

## Who was Richard Grainger? [Borrow the project box for this activity]

### Learning outcomes

- Learn that a significant local historical figure has a tangible link with their local area.
- Experience using a historical source to find out more about Richard Grainger

### Content

Suggested activities allowing you to focus your local history project on Richard Grainger.

### Preparation and resources

- The Grainger Project sources (artefacts, booklet and documents) are not downloadable. Arrange to borrow the project box with sources, free of charge, from the address below \*.
- Download the activity cards (HH Xtra Grainger project resource) from [www.stjameschurchnewcastle.wordpress.com](http://www.stjameschurchnewcastle.wordpress.com) and read through to choose which ones to do.
- Print out or use the borrowed pupils' activity cards as needed.

### Recommended time

Very flexible. Apart from Activity 6, each activity can be completed within 15 minutes, so ideal for carousel group work over one or two half days, or as individual enrichment resources.

#### Activity 1 Grainger portraits

Richard Grainger was very famous at a young age. In his later years he fell back into the shadows and there is little known about the end of his life. But we do know from portraits what he looked like at different stages of his life. The portraits used here were from

##### Sources

Three pictures of Richard Grainger and one of Rachel Grainger

##### The task

Pupils work through the following tasks, either on different table groups using print resources or as a class using the slideshow.

Putting the pictures of Grainger in chronological order. Pairing up the Richard and Rachel portraits.

#### Activity 2 Grainger's childhood home

Richard Grainger was the son of a poor widow. He grew up on High Friars Lane just within the town walls built long ago to protect the old town.

##### Sources

Engraving, photograph and map

##### The task

Examining sources to find out more about where Grainger was born. What did High Friars Lane look like in Richard's early years? What's there now?

#### Activity 3 Grainger's work

Grainger left school at fourteen to become an apprentice carpenter. Once he had learned his trade he set up business with his brother and started getting orders to build new houses.

##### Sources

Artefacts – chisels, planes, ruler – and images

##### The task

Investigating how a builder of his time would have worked.

\*Borrow from: Pendower Good Neighbour Project 0191 272 2962 / [patpen@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:patpen@blueyonder.co.uk)

#### Activity 4 Grainger's town centre

In Grainger's youth what is now our city centre was an area with open land, a convent and a huge mansion called Anderson Place. It lay close to the old tumbled down town wall which was no longer needed for protection. With the help of John Clayton, the town council's chief officer, Grainger raised money to buy the land and persuaded the town council to let him clear it for housing, businesses and leisure facilities, creating a new town centre. Then he employed architects to design buildings and used his own firm to build it all. It took less than 10 years!

##### Sources

Maps, images and Google Earth (optional)

##### The task

Looking at the map and images of 19<sup>th</sup> century Newcastle and comparing the buildings then and now. Following this you could look with the class on Google Earth to check they're still there and spot other buildings around them that must have been built by Grainger (look for the similar architectural details).

#### Activity 5 The Grainger Market

Only a year or so after the redevelopment started, an imposing new market building was completed. It replaced the existing butchers' market and had space for a fruit and vegetable market too. It was built to the same high standards as those around it, with lighting and water supply included. Having a grand opening banquet was a great way of showing how amazing the new town centre would be when it was finished.

##### Sources

Photograph of a present day stall in Grainger Market; painting of The Banquet Given on the Occasion of the Opening of the Grainger Market, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1835 by [Henry Perlee Parker](#)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/the-banquet-given-on-the-occasion-of-the-opening-of-the-gr37027>

##### The task

Talking about the painting, and why the opening of a market was such an important occasion and challenging the children to consider the value of our present day Grainger Market.

#### Activity 6 Walking tour of Graingtowm

The walk route and text follow the map route in the booklet *Richard Grainger and the West end of Newcastle*. The walk can be taken in any order that suits you, preferably with your class walking as two separate groups. You could combine the walk with visiting the Laing Gallery's Northern Spirit exhibition, which contains vivid paintings of Victorian Newcastle and items of Sowerby glass. If you want pupils to sketch, you should find enough pavement seating in the Theatre Royal area to accommodate half a class.

If you can't do the walking tour, use Google Earth Street View to follow the route and look at Grainger's final home in Clayton Street.

#### Activity 7 Grainger and St James'

In 1830 it was decided to build a church to be called St James'. John Buddle gave some of his land for the church to be built on and one of Newcastle's finest architects John Dobson designed it. The church was opened in 1833. It soon became a fashionable place for worship and for funerals. The original building was smaller than it is now, with seating for around 430 people. New sections were added soon after Grainger's death and later a new spire and hall changed the building's appearance even more.

##### Sources

Images of St James' Church taken at different times.

##### The task

Comparing the church in Grainger's time to nowadays.

### Activity 8 Grainger's later life

Grainger was a land developer as well as a builder. He speculated just as today's developers do, borrowing money to build then recouping it. He made a lot of money overseeing the new town centre, and went on to buy Elswick estate and its big house, where he brought Rachel and his children to live in 1839. Grainger dreamed of building an industrial estate and a suburb on his land and had other ideas too, from leisure facilities to a new railway station to serve new factories and residents. But cash flow problems caught up with him and bankruptcy was only just avoided. Then soon after, his wife Rachel died along with their thirteenth child. Grainger moved back into Newcastle and lived on Clayton Street, one of the streets he had built. He had his office there too. He continued to run a building business until he died from a heart attack in July 1861, very soon after that year's census was taken.

#### Sources

Drawing, photograph, map and Google Earth investigation (optional)

#### The task

Looking at the aerial photograph of Elswick Hall and photos of Clayton Street to encourage understanding of how much Grainger aspired to and how sadly he had to relinquish his grandiose dreams.

A good extension of this would be to use Google Earth to see what has happened to both his homes – the Hall, like many other big houses in the west end was demolished but the row of houses on Clayton Street is little changed, on the exterior at least. There are two plaques showing which houses were used by him. The 1861 census report (see Step 3) is worth referring to if you have time.

### Linking Richard Grainger to our Lives

Here are two of many ways to bring your investigation to a relevant conclusion.

1. If you have used them, remind pupils of the pictures they've seen of High Friars and Elswick Hall. How do they compare and how do they reflect Richard's life story? What would your pupils like to leave behind them for future generations?
2. The text of the Graingtowm walking tour (Activity 6) finishes with a quotation from a visitor who saw Graingtowm soon after it was completed. What do you pupils make of the quotation? What would they change in the city centre if they had the chance to rebuild it as Grainger did? What would they build in Elswick now?