

Brian Hatton

History - Teacher's notes

Theme - Identity

Introduction

Brian Hatton (1887-1916)

Brian was born in Hereford and he spent most of his childhood and early adult life there. Brian lived with his family in Whitecross and later Broomy Hill, Hereford. As a young child he made remarkable drawings, which showed his natural artistic ability. His parents, Amelia and Alfred, encouraged his talent. In 1898, at the age of eleven he was awarded the 'Gold Star' by the Royal Drawing Society. Following this the artist G.F. Watts took a keen interest in his development and became his mentor. Brian's younger sisters, Ailsa Marr (b.1893) and Marjorie (b.1895), became the subject of many of his works. Brian suffered from asthma as a boy and spent periods of time in Swansea for health reasons. As a young man, he travelled at home and abroad. In 1908, he travelled to Egypt as part of the Petrie expedition. He continued to love Herefordshire, where his work was inspired by local people and places. On his travels and later as a soldier, he recorded the people and places around him.

Brian had a studio in London, where he began his professional career as a portrait painter. Tragically, Brian was killed in action in Egypt, whilst serving with the Worcester Yeomanry, in the First World War. He died on 23rd April, 1916. He left a wife, Lydia May and a daughter, Mary Amelia (b.1915). Had he not belonged to the generation who fought in the First World War, Brian may have become known nationally as a talented artist.

During his life, he created over 1000 art works including oil paintings, watercolours, and pencil and pastel drawings, together with a small number of prints. His subjects included: landscape views, horses and other animals, agricultural activities and country people. He also drew imaginative subjects inspired by literature. When he began to accept commissions, he painted portraits, some of which were of local people.

Brian Hatton - timeline

1887: 12th August, was born at Carlton Villa, Whitecross, Hereford.

1893: Brian's sister, Ailsa Marr Hatton was born

1895: Hatton family moved to Mount Craig, Broomy Hill, Hereford.

1895: Brian's sister, Marjorie Hatton was born.



- 1895: Aged 8, awarded his first medal by the Royal Drawing Society.
- 1897: Aged 10, sent to Swansea for health reasons, stayed with Dr and Mrs Lancaster.
- 1898: Awarded the 'Gold Star' of the Royal Drawing Society. The artist G F Watts admired Brian's talent and began to take a keen interest in his development.
- 1899: Became a pupil at Swansea Grammar School.
- 1904: Visited St Ives and Newlyn, Cornwall.
- 1905: Attended Trinity College, Oxford.
- 1906: Visited Amsterdam and the Hague with his uncle, Charles Marr.
- 1906: Attended Hospitalfields Art School, Arbroath, Scotland.
- 1908: Shared rooms in London with his cousin, Geoffrey Vevers.
- 1908: Set up a studio at home in Mount Craig, Hereford.
- 1908: Travelled to Egypt to accompany the archaeological expedition of Professor (later Sir) William Flinders Petrie.
- 1909: 27th July, Brian's mother, Amelia Hatton died.
- 1910: November, visited Paris, paints at the Academie Julien.
- 1912: January, shared a studio in London with friend, Gerald Siordet. Worked on portrait commissions.
- 1914: 4th September, joined the Worcester Yeomanry.
- 1914: 5th November, married Lydia May Bidmead of Hereford in Newbury.
- 1915: 21st September, Brian's daughter, Mary Amelia was born.
- 1916: 23rd April Easter Sunday, Brian was killed in action at Oghratina, Egypt.

Lesson activities - Investigating 1887-1916

History national curriculum - KS3

Key concepts

- 1.1 Chronological understanding, 2
- 1.2 Cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, 1
- 1.4 Cause and consequence, 1
- 1.5 Significance, 1
- 1.6 Interpretation, 2

Key processes

- 2.1 Historical enquiry, 1, 2
- 2.2 Using evidence, 1, 2
- 2.3 Communicating about the past, 2
- 3 Range and content
 - British history, 7
 - European and world history, 10
- 4. Curriculum opportunities, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Key question - What can the Brian Hatton collection's suitcase image bank tell us about the period in which the artist lived and worked?

There are two image banks for this theme. All the activities can be completed using the suitcase image bank. Pupils who wish to explore the entire collection of Brian Hatton self portraits can use the identity image bank.

Podcast

There is a podcast of an expert talking about the character of Brian Hatton as shown through his letters– go to [Identity, Podcasts](#)

Resources

- Go to [Suitcase Activity Image Bank](#)

Useful web links

<http://www.bromyardhistorysociety.org.uk/>
Bromyard Local History Centre

<http://www.firstworldwar.com>
First World War web site

<http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/L/lostgeneration/>
Channel 4 site on 'The Lost Generation'

Activity 1: Different sources

Look carefully at the images in the suitcase image bank. Discuss the images with a partner.

Look for the following types of evidence

- Clothing
- Objects
- Buildings
- Written

Working in groups of 4-6, select 6 of the images from the suitcase image bank and discuss how these provide evidence of the period in which Brian lived and worked.

Activity 2 - Mind map

Now create a mind map with 1887-1916 in the centre, using the images to help you. You may do this using paper or suitable mind map software.

Activity 3 - Sharing ideas

In your group, nominate a spokesperson to share your findings with the rest of the class.

Activity 4 - Researching the past

Using your mind map as a starting point your group must choose to research one aspect of life during the period 1887-1916 e.g. costumes, buildings, domestic life. Record your findings.