]

9. “Tiger Bay is my home”

(Evidence in today’s built environment: although the line of shops, cafes and lodging houses on Bute Street has gone, there are still some shops and services that reflect the area’s diversity. The main evidence, however, is in the people themselves, descendants of those who lived here in the 20s and 30s.)

The cock-horse shackles on, to pull another tram up Bute Street,
from the docks, through Tiger Bay and back again, you’d see the whole world
in the clothes and on the faces, drawn together from far places,
With strange names.

Cardiff Bay through a street-window yesterday.

Mike Johnson, ‘Bay Windows’²⁹

The 1920s and 1930s were a time of deep poverty, made worse in Butetown because of the harsh measures against ‘coloured seamen’ and the fact that it was almost impossible for Butetown residents to get work outside the Bay. Abdi Noor³⁰ says of the period when the colour bar was at its worst, “I used to sleep in the street, put Vaseline on my lips so no one knew I was starving.” In June 1936, of 690 unemployed on Cardiff Dock Register, 599 were Black. There was some relief from charities, but poverty forced some into prostitution and Tiger Bay gained a reputation in the rest of Cardiff as a crime-ridden, dangerous place.

However, crime and danger were not what the people who lived there then remember. It was a strong, supportive community, proud of its special identity. People talk of leaving their doors open, of it being a warm, safe environment for residents, and of a genuinely mixed community where people shared each other’s cultures and traditions. The rich diversity of the area was reflected in the shops, cafes and lodging houses that lined Bute Street. For a vivid picture of Tiger Bay in the ‘thirties, read the descriptions by Harry Cooke in the next section.

Source 9.1: The Bay area in the 1920s.



Source 9.2: *Mixed Britannia* (BBC)

This is VERY strongly recommended, from 40:00 minutes till 44:40. First, there is the story of Olive and Ali Salaman. Olive was a trainee nurse from the Welsh Rhondda Valley and Ali was a Yemeni cafe cook. They met when she got lost one night after going to the cinema. Then there is a piece about the Arabic School - attended by children from all backgrounds - and the whole community celebrating Eid.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTOSFKs_JpQ

The story of Olive and Ali is also available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00krrq7>

Source 9.3: A photograph of Olive, Ali and clients in the Cairo Cafe

This superb photo is in the Imperial War Museum collection and can be found at <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200245>

²⁹ Mike Johnson, *Cardiff Songs - tales from Tiger Bay and beyond* (words and music) (Bayfolk 2015), available from Butetown History & Arts Centre

³⁰ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

Source 9.4: Unemployed men in the John Cory Sailors and Soldiers Rest in 1903. The centre was at 189-190 Bute Street.³¹



Source 9.5: Kenneth Trotman³²

Running messages, carrying bags ... to get a few coppers ... never hungry because there was always somebody with a cup of tea, or cake, or a parcel of chips or something. People used to live like one ... if your friend had a shilling and there was four of you, you will share 3 pence each. Butetown was like home. You never miss your island because everybody live like one big family, no matter what nationality you was or what colour you was. Everybody was one. Work situation was very bad, no work at all for nobody. If you didn't have a ship you was out of work. I never was hungry once in Cardiff because there was always somebody with a cup of tea, or a parcel of chips.

Source 9.6: Maria Clark, talking about life in 1940s Butetown

Children of all creeds and colours played together ... It was a time when I did not know the meaning of prejudice.

Source 9.7: Establishments in Bute Street (in the 1940s)³³

HOUSE NUMBER	HOUSEHOLDER	HOUSE NUMBER	HOUSEHOLDER
191	Imami Ullah cafe	230	Yousif Ahmed - Seamers lodging house
196	Anglo + Asia restaurant	230a	Hargisa Restaurant
199	Seamers lodging house	232	Lysandrou Costas, boot and shoe repairs
200	Pakistan restaurant	233	GCF Junior club
202	Cardiff City Home (lodging house)	235/6	Cairo Hotel - boarding house for Egyptian Seamen
203-4	Volpert & Co tailors	237	Bute Road tavern
206	Florence Fernandez, greengrocers	238	Abdul Sattar boarding house
207	Taj Mahal restaurant	239	Rothsay Castle pub
208	On Yen Sam Chop Suey House		St Mary's Church
213/5	Colonial Centre Club and Hostel for Colonial Seamen	273	George Philippou's cafe
221	Zussens Lts outfitters		Railway bridge
222	Zussens Ltd pawnbrokers	277	Tysoflias Pantelis, tailor
223	Hamed Hamed, grocer	282	Harry Wing, restaurant
227	Bute Street police station		

³¹ Butetown History & Arts Centre

³² In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

³³ The Cardiff Story Museum, taken from a trade directory

Source 9.8: Bute Street in the 1940s.



Source 9.9: Boarding houses in Butetown 1949³⁴

Angelina Street	23	Portuguese	Maria Street	1	Arab
	30	African		4	Malay
	30a	African		5	Indian
Bute Street	41	Greek/Turkish		13	Arab
	178-80	British		14	Somali
	199	Maltese		33	British
	201	Indian/Arab		37	Somali
	202	Maltese		38	Arab
	206	Portuguese		42/43	Arab/ Somali
	209/210	British	Mount Stuart Square	38	Portuguese
	230	Somali		7	Somali
	235/236	Arab	Sophia Street	1	Arab
	238	Arab		21	Arab
Christina Street	4	Arab		35	Arab
	23	Arab		49	Arab
Frances Street	1	Arab	South Church Street	1	Arab
Hunter Street	13	Scandinavian		11	Arab
Bute Crescent	3 and 4	British		12	Portuguese
Loudoun Square	20	Arab		32	Scandinavian
	21/22	Maltese			
	46/47	African/ British West Indian			

³⁴ The Cardiff Story Museum, from local government records

Thinking points

- What impression do sources 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6 give of life for people living in the Bay?
- How do sources 9.7 and 9.9 show the impact of migration in the area?
- In this chapter there are many different kinds of sources giving an insight in the life of the Tiger Bay community. If you had to choose just three to represent that life, which three would you choose and why?

Practice questions

1. Study Sources 9.2, 9.3 and 9.7. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying multicultural life in Butetown? [10 marks]

Harry “Shipmate” Cooke

*How I Saw It - A Stroll Thro' Old Cardiff Bay*³⁵ is Harry Cooke's beautifully written account of life in Tiger Bay in the 1930s. These are some extracts.

Solly Andrews' cafe

Inside the cafe the air was ever filled with the smell of stewed tea, and the sound of steel-studded boots that crunched on the coal gritted red tiled flooring. On the cafe's marbled counter, large aluminium hot-water boilers stood, gently steaming, as they awaited the call of the busy teapots which, once filled, always made a loud click as their lids snapped shut. Solly's was a place full of the conversations of dockers, elbows on the tables as they supped tea from thick mugs ... it was a place of wonder for any small boy with a hint on salt in his veins who had slipped past the eye of the dock policeman and crept in to listen.

The Latin Quarter (George Street)

Josephina Perez was without doubt, a prince of general stores. “Joseys” - the memory of that little general store, even today, brings a far-away look into the old people's eyes. The smell of fresh baking bread, chorizos, beans, peanuts and *cocido* stew cooking on the family stove, combined in a dance of delight that tingled the tastebuds... She sold salt fish that was fit for a king, thick and white with grains of salt glittering like small diamonds ... Josey cooked her salt fish and called it “*bacalao*” - a dream of a dish with olive oil, garlic, onions and herbs.

Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi, the body of Christ, such a to-do, such a “kerfuffle”, when the big day arrived ... led by a drum major with a twirling mace, the band, drums beating and pipes skirling, marched through James Street, West Bute Street and on into Bute Street toward town... Not an eye turned, not a twitch nor a glance betrayed the marching children, but they saw it all. They saw the cooing womenfolk, they saw the supposedly uninterested menfolk, the sly tongue-poking of jealous small boys and silent weeping of little girls of other faiths who, just for today, wished that they, too, could be Roman Catholics.

³⁵ Butetown History & Arts Centre 1995

St Patrick's Day

Yesterday and tomorrow they are as Welsh as a plate of cockles but today, Paddy's day, they are as Irish as a Dublin Bay prawn.

Patrick Street

Patrick Street, with its tall many-roomed houses on the one side, and small terraced houses on the other, was a place to conjure with. Finns, Estonians, Malays, West Indians, Africans, all living together in a glorious jumble of humanity.

Food

Jollof rice with that added touch of cayenne pepper, peas and rice and Tommy Letton's bream with the succulent curry sauce seeping into its bed of rice. Home from the sea and a leg of mutton from Aggie the butcher cooked with slivers of garlic in its basted crinkly sides, roastie potatoes and gravy made in the meat tin ... handmade sweets from Canal Zones shop, halva, the honey tasting sweetmeat from the Cairo Cafe and hot roasted peanuts from the little African, "Peanut Charley" ... There was Gunderson's chip shop in Sophia Street. A warm, steamy home of crisp batter, cod and hake done to a turn, fat chipped potatoes and crimson beetroot.

Changes

But the old Bay has gone, faded into the sea mist which rises each morning over this new Cardiff Bay... The small streets ... were vacated and stood with front doors clapping in the wind until they too were thrashed into dust. They built tall flats, shaking hands with the clouds, houses with bathrooms, easy-clean windows, central heating and clothes-lines of steel and plastic that whirled with the wind. They built new shops to replace Jeffries, Lopez, Nicholas, Marshall the bike, Ali Thabit, Aggie the butcher, Tages barber shop and others...

Bute Street Thirties

Stalking our past with its memories
like some splendid, exuberant old ghost
Bute Street at night when conditions were right
was Cardiff's own Barbary Coast

Pawnbrokers, tailors, shipchandlers
grocers and butchers galore
at the end of each day they would close to make way
for the grog shops, the cafes and more

.....
The song of the thirties is over
just a verse in the funnel of time
those extrovert ways, tumultuous gone days
all history, its yours as is mine

Bute Street

But Bute Street, seasoned by the salt winds from the Bristol Channel, was not just pubs and boarding houses: it rolled its way toward town, gathering buildings and people like a hen with its chicks. Tea cafes, coffee cafes. The Kardomah, the Cairo, Mr Wing's chop suey, Lavinsky's, Copsteins, Lily Volpert's, paper-shops, butchers, the Post Office, chemists, Zussen's pawnshop, grocers, the Police Station - you name it, you got it, and all under the benevolent eye of the twin towers of St Mary's Church.

Old Tiger Bay

Outsiders viewed your name with alarm
but they knew not the pleasure, the fun and the charm
of the boys on the corner on a warm summer's night
strumming guitars 'neath the mellow lamplight

Of weddings, street parties, the girls starched and clean,
and the little old ladies in their best bombazine,
the bookies, the packmen, the haves and have nots,
dancing the polka in humanity's plot.

Nostalgia grows stronger as day follows day,
for the vanished mystique ... that was old Tiger Bay

10. 'Go back to Tiger Bay'

Cardiff was the biggest Black community up until the Second World War, but that little Black population stood alone. They had to take the brunt of all the racism that was thrown at it.

Harry Joshua³⁶

Look at a map of Cardiff and you will see how detached Butetown is from the rest of the city. Cut off by the railway, the canal and the bay itself, it saw itself as separate and was treated as such. Abdi Noor says in *Tiger Bay is my Home* that "if you left Butetown the police would say 'Go back to Tiger Bay'. We never used to know the land, only the sea port." Moses Hassan said in 1991 "You couldn't go out of the area: the police questioned you if you were in town after dark. Then provoked you and arrested you!"

A survey of 119 city centre businesses in 1929 found that 80% of respondents refused to employ 'coloured' people. There was almost no work for the seamen's families. A few women got jobs outside the Bay as domestic servants or in a factory. Some boys worked as tea boys or carrying messages.

Some of the most negative reactions were to the mixed marriages that were common in Tiger Bay. In 1929 the Chief Constable called for sex between Black and White to be a criminal offence, saying that 'half-caste' children had 'the vicious hereditary trait of their parents.'

In the late 1930s Cardiff Council wanted to build segregated housing, a block of flats that would be only for 'coloured' people. The women of Butetown organised a successful protest and stopped the plan.

Families whose men had come 'from the four corners of the earth' struggled against unemployment, poverty, racism and sometimes violent attack. In the face of this they built a supportive, united community based on shared experiences of the sea and of discrimination; and together they pressed for change.

Source 10.1 : 1935 report by British Social Hygiene Council/ British Council for the Welfare of Mercantile Marine

They mate with the type of women who are willing to accept them because there are none of their own kind to be had ... The coloured men that have come to dwell in our cities are being made to adopt a standard of civilisation that they cannot be expected to understand.... They come into intimate contact with white women, principally those who unfortunately are of loose moral character, with the result that a half-caste population is being brought into the world.

Source 10.2: Youth leader H. Hassan talking to Henry Lee Moon³⁷

We are not Colonials. We were born in this country and do not need to be brought under the wings of the Colonial Office. We expect to enjoy all the privileges afforded other British youth and are opposed to discrimination on account of colour or race.

³⁶ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

³⁷ Quoted in *Racism and Resistance: Cardiff in the 1930s and '40s* by Marika Sherwood, in *Llafur (Welsh Labour History Journal)*, September 1991

11. 1940s: convoys, Blitz and GI brides

When war came in 1939, Butetown's 'coloured' seamen were wanted again. Again, large numbers served and died on the merchant ships, many on the Atlantic convoys that kept Britain fed with supplies from the USA and Canada. There were still restrictions: in 1942 the authorities were still keeping a register of seamen unable to prove British nationality: '30% Arab, 20% Somali, 2% African, 6% West Indian, 32% Malay, Indian, Portuguese, doubtful.' The men resisted: Miope Nagi, who kept a boarding-house at 1 Sophia Street, said no Arabs had agreed to register and they intended to boycott.

Cardiff docks suffered heavy bombing during the war, especially in 1940 and 1941. Butetown was badly bombed with lives lost and buildings destroyed, including the Peel Street Nur al-Islam Mosque. At the time, people were in the mosque praying but no one was hurt. The mosque was rebuilt with a government grant of £7000 and the whole Butetown community, Muslim and non-Muslim, celebrated the opening of the new mosque in 1943.

The Tiger Bay community was reflected in its air raid wardens. The post at the Methodist Church had 'a Maltese boarding-house keeper as sub-warden and a number of West Indian, West African, Arab and Jewish men and women as wardens and messengers.'³⁸ One of these was Edward Bovell who had arrived in Cardiff from Barbados in 1885 and was known as 'the man with the longest memory in Butetown.'

For some Tiger Bay women the war brought a different opportunity: meeting and marrying African American men in the US army. Chrissy Sinclair's father was a seaman from Barbados and her mother was Welsh. She became a showgirl and film extra in London, where she met Henry Kennard, a Black US army corporal. They married and she lived with him in Boston. Patti Ann Ismail was half Somali and half Welsh and, after marrying Black GI Bowen Keiffer Jackson, lived with him in the USA and played a leading role in the US Civil Rights Movement. It is estimated that there were as many as 70 of these 'Tiger Bay marriages'. For more on the Tiger Bay brides go to <http://www.gibrides.com/the-welsh-war-brides-of-tiger-bay/>

Source 11.1: The old Peel Street Mosque³⁹



Source 11.2: Procession to celebrate the opening of the new Peel Street Mosque in 1943. <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205188672>

Source 11.3: The Imperial War Museum collection of photographs of Butetown in 1943

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/search?query=butetown>

This is a rich collection of photographs, focusing especially on the Yemeni-Welsh community on the occasion of the opening of the new mosque, but also showing the community's diversity. A few recommended photos are selected below:

The Satar family at home: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200238>

The opening of the mosque: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205196853>

Muslim girls studying the Qur'an: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200257>

Boys studying the Qur'an: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200255>

³⁸ Stephen Bourne, *Mother Country* (2010) p 66, referring to Kenneth Little, *Negroes in Britain* (1948)

³⁹ Butetown History & Arts Centre

Air Raid Wardens Edward Bovell, Revd Edward Avery and Miope Nagi: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200261>

A Geography lesson in South Church Street School: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200239>

Kaid Sala's grocer's shop: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200248>

Mr and Mrs Thabeth's General Store: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205200241>

Thinking points

- How could you use Sources 11.1, 11.2, 11.3 and 11.4 to describe change over time?
- What impression of life in Butetown do the Imperial War Museum photographs give?

Practice question

1. Explain how the Second World War affected the community in Butetown.
[10 marks]

12. From Berbera to Butetown, from Ta'izz to Tiger Bay

A man who has not travelled does not have eyes.

Somali proverb

(Evidence in today's built environment: the South Wales Islamic Centre and the Maria Street Mosque, the Somali Paddle Steamer Cafe.)

Two of the strongest communities in Butetown originate from two port cities facing each other across the Gulf of Aden, where Cardiff steamers stopped to load up fuel from the coal bunkers: Berbera in Somaliland and Aden in Yemen. The cities are strongly linked: many Somalis live and work in Aden, and vice versa. The impact on Cardiff of Yemeni and Somali men, their wives (many of them Welsh) and their descendants, was significant all through the years of the coal industry and the two wars. They remain important Bay communities to this day. Both have a strong tradition of self-help and community support.

Many of the Yemeni men came from Ta'izz to the north west of Aden. Two of the religious leaders of their Cardiff community became famous nationally and internationally. Shaikh Abdullah Ali Al-Hakimi led Cardiff's Yemenis in the 1930s and 1940s and was based at the Peel Street Nur al-Islam Mosque. He published *Al Salam*, one of the UK's first Arabic language newspapers, and was responsible for setting up *zawiyas* (small mosques) in Hull, Liverpool and South Shields. In the 1950s he became increasingly involved in the politics of Yemen as a leading opponent of its then ruler. Yemenis in Cardiff became divided politically between those who, like Al-Hakimi, opposed the rule of Imam Ahmad and those, following Shaikh Hassan Ismail, who supported him.

In an article for the *Geographical Magazine* in 1944, Prof RB Serjeant⁴⁰ wrote that

Their children, alert and intelligent, hardly distinguishable in complexion from their English schoolmates, are carefully brought up in the Moslem faith....The sheikh [al-Hakimi] looks after the sick, and at its own expense, the society sends ill or aged members back to Arabia. A school is maintained in Cardiff, attended by about fifty boys and thirty girls.

The foremost religious leader of Cardiff Yemenis in the late 20th century was Shaikh Sa'id Hassan Ismail. The son of a Yemeni father who died in the Second World War and an English-Italian mother, Sa'id was adopted by Shaikh Hassan Ismail and educated partly in Yemen and partly in Cardiff. The leading Imam at the South Wales Islamic Centre on Alice Street, as a dual heritage British-born Muslim, he sometimes joked that he was seen as 'either too white, or too black'. He once complained that Cardiff Yemenis knew more about what was happening 'on the other side of Ta'izz' than they did of Cardiff. He became Muslim Chaplain to Cardiff City Council, the first to hold such a post in the UK.

Cardiff's Somalis were extremely active in the anti-racist campaigns of the 1930s. The British Somali Society, led by Tuallah Mohamed, fought against employment discrimination and the rota system. It was also a welfare organisation within the Somali community, giving help to the unemployed and arranging for the sick to be sent back to Somaliland and settled. Many of the Somali seamen were sending most of their wages back to relatives at home. There was a big influx of Somalis after the Second World War, followed by later arrivals in the 1990s because of civil war.

In 2004 Glenn Jordan, working with Abdihakim Arwo a researcher from the Somali community, interviewed and photographed many older Somalis for the book *Somali elders*⁴¹. Nearly all had been merchant seamen but they had taken up many other occupations: cooks, labourers, factory workers, welders, steelworkers, drivers, merchants, shop assistants and coalminers. Several had served in the Royal Navy as well as the Merchant Navy. Said Ismail Ali served on warships in the Second World War, one of which was sunk. Ali Elmi Shirreh and Omar Yussuf Essa served in the 1982 Falklands War and Shirreh was on the *Atlantic Conveyor* when it was sunk by Argentine planes. Mahamud Jama Mohamed was one of 12 miners trapped underground for three days in a mining accident.

⁴⁰ 'Yemeni Arabs in Britain' in *The Geographical Magazine* vol 17, no 4 (1944)

⁴¹ Information taken from interviews in Glenn Jordan, *Somali Elders* (2004) - Butetown History & Arts Centre

13. 1960s: Demolition and redevelopment

(Evidence in today's built environment: the Loudoun Square tower blocks and the streets surrounding the square.)

In the 1950s the docks went into steep decline. Butetown was no longer driving Cardiff's economy. People got work where they could, in many cases in the metalworks, foundries and warehouses on the other side of the railway line from Bute Street. Many of Cardiff's Gypsy Travellers, no longer able to make a living selling door-to-door, made a living collecting scrap metal and selling it to the scrapyards in the former docks. Most were now settled in official camps and caravan sites elsewhere in the city. Unemployment was still high and the 'colour bar' still operated unofficially. When community activist Dave Shipper visited 13 department stores to ask personnel managers how many non-White people they employed, he found -that out of between two and three thousand employees, only four were Black: two young Yemeni women and two Ghanaian pharmacists. In 1960 two young Somali women working in a restaurant were told to remove their headscarves and were sacked when they did not. Until the Race Relations Act made discrimination in employment illegal, no Black people worked on Cardiff's transport system.

Cardiff Council, meanwhile, decided to demolish the whole Loudoun Square area in a conscious plan to change a community that councillors still saw as negative and 'deviant'. The intention was to reduce population density and create a planned environment with fewer opportunities for crime. The new flats - including two tower blocks in the middle of the square - had indoor toilets and bathrooms and modern amenities the old lodging-houses had lacked. The streets and the square, however, were no longer places where people came together.

Source 13.1: Film 'Tiger Bay' (1959)

The film is on 'YouTube' - go to <http://bit.ly/1ZJbZO3> or search for 'Tiger Bay'. The first three and a half minutes show the lead character leaving the docks and walking into Loudoun Square where he joins children playing and watches men gambling. It gives an impression of the environment that was about to be demolished.

Source 13.2: ITV Cymru/Wales interviews with Angelina Street residents about the proposed redevelopment (1960)

Available on YouTube - search for Butetown, 1960 or go to <http://bit.ly/22LSPhP>

Source 13.3: Demolition of Loudoun Square under way.⁴²



Source 13.4: Angelina Street, looking towards Loudoun Square.⁴³



This photograph was taken after the construction of the tower blocks in Loudoun Square and before the redevelopment of Angelina Street.

⁴² Butetown History & Arts Centre

⁴³ Butetown History & Arts Centre

Source 13.5: Still from 'Tiger Bay is My Home' showing Angelina Street after the redevelopment.



Source 13.6: Residents in 1982 commenting on the impact of the 1960s redevelopment.⁴⁴

Gaynor Legall: People had no choice but to move. The maximum was three weeks' notice and you were out.

Beatrice Sinclair: People have moved out to different estates and you don't see them very often.

Ella Romaine: Now you can be dead and buried in the flats and nobody don't know nothing about it.

Olwen Watkins: Ugly flats: the most horrible thing that's happened to me in the last 20 years. They've brainwashed people into believing that having an indoor toilet and a bathroom was going to make a huge difference to life, for the better ... but what it's done is rob people of community life. This redevelopment has closed people off from each other ... You don't see people sitting out on front doors very much ... It used to take you half an hour to get to the shop because you kept meeting people on the way.

Thinking points

- Describe the differences between housing before and after the redevelopment.
- Were the views of residents in 1960 (Source 13.2) borne out by the comments in 1983 (Source 13.6)?

Practice questions

1. Explain why the area around Loudoun Square was demolished in the 1960s. [10 marks]
2. Study Sources 13.2, 13.4 and 13.6. Which of these sources is more useful to a historian studying the redevelopment of Butetown in the 1960s? [10 marks]

⁴⁴ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

14. 1987: more redevelopment

(Evidence in today's built environment: Mermaid Quay and the whole Bay area, offices of organisations supporting asylum seekers.)

The Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, set up in 1987, aimed to 'recapture the Bay area for the city' and became closely linked to Welsh devolution. Over the next few decades the whole docks area was transformed. Where trains carried coal to the Bute East Dock there are now apartments, hotels, a cinema and the City Council Offices. The efficient Baycar bus service whisks the crowds down Lloyd George Avenue to the Bay. Around the Pierhead are the Millennium Centre and the Welsh Assembly. Louisa Street, George Street and South William Street are now Mermaid Quay, an area of chain restaurants. The Bute West Dock Basin is now filled in and renamed Roald Dahl Plaas. The old Norwegian Church where Dahl was christened has been moved and rebuilt by the Roath Basin. The area is known across the world as where the BBC has filmed *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood*.

Source 14.1: Roald Dahl Plaas in 2016, with the Millennium Centre in the background



Source 14.2: the relocated Norwegian Church and the Doctor Who Experience, 2016



The Coal Exchange in Mount Stuart Square and some of the banks and shipping offices where Bute Street and West Bute Street fork down towards James Street are all still here. As they are listed buildings, developers cannot remove them unless or until they fall down. Many are crumbling. The Coal Exchange was used as a music venue until 2013 but is now derelict. Bute Street Station building is in a sorry state and the stop has been renamed Cardiff Bay.

Source 14.3: The Coal Exchange boarded up in 2016**Source 14.4: the Bute Street Station building in 2016**

As for the shipping companies, two remain but they no longer hire seamen from Butetown. Charles N Willie & Co deals in timber from the Baltics and sails to Spain and Portugal: its crews are Russian and Ukrainian. Graig Shipping Co is involved in ship construction in China and its crews are Chinese.

Some improvements have come the way of Butetown residents. Angelina Street has been rethought yet again, this time with low-rise housing. There is a new community centre and youth centre. However, young people still find it hard to get jobs in the rest of the city. Since the 1990s Tiger Bay's population has changed yet again. While the old multiracial community descended from the world of the docks is still here, new arrivals include asylum seekers and refugees from conflicts in the Middle East, North and Central Africa and Eastern Europe. Theirs is a very different experience from the long-term residents. The challenges they face, with anti-immigration feeling rising and increasingly strict legal controls, are not specific to Butetown but shared across the UK. Displaced People in Action (DPiA) provides support for asylum seekers, many in extreme poverty, who are not allowed to work, have access to benefits severely limited and face tough legal battles for refugee status and leave to remain. Race Equality First tackles racism and hate crime. They report that there has been a sharp increase in Islamophobic attacks, especially against Muslim women.

However, it remains a place the residents are deeply proud of, for its long history of community solidarity and anti-racist action, way in advance of other parts of the UK. However many knocks it receives, Tiger Bay is still resilient and has much to teach the rest of us about how people of many cultures can live together, build relationships with each other and create a society in which each distinct culture is valued and has a place, while a new, strong, shared identity is formed.

Source 14.5: Omar Yussuf Essa, born around 1940, interviewed by Glenn Jordan in 2004.⁴⁵

I have been here in Cardiff since 1964 ... Cardiff used to be better than it is now, as it had launderettes to wash your clothes, public baths, and public swimming pools. Now they turn everything into offices, bars and restaurants. I don't know who uses all of them. Butetown and Cardiff Bay are now developed, but we have lost a lot of services that the public needs.

⁴⁵ *Somali Elders* (2004) - Butetown History & Arts Centre

Source 14.6. The DPiA offices are in a wing of the former Coal Exchange.



Source 14.7: The entrance to the former National Westminster Bank. Race Equality First have their offices inside the building.



Source 14.8: Gaynor Legall speaking in 1982 when she was in her early thirties⁴⁶

Knowledge of history, talking to my grandmother, stood me in good stead for when I came across racism. I am what I am. I don't have to bend my knee or bow my head for anyone. They take me as they find me. For years and years and years we saw absolutely no reflection of ourselves in the society, everything was geared towards the white population and we were teenagers and it was very difficult for us... and all of a sudden we had the scales removed from our eyes ... nothing wrong with being Black - we didn't have to pretend any more. I could be me, be Black. ... We're just asking for fundamental rights.

Thinking points

- In Source 14.5 Omar Yusuf Essa disapproves of the new development of Cardiff Bay. However, the offices, bars and restaurants have replaced derelict dockland and poor quality housing. What arguments could be made in favour of the changes?
- Why does Gaynor Legall in Source 14.8 say knowledge of history has been important to her?

Practice questions

1. Explain how the development of Cardiff Bay since 1987 affected people in Butetown. [10 marks]
2. Explain how immigration to Butetown has changed since the 1990s. [10 marks]

⁴⁶ In *Tiger Bay is my Home* (1983)

15. Preserving Butetown's story

In 1988 an African American academic called Glenn Jordan started oral history classes for Butetown residents with the aim of recording and preserving the memories of the area's rich and distinct history. From this project, the **Butetown History & Arts Centre** developed, and for nearly thirty years the Centre has built up an extraordinary archive of photos, oral histories, artwork and publications that document the history of the Bay and its people. It mounts exhibitions, facilitates and contributes to films (many of which are on YouTube) and runs educational activities. Without BHAC and the work of Glenn Jordan and others, much of Butetown's history would have been lost. It is the only place in the Bay area where the story of the seamen, the community that grew from them and the docks where they worked, can be found.

In the City Centre, the **Cardiff Story Museum** on The Hayes has very good visitor-friendly exhibits about the history of the Bay, including a three-dimensional model of the docks in their heyday, interactive touch screens following individual stories of Butetown residents, objects representing different cultural heritages linked to personal stories, and much more. They have a basement educational centre and run activities for schools.

The multi-million pound Cardiff Bay redevelopment did not include a museum of the history of the Bay and its people. BHAC, which could provide that, struggles financially. Many outsiders visiting the attractions of the Bay today may even be unaware of Butetown's existence, within sight of the new Welsh Assembly building where decisions affecting its future are made. Apart from occasional signposts down Bute Street recording the establishments that were once there, they will find almost nothing in the streets to tell them the rich and special history of the people of Tiger Bay, a Welsh community that was the trailblazer for modern multicultural Britain.

16. Tracing Butetown's history in today's built environment: a field tour (about 2 hours)

For those who can arrange a trip to Cardiff, this is a suggested walking itinerary, with places marked on the map. The tour starts in the city centre very near the station and drop-off points for a coach or minibus. It ends in the Bay area which is a safe, pedestrianised area with places to eat, explore and relax - a good place to unwind after the tour and give learners some free time. A coach or minibus can pick up from there, or a ten minute bus ride on the Number 6 Baycar will take you back to the station (from in front of the Millennium Centre on Roald Dahl Plaas).

For those who can't visit, the tour can perhaps be done by learners virtually using Google Streetview. If you manage a trip, don't show them the photos here in advance, but give them copies of some of the archive photos in this pack, so that they can discover the changes as they walk. If you can't visit, these 2016 photos can be used.

Advance planning: contact Butetown History & Arts Centre (<http://bhac.org/>) to see if you can visit their centre and see some of their resources or meet a local resident. Contact The Cardiff Story (<http://cardiffstory.com/>) to arrange a time to visit there, maybe for a brief introductory talk. It may also be possible to arrange visits to places of worship such as the Greek Church, St Mary the Virgin and the Islamic Centre on Alice Street.

A tour will mean more to learners **after** they know Butetown's history, rather than before. Big questions for learners to consider:

What evidence of migration can we see in the environment?

What has changed over time and why?

What hasn't changed and why?

What has been the link between these changes and migration?

How well or badly is the area's history - of the docks and of the Tiger Bay community - commemorated and recorded?

It is best if learners have specific tasks to follow during the tour. This could be taking notes, photographing or filming to collect information for a later presentation.

You could ask different groups to focus on different questions, or periods (what would this have looked like in the 1960s, the 1930s, 1919, the 1880s...?). Or hand over the guiding to the learners, who have to prepare in advance, with each group of learners acting as tourist guides for a different section of the walk.



[Google Maps, adapted]

1. Start at The Cardiff Story in The Hayes, arranging your arrival beforehand. The main attraction is the model of the docks on the ground floor and the accompanying activities. This will give learners a sense of the docks as they were in their heyday.



2. Walk south down The Hayes, past John Lewis and across Bute Terrace/ Custom House Street, to enter Bute Street and pass under the railway bridge, traditionally the barrier between Cardiff city centre and Butetown.



This is where police stopped the mob in 1919. (Compare with the photo in Source 6.3.) In the past this was a street of densely packed shops and houses, with Irish Newtown to your left under another bridge. Now, to your right is Callaghan Square with a statue of the Marquis of Bute.



3. Continue walking down Bute Street, staying on the right side of the road. Immediately past the Salvation Army Hostel, look over the wall to see the Greek Church, opened in 1903. The Greek Easter was celebrated by everyone in the community. A detour right down North Church Street takes you round to its beautiful, ornate entrance.



4. Return to Bute Street. The parkland just south of St Mary the Virgin Church used to be streets and houses, including Peel Street, where the mosque once stood. (Compare with Source 11.1).



5. Look down Bute Street. Until the late 1950s this was a busy, crowded street of shops, cafes and boarding houses. A good time to read out some of Source 9.6. It is so different now - evidence of 1960s redevelopment. Compare Bute Street now with Source 4.3.



6. Turn right into Maria Street. At the end of the street you will see the Maria Street Mosque that replaced the one on Peel Street. Look for Red Sea House, a rest home for elders who were once merchant seamen. There is other evidence here of Butetown's multicultural community.



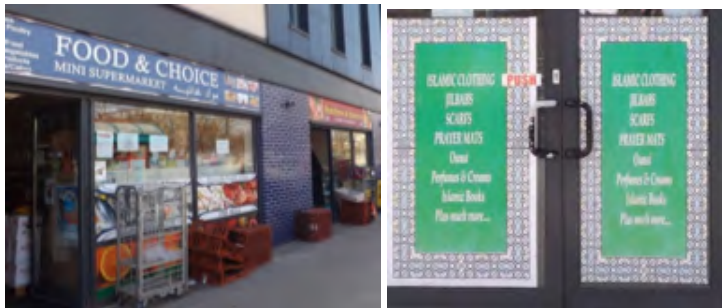
Then look left down Angelina Street towards the tower blocks of Loudoun Square. A good moment to show Sources 13.4 and 13.6 and discuss the changes and why the 1960s demolition happened.



7. Walk the length of Angelina Street to Loudoun Square, turning right to go round the square, passing the new Community Centre and then left at the Somali Paddle Steamer Cafe, then right into Hodges Square, cutting through to emerge in Hannah Street with the South Wales Islamic Centre on your right, one of the earliest purpose-built mosques in the UK (1980s).



8. Walk down Hannah Street to rejoin Bute Street by a row of shops, turning right to walk down towards Cardiff Bay Station. The old station building, in a dilapidated state, is to your left.



This sign records Speiro Lambadares's tobacconist's shop which stood at 29 Bute Street in 1920. Look for other such signs - there is one near the station entrance.

9. Continue down Bute Street, straight across the junction. Butetown History & Arts Centre is soon on your left, in the building that was once the head office of Emlyn Jones Shipping Company. Opposite BHAC is the former National Westminster Bank building.



10. Carry on down Bute Street towards the junction with James Street. The last building on your left was the headquarters of John Cory, one of the biggest shipping companies that also ran a seamen's rest home on Bute Street. As you face the John Cory Building, just to its left was the old Custom House. As you reach James Street, look to your left for the large red brick post office building, now much the worse for wear. This is where unemployed men waited in the early morning, hoping for work.



11. Turn right into James Street, once the commercial heart of Butetown, but no longer. First right takes you down West Bute Street, then left into Mount Stuart Square, then first left with the former insurance offices running down the left of the street. The side of the Coal Exchange is to your right, probably boarded up. Around Mount Stuart Square, look for evidence of its international connections through the docks.



12. Turn first right and shortly you will see the grand entrance of the huge Coal Exchange. This was where the world's first million pound deal was made. The men who did business here arranged the hire of seamen from all over the world, agreed to pay them less and work them in the sweltering conditions of the boiler rooms, and profited from their labour. That profit powered the UK's economy.



13. Now find your way back to James Street, walking back to the junction with Bute Street. Turn right and walk through the Mermaid Quay complex to the Bay. This is a good time for a break. There are cafes and restaurants including cheaper options such as Subway and Sainsbury's (on Roald Dahl Plaas). Things to see here include the statue of two migrant workers, John Masefield's poem 'Cargoes' (though it's about Tyne coal, not Welsh!), the memorial to merchant seamen who died in war, the Millennium Centre, the Welsh Assembly, the Pier Head and the replanted Norwegian Church. Ask them to look for anything that tells visitors the history of the docks and of the people of Tiger Bay whose homes stood where Mermaid Quay now is. They won't find much.



14. As a final flourish, take them into the middle of Roald Dahl Plaas and show them Sources 8.1 and 9.1, showing what the area around them was like in the 1920s. What are the changes? Why have they happened? How did they affect the lives of Butetown's community? It might be a good time for a discussion of whether or not the Cardiff Bay Development reflects, records and respects the lives of the people of Tiger Bay.

Note: For a very energetic group, a further trip could take in the Irish migrants and include the Bute West Dock and the Newtown memorial on Tyndall Street, though that would involve a lot more walking.

If you are making a day of it, and want something completely different as a relaxation for the learners, other attractions include:

- *The Doctor Who Experience*, 10 minutes walk from the Pier Head. Fun but expensive.
- Shops in the many Victorian and Edwardian arcades in the pedestrianised city centre.
- The Principality Stadium (home of Welsh rugby).
- Cardiff Castle (admission is charged) - highlights are the Victorian Gothic residence, the battlements, the medieval keep and the Second World War air raid shelter tunnels

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