

**People, Politics, and Print: Notes Towards a
History of the English-Language Book in
Industrial South Wales up to 1900**

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD at Cardiff University

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Jonathan Evans

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WE SHALL RISE AGAIN.

Summary

In Wales the histories of book production and industry started following the sixteenth century Acts of Union. In 1586 print production in Wales was a collateral victim of the Star Chamber ban on regional printing. When the printing press finally arrived in Wales in the eighteenth century it was closely associated with the iron trade. The Industrial Revolution started in Wales in 1759 on the undeveloped northern rim of the South Wales coalfield basin. The iron industry had two phases of development, when the second phase started in the 1780s South Wales was the largest iron producing region in the UK. At this time Edmund Jones wrote An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth (1779) and Apparitions of Spirits (1780), both of which document the narratives of a pre-industrial community. At the end of this period the Welsh print-trade was dominated by Nonconformist printers who were particularly hostile to the novel. Despite this opposition Twm Shon Catti, the first Welsh novel, was printed in 1828. In the 1840s John Nixon started to sell Welsh steam-coal to the French market. The steam-coal export trade was so successful that it rapidly changed the technology and science of mining, and in consequence a number of institutions grew around the industry. Meanwhile the miners themselves were organising and they established well-stocked miners' libraries which they used to educate themselves. In this period the centre of the Welsh print-trade moved to the industrial coalfield, and as it did so the newspaper became the dominant literary form. In the 1880s Joseph Keating worked in a number of collieries in the Aberdare valley. While Keating is justly famous for being the first Welsh industrial novelist of the twentieth century, he wrote in the older literary tradition which has been outlined in this thesis.

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Preface

Methodology

I started this research project with the intention of writing a theoretical thesis on the Welsh industrial novelists of the 1930s. What I soon found was that there was a significantly large volume of previous research material available which to date has received very little, if any, academic attention. The amount of material was so large that for a long time the work of this project was to find a shape and a narrative from a neglected and unstructured mass.

One of the problems that I found early on was that there was the question of the missing Welsh novel to be answered. If the novel is missing in Wales while it has been the dominant literary form in England for nearly three centuries, then the implication is that there is a serious problem in Welsh literary production. Perhaps I took the work of Macherey and Eagleton too literally, but it was this question of absent literary production – a meaningful fissure - that has formed the initial inquiry of this thesis. There was an excellent guide on this journey. We are fortunate in Wales that we have to hand a work as remarkable as Ifano Jones's Printing and Printers in Wales and Monmouthshire (1925). Although Ifano Jones's book is in some ways incomplete and in need of an update, he has left us a structure which we can use to reconstruct in some considerable detail the history of an entire means of literary production.

When Gwyn Alf Williams wrote on the Merthyr Riots in 1959 he found that 'even the essential preliminary of narrative reconstruction is beset with difficulties. The story of the rising has to be pieced together like a mosaic.'¹ What was true in the 1950s has been

¹ Gwyn Alf Williams, 'The Merthyr Riots: Settling the Account', National Library of Wales Journal XI:2 (1959) 124-141 (p. 125).

equally true at the start of a new century. The narrative reconstruction which is essential to the process of recovering a lost tradition was easily the most difficult part of this research project. This is a major reason why I have at times focused so closely on the historical context, it forms the structure for the recovery of a lost industrial literary tradition.

The methodology that I have used in this thesis flows from this original research. The nature of the research material, much of it untouched and in a poor state (frequently caused by a lack of respect for the subject), has meant that by its very nature this research project has had to be inductive — it is unapologetically so. Before the preliminary research was completed it would have been impossible to even begin to structure an argument. The result is that this research project has been closer to the materialist work of the postcolonialist Subaltern Studies Group than it has been to the scholarly studies which are currently in vogue in English Literature. This thesis is unashamedly materialist, and has been conducted with the long Marxist tradition very much in mind.

The question of language arose very early in the research stage. Many of the industrial writers published in both English and Welsh, and there is a large body of industrial literature available in both languages. As I was drawing together the research into a narrative I did so mindful of the importance of both languages, but have focused on three English-language writers because they most fully realise the period that they were writing in.

Research Limitations

The danger of the methodology that I have used in this research was that it could have

produced a scatter-gun effect which covered a lot of ground in very little detail. To correct this I established early on a set of research limitations, which have been strictly observed.

The first research limitation that I observed was to concentrate on the iron, steel, and steam-coal industries of South Wales and Monmouthshire. The aim of this thesis has been to recover a lost tradition of Welsh industrial writing, the majority of which was written in the iron and steam-coal districts of the South Wales coalfield. Consequently I have had to exclude a number of other industries as a research limitation. Firstly, the anthracite industries of West Glamorgan and Pembrokeshire in the nineteenth century were declining in importance at the same time as the steam-coal trade came into dominance, which meant that for the purposes of this thesis they could be excluded from the argument. Secondly, I have researched very little of the non-ferrous metal industries of Wales and although the copper, lead, gold, and silver mines have a long history dating beyond the Mines Royal of the sixteenth century they have had to be excluded from this research project because they produced less literature and their history often runs counter to that of the iron and coal industries. Thirdly, I have covered very little of the industrial literature from North Wales. The unfortunate consequence of this has been that Daniel Owen's early industrial novel Rhys Lewis (1885) has had to be put to one side for the moment. Similarly I have covered very few of the printers of North Wales in depth and a firm such as Hughes & Son from Wrexham which would prove a valuable area for further study has been largely excluded as a limitation. One book in particular from North Wales has had to be disregarded with deep regret: in 1901 the Co-operative Printing Society in London published W. J. Parry's book, The Penrhyn Lock-Out, 1900-1901. Written at the same time as the formation of the South Wales Miners' Federation, Parry's appeal for support for the

striking quarrymen at Penrhyn closely mirrors the experience of the miners and ironworkers to the south.

Questions of immigration, emigration, and diaspora have been excluded as a research limitation during this research project because I wanted instead in this thesis to emphasise the Welsh experience of industry and the literature that was produced in consequence. In the 1860s there was little if any union activity in South Wales because so many skilled colliers and ironworkers had emigrated from the country: the Welsh were leaving to start the iron, steel, and coal industries of America, Australia, and Russia. As they settled abroad the Welsh community maintained a strong cultural identity, and these diaspora communities have been responsible for a considerable body of print production in both languages. As early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries books by Welsh authors were printed on presses in Milan, Paris, Cologne, Amsterdam, Heidelberg, and Frankfurt.² Welsh was the first Celtic language to be printed and it has been one of the most successful, especially in diaspora, but it has had to be excluded from this research because it would have distracted from the task of recovery. Similarly the subject of immigration has been put to one side because my intent was to examine the literature of the Welsh experience of industry. The history of immigration would be particularly pertinent to the further study of Keating's work, but it has to be suspended in this thesis because my concern was primarily focused on the question of Keating as an industrial writer of the South Wales coalfield.

This thesis focuses on recovering a lost literary tradition which was written in response to the development of the iron and steam-coal industries in Wales. The result of this has been that very little space has been left for textual analysis or theoretical argument.

² W. Eilir Evans, 'Welsh Publishing and Bookselling', in *Library* 1895, s1-VII: 391-397, (p. 392).

In order to reconstruct this lost narrative I have had to exclude much textual analysis as a research limitation: the result is a thesis which crosses any number of disciplinary boundaries. Each of the three writers that I have analysed in this research project could comfortably be used as a topic for a literary thesis in his own right, but this was not my intent here. Indeed, before this preliminary work of recovery was begun it would have been impossible to conduct a sensible close textual analysis.

When the Welsh coal and steel industries collapsed in the 1980s they did so quickly. For years the heavy nationalised industries of Wales had been deprived of capital investment (which had instead been spent elsewhere) but the end when it came was brutal, and swift. The consequence of this rapid collapse of an entire industrial base was that much of the historical record has been destroyed. Most of the colliery records of South Wales were literally thrown into a skip placed outside the colliery office doors. What survives is thanks to the foresight of miners and archivists like Ray Lawrence and Ceri Thompson who were able to grab what they could out of the skip before it was burnt or taken to the local landfill. Similarly, many of the Miners' Libraries were destroyed as the Workmen's Institutes were closed. What survives of the industrial record in South Wales is only a small sample of the material which has been lost. This in South Wales is nothing new. After his death in 1793 the manuscript of Edmund Jones's autobiography was sold by his nephew to a grocer in Pontypool who used it to wrap the weekly groceries.³ The result of this loss and destruction is that in Wales what archive material survives is often spread far and wide, and practically every day new parts of that record are recovered. Even the preliminary task of literary reconstruction in industrial Wales was never going to be easy, but it is a task which this thesis has hopefully demonstrated is possible, and vital.

³ Cadrawd [Thomas Christopher Evans], 'Neu Wrechion Oddiar yr Eingion' (1918): NLW MS. 7557B

Suggestions for Further Research

This is a topic which would be ideally suited to a digital humanities approach and there are several particular areas that I feel would reward further research.

The first task of this project would be digitisation. Much of the material that I have encountered as part of this research is deteriorating badly and in a few years time will be lost altogether (the nineteenth century newspapers are an obvious example). The majority of this literary material was produced quickly and cheaply for a local popular market and as such was never meant to last longer than a year or two. Books like Protheroe's Little Johnny, which includes a number of unique woodcuts of working life underground in the 1860s, are on the edge of being lost altogether as the paper they are printed on inevitably succumbs to age. Digitisation and release under an open licence into the public domain would preserve this record for the future; it would also make it available for analysis using new quantitative literary techniques.

Much of the work of this thesis was conducted using a number of techniques which have become available thanks to the digitisation projects of JSTOR, ECCO, Google, the Internet Archive project (archive.org), and the National Library of Wales. The techniques that I have used have ranged from indexing and searching to some preliminary data mining activity. Often I have been able to use these new electronic resources to index and work more efficiently with the original editions. During this research I have been amazed at the quality and volume of the Welsh literary material which is now publicly available thanks to these projects, the bulk of which has been digitised from American libraries which contain an impressive collection of Welsh material. On 14 July 2010 Google announced funding of

nearly \$1 million for twelve humanities research projects on its digitised book collections.⁴ It could be predicted that this sort of collaborative activity will soon become an important new resource for literary research as traditional resources become ever more stretched.

The second area for future research is the nineteenth century Welsh newspapers which may represent a significant source for many of the narratives which would later form the Welsh industrial novel genre. I have already been able to touch briefly on how many literary traditions originated in the Welsh Victorian newspapers, and have started some preliminary research on the question. I have already been able to trace the origin of one of Joseph Keating's short stories to a news report which was published in the South Wales Echo on 15 July 1902, and I am sure that many more such examples of crossover from news into literature exist. In another example Keating's short stories were published in their hundreds by the London and American periodical and newspaper press, most of which have yet to be identified let alone catalogued. By hand it would take years to find these stories (especially when given that Keating used a series of pseudonyms), but electronically they could easily be recovered by data mining if given adequate resources. These newspaper collections have recently begun to be digitised and they would represent a useful early digital research project as they are small enough to still be able to corroborate by hand but large enough to be able to be researched electronically.

Acknowledgements

One of the pleasures that I have had in writing this thesis has been the willing and able support which I have received from so many people.

⁴ Jon Orwant (Engineering Manager for Google Books, Magazines and Patents), 'Our Commitment to the Digital Humanities' Available at: <<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/07/our-commitment-to-digital-humanities.html>> [accessed 14 July 2010]

I would like to thank Professor Stephen Knight for his valuable support of this research project, without his advice and guidance this thesis would have been much impoverished. In particular I would like to thank him for his support of my inductive approach to this project, in giving me the space to first conduct the research and then allow it to produce its own results he has richly improved the quality of this thesis.

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Chapter One - The Question Stated⁵

In his paper 'Working-Class, Proletarian, Socialist: Problems in Some Welsh Novels'

(1982) Raymond Williams insisted that we confront one of the most peculiar of problems:

Welsh: yes and no. It was a special problem for us. We had a literature, in Welsh, that was perhaps the oldest continuous body of writing in Europe. Except that by the twentieth century it was no longer our majority language, and as part of the same history Wales had changed, had a majority of urban and industrial workers, was to that extent separate from the life within which the received forms were generated: tribal, feudal, pastoral, religious; a many-sided tradition which did not, however, include realist prose narrative. By the twentieth century that may have been old to the English; it was new to us.

Industrial; well, certainly. But there is a problem. There were novels about English industrial life from the 1840s: *Mary Barton*, *North and South*, *Hard Times*, *Shirley* and so on. A Welshman grouped them together as English industrial novels. He was right and wrong... If you look at the work that was represented in nineteenth-century novels, you will find, on the one hand, the full middle-class spectrum of businesses and professions; on the other hand a very limited working-class range, with the textile mills predominant... Nobody was writing novels which more than glanced, if that, at the ironworks, the rapidly developing coal-mines, the docks, the shipyards, the chemical works, the engineering shops. Or if they were, we have still to recover them.⁶

Writing in 1984, Graham Holderness picks up Raymond Williams's argument and puts the case more bluntly:

The coal-mining industry received little more than glancing recognition in the nineteenth-century bourgeois novel. That significant absence was not mere absent-mindedness or anachronism, but a systematic writing of a society's industrial base out of its dominant literary form.⁷

⁵ I borrow the title for this first chapter from Thomas Malthus who used it for the first chapter of his Essay on Population: Thomas Malthus, *An essay on the Principle of Population: as it affects the future improvement of society, with remarks on the speculations of Mr Godwin, M. Condorcet, and other writers* (London: J. Johnson, 1798)

⁶ Raymond Williams, 'Working-Class, Proletarian, Socialist: Problems in Some Welsh Novels', in The Socialist Novel in Britain: Towards the Recovery of a Tradition ed. by H. Gustav Klaus (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982), 110-21 (p. 113)

Holderness writes with some urgency at the start of the Miners' Strike of 1984-85; within a handful of years the British coal industry was decimated and the country's industrial base received a shock from which it has yet to recover.

The National Miners' Strike of 1984-5 broke out after the Yorkshire NUM called for a national strike to protect the Cortonwood Colliery which was threatened with closure.⁸ Meanwhile, in South Wales a strike in the coal industry had been building since the thirteen-week long Steelworkers' Strike of 1980. In January 1983 the South Wales NUM were so concerned about the lack of investment that a meeting was held at the NCB national headquarters: investment by the NCB in South Wales was £600 per miner, while in Yorkshire it was £39,000 per miner.⁹ The meeting failed and on 22 February 1983 the miners of the Lewis Merthyr/Tymawr Colliery held a stay-down strike to protect the colliery from closure. Representatives of the Welsh NUM were sent around the country to call for a national strike to stop the colliery closure programme. However, despite the support of the Scottish and Yorkshire districts, the English miners as a whole failed to support the Welsh call for action and the mechanised coal face at Lewis Merthyr was closed on 14 March 1983 (described by the NCB as 'Remaining reserves not technically workable').¹⁰ Production finally came to an end in Lewis Merthyr on 17 June 1983 when hand-working of the upper four feet seam ceased.¹¹

⁷ Graham Holderness, 'Miners and the Novel: From Bourgeois to Proletarian Fiction', in The British Working-Class Novel in the Twentieth Century ed. by Jeremy Hawthorn, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, 2 (London: Edward Arnold, 1984), 19-32 (p. 20)

⁸ See, for example, Hedley McCarthy's recent account of the strike: 1984 The Great Coal Strike ([Ebbw Vale]: Hedley McCarthy, 2009), p. 12

⁹ Michael Thomas, The Death of an Industry: South Wales Mining and its Decline – The Local Story in a Global Context (Singapore: Colben System, 2004), p. 202. This was typical of the historical mismanagement and lack of investment in the Welsh coal industry.

¹⁰ This was typical of the NCB in South Wales. Time and again profitable pits with large workable reserves were closed as uneconomic and not technically workable.

¹¹ Michael Thomas, p. 203

Less than a fortnight after the end of the Lewis Merthyr stay-down strike Margaret Thatcher announced the nomination of Ian McGregor as chairman of the NCB.¹² The Welsh miners' union representatives who travelled to the Midlands looking for support from the English miners were shocked to find that the English miners in 1983 were only interested in the short term gain to themselves as Welsh pits were closed.¹³ A coal strike that could have been won if the English miners had earlier supported the Welsh collieries was doomed to failure because the Tory government was given time to stockpile reserves and prepare for a protracted dispute.

In the twentieth century the Welsh miners frequently represented one of the most significant threats that the British State has yet known. The response of successive post-war governments was to strangle the industry from beneath the miners. The stay down-strike in Lewis Merthyr is a good example of the work of this thesis: Welsh industry cannot simply be read as an adjunct to that of England, it has an alternative history and its own literature which demands to stand independently on its own merit.

If anything the aftermath of the Miners' Strike of 1984 has extended the exclusion of mining from British mainstream culture. Seven years after Holderness wrote about the conscious erasure of a society's industrial base from its literature, almost the entire Welsh coal industry had been closed in favour of cheap subsidised foreign coal imports. For a brief period in the 1980s a cluster of critical work was written on the literature of labour: the cluster has since been repeated on a number of occasions.¹⁴ As valuable as it is in its own right, this cluster of academic work suggests that the resistance of the working-class

¹² John Saville, 'An Open Conspiracy: Conservative Politics and the Miners' Strike 1984-5', *Socialist Register* 22 (1985-6), 295-329 (p. 305). McGregor was a notorious professional American union buster and was the chairman of BSC during the Steelworkers Strike of 1980. As soon as he was appointed as chairman of the NCB a national strike was inevitable.

¹³ Ray Lawrence, interview by author, 2 June 2010

to the reactionary ideology of monetarism also enabled the working-class to begin to speak of their own culture, their own history. However, this brief moment of agency was not to last and recently in Wales the question of absence and memory has become more urgent than ever as modern Wales is being actively re-imagined around a fictitious pre-industrial agricultural economy. Yet, however much it is downtrodden, ignored, or used to serve other political interests, industrial South Wales cannot so simply be written out of the cultural and economic history of the British Isles.

What then were the Welsh miners and ironworkers writing? In the twentieth century the generation of industrial writers who were born, grew up, and worked in the coal communities of South Wales were writing novels, autobiographies, and short stories, many of which were so popular that they saved more than one London publishing house from bankruptcy during the 1930s.¹⁴ Practically every significant critic to have written on the literature of industrial South Wales has pointed out that the novel in Wales was remarkably late in being written. They all make a good point: the Welsh novel only really becomes successful in the last half of the 1930s as the Welsh industrial novelists came of age. And this is the problem: the Welsh industrial novelists of the 1930s were published successfully in London and New York but they came, it seems, from nowhere, there was no obvious literary tradition out of which this generation grew. The moment when this new literary tradition begins is described by Jack Jones in his first autobiography, Unfinished Journey

¹⁴ The first cluster was initiated by Raymond Williams in 1978 shortly before the start of the Winter of Discontent (a series of union disputes which marked the end of Callaghan's disastrous government), see: Raymond Williams, The Welsh Industrial Novel: The Inaugural Gwyn Jones Lecture (21 April 1978) (Cardiff: Cardiff College Cardiff Press, 1979). The most recent cluster has tended to focus on the use of postcolonial theory, see for example: Stephen Knight, A Hundred Years of Fiction (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), or Kirsti Bohata Postcolonialism Revisited (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004)

¹⁵ John Harris, 'Anglo-Welsh Literature', in A Nation and Its Books: A History of the Book in Wales ed. by Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales in association with Aberystwyth Centre for the Book, 1998), 355-69 (p. 358)

(1938):

One night when I got home without the job I had been combing the city and its outskirts for, I picked up a piece of paper and made a round ring with a pencil. Inside the round ring I wrote: "Rev. Dan Price, B.A."'¹⁶

In time the round ring became a writing plan for a novel which was used by the unemployed collier to write Rhondda Roundabout (1934). The genesis of Jack Jones's first novel it seems was a circle drawn in pencil on a piece of scrap paper, there is no obvious pre-text to this moment.

Concern for the missing Welsh novel was not new for, as I will show later, it is as old as the Welsh novel itself. In 1911 the journalist Beriah G. Evans, who came from industrial Nantyglo, put the question directly:

Why is it that Welsh life has never been either correctly or adequately represented in English fiction?¹⁷

In total Evans asks the question three times, and each time he fails to find an adequate answer. Writing in A Theory of Literary Production Pierre Macherey said that, 'Before we know how the text works we must know the laws of its production.'¹⁸ What has interested me in this research project has been the recovery of a lost tradition of industrial writing in South Wales which pre-dates the twentieth century, some of it so early that it pre-dates the Industrial Revolution itself. If the process of recovery of a lost industrial literary tradition

¹⁶ Jack Jones, Unfinished Journey (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938), p. 280. Jack Jones provides us with a full account of how he wrote Rhondda Roundabout in this autobiography. He had been working as a labourer (or navvying as he called it) when he sent off an account of his post-WWI political experiences to Sir Ernest Benn (uncle of the Right Hon. Tony Benn) who was about to launch The Independent. The article was subsequently published and it was the fee of twenty pounds for this article which supported Jack Jones while he wrote his first novel (Unfinished Journey, pp. 276-277).

¹⁷ Beriah G. Evans, 'Wales and its Novelists', Wales: A National Magazine [ed. J. Hugh Edwards] 1 (May 1911), 35-8 (p. 35)

¹⁸ Pierre Macherey, A Theory of Literary Production, trans. by Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 57

is to begin then it must begin with the history of the book in Wales. Before any in-depth critical analysis of the literary material can begin, it first has to be located and recorded within the historical context of its production. And essential to this literary production is locating the printing press, as without the press there can be no literature. This process has already begun in post-colonial India where the history of the printing press on the continent and its political uses by the colonialists has been well described.¹⁹ However, my intention here is not to produce a complete history or bibliography of the Welsh book (which would be beyond the scope of a single thesis). It is my intention, however, to map notable and archetypal points and practices of the Welsh print industry which directly impacted on the literature produced by the colliers and ironworkers of industrial Wales: it is their voices, their songs, their joy and their sorrow which have been the focus of my research. The printers were themselves artisanal and became industrial, as did the society around them: the social relations of their printing and the topics which they, or rather their audiences, chose to see in print are the evidence of the development of English-language fiction in Wales and the other prose discourses with which it was intimately related and which helped to condition the unique phenomenon of Welsh industrial fiction in English.

While it is more usual to see Welsh history thought of in centuries (for example, 1700-1800) in this thesis I will structure my argument around three main time frames: the pre-Industrial Revolution period (which started with the Acts of Union of 1536-42 and which ended when a new iron furnace was built at Dowlais in 1759); the Industrial Revolution (which in Wales began in Dowlais on 19 September 1759 and which ended in the transitionary capitalist crisis of the 1820s and 1830s); and the age of coal (which

¹⁹ See, for example, Anindita Ghosh's scholarly work on the history of the British printing presses in Bengal: Power in Print: Popular Publishing and the Politics of Language and Culture in a Colonial Society, 1778-1905 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)

started in South Wales in the 1840s and which for the purposes of this thesis will culminate as the ex-miner Joseph Keating starts a new literary tradition at the turn of the twentieth century). In each period I will establish the historical context of industry in South Wales. I will then outline the state of the print industry in Britain as a whole. Next I will specifically look at the Welsh print industry as a whole before examining in finer detail one or two specific examples of Welsh printers. Finally I will analyse the work of a representative author of each period: for the pre-industrial period, Edmund Jones; for the Industrial Revolution, T. J. Ll. Prichard; and for the age of coal, Joseph Keating.

Chapter Two - A Late Beginning: The Print Culture of pre-Industrial Wales, 1536-1759

In this chapter I will examine the history of Welsh print-culture from the Acts of Union of 1536-42 to the start of the Industrial Revolution in the middle of the eighteenth century. Our modern concept of industry is received through the lens of the nineteenth century. The popular image is of the Satanic mills and polluting iron furnaces of the Industrial Revolution, although much of the writing on industry in this period was anything but grim. It is important, however, to remember that industry in Wales pre-dates the Industrial Revolution by hundreds of years. Wales had experienced significant periods of industrial production well before the start of the Industrial Revolution. The modern history of Welsh industry can be dated to the Acts of Union of 1536-42, but even this date is essentially arbitrary as industry pre-dates even this moment. The Roman occupation, for example, exploited the metallurgical wealth of Wales (most notably gold, lead, and iron). Soon after the Norman Conquest of Wales its mineral resources were once again being exploited: in 1228 Gilbert de Clare controlled lead, silver and iron production in the lordship of Glamorgan and in 1325 iron mines were being worked at Blaenavon and Ebbw Vale. However, these early industries were small and unable to grow because of the rule of the Marcher lords: it was only when Wales came under the control of the Tudor Crown after the Acts of Union that new investment and development could be made in Welsh industry.²⁰ Following the Acts of Union the Welsh iron industry came to the fore as Henry VIII started an armaments drive.²¹ The owners of the sixteenth-century English iron industry of Kent

²⁰ William Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution vol. 1 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1968), p. 39

²¹ Rees, Industry before the Industrial Revolution, vol 1, p. 23

and Sussex soon found that they were competing for exhausted timber supplies with the naval ship builders. So serious was the lack of timber that the traditional English centres of iron production came under increased attention and regulation by the State. The consequence of this was that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries much of the enterprise and many of the skilled workers from Kent and the Weald migrated to establish new iron industries in Ireland, the West Midlands, and South Wales.²² It could be said that Wales entered the modern era through the iron furnaces and forges which opened following the Acts of Union.

While the Welsh iron industry was developing rapidly following the Acts of Union, the early Welsh print industry was a collateral victim of the ban on regional printing which was enacted by the Star Chamber in 1586. The first printing press of any substance was erected in Wales in 1718, a comparatively late date in the context of British book production.²³ Consequently this early pre-Industrial Revolution period divides into two periods, the first where Welsh print literature was conducted entirely through the English presses and the second where a native tradition of Welsh print slowly begun to be established—at first on worn second-hand amateur presses but as the eighteenth century progressed the Welsh printing trade grew in sophistication.

Once I have examined the context of Welsh literature and print-culture before the start of the Industrial Revolution, I will look more closely at one specific example of an eighteenth century Welsh printing press—the Trevecka press.²⁴ This press was part of the

²² See: Rees, *Industry before the Industrial Revolution*, vol 1, p. 238-276

²³ For comparison see, Marjorie Plant *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1939), p. 84; and, John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)

²⁴ The press called itself 'Trevecka' but the modern spelling conforms with Welsh and is 'Trefecca'. Therefore, in this thesis I will use Trevecka when talking about the press and the Family and Trefecca when talking about the place.

Family, a Religious-Industrial commune of Methodists which formed in Trevecka following the Rupture in the eighteenth-century Methodist Revival in Wales.²⁵ This group has subsequently become known as Hen Deulu Trevecka, or The Old Family at Trevecka. Typically for a Welsh press of the period the Trevecka press predominantly produced two sorts of print: the first was jobbing work (which sustained the press itself), and secondly, it was used for propaganda purposes by the radical Nonconformists of the eighteenth century Revival. Trevecka was not unusual in this: the Welsh print trade was dominated by Nonconformists well into the twentieth century, and they have at times been able to affect the history of the Welsh book. The Trevecka press was kept busy and among the books which it famously produced are Edmund Jones's An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth (1779) and A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits (1780): both were well-considered books in their lifetime and both have gone on to gain some considerable importance in Welsh cultural history. Edmund Jones's Account of the Parish of Aberystroth has particular interest for this thesis as it was written as the Industrial Revolution arrived in the old pre-industrial Monmouthshire parish of Aberystroth. Soon afterwards the idyllic vale which Jones described became the heavily industrialised Ebbw Vale and Abertillery valleys.

²⁵ The causes of the Rupture between Daniel Rowland and Howell Harris were in part doctrinal (basically put the problem was over the Trinity and the body of Christ) and in part personal (Harris often called himself the father of the Association and he was often accused of trying to maintain a strict control over the organisation, much to the frustration of ordained ministers like Daniel Rowland, Howell Davies, and Williams, Pantycelyn): John Morgan Jones and William Morgan, The Calvinistic Methodist Fathers of Wales, trans. by John Aaron, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2008), pp. 568-99 [originally published in 1890 as Y Tadau Methodistiaidd]

2.1 *The Welsh Book Before 1718*

The story of Welsh print culture begins in the fifteenth-century with an obscure reference in 'Cywydd i ael merch' [A poem to a maid's brow] by the bardic poet Bedo Brwynllys (who came from Talgarth):

Dilwch yw d'ael, du o lir,
Dawn popi'n duo papur.
Ni liwiodd du ar liain,
Nid mwy o'r fath dim mor fain.
Copi wrth brint y capel,
Campus bwyth cwmpas y bêl;
Crest o'r inc, croes duw ar wen,
Cryn lath arwydd cron lythyren.²⁶

[Blemish-free is your brow,
The essence of the poppy to ink the paper.
Never did black on cloth,
Colour anything so fine.
Copy from the chapel's print,
With excellent stitch around the ball;
Crest of ink, God's cross on white,
Small stick sign of a round letter.]²⁷

Ifano Jones hints that this love poem which relies heavily upon images of Church and the printing press may have been written before 1477 when the first book was printed in England by Caxton. However, as attractive as this early date is, Ifano Jones can be no more

²⁶ I am indebted for this reference to: Ifano Jones, A History of Printing and Printers in Wales to 1810, and of Successive and Related Printers to 1923. Also, A History of Printing and Printers in Monmouthshire to 1923 (Cardiff: William Lewis (Printers), 1925), p. 1.

²⁷ I am indebted for help translating 'Cywydd i ael merch' to Tomos Owen and Dr. Dylan Foster Evans.

specific than to suggest that this poem must have been written when the poet was still a young man, or in other words sometime between 1460 and 1480.²⁸

The first book to be printed in the Welsh language was Yny lhyvyr hwnn by John Price of Brecon.²⁹ Yny lhyvyr hwnn was a small book of 34 pages, which was printed in London in 1546 by Edward Whitchurch. One year later John Waley in Foster Lane, London printed Wylliam Salesbury's A Dictionary in Englyshe and Welsh. Ifano Jones suggests that the small book really is not 'A Dictionary in Englyshe and Welsh' so much as it is a dictionary in Welsh and English.³⁰ It is of some considerable importance that Salesbury's dictionary was issued by the authority of a Tudor King of England. At this point it is worth directly quoting Jones:

And the interest attached to the book is intensified by a perusal of the printer's greeting on the last page, for in it we are unmistakably conscious of an honourable compact on the part of the Tudor Government, a Welsh author, and a London printer, to bestow upon the Cymry the benefits of the printing-press.³¹

Within three years of the last of the Acts of Union the Welsh Tudor Government in London had deliberately started a Welsh print culture and, although the early print production for Wales was by comparison small, it was, nonetheless, significant.

While the Tudor Government was bringing the Welsh the benefits of the printing press, their Acts of Union enabled Welsh industry to be developed beyond its Medieval

²⁸ Ifano Jones, p. 1-2.

²⁹ R. Geraint Gruffydd, Yny Lhyvyr Hwnn (1546): The Earliest Welsh Printed Book *Bulletin of the board of Celtic studies*, volume XXII (1969), pp.105-116. The English translation of the full-title of Yny Llyvyr Hwnn is: In this book are set forth the Welsh alphabet (including a note on spelling and pronunciation); the calendar (which includes monthly directions for farmers and also rules for finding Easter); the Creed, or Articles of the Catholic Faith; the Paternoster or Lord's Prayer; the Ten Commandments; the Seven Virtues of the Church (that is, the seven sacraments); the virtues to be practised; and the vices to be shunned, together with their branches.

³⁰ Ifano Jones, pp. 8-9.

³¹ Ifano Jones, p. 9.

restrictions. The Acts of Union had two main impacts on Welsh industry: firstly, they freed industry in Wales from monastic and lordly control by allowing the Crown to extend its prerogative over the Mines Royal (i.e. gold, silver, copper and quicksilver); secondly, they enabled English capital to be invested in Welsh industry at a time when the medieval centre of the British iron industry in the south east of England was coming under growing restriction and regulation because of a shortage of timber to produce charcoal for the furnaces.³² Within a handful of years ironmasters from the Weald had built iron furnaces in the Taff valley (e.g. Pentyrch in the lower Taff valley and at Aberdare and Merthyr in the upper), in Glamorgan (e.g. Coity), Monmouthshire (e.g. Monkswood, Pontypool, Pontymoile, Trevethin, Blaenau, Machen and Clydach), and West Wales (e.g. Blackpool in Pembrokeshire).³³ While industry may understandably have initially relied heavily on English capital and ironmasters such as Sir William Sydney, many of the old Welsh aristocratic families like the Lewises of the Van in Caerphilly (who were descended from Ifor Bach, chieftain of Senghenydd) and the Morgans (the Tredegar family) were soon heavily involved in the new trade. From the start of the story of industry in modern Wales the old Welsh aristocracy were profiting from the industrial use of their landed estates. In another example the Pentyrch forge was established in the lower Taff valley in the 1560s by an Englishman it was on land leased from Edward Lewis of the Van, Caerphilly.³⁴ Although the capital was English, many of the original sixteenth century iron founders were French, probably from the Lorraine iron-field, and the French method of refining iron was an early development in South Wales.³⁵

On 23 June 1586 the Star Chamber issued a decree which outlawed all printing

³² William Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution vol. 1, pp. 247-248.

³³ William Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution vol. 1, p. 248-70

³⁴ William Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 1, p. 263.

outside London, Oxford, and Cambridge.³⁶ Even the London press at this time found itself heavily regulated and controlled. The Star Chamber decree in one act brought all provincial printing in England and Wales to an abrupt end, and with it ended any hope that sixteenth century Wales had of developing an independent print culture on its own soil. In the fly-leaf description of Peter Lord's Words with Pictures his publisher describes the moment simply: 'Printing in Wales was banned until 1694.'³⁷ On the one hand, Peter Lord's publisher is perfectly correct, for the 1586 ban of the Star Chamber on regional printing was technically in force until 1695; however, on the other hand, the State control of print production was a little more complex than 'a ban on printing in Wales' implies. Firstly, despite some evidence for a very minor Catholic press in Wales, it would be odd for a Tudor government to put a ban on Welsh printing only forty years after they had gone to the trouble of publishing Yny Lhyvyr Hwnn and Salesbury's Dictionary in Englyshe and Welsh with the express idea of bringing to the 'Cymry' the benefits of the printed book. No insurgency or rebellion had arisen in Wales to justify the removal of a benefit so recently granted. Indeed, Morgan's Welsh Bible came into print in London in 1588, some two years following the ban on printing in Wales. The Welsh print industry was never specifically banned as such, certainly not by the Tudors, it was banned only because all regional printing was banned during the attempts by the Tudor State to control the English radical Protestant and Catholic presses. If anything, a native Welsh print culture was an innocent collateral victim of the attempt to control the political influence of the printing press in

³⁵ William Rees, Industry Before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 1, p. 248. There have often been strong links between the industries of France and Wales, sometimes stronger links than those which existed between the industries of Wales and England (as in the case of the South Wales steam-coal trade which was dominated by exports to France).

³⁶ Marjorie Plant, The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1939), p. 81.

³⁷ Peter Lord, Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640-1860 (Aberystwyth: Planet, 1995), flyleaf.

England.

Ironically, the Decree of the Star Chamber was enacted despite the small number of regional printers and presses that were active in Britain at that time. Even in London, between 1500 and 1550 there were only thirty-six active printers and most of those were working after 1530. As the sixteenth century progressed, the number of printers in London naturally increased, and between 1590 and 1595 there were ninety-seven licensed printers working in the capital. In 1615 the Court of the Stationers' Company acted to cut this number and ordered that only twenty-two printers should be allowed in England as a whole. The Civil War inevitably changed this heavily regulated industry and by 1649 there were far more than the officially ordained twenty-two printers at work in England.³⁸ In Wales the Civil War meant that crude presses at Shrewsbury and Chester were added to those of London and Oxford (which had previously provided print for the Welsh market). However, the demand for a native Welsh press was never far away and in 1662 Sion Gruffydd wrote fourteen englynion urging the antiquaries Robert Vaughan and Meredith Lloyd to print books in Welsh. In 1689 Dr William Lloyd, at the time Bishop of St. Asaph, yearned so much for a printing press to be established on Welsh soil that he offered to set it up with his own money and effort.³⁹

Despite the unsteady growth which the Civil War had brought to the British print trade overall, the Commonwealth did not see a significant expansion of the printing trade: in 1660, for example, there were still only 60 printers working in London.⁴⁰ Sir Roger L'Estrange (Surveyor of the Press) suggested that this number be reduced, and in 1662 the

³⁸ Plant, pp. 81-85.

³⁹ Ifano Jones, pp. 30-31.

⁴⁰ Plant, p. 84.

Licensing Act reduced the number of officially licensed printers in London from 60 to 20.⁴¹ Marjorie Plant tells us that the Licensing Act of 1662 was never enforced but instead was openly ignored, and in 1695 it was quietly allowed to lapse.⁴² The Licensing Act may have been ignored but Raymond Williams in The Long Revolution finds that its end brought with it the end of the virtual monopoly of an important new technical development in English print culture—the newspaper. Ironically, this virtual monopoly on the press had been run for the benefit of the very same Surveyor of the Press who had suggested it be enacted in the first place, one Sir Roger L'Estrange. The end of the Act saw a rapid expansion of the English public press between 1695 and 1730: this growth was mostly concentrated in daily newspapers, provincial weekly newspapers, and periodicals.⁴³

Whereas both industry and print culture arrived in sixteenth century Wales at roughly the same moment, their fortunes over the next two hundred years could not have differed more. While the Welsh iron industry had started to expand significantly, early Welsh print culture was conducted entirely through the English presses: initially through those in London and Oxford but following the Civil War popular work for Wales was printed in Shrewsbury and Chester while scholarly and subsidised work was published in London and Oxford.⁴⁴ The first Shrewsbury press had been established by the Royalists in 1642, and for the next next one hundred and fifty years Shrewsbury (together with the lesser presses at Chester) became the main producer of print for the Welsh market.⁴⁵ In 1648 an army press was established in Montgomery which published one of the

⁴¹ Plant, p. 84.

⁴² Plant, p. 84.

⁴³ Raymond Williams, The Long Revolution (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965), pp. 202-3.

⁴⁴ Eiluned Rees, 'The Welsh Book Trade from 1718 to 1820', A Nation and its Books, p. 123.

⁴⁵ Ifano Jones, p.9.

“Mercurie” broadsheets: News from Pembroke and Montgomery.⁴⁶ However, the Montgomery press could not have lasted long as it quickly disappears from the record, and with it disappeared an early and undeveloped potential for a successful native Welsh press.

W. Eilir Evans best summed up this early period of Welsh publication in his 1895 essay ‘Welsh Publishing and Bookselling’:

The Welsh language was ignored by Church and State; not one in fifteen of the clergy were able to officiate in the vernacular. Bearing this state of things in mind, one does not wonder that no more than one hundred and seventy-three books were issued between 1588 – when the Welsh Bible was printed – and the end of the seventeenth century.⁴⁷

Those very few books which had been published in the Welsh language before the eighteenth century had made little impact: this includes the Welsh Bible which was little circulated beyond the Established Church:

But the New Testament was not printed until the Ninth year of Queen Elizabeth, of the year of our Lord 1567. But tho’ this was an invaluable mercy, as far as it went, and a great increase of light, the better half of the Bible being printed; which doubtless did good to some; yet the numbers printed were not many.

About twenty years after, in the memorable year 1588, the whole Bible came out in Folio, but they were only for the use of the Churches; and perhaps both impressions hardly enough for the Churches and Chapels in all Wales, tho they were an increasing help. I saw a black lettered Bible of the first impression in the Church of *Aberystroth*. But an Octavo Welsh Bible convenient for the use of the Laity was not printed until the reign of King Charles the first, in the year 1630; which was an exceeding great blessing, and was a great help and preparation for the people to understand the preaching, which more abundantly obtained after the ceasing of the Civil War, which succeeded soon after, and did a great good.⁴⁸

In this first phase Welsh print culture had failed to reach the majority of the population and,

⁴⁶ W. Eilir Evans, ‘Welsh Publishing and Bookselling’, Library 1895, sI-VII; 391-397 (p. 392).

⁴⁷ Eilir Evans, p. 393.

⁴⁸ Edmund Jones, A geographical, historical, and religious account of the parish of Aberystroth: in the county of Monmouth: to which are added, memoirs of several persons of note, who lived in the said parish (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1779; repr. Cowbridge and Bridgend: Owen, 1988), p. 92. All further references are to this edition and are given in parenthesis in the text.

aside from the Bible, Welsh books up to this point had predominantly been considered to be a tool for educating a small rural Anglicised elite who were literate.⁴⁹ Even the Welsh Bible until 1630 had been produced for Church use alone, and then it was produced in numbers so low that not every Church in Wales had a copy available for use. Yet, despite these problems, Welsh book production had started under the auspices of the Tudors and by the beginning of the eighteenth century a number of Welshmen were active in the English print trade producing books for the Welsh market.

2.2 The Development of the Printing Press in Eighteenth-Century Wales

In 1718 a native Welsh print culture finally arrived when two ballads were published by Isaac Carter on his press in Trefhedyn.⁵⁰ One of the two ballads was written against the evils of tobacco, the other was written on the properties of conscience.⁵¹ In the seven years that Carter worked in Trefhedyn he printed these two ballads (1718), and a further three books (dated 1719, 1722, and 1724).⁵² In 1725 Carter moved his press to Carmarthen after his friend Nicholas Thomas had established his own printing office in the town in 1721. Nicholas Thomas was the nephew of the Shrewsbury printer Shôn Rhydderch, and together with his uncle he had been an early promoter of the Trefhedyn press. In Carmarthen, Carter printed a further five books. However, despite printing a 444-page Welsh translation of Vincent's Explicatory Catechism, Carter's first press at Trefhedyn had so low an output that in 1981 Crawford and Jones suggested that most of Carter's work on this press must have

⁴⁹ Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, The Dynamics of Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1971), p. 28.

⁵⁰ Ifano Jones, p. 34. Trefhedyn is located on the Cardiganshire bank of the Teifi, which is still connected by bridge with Newcastle Emlyn.

⁵¹ Tegwyn Jones, 'Welsh Ballads', in A Nation and Its Books, 245-51 (p. 245)

⁵² Ifano Jones, p. 39.

In Trefhedyn, on the banks of the Teifi, the Welsh print industry had made an unpromising, but lasting, start. The first impression may be to question why on earth the first Welsh press was established in such a remote part of the country. Geographically Newcastle Emlyn is about as far from the eighteenth century British print trade as you could hope to be in Wales. Even if you were to argue that the wool trade meant the area was prosperous enough to support an independent press, why then did not Carter locate his press in Lampeter or Llanfair Caereinion, which would have been more obvious choices that involved less of a jump into the unknown. Eiluned Rees suggests that Carter established his press in Trefhedyn because there was a 'remarkable coterie of clerics and littérateurs in that area.'⁵⁶ Ifano Jones goes further and supplies us with a list of likely patrons for the Trefhedyn press:

Thus, in the second decade of the eighteenth century, all over the commote of Gwynionnydd and Elfed, and the two commotes of Iscoed Higher and Iscoed Lower, the enthusiasm of both squire and peasant, -churchman and dissenter,- for printed literature in Welsh, led up naturally to the erection of the first Welsh printing-press at Trefhedyn in 1718.⁵⁷

Yet despite the local support of 'clerics and littérateurs' in the immediate vicinity of Trefhedyn, Carter only stayed in Trefhedyn for seven years. In 1725 he relocated his press to Carmarthen, at the time the biggest town in Wales. Carmarthen soon afterwards became the centre for the Welsh print industry. And, although by the end of the eighteenth century the print industry had begun to spread across the country as a whole, Carmarthen remained at its centre for the rest of the eighteenth century.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Rees, 'The Welsh Book Trade', p. 123.

⁵⁷ Ifano Jones, p. 38

⁵⁸ See for example: Eiluned Rees, 'Developments in the Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century Wales', The Library, 1969, s5-XXIV: 33-43 (p. 35).

If Ifano Jones felt that Trefhedyn was a natural location of the first press on Welsh soil thanks to the location of so many patrons in the vicinity, then the move of Carter's press to Carmarthen in 1725, after printing so little, may seem at first a little odd, especially when competition already existed in the town. There are a number of reasons why Carmarthen became the centre for the print trade, such as its ready access to the sea trade routes. There may be, however, one more reason why Carmarthen became the home for so many Welsh printers in the eighteenth century: at the start of the eighteenth century Carmarthen became the centre of a small, very localised, but very successful charcoal-iron industry.

In 1717 the small charcoal-iron furnaces at Cwmdwyfran, Cwmbran, and Carmarthen. Lacking mineral reserves of its own, the iron ore which fed the Carmarthen furnaces were shipped from the main coalfield basin measures around Kidwelly.⁵⁹ Although they were located in a gap in the coalfield measures, the Carmarthen furnaces were able to take advantage of the heavily wooded Gwili valley which was able to provide suitable levels of charcoal to feed the greedy furnaces. So good was the supply of charcoal, and of such high quality was the iron it produced, that the Carmarthen Cwmdwyfran forge was the last of the charcoal-fired iron furnaces which worked in the UK: it survived well into the 1830s.⁶⁰

By 1800, thanks to the high quality of the iron it produced, the forge in Carmarthen maintained three sloops for transport of raw and finished materials and it issued its own tokens. In 1717 the Cwmbran forge produced 20 tons of iron a year, while twenty years

⁵⁹ Trevor Thomas, *The Mineral Wealth of Wales*, (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), p. 187

⁶⁰ William Rees, *Industry Before the Industrial Revolution* vol. 1, pp. 309-312

later in 1737 it produced 60 tons a year.⁶¹ However, the production of these Carmarthen forges, while of high quality, was inevitably limited and following the Industrial Revolution they would have found it increasingly difficult to compete. In 1821 the last of the Carmarthen ironworks were finally transferred to Aberavon.⁶²

All industry consumes a large quantity of print in the form of invoices, posters, production notes, and so on and even an early eighteenth-century iron forge must have started to become a significant consumer of the jobbing press. Having such a large consumer of the output of a jobbing press would have provided a conducive environment for what were essentially inexperienced printers who were working with tired type and worn presses.

2.3 The English Print Industry in the Eighteenth-Century

The main development of the print trade in the eighteenth-century was not technical: despite a number of developments in the industry, from a purely technical point of view the press at the end of the century was still left largely untouched by the Industrial Revolution.⁶³ The printing works themselves were small, and even in 1800 they still consisted only of a master printer and his assistant, working mostly by hand.⁶⁴ What did change were the social relationships which formed the basis of how the book trade was organised. Following the Civil War, British industry as a whole had started to consolidate into joint-stock companies, all industry that is except the print trade which continued to be

⁶¹ William Rees, *Industry Before the Industrial Revolution* vol. 1, p. 311

⁶² William Rees, *Industry Before the Industrial Revolution* vol. 1, p. 311

⁶³ Plant, p. 188

⁶⁴ Michael Twyman, *Printing 1770-1970: an illustrated history of its development and uses in England* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970), p. 6

predominantly formed around an individual specialist artisan. As resistant as the print trade was to change, there were two key developments in the organisation of the industry in England during the eighteenth century. Firstly, the printer who also acted as publisher was replaced by the modern organisation where a publisher (bookseller) commissions a printer to produce the book on his behalf. Secondly, the print trade in England grew beyond its earlier, heavily regulated centres in London, Oxford, and Cambridge and moved into the regions.

Following the end of the Licensing Act in 1695, the London printers were naturally concerned to protect their trade. The end of the Licensing Act also meant that the right to copy, which had previously been closely controlled by the Stationers' Company, was lost. In 1710 the Copyright Act replaced the outdated Elizabethan patent system. It ensured that, despite losing economic regulation, the British print industry would continue to be regulated (albeit by a bourgeois publisher instead of the State). The Copyright Act passed the legal ownership of published work from the printer to the author, and consequently the modern idea of the author was born. Whereas before the Copyright Act of 1710 literary work was frequently published anonymously, from this point on literature would rely on the idea of the author as bourgeois sovereign individual.⁶⁵ Another affect the Copyright Act of 1710 was that the dominant role of booksellers within the industry was reinforced as they became disassociated from the inconveniences of running their own presses.

⁶⁵ There is an argument to be made that literature significantly changes as the technology of the print industry develops. The English novel was made possible because the supply of type, paper, and ink was improved after industrialisation. In the twentieth century the introduction of offset-litho (at first one-colour and then four-colour, and then modern ten-colour Heidelberg presses) meant that it became possible to produce colour work economically. At first two-colour offset prints were used to produce dust-covers and children's books, but as the technology developed, full-colour work became more common (now it is ubiquitous). In their turn, new digital technologies will inevitably impact upon how language is used and what narratives we choose to invest in as a society.

Specialisation within the print industry largely began within the eighteenth-century book trade. Bookbinding had always been a specialised sub-section of the trade. In the eighteenth century books were usually sold as loose sheets and it was up to the buyer to have the book bound by an itinerant bookbinder. This further reinforced the role of the bookseller at the top of the trade. During the eighteenth century, specialisation had introduced the notion of a hierarchical power structure and class division. In England the bookseller (publisher) in due course became the key controller of the publishing process. Eighteenth century English printers were commissioned by an independent publisher to print a book on their behalf, rather than printing a book and distributing it themselves as they had before. This reinforced the jobbing nature of print production, and at the same time it tended to concentrate the control of what was printed away from the State and put it instead into the hands of specialised publishers. The Copyright Act in effect moved control of literature from the government to those with the wealth and experience to finance its printing and distribution: namely, the nascent industrial bourgeoisie.

Piracy remained rife within the print industry, despite the legal protections offered by the Copyright Act. After the Welsh printer Thomas Jones moved to Shrewsbury at the end of the seventeenth century he found that his almanacs were quickly pirated. Fortunately Thomas Jones has left a full record of this piracy which Rees and Morgan have described as being 'like a serialised novel.'⁶⁶ Piracy committed abroad had always been a problem of the British book trade, it was so common in fact that some of the most important extant editions of Elizabethan works are pirated copies of English originals.⁶⁷ In the eighteenth century the single most significant problem was the piracy of English books

⁶⁶ Eiluned Rees and Gerald Morgan, 'Welsh Almanacks, 1680-1835: Problems of Piracy', *The Library* 1979, s6-I(2): 14-163 (p. 145).

⁶⁷ Plant, p. 11.

by Dublin printers, for which there was often no legal redress. The piratical Irish booksellers were so confident of their art that they boasted of being able to secure the sheets of any book being printed in London before the book was published.⁶⁸ There are examples where the Dublin piratical press was actually of much better quality than the London press. For example, an unauthorised Dublin edition was produced when Edward Davies's novel Elisa Powell was published in London in 1795; however, the pirated Irish edition is of far superior quality to the original and is much more professionally typeset.⁶⁹

London continued to dominate the English book market, despite the start of a significant movement of the print and bookselling trade to the English regions following the lapse of regulation in 1695. Just how difficult the process of regionalisation of the English print trade was in the eighteenth century can be seen in two examples of regional literary production: Tristram Shandy and The Lyrical Ballads. Laurence Sterne originally failed to find a London bookseller willing to produce his novel, Tristram Shandy; so he had the book printed in York instead, but he had to hide the disgrace of the novel's provincial production behind an imprint which reads simply: '1760'. The first edition of The Lyrical Ballads by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge was produced in 1798 by a Bristol bookseller, it was such a market failure that it forced its provincial publisher into bankruptcy. Within five days of the bankruptcy of its regional bookseller The Lyrical Ballads had been sold to John and Arthur Arch in London, whose production of the book became an instant success. The London edition of Lyrical Ballads is still frequently

⁶⁸ Plant, p. 120.

⁶⁹ See: Edward Davies, Elisa Powell, or Trials of Sensibility: A series of Original Letters Collected by a Welsh Curate (London: C. G. and J. Robinson, 1795); and, Edward Davies Elisa Powell (Dublin: Wogan, Byrne and Rice, 1795)

mistaken to be the first.⁷⁰ Despite piracy, disgrace, and bankruptcy the provincial book trade in England continued to grow throughout the eighteenth century. John Feather in his book on the English provincial book-trade uses The Universal British Directory as a source to show that in England and Wales in the 1790s there were 988 firms engaged in the book trade in 316 towns. Feather lists the towns in an appendix, and not a single one of them is Welsh.⁷¹

The print industry has always had a radical influence and towards the end of the eighteenth century the first British trade unions began to form in the print trade. First to develop were the friendly societies of the bookbinders: the Friends (1780), the Brothers (1783), and the City Brothers (1785). The three were united shortly afterwards as the London Consolidated Society of Journeymen Bookbinders.⁷² The bookbinders agitated for a reduction in the number of hours worked and on 25 April 1786 twenty-four bookbinders were indicted for unlawful conspiracy. When the case came to trial, nineteen were discharged and two were sentenced to serve two years in Newgate prison. In 1792 the compositors also formed a union, and the pressmen soon followed.⁷³ Plant links the origin of the early print unions to the technical advances in the print industry at the end of the eighteenth century.⁷⁴ Production is ultimately no more and no less than a series of social relationships, and in this example we have evidence that social relationships in the print industry had begun to change well before meaningful technical development had arrived.

Was Wales, like the north or south-west of England, just another provincial arm of

⁷⁰ John Feather, The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 110.

⁷¹ Feather, The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England, p. 190.

⁷² Plant, p. 377.

⁷³ Plant, p. 378.

⁷⁴ Plant, p. 378. For example, to a significant change in newspaper layout, the introduction of small capitals, and the loss of most double letters and of the long s.

the English publishing industry? There is always a tendency for Wales to think and act provincially, never more so than in the last 50 years as our heavy and manufacturing industries have all but disappeared and Welsh industry and culture has come to rely more and more on the injection of public money from Westminster. But does this mean that Wales has always thought and acted as just another of the English regions? One of the main aims of the Acts of Union of 1536 was to make the Welsh English, but Wales has never quite fitted in with these provincial ideals. In part the history of the Welsh print industry in the eighteenth century can be used as a good example of how Wales has resisted becoming a principality or a province. Although by the end of the eighteenth century the trade in England had been divided between a bookseller (publisher) who commissioned a printer to produce work on his behalf, in Wales the printer who also acted as a publisher survived into the twentieth century.

Press-making in England was a specialised trade which was dominated by London, as was type-founding.⁷⁵ In Wales the presses at this time were more likely to be either well-used second-hand presses which were obtained from Shrewsbury or (especially during the first half of the eighteenth century) made by a local carpenter. It may be useful at this point to draw further on the work of John Feather: in his article on British publishing he provides us with some statistical information for the eighteenth century book trade.⁷⁶ I have repeated his figures and have added to them those which W. Eilir Evans gives for the total number of books published in Wales during the same period (see Figure 2.2).⁷⁷ In figures the result is alarming: the total number of books published in England in the eighteenth century is

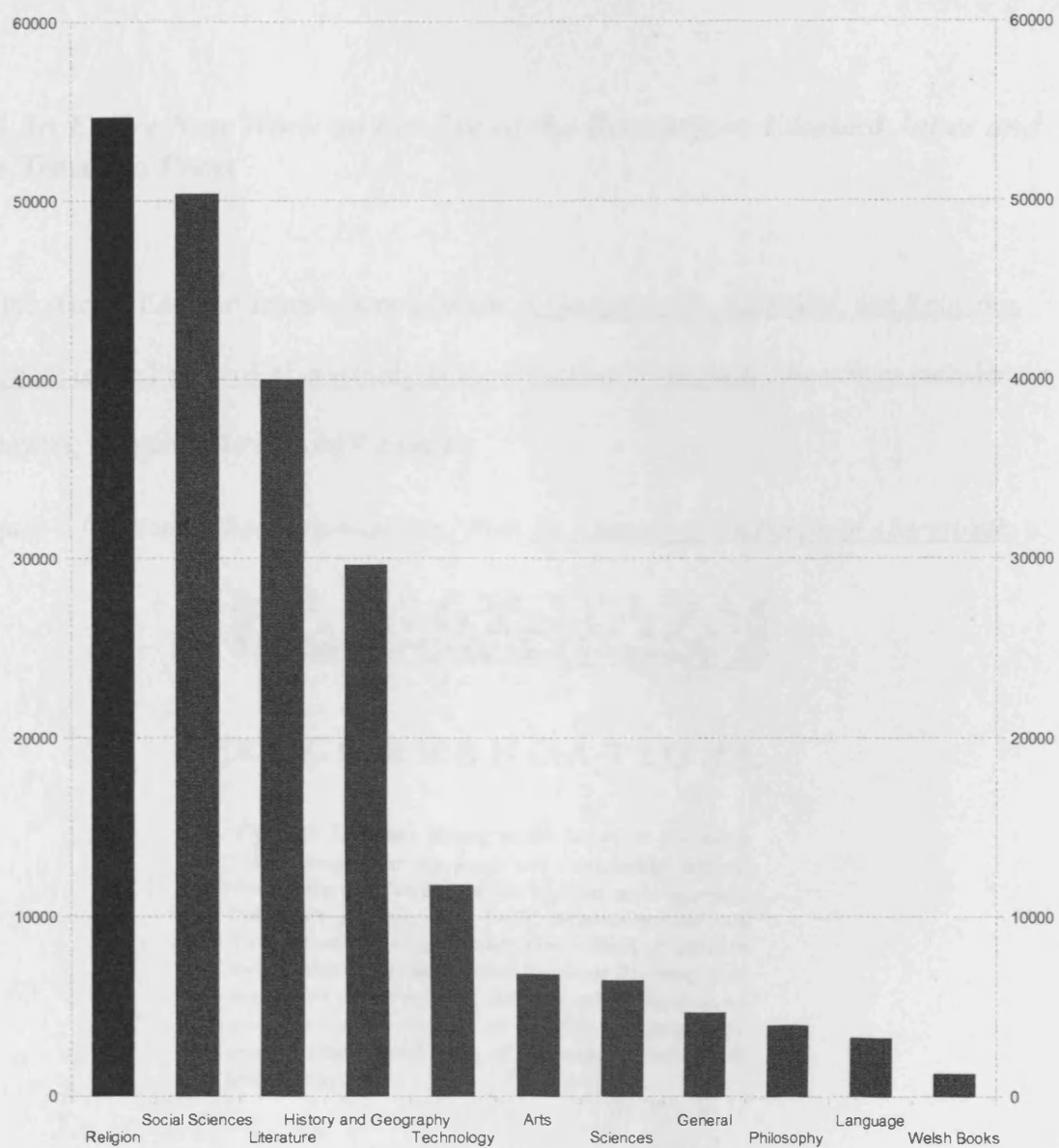
⁷⁵ Feather, p. 99.

⁷⁶ John Feather, 'British Publishing in the Eighteenth Century: a preliminary subject analysis' *The Library*, 1986, s6-VIII: 32-46 (p. 36).

⁷⁷ W. Eilir Evans, 'Welsh Publishing and Bookselling', p. 393. See Figure 2.2.

roughly 272,000 — the total number of books printed in Wales in the same period is 1,224.

If we include in the Welsh total the number of single-sheet ballads printed the figure comes to roughly 2,000—or a little less than 1% of the total for the United Kingdom. However, these figures mask the question of English regional book production and although the figure for Wales is in comparison small it is nevertheless significant: print capitalism in Wales followed its own course of development independently from that of England. The printing press arrived late in Wales but by the start of the Industrial Revolution, small as it was, it was beginning to thrive.



*Figure 2.2: A comparison of eighteenth century book production in Britain and Wales
(Source: Feather 'British Publishing in the Eighteenth Century: a preliminary subject
analysis' and W. Eilir Evans, 'Welsh Publishing and Bookselling')*

2.4 An Entire New Work on the Eve of the Revolution: Edmund Jones and the Trevecka Press

At the start of Edmund Jones's famous book, A Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystroth: in the County of Monmouth, the printer includes the following recommendations for the book:

Figure 2.3 'Printer's Recommendations,' from An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 8



RECOMMENDATIONS.

TH E author having in the sequel of this Book given so many good and remarkable instructions from one Parish, the like whereof never appear'd before in publick, may justly animate any curious Person that reads it, to desire that a like performance may be obtained from another Parish or Parishes, that may afford things notable, either from this Author, or from a more able hand; as it will be a means to recover some useful parts of knowledge, nearly lost in obscurity.

G. W. F.

TH I S work deserves recommendation, tho' at the same time, I am persuaded, it will recommend itself to the curious and inquisitive Reader,—because it is an entire new work, and on a new plan, comprehensive, and entertaining; where the Curious may find many interesting things, totally omitted, not only in any former work of the kind, but also, in all other kind of Books ever published.—

THE Author gives an accurate and circumstantial account of the Origin of the Parish; with a view of its progressive improvements from its first foundation to its present state— Tho' I am pretty well acquainted with the Contents of this Book, yet I would not be without it for twice his Value.

PRINTER.

At that time Aberystroth was a small rural Welsh-speaking Parish, of about 150 houses and not more than 500 people, in the mountainous Ebbw and Abertillery valleys of the county of Monmouth. Edmund Jones's history of the parish was published in 1779. It has since been described, with some justification, as the first parochial history written in Wales.⁷⁸ In 1778 the Duke of Beaufort issued a mineral lease at the head of the Ebbw valley to the Kendall family. In 1779 the first furnace of the Beaufort Ironworks was built on the lease. Edmund Jones's parochial history of a rural Welsh parish was published within a matter of weeks of the start of the Industrial Revolution in the area of Aberystroth. Over the next sixteen years, four iron works were established in the Ebbw Fawr valley (including two large iron works at Victoria and Ebbw Vale).⁷⁹ In 1795 the Nantyglo and Blaina Ironworks opened in the Tillery valley. By the end of the eighteenth century the picturesque rural vale which Jones describes had become two of the most intensively industrialised valleys in South Wales, and they would remain heavily industrialised until the collapse of Welsh industry at the end of the twentieth century.

When they first opened in 1778 the Ebbw Vale Ironworks were known locally by the original name of the village, Pen y Cae. Since the nineteenth century the names of both the parish of Aberystroth and the village of Pen y Cae have been lost. This slippage in names is typical of much of the iron-belt district, yet the loss of the name in the example of both Pen Y Cae and Aberystroth is so extreme that without knowing that the parish used to be called Aberystroth there would be nothing to connect either the name or Edmund

⁷⁸ Cadwlad [Thomas Christopher Evans], 'Neu Wreichion Oddiar yr Eingion: The Prophet of the Tranch' (1918): NLW MS. 7557B

⁷⁹ In 1790 Jeremiah Homfray (a son of a forge owner at Stewpony, near Stourbridge) and Walter Watkins established the more substantial Ebbw Vale ironworks to the south of the Beaufort works. In 1793 the Harfords, a Bristol firm of Quaker capitalists who also had interests in the neighbouring Nantyglo and Blaenavon iron works, joined the company. See Elizabeth Phillips, A History of the Pioneers of the Welsh Coalfield (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1925), p. 91.

Jones's book with the area. Indeed, when reading some of the twentieth-century references to Edmund Jones it is easy to believe that the authors have failed completely to understand the link between the old pre-industrial parish and the despoiled industrial townships.⁸⁰

Given the association between Aberystroth and Pen-y-Cae, and Ebbw Vale and Abertillery, we have available in this book a valuable record of the parish of Aberystroth on the eve of the Industrial Revolution.

2.4.1 Hen Deulu Trevecka: The Religious-Industrial Community of Howell Harris at Trevecka

That Edmund Jones's first parochial Welsh history happened to be written about the parish of Aberystroth on the cusp of the Industrial Revolution is in my opinion no accident.

Neither is it accidental that this book was published on the Trevecka Press. The press at Trevecka was part of a Welsh Calvinist Methodist religious commune known as 'the Family' (Teulu Trevecka) which formed around one of the two leaders of the eighteenth-century religious Revival in Wales, Howell Harris. In his book on the letters of the Trevecka Family, Morgan Hugh Jones describes the Family as 'the communistic Religious-Industrial Community at Trevecka.'⁸¹ M. H. Jones found it odd that in 1927 'a Lecturer in Economics' in his latest book The Industrial Revolution in South Wales has nothing to say about the Religious-Industrial Community at Trevecka, which was a forerunner of Robert Owen's Co-operative Movement and he suggests was one of the earliest stages of the

⁸⁰ See for example: Edgar Phillips, Edmund Jones: "The Old Prophet" (London: Robert Hale, 1959); and the more recent, The Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales, Edmund Jones ed. by John Harvey (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003).

⁸¹ M. H. Jones, The Trevecka Letters, or, The unpublished MSS. correspondence of Howell Harris and his contemporaries : an inventory of the letters with a digest of their contents to illustrate certain old and new features of the religious and social awakening in Wales during the 18th century (Caernarvon: Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, 1932), pp. 185-206.

Industrial Revolution in Wales.⁸² Jones may overstress his case a little here, as we have seen the Industrial Revolution had any number of precursors, yet the case for the Old Family at Trevecka (Hen Deulu Trevecka) is at the very least compelling; sadly, however, Hen Deulu Trevecka remains neglected to this day. For some reason the Family have escaped from Welsh history, especially industrial history: the accepted creation narrative of industry in South Wales has become that of Guest at Dowlais, and Bacon and Crawshay at Cyfarthfa or, in other words, of English dominance, for example:

‘The bosses always makes what pays ‘em best... What the hell do they care? None of ‘em belongs here. They came, the damned lot of ‘em, from God knows where up England way. The Crawshays; the Guests; Bacon an’ Homfray; Bruce an’ Fothergill; an’ the rest... They didn’t come here for our good—nor to stay here after they’d done their eye-good. No fear. Now that they’ve turned the place shang-de-vang they’re on the wing.’ (*Unfinished Journey*, p. 14)

There is, however, another narrative which is waiting to be recovered, that of the central role played by Welsh religious dissenters and Nonconformists, like the Family, in the Industrial Revolution in Wales.

Howell Harris had always been a fiery preacher. In 1739 he met John Wesley in Bristol, only one day after being bailed from arrest and imprisonment under the Riot Act for open-air preaching in Pontypool. As early as the autumn of 1736 Harris had formed a number of Private Societies or *Seiadau*, including an earlier one at Trefecca which was formed of three or four hundred ‘other awakened souls’ in August 1735.⁸³ Harris played an important role when the first Methodist Association was formed in Watford, Caerphilly in 1743. Following the Rupture of Welsh Methodism in 1751 Harris split with the followers

⁸² *The Trevecka Letters*, p. 187. Jones is probably referring here to: John Morgan Rees, *An Introduction to the Industrial Revolution in South Wales* (Wrexham: Hughes & Son, 1927).

⁸³ *The Trevecka Letters*, p. 220.

of the other great eighteenth-century leader of the Welsh Methodist Revival, Daniel Rowland. The reasons why the movement split were in part personal (Rowland disapproved of Harris's erratic conduct and personal life) and in part theological (Harris emphasised the divinity of Christ and wanted to keep the movement within the Established Church).

Following the Rupture, Harris withdrew to Trefecca, the small hamlet where he had been born in 1714. In 1752 the first member of the Family arrived at Trevecka and the last surviving member, William James, died in 1847.⁸⁴ It may seem odd from our modern perspective that the founder of Welsh Methodism and one of the leaders of the first Revival, Howell Harris started a commune in the middle of the Welsh countryside. It was, however, Harris who established the first Methodist Societies (Seiadau) and Associations (Sasiynau) and he was inspired by and closely connected with the Revivalist eighteenth-century Moravian communities on the continent.⁸⁵ Although he was a Calvinist, Harris was closely associated with the Moravian Association. He tried, unsuccessfully, for the rest of his life to unite the Methodists and the Moravians. There is strong evidence to show that the Family at Trevecka was modelled on the Moravian Religious-Industrial communities at Halle, Hernhut, and Fulneck.⁸⁶ In 1753 the Family had sixty members who were engaged mostly in agriculture and the wool trade. Soon after the Family introduced to Wales many of the new developments in agriculture which were central to the British agricultural revolution (e.g. turnip growing for livestock); however, when they introduced these new developments they did so in the absence of the inclosures which were the most destructive

⁸⁴ The Trevecka Letters, p. 187.

⁸⁵ Howell Harris's connection with the Moravians is surprisingly well-documented; see for example: M.H. Jones's Trevecka Letters or the later Selected Trevecka Letters (1747-1794) transcribed and annotated by Gomer Morgan Roberts (Caernarvon: The Calvinist Methodist Historical Society, 1962).

⁸⁶ The Trevecka Letters, p. 190.

aspect of the Agricultural Revolution in England. In November 1755 Harris recorded one hundred souls who were living in the Religious-Industrial Community at Trevecka (32 men, 38 women, and 30 children). New members brought with them new trades and now there were, 'Above 70 distinct Trades if [they were carried out] in London.'⁸⁷

The actual date at which a printing press was established in Trevecka by the Family is disputed. John Ballinger in his 1905 article on the Trevecka Press tells us that there is no record available for the origin or operation of the press, but that there was at least one printer in the Family before 1770. The first book published on the Trevecka press to have survived is dated 1766 in Roman numerals, but Ballinger suggests that this date is in error and should instead read 1776. Although Ballinger is uncertain of the date of the start of the Trevecka press, he finds that it was worked until 1805.⁸⁸ Ifano Jones typically disagrees with his colleague Ballinger and instead dates the erection of the Trevecka press to 1753, or the first year proper of the Family.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, in his study of the Trevecka letters, M. H. Jones specifically disagrees with both, dating the origin of the Trevecka press, from the evidence of the letters and diaries, instead to 1756. In 1757 M. H. Jones lists the year's developments at Trevecka: 'Enlarged Workshop, Currier, Barker, Bookbinding and Printing, Tiler, Gardener, Shoemaker, Tailor, Smith.' In 1759 M. H. Jones records that books have been printed for the first time at Trevecka.⁹⁰ Ballinger's date of 1776 has to be much too late, but Ifano Jones's date of 1753 has to be too early as Howell Harris wrote in 1754 that a family of a hundred had settled at Trevecka: 'having nothing outwardly

⁸⁷ The Trevecka Letters, p. 200.

⁸⁸ Ballinger, p. 228.

⁸⁹ Ifano Jones, p. 75-6.

⁹⁰ The Trevecka Letters, p. 198.

adequate to provide for such a family, nor any manufactory set up.'⁹¹ The little-known record of M. H. Jones has to be the most accurate of the three. The printing press at Trevecka was erected in 1756, and three years later it produced its first book.

If the precise date at which a printing press was put into production in Trevecka is contended, we can be certain that the press itself was highly productive in its lifetime. In 1905 John Ballinger records that the Welsh department of Cardiff Free Library (at that time an active, and impressive, archive) had in its collection eighty of the 'hundred or so' books which were published on the Trevecka press.⁹² Surprisingly, given that the Trevecka Family were a religious community, the Trevecka press itself published a diverse range of material in both languages, including the expected religious work (which included a pirated edition of the Welsh Bible), a two-volume Pharmacopoeia, five books (religious and semi-secular) by Edmund Jones, and poetry, including that of Thomas Edwards (Twm o'r Nant).

The Trevecka press had its own bookbinder, highly unusual at the time as until the 1770s most books would have been sold by the printer as loose sheets or paper-bound; it was at that time expected that buyers would themselves get the book permanently bound.⁹³ Binding was always a separate and distinct trade from printing and even into the middle of the nineteenth-century it was still being done manually and labour-intensively, in the country usually by itinerant book-binders.⁹⁴ The Trevecka press was unusual in having its own in-house book-binder, it anticipated the modern division of labour within the modern

⁹¹ Howell Harris, A brief account of the life of Howell Harris, Esq / extracted from papers written by himself ; to which is added a concise collection of his letters from the year 1738, to 1772 (Trevecka: The Trevecka Family, 1791), p. 80.

⁹² Ballinger, p. 228.

⁹³ Plant, p. 212.

⁹⁴ Plant, p. 346.

print industry (i.e. pre-press, press, and post-press).

While in Trevecka, Howell Harris had a hand in establishing the influential Breconshire Agricultural Society. In 1757 the Society offered premiums for finding coal and ore, and distributed turnips and potatoes to the poor as the price of corn was high. In 1759 the Society gave turnip seeds away free to encourage local farmers to adopt the new farming methods. Whereas in much of England the introduction of growing turnips and swedes as feed for livestock went hand in hand with the inclosures and the forced removal of the people from their land, in Breconshire, thanks to the influence of Howell Harris and the Family, there was at least an attempt to conduct the Agricultural Revolution in the interest of the people and not against them.⁹⁵

The Trevecka press had available two fonts of type (small pica and long primer), a font of diamond which was reserved for the printing of a Welsh Bible, and a small case of ornaments.⁹⁶ As well as a hundred or so books, the press produced jobbing work, hymns, marwnadau (elegies), as well as a magazine Cylch-grawn Cymraeg [Welsh Magazine] which was produced by Morgan John Rhys who was a native of Llanbradach, near Caerphilly (and a member of the chapels of Watford and Groeswen). A Baptist minister, the radical Morgan John Rhys [later Rhees] had stood on the ruins of the Bastille during the French Revolution and he had 'advocated the reform of Parliament and the abolition of class privileges, oppressive taxes, and the waste of public money by wars and bribery.'⁹⁷ In 1792 Morgan John Rhys was in Trevecka supervising the printing of Y Cylch-grawn Cymraeg. Only five editions of the magazine (two of which were printed on the Trevecka

⁹⁵ The Trevecka Letters, p. 198.

⁹⁶ Ballinger, The Trevecka Press p. 243.

⁹⁷ Evans, John James, 'Rhys, Morgan John (Morgan ab Ioan Rhys; 1760-1804)' Welsh Biography Online. Available at: <<http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-RHYS-JOH-1760.html>> [Accessed 16 August 2008].

press) were produced before Rhys was forced to flee the country for America in 1794 after he his radical activities had come to the notice of the English Government.⁹⁸ In America he famously campaigned against slavery, met ‘Anthony Wayne’s victorious American army in the west with a lecture on Indian property rights’, and founded the successful Welsh settlement which became the county of Cambria in Philadelphia, before establishing the disastrous Welsh community at Beula.⁹⁹ It was typical for the Trevecka press to have been associated with such a well-connected Welsh radical.

In Carmarthen in 1770 the Rev. Peter Williams discovered that ‘by adding notes the rights of the King’s printers and the universities in the Bible could be evaded’, and he brought out an edition of 8,000 unauthorised copies of a Welsh Family Bible.¹⁰⁰ This edition of the Bible included John Canne’s notes, which were translated into Welsh by Peter Williams and David Jones of Pontypool. After three years of work, in 1789-90 the Trevecka press produced its own unauthorised edition of the Welsh Family Bible. While M. H. Jones calls this edition the greatest work produced by the Trevecka press,¹⁰¹ Ballinger describes it as,

A small Welsh Bible, suitable for the pocket, and to bring it within reach of the poor, it was to be issued in parts at one shilling each... There is no record of the number sold in parts, but disputes arose between Peter Williams and the Calvinistic Methodists about points of doctrine, and the Bible is said to have resulted in a serious loss to its chief promoter.¹⁰²

As soon as the Bible had been printed, the printers started to typeset the autobiography of

⁹⁸ Ballinger, p. 233 and Gwyn A. Williams, ‘Morgan John Rhees and his Beula’, Welsh History Review III, 1966-7, 441-72 (p. 443).

⁹⁹ Gwyn A. Williams, ‘Morgan John Rhees and his Beula’, p. 443.

¹⁰⁰ Ballinger, The Trevecka Press, p. 243.

¹⁰¹ The Trevecka Letters, pp. 203-4.

¹⁰² Ballinger, pp. 243-4.

Howell Harris.¹⁰³ The book was published by the Trevecka Family in 1792 as, Hanes ferr o fywyd Howell Harris yscwier: a dynnwyd alln o'i ysgrifeniadau ef ei hun, at ba un y chwanegwyd crynodeb byrr o'i lythyrau o'r flwyddyn 1738 hyd y flwydyn 1772 [A brief account of the life of Howell Harris: extracted from his own writings, to which are added a short summary of his letters from 1738 to 1772]. However, the output of work from the Trevecka press has a notable absence in that it printed no ballads. This absence can be explained because until the start of the nineteenth century the ballad sheets, which would dominate so much of Victorian Welsh cultural life, were a strictly North Walian literary form.¹⁰⁴

The Family suffered after Howell Harris's death in 1773 and most of the trades carried out in the Religious-Industrial community were slowly abandoned, all except the press which survived until the death of Howell Harris's deputies: Evan Roberts in 1804 and Evan Moses in 1805. After the death of Evan Moses, the Trevecka press was moved to Talgarth where it continued to be worked by Maurice Hughes.¹⁰⁵ Ifano Jones reports a rumour which comes from the Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes y Methodistaid Calфинаidd [Journal of the Calvinist Methodist Historical Society] (November 1918) that after 1805 the old wooden Trevecka press was 'carried to Brecon and deposited in a lumber room.'¹⁰⁶ Jones is rightly sceptical about this report and it would be highly unlikely that the press used by the ex-Trevecka printer only a few miles up the road in Talgarth was any other but the old Trevecka press. The last-known print run on the Trevecka press was produced by

¹⁰³ A brief account of the life of Howell Harris, Esq., p. 80.

¹⁰⁴ J. H. Davies, A Bibliography of Welsh Ballads Printed in the 18th Century (London: Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and the Welsh Bibliographical Society, 1908), p. v.

¹⁰⁵ The Trevecka Letters, p. 199.

¹⁰⁶ Ifano Jones, p. 83.

Maurice Hughes in Talgarth in 1829.¹⁰⁷ In 1840 the last of the Family were finally pensioned off by the Methodists and Trevecka became home to the Countess of Huntingdon's college.

What makes Trevecka such an interesting example of an eighteenth-century Welsh press is that it demonstrates the extent to which the Nonconformist Revival had gripped Welsh society. It was not until the middle to late nineteenth century that this grip on the Welsh print industry began to be relaxed, and then only a little. Well into the twentieth century many Welsh print firms such as McLay's were well known as Nonconformist presses. Ballinger describes the Family press simply, 'The [Trevecka] press was largely used for propaganda in connection with the religious revival, but there was also a certain amount of commercial work executed.'¹⁰⁸ In this dual commercial and propagandist role the Trevecka press is typical of many in the history of the Welsh print industry.

Yet, despite being established primarily for propaganda purposes by the Methodists of Teulu Trevecka the press itself printed a diverse range of material, as we have seen, including one which the printer (probably one of the Hughes family who worked the Trevecka press) felt deserved recommendation 'because it is an entire new work, and on a new plan, comprehensive, and entertaining; where the Curious may find many interesting things, totally omitted, not only in any former work of the kind, but also in all other Books ever published.—' (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 8) How new a work Edmund Jones's book in fact was will be examined in the final section of this chapter.

¹⁰⁷ Ifano Jones, p. 83.

¹⁰⁸ Ballinger, p. 230.

2.4.2 An Entire New Work: Edmund Jones's Aberystroth and Apparitions

Lord prosper not Anabaptism,

But let it wither daily. (Edmund Jones, Diary (1768): NLW MS 7026A, p. 117)

'Edmund Jones was born at Penllwyn in the parish of Aberystroth, near Pontypool, on April 1st, 1702. Some of the detractors of this extraordinary man have gone so far as to say that a birthday on All Fool's Day was singularly appropriate for such an eccentric character.'¹⁰⁹ Edmund Jones was the son of John Lewis: he adopted his father's Christian name as his surname following Welsh custom, but in the hands of the local English-speaking Anglican priest John (or, more correctly, Shôn) became Jones. It is of note that Phillips says that Aberystroth was near Pontypool; he could just as easily have said that Aberystroth became industrial Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo, and Abertillery; indeed, Ebbw Vale would have made more sense as at that time the steelworks in Ebbw Vale was still working one of the largest steel-rolling mills in Europe. This slip which obscures an industrial context is typical of the modern reception of An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth.

Edmund Jones is better known either as Edmund Jones the Tranch (because he lived in the Tranch, Pontypool) or the 'Old Prophet' (a name that he earned through his prophetic revelations). Edmund Jones was always something of a prophet and numerous examples exist. In August 1769, for example, he turned down an invitation to the ordination of a friend in Herefordshire because there would be a terrific downpour of rain. On the day of the ordination the rains duly arrived and the ministers who attended were forced to make their way through the floods, arriving weary and soaked, all, that is, except

¹⁰⁹ Edgar Phillips, Edmund Jones: "The Old Prophet" (London: Robert Hale, 1959), p. 11.

Edmund Jones.¹¹⁰

Edmund Jones, the old dissenting Independent minister, was a particularly important influence on the development of Methodism in Wales, a role in which he acted as a connection between the old Welsh Dissenters and the new Welsh Revivalists. It was Edmund Jones, for example, who first brought Howel Harris to preach in Monmouthshire in the spring of 1738. So insistent was Edmund Jones on this occasion that he walked all the way to Trefecca and refused to return until it was in the company of Howel Harris.¹¹¹ The latter's preaching in the parishes of Aberystroth, Mynyddislwyn and Bedwellty was such a success that he converted many, including John Powell and Morgan John Lewis, who later became the leaders of Methodism in Monmouthshire.¹¹² Edmund Jones would have been well-known to the Family at Trevecka, so much so that when Jones published his books he chose to do so on the press at Trevecka instead of using a more local printer in Pontypool (who would have been located at most only a mile or two up the road from where he lived in the Tranch).

Edmund Jones was unusual as an old Dissenter in that he disagreed with those Revivalists who wished to keep Methodism within the established church. He opposed the first Methodist Association when it was formed at the Dissenting Presbyterian Watford Chapel, Caerphilly, in 1743 because it stayed within the established church.¹¹³ Edmund

¹¹⁰ Edgar Phillips, pp. 21-2.

¹¹¹ Edgar Phillips, p. 49-50.

¹¹² Annie Grace Bowen-Jones, 'Edmund Jones' in The National Library of Wales: Dictionary of Welsh Biography <<http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-JONE-EDM-1702.html>> [accessed 10 November 2008].

¹¹³ Dissenters had been holding meetings in the Caerphilly area since 1660, and in 1739 they were able to build Watford Chapel. The first Minister of the Chapel in Watford was a friend of Howell Harris. Another of the early Ministers of Watford Chapel was David Williams who was a friend of both Morgan John Rhys and Benjamin Franklin (who founded the Royal Literary fund and in 1792 helped to draft a new French constitution). For further information see, Dacey *et al.*, Some Historic Buildings of the Rhymney Valley (Hengoed: Rhymney Valley District Council, 1979), pp. 45-6.

Jones managed to convert some of the Methodist Societies into Dissenting churches and in Caerphilly he helped to establish the chapel at Groeswen from a group of dissatisfied Methodists from Watford. Under Jones's influence, Groeswen Chapel quickly left the Methodist society and became an Independent Presbyterian church.¹¹⁴ Never a rich man, Edmund Jones sold his library of books to raise the funds to build his own chapel in the Tranch, Pontypool. Despite settling in Pontypool, Jones continued his preaching tours and he was a well-known and respected character in most of eighteenth-century Wales: 'In 1782 [when he was 80 Edmund Jones] travelled 400 miles on foot in North Wales... even in 1789 when 87 years of age, he preached 405 times.'¹¹⁵ No doubt this meant that Edmund Jones was well placed when he came to write his Apparitions of Spirits in the County of Monmouth and the Principality of Wales.

¹¹⁴ Edgar Phillips, p. 42 and 46. Groeswen Chapel is in line of sight with Watford Chapel, something which would not have been lost on Edmund Jones.

¹¹⁵ Edmund Jones, Welsh Biography Online

A Bibliography of Edmund Jones:

1745

Solomon Caradoc Owen, Dail pren y bywyd, neu, Jechydwriaeth [sic] y cenhedloedd trwy efengyl Iesu Grist : wedi ei hagoryd a'i chymmwyso mewn pregeth ar Dad. xxii. ad. 2, a'r rhan ddiweddaf: Pennau'r hon a ddysgwyd mewn breuddwyd, yr 20fed o fis Mawrth, 1742 / gan Solomon Owen Caradoc, ac a 'scrifennwyd gan mwyaf ganddo ei hun yn Saeson-aeg ; ac a wnaed yn awr yn gyhoeddus er lles cyffredinol i genedl y Cymru gan Edmund Jones (Caerfyrddin : Argraphwyd gan Samuel Lewis, 1745)

Solomon Caradoc Owen, The Leaves of the Tree of Life: Or, The Nations Healed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Opened and Applied in a Sermon upon Rev. xxii. 2v. The Heads of which were learnt in a Dream, March, 20th, 1742. By Solomon Owen Caradoc and written mostly by him in English. And now made Publick for the Common Benefit of the Welch Nation by Edmund Jones (Carmarthen: printed by Samuel Lewis, 1745)

1748

Solomon Caradoc Owen, The Evil and Punishment of Not Loving the Lord Jesus Christ (London: J. Oswald, 1748)

1753

The miraculous increase of Jacob's flock opened and applied, from Genesis xxx. 25. to the end by Solomon Owen Caradoc and published by Edmund Jones.. (London:Printed for J. Oswald, 1753)

1771

Spiritual Botany 2 vols. [1771], MS, Haines Collection, Newport Central Library

1776

Two Sermons, First Shewing the Misery of Those Who are Without the Light of Christ : Second Shewing the Felicity of Being in the State of the Light of Grace (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1776)

1777

Samson's Hair : An Eminent Representation of the Church of God, in Two Parts; to which is added, two sermons... (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1777)

1779

A Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystroth: in the County of Monmouth: to which are added, memoirs of several persons of note, who lived in the said parish (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1779)

1780

A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits, in the County of Monmouth, and the Principality of Wales: with other notable relations from England, together with observations about them, and instructions from them : designed to confute and to prevent the infidelity of denying the being and apparition of spirits, which tends to irreligion and atheism (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1780)

<p><u>A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales: To which is Added the Remarkable Account of the Apparition in Sunderland with other Notable Relations from England, together with observations about them and instruction from them</u> (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1780) [a second edition of <u>Apparitions of Spirits</u>]</p>
<p>1781 <u>Two Sermons, First of the Creatures Going into Noah's Ark; Typically Representing the Salvation of God's Elect Church in and by Jesus Christ. Second of the creatures going out of the Ark to Mount Ararat, Typically Representing the Removal of the Church Militant out of the State of Grace into the State of Glory</u> (Trefecca: Hen Deulu Trevecka, 1781) [B.L. Catalogue]</p>
<p>1782 <u>Dwy Bregeth</u> (Trefecca: Trevecka, 1782) [Two Sermons]</p>
<p>1813 <u>A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits, in the County of Monmouth, and the Principality of Wales</u> (Newport, Monmouthshire : Printed and sold by E. Lewis, [etc.], 1813)</p>
<p>[1958] Diaries [Contents: Ten sides of Haines MS. 17, N.L.W. MS. 7557B (beginning with Prophet Jones memorial); all the handwritten notes in N.L.W. MS. 7025A; all the handwritten notes in N.L.W. MS. 7026A.] (Aberystwyth: NLW, 1958)</p>

Table 2.1 Edmund Jones's Bibliography

The copy of Solomon Owen Caradoc's Dail pren y bwyd¹¹⁶ which is located in the archives of Cardiff University contains an elusive note written in the hand of Aneurin Lewis: the note says quite simply, "Ffugenw Edmund Jones ei hun!" [A pseudonym of Edmund Jones himself?]. The book was published or, to be more accurate, printed by Samuel Lewis in Carmarthen in 1745. Eight years later and the names of the Rev. Edmund Jones and Solomon Owen Caradoc are once again linked. Printed in London for J. Oswald

¹¹⁶ The full translation of the title is The leaves of the tree of life: the nations healed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ; opened and applied in a sermon upon Rev. xxii, 20, latter part. The heads of which learnt in a dream, March 20th, 1742, by Solomon Caradoc, a shepherd in Wales, and now made public for the common benefit of the Welsh nation. I am indebted to Cadrawd who included this translation of Solomon Owen Caradoc's book in his 1918 article on Edmund Jones: 'Neu Wreichion Oddiar yr Einging' ['Or Sparks from the Anvil']. Source: NLW MS. 7557B.

is The miraculous increase of Jacob's flock opened and applied, from Genesis xxx. 25. to the end (1753) which claims to have been written by Solomon Owen Caradoc and published by Edmund Jones. While it is more usual for The miraculous increase of Jacob's flock to be assumed to be Jones's first book, it is perhaps appropriate in the context of this analysis of the links between Welsh industry and the Welsh print trade that Aneirin Lewis should have found Edmund Jones's first book to have been produced in Carmarthen in 1745.

Solomon Owen Caradoc is an elusive character in the archive; he is only linked with these two books, and as such there is no reason to doubt Aneirin Lewis's note that S.O.C. (as it often appears) is in fact Edmund Jones writing under a pseudonym. Why he would do so is another question altogether. There is, perhaps, an answer of sorts to be found in his only surviving diary, where Edmund Jones has left a record of his antagonistic relationship with the local Anabaptists. In one important example his poor relationship with the Welsh Anabaptists appears to have become something more serious: 'Haslet, an Irishman of Marshfield, and John Davies of Wotton who stole my letter to his father begot it to a Tutor who sent it to London. Seek to do me mischief.'¹¹⁷ The note itself is obscure, necessarily so perhaps. Could it be that Edmund Jones in 1768 was being monitored by the English State for signs of republicanism? He certainly would not have been the first, nor was he the last Welshman who had been monitored by the British State for signs of political radicalism. As we have seen, in 1794 the Nonconformist minister Morgan John Rhees of Llanbradach was forced to flee Britain for the new American republic because of his radicalism and in the nineteenth century there is evidence that at least one radical Welsh

¹¹⁷ Edmund Jones, Diary (1768) (NLW MS 7025A), p. 112

newspaper was being actively monitored by the Home Office in London.¹¹⁸ In light of this, Jones's use of the pseudonym Solomon Owen Caradoc could be seen to be a politically expedient manoeuvre by one of the more radical voices of Welsh Dissent in the eighteenth century; and, his distrust and dislike of Anabaptists is more than theological—it is personal and political.

In 1776 Edmund Jones began his professional association with the press at Trevecka: over the next six years he produced five books on the Trevecka press. The first two books are English-language sermons:

Two sermons, first shewing the misery of those who are without the light of Christ : second shewing the felicity of being in the state of the light of grace (1776); and, Samson's hair : an eminent representation of the Church of God, in two parts : to which is added, two sermons... (1777)

In 1779 the Trevecka press published one of Edmund Jones's most well-known books:

A geographical, historical, and religious account of the parish of Aberystroth in the County of Monmouth. To which are added, Memoirs of several persons of note, who lived in the said parish

And then in 1780 the Trevecka press printed the other book which has made Edmund Jones famous:

A relation of apparitions of spirits, in the county of Monmouth, and the principality of Wales : with other notable relations from England, together with observations about them, and instructions from them : designed to confute and to prevent the infidelity of denying the being and apparition of spirits, which tends to irreligion and atheism

Shortly afterwards a second edition of Apparitions of Spirits was put to press:

¹¹⁸ See Chapter 5, p. 215

A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales; To which is Added the Remarkable Account of the Apparition in Sunderland with other Notable Relations from England, together with observations about them and instruction from them

This is a new edition to which has been added several stories from England which are written in a different hand. This edition must have been quickly brought to the press as it includes the same galleys that produced the original Apparitions of Spirits. The catalogue of the National Library of Wales lists one final book by Edmund Jones which was published on the Trevecka press:

Dwy bregeth : y gyntaf am y creaduriaid yn myned i mewn i Arch Noa, yr hyn ydoedd gysgod o iachawdwriaeth etholedig Eglwys Dduw yn a thrwy Iesu Grist; yr ail am y creaduriaid yn myned allan o'r arch i Fynydd Ararat ... (1782)

Edmund Jones started as a Welsh-language writer, and ended as one.

In his article of 1918 Cadrawd (i.e. the blacksmith Thomas C. Evans) describes the manuscripts that Edmund Jones left to us. The first is the manuscript of Apparitions of Spirits, which at that time was part of the Wooding library collection which had been acquired by Cardiff Corporation for the Cardiff Free Library collection.¹¹⁹ The second manuscript is of Edmund Jones's unpublished herbal, A Spiritual Botany, which is currently located in the Haines collection in Newport Central Library. Edmund Jones includes a list of herbs in his only surviving diary, which is dated 1768 (see: NLW MS 70925A, pp. 15-18): many of the herbs which he lists are native plants such as Wild Valerian (no. 18) and Betony (no. 40); many are still recognisable garden herbs, such as Sweet Marjoram (no. 43), Rosemary (no. 2), and Marygold (no. 68); while others are more

¹¹⁹ The location of this manuscript is currently unknown to the author.

obscure, such the Herb Lewelin (no. 12) and W. Hemp (no. 50). Cadrawd describes an earlier reference to Spiritual Botanology:

In the articles on Edmund Jones in the Adolygydd, vol. 1, pp. 100-118 and pp. 267-301...we are informed that a good deal of the poetry composed by the 'Old Prophet' had been lost. 'We have a list of some 68 different herbs of which he had sung and from the use of which he had greatly benefited. In this list are nearly all the common garden herbs are mentioned, with a good number of the most familiar wild herbs common in fields and hedges.' (Cadrawd [Thomas Christopher Evans], 'Neu Wreichion Oddiar yr Eingion' (1918): NLW MS 7557B)

In his diary the 'Old Prophet,' Edmund Jones, lists 69 herbs and he is likely to have used this list as the basis of his unpublished herbal. In his diary Edmund Jones simply lists the herbs, but in Spiritual Botanology he describes the herbs through a dialogue between two fictional characters (NLW MS 7557B). Spiritual Botanology had been prepared for print as it includes a preface and a title page; I would suggest that either Edmund Jones tried, but failed, to find subscribers for the book or that he planned to print it but never gathered enough funds to do so. Why Edmund Jones's Spiritual Botanology was not printed by the Trevecka Family is not clear but amongst their bibliography is Nathaniel Williams's Pharmacopoeia, or Medical Admonitions in English and Welsh (1793-6).

Following his death in 1793 Edmund Jones's library was inherited by his nephew, aside that is from those books which went to the Ebenezer Church, Pontnewynydd in Pontypool. Included in the inheritance was a number of manuscripts and diaries. Included in the collection was the manuscript of Edmund Jones's autobiography. On receipt of his inheritance, Jones's nephew promptly sold two cart loads of manuscripts to a grocer in Trosnant, Pontypool who used the to wrap the daily groceries. William Roberts (Nefydd), a printer and preacher from Blaenau, later managed to rescue a small portion of the

remaining manuscripts that had survived the unfortunate entrepreneurial spirit of Edmund Jones's nephew.¹²⁰ Fortunately the Diary for 1768 was saved, but Edmund Jones's autobiography has disappeared and it has to be assumed that the manuscript was slowly thrown on the fire after it had been used to wrap groceries in Trosnant over two hundred years ago.¹²¹

Several authorities list the first edition of Apparitions of Spirits as published in 1776 and printed in Bristol.¹²² I would suggest that this early date be discounted as in error for two reasons: firstly, no copy of this edition survives in the catalogues of any public archive; and secondly, the text (as shown below) is informed by his Account of the Parish of Aberystwith which was published in 1779. The first edition of Apparitions of Spirits has to be the Trevecka edition of 1780; the second was produced shortly afterwards and added a number of stories from English sources. In 1813 the original Apparitions of Spirits was republished by Evan Lewis on the press which he had established on Westgate Street, Newport in 1810. The imprint of this third edition is worth giving in detail:

Newport,
Monmouthshire:
Printed and Sold by E. Lewis,
Bookseller, Stationer, and Bookbinder;
Etheridge and Tibbins:
Sold also by Crosby and Co, Stationer's
Court, London; C. Frost, Broad -Street,

¹²⁰ Cadrawd [Thomas Christopher Evans], 'Neu Wreichion Oddiar yr Eingion' (1918): NLW MS. 7557B

¹²¹ 'Notes on the Bibliography of Monmouthshire', p. 242. The Diary that survives is now located in the National Library Collection in Aberystwyth.

¹²² See for example, W. Haines, 'Notes on the Bibliography of Monmouthshire', in The Library, 1896, s1-8: 239-247, (p. 241).

Bristol; and most booksellers
in town and country.
1813.

Samuel Etheridge had established his press in the High Street, Newport by 1812. John Tibbins was another Newport printer, but by the end of 1815 he had moved to Cardiff.¹²³ Crosby and Co. of London at the time was the fourth most prolific publisher of novels in the UK.¹²⁴ Both of the Welsh printers had strong links to radicalism, and both were later involved in Chartism. Ifano Jones describes how in 1820 Samuel Etheridge's Letter 2nd To the Burgesses of Newport Monmouthshire was printed on his behalf by Richard Lloyd on his Cardiff-based press. Jones feels that this implies that there must have been a prior, first letter to the Burgesses of Newport, in Ifano Jones's own words: 'which appears to be the first of the Chartist tracts printed at Cardiff and Newport.'¹²⁵ John Frost the insurgent Chartist leader, who in 1839 famously led the Chartists to the Westgate Hotel in Newport, called Etheridge 'his printer.'¹²⁶ The third edition of Apparitions of Spirits was reprinted in 1813 by one of the radical presses of industrial South Wales. At first sight a book of fairies, ghosts, and ghouls may seem an odd choice for a radical press but the radicalism which drove Chartism grew in the heart of the now industrial Parish of Aberystroth which was by now better known as Ebbw Vale, Blaina, Beaufort, Nant-y-glo, and Abertillery – all towns which were centres of the Welsh iron industry. The religious radicalism of the Revival in

¹²³ Ifano Jones, p. 243.

¹²⁴ A. A. Mandal, 'Making Austen Mad: Benjamin Crosby and the Non-Publication of Susan' The Review of English Studies 57:231 (2006):507-525.

¹²⁵ Ifano Jones, p. 241. Ifano Jones here adds the following note: 'See the entries on pp. 191-2 of the catalogue of the Welsh Library at Cardiff.' These pages include a list of pamphlets which were published by John Frost between the early 1820s and the early 1830s, most of them written in the form of open letters and many of them printed by Etheridge, see: Ifano Jones and John Ballinger, The Catalogue of Printed Literature in the Welsh Department (Cardiff: Free Libraries Committee; London: H. Sotheman, 1898).

¹²⁶ Ifano Jones, p. 241.

the eighteenth century was the natural context out of which the political radicalism of the early nineteenth century grew. It is appropriate then that the early radical Chartist press in Wales chose to reprint one of the best known works that was produced on the religiously radical eighteenth-century Trevecka press.

The third edition of Apparitions of Spirits is a reprint of the first 1780 edition which was produced on the Trevecka press. The second 1780 edition includes a number of stories from English sources which are written in a different hand; it also includes at the end of the original Welsh section a 'Preface to the Preceding Account' which explains the reasons for these additions, which are basically to correct the mistaken impression 'that Wales is a hellish place where so many Apparitions have been seen, and far worse than England' and to answer the critics who blamed Edmund Jones for writing the Apparitions of Spirits.¹²⁷ The English stories which have been added are written very much in the evangelising Nonconformist mode. The longest story was written in 1768 from an interview with Elizabeth Hobson (a Methodist) from Sunderland who was visited by the spirits of the dead, another is a record of a gunsmith from Bristol who became a mathematician and a conjurer of spirits (after taking a familiar spirit he soon dies badly). Although they resemble Edmund Jones's original in that they are written from within the evangelical Nonconformist frame, these stories differ significantly to those from Wales (they lack the folkloric connections of the Welsh stories and are written from within an English tradition which has its own conventions and its own apparitions): they are essentially English narratives which have been grafted onto the Welsh original. The rushed second edition of Apparitions of Spirits has not just been hybridised — it has been appropriated for the

¹²⁷ Edmund Jones, A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales; To which is Added the Remarkable Account of the Apparition in Sunderland with other Notable Relations from England, together with observations about them and instruction from them (Trevecka: Trevecka, 1780), pp. 110-1

English market.

There are a number of bibliographic and textual references which demonstrate that both An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth and Apparitions of Spirits were well-remembered, as in the Rev John Evans's Juvenile Tourist:

Before I quit my present subject, I shall just notice the apparitions and fairies with which Wales is said to abound. A venerable minister, Mr. Edmund Jones, now deceased, published some years ago a pamphlet, in which were retailed all the tales of the kind which he could muster up throughout the principality. I now sought for this, but in vain; probably parents had wisely committed it to the flames. I read it when a boy, and under its influence have been fearful of my shadow.¹²⁸

Principally a collection of local tales of fairies, ghosts, and spirits Apparitions of Spirits, like An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, records the pre-industrial life of Wales in some detail, as in this example:

The last Apparition of the Fairies in the Parish of *Aberystroth*, was in the fields of the Widow of Mr. Edmund Miles, not long before her death --- Two men were moving hay in one of her fields, the *Bedwellty* side of the river *Ebwy Fawr*, (one of whom is now an eminent man in his religious life) very early in the morning; at which time they saw the chief Servant of the House coming through the field on the other side of the river, towards them, and like a marriage company of people with some bravery, in white aprons to meet him; they met him and passed by, but of whom he seemed to them to take no notice. They asked the servant if he saw the marriage company? he said "No", at the same time they could hardly think any marriage could come that way, and at that time of the day. This certainly must have been Fairies, and was partly a pressage of Mrs. Miles's death, and partly it may be of the marriage of her daughter, --- the heiress of the estate after the death of her brother Mr. John Miles, with that servant: the account of the Fairies, resembling a marriage company, could not be kept a secret from Mrs. Miles, which when she heard of it, gave her a deal of uneasiness, as she understood it as a pressage of her death, as indeed it was.

¹²⁸ Rev. John Evans, The juvenile tourist : or, excursions into the west of England; into the Midland counties, with part of South Wales; and into the whole county of Kent; concluding with an account of Maidstone and its vicinity : interspersed with historical anecdotes and poetical extracts, for the rising generation 4th edition (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1818), pp. 284-5.

My thanks for this quotation goes to John Ballinger who uses it in, 'The Trevecca Press' Library, s2-VI (23) (1905), 225-250 (pp. 237-8).

More of these kind of accounts may be seen in the geographical and historical account of the Parish of Aberystroth.¹²⁹

This story is typical of many of the folk stories which have been recorded by Edmund Jones: many include the Tylwyth Teg, many have an otherworldly bent, and most are omens of death.

One of the two copies of An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth which is located in the Salisbury Collection in Cardiff University has been annotated in the hand of P. B. Williams of Llanrug (son of Peter Williams the Revivalist Methodist preacher and himself the incumbent rector of Llanrug, Caernarfonshire). Amongst the annotations and corrections which P. B. Williams has added to this section in his own hand is: 'Fairies: Tylwyth Teg.' In An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth Edmund Jones is more specific:

Nay some were so ignorant as to think them at least for some time, and before they had more knowledge and experience of them, to be some happy spirits, because they had musick, and dancing among them; and called them by the odd name of BENDITH EU MAMMAU, i.e. their *Mother's blessing*, in Monmouth-shire; but in other parts of Wales they are called YR TYLWYTH TEG YN Y COED, i.e. *the Fair Family* or *Folks in the Wood*, because they were seldom or never seen far from the Wood, especially from the female Oak; likely for the sake of Paganism of the antient Britains, which filled Hell with subjects to Satan, which they greatly practised, especially under the Female Oak; which for that reason then was, as still is called, YR BRENHIN-BREN, i.e. *the King Oak tree*. (Apparitions of Spirits, p. 78)

Many of the old Welsh folklore traditions survived in the parish of Aberystroth until the eve of the Industrial Revolution, and many of these survived until well into the twentieth century, for example:

¹²⁹ Rev. Edmund Jones, A relation of apparitions of spirits, in the county of Monmouth, and the principality of Wales : with other notable relations from England, together with observations about them, and instructions from them : designed to confute and to prevent the infidelity of denying the being and apparition of spirits, which tends to irreligion and atheism (Newport, Monmouthshire : Printed and sold by E. Lewis, [etc.], 1813; repr. Cowbridge and Bridgend: J. E. Owen, 1988), pp. 22-3. All further references in parenthesis in the text are to this edition.

It was told me that Mr. Howel Prosser Curate of *Aberystroth* seeing a funeral going down the Church lane, late in the evening, towards the Church, imagined it was the Body of a Man from the upper end of the Parish... whom he heard was sick; and thought he was now dead; and going to be buried; put on his Band in order to go perform the burial office; and hastened to go to meet the burial; and when he came to it, saw a people he did not know, of which he took no notice, as they came from the border of Brecon-shire. But putting his hand on the Bier to help carry the Corpse, in a moment all vanished; and to his very great surprize and astonishment, there was nothing in his hand but the Skull of a dead Horse... In former times several have seen the likeness of human Skull carrying the Corpse Candles, which may be some confirmation of the truth of the extraordinary thing. (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 73)

Edmund Jones's description of a Corpse Candle here would become a familiar, although displaced, phenomenon in the coal industry of South Wales; for example, there are many reports of Corpse Candles being seen around collieries shortly before an explosion. Marie Trevelyan records two examples:

Colliers in various parts of Wales even in the present day believe in corpse-candles... Before one of the great explosions at Llanbradach people declared corpse-candles without number were seen hovering around the mouth of the pit. At Glyncorwg, near Bridgend, Glamorgan, "hundreds" were seen before an explosion.¹³⁰

The Corpse Candles which were seen in Llanbradach Colliery before the explosion of 1901 are still, just about remembered locally. The corpse candles [*cannwyll y corph*],¹³¹ also appear subsequently in the sequel to An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth - Apparitions of Spirits: this time the bluish flame of the Corpse Candles appear alongside traditions such as the 'Kyhyrraeth' (*cyhyraeth* - a low moaning sound heard before death) and the watch-night for the dead (see Apparitions of Spirits, p. 27 and p. 83). Even after the introduction of safety regulations, the coal industry was always dangerous and the sight of men being

¹³⁰ Marie Trevelyan, Folk-Lore and Folk-Stories of Wales (London: Elliot Stock, 1909), p. 179

¹³¹ For the sake of accuracy I have maintained the use of Edmund Jones's antique Welsh spellings in this thesis.

carried home injured, dying, or dead through the streets on the bier would have been all too common. It was inevitable that Welsh folk-lore would be transcribed into an industrial context but the argument can be pushed further and a process of hybridisation of these Welsh narratives into new literary forms can be identified at the end of the nineteenth century. I will return to this subject in Chapter 6 where I will look at how these narrative themes were adapted by Joseph Keating in his short stories which are written about working life underground in the deep steam-coal mines of Victorian South Wales.

In England the Chartist and mining literature of the nineteenth century has been described as distinctively marked by a multiplicity of genre.¹³² I would argue that a similar multiplicity in Wales at the start of the Industrial Revolution became hybridity as old narrative themes became adapted to fit into new, alien literary forms. Edmund Jones's Account of the Parish of Aberystroth may be used as an early model of how a hybrid genre can work in practice. To emphasise this point you need go no further than the title: A geographical, historical, and religious account of the parish of Aberystroth: in the county of Monmouth : to which are added, memoirs of several persons of note, who lived in the said parish. Jones has essentially borrowed an English literary form and used it to transcribe native Welsh oral story-telling traditions within a new structure: he hybridises both English literary form and Welsh narrative patterns to produce something which is altogether new. Edmund Jones described how he wrote An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth:

Jones was moved to write this work by a letter in the Gentleman's Magazine for April, 1755, 'from a Gentleman who desired such accounts from parishes I have given in the parish of Aberystroth. If this gentleman is now alive he would be glad to read this account, especially as I can tell him that his letter did in some measure

¹³² H. Gustav Klaus, The Literature of Labour: Two Hundred Years of Working-Class Writing (Brighton: Harvester press, 1985), p. 46 See also in particular, 'Chapter 3: The Historical Bent of the Chartist Novel' pp. 46-61 and 'Chapter 4: Forms of miners' literature in the nineteenth century', pp. 62-88.

influence me to write it.' He seems to have taken the schedule of questions printed in the Gentleman's Magazine, and answered them as fully as possible for his parish, adding (what the magazine does not mention) an account of the superstitions.¹³³

We have, then, available at least one answer for the hybridity of Account of the Parish of Aberystroth: it was suggested by The Gentleman's Magazine and Edmund Jones dutifully followed the formula as set, but he adds to this borrowed formula a whole series of Welsh folklore stories and narrative patterns.

What sort of new work was this, then? Account of the Parish of Aberystroth opens by explaining the name of the Parish: originally 'Blaene Gwent' but after the division into Parishes, Aberystroth (i.e., the mouth of the river below the washing).¹³⁴ This opening would be mirrored by a number of significant descendants of Edmund Jones's first history (such as Evan Powell in his History of Tredegar).¹³⁵ Indeed, the problem of language, names, and pronunciation is one of the key factors which marks much literature of industrial Wales. On the back of the title page of Account of the Parish of Aberystroth is a short passage entitled: 'Directions for the English Reader, how to Pronounce the Names of Places.' Jones's book, then, was intended as more than a local history because it addresses from the outset an English audience, which is suggestive that the Trevecka Press was at least reasonably well-connected with both the Welsh and the English book markets. It is tempting to assume that the Trevecka Press may have been looking to Edmund Jones, as a famous Welsh Nonconformist preacher, to produce a saleable evangelical rival to Pennant's recently published travel book Tour of Wales (1778). Thomas Pennant it should be

¹³³ The Trevecka Press, p. 236.

¹³⁴ In the industrial period 'washing' could have meant either the cleaning of the iron ore by flooding it from a dammed nearby stream, or washing the coal but at this point it is just as likely that 'washing' meant a point for washing clothes in the river.

¹³⁵ Evan Powell, History of Tredegar 2nd ed. (Newport: South Wales Argos, 1902).

remembered came from one of the old Welsh aristocratic families, one which like the Lewises of Caerphilly would soon become a part of the new industrial Welsh bourgeoisie. A year later, Edmund Jones published his Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, which has been called 'the first parochial history in Wales.'¹³⁶ If Pennant was effectively a bourgeois writer, then in Edmund Jones we find an old Welsh Dissenter writing and publishing material which in many ways is still unique.

So were Jones's two books simply a hybrid of both the new travel genre and the Revivalist literature of Wales which was produced for an English audience? There is something to be said for this argument, certainly there are passages in Account of the Parish of Aberystroth which read as if they are trying to attract travellers to the parish. However, hybridity has produced two books which are rich in sources and which ultimately defy any singular generic definition.

While much of his history of Aberystroth is biographical, Jones frequently describes the parish on the eve of the Industrial Revolution with a documentary eye to detail, for example:

There is neither Town nor Village in the Parish. Nor the ruins of any Castle, Tower, or Monastery. But Houses scattered here and there in the bottom and sides of the Valleys great and small; not one without them, and some on the backs of the South ends of the *Beacon Mountain* and *Mount Kelliau*. All the Houses, in number about 150, are built of stones and timber, not of Earthen-sides and timber, as in some parts of *Wales*. Of these some are poor and meanly built, but many well built, and delightfully situated; and some very delightful. Scarce a Valley or *Koome* without one or the other that is so. As to their number they are in all about 150. About 30 in *Ebwy-vawr*, above 30 in *Tilery*, and more than four-score in the *Valley of the Church*. (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 50)

Jones later writes in some detail about the building of St Peter's Church during the reign of

¹³⁶ W. Haines, 'Notes on the Bibliography of Monmouthshire', Library s1-8 (1)(1896): 239-247 (p. 241).

King Henry VII or Henry VIII (P.B. Williams annotates here: Henry V). When the building of the church was finished in the sixteenth century on one wall there was a large painting of the patron Apostle Peter with a key:

One of the Parishioners, who seeing the Picture asked the meaning of it, and being told it was the Picture of Peter the Apostle with his Key to open the Door of Heaven to let the people in, he reply'd that none were gone to Heaven for a long time past, for said he, "his Key is become rusty." (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 51-2)

An enlarged St. Peter's church still stands on the site of the original in the village of Blaina just to the north of Abertillery and to the south of Nantyglo, but both the picture of Apostle Peter and the joke have long since disappeared from living memory.

Even in Edmund Jones's idyllic rural Vale of Aberystroth there are some signs of the beginnings of industry. He mentions when describing the game and fishing in the parish that in the upper end of the Ebwy-fawr the fish, 'are in less plenty towards the upper end, because of the troubled waters from the Coal works, which are hurtful to fishes' (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 40). Jones also recalls a story of hibernating swallows being found dead with their beaks stuck in the clay(shale) in a coal mine at Rhase yr Glo [*sic.*] [i.e. the Coal Race] (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 62). In another description, this time from Apparitions of Spirits, Jones recalls a sighting of the Tylwyth Teg in an area just below modern Cwm, Ebbw Vale:

W. E. of Hafodafel, going a journey upon the Beacon Mountain, very early in the morning, passed by the perfect likeness of a Coal Race, where really there was none; there he saw many people very busy;—some cutting the coal—some carrying it to fill the sacks—some rising the loads upon the horses' backs, &c—This was an Agency of the Fairies upon his visive faculty, and it was a wonderful extra natural thing, and made a considerable impression upon his mind. (Apparitions of Spirits, p. 21)

The early mining of iron ore and coal involved a unique means to clean the minerals which was known as 'race': a dam would be built across a stream and below the dirty iron ore or coal was laid out in the stream bed; when all was ready the dam would be broken and the racing waters would clean the rubbish away. Jones describes the early industry of the area, and he does so in this last example through the use of Welsh folkloric narrative themes.

The section of the book for which Jones is most well-known, 'Of Apparitions, and Agencies of Spirits in the Parish of Aberystroth' forms the largest single chapter in the first section, even though it occupies only twenty out of a total of one-hundred and sixty pages. That apparitions have come to dominate the cultural memory of Edmund Jones, while understandable, is problematic because it means that he is better known for his superstitions than he is for his record of the pre-industrial community of Aberystroth, which has been all but forgotten. For example, both Edgar Phillips in Edmund Jones "The Old Prophet" (1959) and John Harvey in his more recent Apparitions of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales (2003) (which completely reorders the short narratives) neglect Jones's place at the start of the Industrial Revolution altogether. It would be easy to forget that the Parish of Aberystroth became the heart of the Monmouthshire iron, steel, and coal industry as everyone to write on Edmund Jones to date seems unaware of the connection between the two.

The largest section in Account of the Parish of Aberystroth is biographical and it opens with the following dedication:

LASTLY, I come to give Memoirs of some Religious Persons of Note who lived in the Parish of Aberystwyth And here, as to some of them, for want of better Information, and a better memory, I must be brief, after the manner of Melchior Adam, who wrote the Lives of reformed Divines in Germany, which yet was much esteemed for want of a better, as this writing of mine justly may be, I am still of the

mind that it is better than nothing. (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 112)

Melchior Adam was an influential German Calvinist who was famous for his biographies; however, despite his fame to this day no English translation of his work is available. It is likely that Edmund Jones had contact with this work through the Family at Trevecka, which had well developed connections with the British Moravian movement.¹³⁷ This connection suggests that South Wales, on the eve of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, was once again looking beyond London and towards a European cultural context.¹³⁸

In all there are thirty-one biographies in this section. Some are long (by the standards of the rest of Account of the Parish of Aberystroth) and some are short, for example:

XVII. William Walter Reynold

He lived pretty high up in *The Valley of Tilery*, upon his own Estate. He was an excellent Christian in the Baptists communion. So exact and conscientious in his ways (Oh that all Professors were such) that like *Demetrius* of old, he had good report of all. He died in an advanc'd age, but I remember not the time of his death. He was an honour to his Relations, and to the Church to which he belonged. (Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, p. 136)

All we have here is an epitaph-like five-sentence paragraph, a trace of a life; and yet Jones in these memoirs has recorded the lives of the parishioners of Aberystroth which would otherwise have been lost to us altogether. The voices of the pre-industrial community of Aberystroth have been recorded in an all too brief moment of agency.

¹³⁷ For more detail see: R. T. Jenkins, The Moravian Brethren in North Wales: An Episode in the Religious History of Wales (London: The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1938).

¹³⁸ As I will show later, this European connection has played an important part in the development of industry in South Wales. I have already detailed how the first iron workers in South Wales were French. In the nineteenth century the French connection was of particular importance to the steam-coal industry.

I would suggest that both of Jones's books should be read as a collection of short prose narratives; indeed, it would hardly be possible to read them as any other. The short story has earned an enduring place in Welsh industrial literature and these early short prose narratives represent the beginnings of an independent, native literary form which came to dominate when the industrial writers of South Wales found their voice at the end of the nineteenth century. There is something to be said for describing Edmund Jones as yet another, if unrecognised, historian of religious Dissent in Wales when we encounter biographies like that of 'The Notable Conversion of John James Watkin'.¹³⁹ There is also something to be said for the argument that Edmund Jones represents a radical tradition which had its roots in the Commonwealth and which informed the later radicalism of the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. This radical Commonwealth tradition can be seen in stories such as 'The Notable Conversion of John James Watkin', which describes a Royalist soldier from the parish:

He was a Native of Aberystroth, went into the Royal Army against the Parliament, and was very fierce and acute on that side. In fencing, none could stand before him. He dangerously wounded my Grand-father, running his sword upon his Ribs, in a fray, which happened by Aberystroth Church...hearing that a preacher was coming down from Brecon-shire to preach a *Kelli yr Kreeg*, he went up the Church Lane, towards *Rhase yr Glo*, with his Sword by his side intending to kill him. The preacher who was Mr Jenkin Jones of *Llanddetty*, a Gentleman of a good Estate, who had been brought up in Oxford. When he met the Soldier he took off his Hat to him, upon which the Soldier said to himself; "He is a clean looking Man, it is a pity to kill him, I will not now kill him, I will go and hear him;"... He went after him to *Kelli yr Kreeg*, and was converted under the Sermon and the Grace of God made him a Soldier of Jesus Christ, which was infinitely better than to be a Soldier for King Charles, against whom the Lord did fight in his providence, and did not prosper him in his Wars. (*An Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, pp. 118-9)

¹³⁹ See for example, Geraint H. Jenkins, 'Historical Writing in the Eighteenth-Century,' in *A Guide to Welsh Literature, 1700-1800* ed. by Branwen Jarvis (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp. 23-44. Geraint H. Jenkins compares Edmund Jones's *Aberystroth* to Pennant's *History of the Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell* (1796), a contrast which could be suggested to have been a little unfair on Edmund Jones.

It was Captain Jenkin Jones of Llanddetty (near Talybont-on-Usk), who converted the Royalist soldier John James Watkin. Jenkin Jones is known to have been a 'fiery Puritan leader with a troop of horse at his back – one of the "approvers" appointed under the Propagation Act to recommend and approve substitute [church] ministers.'¹⁴⁰ The conversion of a Royalist soldier from Aberystroth by a Parliamentary cavalryman and 'approver' is unique: without Edmund Jones this record would have been lost to us altogether. But in my opinion Edmund Jones's record of the conversion of a prominent Royalist by a local Puritan radical goes beyond the normally accepted role of history as narrative and could be said to be in the earlier Republican tradition of the seventeenth century. In his Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, just as in Apparitions of Spirits, the project of Edmund Jones and the Trevecka Press was wider than 'local history', no matter how interesting or valuable that would have been given the context. Jones writes here within a Welsh radical tradition, and he is doing so in the knowledge that at least a portion of his audience is aware that he is doing so. This is more than a Nonconformist conversion narrative, although these would have been familiar to a contemporary English audience.

To return to the question of form, I would suggest that what we find in Edmund Jones is essentially an early example of a collection of short stories which have hybridised native Welsh narrative traditions, and folk-lore into a new and complex narrative form. Not quite a novel, no; but it would have been perhaps a bit unexpected to expect traditional Welsh narratives, drawn from a pre-print culture where literature was oral, to transform themselves into what at the time was a radical new literary form. What appears to have been happening was that new forms were being adapted and altered to work within Welsh

¹⁴⁰ I am indebted to Dr. Peter Thomas of Cardiff university for the use of this quotation which is drawn from his lecture: 'The "desert sanctified": Henry Vaughan's Church in the Wilderness' (unpublished lecture, Centre for Seventeenth-Century Studies: 12th International Conference, 16 July 2009)

culture; but this is more than mimicry, since Welsh print culture as the eighteenth century drew to a conclusion was drawing on its own native traditions to develop an entire new work. It could do so only because the Welsh print industry was for the most part independent from that of England, an independence that was ultimately a product of the success of early Welsh industry.

2.5 Conclusion

The story of early Welsh print culture can be divided into two periods. The first period in the history of the Welsh book started with the Acts of Union and ended in the eighteenth century; during this period Welsh print culture was conducted through London, Oxford, (and later Shrewsbury, and Chester) because regional printing was strictly controlled by the British State. Welsh print production was essentially a collateral victim of the British government's attempts to control rebellion and sedition through controlling the printing press. In contrast to this, the early Welsh iron industry started to grow in importance following the Acts of Union and by the start of the eighteenth century it had considerably grown in stature. The second period in the history of the Welsh book begins in 1718 when Isaac Carter established the first printing press on Welsh soil on the banks of the Teifi in Trefhedyn; however, even though it had now started to develop its own native printers, much Welsh print still continued to be produced outside of the borders of the country. The eighteenth-century Welsh print industry started as a fairly amateur enterprise and, although it developed over the century, the history of the book in this period is essentially one of localised non-professional authors whose books were produced on sometimes less than ideal second-hand presses which used worn, second-hand type. The print culture of Welsh

pre-industrial society was very different from that of England; it published different material and addressed a different audience. Whereas the early Welsh print which had been produced in England essentially did little more than supply the demand of an English-speaking gentry, when the printing press arrived in Wales it begun supplying a new market with new material.

For most of his life Edmund Jones lived and administered to his flock in The Tranch, Pontypool, which at the time was a prosperous industrial town on the eastern flank of the coalfield, a town which was already famous for its tinplate ware. This alone of course does not qualify him as the first industrial writer: his Account of the Parish of Aberystroth is published in the same year as the first ironworks was established in the parish, after all. However, a view of Jones's work as strictly a pre-industrial writer has to be held under suspicion as his writing records that the rich coal reserves of the upper Ebbw and Tillery valleys were already being exploited at this point. Jones essentially represents a new-found confidence in the culture of the Welsh book, which is due in part to the revolutionary new development of the iron trade along the northern edge of the South Wales coalfield basin.

Chapter Three - The Print Culture of the Industrial Revolution in Wales, 1757-1840

In this chapter I will examine the Industrial Revolution in Wales, and how it was related to but was ultimately distinct from the Industrial Revolution in the rest of the UK. I will then look at how, although delayed, the Industrial Revolution affected the British print trade as a whole before analysing the impact that it had on the trade in Wales. Once I have established this context, I will conclude by examining in detail one of the printing presses which moved to take advantage of the growing industry in South Wales at this time.

While it may be both convenient and popular to divide Welsh literature for the purposes of criticism cleanly by centuries (1700-1800, 1800-1900 and so on) this may not necessarily always be a useful division to make (as we have already seen in the work of Edmund Jones). When analysing industry and literature in Wales this popular division becomes distinctly problematic and difficult to sustain, especially when talking about the Welsh Industrial Revolution. While dating the Industrial Revolution in England is still a point of debate, in South Wales the date is somewhat easier to resolve: it began with the formation of the Dowlais Iron Company and the revolutionary activity as such came to an end in the 1820s during the widespread social unrest which was associated with the first true general crisis of overproduction which was suffered by the new capitalist mode of production.

3.1 *The Revolution Begins*

In 1747 the Dowager Lady Windsor leased 'a great, barren extent of mountain land'¹⁴¹ to a Mr Thomas Morgan of Newport:

The term was for 99 years, subject to an annual payment of £26! The extent was an area of 2,000 acres, and, to prove that the owners of the land knew of its mineral wealth, and that it was not simply a marshy "waun", minerals are specially named in the lease. It was free from any restriction as to sub-letting and royalty, and empowered the lessee to work coal, iron ore, limestone, sandstone, and fire-clay.¹⁴²

Thomas Morgan was part of the aristocratic Tredegar family and was the owner of the early Machen furnace. It sounds from the terms of the lease that Morgan signed it with the intention of developing the barren mountain for iron production, and yet he failed to do so. After a few years had passed, Thomas Morgan sold the lease for Dowlais on to David John of Gwernllwyn Isaf, who was one of the pre-industrial inhabitants of Dowlais and his family continued to receive an annual rent on the lease until it expired in 1850.¹⁴³ David John subsequently sub-leased the land to the Rev. Thomas Lewis of the Van, Caerphilly the owner of the Caerphilly and Pentyrch furnaces (who was a descendent of Ivor Bach—the Welsh chieftain of Senghenydd).¹⁴⁴ It was Thomas Lewis's ancestor Edward Lewis who had originally leased the land for the Pentyrch furnace in the sixteenth century. Lewis paid an annual fee of £28 to David John for the lease.¹⁴⁵

On 19 September 1759 the Dowlais Iron Company was formed when the Articles of

¹⁴¹ Charles Wilkins, *The History of the Iron, Steel, Tinplate, and.... Other Trades of Wales* (Merthyr Tydfil: Joseph Williams [Printer and Publisher], 1903), p. 35

¹⁴² Wilkins, p. 35

¹⁴³ This 99 year lease was very nearly the end of the Dowlais Ironworks because on her death Lady Windsor's estate was inherited by her daughter, who was married to the first Marquess of Bute. When the lease expired in 1850 both the land and the ironworks were technically in the possession of Guest's great rival, Bute. It was only because the works had been deliberately allowed to fall into a state of disrepair that Bute renewed the lease instead of recovering his property.

¹⁴⁴ Wilkins describes Ivor Bach as tramping over 'the bleak hillside' of Dowlais 'in his Robin Hood-like days.' p. 35

¹⁴⁵ Wilkins, p. 36

Co-Partnership in the Merthyr Furnace were signed.¹⁴⁶ The original nine partners of the company were:

Thomas Lewis [of the Van, Caerphilly] , esq.; Thomas Price of Watford [Caerphilly], gent. ; Richard Jenkins of Cardiff, mercer.; Thomas Harris of Bristol, esq.; John Curtis of Bristol, esq.; Nathaniel Webb of Bristol; John Jones of Bristol, ironmaster ; Isaac Wilkinson of Place Gronow [Denbighshire], gent.; and Edward Blakey of Shrewsbury [Shropshire], esq.¹⁴⁷

Each of the partners held a one, two, or three-sixteenths share according to whether they had invested £250, £500, or £750. Thomas Price brought with him the following leases: to work coal in Bedwellty; coal, tin, lead, and iron in Gelligaer; and, the iron ore, or 'mine', in 'Carno bank' (Rhymney).¹⁴⁸ Thomas Lewis brought into the partnership a Lease (1757) to extract coal and ironstone in Dowlass [*sic.*] and Tor y Van with liberty to erect a furnace and to raise limestone, and (most importantly for the subsequent history of the Dowlais Ironworks) to make water courses, together with another Lease (1757) to the veins and mines of ironstone and coal in Pantyrwayn [*sic.*] and on the common called Tilla Dowlass [*sic.*] and Tor y Van, once again with liberty to convert water courses to turn engines and wheels.¹⁴⁹ Isaac Wilkinson brought with him his patented machine for blowing blast furnaces. In 1767 John Guest was appointed to manage the works and in 1782 he became a partner with a seven-sixteenths share in the furnace. In 1801 the Bristol partners were bought out, leaving three partners (William Taitt, who held eight shares; Thomas Guest, who held two; and, William Lewis, who held six). On his death William Taitt, who had been acting as agent for the works in Cardiff, left his shares to his wife's nephew: Josiah

¹⁴⁶ In 2009 the Dowlais Iron Company, which now trades as GKN, celebrated its 250th year in business.

¹⁴⁷ Madeleine Elsas, Introduction', in Iron in the Making: Dowlais Iron Company Letters, 1782-1860 ed. by Madeleine Elsas (Cardiff : Glamorgan County Council, and Guest Keen Iron & Steel Company, 1960) pp. vii-xvii, p. vii

¹⁴⁸ Iron in the Making, p. vii

¹⁴⁹ Iron in the Making, p. vii

John Guest. The Lewis family were finally bought out by Guest in 1848 for £200,000. In 1852 the company was dissolved and passed over to Charlotte Guest.¹⁵⁰ What had started out as a joint stock company which was dominated by the leases which were brought into it by the old pre-colonial Welsh aristocracy had finally passed into the hands of an English iron-mistress (i.e. Charlotte Guest).

The main reasons why the early Welsh iron industry remained relatively small until the middle of the eighteenth-century are largely due to the geography and geology of South Wales. The early iron industry tended to gather around the eastern and southern rims of the coalfield basin because they had naturally good transport access to the British markets via the Severn Estuary, while the northern edge of the coalfield remained undeveloped because it had exceptionally poor natural transport links – it is both mountainous and remote from water-borne transport routes. On the southern rim of the coalfield basin the rocks sink at an alarming rate, in places at an angle of 45 degrees or 1 in 1, so that within only a few kilometres of the southern rim the mineral-rich rocks are already nearly over a kilometre deep. Where the seams sink rapidly on the southern rim the reserves were soon exhausted as they quickly fell out of reach, and consequently the early iron industry was always going to remain small because the mineral supplies were limited. On the northern rim the mineral-rich rocks, although sometimes thin, sink at a much shallower angle of 5 degrees and are consequently technically considerably easier to work.¹⁵¹ The ironworks of the Welsh Industrial Revolution were nearly all built along the northern rim of the coalfield because they were able to exploit the ready access to ore and coal. By the end of the

¹⁵⁰ Iron in the Making, p. viii

¹⁵¹ This is the reason why so much opencast mining has stripped the coal from the northern rim around Rhymney and Merthyr. The problem is that in some places in Merthyr the aggregate coal depth is less than 60 feet thick, the significantly large coal seams are buried deep under the coalfield basin itself.

Industrial Revolution a network of canals and tramroads had been built between the ironworks and the docks to the south.

Within the space of twelve years in the middle of the eighteenth century four iron works were established on the northern edge of the South Wales coalfield basin: Hirwaun (1757), Dowlais (1759), Sirhowy (1760), and Cyfarthfa (1769).

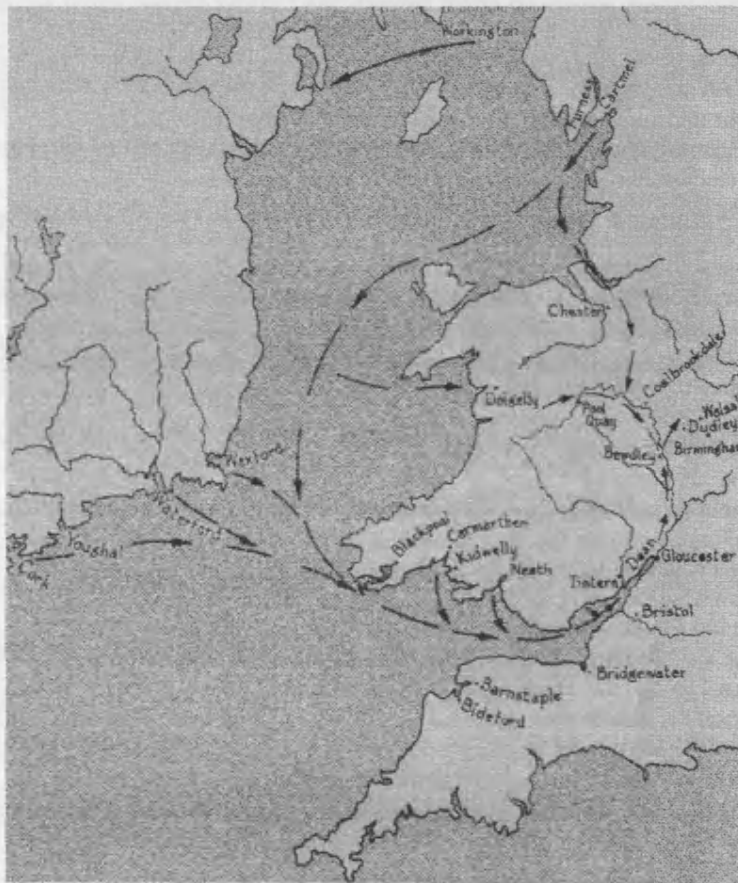


Figure 3.1: Western Trade Routes for Iron, 1650-1750. (Source, Rees, *Industry Before the Industrial Revolution* vol I, p. 340)

One of the most significant developments of the first ironworks of the Industrial Revolution was that they moved away from the ancient sea and river trade routes which

until this point had been used for transporting the iron that was produced in Wales. As can be seen from the map in Figure 3.1, before the Industrial Revolution the ancient trade routes along the coast and major rivers had remained largely intact, with the important exception of the trade link between South Wales and the European continent which had been severed. The ancient trade link between South Wales and Europe was finally restored in the 1840s when John Nixon started the export trade in Welsh steam-coals to France.¹⁵² The iron produced by the first ironworks of the Industrial Revolution had to be physically transported overland to the docks in Newport and Cardiff via pack horse, and in return supplies of food had to be brought in on the same pack horses, a distance of at least twenty-five miles over some of the most difficult terrain in the country. The difficulty in supplying the iron-working communities in all weathers and seasons was the justification which was most often used for the truck system in South Wales. Without the ironworks ensuring a ready supply of food for the workmen and their families during the often extreme weather experienced in the winter on the northern edge of the coalfield there would have been a very real prospect of hunger riots and starvation.¹⁵³

This crisis in the supply of food to the new ironworks communities was particularly acutely felt during the repeated harvest failures of the 1790s. In 1795 Richard Crawshay, who was by now ironmaster of the Cyfarthfa ironworks, used the prospect of famine and hunger riots in Merthyr to press for the passing of a new Inclosure Bill in Parliament (he

¹⁵² The French market for Welsh steam-coal was always one of the biggest and most important for South Wales. The connections between the two countries remained until the end of the export trade. If anything, for most of its industrial history South Wales was economically and culturally closer to France than it was to the home counties and metropolis of the south-east of England.

¹⁵³ Alan Birch, The Economic History of the British Iron and Steel Industry, 1784-1879 (London: Frank Cass, 1967), p. 70

had the support of both Wilberforce and Pitt).¹⁵⁴ The shortage became so acute that when Crawshay wrote to William Falkner, Esq. (Council Office, London) on 20 July 1795 he said that famine in Merthyr had only been averted because he had paid to bring a ship from London with 300 sacks of flour and 430 sacks of biscuits.¹⁵⁵

The advantages of the ironworks along the iron-belt were so significant that they easily outweighed these problems. Even the significant costs and difficulties of transportation by pack horse did not obstruct the development of the trade. Take, for example, this letter from William Taitt (Dowlais Furnaces) to Walter Swayne of 9 January 1789:

On my return home I find that the people who used to carry our Iron to Cardiff have all of them sent their horses from home for want of Fodder for them, & that there is little probability of our getting any thing done by them before May at Soonest. We must therefore send our Iron by Waggons at a very advanced price Viz. 6/- per Ton.¹⁵⁶

The situation was not much improved when the Glamorganshire canal from Merthyr to Cardiff was opened in 1794. Here, for example, is a letter from Thomas Vaughan of the Pentyrch Works to Robert Thompson of 8 December 1794 (ten months after the canal opened on 10 February 1794):

Your letter of 23 Ultimo came duly at hand but the breach in the canal has put out of our power to send you either the Potatoes, or the blacking Dust, unless it is by land, and I cannot find any degree of certainty when the Canal will be navigable again to Merthyr. When it is you may depend on both, or the dust sooner if you want it may be sent by Thomas Lewis Hughs Wagon.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Richard Crawshay to John Morris, Esq. (Clasemont), 4 November 1795, in The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, 1788-1797 calendered by Chris Evans (Cardiff: South Wales Record Society, 1990), p. 146; and Richard Crawshay to Charles Hassall, Esq. (Eastwood, Narberth) 1 December 1795, The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 152

¹⁵⁵ Richard Crawshay to William Falkner, Esq. (Council Office, London) 20 July 1795; and Richard Crawshay to Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart. [undated] The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 143-4

¹⁵⁶ Dowlais Iron Company Letters, p. 148

¹⁵⁷ Dowlais Iron Company Letters, p. 152

The new canals along the Taff and Ebbw valleys were soon joined by a network of tramroads (e.g. Sirhowy Tramroad) which were at first extensions of the internal tramroads of the quarries, mines, and ironworks. Many of the early tramroads were run as toll roads and were open for use by anybody willing to run their own team of horses (including gigs and chaises which were used by the ironmasters). At their peak there were 400 miles of tramroad in use in South Wales and 120 separate tramroads, three-quarters of which were built as feeders between the quarries, mines, and ironworks and the canals.¹⁵⁸ In time many of the larger tramroads, such as the Sirhowy, were converted into railways.

Arnold Toynbee's justly famous Lectures on the Industrial Revolution in England are just that, a history of the Industrial Revolution in England. There is, however, one very brief reference to Wales:

In 1755 [sic] an ironmaster named Anthony Bacon had got a lease for ninety-nine years of a district eight miles in length, by five in breadth, at Merthyr-Tydvil, upon which he erected iron and coal works.¹⁵⁹

Toynbee gets his dates a little confused here. The 99 year lease on Cyfarthfa was signed by Anthony Bacon in 1765, and the first furnace was in blast in 1767. The original furnace, which was known as 'Number Five', remained in blast for over a hundred years until it was closed when the plant at Cyfarthfa was converted to steel production.¹⁶⁰

In 1929 L. B. Namier found that while tradition has it that very little is known about Anthony Bacon (aside from his origin in the iron district of Whitehaven and his success as

¹⁵⁸ D. S. M. Barrie, A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain, volume XII: South Wales 2nd edn. (Nairn: David St. John Thomas, 1994), pp. 29-31

¹⁵⁹ Arnold Toynbee, Lectures on the Industrial Revolution in England (1884), p. 13. Available at: <<http://www.efm.bris.ac.uk/het/toynbee/indrev>> [accessed 16 August 2008].

¹⁶⁰ An impressive performance given how antiquated the early furnaces were and how quickly the new types of furnace were developed.

a merchant in London), in fact a good deal is known about the first English iron master in South Wales.¹⁶¹ From the point of view of this thesis the first point to be drawn from Namier's account is that Anthony Bacon's brother, Thomas, was involved in the print and bookselling trade in Dublin after he married 'a smart widow.'¹⁶² In 1741 Thomas Bacon established a paper called The Gazette and was employed as a print corrector. As many other Dublin printers and booksellers had done before him, Thomas Bacon soon set himself up in business producing copies of books published in London. As we have seen, in the eighteenth century the Dublin print trade was notorious for producing pirated copies of London editions. Thomas Bacon agreed to produce, at some expense, an authorised reprint of Samuel Richardson's Pamela but another Dublin printer clandestinely obtained the sheets and produced his own unauthorised edition instead. The costs of this piracy were high and after Thomas Bacon was financially ruined. Thomas shortly afterwards left Dublin for Maryland.¹⁶³ So before Anthony Bacon even came to Merthyr his family had interests in printing, they owned colonial plantations in America, and they were also closely connected with the slave trade.

In 1758 Anthony Bacon entered into his first government contract which was connected with slavery: it was for the 'victualling of the troops sent to garrison the fort lately taken from the French on the River Senegal.'¹⁶⁴ He had already profited from the tobacco trade in Maryland. The African Gold Coast at this time had two staple exports: the first was gum arabic (used for the printing of linen, and still in use in the print industry) and the second was slaves. In 1765, the same year that he signed the leases in Merthyr,

¹⁶¹ L. B. Namier, 'Anthony Bacon, M.P., An Eighteenth-Century Merchant', in Industrial South Wales, 1750-1914 ed. W. E. Minchinton (London: Frank Cass, 1969), pp. 59-106 (p. 59).

¹⁶² Namier, p. 61

¹⁶³ Namier, pp. 60-61

¹⁶⁴ Namier, p. 62

Anthony Bacon's name appears on a contract to supply slaves to the British Government in the islands of Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago, St. Vincents, and Dominica (dated 2 January, 1765). He was entitled to employ one woman to every nine men, no deductions were to be made for disablement or illness, but payment was to stop in cases of death or desertion.¹⁶⁵ Anthony Bacon was deeply involved in the slave trade, both through his contracts to supply the British government and also through his connections with the family plantations of Maryland and Virginia. After the American Wars of Independence most of the Bacon family assets in the U.S.A. were expropriated by the new American government; however, when he died Anthony Bacon's estates still included a share in 'the Dismal Swamp' plantation in Virginia.¹⁶⁶

Anthony Bacon retired from his contracts for victualling the troops in Senegambia and the West Indies in 1773-74. Bacon had ceased supplying slaves and instead started his career as a gun-founder, supplying ordnance to the British government from his new ironworks at Cyfarthfa.¹⁶⁷ The new boring process of gun manufacture which Bacon used in Cyfarthfa had been discovered and patented by John Wilkinson, the son of Isaac Wilkinson. Surprisingly, despite Isaac Wilkinson's business involvement in the Dowlais Iron Company there is no record of gun manufacture at the Dowlais ironworks. In contrast, the scale of the involvement of the ironworks at Cyfarthfa can be judged from a tender which Bacon submitted for casting 4,000 tons of iron ordnance at the cost of £20 a ton.¹⁶⁸ The growing involvement of the British army in Revolutionary America invigorated the

¹⁶⁵ Namier, p. 73 and p. 93

¹⁶⁶ Namier, p. 98

¹⁶⁷ Namier, p. 96. Bacon also received a State pension from the secret service at this time, the details of which Namier is unable to elucidate.

¹⁶⁸ Namier, p. 82

trade and in 1777 Anthony Bacon supplied a total of 595 guns to the British government.¹⁶⁹ However, despite the early success that Cyfarthfa had in the sale of guns, by the start of the nineteenth century there is no record of gun-making continuing at the ironworks.¹⁷⁰

In his paper Namier disputes the account by Wilkins in his History of Merthyr Tydfil that there were rumours that Bacon had been supplying ordnance from Cyfarthfa to both sides of the conflict during the American Wars of Independence. If true, this would not have been the first time that a Welsh ironmaster had been accused of illegally exporting munitions to an enemy: a similar claim was made as far back as 1574 when a complaint was made that Edmund Matthew had been engaged in the illicit export of arms to the continent from the Pentyrch ironworks. In 1609 another charge of illegally exporting ordnance from the Pentyrch ironworks was made. After being arrested on the orders of the Justices of the Peace who were investigating the claims, the new iron master of Pentyrch, Peter, Semayne made good his escape from the Court in Cardiff.¹⁷¹ The claim which Wilkins made, and which Namier later disputes, was drawn from the Nautical Observations of the Port and Maritime Vicinity of Cardiff by Captain W. H. Smyth (1840). Nautical Observations is a pamphlet which argues the case for the Marquis of Bute's vision for the expansion of the docks in Cardiff. The section in question discusses the history of the Port of Cardiff:

Among the means of embarking and exporting these products, the river Taff was the principal outlet; and the so-called Port of Cardiff was held to be in extreme activity half a century ago, when the comparatively scanty supply [of iron] was brought down from the hills in wagons, each bringing two tons, drawn by four

¹⁶⁹ Namier, p. 84

¹⁷⁰ Birch, p. 50: 'there is no mention among the Cyfarthfa MSS of the production of cannon which had earlier been Anthony Bacon's chief product...' Crawshay's involvement in the gun trade was disastrous (as outlined below) and he found it instead more profitable to supply the iron which was used elsewhere to manufacture the ordnance for Britain's wars in Europe and the colonies.

¹⁷¹ Rees, Industry before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 1, pp. 260-1

horses and attended by a man and a boy. Even Mr Bacon's contract guns* in the American war, were thus conveyed for embarkation to the side of the Gwalt Quay, which from that circumstance was known for some time afterwards as the "Cannon Wharf," though that name has long been lost; and it is proof of the growth of the town since that time, that the guns used to be proved from the street before this quay (St Mary's), against the earth bank of the South Wall, across the end of the street, there being then no houses beyond the then gate, called Port-Llanogay. Coals, at the same time, were brought from Caerphilly mountain in bags weighing from 100 to 130lbs on horses, mules, and asses... This was principally done in fine weather, for it was customary to avoid the incidental delays of frost, snow, or bad weather, by bringing in the winter stock at a particular time; and this provident collecting was called a *cymhorth*, from a Welsh word, signifying help, or assistance.

* This contract was forfeited, it is said, from proof presumptive that the enemy procured a supply of great guns from the same source.¹⁷²

Given the earlier accusations it would not be entirely surprising to find that Bacon was indeed supplying both sides in the American War of Independence. It would also not be entirely surprising for Captain Smyth, who was under the influence of Bute, to suggest that one of Bute's business rivals was less than perfect. What is clear, is that both Bacon and his new partner, Richard Crawshay, profited from supplying ordnance to the British armies in America during the Wars of Independence.

In 1794 the gruff Yorkshireman Richard Crawshay joined with Cockshutt and Stephens, and made an outright purchase of Cyfarthfa ironworks from Tanner and Bowser (who were struggling after taking control of the ironworks following Anthony Bacon's death).¹⁷³ Originally from Yorkshire, Richard Crawshay moved to London where he became a successful ironmaster. As early as 1777 the London-based Crawshay had formed a partnership with Anthony Bacon to supply cannon to the Board of Ordnance. In 1779 the

¹⁷² Captain W. H. Smyth R.N. Nautical Observations on the Port and Maritime Vicinity of Cardiff, with occasional strictures on the ninth report of the Taff Vale Railway Directors; and some general remarks on the commerce of Glamorganshire (Cardiff: printed by W. Bird, 1840), p. 8

¹⁷³ Wilkins, p. 65

Cyfarthfa ironworks supplied fewer guns to the British government, but the works also held contracts for supplying guns to the East India Company and to the King of Sardinia.¹⁷⁴ Following the disastrous and expensive end of the American Wars of Independence, the British government 'contrived to return unwanted stores to suppliers on dubious grounds.'¹⁷⁵ As there was no local market for the guns, Crawshay shipped the guns which had been returned by a cash-strapped British government to Constantinople in the hopes that he would find a new market for his ordnance.¹⁷⁶ Judging from the evidence of his letterbook Crawshay was unsuccessful in his plans to find a new market and in 1791 he draws an abrupt end to the history of the supply of guns from Cyfarthfa. The note he writes is simple: 'My Adventure in Constantinople is now wound up.'¹⁷⁷ Although the ironworks of South Wales continued to supply the Navy Board with iron, they soon moved away from ordnance manufacture and concentrated instead on supplying high-quality wrought iron.¹⁷⁸

So profitable and productive were the initial four iron works of the early Industrial Revolution in South Wales that they were quickly joined by a second phase of industrialisation in the 1780s and 1790s. As the last chapter recorded, in 1779 the first ironworks of this second phase to open were the Beaufort ironworks in the old parish of Aberystroth, these were joined by: the Penyarden works in Merthyr Tydfil (1784); Ebbw Vale and Blaenavon (1789); Tredegar, Neath Abbey and Aberdare (1800); Abernant and Gadlys (1802); Union Ironworks, Rhymney (1808); and the Bute Works, Rhymney (1825). The last of the ironworks of the Welsh Industrial Revolution to open were the British

¹⁷⁴ Namier, p. 84

¹⁷⁵ Richard Crawshay to H. and J. Humphreys (Constantinople) 1 January 1788 The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 2

¹⁷⁶ The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 2

¹⁷⁷ Richard Crawshay to David Tanner, Esq. 22 June 1791, The Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 103

¹⁷⁸ See for example, Birch, The Economic History of the British Iron and Steel Industry, p. 50

ironworks, near Pontypool which opened in 1827. In 1819 the old Caerphilly iron works at Machen were closed.¹⁷⁹

Finally, at the end of the Industrial Revolution in Wales, a long thin belt of ironworks had been built along the heads of the valleys, from Aberdare in the west to Blaenavon in the east. Although this line of ironworks was small, only twenty miles by two, its significance was such that it would prove to be one of the driving forces behind the global Industrial Revolution. The new puddling furnaces had brought dramatic improvements in the quality of the iron which was produced in South Wales and the ironworks of South Wales at the end of their Industrial Revolution supplied a diverse market, from the wrought-iron plate which was required for the new high-pressure steam engines to the Cyfarthfa iron which was used in London Bridge. There was, however, one development from South Wales which would revolutionise the world – iron rail. The use of rail itself was not a new idea: wooden rails had been used as far back as the twelfth century. In 1695 Sir Humphrey Mackworth built an iron ‘new road or wagon-way’ between his copperworks and coal mines to the waterside at Neath.¹⁸⁰ The flat L-shaped plates and more recognisable edge-rails which were used on tramroads had for some time been produced by the ironworks of South Wales when on 23 May 1821 the Chairman of the Stockton & Darlington Railway Committee, Thomas Meynell wrote to Josiah John Guest at Dowlais ironworks asking for his technical opinion of ‘the comparative value of Tram-roads & Rail-roads.’¹⁸¹ By 1 November 1821 a specification for an iron rail had been drawn up by Josiah John Guest for use by the Stockton and Darlington Railway. In 1829 the first

¹⁷⁹ They had probably worked out the supplies of ore and found it uneconomic to compete with the larger ironworks to the north.

¹⁸⁰ D. S. M. Barrie, p. 29

¹⁸¹ Dowlais Iron Company Letters, p. 171

iron rails rolled in Wales were produced by the Ebbw Vale ironworks for the Stockton and Darlington railway.¹⁸² Welsh rail would soon be used in railways across the world.

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the iron industry had been small. Between 1720 and 1730 there were only fifty-nine iron furnaces in the whole of Britain — five were Welsh and the total national annual production was 17,350 tons, or roughly 5 tons of iron per furnace per week.¹⁸³ In 1788 South Wales had twenty-four furnaces producing 4,080 tons of iron annually. As the second phase of expansion was beginning, the iron-belt of South Wales was by far the largest iron-producing region in the United Kingdom, it dwarfed the next largest region of Shropshire, which had only fourteen forges producing 2,520 tons.¹⁸⁴ In 1834 the Nantyglo and Beaufort ironworks alone had eleven furnaces each and in 1839 the Dowlais works alone had seventeen furnaces.¹⁸⁵ In 1839 South Wales produced 453,880 tons of pig iron; by 1845 Dowlais (always the largest of the ironworks) was producing 74,880 tons annually, or on average 80 tons per week per furnace.¹⁸⁶ The ready supply of cheap iron ore, coal and limestone had produced an impressive increase in industrial production, and the idyllic small rural parishes such as Aberystwith had become after fifty or sixty years part of the backbone of the Industrial Revolution.

Unfortunately, this development came at a high social and human cost. Even at this early stage, the infant capitalist mode of production was as prone to contradiction and crisis as its parasitic modern incarnation, and trade was as often depressed as it was expanding. In 1810 the first organised strike in South Wales broke out in the Dowlais

¹⁸² Elizabeth Phillips, Pioneers of the Welsh Coalfield, p. 87 Ebbw Vale had been casting tramrails since the end of the eighteenth-century.

¹⁸³ Wilkins, p. 428

¹⁸⁴ Alan Birch, p. 44.

¹⁸⁵ A. H. John, The Industrial Development of South Wales, 1750 – 1850 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1950), p. 140

¹⁸⁶ Wilkins, p. 428

ironworks when the price for puddling iron was reduced from 12s to 10s 6d thanks to a depression in the iron trade.¹⁸⁷ Although in 1812 the demand for iron ordnance from the British Government collapsed as the wars against France came to an end, the high quality of the Welsh iron meant that the economic depression which followed did not begin to affect the larger Welsh ironworks until 1816.¹⁸⁸ At the end of the Welsh Industrial Revolution the new communities of the South Wales iron-belt once again rose up in insurrection. The riots which started in Nantyglo in 1816 grew and in 1831 this resistance found its voice, its heart, and its infamy in the rising in Merthyr Tydfil.

3.2 The Industrial Revolution in the British Print Industry, 1800-1830

The Industrial Revolution which had begun in Wales in the middle of the eighteenth-century only arrived in the British print industry in 1800. On the one hand the British print trade had already started to reorganise as the Industrial Revolution began, while on the other hand the technology of the press would still have been recognisable to Gutenberg as it consisted of wooden frame presses which could only manage comparatively small print-runs. The first technical development to the press itself came in 1800 when Earl Stanhope developed a press made entirely of iron.¹⁸⁹ The better known iron-framed Columbian Press was developed in 1813 by George Clymer, a Philadelphia mechanic. The popular Albion iron-framed hand-press was manufactured by Cope in 1820. While improving the quality of print (for example, an iron frame would have made registration of the print considerably easier) these first hand-operated iron presses made little impact on the volume of work

¹⁸⁷ Wilkins, p. 126

¹⁸⁸ Alan Birch, p 53 and p. 56

¹⁸⁹ Twyman, p. 51

which could be produced. It was the newsprint trade which generated the real innovations of the print trade in the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century The Times spearheaded much of the technical development of the printing press (until the middle of the century The Times was the only national daily newspaper).

The move towards the powered steam-press begun in 1810 when the German engineer Frederick Koenig developed his steam-powered flat platen press.¹⁹⁰ Trevithick succeeded in the first use of high pressure in a steam-engine in 1799 and many of his engines were specifically developed for use in the ironworks of South Wales, where they provided blast air for the furnaces. Koenig's use of high-pressure steam power in a printing press to print 3,000 copies of the New Annual Register in 1810 is a remarkably early development.¹⁹¹

Over the next two years, Koenig perfected his press and in so doing developed the first cylinder press where the paper moved under an impression cylinder which was inked by a set of rollers.¹⁹² The Times again drove innovation and John Walter, in consultation with Koenig, brought out an edition which was produced on a steam-press on 28 November 1814. The night of this first machine-printed edition was an anxious one for John Walter as they were expecting trouble from the organised pressmen, so they had the first edition printed secretly next door to The Times works. The first that the pressmen knew of the new machine was when they were each presented with a copy of the newspaper as their shift came to an end at six in the morning. The astonished pressmen were told by Walter that 'The Times was already printed by machine; that if they attempted

¹⁹⁰ Twyman, p. 51

¹⁹¹ Jobbing and book printing did not require speed or volume as much as ease and accuracy to set up.

¹⁹² Twyman, p. 52. A development which is in at the heart of modern offset-litho machinery.

violence there was a force ready to suppress it; but that if they were peaceable, their wages should be continued to every one of them till similar employment could be procured.¹⁹³ However, despite this coup d'état at The Times, Koenig's steam-press never really became popular as it was overcomplicated and prone to breakdown. In 1820 there were only eight powered presses in London, and most of the printers of these eight still preferred to use a hand press.¹⁹⁴ It was only in the 1830s when the major book-printing houses began to convert to powered cylinder presses that steam power began to dominate the print industry.¹⁹⁵

In 1815 Edward Cowper patented his technique to mould stereotype plates to a cylinder.¹⁹⁶ This development revolutionised the press because it meant that the paper could now be drawn mechanically through a cylinder press instead of being printed flat on a platen, which increased the speed of the press considerably. Cowper and his cousin Augustus Applegath were both engineers at The Times, and together they improved Koenig's original press so that it was able to be worked until 1827 when they built a new four-station press for The Times (this press printed four sheets in one movement and could produce 4,000 single-side sheets an hour). By 1828 the two cousins had produced seventy of their Applegath printing machines and these were put to a number of uses, including printing books, newspapers, and bank notes.¹⁹⁷ Despite the undoubted advance of the Applegath press upon that of Koenig, they were ultimately still no real solution to the problems of rotary printing; however, the beginnings of mechanisation and of a movement away from printing on a flat platen had begun.

¹⁹³ Plant, p. 275

¹⁹⁴ Twyman, p. 52

¹⁹⁵ Twyman, p. 52

¹⁹⁶ Plant, p. 275

¹⁹⁷ Twyman, p. 52

One of the most important developments to the print trade happened in France in 1799 when Louis Robert invented ‘a machine for making a continuous sheet of paper on an endless wire cloth worked by a rotary motion.’¹⁹⁸ In 1801 the process, which had failed to be adopted in France, was patented in England by John Gamble. Three years later the patent was re-assigned to Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier, who had improved on the original process. The Fourdrinier paper-making machine was revolutionary because it was able to produce paper on a continuous roll whereas hand-made paper could only be produced a single sheet at a time. The new machine-produced paper brought consistency and quality to an industry which had previously relied on hand-made paper of varying quality (often poor), the size of which was limited because it was produced by hand, and which took anything from five to six weeks to produce. The early printers and booksellers had to keep a large stock of paper if they wanted to be able to supply large orders at short notice, which in turn tied up capital in stock.¹⁹⁹ One of the problems of storing paper is that it acts like a sponge, soaking up water from the atmosphere, so either the hand-made paper had to be exceptionally well-stored or the large paper-stock had to be constantly rotated. From the point of view of the paper-supplier, they could now deliver quantities of paper of a size, quality, and at a speed which would have been impossible if production had continued by hand.

It would be no exaggeration to say that without the Fourdriniers’ invention it would be impossible to imagine literature developing in any meaningful modern sense of the word, as it allowed the development of mass-market print capitalism. Yet despite the development of the powered press and efficient Fourdrinier paper-making machinery, the

¹⁹⁸ Plant, p. 329

¹⁹⁹ Plant, p. 329

print industry in 1830 was still faced with a number of problems which had to be answered before it could begin to satisfy the demands of a new mass market. Firstly, although Koenig's steam-press had begun to be adopted, the powered printing press was far from being a practical solution: in 1830 the steam press was still unreliable and was hand fed with paper. Despite the widespread use of stereotype plates, the originals still had to be typeset by hand, and this hand composition produced one of the more problematic bottlenecks in the supply of print. The compositors in their turn were able to exert an unprecedented level of control over the entire industry. While the Fourdrinier machines were available to supply paper for the new demand for print, there were still problems with the supply of a resource as basic as ink. The answer for the demand for new dyestuffs for the print and textile trades eventually came from the coal industry. Even paper itself was still manufactured from cotton rags: wood pulp paper was only later produced when the demand for paper exceeded the supply of cotton. Despite these problems, by 1830 the print industry had begun to modernise and the price, reliability, standardised quality, and availability of print had begun to be revolutionised by industry.

3.3 The Print Industry in Revolutionary Wales

1800 marked the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the print industry in Britain, but in Wales the adoption of the new organisation and technology was delayed; the Industrial Revolution in the Welsh print industry was essentially a post-1820 phenomenon.²⁰⁰ Despite this delay, by 1800 the Welsh printers had grown in sophistication from Carter's original worn and amateur press, so much so that reputable London firms were now willing to

²⁰⁰ Eiluned Rees, *The Welsh Book Trade*, p. 132

commission and sell high-status books which had been printed in Wales.

In 1735 Carl Linné (Linnaeus) published his influential book Systema Naturae [The System of Nature] which initiated the great cataloguing project that lay at the heart of much of the scientific expansion of European colonialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Mary Louis Pratt puts it, 'The systematising of nature in the second half of the [eighteenth] century was to assert even more powerfully the authority of print, and thus of the class which controlled it.'²⁰¹ The power of print to popularise Linnaeus's system of mapping nature into genus, species, and sub-species meant that the project did not limit itself to simply mapping the natural world of those new lands which were being discovered, it also helped to racialise the bodies of the people that the white Europeans encountered and so enabled their colonial domination. The System of Nature was essential to the development of the discourse of race through which the violence of colonialism justified and rationalised itself; it also created the idea of 'nature' as opposed to civilisation or society. It is of some considerable importance then that when the first English translation of The System of Nature was published it was translated by a Welshman and printed on Welsh presses. The translator was William Turton (a naturalist and medical doctor who practised in Swansea) and when the London firm of Lackington, Allen, & Co. published Linné's The System of Nature in six volumes between 1800 and 1806 they had the printing done by three Swansea printers: Zechariah Bevan Morris, John Voss, and David Williams.²⁰² The printing of a high status book like The System of Nature in Swansea demonstrates that the Welsh print trade at the start of the nineteenth century was

²⁰¹ Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 30

²⁰² Rees, p. 127. Although Rees lists the three printers the last, David Williams, has to be put under question as Ifano Jones fails to list him and the NLW record for the book lists only the partnership of Voss and Morris which are dated 1800-1804.

already professionalised, its translation in Swansea also suggests that Wales was already starting to taking an active role in the new colonial project (which drew moral imperative from Linnaeus's cataloguing project).

In 1801 the printers John Voss and Zechariah Morris dissolved their partnership and both continued to trade separately in Swansea. John Voss had originally been a draper in Swansea and only became involved in the print trade when he entered into partnership with the professional printer Zechariah Morris; however, following the collapse of the partnership, the inexperienced Voss continued on in the print trade.²⁰³ On 12 July 1805 Zachariah Morris²⁰⁴ was prosecuted by Dr William Turton for the theft of thirty reams of paper which were supposed to have been used to print Turton's book British Fauna.²⁰⁵ Despite pleading not guilty, Morris was convicted to the value of four shillings and imprisoned for three months.²⁰⁶ After the dissolution of his partnership with Voss, and after serving his jail term for theft from Linné's translator, Zechariah Morris subsequently moved his Swansea press to an office in Carmarthen: he called his new office 'The Gomerian Printing-house'.²⁰⁷ In 1818 Morris sold his Carmarthen press and type to the Rev. John Jenkins. After the press was relocated from Carmarthen to Merthyr Tydfil he continued to be employed by the press as foreman and instructor.²⁰⁸

In 1814 Seren Gomer (the first Welsh language newspaper) was founded by John

²⁰³ Ifano Jones, p. 149

²⁰⁴ Ifano Jones uses both Zechariah and Zecharias, while the prosecution was of Zachariah.

²⁰⁵ The record that the paper was meant to have been used for Turton's book British Fauna comes from Ifano Jones, p. 151

²⁰⁶ 'Accused: Zachariah B Morris; Parish: Swansea; County: Glamorgan; Status: Printer. Offence: Theft of 30 reams of white paper. Location and date: Parish, Swansea; County, Glamorgan; Date: 12 July 1805. Prosecutor: William Turton, Swansea, doctor. Plea: Not guilty. Verdict: Guilty to the value of 4/- Punishment: 3 months imprisonment. File number: 4/632/2 Document number 6', National Library of Wales: Crime and Punishment. Available at: http://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?co=Glamorgan&from=1782&off_cat=Any&off_co=All&to=1830&off=750 [accessed 18 August 2009]

²⁰⁷ Ifano Jones, pp. 149-50

²⁰⁸ Ifano Jones, p. 150

Voss, John Walters, Thomas Walters, David Walters, the Rev. Joseph Harris ('Gomer'), and David Jenkin. When Seren Gomer failed, it lost the partners over a thousand pounds and it nearly pushed the printer Voss into bankruptcy.²⁰⁹ For Seren Gomer to have collapsed so resoundingly suggests that there was a significant problem in the Welsh trade at this point in time. The market for Welsh language work has always been and always will be limited, but I would suggest that there is a more significant problem than a difficult market which lies behind the unusual nature of Welsh print-capitalism in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The problem could not have been one simply of production: as we have seen, the presses existed and were capable of producing high-quality print. The demand must have been there because so many Welsh newspapers and magazines were started (and failed) in this early 'revolutionary' period.

Distribution costs may have been a significant issue, possibly because until the phase of industrialisation which followed the Industrial Revolution Wales had very poor roads and transport was limited to waterways which were often dominated by the ironmasters. Itinerant booksellers continued as a major source of distribution in Wales long after they had all but disappeared in England, which is suggestive that there was indeed a problem with distribution at this time. However, there was no similar distribution problem experienced by the English print trade, which would seem to imply that there must have been more going on than a simple question of being able to fulfil demand for print. In my opinion there is only one answer available at this time as to why Welsh print-capitalism was so different from its English counter-part: the influence and control of religious Nonconformity on Welsh society in this period was almost absolute. I will explore this

²⁰⁹ Ifano Jones, p. 149

question further in the last section of this chapter which will trace the history of one of the Welsh presses of this period.

3.4 The History of Zechariah Morris's Press

In 1794 the Swansea printer Simon Llewelyn printed a theatre bill for a comedy which was called, 'The English Merchant'.²¹⁰ Two years later Llewelyn took into partnership the young Zechariah Morris. In 1797 Zechariah Morris established a printing office together with his business partner, Voss.²¹¹ As we have already seen, by the start of the nineteenth century Morris was something of an accomplished master-printer, although his successful prosecution and subsequent three-month incarceration by one of his own customers in 1805 puts him in something of an unfortunate light.

In 1819 Morris sold his press to its next proprietor, the Rev. John Jenkins.²¹² Shôn Shincyn was born in 1779 in a house called Cilfynydd, near Llangattock in the parish of Llangynidr, Breconshire. As was not uncommon at the time, his father was too poor to be able to send the boy to school, but following the inspirational preaching of the Rev. Morgan John Rhees on the benefits of the Sunday Schools in Llangynidr in 1792, the young Shôn Shincyn bought himself a copy of the book which Morgan John Rhees had just published for use in Sunday Schools (probably printed on the Trevecka press). Shincyn taught himself to read from this book, the rest of his education came from the Sunday

²¹⁰ Ifano Jones, p. 140

²¹¹ Ifano Jones, p. 149

²¹² Ifano Jones says of John Jenkins that he was, 'better known to the Welsh people as "Shôn Shincyn o'r Hengoed."' (p. 150) Although John Jenkins's Welsh-language biographer has used the English form of his name, in this thesis I will follow Ifano Jones's example and use Shôn Shincyn: see, John Evans's Hanes buchedd a gweithiau awdurol y diweddar John Jenkins (Cardiff: argraffwyd W. Jones, 1859).

School and a country night-school.²¹³

When he was fifteen Shôn Shincyn left his work as a farm servant and started work in the ironworks at Sirhowy, Merthyr, and Dowlais. So unprofitable was his early work in these ironworks that often he could not afford to both feed and clothe himself. While at Merthyr he worked for some time as an iron-miner before he became, 'a limestone wagoner in the Vale of Ebwy at a salary of £8 8s a year.'²¹⁴ Shôn Shincyn had found work on the new tram road which ran from the Trefil limestone quarries to the north of Tredegar and which at that time supplied the ironworks at Beaufort, Ebbw Vale, and Sirhowy. As early as 1796 the Ebbw Vale ironworks was consuming sixteen tons of limestone each day in their blast furnaces and the Trefil quarries would have been kept busy. Shincyn soon returned to iron mining and it was while he was working as a miner at the age of twenty that he began to preach. He must have been an impressive preacher as he was offered four years' training at Bristol Baptist College, but he turned it down as he felt it was unnecessary. From 1804 to 1805 Shincyn farmed at Blaen Morlais, Merthyr Tydfil (located on the mountainside above Dowlais). The existence of Welsh hill farms is never secure and Shôn Shincyn lost all his savings trying to work the thin soil which covers the limestone to the north of Dowlais. Failing at farming, he moved back to iron-mining in Dowlais and while working as a miner he founded a Baptist Church in the town. When he was ordained as a Baptist minister in Llangynnidr in 1806, Shincyn was working once again in Trefil, this time as a quarryman. In 1808 Shincyn was appointed as minister of the Baptist Church in Hengoed, a post that he retained for the rest of his life.²¹⁵

²¹³ Ifano Jones, p. 268

²¹⁴ Ifano Jones, p. 268

²¹⁵ Ifano Jones, p. 265

In 1819, after failing at farming yet again (this time at Pentanas, near Quaker's Yard), Shôn Shincyn bought Zecharias Morris's press. He did so with one single intent: he had 'decided to become a master-printer purely and simply to print his commentary on every verse in the Bible.'²¹⁶ His life's work, Shôn Shincyn's 2,827 page Esponiad was published in 88 parts between 1819 and 1831. From the outset, Shôn Shincyn felt the 'Divine Hand of Providence' in his purchase of Zechariah Morris's press and as a result he never once tried to profit from the press: 'he printed and published not as a man of business, but as a minister of the Gospel and a commentator of Scripture.'²¹⁷ When he completed his Esponiad Shôn Shincyn was eleven hundred pounds in debt and had only his stock of books to cover the debt; his proud boast was that despite the lack of money during its printing and the debt left at the end that he managed to pay it off without a single legal writ being issued.²¹⁸

After buying the press, Shôn Shincyn built a small hut to be used as a printing office near his home (at that time in Pencarth). He called his new office 'Argraffdy'r Beirdd' [The Bardic Printing-House]. No doubt this name was influenced by his friendship with the poets: Thomas Williams (Gwilym Morganwg), and Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) and his son Taliesin (in Welsh, Taliesin ap Iolo). Between them these four figures are representative of Welsh literary life in the first quarter of the nineteenth century; they were also central to the revival of the Eisteddfod. They all had particularly strong working-class backgrounds: Gwilym Morganwg had started work at the age of seven in his father's coal-level near Cefncoedycymer in the Taff valley and, after leaving the coal-level at fourteen, he worked at Cyfarthfa with the engineer Watkin George; Iolo Morganwg

²¹⁶ Ifano Jones, p. 265

²¹⁷ Ifano Jones, p. 268

²¹⁸ Ifano Jones, p. 268

claimed to have learned to read as a child by watching his father inscribe headstones; and Shôn Shincyn, who dedicated his literary life to God, was a classic example of the industrious working Welshman.

Despite such auspicious connections for the beginnings of a new press (including an englyn written for the new printing-house by Iolo Morganwg) Shôn Shincyn never did use the new office that he had built at Pencarth. In the Easter of 1819 Zechariah Morris and his press from Carmarthen were instead established in a new printing office, also called 'Argraffdy'r Beirdd', in Merthyr Tydfil. At first Shincyn worked in partnership with Gwilym Morganwg. The two men had previously worked together on Y Parthsylydd [A Welsh Gazetteer] (1815-16), where they managed to produce nine out of a promised twenty shilling parts before their Swansea printer, David Jenkin, failed. The new printing partnership of Shôn Shincyn and Gwilym Morganwg was advertised in Seren Gomer on 5 May 1819 and one of the first editions that they printed on the newly established press was Llythyr Cymanfa Ddwyreiniol y Bedyddwyr Neillduol, yn Nghymry [A Letter of the Extraordinary Assembly of Baptists' in Wales]. Once the lack of subscribers for the completion of Y Parthsylydd became obvious, Gwilym Morganwg quickly retired from the partnership.

In the early summer of 1827 Shincyn moved his press to a piece of land that he had leased near his chapel in Hengoed. The reason for this move from Merthyr was entirely practical: every Sunday since 1824 he had been walking the five miles from his house at Tŷ Twpa (which is close to Deri, Bargoed) and his ministry at Hengoed. Shincyn called his newly built house and printing-office 'Maesycwmwr.' The last major project on the Taff Vale Extension line, the Hengoed Viaduct and the subsequent rail connections transformed

the rural Maesycwmwr that Shincyn knew into a heavily industrialised village in the middle of the prosperous steam-coal district.²¹⁹

In 1828 Shincyn returned briefly to Merthyr, once again in partnership with Gwilym Morgannwg. The two now had a new partner—the Pontypool printer Richard Jones, whose press and type were used to establish the new office on the High Street. Despite this brief return to Merthyr, Shincyn continued to print in Maesycwmwr on Zechariah Morris's press until 1831 when he removed his press from Maesycwmwr to new offices on Bute Street, Cardiff.²²⁰ At the time Bute Street lay between the old Glamorgan Canal and the new Bute Ship Canal, on a salt marsh with only the Taff Vale Railway to keep it company. The next move for the Shincyn press is a little more puzzling: it was moved from Bute Street to offices on the old Castle Street (which faced the castle wall). This move is odd because in 1791 John Bird moved the Rhys Thomas press, which he had bought for seventeen guineas, from its home in Cowbridge to his house next to the Castle Gate, Cardiff. John Bird and his descendants were always closely associated with the Butes, who frequently used the press for their own business ends; for example, Captain Smyth's pamphlet Nautical Observations of the Port and Maritime Vicinity of Cardiff, which propagandised the case for building the docks in Cardiff to Bute's interests (and which was the origin of the story of Anthony Bacon's supply of cannon to the enemy) was printed for Bute on William Bird's press in Duke Street, Cardiff. It would have been a brave man to have gone into competition with the Marquis of Bute so close to his own press. That both printers could survive in such close proximity demonstrates that Cardiff,

²¹⁹ Shôn Shincyn named his printing office Maesycwmwr, but the name has since been changed to Maesycwmmwr. In this thesis I will use Shincyn's originally intended spelling of the name.

²²⁰ There may well be a problem here. The third volume of the Esponiad is imprinted as being printed in Maesycwmwr in 1832. Yet Ifano Jones tells us that the two sons moved the press to Cardiff 4-6 August 1831.

despite being so small physically, was so prosperous thanks to the larger industrial communities to the north that it could afford to keep two presses in print.

As soon as he had finished his Esponiad Shincyn kept his word to God and passed the press over to his two sons, John and Llewelyn. Llewelyn Jenkins's name appears on its own for the first time on the October 1834 edition of the monthly Baptist magazine Greal y Bedyddwyr [The Baptist's Grail]. By this time Llewelyn's brother, John Jenkins, had sailed for Brittany where he became a famous Baptist missionary who worked to convert the Roman Catholic natives. Llewelyn Jenkins continued to print a number of Baptist monthly magazines until he sold the press to William Owen and Robert Roberts in 1844. Like his father and brothers, Llewelyn had been called to preach and was walking from his home in Maesycwmwr to the 1878 annual meeting of the Welsh Baptist Union in Aberystwyth when he died in Llandrindod, aged 68.²²¹

Ten years after they had bought the press from Llewelyn Jenkins, William Owen and Robert Roberts sold it to William Jones who continued the Baptist traditions of the press and continued to print Y Bedyddiwr [The Baptist] until its demise in 1859. As was typical of many printing presses in Wales, when William Jones died suddenly at the age of 70 in 1896 the business was continued by his widow, Eliza Jones.²²² Their son Herbert William Jones briefly ran the business but in 1899 it was sold to Archibald M'Lay who moved the press from Duke Street to Working Street, The Hayes, Cardiff in 1910. Archibald M'Lay came to Cardiff from his native Glasgow. He had received a university education to prepare him for a ministry in the Free Church of Scotland but on a question of conscience had left his calling to preach and entered business instead. Archibald M'Lay

²²¹ Ifano Jones, p. 270

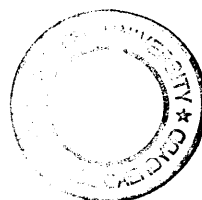
²²² Ifano Jones, p. 270

was associated with The Brethren. Even late into the twentieth century the M'Lay press was known to be a Presbyterian press. In 1919 the office on Working Street was destroyed by fire and in 1921 the press was moved into new custom-built premises on Fairwater Road, Ely, Cardiff. These new buildings, called the 'Ely Factory', covered about half an acre, employed about 70, and included letterpress printing, lithography, die-stamping, book-binding, box-making, and bag-making. At that time M'Lays would have been one of the largest printers in Wales. As the twentieth-century drew to a close the McLays²²³ press was moved from the factory in Ely to a new location on the northern outskirts of Cardiff. Although they have lost their close connection with Welsh Nonconformity over the course of the twentieth century, McLays are still in business in the Cardiff area, making them one of the oldest presses still working in Wales.

3.4.1 A Brief Bibliography of the Shôn Shincyn Press

In many ways the material which the Rev. John Jenkins published on his press is typical of that of an early nineteenth-century Welsh printer. The extensive Salisbury Collection of Welsh books which is held by Cardiff University contains sixty books which were published by the Shôn Shincyn press: thirty-four were produced in Merthyr (1819-1827); eight were produced in Maesycwmwr (1827-1831); and eighteen were produced in Cardiff (1831-1844). These sixty books are overwhelmingly religious and published in the Welsh-language. The only exceptions are the bilingual elegiac poem On the death of his Majesty King George III of blessed memory: Awdl ar farwolaeth yr enwocaf o'r Breninoedd...ei farwrhydi Sior y III by Benjamin Jones (1820) and two translations of the many Welsh-

²²³ The name has since changed from the original M'Lays to the modern McLays.



language circular letters which were published for the Monmouthshire Baptist Association on the press in Cardiff.²²⁴

The Esponiad, which was the life work of Shôn Shincyn and his calling from God, is itself simply printed:

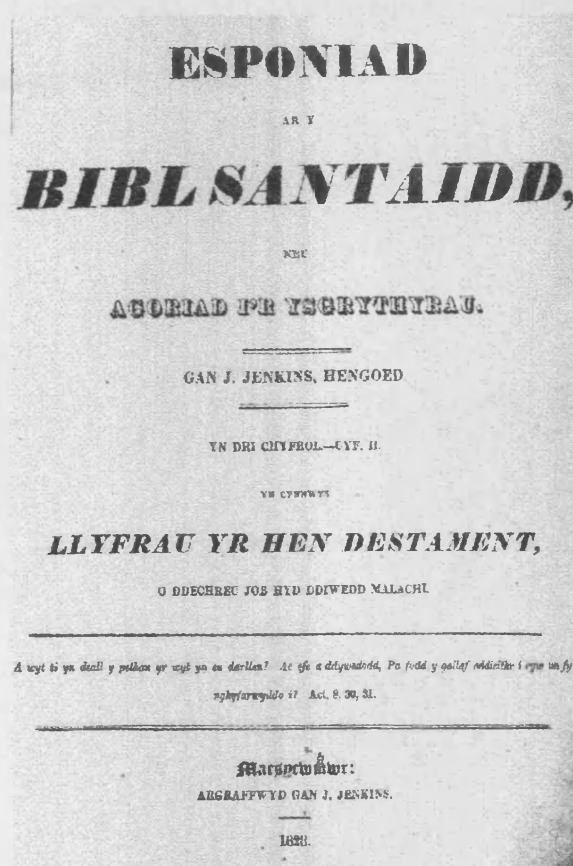


Figure 3.2: Esponiad ar y Bibl Santaid vol. II (1828)

The title page is indicative of the book itself: the typeface is conservative, and (like the book itself) comparatively large (today it would be called a large-type book). There are no

²²⁴ See, for example: The Necessity of Home Missionary Exertion: The Circular Letter of the Ministers and Messengers of the Several Churches Belonging to the Monmouthshire Baptist Association, who Assembled at Moriah, Risca, on the 28th and 29th of May, 1839 [originally published in Welsh as: Yr Angenrheidrwydd o Weithrediadau Cenhadol Cartrefoil] and Prosperity of the Gospel: The Circular Letter of the Ministers and Messengers of the Several Churches Belonging to the Monmouthshire Baptist Association, held at Tabernacle, Pontypool, May 31st and June 1st, 1842 [originally published in Welsh as: Llewyddiant yr Efengyl].

ornaments beyond simple division by black line. It could be argued that this was very much in the style of the period but even in a simple sale catalogue, which is roughly contemporary, the use of typeface design is far more complex (see Figure 3.3 below). I would suggest that the Esponiad, despite using seven or so different typefaces, was printed by Shôn Shincyn in a deliberately conservative fashion which would have been suitable for the Nonconformist message of the book.

Shincyn's more commercial work contrasts sharply with the intentional conservatism of the Esponiad:

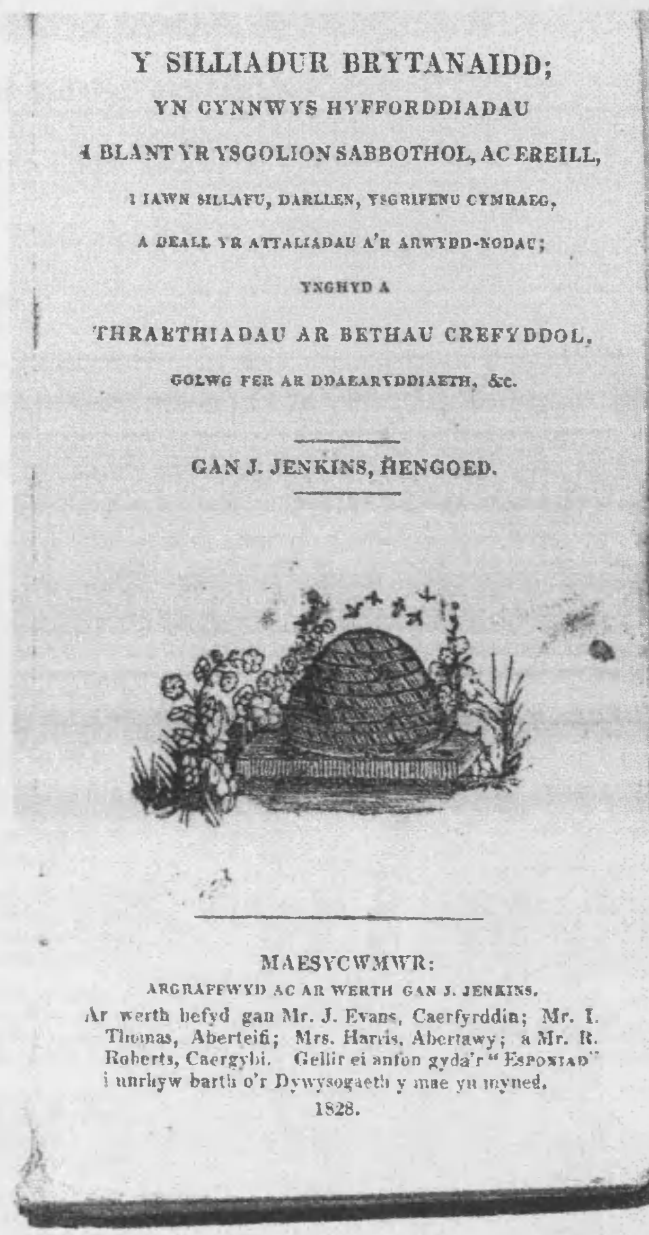


Figure 3.4: *Y Silliadur Brytanaidd* (1828)

The title page of Y Silliadur Brytanaidd [The British Alphabet/Speller] in contrast is much more ornate than that of the Esponiad. Although the style of typesetting and layout here

does resemble that of the Esponiad, Y Silliadur Brytanaidd benefits from the use of an ornament and the use of a single typeface. Y Silliadur Brytanaidd is a Sunday school book, which must have been very much like that published by the Rev. Morgan John Rhees which Shôn Shincyn had used to teach himself to read as a young man. Y Silliadur Brytanaidd starts with simple lists of the alphabet and slowly builds in complexity, beginning with the Welsh alphabet: 'A B C CH D DD E F FF G NG H I L LL M N O P PH R S T TH U W Y.'²²⁵

There is even a ballad which was published on the Nonconformist Jenkins press, albeit after its move to Cardiff and after the son Llewelyn had come into the business:

4

18 Ein Canadon anwyl hawddgar
A roiant hwy yn rhwym mewn carchar,
Gan ddwyn arnynt ryw gam achwyn,
Ond methwyd tystio dim i'w herbyn.

19 Dystrywiwyd hofyd ein capelydd,
Lle'u cyfarfod 'ro'em a'n gilydd,
Gan ein gosod ar wasgarfa,
Dyma fel yr ydym yma.

20 Ni chawn gymmaint a gweddio
Yn eu clyw, rhag cael ein llarpio;
Ond clod i'r hwn a fedr wrando
Ar ochenaid calon Negro.

21 Dyma fel yr y'm yr awrlhon,
Am lyny, O, ein brodyr gwynion,
Danfonwch i ni bob cynnorthawy,
I'n dwyn ni maes o hyn o adwy.

22 Fe gaiff y negro'ch gwelod etto,
Gan gau'n uchel a chydseinio
Clod i'r hwn ddaeth i'n gwaredu,
Pan yn gorwedd mewn trueni.

34 Er bod eia crwyn ni 'nawr mor ddud,
Na fydded cywilydd i ein gwelod,
Yr y'm yn awr yn cyd-weddio
Am i Dduw a'i air i lwyddo.

24 A gweddio 'nawr yn awdurdodol,
Er tori'n chwiffrw rwystrau dynol,
Fel bo'r Iesu gael y goron,
A ninnau'r Caethlon du yn rhyddion.

Argraffwyd gan J. a Ll. Jenkins, Caerdydd.

*Hanes, Cyffes, Achwyniad, Anerchiad,
a Dymuniad*


Y NEGROES,

Gan SOLOMON KUTRY.

(Tad yr hwn oedd Gaeithwas.)

"Ond dyma yz ymryd a ddewisais! datod rhwymau
anwiredd, tyau ymleth feichiau trwmion, a gollwng y rhai
gorthrymodig yn rhyddion, a thori o honoch bob ian, onid
weli dy fara i'r newynog, a dwyn o honoch y crwydriad i
dy? a phan welych noeth, ei ddiladu: ac nad ymguddiech
oddiwrth dy gnawd dy hun?" Emy 68. 6, 7.

Na fydded i neb argraffu y Gŵa hon heb gena
yr Awdur.



Ar y Dda "Auhawdd Ymudael."

BOED clod i'r Iesu yn oes oesoedd,
Sy'n llywodraethu yr holl fydoedd,
Am fod gobaith gael yr awrlhon
Ddwyn yn rhydd y Negroes duon.

²²⁵ 'Y Llythyrenau Rhufeinaidd' [lit.: The Letters Roman] Y Silliadur Brytanaidd, p. 5

Figure 3.5: *Hanes, Cyffes, Achwyniad, Anerchiad, a Dymuniad Y Negroes* by Solomon

Nutry [1830-1834]

To demonstrate how professional the Jenkins press was, compare the ballad *Dymuniad y Negroes* with two contemporaries:

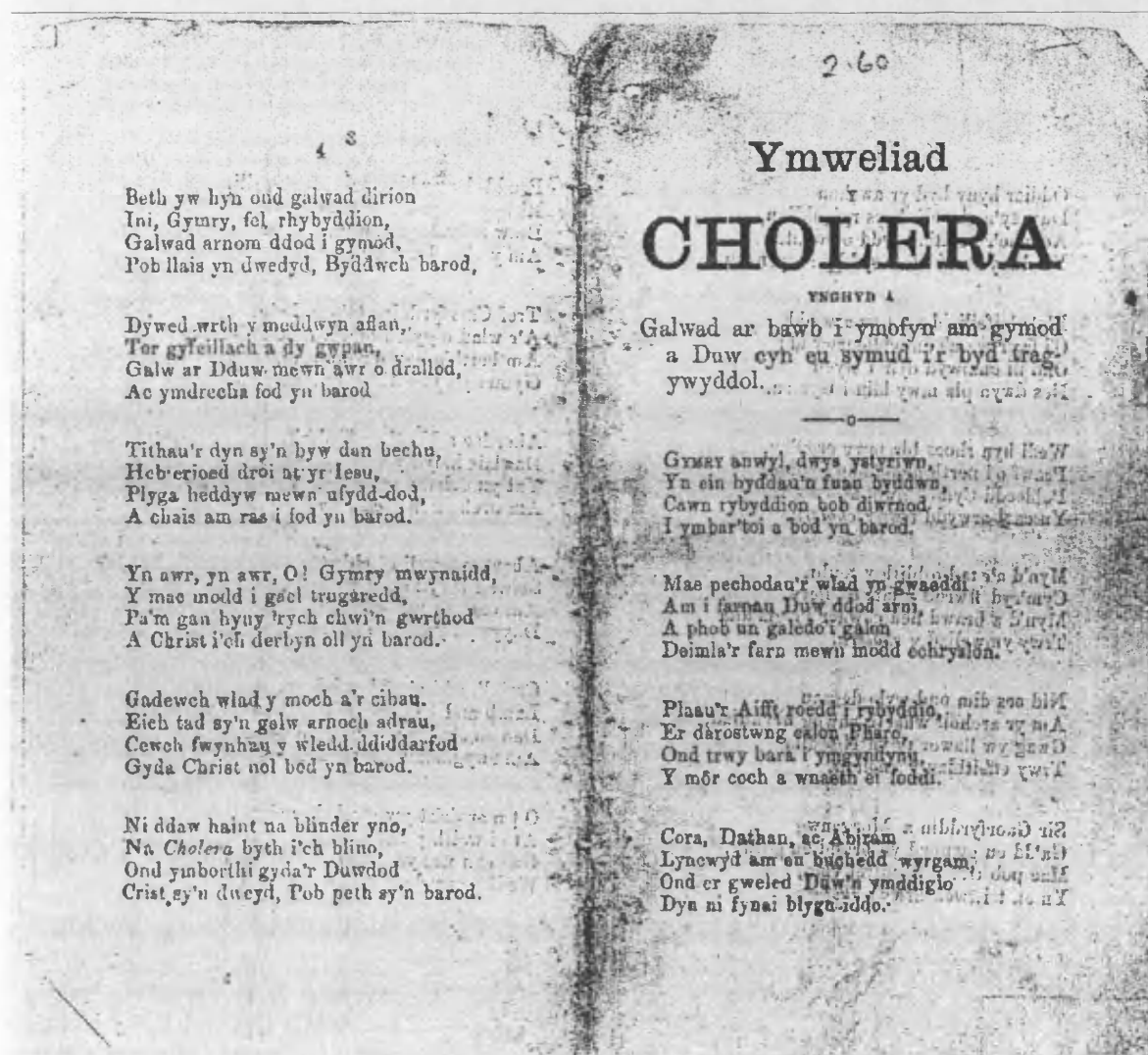


Figure 3.6: *Ymweliad y Cholera* T. Jones (1832)²²⁶

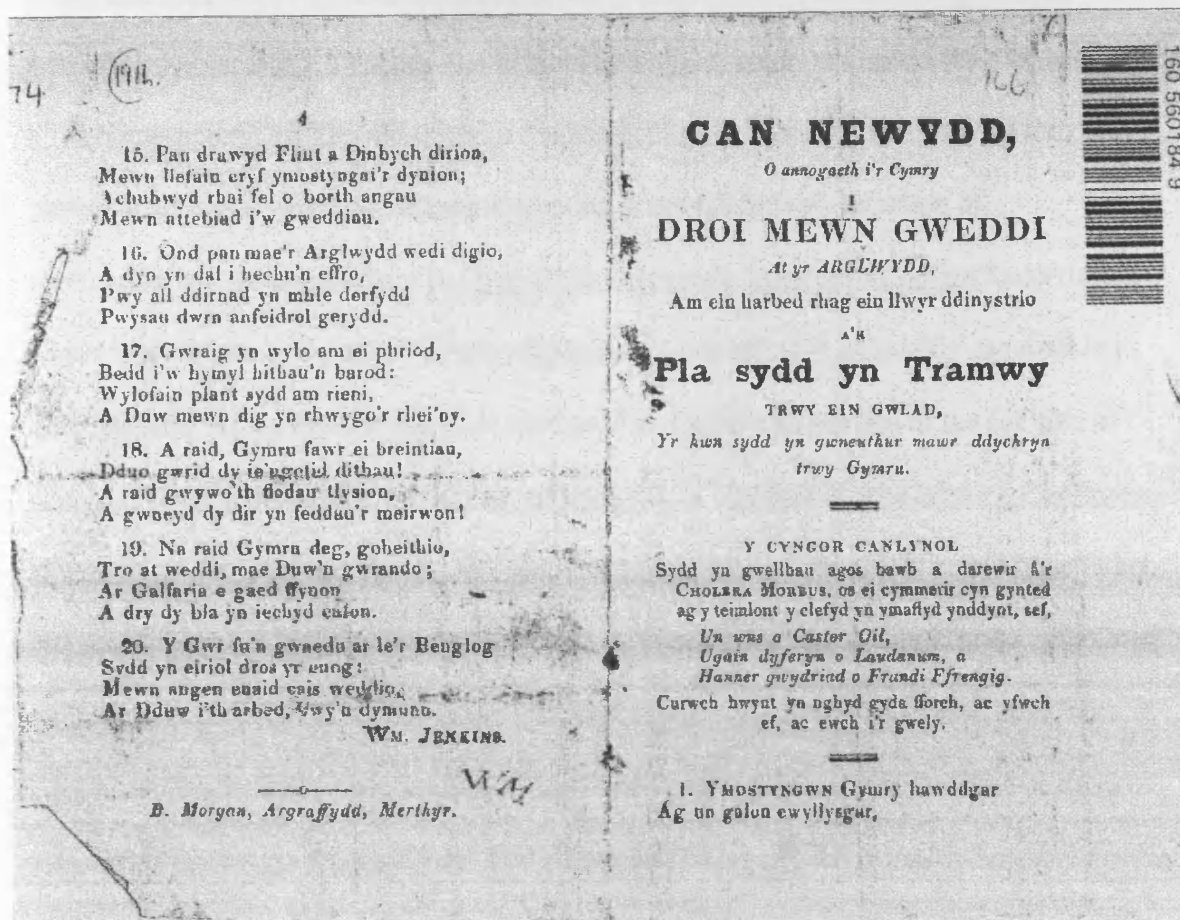


Figure 3.7: William Jenkins *Can newydd, o annogaeth i'r Cymry i droi mewn gweddi at yr Arglwydd, am ein harbed rhag ein llwyr ddinystrio a'r pla sydd yn tramwy trwy ein gwlad...* (Merthyr: B. Morgan, 1832)²²⁷

²²⁶ This poem has been impossibly mis-catalogued on the Cardiff University library database as printed in 1800: seventeen years before the first cases of cholera appeared as the British were suppressing an Indian insurgency, and thirty-two years before the first cholera epidemic swept the UK.

²²⁷ Again, mis-catalogued as 1830.

The Welsh Ballads were never intended to be permanent works of literature: they were produced quickly, cheaply, and addressed the latest news or politics—they were more journalism than literature. Dymuniad y Negroes is printed on a better-grade paper than either Can Newydd or Ymweliad Cholera and has benefited from the addition of an ornament. Dymuniad y Negroes was printed as a higher status document than the majority of its contemporaries. The old press in the hands of Llewelyn Jenkins was working on a professional level, which is perhaps surprising given his father's rejection of commercialism. In comparison to Dymuniad y Negroes, Ymweliad Cholera looks rushed, which is understandable as it had to be produced as cheaply and as quickly as possible in order to fulfil the demand of the local market. The English translation of the full title of Hanes, Cyffes, Achwyniad, Anerchiad, a Dymuniad y Negroes is: The History, Confession, Complaint, Greeting/Speech, and Wishes of the Negroes by Solomon Nutry (whose father was a slave). In all likelihood this ballad was written by one of the Bardic poets associated with the Jenkins press in celebration of the end of slavery. It could otherwise have been suggested that the ballad was an import from the Welsh settlements of the USA as there was a surprising amount of cultural traffic between Wales and the colonies, but as the name of Solomon Nutry is cautiously linked with Edmund Jones's pseudonym 'Solomon Caradoc Owen' that the ballad would on first sight appear to be of local origin. In contrast to the title of Dymuniad y Negroes, the translated title of Ymweliad y Cholera is: The Visitation of Cholera: Together with a call on everyone to seek reconciliation with God before they move to the world eternal. Both of the Cholera ballads are typical of the literature which was produced across Britain during the first cholera epidemic (the basic

message of most cholera literature was to make your peace with your Maker before you shortly meet him). Dymuniad y Negroes is very much written from within the radical tradition of Welsh Nonconformity which would have been recognisable to an earlier generation of Nonconformists such as Morgan John Rhees or Edmund Jones.

There is one significant absence in the output of the Jenkins press, an absence which is typical for the Welsh print trade of this period: it printed no work of fiction. The Nonconformist rejection of fiction was so complete that it even influenced the early proprietary [lending] libraries:

Significantly, no works of fiction appear in the printed catalogues of the Pembroke Society, while the rules of the Swansea-based Glamorgan Library (founded in 1804) require that “novels shall be excluded”.²²⁸

Here we have then one of the most significant reasons why there was no Welsh novel during this early period: even if the novel could have been run off one of the Nonconformist presses, it would have found a difficult market. The irony is that, as will be discussed in the next chapter, there is evidence that despite Nonconformist distrust and hostility towards the novel it became an exceptionally popular literary form in Wales.

3.5 Conclusion

If the Old Prophet, Edmund Jones can justifiably be called the first industrial writer of South Wales then what follows him is something of a puzzle. The Industrial Revolution in South Wales can be split into two distinct periods. The first, the early Industrial Revolution in Wales, was marked by the development of ironworks along the northern edge of the

²²⁸ Eiluned Rees, ‘The Welsh Book Trade’, p. 130

South Wales coalfield basin. These new ironworks were able to exploit the more easily available resources to the north but they also faced a significant problem, transport. Moving the finished iron out of South Wales and ensuring that enough food was brought in proved to be a major obstacle. In the second phase of development, the Industrial Revolution matured and the number and sophistication of the ironworks of South Wales increased significantly. Transport links were rapidly improved by the development of the canals which ran north from Cardiff and Newport and by the new docks which were being built along the Severn coastline.

Meanwhile, in Britain as a whole the print industry lagged behind these developments. The Industrial Revolution only really began in the British print trade in 1800, and in Wales it was delayed until the 1820s. However, despite this comparative lack of technical development, the Welsh print trade in 1800 was sophisticated enough to be considered capable of printing high-status prestige books by the London publishers. In particular, the production of the first English-language translation of Linnaeus's System of Nature locates the print culture of Wales at the heart of the British colonial enterprise. A number of the Welsh presses of this revolutionary period continued well into the twentieth century, and some of them are still trading today.

And yet no novel had been produced within Wales by this date. A tradition of extended prose narrative had emerged in Wales in the form of the biographical conversion narratives which are associated with many of the major figures of Nonconformity. Following Howell Harris's death, the Trevecka family published A brief account of the life of Howell Harris, Esq extracted from papers written by himself ; to which is added a

concise collection of his letters from the year 1738, to 1772 (1791).²²⁹ John Evans's biography of Shôn Shincyn, Hanes Buchedd a Gweithiau Awdurol y Diweddar John Jenkins, D.D. Hengoed was printed in Cardiff in 1859 by William Jones. Historically the iron industry and later steel industry of South Wales never did produce a novel; the Welsh industrial novel is essentially a product of the steam-coal districts of the South Wales coalfield. If Wales in the Industrial Revolution was ever going to produce a novel then it would have been people like Shôn Shincyn that we would expect to have produced it: he had the experience of industry, the ability to write an extended prose narrative, a press which would have been more than capable of printing the work, he was closely allied to the Welsh cultural revival at the start of the nineteenth century, and yet Shôn Shincyn devoted his literary life to his Esponiad, the work that he believed had been given him by God.

The case is similarly negative when we look at other candidates for the novel. Gwilym Morganwg was closely associated with industry: he started work in a coal level at the age of seven.²³⁰ It would be easy to suggest that, like his other Bardic associates of the period, Gwilym Morganwg's chosen literary form was poetry. Yet even this cannot be sustained, since the Bardic poets were known as poets and yet they would have been as familiar with prose in the form of newspapers, magazines, and journals as they were with poetry. A literate, often self-educated, industrial work-force existed at this point in Welsh history that was more than capable of writing an extended self-reflective prose narrative (i.e., a novel), and yet their attention was otherwise diverted and no novel was produced in Welsh or English. There was, however, one significant exception to this rule and in the

²²⁹ Howell Harris kept his personal papers in English despite often publishing in the Welsh language.

²³⁰ Ifano Jones, p. 266

next chapter I intend to look more closely at this exception which runs against the grain of the period, the novel Twm Shon Catti.

Chapter Four - Twm Shôn Catti, a Wild Welsh Wag?

The first Welsh novel, The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, by Thomas Jeffery Llewelyn Prichard, was published in Aberystwyth in 1828. However, in Wales little is as straight-forward as it would seem and locating Twm Shon Catti as the first Welsh novel is not without its peril. Most sources of authority on the subject are cautious, as in this example which opens the entry for 'The Welsh Novel in English' in the New Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales:

In spite of a comparatively early start with T.J. Ll. Prichard's The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti (1828) [the novel] was slow to get into its stride in Wales.²³¹

There is, however, an alternative point of view, which Belinda Humfrey puts a little bluntly in her essay 'Prelude to the Twentieth Century':

But the novel, Elisa Powell, or the Trials of Sensibility (1795) is pleasingly claimed as the first Welsh novel rather than the picaresque Twm Shon Catti (1828) by T.J. Llewelyn Prichard which is of local west-Wales interest but of no literary merit.²³²

As we shall shortly see, it is odd indeed that a Welsh novel which was so popular in the nineteenth century has become for Humfrey of local interest only and for her has lost all literary value. It could be suggested that Humfrey is trying to sell the case for Edward Davies's Elisa Powell as the first Welsh novel: indeed, she might appear to be overselling the case. This debate is not entirely new: in the preface of the second edition of Twm Shon

²³¹ The New Companion to the Literature of Wales, compiled and edited by Meic Stephens (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), p. 437.

²³² Belinda Humfrey, 'Prelude to the Twentieth Century', in Welsh Writing in English ed. by M. Wynn Thomas, A Guide to Welsh Literature, volume VII (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), 7-46 (p. 35).

Catti (1839) Prichard discusses the importance of his novel as the first in Wales:

The first edition of *Twm Shon Catti* was received by the Public in Wales with such favour,—so infinitely beyond the Author's expectations, that his first feeling after the book was printed, had been, deep regret that he could not afford, in a pecuniary sense, to sacrifice the whole edition, at the shrine of his more mature judgement.

On examining the cause of such unlooked for approbation, he found it, not in any merit of his own, but in the nationality of his subject, and the humiliating suggestion that, slight as it was, it was the first attempted thing that could bear the title of a Welsh Novel.

It is true that others have made Wales the scene of action for the heroes of their Tales; but however talented such works might be, to the Welshman's feeling they lacked nationality, and betrayed the hand of the foreigner in the working of the web; its texture perchance, filled up with yarns of finer fleeces, but strange and loveless to their unaccustomed eyes.

Were a native of one of the South Sea Islands to publish the life and adventures of one of their legendary heroes, it is probable that such a production would excite more attention, as a true transcript of mind and manners of the people he essayed to describe, than the more polished pages of the courtly English or French novelist, who undertook to write on the same subject. On the same principle, the author of this unpretending little provincial production accounts for the sunny gleams of favour, that have flashed on the new track which he has endeavoured to tread down, among briers and brambles of an unexplored way, while the smoother path of the practised traveller has been shrouded in gloom.²³³

In the late 1830s Wales had for some time been perceived by the English imagination as a suitable bourgeois literary subject: it still is in many ways. And that, as Prichard argues, is just the point: until *Twm Shon Catti* was published in 1828, Wales had essentially been a subject of an essentially English novelistic imagination. Prichard in this modestly written preface anticipates much of the subsequent criticism of and debate about his novel: in so doing he firmly makes a claim for it as the first Welsh novel.

²³³ T. J. Ll. Prichard, 'Preface', *The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones Esq. Of Tregaron, A Wild Wag of Wales* 2nd edn (Cowbridge: J.T. Jones for E. Poole, 1839), pp. iii-iv

4.1 The End of the Industrial Revolution in Wales

On 4 April 1826, Prichard wrote to Rees from an address at *Widermarsh Gate Hereford* about his attempts to sort out some unsatisfactory business with a printer on Rees's behalf, and his own affairs. He had been unwell and *thrown... into considerable difficulties [by a] stoppage of the Banks... which to a person possessed of little, and that little in Hereford Notes is a serious inconvenience.*²³⁴

The Rev. William Jenkins Rees together with the Rev. John Jenkins of Hengoed (i.e., Shôn Shincyn) and Thomas Price played a significant part in the revival of the Eisteddfod and helped to resurrect the Cymmrodorion Society.²³⁵ Britain in 1826 when Prichard wrote his letter to Reed was in the middle of an economic crisis which triggered a catastrophic collapse of the banks. The crisis began in 1825 and it caused many of the British banks that had become established following the Industrial Revolution to fail. Marx and Engels identified the crisis of 1825 as the first general crisis of the capitalist mode of production: Engels describes it in Anti-Dühring:

In fact, since 1825, when the first general crisis erupted, the whole industrial and commercial world, production and exchange among all civilized peoples and their more or less barbarian appendages, have broken down about once every ten years. Trade comes to a standstill, markets are glutted, products lie around in piles as massive as they are unsaleable, hard cash disappears, credit vanishes, factories are idle, the working masses lack the means of subsistence because they have produced too much of them, bankruptcy follows upon bankruptcy, forced sale upon forced sale. The stagnation lasts for years and both productive forces and products are squandered and destroyed wholesale, until the accumulated masses of commodities are finally run down at a more or less considerable depreciation and until production and exchange gradually begin to move again. By degrees the pace quickens, it becomes a trot, the industrial trot passes into a gallop, and the gallop in turn passes into the unbridled onrush of a complete industrial, commercial, credit and speculative steeple chase, only to end up again, after the most breakneck jumps -- in the ditch of a crash. And so on over and over again. We have now experienced it fully five times since 1825, and at this moment [1877] we are experiencing it for

²³⁴ Sam Adams, Thomas Jeffery Llewelyn Prichard (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 79

²³⁵ Selwyn Jones, 'Rees, William Jenkin, (1772-1855)' Welsh Biography Online. Available at: <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-REES-JEN-1772.html> [accessed 9 April 2009]

the sixth time. The character of these crises is so clearly marked that Fourier hit them all off when he described the first as a *crise pléthorique*, a crisis of superabundance.²³⁶

More recent statistical analysis by Crafts, Leybourne, and Mill has found that following 1815 an economic cycle of about seven years can be identified.²³⁷ They corroborate Engels and identify the cycles of the 1820s as the start of the first collapse in the long-term trend growth which began at the start of the eighteenth century.²³⁸ Meanwhile, industrial South Wales would have been left largely untouched by the 1825 banking collapse because it had few, if any, banks at the time, but the consequences of the sharp depression in trade which was associated with the collapse of the English banks changed Welsh society almost beyond recognition.

In South Wales the recession of the last two quarters of 1825 was the trigger for the start of the first regionally organised working-class resistance. Iron prices had been dropping since the end of the wars with America and France and by early 1826 the ironmasters of South Wales had organised together in order to reduce wages. In the early spring of 1826 the Merthyr workmen 'promptly stopped work in protest, but restarted when their employers threatened to extinguish the furnaces.'²³⁹ The strike in Monmouthshire lasted longer and was better supported; by mid-June the workmen at Ebbw Vale and Nantyglo were still resisting the drop in wages.²⁴⁰ The Monmouthshire coal owners had not followed the ironmasters in reducing wages because the coal trade was not

²³⁶ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring: Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1976), pp. 355-6.

²³⁷ It seems that Engels was over-optimistic when he suggested a ten year cycle.

²³⁸ N. F. R. Crafts, S. J. Leybourne, T. C. Mills, 'Trends and Cycles in British Industrial Production, 1700-1913', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* Series A (Statistics in Society), 152:1 (1989), 43-60, p. 52 and p. 57

²³⁹ E. W. Evans, *The Miners of South Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961), p. 21

²⁴⁰ Evans, p. 21

as depressed as the market for iron, but they were forced to do so when the ironmasters began to flood the market with their own cheaper coal.²⁴¹ On 24 March 1827 the Coal Owners reduced their wage rates to levels below those before 'the mad speculation of... 1825.'²⁴² Consequently, the colliers of the sale-coal collieries struck in an organised combination.²⁴³ For seven weeks the strikers held firm and in early May they returned to work with a smaller deduction than had been originally demanded by the employers.

In 1830 the iron trade had still not improved, as it always had previously. Cyfarthfa alone had 80,000 tons of iron stockpiled in the January of 1830.²⁴⁴ In the February of 1830 the ironworkers of Varteg were the first to strike for an increase in wages. In the same year there was a well-organised and broadly supported campaign by the Monmouthshire sale-coal colliers to increase wages and abolish truck. This strike marked a turning-point in the history of the Welsh coal industry and was the first time that the colliers had acted independently of the ironworkers.²⁴⁵ It was decided that the colliers at the three Crumlin levels who had been given notice of a wage reduction should be financially supported by contributions if they came out on strike; however, the reduction in the wage was never enforced and the support of the sale-coal colliers was not called upon.²⁴⁶ The first trade union in industrial South Wales was about to be briefly formed by the colliers of Monmouthshire,²⁴⁷ by the same men who less than ten years later marched on Newport in an act of Chartist insurgency.²⁴⁸

²⁴¹ Evans, p. 22

²⁴² Evans, p. 23

²⁴³ Evans, p. 23

²⁴⁴ Evans, p. 35

²⁴⁵ Evans, pp. 35-7

²⁴⁶ Evans, p. 37

²⁴⁷ Evans, p. 38

²⁴⁸ See, R. G. Gamage, 'Chapter VIII: The Welsh Insurrection', in History of the Chartist Movement, 1837-1854 (Newcastle-On-Tyne: Browne & Browne; and London: Truslove & Hanson, 1894), pp. 161-188

When an attempt was made to drop the wages of the ironstone miners of Cyfarthfa in the following year (1831) a full-scale insurrection almost broke out across the entire iron belt district. A mass meeting was held in Merthyr on 30 May 1831 and it was decided that a demand would be made for a 10% increase in the wages. At the meeting were the unemployed Monmouthshire colliers and ironworkers and following the meeting ironworks in Aberdare, Nantyglo, Blaenavon, Abersychan, Pontypool, Varteg and Llanelly were all rendered idle. When a strike broke out in Merthyr in June it was able to draw on considerable support from Monmouthshire. By 3 July 1831 union lodges were active in Merthyr: 'by early September even the contemporary press knew of the existence of unions among the colliers of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan.'²⁴⁹ But this early period of organised resistance did not survive for long and by December of 1831 the union in Merthyr had failed altogether.²⁵⁰

Following the failure of the first attempts to organise a union, the Scotch Cattle, for a number of years became the dominant means of resistance of the industrial workforce of South Wales. Described as a spontaneous combination, the Scotch Cattle had been active in the steam-coal valleys of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire since 1822 when an outbreak of Scotching broke out in Nantyglo: this action was stopped only when the damages caused by the Scotch Cattle were deducted from the wages.²⁵¹ Evans tells the story of how the Scotch Cattle treated a blackleg workman who had accepted a wage reduction during a strike: scabs would first be issued with a warning notice, which would be posted at the level where they worked, and then if they continued to break the strike they would be

²⁴⁹ Evans, p. 41

²⁵⁰ Evans, p. 46

²⁵¹ Evans, pp. 48-9 Although Evans reports that there are uncorroborated allegations that the Scotch Cattle had been active between 1808 and 1814.

visited at home by 'The Herd', a group of up to 300 men in disguise (wearing cow-hides or women's clothing, or simply with their jackets turned inside out) and with blackened faces.²⁵² The Herd would start by breaking the doors and all the windows of the house, next the furniture would be broken and the victims beaten if they resisted, and finally their clothing and curtains would be thrown on to a fire. Like the Blacks who had resisted the enclosure of the English forests a hundred years before, the Welsh Scotch Cattle inevitably attracted the more criminally-minded members of the local community.²⁵³ In addition to maintaining discipline during industrial disputes, the Scotch Cattle also looted and sacked truck-shops, threatened and attacked officials of the company, and at their height in 1833 they even attacked workmen who refused to demand an increase in wages.²⁵⁴ 'On at least one occasion in 1834 a woman returned home to find her house looted, simply because it was near a truck shop that the Herd had attacked.'²⁵⁵

Demand for iron improved in the 1830s and by 1834 the Welsh ironworkers and colliers were again ready to agitate for improved pay and conditions, and once again they started to form together in an organised trade union. By this time they had also started to join the Chartist movement. The Chartists' march on Newport in 1839 was composed of workers from the ironworks and pits of Monmouthshire and Merthyr. So many working men and women had left in the march on Newport that the ironworks of Monmouthshire

²⁵² Evans suggests that one reason why the Scotch Cattle acquired their name was that Scotch Cattle are black faced (p. 49). In Ebbw Vale in the middle of the twentieth century it was common for a scab to be called 'Du Wyneb' or 'Black-faced'; the name was insulting because it likened the scab to a black-faced Hereford sheep. Although these were now industrial proletarian communities, they still retained close connections with their agricultural origins.

²⁵³ For the history of the English Blacks see, E.P. Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters: the Origin of the Black Act* (London: Allen Lane, 1975). When I lived in Abertridwr and Senghenydd in the 1990s they still had an active group which called itself 'The Herd' who, like the earlier Scotch Cattle, were composed of the more criminally-minded members of the local community who acted within the local community very much as the Scotch Cattle had nearly two hundred years before.

²⁵⁴ Evans, p. 50

²⁵⁵ Evans, p. 50

and Merthyr were forced to stop work. Following the attack on the Chartists in Newport, the Monmouthshire colliers went on strike rather than work with men who had given evidence at the trial of the Chartists.²⁵⁶

Yet, despite these early attempts to improve conditions and to organise, they would all ultimately fail: due in part to the hostility and organisation of the ironmasters and coal owners, and due also to the influence of Welsh Nonconformity whose control over Welsh society in this period was almost total and which was notoriously antagonistic to the early worker's unions and benefit societies. So anti-union were the Nonconformists that one of the grounds of excommunication from the chapel was simply the wearing of a benefit-society badge.²⁵⁷ The Nonconformists saw negotiating between worker and master as their natural role in society and they were deeply suspicious of, and aggressively hostile to, the efforts of labour to organise for themselves. In its turn Chartism faced the opposition of both the Established Church and the Nonconformists: Chartism was yet another cause of excommunication and the evils of Chartism were at that time a common subject of sermons from the pulpit.²⁵⁸ Davies recounts the following story of the night of the Chartists' march from the ironworks and coal mines of Monmouthshire on the docks of Newport:

When the Chartists assembled in north Monmouthshire and marched on Newport on Sunday night, 3 November 1839, and the early hours of the following morning, John Ridge, pastor of the Independent church at Beaufort, spent the night under the pulpit stairs, and Richard Jones, his counterpart in Sirhowy, spent the night up to his chin in the works' feeder.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁶ Evans, p. 57

²⁵⁷ Ebenezer Thomas Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1965), pp. 76-7

²⁵⁸ It should be noted that the threat of excommunication was not an empty one, where you worked and what work you could do was determined by which church or chapel you belonged to, see for example: Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales, pp. 76-7

²⁵⁹ Davies, p. 78. Feeders were notoriously dangerous when in use because of the strong undercurrent.

The ministers no doubt were well aware of the part which they had played in trying to suppress Chartism locally, and were afraid of the response of the marchers should they be spotted. Welsh Nonconformity, which had earlier been a socially radical movement, had started now to become conformist and conservative:

Throughout the period from 1832 to 1900 the Monmouthshire Welsh Baptist Association did not once discuss the social conditions of industrial Monmouthshire, with the exceptions of the problems of temperance and Sunday closing.²⁶⁰

On 17 November 1839 Evan Jenkins, the incumbent Anglican minister of Dowlais, gave a notorious sermon on the evils of Chartism. His sermon was published in 1840 in Merthyr by the printer J. E. Dibb, it was published in at least sixteen different editions. In his sermon Jenkins preached that rebellion is inconsistent with the teaching of the Church, that God alone is author of poverty and riches and as such should not be questioned, and that riches carry great responsibility; for example:

One thing however is quite certain, under whatever Government we may live, and whatever might be the political sentiments of our legislators, *poverty will never cease from the land*, and it will never cease because it is the result of the eternal purpose and appointment of Jehovah... Well, then, in defiance of philosophers, of revolutionists, and of Acts of Parliament, Poverty “retains with unsparing grasp his unsparing grasp his uncompromising tenacity upon the communities of mankind,” and it does so because God himself declares—“*The poor shall never cease out of the land.*”²⁶¹

Although the sentiment of the Rev. Evan Jenkins may have been considered as extreme by many in Wales, they do represent something of the open hostility to Chartism which organised religion in Wales expressed. Welsh Nonconformity in an industrial society was neither socially active or involved; it was distanced from the daily concerns, struggles,

²⁶⁰ Davies, p. 85

²⁶¹ Rev. Evan Jenkins, Chartism Unmasked (Merthyr Tydvil: J. E. Dibbs, 1840), pp. 12-13. The italics are those of the original author.

hopes and aspirations of the community that it was supposed to serve. As the century progressed, the leadership of Welsh Nonconformity reverted increasingly to its middle-class roots.²⁶² Russell Davies has recently pointed out that:

The industrial unrest of the 1850s and 1860s aroused resentment and regret that many of the prominent religious leaders were not supportive of the workers' cause. Shopkeepers and industrialists were criticized for praying on their knees on Sundays, and praying on their neighbours for the rest of the week.²⁶³

By the middle of the century many of the Nonconformist chapels and denominations of South Wales were at the vanguard of the charge towards linguistic Anglicisation.²⁶⁴

The Welsh Industrial Revolution, which had roughly begun when the wars against the French started in the middle of the eighteenth century, was ironically pushed into its first protracted economic crisis by the peace which broke out across Europe following the defeat of Napoleon. Although the crisis arrived later in Wales than in England, thanks to the demand for the higher quality Welsh iron, by the 1820s the crisis was beginning to provoke working-class organisation and insurgency. This moment of intense social crisis in Welsh economic and cultural life at the end of the Industrial Revolution can be said to have directly had an impact on the literature which was produced in Wales. The overwhelmingly dominant literary form of the Industrial Revolution in Wales was religious: be it in the form of sermons, biographies, poetry, hymns, commentary, or as simple as a Sunday school 'a, b, c, ch'. Yet, in spite of the dominating impact of Nonconformity, and the repressive power of capitalism, during this moment of crisis Wales produced its first novel at a time

²⁶² Davies, p. 148

²⁶³ Russell Davies, *Hope and Heartbreak: A Social History of Wales and the Welsh, 1776-1871* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p. 342

²⁶⁴ Davies, p. 69-76. See also Tim Williams, 'The Anglicisation of South Wales', in *Patriotism: The making and unmaking of British national identity* vol. II Minorities and Outsiders, ed. by Raphael Samuel, vol. 2 (London: Routledge, 1989), 193-203 (p. 197).

of complex resistance: T.J. Ll. Prichard's Twm Shon Catti (1828)—and Welsh cultural life had finally begun a quiet revolution of its own.

4.2 The Origins of Twm Shon Catti

It would be easy to assume that when Prichard wrote Twm Shon Catti in 1828 he did so on a blank canvas but in fact there were a number of precedents to his novel, one of which was so egregious that Prichard wrote his novel in response:

The Precursors of <u>Twm Shon Catti</u>
<u>The Joker; or, merry companion. To which are added Tomshone Catty's tricks</u> (Carmarthen: J. Ross and Swansea: M. Bevan, 1763)
<u>Y Digrifwr: Casgliad o Gampiau a Dichellion Thomas Jones, o Dregaron, yn Sir Aberteifi; Yr hwn sydd yn cael ei adnabod yn gyffredin wrth yr enw Twm Sion Catti. Hefyd chwedlau digrif eraill</u> [<u>The Comedian: A Collection of the Games and Wile of Thomas Jones of Tregaron, in Cardigan; otherwise known as Twm Sion Catti. Also with other humorous tales</u>] [1803, 1811, 1844]
William F. Deacon, 'Twm John Catty, The Welch Rob Roy.', in <u>The Inn-Keeper's Album</u> (London: Thomas McLean, 1823), pp. 258-319
William F. Deacon, <u>The Life, Exploits, and Death of Twm John Catty, the celebrated Welch Rob Roy, and his beautiful bride Elinor, Lady of Llandisent, etc.</u> (London: unknown [1830?])

Table 4.1 The Precursors of Twm Shon Catti

The first precursor was a 28-page, English-language pamphlet which was printed in 1763 by J. Ross and R. Thomas in Carmarthen and by M. Bevan in Swansea: The Joker; or, merry companion. To which are added Tomshone Catty's tricks.

Following on from this remarkably early version is the second, an 8-page book entitled: Y Digrifwr: Casgliad o Gampiau a Dichellion Thomas Jones, o Dregaron, yn Sir Aberteifi; Yr hwn sydd yn cael ei adnabod yn gyffredin wrth yr enw Twm Sion Catti. Hefyd chwedlau digrif eraill [The Comedian: A Collection of the Games and Wiles of

Thomas Jones of Tregaron, in Cardigan; commonly known as Twm Sion Catti. Also other humorous tales]).²⁶⁵ In all Y Digrifwr, which is a Welsh-language translation of the earlier pamphlet The Joker,²⁶⁶ went through three impressions: 1803, 1811, and 1844.

Y Digrifwr is something of a mystery: it has no identifiable author and although Libri Walliae attributes the 1811 edition to Jonathan Harris (printer) of Carmarthen it is unclear on what grounds it does so. Presumably the two later impressions (1811 and 1844) were drawn off the original stereotype plate of 1803. Looking at this pamphlet, my first impression would be to call it a galley book in that it looks very much as if it has been rapidly assembled from the plates used for printing a newspaper or magazine. Indeed, the only problem in calling it a galley book would be that in 1803 no newspaper or magazine had as yet been printed in Carmarthen: it pre-dates the first magazine Trysorfa Efengylaidd [The Evangelical Treasury] by three years. The other, and this time more fundamental problem, is that Jonathan Harris only commenced printing in Carmarthen in 1807: until then the Carmarthen trade was dominated by three printers—John Ross, John Daniel, and John Evans.²⁶⁷ Therefore, Harris could not have printed the first impression of Y Digrifwr in 1803. Meanwhile, Ifano Jones mentions briefly that John Daniel advertised his subscription Bible on the front page of John Harris's almanac for 1803.²⁶⁸ My suspicion would be that this almanac is the source for the plates which were adapted by an unknown enterprising printer to print the 8 page Y Digrifwr: Libri Walliae has confused Jonathan Harris with the earlier John Harris. Once the imprint was complete, the plates of Y Digrifwr were safely stored and when required a fresh impression could be easily drawn

²⁶⁵ A copy of the 1811 edition of Y Digrifwr is available on Google Books at: <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=O3oCAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover> [accessed 19 July 2009]. All translations of titles are my own.

²⁶⁶ Adams, p. 78

²⁶⁷ Ifano Jones, p. 189

²⁶⁸ Ifano Jones, p. 144

off them. From a printer's point of view, this would be a remarkably cheap and quick way to produce a pamphlet for market (an 8-page pamphlet is only two folded sheets of paper); it also helps to bulk out the printer's list of available titles.

The third, and probably more significant, precedent for Twm Shon Catti originally appeared as a short story in William F. Deacon's book, The Inn-Keeper's Album (London: Thomas McLean, 1823): the story is called, 'Twm John Catty, The Welch Rob Roy.' This is an odd story in many ways: the sixteenth-century Welsh gentleman and antiquarian, Thomas Jones has become in the hands of a London author and journalist a fifteenth-century supporter of Glyndŵr against the English King Henry IV. This is the version of the story of Twm Shon Catti which most obviously adopts the English Robin Hood traditions, for example:

Three years thus passed on, and still the greenwood was his sole residence. The English monarch had in the mean time crushed the rebellion, and the Welch were left to enjoy a brief interval of repose. It was now that the dread of Twm John Catty overspread every class of the community; for, with his bold foresters by his side, he fearlessly plundered villages, taxed monasteries, and bestowed on the needy, what he extorted from the rich. His robberies, however, were unstained by cruelty; and as they generally terminated in some rude jest, at the expence[sic.] of the hapless traveller, ridicule softened over the glaring violation of justice.²⁶⁹

Deacon was writing in a narrative form that would have been familiar to his English audience, but it would have been almost completely alien to the Welsh audience, who had their own narrative tradition and culture. Just how alien this Welsh culture was to the Englishman Deacon can be judged from his footnote:

The reader of this idle tale will, I trust, pardon the orthography of the different Welch places alluded to in it, when I assure him that I have been nearly put to death

²⁶⁹ 'Twm John Catty', p. 267

in a vain attempt to pronounce them after the most approved fashion. Wales is as famous for the length and toughness of its words as of its pedigrees, and many of its villages have more consonants than houses. One, in particular, has a name long enough to rival the famous cook's hill at Cambridge, which is thirty-six feet long, by one and a half broad.²⁷⁰

The oral folk-tales which had grown around Twm Shon Catti are as alien to Deacon as the language. His narrative conforms to the new Romantic ideals, it follows in the Robin Hood traditions, but it has very little relation to either Twm Shon Catti, or Thomas Jones of Tregaron.

Deacon's 'Twm John Catty' was sold on to a number of contemporary magazines. I would suggest that the story was syndicated by Deacon, but there is so much variation in these versions that they must have been rehandled by a number of editors. For example, in 'Extracts from New Works: The Cambrian Freebooter', the version of the story which appears in the weekly magazine The Portfolio in 1827, Twm John Catty becomes a Welsh chieftain who has withdrawn into the forest after the seizure of his Lampeter estates and the failure of his subsequent rebellion against Henry IV:

Twm John Catty retreats to his forests, where, according to Mr. D., but not according to the rubric, he plays sundry tricks on the monks, in imitation of the English outlaw, which seem rather to entitle him to the name of the Welch Robin Hood than the Welch Rob Roy.²⁷¹

The Gentleman's Pocket Magazine of 1828 has a poem written in four Spenserian stanzas called, 'Twm John Catti's Cave' by F. W. Deacon.²⁷² And finally, in April 1828 The Cornish Magazine of April 1828 has a short story of Deacon's Twm John Catty which is titled 'Spicilegia, No. 2: A Tale of the Olden Times'. In this version Thomas Jones of Tregaron

²⁷⁰ 'Twm John Catty', p. 319

²⁷¹ The Portfolio of Amusement And Instruction, in History, Science, Literature, and the Fine Arts Etc. 12 August 1826, p. 184

²⁷² The Gentleman's Pocket Magazine 1828, p. 160-1

has once again become an ancient Welsh chieftain.²⁷³ One more reason for the popularity of ‘Twm John Catty’ with the magazine press is that Deacon’s short story was successfully adapted for the stage in 1823 (a subject to which I will shortly return).

The popular association of the Welsh Twm Shon Catti with the English Robin Hood can be traced to what is essentially a confused rewriting of two Welsh folk-heroes (Glyndŵr and Twm Shon Catti) within an English narrative form. This may in part go to explain the success of Deacon’s ‘Twm John Catty’; he has hybridised a Welsh folk-hero whose tales had been passed down through Welsh oral narrative traditions within a form which was familiar to an English audience.

In 1830 Deacon’s ‘Twm John Catty’ was published in London as The Life, Exploits, and Death of Twm John Catty, the celebrated Welch Rob Roy, and his beautiful bride Elinor, Lady of Llandisent. It could be suggested that the London publisher, who is unrecorded, hoped to cash in on the recent success of Prichard’s Twm Shon Catti (1828) by releasing a cheap novel of the short story from The Inn-Keeper’s Album.

Prichard in the first chapter of his Twm Shon Catti wrote of Deacon’s ‘Twm John Catty’ and the response which it received:

Although neither the legends, poetry, nor history of the principality, seems to interest, or accord with the queasy taste of our English brethren, the name of Twm Shôn Catti,²⁷⁴ curiously enough, not only made its way among them, but had the

²⁷³ The Cornish Magazine April 1828, p. 83-5 [originally published as The Selector]

²⁷⁴ Prichard uses the correct ‘Shôn’ in this chapter, but slips and mixes its use with ‘Shon’ throughout the rest of the novel. There are probably a number of factors behind this slip: whoever typeset the book did so with little talent and the galley was left uncorrected, as indicated by the large number of simple spelling mistakes in the text; John Cox’s compositor often quickly ran out of the circumflex (‘to bach’) mark and was forced to mix its use as the book was being put through the press, which was one of the consequences of using a typeset which has been designed for English use in the Welsh language; the circumflex ô appears ten times in the first chapter but thereafter its use is predominantly limited to the page headings (which are typeset in a larger font) while the circumflex î appears more frequently throughout the book (e.g. the Lady of Ystrad Fîn), which suggests that Cox may have been using a tired second-hand set of type which came from another Welsh printer.

unexpected honor [*sic.*] of being woven unto a tale, and exhibited on the stage as a Welsh dramatic spectacle, under the title, and the imposing *second* title, of Twm John Catti, or the Welsh Rob Roy. The nationality of the Welsh residents in London, who always bear their country along with them wherever they go or stay, was immediately roused, notwithstanding the great offence of substituting “John” for “Shôn,” which called at once on their curiosity and love of country to peruse the “Innkeeper’s Album,” in which to this tale first appeared, and to visit the Cobourg Theatre, where overflowing houses nightly attended the representation of the “Welsh Rob Roy.” Now that second title, which confounded the poor Cambrians, was a grand expedient of the author’s, to excite the attention of the Londoners, who naturally associated it with the hero of the celebrated Scotch novel; the bait was immediately swallowed, and that tale, an awkward and most weak attempt to imitate the “Great Unknown,” and by far the worst article in the book, actually *sold* a volume, in other respects well deserving the attention of the public.²⁷⁵

Prichard continues:

Great was the surprise of the sons of the Cymry to find the robber Twm Shon Catti, who partially resembled Bamfylde Moore Carew, Robin Hood, and the humorous but vulgar footpad, Turpin, elevated to the degree of a high-hearted, injured chieftain:—the stealer of calves, old women’s flannels, and three-legged pots, a noble character, uttering heroic speeches, and ultimately dying for his *Ellen** a heroes death!

“This may do for London, but in Wales, where *Y gwir yn erbyn y byd*† is our motto, we know better!” muttered many a testy Cambrian...

*His wife’s name was Joan †The truth against the world. (p. 3)

This then is the context against which Prichard is explicitly working:

If the misrepresentations of historical characters, re-moulded and amplified, to suit the fascinating details of romance, be a fault generally, it is particularly offensive in the present case, where the being treated of, is so well known to every peasant throughout the principality; so that a real account of our hero, if not exactly useful, may at least prove amusing, in this age of inquiry, to stand by the side of the fictitious tale... (p. 4)

He then describes his sources for Twm Shon Catti:

²⁷⁵ T. J. Ll. Prichard, The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti: Descriptive of Life in Wales (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox, 1828), pp. 2-3. All further references in parenthesis in the text are to this edition.

Little, it is true, of his life is known, and that little collected principally from the varying and uncertain sources of oral tradition... but his rover's exploits and vagaries I met with principally in a homely Welsh pamphlet of eight pages, printed on tea-paper, and sold at the moderate price of two-pence. (p. 5)

Prichard has left us a contemporary record of the reception of Deacon's 'Twm John Catty' by the London Welsh. That they objected firstly to the change of name ("John" for "Shôn") and then to the elevation of a thief to a chieftain is indicative that there is something interesting going on here. Deacon's story has assimilated a Welsh folk-hero, has hybridised it within popular English cultural forms: and in the process of hybridisation the Welsh language has been stripped away ("Shôn" become "John"), and the oral folk-tales of Wales have more or less been completely bastardised by Deacon to serve the interests of the English press. Deacon's 'Twm John Catty' is a colonial hybrid. What is surprising is that the Welsh did not take this act of colonial appropriation sitting down; they offered resistance to the colonial enterprise. This may in part explain why Prichard chose to write his novel in English. He is using the language of colonial hybridity so as to confront it.

4.3 Thomas Jeffery Llewelyn Prichard

It is likely that Thomas Prichard was born in 1790 in Builth, and was the son of a lawyer.²⁷⁶

Prichard's first appearance of note is on the London stage and his recent biographer Sam Adams suggests that the 'Mr Jefferies' who appears frequently on Covent Garden playlists between 1814 and 1823 is none other than Thomas Prichard: he earlier suggests that Prichard's stage name had been adopted from the Rev. Jeffery Llewelyn of Llywel.²⁷⁷ I can

²⁷⁶ Adams, pp. 50-2

²⁷⁷ Adams, pp. 61-3 and pp. 53-5

see no reasonable cause to doubt the veracity of Adams' claims; there is, however, another 'Mr Jefferies' that the pen name could possibly be alluding too. Despite the militant opposition of Welsh Nonconformity, the theatre in Wales in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had been thriving, thanks in part to the success of the development of Welsh seaside resorts which were popular with wealthy English visitors. However, despite the hopes of many that Swansea could develop as a fashionable seaside resort for the idle rich in the second half of the eighteenth century, there was one person who stood in the way of permitting a band of actors to perform in the town, thereby giving the town the status that it aimed for – Gabriel Powell, Steward to the Duke of Beaufort and Recorder to the Corporation of Swansea. Powell was a true xenophobe and his hatred of strangers and change was so strong that, despite the wishes of the local population and gentry, he tried to keep any strolling players out of the town. In 1775 the only opposition to the arrival of a theatre company in the town (which would have improved its status as a resort) came from a 'Mr Jeffries': probably Gabriel Jeffreys, Portreeve of Swansea and a sycophant of Gabriel Powell. 'Mr Jeffries' ultimately became pilloried and caricatured in the popular London press. Fortunately the opposition of Mr Jefferies and Gabriel Powell failed and Swansea became one of the most fashionable resorts in Britain, known as 'The Brighton of Wales'.²⁷⁸ There could well be an inside joke in a young Welsh actor's choice of 'Mr Jefferies' as a stage name, especially when given the context that many of the London companies would have looked towards the profitable summer resort season with much anticipation.

Thomas Jeffery Llewelyn Prichard arrived in Aberystwyth in 1823-4 after a

²⁷⁸ Cecil Price, The English Theatre in Wales in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1948), pp. 47-51.

successful career on the Covent Garden stage. While in London Prichard had already written and published work of Welsh interest and when he left London he did so with the intention of making a successful living as a Welsh writer, working in Wales and writing primarily for a Welsh audience (even though he never published work written in the Welsh language).²⁷⁹ Prichard's move from London to Aberystwyth was a conscious act where he deliberately turned his back on both the stage and the London-Welsh literary establishment,²⁸⁰ hoping to find success by 'writing for his own people'.²⁸¹

Just how successful Prichard was in writing for his own people can be judged from the bibliography of his work aside from Twm Shon Catti:

²⁷⁹ Adams, p. 74

²⁸⁰ Adams, p. 65

²⁸¹ Adams, p. 74

Other Books by T. J. Llewelyn Prichard
<u>My Lowly Love and Other Petite Poems, Chiefly on Welsh Subjects</u> (Worthing: printed by William Phillips, 1822)
<u>Mariette Mouline, The Death of Glyndower, and Other Poems, Partly on Welsh Subjects</u> (London: printed by W. Hersee, 1823)
<u>Aberystwyth in Miniature, in Various Poems</u> (Carmarthen: printed by Jonathan Harris, 1824)
<u>Welsh Minstrelsy: Containing The Land Beneath the Sea; or Cantrev y Gwaelod, A Poem, in Three Cantos, with Various Other Poems</u> (Covent-Garden, London: Messers. John and H. L. Hunt, 1824) printed by John Cox, Aberystwyth Digitised by Google
<u>The New Aberystwyth Guide to the Waters, Bathing Houses, Public Walks, and Amusements; including Historical Notices and General Information</u> (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox for Lewis Jones, 1824)
<u>The Cambrian Balnea: Or Guide to the Watering Places of Wales, Marine and Inland (Part I: The Llandrindod Guide)</u> (London: John and H. L. Hunt, 1825) printed by Price, Hay
<u>The Cambrian Wreath: A Selection of English Poems on Welsh Subjects, Original and Translated from the Cambro-British, Historic and Legendary, including Welsh Melodies: by Various Authors of Celebrity, Living and Departed</u> edited and illustrated by T. J. Llewelyn Prichard (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox, 1828) Digitised by Google
<u>The Heroines of Welsh History: Comparing Memoirs and Biographical Notices of the Celebrated Women of Wales, Especially the Eminent for Talent, the Exemplary in Conduct, the Eccentric of Character, and the Curious by Position, or Otherwise</u> (London: W. and F. G. Cash; Bristol: C. T. Jefferies; Swansea: William Morris, 1854) printed by C. T. Jefferies, Bristol Digitised by Google

Table 4.2 Other Books by T. J. Llewelyn Prichard

A number of points and patterns can be identified here. The first can be deduced by working chronologically: Prichard's first two pamphlets of poems were printed in London in 1822 and 1823. Despite this inauspicious start they were written 'chiefly' and 'partly' on

‘Welsh Subjects’: Prichard while in London was already writing consciously as a Welshman. On his return to Wales Prichard published a poetic description of Aberystwyth, Aberystwyth in Miniature, in Various Poems which he arranged to have printed in Carmarthen (at this point in time still the centre of the Welsh print industry). Prichard’s last book The Heroines of Welsh History was published in Bristol in 1854, about ten years before he died in poverty in The World’s End, Swansea (which may in part explain why there is a Swansea bookseller included in the list of the publishers). The overwhelming majority of Prichard’s work was written and published in the distressed decade of the 1820s.

When Prichard wrote his next book, the Welsh Minstrelsy (1824), (after he published a book on Aberystwyth in Carmarthen) it was published in Covent Garden by John and H. L. Hunt— but it was printed in Aberystwyth by John Cox. This marked the beginning of Prichard’s four year involvement with John Cox’s press. As we have already seen, it was not unprecedented for a London publishing house to use Welsh printers and in John Cox, Prichard must have temporarily found a willing printer, as he published his most significant work in the 1820s in Cox’s printing office in Aberystwyth. Before the arrival of John Cox, Prichard would have had extreme difficulty in getting even a playbill for the theatre printed in Nonconformist Aberystwyth, let alone something so sinful as a novel. However, the choice of printer here is difficult in that in 1824 John Cox was new to printing and the first work that he produced was that written by Prichard.²⁸² Cox may have been new to the press but he was not new to Aberystwyth and the ‘Library History Database’ project has two entries for Cox in Aberystwyth: the first is for ‘Cox’s Circulating

²⁸² See the bibliographies included as Appendices Two and Three.

Library' [1806?], which was run by William Cox; the second record from 1822 is for the same library but now run by John Cox.²⁸³ So John Cox had come into the print industry following his inheritance of the circulating library in 1822, which would seem to imply that from the outset Cox had a bookseller's interest in the press. This indicates that a change was beginning to impact upon the domestic print trade as the Industrial Revolution was drawing to an end in Wales: up until this point Welsh printers had survived on jobbing work and printers published books only as and when they could. Welsh book production in this early period had very much been an ad hoc affair. Cox marks the beginnings of a new generation of more independent printers who did not need to rely on jobbing work to support the book press.

If Welsh Nonconformity was notoriously hostile to unionism and Chartism in the nineteenth century, it was equally notorious for its opposition to the novel and to the theatre. The first press in Aberystwyth was established in 1809 by the Rev. John James, a Baptist minister, but because John James had no experience of the print trade he entered into partnership with a young journeyman-printer from one of the Carmarthen printing offices—Samuel Williams. In 1812 Samuel Williams bought the press and type and opened his own print office. Ifano Jones continues the story:

Being an elder of the Calvinistic-Methodist church worshipping at The Tabernacle, and holding strictly puritanical views, Samuel Williams would never think of printing anything but was either religious or edifying. Once, however, in 1818, when 'Rob Roy, or Auld Lang Syne' was being played at Aberystwyth, the play-bill, in spite of Samuel Williams's refusal to have anything to do with it or the theatre, was surreptitiously printed at his office. This was effected through the strategy of George Careswell... who, though knowing hardly anything about

²⁸³ Professor Robin Halston, Library History Database: Libraries in Wales to 1850. Available at: <http://www.r-alston.co.uk/wales.htm> [accessed 21 July 2009]

In the Library History Database there is another, more confused, reference available for William Cox: 'ABERGAVENNY *mom* Cox's Circulating Library 1706? [William Cox] 1806?-22. Followed by John Cox'

printing, succeeded to induce some of the workmen to get the play-bill executed during the night.²⁸⁴

There is something deeply ironic about a play-bill for 'Rob Roy' being published in the middle of the night by Samuel Williams's workmen.²⁸⁵ Samuel Williams was never a very good printer and he used his old and worn type without any typographical style.²⁸⁶ As was typical of many Welsh printers in the nineteenth century, when Samuel Williams passed on to the land eternal in 1821 the business was taken over by his widow, Esther Williams, who continued in the business until she died in 1857 at the age of 71. Following Samuel's, death the business, which was now run by Esther, improved considerably.²⁸⁷

There is another anecdotal report of the difficulty that Prichard had in getting work for the theatre published in Aberystwyth in the nineteenth century. This time the story comes from Bye-Gones, relating to Wales and the border counties (1882) which was collected from the pages of the Oswestry Advertizer. When Prichard appeared in a production in the Aberystwyth Assembly Rooms in 1841, the main problem that the production faced was in getting their playbills printed, as the only printer in the town was convinced that the stage was the home of the Devil and refused to have anything to do with the company. Finally, some type was obtained by the company and an actor of substantial proportions called Crutchley was induced to sit on the type and so the bills were printed.²⁸⁸

As attractive as it is, this story does not quite sit square with the context of the Welsh print industry in this period. In 1841 there were four printers working in

²⁸⁴ Ifano Jones, p. 205

²⁸⁵ Were they working on the night-shift at the time I wonder?

²⁸⁶ Ifano Jones, p. 205

²⁸⁷ Ifano Jones, pp. 200-6

²⁸⁸ Cecil Price, The English Theatre in Wales, p. 149: and, Adams, Thomas Jeffery Llewelyn Prichard, p. 66

Aberystwyth (including Prichard's old printer, John Cox), who should have been perfectly capable and willing to print the playbills. The story of a theatre group printing its own playbills does, however, foreground the notorious difficulties which the theatre and fiction experienced in getting work through the Nonconformist Welsh presses. Compare this desperate printing of play-bills in mid-century Aberystwyth with a list of the printed publicity which was produced by W. S. Johnson on his Nassau Steam-press for Watts Phillips's London play The Dead Heart in 1859:

10,000 adhesive labels,
 30,000 small cuts of the Guillotine scene,
 5,000 reams of note-paper,
 110,000 business envelopes,
 60,000 pence envelopes,
 2,000 six-sheet cuts of Bastille scene,
 5,000,000 hand-bills,
 1,000 six-sheet posters,
 500 slips,
 1,000,000 cards the shape of a heart,
 100 twenty-eight sheets,
 20,000 folio cards for shop-windows.²⁸⁹

Even allowing for the differences between a summer resort playhouse and a London theatre, the comparison is extreme and shows how much control Nonconformity exerted over the Welsh press.

In Aberystwyth and its Court Leet (1902) George Eyre Evans lists the books and pamphlets which were printed in Aberystwyth between 1809 and 1902.²⁹⁰ Samuel and Esther Williams are listed as printing 137 books between 1809 and 1857 (after which the

²⁸⁹ Twyman, p. 105 [originally in, W. Smith, Advertise. How? When? Where? (London, 1863), p. 72]

²⁹⁰ George Eyre Evans, Aberystwyth and its Court Leet (Aberystwyth: Welsh Gazette, 1902), pp. 174-89

business was taken over by their son, Phillip).²⁹¹ In contrast, John Cox printed 58 books between 1824 and 1869 (see Appendix Three). As can be seen from the list of books printed by John Cox, his output was somewhat erratic: he published five books in 1824 and 1833, but frequently had years where he printed neither book nor pamphlet. Cox may have been publishing as and when his circulating library needed to be bulked out with certain titles, which would explain why he published so many English-language guides to Aberystwyth. George Eyre Evans includes in his book this description of John Cox the printer:

By the year 1824, in which he printed T.J. Llewelyn Prichard's Aberystwyth Guide, John Cox, *facile princeps* of local printers, was established here. His work was of the highest and most artistic quality; he believed in turning out the best possible results, and is known, on many occasions, to have destroyed quantities of printed matter for the sake of one faulty letter. His font of type was both extensive and artistic.²⁹²

In contrast to Evans's description of John Cox's press is this description of the first edition of Twm Shon Catti from Adams:

This first edition was a cheap affair, clumsily printed on coarse paper, which was all that Prichard could afford. It was not seen through the press with any care: there are two chapters numbered VII, a further two numbered XXI, and XVIII is missing, so that, although there are twenty-eight chapters in all, the last is numbered XXVII. How the anonymous reviewer could praise its *printing, matter, and materials* is a mystery.²⁹³

All of Prichard's books were produced by John Cox in his first four years as a printer, and from this it could be assumed that John Cox either improved as a printer following the poor quality of the first books drawn off his press, or that after 1828 he employed a much more capable compositor who had a larger set of type available.

²⁹¹ George Eyre Evans, p. 84 and pp. 174-80

²⁹² George Eyre Evans, p. 84

²⁹³ Adams, p. 39

John Cox was producing a diverse range of material on his press, in both languages, including an unsuccessful newspaper, The Aberystwyth Chronicle and Illustrated Times which lasted only six months. In this John Cox is typical of many Welsh printers in the early nineteenth century who attempted unsuccessfully to print a newspaper, often with disastrous financial consequences. Luckily John Cox managed to avoid bankruptcy after the failure of his newspaper, thanks probably to his putting a swift end to the venture.

It needs to be emphasised that while most of the printing presses of industrial South Wales in the early nineteenth century were producing almost entirely Welsh-language books, in Aberystwyth the presses were bilingual. While this discrepancy can be said to be a result of the maritime and tourist trade (as implied by Cox's most popular book The New Guide to Aberystwyth, which in 1869 had gone through five editions), it does indicate that there is a need for caution when reading the industrial areas of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire as English-speaking and the rural 'heartland' as monoglot Welsh-speaking.

4.4 The First Edition of Twm Shon Catti: Aberystwyth, 1828

In 1828 the first novel to be produced in Wales was published:

<u>Twm Shon Catti</u>, First edition:
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti; Descriptive of Life in Wales: Enterspersed with Poems</u> (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox for the author, 1828)
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti; Descriptive of Life in Wales: Enterspersed with Poems</u> (Cribyn: Llanerch Press, 2005)
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti</u> Digital Edition (Aberystwyth: Culturenet Cymru - National Library of Wales, 2003)

Table 4.3 The Impressions of the First Edition of Twm Shon Catti

For all its faults, including a large number of simple spelling errors, the first edition of Twm Shon Catti was successful, as can be judged from Prichard's preface to the second and third editions (quoted earlier) where he seems almost surprised by the success of his one and only novel. Aside from the oddball Heroines of Welsh History, Twm Shon Catti was also the only book which Prichard wrote that survived beyond the 1820s.

Perhaps most problematic of all issues is the role which language played in the production of Twm Shon Catti. Adams tells us that Prichard wrote his novel for a Welsh audience and that Prichard had become disenchanted with 'the tourist market.'²⁹⁴ Despite the evidence of a bilingual press in Aberystwyth, the idea of writing a book for a Welsh audience in English in the early nineteenth century, when the majority of the population were still in theory monoglot Welsh speakers, is nothing if not bizzare: who did he expect to read the book? The anglicised Welsh gentry? He surely could not have expected the English-speaking gentry to buy that many copies: they were few enough in number even then. The second point to raise is that there is something odd in the idea that a writer could publish a book in a seaside resort and not hope to profit from being able to sell the book to the wealthy patrons of that resort, especially when his printer was also the owner of an established circulating library in the town. Prichard later described his decision to write Twm Shon Catti in English:

Certain parties in our principality, who may be designated the fanatics of Welsh nationality, have somewhat pertinaciously harped upon the question of why I have written both this work and my Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catty in the English rather than the Welsh vernacular. I might reply, although from my childhood acquainted with both languages, that a long residence in England, and a partiality for its language and literature had decided my preference... In a

²⁹⁴ Adams, p. 43

commercial view of the question I have endeavoured to profit by the experience of others, who, to their sorrow have discovered that Welsh readers and book buyers are so circumscribed in number that in these times, both authors and publishers are severe losers by such experiments as publishing books in the Welsh language.²⁹⁵

How reliable his description here is open to question because it lies after his rift with Llanover and his subsequent disillusionment with the Welsh language. It does, though, reveal that the market for Welsh-language books was difficult even in the 1820s.

The story of *Twm Shôn Catti* was from the first obviously dramatic and Price tells us in an appendix that, 'after 1800 a noticeable effort was made to please Welsh audiences with plays of local interest. London productions like Twm John Catty and The Welsh Girl were frequently given.'²⁹⁶ Earlier, Price tells us that in Swansea when William M'Cready put on a performance of Twm John Catty he falsely claimed that it had been written by the successful playwright, W. T. Moncrieff.²⁹⁷ As it stands, who exactly wrote the script is unknown, assuming that there was one script and not multiple versions (like the magazine adaptations). There are a number of reviews of the play Twm John Catty which are available: the April 1823 copy of The Drama; or Theatrical Pocket Magazine has the following review of a London performance of Twm John Catty:

The piece is founded on an interesting national tradition recently published in "The Innkeeper's Album."... The piece is extremely interesting, and the good acting of Huntley [*Catty*], Rowbotham [*Hotspur*], Loveday [*Sir John Falstaff*], Stanley [*Prince of Wales*], Bradley [*Madoc*], Sloman [*Taffy*], and Mrs Pope [*Elinor*], contributed highly to our pleasure and its success. The scenery was pretty, but had nothing to excite particular attention. The piece was well received.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁵ T. J. Ll. Prichard, The Heroines of Welsh History: Comparing Memoirs and Biographical Notices of the Celebrated Women of Wales, Especially the Eminent for Talent, the Exemplary in Conduct, the Eccentric of Character, and the Curious by Position, or Otherwise (London: W. and F. G. Cash; Bristol: C. T. Jefferies; Swansea: William Morris, 1854), p. v.

²⁹⁶ Cecil Price, The English Theatre in Wales, p. 169-70

²⁹⁷ Cecil Price, The English Theatre in Wales, p. 107

²⁹⁸ The Drama; or, Theatrical Pocket Magazine April 1823, pp. 205-6.

Meanwhile, The Rambler's Magazine of May 1st 1823 has the following less enthusiastic review of the same play:

"Twm John Catty," in English Thomas John, son of Catherine, is worthy to be compared with Rob Roy; the scenery is really beautiful; the acting in general good; but for the plot, whether historical or fictitious, the less that is said the better... Henderson's Owen ap Jenkins was a disgrace to the Welch name. Loveday's Sir John Falstaff reminded us of Grimaldi, with his head out of a beer cask, singing the wolf song; we suspect his bowels are out of order, from the distortions of his phiz; purgatives and retirement will do him no harm, and the house much good.²⁹⁹

Critics have always been fickle it seems and these two reviews could almost be of different plays. The speed with which Deacon's short story was adapted for use on the stage can be judged from these reviews: the adaptation must have been ready in less than a handful of weeks.

Like Twm John Catty, Prichard's novel was quickly adapted for use on the stage. Given Prichard's background in the London theatre this is perhaps not so surprising: what is of note, however, is that whereas Deacon's story was used on the London stage, Prichard's novel appeared only in Welsh theatres. In the winter of 1828 in Haverfordwest, Joseph W. Potter's performance of the play Twm Shon Catti was warmly received: shortly afterwards Potter (yet another Welsh printer) moved into the new theatre which he had had built in Aberystwyth.³⁰⁰ Unlike Twm John Catty, Twm Shon Catti had a long life on the Welsh stage. On 7 December 1847 a performance of Twm Shon Catti was put on in the dilapidated theatre in the Market Square, Merthyr Tydfil; the play had been written by William Ellis, a miner who styled himself as 'the Welsh Shakespeare.'³⁰¹ At the end of the

²⁹⁹ The Rambler's Magazine, or Fashionable Emporium of Polite Literature vol. II 1 May 1823, pp. 226-7

³⁰⁰ Cecil Price, The English Theatre in Wales, p. 130.

³⁰¹ Cecil Price, 'Some Welsh Theatres, 1844-1870', National Library of Wales Journal XII:2 (1961), 1-15 (p. 11).

nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth century the play of Twm Shon Catti was still being performed. Edward Ebley's portable 'Theatre of Varieties', which successfully toured the industrial towns of South Wales between 1883 and 1906, included Twm Shon Catti as part of its repertoire.³⁰² Even at this late juncture when the power of Nonconformity over Welsh society was in rapid decline, the threat of excommunication from the chapel for attending the theatre was still very real. Following the excommunication of some of his audience at the Olympic Theatre, Ebley was forced to print the following notice on his playbill:

Mr Ebley wishes to impress upon his patrons that every play which he produces has been personally supervised by him, and that anyone visiting the Theatre, even for the first time, will find that every feature of vulgarity has been eliminated from the text which would be calculated to displease the most fastidious mind. His only wish is to place before the public Plays which not only appeal to men's hearts, but will leave a lasting impression upon them, and if he succeeds in making one *bad man think*, he will then be worthy to join the ranks of those inspired apostles who, by their purity teaching, help to keep the universe together.³⁰³

Ebley's problem was that he had two sorts of disruptive members of his audience: the first were 'young pit workers who would start a fight on the smallest provocation', the second were elderly women who became violently carried away in the heat of the moment. Ted Ebley threw out the worst offenders and once climbed down from the stage 'banged the heads of two contestants together' and climbed back on the stage; the second, and often worst, type of disruptive influence in Ebley's audience were those 'elderly busom [*sic.*] women whose reactions were often violent.'³⁰⁴

William Haggar (the manager of another well-known portable theatre of industrial

³⁰² Cecil Price, 'Portable Theatres in Wales', pp. 11-2.

³⁰³ Price, 'Portable Theatres in Wales', p. 12

³⁰⁴ Price, 'Portable Theatres in Wales', p. 12

South Wales, whose base was in Aberdare) contacted Gaumont in the early twentieth century and his company was used to produce a number of films, including a film version of Twm Shon Catti: the rights to show the film in South Wales were retained by Haggar.³⁰⁵ Both Deacon's Twm John Catty and Prichard's Twm Shon Catti had found at least some degree of success on stage, and Twm Shon Catti had even been produced as an early film by Gaumont.

Prichard's novel had something of an unpromising start. It was written by an aspiring poet and it was produced in an Anglicised seaside resort in the middle of rural Wales. Prichard claimed to have written the novel for the Welsh in response to Deacon's act of colonial appropriation, and yet he wrote his novel in English. Twm Shon Catti was sold by Prichard who was an itinerant bookseller: it was literally sold door to door in Wales. And yet despite these problems the first Welsh novel was a success and it was warmly received by many people in Wales: eleven years after the first edition was produced a new edition was published.

4.5 The Second Edition of Twm Shôn Catti: Cowbridge, 1839

<u>Twm Shôn Catti</u>, Second edition:
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shôn Catty, alias Thomas Jones, Esq., of Tregaron, A Wild Wag of Wales</u> (Cowbridge: Printed and Published by J. T. Jones for E. Pool, 1839)
<u>Traethhawd ar anturiaethau, a gwib-dybiau, Twm Shon Catty, alias Thomas Jones, Yswain, Tregaron, digrifwr gwyllt Walia</u> (Merthyr Tydfil: printed by Rees Lewis, 1848)
<u>Twm Shon Catti, or the Welsh Robin Hood</u> (1858) [abridged compilation, 18 pp.]. ³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ Price, 'Portable Theatres in Wales,', pp. 13-4

The Humorous Adventures of the Welsh Robin Hood, commonly known as Twm Shon Catti (London: Griffith & Son, 1869) – Ifano Jones in his Catalogue of the Welsh Library notes that this is an unauthorised edition.

Table 4.4 The impressions of the second edition of Twm Shon Catti

Just eleven years after the first edition of Twm Shon Catti was published, Prichard had a second, much expanded edition of 1,000 copies printed in Cowbridge by J.T. Jones.³⁰⁷ Prichard originally tried to interest a London publisher in republishing his novel, and failed.³⁰⁸ Prichard then turned to a Cowbridge printer to produce a new revised edition. This choice is unusual because Cowbridge lacks the connections to the theatre which should technically have attracted Prichard elsewhere (e.g. Swansea). The second edition of Twm Shôn Catti represents a significant change from the first: it has expanded from 71,000 to 91,000 words, it is much more carefully printed, on better quality paper, is much more professionally typeset, and Twm Shon Catti has become correctly circumflexed as Twm Shôn Catti. But the biggest change is the move which Prichard made from a printer in the seaside resort of Aberystwyth to one in Cowbridge on the southerly borders of industrial South Wales.

There had been a printing office in Cowbridge since Rhys Thomas established his press in the town in 1770.³⁰⁹ Prichard chose to have the second edition of Twm Shon Catti printed in Cowbridge in 1839, in the office of the Rev. Josiah Thomas Jones: a printer, a

³⁰⁶ This edition is somewhat mysterious because to date the only reference to this edition that I have found is listed in the Catalogue of Printed Literature in the Welsh Department. As such it has to be left open to question. See, John Ballinger and James Ifano Jones, Catalogue of Printed Literature in the Welsh Department (Cardiff: Free Libraries Committee; and London: Henry Sotheran, 1898), p. 405

³⁰⁷ Adams, p. 88

³⁰⁸ Adams, p. 44

³⁰⁹ Ifano Jones, p. 85. As we have seen, Rhys Thomas's press was moved to Cardiff by John Bird in 1791.

publisher, an Independent minister from West Wales, and ‘an out and out radical.’³¹⁰ Josiah T. Jones had resigned his ministry in Caernarvon in 1831, but continued to work in the town as a printer and publisher. From Caernarvon, Jones moved to Merthyr where he started a newspaper, The Merthyr and Cardiff Chronicle: his entry in the Welsh Biography Online database continues to tell us that ‘the ironmasters angered by his Radicalism, made the place too hot for him, and he removed to Cowbridge to publish.’³¹¹ Josiah T. Jones later moved his press to Aberdare (I will return to the subject of J. T. Jones in the next chapter where I will describe his career as a newspaper publisher in Aberdare). Thus, the second edition of Twm Shôn Catti was printed by a radical printer who was closely linked to the industrial communities of the South Wales coalfield.

4.6 The Third Edition of Twm Shôn Catti: Llanidloes, 1871

The second edition of Twm Shôn Catti was the last which Prichard saw through the press in his lifetime. It is worthwhile pausing to note that the vast majority of Prichard’s books appeared during the economic crisis of the 1820s: the only new work which he published outside of that troubled decade was The Heroines of Welsh History (1854). Even the second edition of Twm Shôn Catti was printed in 1839, on the cusp of the decade which became known as ‘the Hungry Forties’: in 1846-7 famine once again arrived in Britain thanks to a failure of the harvest, and in 1847 the crisis had become so severe that the British financial system collapsed and the new Bank Act had to be suspended.³¹²

³¹⁰ Robert Thomas Jenkins, ‘Jones, Josiah Thomas’, in Welsh Biography Online. Available at: <<http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-JONE-THO-1799.html>> [accessed 9 April 2009]

³¹¹ Robert Thomas Jenkins, ‘Jones, Josiah Thomas’, in Welsh Biography Online. Available at: <<http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-JONE-THO-1799.html>> [accessed 9 April 2009]

³¹² Karl Marx Capital: A critique of political economy vol.III (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 545-6

Prichard resumed his involvement with the stage following the failure of his attempt to become a successful Welsh writer in the 1820s. In the 1840s he was to be found acting in Brecon and Aberystwyth.³¹³ However, Prichard's stage career came to an impromptu end when he lost his nose, although when and how he suffered this loss is (like much of his life) unknown.³¹⁴ Shortly afterwards in 1847-9 Prichard, together with his new wax nose, was to be found cataloguing the library of the iron owner Augusta Hall (i.e., Lady Llanover). It is worth bearing in mind at this point that Augusta Waddington, the first Lady Llanover, was married to Benjamin Hall: one of the most powerful ironmasters and landowners in South Wales, and the son of Charlotte Crawshay (daughter of Richard Crawshay). A sense of how the Crawshays are still remembered locally can be gathered from Jack Jones autobiography where he describes the conversion to Bessemer steel production:

His thoughts were bitter as he sat noting the new furnaces of Dowlais and Cyfarthfa illuminating the district and the sky above. He had worked for them all, all the English ironmasters who had made their millions in Merthyr and Dowlais. Sir John Josiah Guest, yes, he had worked for him before ever he as "Sir" or M.P. Just plain Josiah John; ay, and for his lady, Charlotte, who had kept the Dowlais colliers out for two months. Unconditional surrender was what she had demanded. As bad as old Crawshay himself, she was. Now they were gone, gone to live in parks in Caversham and Wimbourne, leaving their old puddlers with constitutions ruined by too much hard work, drinking, and insanitary home life, to fill workhouses and fatten graveyards. (Unfinished Journey, pp. 10-11)

While Lady Llanover is fondly remembered by some for her services to the preservation of the Welsh language and culture,³¹⁵ in the industrial areas where she owned land and mineral rights she is remembered with the same evil reputation as a ruthless exploiter as

³¹³ Adams, pp. 68-9

³¹⁴ Adams, p. 68

³¹⁵ For more on Lady Llanover's influence on nineteenth century Welsh society see: Jane Aaron, Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Nation, Gender and Identity (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), pp. 66-73

the Crawshay family in Merthyr Tydfil.

At some point while he was employed at Llanover Hall, Prichard fell out with Augusta Hall. Charles Wilkins, the great historian of the Welsh iron industry, described the rift in Cymry Fu (1889) as follows:

He once told me how his downfall began. For years he was occupied with a great historical work. He had a patron who encouraged him. Life was happy. As he progressed with his work he saw fame in the distant future, and comfort and rest. But his patron, who scrupulously examined his manuscript, began to find fault. He had to choose between historic accuracy or the entire withdrawal of his patron's support. He was not required to make false statements but to slur over facts. And this he would not do, and he added, 'I was turned adrift, too poor to go on unaided, and then began my downward course.'³¹⁶

When Charles Wilkins first met Prichard in Merthyr in the 1850s Prichard was working as an itinerant bookseller. His usual practice, 'was to get consignments of the volume sent to him at various towns, and with these he went literally from door to door selling them.'³¹⁷ Wilkins, and in turn Adams, quote the following letter which was written by Prichard at Major Roteley's Cottage, Thomas-street, World's End, Swansea on the 24th of November 1857:

I am now about to travel and recommence my Bookselling... But I shall never publish again, except on the terms of selling the copyright to a London publisher – with the sole exception of my very fortunate book, The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shôn Catty, that the people seem wild about seeing in print again... I have delayed re-publishing it from an intention of re-writing the whole, in which... I have in a great degree employed myself during the suspension of my travelling capabilities, so that in the end I think my illness will ultimately prove as productive – and probably more so, than if I had been solely employed in selling the Heroines of Welsh History – which, I regret to say, is far from meeting with similar popularity to that accorded to Twm Shôn Catty – although it deserves it far more, being Historical...³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Adams, pp. 90-1

³¹⁷ Adams, p. 93

³¹⁸ Adams, p. 94

We have then some answer of who was buying Twm Shôn Catty, Prichard sold the book on the doorstep as an itinerant bookseller. The next record of Prichard is a letter which complains about ‘an old man’s appalling and helpless predicament’ in the World’s End in Swansea, in the Cambrian newspaper dated 22 November 1861. Although Prichard was subsequently saved from destitution by a public subscription, he died from the burns which he received in mysterious circumstances at the start of 1862.

At some point during this last phase of his life Prichard appears to have sold his manuscripts, including the revised draft of what was to become the third and last edition of Twm Shôn Catti. The sale may well have been made by the committee which had been set up to provide relief to Prichard.³¹⁹ In his forward Pryse describes this sale:

Previous to his death he made over, by a properly constructed deed of sale, all his MSS and Copyrights to a literary and patriotic gentleman of independent means then living in Glamorganshire, and who had for years been one of Mr Prichard’s kindest and best friends. This benevolent gentleman having promised to write a biographical account of the author’s life, we will not here trespass further...³²⁰

Nine years after Prichard’s death in the World’s End, Swansea his ‘fortunate book’, which he had been working on for re-publication when he died, was published by John Pryse in Llanidloes.

³¹⁹ Adams, p. 97

³²⁰ John Pryse, ‘A Few Words to the Reader’, 3rd edn. Twm Shôn Catti pp. iv-v

<u>Twm Shon Catti, Third Edition:</u>
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales</u> illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1871) with editions, now first printed from mss left by the author
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales</u> illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1872)
<u>Difyr Gampau a Gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: Gwron Cymreig. Wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesoneg y diweddar</u> translated by Eilonydd [John Evans], illustrated by E. Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1872)
<u>The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales</u> translated by Eilonydd [John Evans], illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1873)
<u>The Laughable Adventures of Twm Shon Catty! The Wild Wag of Wales</u> (Cardiff: E. Jones & Son, 1882)
<u>The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti</u> (Swansea: printed at Cambrian Daily Leader Office, 1891)
<u>Difyr-gampu a gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesonaeg</u> translated by Eilonydd [John Evans] (Bala: H. Evans, [188-?])
<u>Difyr-gampu a gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesonaeg</u> translated by Eilonydd [John Evans] (Bala: H. Evans, [1896-?])
<u>The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti, a wild wag of Wales</u> (Ferndale: David Davies, [189-?])
<u>The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti, a wild wag of Wales</u> (Ferndale: D. Davies (Bookseller), [189-?])
<u>The adventures of Twm Shon Catty : alias Thomas Jones Esq., a wild wag of Wales</u> (Cardiff: Western Mail, [1900-?])
<u>The Comical Adventures of Twm Shon Catty (Thomas Jones, Esq.) Commonly known as the Welsh Robin Hood</u> (London: W. Nicholson & Sons (Printers), [1900-?])
<u>The Comical Adventures of Twm Shon Catty (Thomas Jones, Esq.) Commonly known as the Welsh Robin Hood</u> (London: W. Nicholson & Sons (Printers), [1900-?]); repr. Felinfach: Llanerch, 1991)

Table 4.5 The impressions of the third and final edition of Twm Shon Catti

The first imprint of the third edition of Twm Shon Catti was produced by John Pryse on his press in Llanidloes (a town at the centre of the mid-Wales lead mining industry and the scene of industrial unrest in the Chartist uprising of 1839). Judging from the quality of this edition, the Pryse press was probably one of the most obviously commercial Welsh presses to print Twm Shon Catti. Whereas the first edition was poorly printed by the owner of a circulating library, and the second edition had been professionally printed by a Welsh radical press, the third edition was printed and sold by a Welsh bookseller who had produced a more obviously mass-market edition. Not only had the mode of production changed, but so had the mode of distribution; whereas the first two editions had been produced for Prichard to sell as an itinerant bookseller, this third edition had found a professional bookseller who was willing to market the book; for example, Pryse's edition of Twm Shon Catti comes with a number of populist wood-block illustrations by Edward Salter. Significantly, Pryse used the same wood-blocks to print both Welsh and English language editions, simply resetting the titles; he was investing in the edition, but as he did so he had an eye to recouping the outlay. Pryse's edition was the only one to be illustrated but this is not entirely surprising for this period as many of the books of the time contained illustrations and many had illustrated covers. For example, the first edition of Daniel Owen's novel Rhys Lewis was illustrated when it was published in Wrexham in 1885 on the Hughes press. The Western Mail edition of Twm Shôn Catty of 1900 has an illustrated paperback cover (which was typical of its popular imprints).

4.7 *The Pirates of Twm Shôn Catti*

The first of a number of unauthorised editions of Twm Shon Catti was produced in London by Griffith & Sons in 1869: this was the first edition of Prichard's novel to link Twm Shôn Catti and the English Robin Hood tradition in the title. Pryse mentions this edition in his foreword:

It may, however, be considered a subject of amazement to find an English printer and publisher, under an assumed name, sending forth an incorrect imprint of the greater part of the volume which the reader now holds in his hand. Such piratical acts are not of frequent occurrence; an Englishman's sense of honesty and honour is generall'y sufficient to guide their hands from carrying away their neighbours' property.³²¹

Griffith & Sons may well have been hoping to take advantage of the success of both Deacon's Twm John Catty and Prichard's Twm Shon Catti.

One year before Pryse's death in 1883 the first Welsh unauthorised imprint of Twm Shon Catti was produced by Eliza Jones on the Rev. John Jenkins's old press (which was at that time working on Duke Street, Cardiff). It is ironic that Shôni Shincyn's Nonconformist press was in 1882 used to produce a pirated imprint of Twm Shon Catti. This is the only edition which uses the title: The Laughable Adventures of Twm Shon Catti! The Wild Wag of Wales, which argues against it being an authorised reprint of the third edition.

In the 1880s Difyr Gampau a Gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti was reprinted by Humphrey Evans on his press in Bala. My suspicion with this imprint is that Evans had bought the stereotype plates for the book from Pryse, or his executor. Most of the unauthorised editions have changed the title somewhat, while Evans's Welsh-language edition even retains the Bardic name of the translator. In the middle of the 1890s Evans

³²¹ John Pryse, 'A Few Words to the Reader', 3rd edn. Twm Shon Catti pp. iv-v

released another imprint of this edition.

In 1891 the Cambrian Daily Leader issued its own unauthorised edition which was titled: The Surprising Adventures of Twm Shon Catti. The Cambrian Daily Leader was Cardiff's first daily newspaper but it was subsequently moved to Swansea. By the turn of the century the Western Mail (which has published a surprising number of books over the years) had released its own imprint: The Adventures of Twm Shon Catty : alias Thomas Jones Esq., a wild wag of Wales.

In the 1890s two imprints of The Surprising Adventures of Twm Shon Catti were published by David Davies in Ferndale. The first imprint which Davies produced was of very poor quality—none of the pages are trimmed properly and the binding, even for the 1890s, was poor:

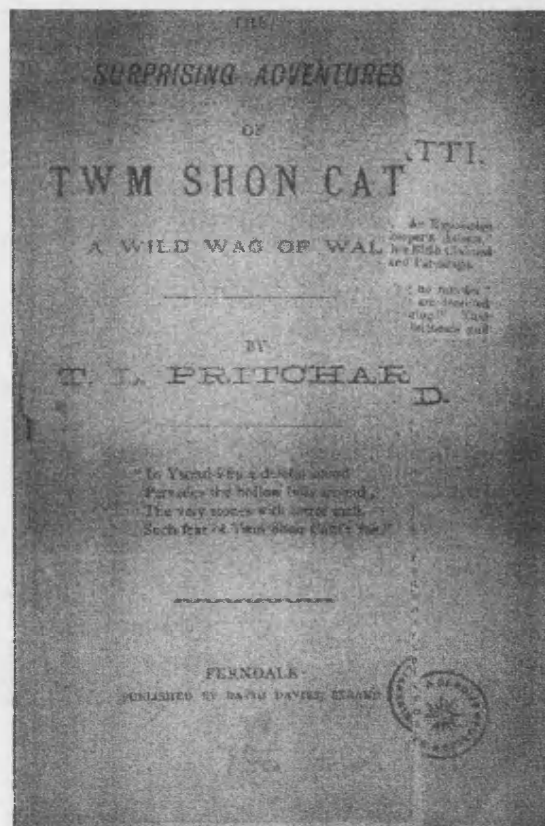


Figure 4.1 The front of cover of David Davies first print of *The Surprising Adventures of Twm Shon Catti*

The second imprint which was produced for David Davies is of much better quality:

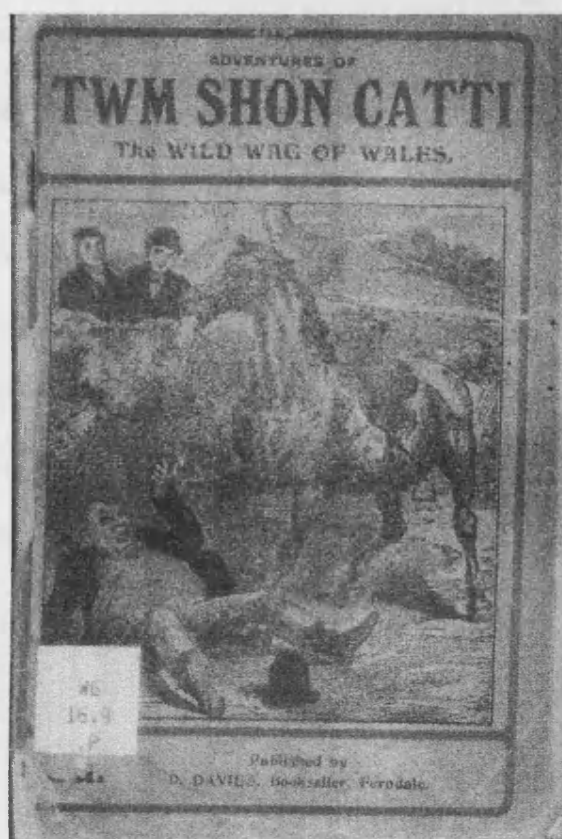


Figure 4.2 David Davies's second print of *The Adventures of Twm Shon Catti*

The poor cover of the first imprint has been replaced by an illustrated two-colour cover, the book is neatly trimmed and bound, and the paper is of substantially improved quality. This second imprint has also been re-typeset. Even so, both of these Ferndale prints when compared to the original 1828 edition are of cheap quality and must have been intended for a local popular market.

The final imprint of *Twm Shon Catti* was made at the turn of the nineteenth century by W. Nicholson & Sons at the Albion Works in London. This unauthorised edition appears to be a verbatim copy of the third edition, with Pryse's appeal to the conscience of English pirates conveniently removed. The cover of this Nicholson imprint has only one title printed on the cover and spine: *The Welsh Robin Hood*. It is only on opening the book that

the full title is to be found: The Comical Adventures of Twm Shon Catty (Thomas Jones, esq.): Commonly known as the Welsh Robin Hood. It is perhaps to be regretted that the only hard copy of Twm Shon Catty to be produced since Nicholson pirated the book in 1900 is a facsimile reprint of this unauthorised, and in many ways incomplete, imprint. Following this final unauthorised edition, Twm Shon Catti all but disappeared in the twentieth century; despite the two imprints of 1991 and 2005 there has still been no authoritative reprint of the novel: even the Library of Wales series, which is publicly funded, has still not published Prichard's 'fortunate little book.'

4.8 Reading Wales through an English Lens: Inclosure

The second chapter of Twm Shon Catti opens with the following description:

Catti, the mother of Twm, lived in the most unsophisticated manner at Lliadiard-y-Fynnon, with an ill-favoured, hump-backed sister, who was the general drudge and manager... Their mother had long been dead, and their father, the horned cattle, a small farm and all its appurtenances, had been lost to them about two years. This little farm was their father's freehold property, but provokingly situate in the middle of the vast possessions of Squire Graspacre, an English gentleman-farmer, who condescendingly fixed himself in the principality with the laudible idea of civilizing the Welsh. The most feasible mode of accomplishing so grand an undertaking, that appeared, to him, was, to dispossess them of their property, and to take as much as possible of their country into his own paternal care. The rude Welsh, to be sure, he found so blind to their own interests, as to prefer living on their own farms to either selling or giving them away, to profit his superior management. His master-genius now became apparent to every body; for after ruining the owners and appropriating to himself half the country, the other half also became his own with ease, as the poor little freeholders found it better to accept a small sum for their property, than to have all wasted in litigation, and perhaps ultimately end their days in prison.

Twim's[sic.] maternal grandfather was the last of those who daringly withstood the desires of the squire, but at last, after having triumphantly gained his cause, being unable to pay the costs, he was arrested by his own attorney, and died a prisoner in Cardigan county gaol, as the neighbours said, of a broken heart. The philanthropic improving squire, then, of course, gained his end. The old farm-house, alienated from the land, became the residence of

the old farmer's two daughters ; not exactly a gift, indeed, as they paid the annual rent of two guineas, which was generally considered about one too much. (p. 7-8)

There are a number of issues to be drawn out of this narrative of inclosure and colonialism:

Firstly, the novel is written as a biography of an historical character, Twm Shon Catti (in English roughly translated as Thomas Jones, son of Catherine) who was born around 1530 in the Tregaron area. Biography is an essential conceit in most novels, but Prichard is essentially drawing on the oral folk-tale traditions which had become associated with Thomas Jones, who has become a Trickster character in the process.

The second point to be made at this stage is that the novel opens in the aftermath of an act of land theft by Parliamentary Inclosure³²² which has been committed by an Englishman with the aim of civilising the Welsh. If this whole idea sounds slightly familiar, it should — the basic colonial project is encapsulated in the opening paragraph of the second chapter of the first Welsh novel. Inclosure in the United Kingdom has had a long, difficult, and controversial history. The medieval inclosures had significantly increased by the time of the Tudors and they became so prevalent that a number of anti-Inclosure Acts were passed in order to prevent, or allow, the State to profit from them. The second set of inclosures began in 1760, roughly the same time that the Industrial Revolution was starting in Wales. These new inclosures of the eighteenth century were conducted through the law by Act of Parliament. The process of legalised theft which Prichard describes here is distinctive, for the old man has bankrupted himself by trying to defend his property from an Act of Parliamentary Inclosure, as it would have been

³²² The Acts are of Inclosure, enclosure is a modern spelling. In this thesis I will use the original spelling for purposes of consistency and clarity (i.e., inclosure).

conducted between 1760 and the 1840s.

The last point to be made is that the approximate date of Thomas Jones's birth is 1530, the same date as the completion of the Acts of Union which brought Wales within the English State. The novel is consciously located historically at the moment where Wales comes out of monastic and lordly control and enters modernity: while the novel also sets itself implicitly in the Parliamentary Inclosures of the Industrial Revolution, as I hope to show.

Later, in Chapter VII, there is another description of Squire Graspacre:

Notwithstanding the prejudice which Squire Graspacre's harsh conduct had given birth to, on his first settlement in Cardiganshire, he had about him certain saving points, that not only reconciled them to his rule, but really gained their esteem. He was a plain, bold, sensible man, and although entertaining a most exalted opinion of English superiority, generally, in particular instances he had the liberality to confess that he found many things in this nation of mountaineers, highly worthy of imitation among his more civilized countrymen. Unlike many of the half-bred English gentlemen who literally infest Wales, and become nuisances and living grievances to the people – building their pretensions to superiority and fashion, on a sneering self-sufficiency, and scorn of customs and peculiarities merely because they are Welsh – he gave them all credit for what was really estimable. (p. 44)

Prichard temporarily rehabilitates his English villain. Note how this description is revised in the second and third editions:

...he had the liberality to confess that he found things in this nation of mountaineers highly worthy of imitation among his more civilized brethren.

There are many exceptions like the squire, but we are sorry to add that in Wales we have more illiberal Englishmen who sneer at all Welsh customs, because they are Welsh, than people would dream of. They forget that our usages are as dear to us as theirs to them, and that however peculiar they may be in the eyes of an Englishman, the Welshman considers them a *sine qua non* of his own nationality. But these instances are fast dying out. Railroads, free and continued intercourse, and a liberal spirit of toleration, enable the Englishman to see our custom and our usages in a different light.³²³

³²³ Twm Shon Catti 3rd edn., pp. 42-3

Once again the idea of nation is being underlined in Twm Shon Catti, and while the second and third editions moderate the original position somewhat, they go further than the first in constructing the idea of nationality. And at the heart of this construction of Wales as a nation, and fundamental to Prichard's narrative, is an Englishman who profits from an act of land theft through inclosure.

There are a number of complexities to add to this interpretation. Firstly, the squirearchy of rural Wales were Welsh: the English squire Graspacre is essentially a fiction.³²⁴ Even in the industrial south, the landowners were for the most part Welsh (the only exception that comes to mind are the Butes, and they acquired their interests in South Wales through marriage). Reading Graspacre closely, there are a number of displacements which can be identified. He could be a caricature of an ironmaster such as the gruff Richard Crawshay who has been displaced into the sixteenth century Welsh countryside. There is, however, a peculiar scene in Twm Shon Catti shortly after this last quotation which points in another direction:

It should have been mentioned before, that the squire, soon after his marriage, had made a tour of South Wales, and, as his lady expressed it, taken a whim in his head of engaging a maid servant in every county through which he passed; so that in Graspacre Hall there was to be found maiden representatives in their native costumes, of all the different shires of South Wales, except Radnor, in which, the squire said the barbarous jargon of Herefordshire, and the paltry English cottons, had supplanted the native tongue and dress of Wales. (p. 47)

Prichard then continues to describe the costume of each girl, who the squire calls by their county instead of their Christian name. If it had been written a little later, this could have been read as a reference to Lady Llanover who famously designed her own idea of Welsh

³²⁴ Herbert M. Vaughan, The South Wales Squires (Carmarthen: Golden Grove, 1988), p. 191

national costume and who gave her servants Welsh names, and there are rumours that she did so after being inspired by Prichard's novel. As it is, Graspacre here is more of a hybrid character, a creature of the colonial displacement which marks the novel: an English ironmaster who has become distorted through the lens of the novel into a sixteenth-century English rural squire.

There is another problem with Prichard's thieving Squire Graspacre: the Parliamentary Inclosure of the common-fields was an overwhelmingly English phenomenon. According to Sir Robert Hunter, out of the 1,761 Acts of Inclosure made between 1709 and 1797, only 15 were enacted in Wales: a total of 28,596 acres of Common-fields were inclosed in Wales as compared with 1,997,372 acres in England. The level of inclosure of common-fields was so low in Wales that Hunter felt able almost to disregard them altogether.³²⁵ Slater reports that 'in 1793 the open field had practically disappeared from Wales, but some few examples still remained of open intermixed arable lands to which the description of "lands in run-rig" was applied, in places where ecclesiastical property was intermixed.'³²⁶ His map of the Parliamentary Inclosures of common fields (which is given below) demonstrates just how localised the process of theft was. By the time of the Inclosure (Consolidation) Act of 1801 the bulk of the inclosures had been completed: between 1709 and 1797, 2,700,000 acres were inclosed while between 1801 and 1842, 1,307,964 acres were inclosed.³²⁷ The figures on the face of it are still substantial, but they included much empty fen and moor. 'While the average number

³²⁵ Sir Robert Hunter, 'The Movements for the Inclosure and Preservation of Open Lands', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 60:2 (June, 1897), 360-431 (p. 380). Available at: <<http://jstor.org/stable/2979801>> [accessed 13 July 2009]

³²⁶ Gilbert Slater, 'The Inclosure of Common Fields Considered Geographically', *The Geographical Journal* 29:1 (January, 1907), 35-55 (pp. 46-7). Available at: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1776115>> [accessed 13 July 2009]

³²⁷ Hunter, pp. 385-6

of Acts between 1801 and 1810 was... 90 per annum, the corresponding number for the next decade fell to 74; and from 1820 to 1830 only 192 Acts were passed; and between 1830 and 1840 only 125.’³²⁸

³²⁸ Hunter, p. 386

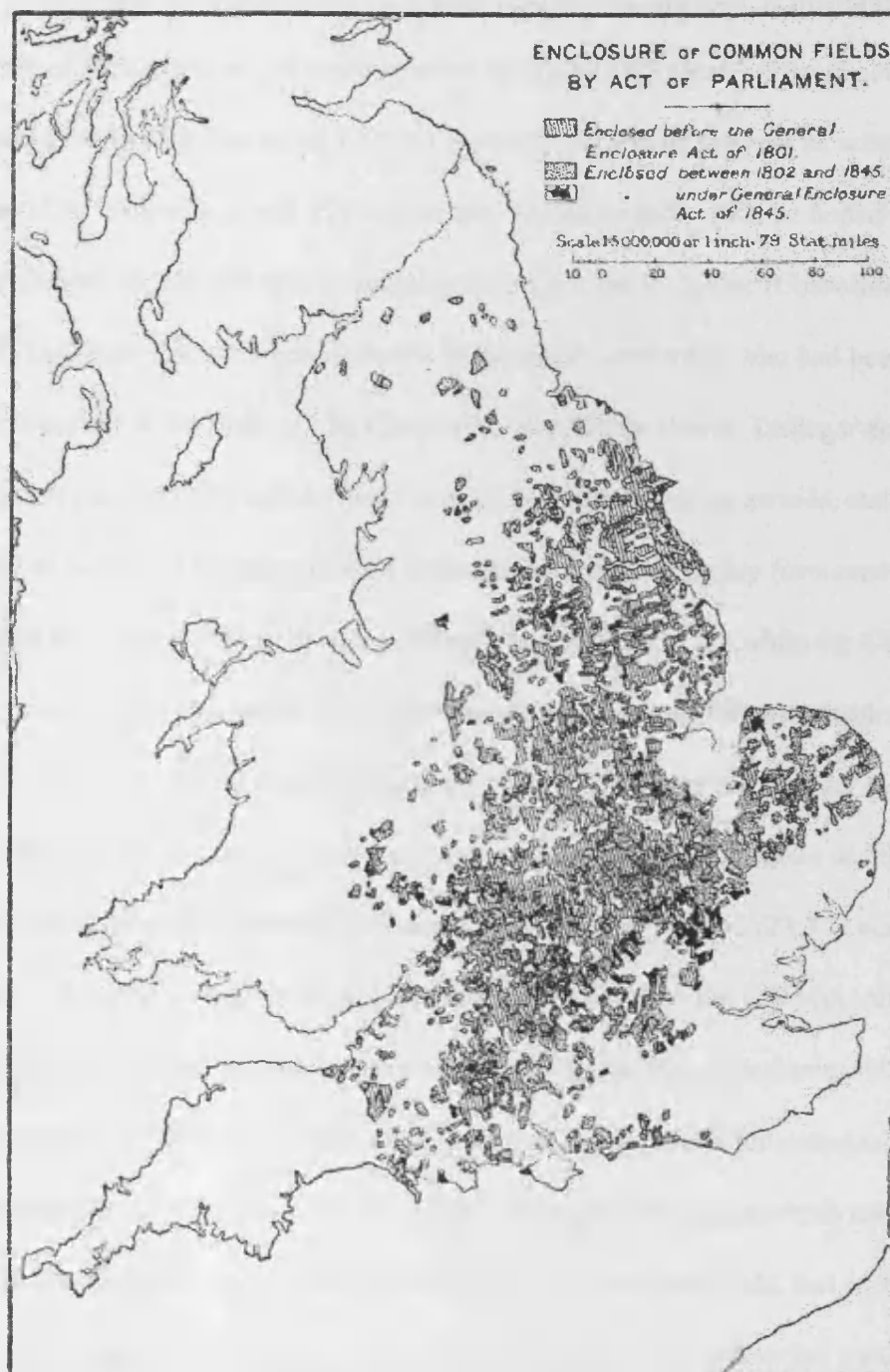


Figure 4.3 Slater's map of the Parliamentary Inclosures of the Common Fields³²⁹

³²⁹ Slater, p. 40

1795 found the ironmaster of Cyfarthfa, Richard Crawshay, acting in his capacity as a member of Parliament to get a new general Inclosure Bill passed (he was acting in response to the British famine of 1795-6). Towards the end of the year he writes that he has the support of Wilberforce and Pitt for the new Inclosure Bill which he hoped to become law in this Session; the bill was eventually to become the Inclosure (Consolidation) Act of 1801.³³⁰ In Wales, the main beneficiaries of inclosure were those who had been most heavily involved in the process: Sir Charles M. R. Morgan (Baron Tredegar and industrial land-owner) received 615 acres of land at 8 of the 17 Breconshire awards, and was involved in 5 out of 8 Monmouthshire inclosures; Sir Joseph Bailey (ironmaster) had 412 acres from his five awards in Breconshire and two in Glamorgan; while the Crown netted 713 acres out of five inclosures in Carmarthenshire and two in Monmouthshire.³³¹

In Wales, over half of all Parliamentary Inclosures were made under the Inclosure Act of 1845, which mostly inclosed road verges and other small portions of land. In total, 51 of the 84 Welsh Parliamentary Inclosures were made after 1845 (23,712 acres were affected). As can be seen from the figures of the awards made to the Welsh industrial bourgeoisie, the figures inclosed are not necessarily great. However, some of the Welsh inclosures of the middle of the nineteenth were sizeable as when, for example, 3,350 acres were enclosed in Aberdare in 1869.³³² Unlike the English inclosures which redistributed the land to rich landowners, the Welsh inclosures for the most part (aside, that is, from a small handful of remnants of the common field system) brought into cultivation small areas of waste ground. This pattern follows that of England where the later inclosures of the middle

³³⁰ Letterbook of Richard Crawshay, p. 152

³³¹ John Chapman, 'The Later Parliamentary Inclosures of South Wales' Agricultural History Review 39.2 (1991), 116-125 (p. 121)

³³² Chapman, p. 119

of the nineteenth century were mostly used to bring waste ground into cultivation.

The story of the Inclosure Acts in Wales continues to the modern day. At the top of the list of the Acts and Statutory Instruments which were transferred to the National Assembly for Wales on Devolution in 1999 are the ten Inclosure Acts which were made between 1845 and 1868. This means that technically the power of inclosure in Wales still exists and is currently in the hands of the National Assembly for Wales.³³³

So for Prichard to open his novel with what appears to be a radical note of protest against the theft of Welsh land by an English inclosure is a little odd, as the inclosures which were at the heart of the English Agricultural Revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had left Wales, for the most part, untouched. In Howell Harris's biography and collected letters, for example, there is no record of inclosure. In Twm Shôn Catty is almost as if Prichard is writing Wales and the Twm story through an English lens with industrialised pens, which is perhaps to be expected as an effect of using an alien literary genre.

Prichard's novel also marks the end of Edmund Jones's attempt to develop a literary form from the available traditional Welsh narrative patterns. Both Edmund Jones and T. J. Llewelyn Prichard are writing narratives which are based on Welsh oral story-telling traditions, and yet both come to quite a different conclusion: Edmund Jones is more or less writing in the short-story mode while Prichard is writing in the novel mode. However, adapting the novel to Wales was not without its problems: aside from finding a printer who was willing to print a novel, writing an extended narrative from the point of view of one sovereign individual was uniquely suited to writing the world from the point of view of the

³³³ United Kingdom. Parliament. Statutory Instruments 1999 No. 672 The National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999. Available at: <<http://www.opsie.gov.uk/si/si1999/99067202.htm>> [accessed 13 July 2009]

industrial bourgeoisie of England, and was uniquely poorly suited to writing the oral narratives of a Welsh society which is more communally orientated.

4.9 Conclusion

Twm Shôn Catti, the first novel to be produced in Wales, was published during the first general crisis that the capitalist mode of production had suffered. Where Edmund Jones was writing of a rural society in crisis thanks to the recent arrival of industry, Prichard was writing the literature of a society in crisis thanks to economic collapse. Trade had been depressed before, but the crisis of the 1820s was altogether new and reflected in part the huge social changes that were happening within British society.

The first and second editions of Twm Shôn Catti were both published during significant periods of crisis in the British economy. Twm Shôn Catti then went into remission until the massive crises of the 1870s and 1880s, when it duly reappeared. There is a pattern here which is suggestive that the Welsh novel in the nineteenth century was responding to social and economic crisis similarly to the English novel: except, that is, whereas in England some 3,500 Victorian novelists produced around 50,000 novels, in Wales no more than a handful of novelists produced at most a dozen or so novels.³³⁴

In Prichard we have an example of a Welshman who is writing in response to a moment of colonial hybridity: the mimic has returned home. One of the more remarkable points about Prichard's novel is that it was not a newspaper novel, even though most of the later unauthorised editions which were published after his death were put into print by

³³⁴ John Sutherland, 'The Victorian Novelists: Who were they?', in The Book History Reader 2nd edn. (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2002), 345-53 (p. 345).

newspaper publishers. Twm Shon Catti, as far as I am aware, was never serialised or rehandled by a newspaper editor in Prichard's lifetime and in this it could not be in more contrast to Deacon's 'Twm John Catty' which was serialised in the popular weekly press as soon as it was published. This is in a way indicative in that the act of creating a novel from a narrative which is serialised in a newspaper is the ultimate hybrid, for on many occasions even the newspaper plates themselves would have been cannibalised—physically cut-up and reused as novels or pamphlets: so whereas Deacon's 'Twm John Catty' can be identified as a colonial hybrid, Prichard's Twm Shon Catti is doing something which is in many ways still unique. It is appropriate in the context of the resistances and insurgencies which spread across Wales at the end of the Industrial Revolution in the 1820s and 1830s, that the first Welsh novel should itself be an act of resistance against a moment of colonial hybridity.

Chapter Five - The Age of Coal

When he wrote his account of a visit to the ironworks of Merthyr in 1832 Edwin Roberts described some of the poor housing that many of the people were living in. He also described a more typical domestic working-class scene in Dowlais:

As the doors were generally open, a passing glance within showed with tolerable exactitude the thrifty or the prodigal tastes of the owners. In some you saw neat substantial furniture. Pictures on the walls, and a range of shiny culinary utensils on the mantle-shelves, harmonized pleasantly with the clean delf [*sic*], and the cupboard full of crockery and glass in the corner. The gorgeously emblazoned set of trays is outvied by the American clock with the newest face... Indications of self-culture and of thought suggest themselves by a pile of books, though there are handsome and well-filled book-cases to be found.³³⁵

Roberts's description of a mid-century working-class living room stands in marked contrast to his description of the ironworks themselves: the dirty, hot ironworks are contrasted with the clean, neat houses that many of the workers created for themselves. Central to this domestic space, among the culinary utensils and the delft, is a collection of books. When Kenrick published his analysis of the 1841 Census nine years after Roberts's tour of the ironworks of Merthyr he records that out of a total population of 32,968 only 445 persons amongst 'the labouring classes' of Merthyr Tydfil had books that were not religious.³³⁶ It was at this point in the 1840s that the Welsh steam-coal industry began to develop rapidly, and it was this phase of the industrialisation of South Wales which changed the Welsh social and literary landscape beyond all recognition. While in 1841 only a little over 1% of the population of Merthyr Tydfil had access to literature which was not

³³⁵ Edwin F. Roberts, *A Visit to the Iron Works and Environs of Merthyr-Tydfil in 1832* (London: William Edward Painter, 1853), pp. 31-2

³³⁶ G. S. Kenrick, 'Statistics of Merthyr Tydfil' *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 9.1 (1846), 14-21 (p. 14) Available at: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2337877>> [accessed 25 October 2009]

religious, by the end of the century the variety and volume of the literary work which was consumed in industrial South Wales had increased substantially.

Even a novel such as Twm Shon Catti, which from a modern perspective was ostensibly written and published deep in rural monoglot Wales, was ultimately a product of the new industrialisation: the iron which was used in the printing press, the new and readily available typesets, the paper, large sections of the audience, and especially the social relations of production which produced the first editions of Twm Shon Catti, these were all products of the Industrial Revolution. There is, however, another connection between the production of the first edition of Twm Shon Catti and industry. Since the late sixteenth-century Aberystwyth had been a prosperous centre for the smelting of lead and silver from ore which was supplied locally from the Cardiganshire leadfield (using coal which was shipped from Neath). So much silver was produced in Aberystwyth from the Cardiganshire lead that between 1638 and 1642 the town had its own Mint.³³⁷ During the Civil War the lead mines of Cardiganshire were used to support the King. Thomas Bushell (who at that time owned the lease) contributed £36,000 of clothing to the King's armies and, after the Mint was transferred from Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury, £100 worth of silver coins struck from Cardiganshire silver was sent every week to keep the Royalist armies in the field.³³⁸ Later, in 1725, Defoe described Aberystwyth as 'a dirty, black smoky place, very populous and so enriched by the coals and lead.'³³⁹ The eighteenth century was the most profitable period for lead and silver production in the Cardiganshire leadfield and, despite the

³³⁷ Rees, Industry before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 2, pp. 453-61. Rees tells us that £13,069 of silver coin had been minted at Aberystwyth by September 1642 (p. 457)

³³⁸ Rees, Industry before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 2, pp. 458

³³⁹ Quoted by Rees in Industry before the Industrial Revolution, vol. 2, p. 571 (original source: Daniel Defoe, A Tour through the Island of Great Britain (2 vols.) (1725)).

handicap of the lack of coal, this success extended into the early nineteenth century.³⁴⁰

Although when Prichard published his novel in Aberystwyth it had ceased to smelt lead, it was still a busy centre for the export of lead ore from the mines of the Cardiganshire.

The large number of unauthorised editions of Prichard's novel which were published in Wales after his death all had one thing in common—they were produced by printers who were also newspaper publishers. With the exception of the two Welsh-language editions, they were also all located in the prosperous coalfields of South Wales. In this chapter I will look to the effects which the development of the Welsh coal industry in the Victorian era had on the literature which was produced by the Welsh.

5.1 The South Wales Coal Industry, 1840-1900

The South Wales coalfield has been described as 'the principal coalfield of the United Kingdom',³⁴¹ but its development was unusual because, unlike the English and Scottish coalfields, it started (alongside iron ore and limestone) principally as an ancillary industry which supplied the ironworks. Before the steam-coal trade started in the 1840s, coal was mined in South Wales primarily to provide coke for the blast furnaces.

At 1,000 square miles, the South Wales coalfield is the largest continuous coalfield in the United Kingdom. The aggregate depth of the Welsh coal seams is on average 1,565 feet.³⁴² As well as the bituminous house coals in the upper series, South Wales has some of

³⁴⁰ Rees, *Industry before the Industrial Revolution*, vol. 2, p. 571

³⁴¹ H. Stanley Jevons, *The British Coal Trade* (London Kegan Paul, 1915; repr. Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1969), p. 93

³⁴² I am indebted for this figure of the thickness of the Welsh coal to Ray Lawrence, 'The South Wales Coalfield Directory', (Blackwood: RAL productions, 1998), p. 4-12.

the world's best reserves of anthracite and steam coals in its middle and lower series.³⁴³ In comparison, the non-continuous Yorkshire and North Midland coalfield as a whole is 1,376 square miles in area but only 60 miles in length, and the aggregate thickness of the bituminous coal seams varies from 40 to 52 feet. In Lancashire the exposed coalfield has an area of 217 square miles: in the north there are 15 seams with 40 foot of coal, while in the south east 19 seams have a total of 70 feet of coal, and in the south west the Lancashire coalfield has 21 seams with 75 feet of coal.³⁴⁴

The South Wales coalfield is a synclinal basin which can be divided between the anthracite districts in the west and the steam-coal districts in the east: the dividing line can be drawn roughly to the west of the Rhondda valleys. In the eastern steam-coal district there are few if any igneous intrusions, which means that the deeper coal was cooked slowly, while in the anthracite district there are a larger number of igneous intrusions which have cooked the coal more rapidly and produced the hard, crystalline anthracites. Crossing the coalfield from east to west is a large anticlinal ridge, an arch which brings the deeper steam coals closer to the surface. The great anticlinal ridge rises closest to the surface under the lower Rhondda and Aberdare valleys and this enabled the collieries of the 1840s to exploit the deeper steam coals which are brought closer to the surface at this point.

The vast majority of the coal which was produced for the Welsh iron industry in the Industrial Revolution was mined in levels, although one or two shallow pits had begun to be sunk:³⁴⁵ in 1803 the Engine pit was sunk in Ebbw Vale,³⁴⁶ and in 1826 the first balance

³⁴³ Jevons, p. 93

³⁴⁴ Jevons, p. 64 and p. 72

³⁴⁵ For example, the average depth of the early pits in Rhymney was only twenty-three yards. See: Walters, p. 15

³⁴⁶ Ray Lawrence The South Wales Coalfield Directory, p. 765

pit was sunk at Cyfarthfa.³⁴⁷ In 1828 Robert Thomas opened a level at Waunywylt to supply house-coal to Merthyr. He died shortly afterwards and the business was taken over by his widow, Lucy Thomas, who became known as the mother of the Welsh steam coal trade. Crucially, although Waunywylt primarily supplied coal to nearby Merthyr, it was also able to produce enough coal to send several barge-loads to Cardiff every week. In 1830 George Insole in Cardiff, who was acting as agent for the Waunywylt coal, sent a load of coal to London for use in the Thames river steamers. At first the trade made little if any profit but shortly its smokeless nature began to be realised and it quickly gained favour over the smoky Newcastle and Durham coals. The coal was so successful that the next year Insole signed a contract to sell 3,000 tons of the 'Murther Coal' to the London coal-sellers Wood and Company.³⁴⁸ After five years the lease on the Waunywylt level expired and Lucy Thomas had to return it to the landowner, but she was able to sign a lease on better terms to develop the neighbouring Graig colliery (which opened in 1837). The key to the peculiar early success of Waunywylt was that it worked the high quality 'four-feet' seam of steam coal, and although the neighbouring Graig colliery was a small pit (producing no more than a few hundred tons of coal a week) the quality of the steam-coal which it was able to produce was unrivalled.³⁴⁹

In 1839 John Nixon, a young mining engineer from the North of England, came to South Wales to work. When he arrived he found that the post as colliery engineer in Nantyglo had been falsely advertised by Crawshay Bailey and he found employment instead working for Lord Bute surveying the Dowlais estate which was coming to the end

³⁴⁷ Phillips, *Pioneers of the Welsh Coalfield*, p. 121

³⁴⁸ J. H. Morris and L. J. Williams, *The South Wales Coal Industry: 1841-1875* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1958), p. 19

³⁴⁹ Phillips, pp. 122-4;

of its lease.³⁵⁰ While working on his survey, John Nixon discovered the benefits of Welsh steam coal:

He was standing one day during his nine months of work at Dowlais near the engine at Pen-y-darren pit, in company with Mr. Gray of Garesfield. The cast-iron boiler of the engine was working at high pressure, a matter which struck him as remarkable. Just then the stoker had occasion to open the furnace door and to throw coal upon the fire, and Mr. Nixon watched him. Never had Mr. Nixon seen coal used that produced so intense a heat, and he immediately called Mr. Gray's attention to the circumstances.

"Look there," he cried, "what great heat, and no smoke from it either! It is much better coal than we have in the North of England."

Mr. Gray asked him why he held that view.

"Why, it gives out no smoke, and we have no coal in England that produces so intense a heat."³⁵¹

Shortly afterwards Nixon accepted an offer of work from an English company with an interest in developing an ironworks on their coal and ironstone concessions in France. When he surveyed the concession at Languin, near Nantes, Nixon found that although there were good reserves of ironstone, the reserves of coal were lying almost vertically and were so broken that they were unworkable.

Nixon returned to London to report the failure of the French concession to the board (news which they took badly) and while on his way to make the report to the shareholders he found that the Thames river steamer he was on had just been equipped with new tubular boilers which were unable to burn the more traditional coke and had to burn instead the smoky Newcastle coals. The smoke from the new boilers was so bad that a race was on to make a fortune from the discovery of smoke-consuming apparatus for the boats. Shortly afterwards, Nixon was on board a Thames steamer when he found that

³⁵⁰ James Edmund Vincent, John Nixon: Pioneer of the Steam Coal Trade in South Wales. A Memoir (London: John Murray, 1900), p. 41 and p. 46-9

³⁵¹ Vincent, p. 65

although ‘the stoker threw coal on to the fire; no volume of black smoke was vomited forth by the funnel.’³⁵² Intrigued, he asked if he could see the boiler being stoked: as soon as he was in the stoke-hole Nixon recognised the crystalline coal which was being used as the same coal that was being used in the Penyardarren ironworks. He asked the stoker about the coal:

“Do you get any coal that smokes?”

“Yes, we do. Newcastle coal is very bad for that, and chokes the tubes, and coke does not give heat without a heavy blast.”

“Where does this coal come from?”

“We get it from Mr. Wood, and they call it Murther... coal.”³⁵³

Nixon had recently experienced the problems the French had in supplying coal to the river port of Nantes and immediately saw the possibility of supplying them with the smokeless and more efficient Welsh steam coal. Nixon next visited Lucy Thomas at the Graig colliery in the hopes of negotiating a contract to supply the French market, but failed as she was content with her business and refused to supply Nixon with coal.³⁵⁴ Following this failure, Nixon returned to the North of England.³⁵⁵

Nixon’s return to South Wales was more by accident than design: he had been asked to come down to advise on a boundary dispute by the Tophill colliery which was accused of working the reserves of an adjoining property. While advising on this case Nixon heard that the new Tir Ffounder steam-coal colliery had been sunk by Thomas Powell in the Aberdare district. Convinced that he could find a ready market

³⁵² Vincent, p. 104

³⁵³ Vincent, p. 106

³⁵⁴ Vincent, p. 109

³⁵⁵ Vincent, pp. 111-7

for Welsh steam coal in France, Nixon managed to negotiate a deal with Powell.³⁵⁶

Nixon exported a hundred tons of coal at his own expense to Nantes to conduct trials so that he could secure future orders. The first trial was conducted at a large sugar refinery. Three tons of Welsh steam coal were tested in comparison to the Newcastle coal which they had been using. It was found in the tests that using Welsh steam-coal saved two hours out of a twelve-hour day and that overall the savings were a third. When he made the first export order for Welsh steam-coal, the owner of the sugar refinery remarked to John Nixon that, 'You have made all our workmen gentlemen.'³⁵⁷

Nixon was able to secure through his business contacts in Nantes a trial of Welsh steam coal by the French government. Nixon was always careful to ensure that he could properly superintend the trials of the Welsh coal as he knew full well the disastrous effects that would follow if the fire was raked (as would normally need to be done with an inferior English coal). The first scientific trials for the French government were conducted under Nixon's careful supervision at the Andrette foundry and they found that the Welsh coal was virtually smokeless, the boilers required no attention from the stoker once fired, and that it had a thirty-three percent higher calorific power than the smoky Newcastle coal which required constant attention and labour from the stokers once fired.³⁵⁸ The results were so impressive that sea-trials were immediately ordered and a French naval frigate was provided at Brest for the tests. Although the sea-trial at Brest was not conducted scientifically,

³⁵⁶ Vincent, p. 123. The deal was that Nixon should receive ninepence for every ton of Powell's coal exported to the west of France, and sixpence for every ton exported to the east of Le Havre.

³⁵⁷ Vincent, pp. 130-2

³⁵⁸ Vincent, pp. 134-40

the advantages of Welsh steam coal over the Newcastle coals was so obvious that further trials were swiftly conducted. Shortly afterwards the French government adopted Welsh steam coal for sole use by the French navy, thereby giving themselves an immediate advantage.³⁵⁹

When their three-year agreement expired, Powell tried to keep the money that he owed Nixon; in the end he had to be threatened with legal action before he paid Nixon his commission.³⁶⁰ Nixon next helped to sink the Werfa Colliery, near Aberdare, and following this success he joined with William Cory on an altogether new plan: 'their design was to open a large colliery "to the deep," in the Aberdare Valley, and to sink deeper than any other colliery owners had yet sunk.'³⁶¹ It was seven years before Nixon's Navigation Colliery in Mountain Ash came into production: sinking the shaft alone was so difficult and expensive that it almost ruined the company.³⁶² When completed in 1860, Nixon's Navigation Colliery worked at a depth of 1,350 feet (411 metres), which made it the first true deep pit in South Wales. In 1856 Nixon and his partner John Cory bought the neighbouring Deep Duffryn colliery, whose poor ventilation had caused the Inspector of Mines to warn the partners that the mine was unsafe.³⁶³ Ever the mining engineer, three years later Nixon designed and installed a reciprocating ventilator of his own design which enabled Deep Duffryn to continue working safely.³⁶⁴

Within the space of a few years John Nixon had gone from a young mining

³⁵⁹ Vincent, p. 142

³⁶⁰ Vincent, p. 152

³⁶¹ Vincent, p. 167

³⁶² Phillips, p. 149

³⁶³ Vincent, p. 168

engineer in the employ of Lord Bute to part owner and engineer of the first deep pit in South Wales. The influence which John Nixon had in Nantes can be gathered from the export figures for Welsh steam coal in the 1840s:

Foreign Coal Exports from South Wales Ports (tons)			
	Cardiff	Newport	Total
1840	3,862	7,115	10,997
1841	4,374	12,842	17,216
1842	7,320	51,936	59,256
1843	12,214	56,944	69,158
1844	22,605	146,792	169,397
1845	32,347	148,028	180,375
1846	45,047	121,358	166,405
1847	79,921	115,023	194,944
1848	117,306	124,870	242,176
1849	168,174	108,199	276,373
1850	231,887	125,220	357,107

Table 5.1: Welsh coal exports in the 1840s (Source: R. H. Walters, Appendix 12)

What makes this growth rate doubly impressive is that it happened in another decade which was marked by economic collapse and recession (i.e. the ‘Hungry Forties’). As compelling as John Nixon’s biography may be, it does not quite tell the full story. Before Nixon opened the French markets, for example, most Welsh coal exports were sent to Ireland. The conventional narrative is that the South Wales steam coal trade started in the Aberdare and Rhondda valleys, thanks in part to the anticlinal ridge which brings the deep steam coals comparatively close to the surface here. Yet

³⁶⁴ Stephen Hughes, *et al. Collieries of Wales: Engineering and Architecture*, (Aberystwyth: Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of Wales, 1995), p. 97. Until this point most small collieries and levels had been ventilated by means of a furnace or fire which was placed either at the bottom of the shaft or in a chimney on the surface (p. 95). In the 1860s rotary fans started to be introduced and South Wales led the country in the use of both centrifugal and axial-flow fans (p. 98).

these coal export figures question this narrative: coal had started to be exported through the port of Cardiff in large amounts, but the port of Newport also saw a similar increase in the figures and it was only in 1849 that Cardiff began to export more coal than Newport. The coal which was shipped through Newport must have come from the Monmouthshire steam-coal district; for example, in 1841 the Risca steam-coal colliery was sunk and in 1842 it secured a contract to supply the Royal West India Steam Packet Company with 72,000 tons of coal a year.³⁶⁵ The conventional narrative of the development of the steam-coal trade needs to be revised to recognise these export figures.

Coal is an unusual commodity in that, because of its bulk, it requires good transport links before it can develop a market. Whereas the early iron industry of South Wales could just about survive using pack horses to transport the iron, it would have been impossible to move even a moderate amount of coal this way. As we have seen, at the end of the eighteenth century a number of important canals were opened in industrial South Wales, including those which run up the Taff and lower Ebbw valleys. These were soon joined by a network of feeder tramroads which linked a number of small levels and quarries with the canals.³⁶⁶ One of the first dedicated tramroads was built because the Monmouthshire canal from the docks at Newport was forced by the terrain to terminate at Crumlin: the final nine-mile connection between the canal at Crumlin and the ironworks of Ebbw Vale and Nantyglo to the north was

³⁶⁵ Morris and Williams, p. 5

³⁶⁶ Colin Baber, 'Canals and the Economic Development of South Wales', in *Modern South Wales: Essay in Economic History* ed. by Colin Baber and L. J. Williams (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1986), 24-42, p. 36. In the late 1790s South Wales had only a few miles of tram-road in use; in 1811, 150 miles of tram-road had been built; in 1830, 350 miles were in use

made by tramroad.³⁶⁷ Many of the tramroads in the middle of the century were converted to rail operation.³⁶⁸ In 1841 the Taff Vale Railway was opened between Cardiff and Merthyr, and branch lines quickly developed.³⁶⁹ Rail was essential to the development of the steam-coal trade, as without it the coal simply could not have been moved to market.

The geography of the South Wales coalfield basin once again worked to the advantage of Welsh industry: the rail links from the collieries to the docks were short (30 miles or less) and they ran downhill, so that a comparatively small locomotive could be used to haul a large train of coal and return uphill with the empty wagons.³⁷⁰ This meant that the export trade was naturally favoured as the rail links between the collieries and the docks were short and easy to work, while the railways to the English markets were long and hilly. By the 1890s the railways of South Wales were the most densely developed rail network in the world.³⁷¹ So dense was this network that between 1830 and 1914, 109 railway companies were formed in South Wales.³⁷² The industry of coal rapidly developed a new and efficient rail network to supply the ports with Welsh steam-coals for export, and to import the wood and other materials which were needed to work the coal underground.

Before the nineteenth century, Pembrokeshire coal had been shipped to

³⁶⁷ Baber, p. 37

³⁶⁸ For example, the Sirhowy tramroad was reluctantly converted to the Sirhowy Railway by Act of Parliament in 1860: Tasker, p. 11

³⁶⁹ The first branch line entered the Rhondda in 1841, and in 1846 a branch line was opened up the Aberdare valley.

³⁷⁰ Morris and Williams, p. 15

³⁷¹ John Williams, 'The Climacteric of the 1890s', in *Modern South Wales* ed. by Baber, 192-203 (p. 202).

³⁷² Tom Taylor, 'Capital Formation by Railways in South Wales, 1836-1914', in *Modern South Wales* ed. by Baber, 96-116 (pp. 114-6)

Cardiff from Tenby.³⁷³ In 1840 Cardiff had the same number of legal quays as it had in the reign of Charles II.³⁷⁴ After the Glamorganshire canal had been built between the large township of Merthyr and the small docks at Cardiff, the loading of smaller ships was accomplished via a tide lock which was built at the end of the canal, the barges laid up alongside the ships.³⁷⁵ In 1839 the first of the Cardiff docks built by the Marquess of Bute was opened; however, the long, thin West Bute Dock was not an immediate success as most traffic was still passing through Newport. In 1840 there was rejoicing if there were more than five vessels in the dock at any one time.³⁷⁶ Following the opening of the Taff Vale Railway the docks in Cardiff started to pick up, and in 1841 153,576 tons were shipped through the docks of Cardiff.³⁷⁷ So much coal was now being shipped through Cardiff that the second Marquess of Bute had already started planning a new dock for Cardiff shortly before his death in 1848; the East Bute Dock was completed in 1859.³⁷⁸ Once the East Bute Dock was opened, the docks of Newport fell behind those of Cardiff and although new docks were built in Newport it never again challenged the dominance of the Bute docks in Cardiff.

Bute's control over the shipping of coal in Cardiff quickly became problematic. As early as 1856 dissatisfaction with Bute and the growth of the coal trade led to the construction of an off-shoot of the Taff Vale Railway which led to

³⁷³ A. E. Truman, 'Population Changes in the Eastern Part of the South Wales Coalfield', The Geographical Journal 53:6 (1919), 410-419 (p. 415)

³⁷⁴ Smyth, Nautical Observations, p. 9

³⁷⁵ Smyth, Nautical Observations, p. 9

³⁷⁶ Lewis, William Thomas (1st Baron Merthyr), 'The Bute Docks, Cardiff', in The South Wales Coal Annual for 1906 (Cardiff: Joseph Davies, 1906), 1-41 (p. 9).

³⁷⁷ William Thomas Lewis, p. 10

³⁷⁸ William Thomas Lewis, p. 12

new docks which opened in Penarth in 1865.³⁷⁹ In the early 1880s the congestion at Cardiff's Bute docks had become so bad, despite the opening of the Roath Basin in 1874, that the docks were overwhelmed. Although a Bill passed Parliament in 1882 to build the Roath Dock (completed in 1887) it was not enough to satisfy the Ocean Colliery Company and they decided to build their own docks, together with a rail link to the Rhondda and a town to support the docks; in 1889 the first of two docks were opened in Barry.³⁸⁰

Statistics on the early industry of South Wales were notoriously poorly handled but from 1854 figures for the annual estimated total output of the South Wales coalfield were kept, and they show that there were three periods of rapid increase, each lasting from two to three years: 1858, 1864, and 1871.³⁸¹ Once again war had an impact on Welsh industry and fed the demand for Welsh industrial production: in the Industrial Revolution the European Wars had generated demand for Welsh iron for munitions, in the Victorian era the demand was for Welsh steam coal to fuel the belligerent navies. The Crimean War in the 1850s created a new demand for smokeless Welsh steam coal from the British and French Admiralties; in the early 1860s the American Civil War created a surge in demand for naval use of Welsh steam coal; and in 1871 the Franco-Prussian war was responsible for yet another boom in the Welsh coal industry.

Although the French government had been quick to see the advantages of

³⁷⁹ Clarence S. Howells, Transport Facilities in the Mining Districts of South Wales and Monmouthshire (London: P. S. King; and Cardiff: Business Statistics, 1911), p. 21

³⁸⁰ History of the Barry Railway Company, 1884-1921 compiled by R.J. Rimell, in collaboration with Messrs. Joseph Davies and Hailey (Cardiff: Tudor Printing Works [Western Mail], 1923), pp. 11-23

³⁸¹ Morris and Williams, p. 80

Welsh steam coal, it took the British Admiralty considerably longer to adopt it. The British Admiralty had begun trials from the mid-1840s but, despite the numerous drawbacks of Newcastle coal, the opposition of the northern coal owners in Parliament meant that tests of mixtures of Welsh and Newcastle coal continued well into the 1870s. The smoke produced by the use of Newcastle coals and the firing of the naval guns during some sea trials was sometimes so bad that it was impossible to see either the signals or the ships.³⁸² The Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean Squadron put the case bluntly, 'I consider it my duty to point out to the Lordships that, in case of war, north country coal is totally unfit for Her Majesty's service.'³⁸³ In 1876 the debate was resolved and thereafter Welsh steam coals dominated the Admiralty purchasing lists.

Few, if any, of the land-owners of South Wales became coal owners: Lord Tredegar, Lord and Lady Llanover, the Thomases, Henry Bruce (Lord Aberdare), and the other local Welsh land-owners were all content to sit back and collect the profit from the mineral royalties.³⁸⁴ The coal owners of South Wales were drawn from a number of backgrounds. Many were mining engineers and mineral agents, some of whom came from within the Welsh iron industry (such as William Thomas Lewis, engineer at the Plymouth iron works and a mineral agent for the Marquess of Bute); some had no connection with the Welsh industry (such as the mining engineer John

³⁸² Morris and Williams, pp. 39-40

³⁸³ Morris and Williams, p. 40

³⁸⁴ One of the few exceptions to this rule was the Bute Merthyr Colliery (the first steam-coal colliery in the Rhondda) which was opened in 1855 by the trustees of the third Marquess of Bute, and the Lady Margaret Colliery which was sunk in Treherbert in 1877 by the third Marquess of Bute. However, Bute only opened the Bute Merthyr Colliery in response to a challenge from the Taff Vale Railway to open up the Rhondda and to attract others to sink collieries on his land, which meant more easy-profit for Bute. Once Bute had sunk the Bute Merthyr he then leased it out (Ray Lawrence, interview with the author, 5 November 2010).

Nixon, and George Elliot, who started as a door boy at the Marquess of Londonderry's Whitefield pit in the North of England);³⁸⁵ and some were Welsh mining engineers who had worked their way up through the industry (such as James Thomas, Ynyshir, who rose from pit boy in his native Bedwellty, to overman and manager in a number of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan collieries).³⁸⁶ Some coal owners were contractors, such as David Davies of Llandinam (Ocean Collieries), a staunch Welsh Calvinistic-Methodist who had one time worked as a farmer and a sawyer in his native Montgomeryshire, he later laid many of the railways of mid-Wales.³⁸⁷ In 1877 he was called by a Liberal pamphlet 'the millionaire Methodist'.³⁸⁸ Another group of coal owners were originally drapers and shopkeepers, such as David Davies of Ferndale (a draper in Hirwaun and Aberdare who used his shops to fund the sinking of his collieries) and Samuel Thomas (the first of the native Welsh coal owners and a grocer, tea dealer, and draper).³⁸⁹ Some were wholesale merchants (such as Insole), although many more merchants were shareholders but not proprietors.³⁹⁰ Some were shipowners (the most prominent of whom was E. H. Watts of Watts, Milburn and Co. who were large London and Newcastle shipowners), but their numbers were not as large as the merchants.³⁹¹ Many of the coal owners were former pit boys and colliers, such as the monoglot Unitarian Welshman David Williams of Ynyscynon (Bardic name: Alaw Goch) who was a sawyer before

³⁸⁵ R.H. Walters, The Economic and Business History of the South Wales Steam Coal Industry, 1840-1914 (New York: Arno Press, 1977), p. 55

³⁸⁶ Elizabeth Phillips, pp. 165-9

³⁸⁷ See, Ivor Thomas, Top Sawyer: A Biography of David Davies of Llandinam (London: Longmans, 1938)

³⁸⁸ Adfyfr [John Thomas Hughes], Neglected Wales (National Liberal Pamphlet, no. 8) (London: National Liberal Printing and Publishing Association, 1887), p. 7.

³⁸⁹ Walters, pp. 64-5

³⁹⁰ Walters, p. 72

³⁹¹ Walters, p. 75

working underground as a haulier.³⁹²

The 1860s brought a number of changes in industrial South Wales. The next phase was marked by the development of deeper steam-coal collieries as the northern and southern synclinal dips of coal began to come within the technical reach of the industry. Meanwhile, the trade in the house-coals and anthracite of the West had been declining since the 1840s as the steam-coal industry of the east grew.³⁹³ After lengthy trials, the Dowlais ironworks converted its first production cast of Bessemer steel on the 5th of June 1865, proving for the first time that the Bessemer process was capable of being used commercially. Within the space of a few years, most of the large ironworks of South Wales had converted to the production of steel. The conversion provoked a crisis in many of the old iron-working communities of Wales as a whole community of skilled and well-paid puddlers were laid off overnight, many finding a home in the workhouse.

Many of the Monmouthshire iron companies were quick to adapt to the new coal industry. Eventually, even the largest of the iron companies entered the new trade: the Dowlais Iron Company had initially been slow to adapt to the steam-coal trade³⁹⁴ but in 1873 it was the third largest coal company in South Wales with an assured tonnage of 800,000 tons, which grew in 1913 to 2,006,500 tons.³⁹⁵ The movement of the iron companies into the steam-coal trade was a natural move on their part as they had always been large producers of coal which they used to fuel the

³⁹² Walters, p. 82.

³⁹³ Morris and Williams, p. 78.

³⁹⁴ Morris and Williams, p. 83

³⁹⁵ Trevor Boyns, 'Growth in the Coal Industry: the Cases of Powell Duffryn and the Ocean Coal Company, 1864-1913', in Modern South Wales ed. by Baber, 153-170 (p. 154).

iron furnaces. They also had a natural advantage in that they occupied the areas to the north of the coalfield where the steam coal was more easily worked. In Monmouthshire the iron companies quickly became dominant in the steam-coal trade and firms like the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company, and the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company were able to leverage their size in order to capitalise their collieries. Many of these companies had started selling steam coal as early as the 1840s.³⁹⁶ The steam-coal trade was so profitable that many of the older iron companies slowly moved away from iron and concentrated their efforts instead on coal.

In 1873 the single largest producer of coal in South Wales was the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Co (with an annual assured tonnage of 1,020,000 tons), closely followed by the Powell Duffryn Company (with an annual assured tonnage of 1,000,000 tons). In 1913 the situation had reversed and Powell Duffryn had become the largest colliery company (with an assured tonnage of 4,178,000 tons), but the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company was still the third largest colliery company (with an assured tonnage of 2,013,615 tons).³⁹⁷ France was always the biggest customer for Welsh steam coals and on 1 January 1914 Powell Duffryn formed a French subsidiary, the *Compagnie Française des Mines Powell Duffryn*, with depots at Le Havre, Rouen, Nantes, and Bordeaux. Powell Duffryn continued to grow and by the outbreak of the Second World War it was producing 21 million tons of coal annually (over a third of the entire production of the South Wales coalfield); on nationalisation in 1947 it was the world's largest coal producer. Powell Duffryn

³⁹⁶ Morris and Williams, p. 84

³⁹⁷ Boyns, p. 154

survived nationalisation thanks to its diversification into engineering and ports, and it still exists as an industrial manufacturing and services group.

5.2 The Politics of Coal

If the ruling class of South Wales felt secure after the defeat of the Chartist insurgency in the winter of 1839, the feeling was not to last long. The new year of 1840 saw a number of strikes across the Monmouthshire house-coal collieries as the colliers refused to work with those who had testified against the Chartists after the attack on the Westgate Hotel. The coal owners, never showing much sympathy for scabs after they had done with them, conceded to the demands of the colliers. The strike action of the summer of 1840 was altogether of a different nature from any previously seen in South Wales. In May the iron masters had enforced a 15% reduction in wages; seeing their success, the coal-owners decided to enforce a similar reduction. The fourteen-week strike in the sale-coal collieries succeeded despite attempts by the coal-owners to bring in scab labour to break the strike. The agreement which ended the strike was historic because for the first time it was agreed locally that a sliding scale agreement should be used to adjust wages to the varying price of coal.³⁹⁸ The verdict of Bute on this strike was typically direct: 'The Masters have been completely beaten by their men, in a way that had never happened to them before.'³⁹⁹

The years that followed saw an almost annual attack by the coal-owners on the wages of the colliers.⁴⁰⁰ In the thirteen years between 1840 and 1853 there were a

³⁹⁸ Morris and Williams, pp. 248-9

³⁹⁹ Bute to Captain Smyth; quoted in Morris and Williams, p. 249

⁴⁰⁰ Morris and Williams, pp. 248-9

total of thirty-four strikes in the sale-coal collieries of South Wales: most of these strikes were regional, only seven were local; on six occasions virtually every collier in Monmouthshire had stopped work; in one strike both the Aberdare and Rhondda valleys were idle at the same time; in another every collier in Aberdare was on strike; and, in 1843 the colliers of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire were taking joint strike action. In the 1840s the colliers of South Wales were organising in a new radical wave of action.⁴⁰¹ The winter of 1841-2 caused such extreme distress in industrial South Wales that the industrial bourgeoisie of South Wales feared another insurrection; the letters of Octavius Morgan from the spring of 1842 record a number of rumours that the colliers of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire were buying weapons for an armed insurgency.⁴⁰²

In the spring of 1842, while the ruling class were sending each other paranoid letters about armed colliers and Chartists, the colliers of Monmouthshire were taking strike action to prevent a general reduction in their wages. In the summer of 1840 the economic depression deepened. In 1843 the economic depression that had started in 1839 started to lift, but in 1847 the recovery stalled and panic ensued. In November and December 1847 wages were again reduced by the iron masters who had formed an alliance to deal with strike action: they were further reduced in March 1848. While the evidence for union organisation before 1850 is scant (what unions were formed were localised and unsuccessful) there is evidence that by 1850 the sale-coal colliers had begun to organise together in a union.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰¹ Evans, p. 63

⁴⁰² Walter T. Morgan, 'Chartism and Industrial Unrest in South Wales in 1842', in National Library of Wales Journal X:1 (1957).

⁴⁰³ Evans, p. 71

During the Crimean War the economy recovered and the coalfield was largely peaceful, wages were once again high thanks to the demand of the British and French navies for Welsh steam-coals; however, the end of the war brought yet another financial crisis and collapse in the UK. In South Wales wages were reduced and once again the colliers went on strike to prevent the reduction. The recession of 1857 was so bad that in November iron furnaces at Penydarren and Beaufort were blown out. When the employers reduced the wages in the Aberdare steam-coal pits, the colliers in response struck and organised resistance through pit committees and 'similar bodies.'⁴⁰⁴ These early combinations tended to be localised and temporary, formed only for the duration of the strike. Markets were still depressed between 1858 and 1863, and once again a war brought a revival in trade: this time the American Civil War created demand for naval steam-coal. Unrest spread throughout the coalfield in the first months of 1864 as the workers struck to raise wages as the return of demand placed them in a more powerful position: by April wages had risen by 20% to 25%.⁴⁰⁵

George Elliot, chairman of the Powell Duffryn Company, described the state of working-class organisation in South Wales in this period: 'I do not think that they have any union except the spontaneous combination which arises if there is the least interference with them.'⁴⁰⁶ In the 1860s a handful of English unionists were active in South Wales:

Roberts, the 'Miners' Attorney General', appeared in the district to demonstrate the advantages of union by defending the colliers in the courts during 1865, and Pickard and Halliday, officials of the Miners' National

⁴⁰⁴ Evans, pp. 86-7

⁴⁰⁵ Evans, p. 89

⁴⁰⁶ Morris and Williams, p. 273

Union, came to represent the widows and children at the inquest on the Ferndale explosion of 1867.⁴⁰⁷

Despite these efforts, the Miners' National Association withdrew from South Wales in 1864.⁴⁰⁸ In the 1860s the colliers had not necessarily needed a union, since demand and wages were high and the emigration of colliers from South Wales between 1864-6 meant that the colliers had a powerful negotiating position. In 1867 the iron workers of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire were on strike as the iron masters reduced wages, but the colliers were largely unaffected. The emigration of experienced men during these years was so significant that some collieries and ironworks were almost forced to close due to a lack of skilled men.⁴⁰⁹ The colliers' strike of 1868 was the last spontaneous combination to organise strike action in South Wales.⁴¹⁰

In the July of 1869 a colliers' conference was held in Lancashire to discuss the question of wages. It decided to form a new organisation in combination with the colliers of Staffordshire and Wales in order to agitate jointly for wages. The Amalgamated Association of Miners was consequently formed and for the next five years it spread rapidly across the coalfields. In August 1869 the president of the association, Thomas Halliday, was at a delegate meeting in Pontypridd which was attended by representatives of every colliery in South Wales. In the summer of 1870 a strike by two thousand colliers in the Rhondda and Tredegar valleys successfully

⁴⁰⁷ Morris and Williams, p. 272

⁴⁰⁸ Morris and Williams, p. 272

⁴⁰⁹ Evans, p. 97

⁴¹⁰ Evans, p. 100

raised wages. The colliers of South Wales rapidly joined the new organisation, particularly in the Aberdare district where 3,000 joined in the space of a few weeks. The new union was formed of local lodges, several of which formed a district. The success of this new union was due to more than agitation for an increase in wages (which had been its original intent); many of the colliers were concerned that a number of inexperienced sub-inspectors of mines had been appointed and many were protesting against the introduction of double-shift working.⁴¹¹

The introduction of shift work and new working hours was particularly problematic in the Welsh coalfield. The first mines and small collieries had been worked on the pillar and stall method which was worked by small work-groups of hewers who had a considerable degree of autonomy in the work-place.⁴¹² The introduction of the long-wall method of mining in the 1860s meant that the autonomy of these small work-groups underground was lost; it also meant that the double-shift system of working could be introduced by the employers. This latter issue was unique to South Wales. In the northern coalfields of England the rocks are comparatively stable and they can be left after the coal has been removed for another specialised shift to come along and clean up the face. In South Wales the unstable geology means that the underground workings rapidly break up, shift, and close (known as 'the squeeze'). If the face is not secured and tidied immediately at the end of the shift, it may well have collapsed before the next shift starts. When worked on the pillar and stall method the squeeze crushed a lot of the coals in the pillar before it

⁴¹¹ Evans, pp. 101-3

⁴¹² M. J. Daunton, 'Down the Pit: Work in the Great Northern and South Wales Coalfields, 1870-1914', The Economic History Review 34:4 (1981), 578-597 (p. 583).

could be worked; hence, the move to longwall working. In South Wales it was rare for the pillar to be removed, as late as the 1980s some of the old abandoned nineteenth century pillar and stall areas were reworked.⁴¹³ The single shift survived in South Wales long after the other coalfields had moved to shift work and consequently the Welsh colliers worked significantly longer shifts than the English miners, who could simply leave the face at the end of the shift.⁴¹⁴

In the 1870s the national Amalgamated Association of Miners was involved in three strikes in South Wales. The first was a strike in the Aberdare and Rhondda valleys which lasted from 1 June to 23 August 1871. This twelve-week strike successfully resisted a reduction in wages and succeeded in getting them raised instead. The colliers had achieved this raise largely thanks to the united front which they had been able to achieve because of the organisation of the union.⁴¹⁵ In 1873 a twelve-week strike broke out amongst the iron workers and miners when the iron masters again tried to reduce their wages. Once more the strike was a success and in mid-March the iron masters agreed to a token reduction of 5% for five days. The union's membership in Wales in 1873 grew to 45,000 and it had branches across the coalfield (including at Begelly in Pembrokeshire).⁴¹⁶ From this point in the 1870s the union started to lose influence, while the Coal Owners' Association started to organise a counter-attack.

⁴¹³ Ray Lawrence, interview with author, 5 November 2010. The old pillars were able to be successfully extracted in the 1980s because the modern support systems allowed it to be done safely. In the 1980s Celynen South was profitably reworking the old pillars in the Black Vein when it was closed as uneconomic.

⁴¹⁴ Daunton, p. 582 and pp. 587-8

⁴¹⁵ Evans, p. 104-5

⁴¹⁶ Evans, p. 107-8

The first of the Coal Owners' Associations was formed in 1864 when the Aberdare Steam Collieries Association was started with the express purpose of resisting strike action by the colliers. In 1865 it paid out its first indemnity to a coal owner, David Davies, whose Abercwmboy Colliery was out on strike in 1864 (the amount was £4,700).⁴¹⁷ In 1870 the South Wales Steam Collieries Association was formed with 13 members and a production of 2,076,359 tons. In 1873 this association was greatly expanded when it became the Monmouthshire and South Wales Collieries Association; it now had 84 members and an annual production of 11,422,811 tons.⁴¹⁸

On 1 January 1875, 50,000 colliers across South Wales went on strike when their contracts were cancelled after they refused to accept another reduction in wages (there had already been two substantial reductions in 1874). This strike was disastrous as the union had little funds available to support the strike and the coal owners used their newly-formed association to break the striking colliers. Consequently, on 29 May the colliers were forced to accept a 12.5% cut in their pay with an agreement that wages in future would be governed by a conciliation board—the first Sliding Scale Agreement which covered the coalfield as a whole was signed on 11 December 1875.⁴¹⁹

The Sliding Scale was introduced by joint agreement, in principle to regulate wages fairly, but it quickly became abused by the coal owners who would often make

⁴¹⁷ W. Gascoyne Dalziel, Records of the Several Coal Owners' Associations of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1864 to 1895 (London: printed by E. E. Miller, 1895), pp. 3-7

⁴¹⁸ Dalziel, p. 1

⁴¹⁹ Evans, pp. 111-3 and p. 117

long-term contracts for coal sales at very low rates knowing full well that they could cover their losses from the collier's wages,⁴²⁰ while ensuring that the next sliding-scale agreement would result in yet another low wage agreement because they were taking so many large orders at low prices so far into the future.⁴²¹ The sliding-scale agreement also ensured that unionism in South Wales would be kept weak by the Coal Owners' Association as the colliers were unlikely to subscribe to a union knowing that an agreement had already been signed.⁴²² For nearly twenty-five years the sliding-scale agreement kept the colliers of South Wales weak and prevented them from organising, despite a revival in unionism after 1883 and recessions in 1876-7 and 1885-7. The leading figure of this period in South Wales was the miners' agent William Abraham (better known by his Bardic name 'Mabon'), who was elected as Liberal MP for the Rhondda in 1885. Mabon very much represented the older traditions of Welsh Nonconformity and acted as a conciliator between the colliers and the coal-owners – a role which Welsh Nonconformity had long held to be its rightful place in society.

On 3 January 1888 the South Wales and Monmouthshire Colliery Workmen's Federation was formed. Led by William Brace, it was encouraged by the success of the enginemen's unions which had been set-up in Aberdare and the Rhondda.⁴²³ In November 1889 the national Miners' Federation of Great Britain (MFGB) was formed in Newport and, within a week, notice was given by the Welsh union to end

⁴²⁰ H. Read, 'South Wales Sliding-Scale: Its Advantages and its Defects', *The Economic Journal* 4:14 (1894), 332-335 (p. 333). Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/295608> [accessed 13 December 2009]

⁴²¹ S. J. Chapman, 'Some Theoretical Objections to the Sliding-Scales' *The Economic Journal* 13:50 (1903), 186-196 (p. 192). Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2220884> [accessed 13 December 2009]

⁴²² Read, p. 335

⁴²³ Evans, pp. 140-1

the third sliding-scale agreement.⁴²⁴ The sliding scale once again proved to be an obstruction which worked in the favour of the coal-owners: the new MFGB was agitating for a 10% raise in wages, but because the Welsh colliers had agreed to a new sliding-scale agreement on 15 January 1890, they could not demand a similar rise and consequently could not join the new national Federation. Despite this, the new Miners' Federation started to recruit and when its supporters were physically thrown out of a sliding-scale conference the union was said to have 5,495 members (mostly in Monmouthshire). By 1892, opinion was divided between those who wanted to scrap the sliding scale and join the national federation and those who wanted to keep the sliding scale and form their own Welsh union. At a June conference it was found in a ballot that nearly two-thirds wanted both the sliding-scale kept and a local union formed which had membership of the MFGB.⁴²⁵ In part this result is not entirely surprising: the structure which had formed under the sliding-scale was of a handful of miners' agents who negotiated the agreement on behalf of the men—naturally the miners' agents were not about to vote themselves out of a job.

On 1 August 1893 the hauliers of the Ocean Coal Company in the Ogmore Valley went on strike. They were shortly joined by the Ocean Coal hauliers in the Rhondda Fawr. They were inspired in part by the general strike in the English coalfields which had started on 26 June and which lasted for nearly five months, and in part by the postponement of an advance on the sliding scale. A committee of the strikers sent a message to the coal owners:

⁴²⁴ R. Page Arnot, *South Wales Miners, Glowyr de Cymru: A History of the South Wales Miners' Federation (1898-1914)*, vol. 1 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1967), p. 28

⁴²⁵ Evans, pp. 150-1

Gentlemen,—We, the Hauliers of the various pits of South Wales, demand an immediate advance of 20 per cent upon the standard of our wages, and that we have decided not to resume work until our request has been complied with.⁴²⁶

The coal owners in response issued summonses against the hauliers for breach of contract. At the start of the strike the Ocean Colliery hauliers travelled in 'marching gangs' of ten men to the pits of Monmouthshire. At Crumlin they spoke to a crowd of 10,000 and soon most of the Monmouthshire miners had come out in support of the Ogmore hauliers. Eventually, the only pits which had not come out in support were those in the Swansea District. A general strike had broken out in South Wales despite the connivance of the coal-owners and some of the miners' agents. When the Emergency Committee of coal-owners met they heard reports that 'the police authorities were practically unable to cope [with] the spreading disorder.'⁴²⁷ The Emergency Committee which had been established by the coal-owners took control of the civil authorities and they organised despatch of the cavalry and infantry to South Wales.

Before the troops arrived, there was a meeting of the Sliding-Scale Joint Committee from which the miners' representatives on the committee issued a manifesto calling on the men to honour the agreement which their representatives had signed, and return to work. The strikers meanwhile held a mass meeting at the Rocking Stone in Pontypridd on 2 September, which passed three resolutions: that the members of the Sliding-Scale Committee resign and refuse to support the sliding scale in future; that the miners of South Wales be allowed to join the South Wales

⁴²⁶ Page Arnot, p. 33

⁴²⁷ Page Arnot, p. 35

and Monmouthshire branch of the MFGB; and that work would not resume until the hauliers first received their wages. Isaac Evans, who had been bitterly opposed to the sliding scale which was supported by William Abraham, spoke to the meeting and was nominated to speak with the Emergency committee the next day. The Emergency Committee refused to meet with their ex-colleague but on the morning of the 3rd of September they agreed to pay the hauliers their money – the strikers had won their cause. The success of the spontaneous Hauliers' Strike of 1893 was well remembered in South Wales, so much so that it was still being talked about in the 1950s.⁴²⁸

In the September of the Jubilee year of 1897 the Welsh colliers voted to end the revised sliding-scale agreement of 1892: in October the required six-month notice to end the agreement was issued to the coal owners. When they received the notice the employers became intransigent in their negotiations with the men and refused to continue unless the democratic decisions of conference cease and they could deal instead with the twelve representatives of the colliers (i.e. miners' agents), who were to be given plenary power. Peaceful negotiations were blocked when the colliers refused to accept such an obviously corrupt suggestion from what they believed had effectively become a cartel.⁴²⁹ Although Mabon, Alfred Onions, and Thomas Richards pleaded with the miners on March 28th to be given plenary powers the suggestion was opposed by Brace and Dai o'r Nant (David Morgan) and it was soundly defeated in ballot.⁴³⁰ In April the five-month lockout began. In June troops were once again sent to South Wales. From May the elected representatives of the

⁴²⁸ Page Arnot, pp. 32-41

⁴²⁹ Evans, p. 170-1

⁴³⁰ Page Arnot, pp. 42-7

area were pushing for government intervention while the coal owners were insisting in their negotiations with Mabon (who had been given the plenary powers which he had initially demanded) that the sliding-scale agreement be kept. The need for debate in Parliament was given new urgency when it was learned that the Royal Navy would soon have to cancel its autumn manoeuvres because of the lack of Welsh steam-coal. Eventually the colliers were forced by the well-organised coal owners to return to work with only one concession—that if after a year had passed the wages had fallen 12.5% below the 1879 standard then the colliers had the right to end the agreement.⁴³¹

Although the strike of 1898 had failed, its impact would alter the entire twentieth-century history of the Welsh coalfields. The strike had started when the union had very few funds to support the miners, while the Coal Owners' Association was well-funded and able to finance the coal owners and cover their losses during the lock-out. During the strike the Welsh colliers had been supported financially by the MFGB and they had been allowed to raise funds in the English mining districts. The sliding scale had once been in use in all of the British coalfields but in 1898 it was only used in the South Wales coalfield, one English iron mine, and one English quarry.⁴³² In 1903 the last sliding-scale agreement in South Wales expired, thanks in no small part to the sacrifice of the miners in 1898 and to the miners' next step which was to establish a new organisation out of the debts of the old—the South Wales Miners' Federation was formed out of the long struggle of 1898.

⁴³¹ Page Arnot, pp. 49-60

⁴³² Chapman, p. 186

In 1900 the South Wales coalfield was one of the largest industrial regions in the UK and its exports dominated the British export markets. The export trade in steam-coals from South Wales had been started in France by John Nixon and France and the Mediterranean countries were always among the largest markets for Welsh coals. A new generation of deep coal mines had started to produce high-quality steam-coals (e.g. Llanbradach Colliery and the Marine Colliery near Ebbw Vale), and a new generation of modern collieries were about to be sunk (e.g. Penallta and Britannia, and the Navigation Colliery, near Crumlin). Following the success of the Hauliers' Strike, a new generation of colliers were organising in a new union which represented the coalfield as a whole. The South Wales Miners Federation (SWMF) was formed out of the struggle of the 1890s. Following the expensive Boer War a tax had been imposed in 1901 on coal exports so that the British government could cover its large debts. It was the new Welsh colliers' union, the SWMF, which helped to lead the opposition in Parliament to the new tax which unfairly hit the Welsh coal trade. The Coal Tax was eventually repealed in 1906 after five years of agitation.⁴³³ Although firms like the Cambrian Combine (formed in 1895 in the Rhondda) and Powell Duffryn had been busy consolidating many of the collieries into large industrial units, it was only during and following the First World War that the coal industry of South Wales was revolutionised as the colliery companies spent their large profits on expensive amalgamations and buy-outs.⁴³⁴ And as the colliery companies grew larger so did their conflicts with the colliers. In the Cambrian

⁴³³ See, Page Arnot, pp. 106-13

⁴³⁴ Walters, p. 274

Combine Dispute of 1910-11 a 'guerilla war'⁴³⁵ was fought in the Rhondda valleys as the colliers were locked out from 1 November 1910 to the beginning of October 1911.⁴³⁶

5.3 Discourses of Knowledge and Power in the Coalfield

The steam-coal industry was so large that it created a number of discourses of knowledge which it needed to sustain itself: new science was needed to analyse the coal and to find out where the best steam coals lay; new technology was needed to extract the coal from the new deep pits; an educated workforce was required to work the coal safely and efficiently;⁴³⁷ new medical discourses were required to define and treat new industrial diseases;⁴³⁸ both Nonconformist and other religious institutions were deployed to new uses; and a new legal discourse grew around mining as Parliamentary regulation of the industry began to be implemented from the middle of the nineteenth century. From the middle of the century public inquiries into accidents and explosions began to be heard and they were subsequently reported in the local press. Even the sliding scale was ultimately a legal discourse which was deployed to some considerable effect by the coal owners. Ultimately these new discourses, which

⁴³⁵ David Evans, *Labour Strife in the South Wales Coalfield, 1910-1911* (Cardiff: Educational Publishing Company, 1911; repr. Cardiff: Cymric Federation Press, 1963), p. 63

⁴³⁶ Page Arnot, pp. 174-273

⁴³⁷ Even in the Victorian era colliers were much more skilled than is portrayed in the popular image of a collier stripped to the waist whacking away at the coal seam with a mandrel.

⁴³⁸ At first diseases like miners' nystagmus (which was caused by working on small seams in the dark) were raised as concern. See for example: T. Lister Llewellyn, *Miners' Nystagmus, Its Causes and Prevention* (London: Colliery Guardian Company, 1912), which was written by a former medical officer of the Powell Duffryn and Rhymney Iron and Coal companies. As technology grew, silicosis and pneumoconiosis became a prime concern. See for example: Enid M. Williams, *The Health of Old and Retired Coalminers in South Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1933).

are all essentially superstructural elements that were built upon the economic base of coal, found expression in the public imagination. At first this new narrative found its voice through newspaper reports on accidents, disasters, and then through education. Before long the new culture found expression in the short stories and novels which had begun to be written from within the coal industry at the end of the century.

The technology of mining had completely changed between 1840 and 1900. Before the 1840s most collieries were levels dug into the sides of the valleys, while the few pits that had been opened were shallow and in comparison small. Many of these collieries were ventilated by a furnace or a fire which was built under a chimney or at the bottom of the shaft and which drew air through the workings. In the 1860s the old wasteful, and dangerous, pillar and stall method was replaced with the more efficient long-wall method of working the coal-face. Mechanical ventilation began to be fitted in the 1860s. Compressed air was first used in 1854 and it was later used to power much of the technology underground. In 1865 mechanical haulage began to be used: the deeper steam-coal pits needed the power, speed and regularity of steam to wind the coal, although the old water balance pits were only slowly replaced.⁴³⁹ Steam winding was later superseded by electrical winders which had uniform torque that put less strain on the ropes and shaft guides.⁴⁴⁰

Before the advent of the coal industry fire-damp escaped to the surface through the many faults which cover the coalfield. Just a mile from Pontypridd there was a 'fountain of fire' where the gas escaped under the River Taff. This blower of gas was so strong that it was often lit at night for the amusement of spectators: the

⁴³⁹ Collieries of Wales, p. 69

⁴⁴⁰ Collieries of Wales, p. 73

flame from the river was said to be from 4 to 5 foot high and several small jets in the fields adjoining were also lit: a contemporary spectator said that 'the effect at night is described as grand and beautiful.'⁴⁴¹ In some mines escapes of gas would blow large slabs of coal off the face, but some jets of gas were stable and they were sometimes used to light the mine, either piped to gas fittings (e.g. a lit blower was used to provide light near the shaft bottom in the Cymmer Colliery, Porth until the colliery closed)⁴⁴² or the blower would be lit where it escaped on the coal face (e.g. at Killingworth and in the Gateshead Colliery).⁴⁴³

The deep steam-coal collieries had to be pumped clear of water and the early low-pressure Newcomen engines were quickly replaced with more powerful high-pressure engines in the 1840s, new horizontal and rotative engines were fitted in the 1870s, and from the 1880s centrifugal and turbine pumps driven by compressed air or electricity became standard pumping gear in South Wales.⁴⁴⁴ Even the wrought-iron headframes of the new steam-coal collieries passed through an evolutionary development as they progressed from wooden headframes (which in 1900 were still in the majority) to the ornate and well-designed headframes that are synonymous with the Welsh coal industry.⁴⁴⁵ As the technology of mining grew more sophisticated, the colliers became more highly trained and specialised, and so they gained more power and were better able to organise.

The rapid growth of the steam-coal trade meant that the science of mining

⁴⁴¹ Robert Galloway, Annals of Coal Mining and the Coal Trade vol. 1 (London: Colliery Guardian, 1904; repr. Newton Abbot : David & Charles, 1971), p. 21

⁴⁴² Ceri Thompson (Curator of Big Pit Mining Museum), interview by author, 25 March 2010

⁴⁴³ Galloway, p. 26

⁴⁴⁴ Collieries of Wales, pp. 87-90

⁴⁴⁵ Collieries of Wales, p. 53-63

quickly became professionalised and mining engineers like John Nixon who were trained on the job were quickly replaced by a new generation of academic engineers who had been more formally trained. In 1851 the Museum of Economic Geology was relocated to new premises in Jermyn Street, off Piccadilly in central London and renamed the School of Mines and of Science Applied to the Arts. Locating a new School of Mines in London was an obviously controversial move that was opposed by many, including Lionel Brough, Inspector of Mines for the South West District, who added his weight to the argument that the Mining School would have been better located in Merthyr Tydfil than in the metropolis.⁴⁴⁶

In 1856 a centre for the instruction of working colliers was established in Bristol, partly under the influence of Herbert Mackworth (the first Mines Inspector in Wales, appointed in 1851).⁴⁴⁷ Mackworth as inspector for the South Western District had for some time been arguing the case for a mining school to be established in Swansea because the serious lack of properly trained overmen was leading to a significant number of unnecessary accidents and loss of life in the mines of South Wales.⁴⁴⁸ The mining school in Bristol was not a success. A year later in 1857 the South Wales Institute of Engineers (SWIE) was formed in Merthyr with the object of 'the encouragement and advancement of Engineering Science and Practice.'⁴⁴⁹ In his inaugural speech, the Institute's first president, William Menalaus, stressed the need

⁴⁴⁶ G. W. Roderick and M. D. Stephens, 'Mining Education in England and Wales in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century' *Irish Journal of Education* 6:2 (1972), 105-120 (p. 109).

⁴⁴⁷ Morris and Williams, p. 185 and 188. There had been an earlier mines inspector, Kenyon Blackwell, who was appointed in 1849 to make a preliminary survey, but he served in the post for such a brief time that he can be discounted.

⁴⁴⁸ Morris and Williams, p. 188

⁴⁴⁹ *The South Wales Institute of Engineers: Sesquicentenary Brochure, 1857-2007* (Cardiff: SWIE, 2007), p. 13. Hereafter identified as SWIE.

for engineering research to be conducted in South Wales.⁴⁵⁰ Over its history the SWIE published in its annual journal the papers which were presented to its meetings. The papers themselves cover a diverse range of material, but most were written on the technology of the iron, steel, and coal industries.⁴⁵¹ From the start the South Wales Institute of Engineers had close links with the coal owners and mineral royalty owners of South Wales: William Thomas Lewis (of the Lewis family of the Van, Caerphilly) who became Baron Merthyr of Senghenydd was at its first meeting and later became President of the Institute,⁴⁵² and from 1889 the SWIE shared offices with the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coal Owners' Association.⁴⁵³

The mineral-royalty owners had always had strong links to education in South Wales. As early as 1715 Edward Lewis left land and monies in his will for the establishment of a school in Gelligaer: the Lewis School later became one of the top County Grammar Schools in Wales and had a history of sending students to Oxford University. In 1881 Henry Austin Bruce was the chairman of a Parliamentary Committee which recommended a college be established in Glamorgan for the benefit of South Wales. There followed some considerable dispute over whether the new university should be established in Cardiff or Swansea but in 1883 the question was settled and the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire was established in Cardiff under the leadership of its first president, Henry Austin Bruce (i.e. Lord Aberdare) who made a fortune out of the mineral royalties that he inherited

⁴⁵⁰ SWIE, p. 16

⁴⁵¹ SWIE, pp. 31-5

⁴⁵² SWIE, p. 13

⁴⁵³ SWIE, p. 23

in the Aberdare district.⁴⁵⁴

From the outset, the University College was closely linked to the money earned from the coal industry in South Wales, but when it was established in the old Infirmary buildings on Newport Road the college had twelve departments, none of which taught engineering or mining science.⁴⁵⁵ In industrial South Wales this was a significant problem and in 1891 a Department of Mining was established under the leadership of its first chair, William Galloway.⁴⁵⁶ As early as 1875 Professor Galloway had argued that coal dust and not fire damp was the most dangerous factor in many of the great colliery explosions (the primary explosion of fire damp lifted the coal dust and a larger secondary explosion followed when the explosive dust-air mixture ignited). It was while he was head of the Mining Department in Cardiff that Galloway's research was published as a series of lectures, together with his suggested use of stone dust to damp the underground workings which when in use prevented many disastrous coal-dust explosions.⁴⁵⁷

Professor Galloway had long been an active member of the SWIE and in 1902 he resigned as head of Mining in Cardiff to concentrate instead on his private practice. In 1904 Galloway became Vice-President of the SWIE and in 1912 he became President. Despite being built on the money earned from the coal industry, the University College in Cardiff often had a problematic relationship with the

⁴⁵⁴ A. H. Trow and D. J. A. Brown, A Short History of the College, 1883 to 1933 (Part of the Jubilee Celebrations, July 1933) (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1933), p. 11.

⁴⁵⁵ The original departments were: Greek; Latin; Mathematics and Astronomy; Logic and Philosophy; English Language, Literature and History; Physics; Chemistry; Biology; Welsh Language and Literature; French Language and Literature; German Language and Literature; and Music. (Trow and Brown, p. 24)

⁴⁵⁶ Trow and Brown, p. 53

⁴⁵⁷ SWIE, p. 86 and p. 88

industry and after the departure of Galloway the Mining Department struggled.⁴⁵⁸ Eventually in 1913 the Coal Owners became so frustrated at the failure of the University College that they opened their own South Wales and Monmouthshire School of Mines in Treforest: the following year they opened another mining school in Crumlin.⁴⁵⁹

Meanwhile, in contrast to the professionalisation of the technology of industry, was the start of a remarkable and, in some ways, unique working-class educational movement. Some of the roots of this movement lie partly in the Mechanics' Institutes which were established in 1823 in a public meeting which was held in a large room at the Crown and Anchor Tavern on the Strand. 2,000 people attended, most being working class – almost all of the trades active in London at the time were represented, from engineers, to barristers, to printers and painters.⁴⁶⁰ The idea of the Mechanics' Institutes was that they would provide scientific education for the working classes:

These institutions were entirely new: they were not established either to supplant or to supplement others that existed. For at that time the working-classes did not possess the same facilities as now, either for physical or mental improvement. In London, if a working-man wished to read a newspaper or borrow a book, almost the only places accessible to him were the public-house, where he must drink as well as read; or an insignificant circulating library where he would seldom find other works than novels.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁸ Trow and Brown, p. 55. The Metallurgy Department was more successful, especially when it was established in buildings on Newport Rd which were funded by the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coal Owners' Association.

⁴⁵⁹ Trow and Brown, pp. 53-4

⁴⁶⁰ Joseph Cowen, Mechanics' Institutions Cowen Tracts (1850), p. 4. Available at: <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/60202129>> [accessed 14 April 2010] Cowen was an English politician and journalist who identified himself with the mining community of the North East.

⁴⁶¹ Cowen, p. 2

The London Mechanics' Institute opened to 'the cheers of 2,000 enthusiastic mechanics... and the loud approval of the public press.'⁴⁶² Once started, the idea of the Mechanics' Institutes spread quickly and by 1826 many of the towns and cities of Britain had established an institution for the education of the working class (sometimes called a Mechanic's Institute and sometimes called a School of Arts).⁴⁶³ However, by the middle of the century many of the Mechanics' Institutes had been taken over by the middle classes—out of 204 institutes in 1849 only 43 were actually supported by mechanics.⁴⁶⁴ Cowen describes the state of many an institute library in 1850: 'In the library will be found not many mechanics taking out scientific books, but young men, clerks, shopkeepers, apprentices, etc inquiring for works of a lighter kind.'⁴⁶⁵ Royle adds that in England, 'the movement found, not an eager adult population, ready to learn the wonders of science, but a semi-literate population of youths, needing the most elementary education.'⁴⁶⁶

Nevertheless the Mechanics' Institutes became an established part of community life in Victorian Britain and their libraries provided a considerable resource to those communities. In 1850 some of the larger Mechanics' Institutes had libraries which contained over 10,000 volumes, while most held over 1,000 books in stock. The books held in these libraries were often diverse, thanks in part to the dependency of many institutes on donations from private collections. It quickly became obvious that the libraries could not be kept strictly scientific (as was

⁴⁶² Cowen, p. 5

⁴⁶³ Cowen, p. 5

⁴⁶⁴ Edward Royle, 'Mechanics' Institutes and the Working Classes, 1840-1860' *The Historical Journal* 14:2 (1971) 305-321 (p. 305)

⁴⁶⁵ Cowen, p. 7

⁴⁶⁶ Royle, pp. 308

originally intended) and although some rules declared that 'the committee shall not admit into the library, either by purchase or donation, any books of a political or theological nature, nor any novels or plays' these were frequently broken.⁴⁶⁷ The institute libraries, which had originally been intended to be entirely scientific, became general collections (about a fifth of the books were fiction). A report from the Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes found that the books which were most read were: 1. Fiction; 2. History; 3. Biography; 4. Voyages and Travels; 5. Periodicals.⁴⁶⁸ Although the Mechanics' Institutes ultimately failed in their purpose of providing a scientific education for the mechanics and operatives of Victorian industry they became a valuable resource which was a popular part of urban life in Victorian society, albeit one that was patronised by the middle class and distrusted by the working class.

Most of the historical work which has been conducted on the nineteenth century Mechanics' Institutes has concentrated on their development in England. There is scant, if any, work to date which has specifically looked at their development in Wales. What we do know has to be deduced from what is practically hearsay evidence; for example, E. T. Davies records that, 'A Mechanics' Institute was established in Dowlais in 1829, and the same town had a society where Welsh literature and history were studied.'⁴⁶⁹ This problem is by no means modern: in Kenrick's analysis of the statistics of the Parish of Trevethin (i.e. Pontypool and Blaenavon) which was published in 1841 he describes the Mechanics' Institute in

⁴⁶⁷ Cowen, p. 17

⁴⁶⁸ Cowen, pp. 17-18

⁴⁶⁹ E. T. Davies, pp. 142-3

Trevethin as the only one in the county of Monmouthshire and he believed that Swansea was the only town in Wales able to support its own Mechanics' Institute.⁴⁷⁰

As poor as it is, there is a record of institutes which were established from the 1840s by the industrial proletariat of South Wales to educate themselves. In 1846 Merthyr opened its first library and in 1850 a Literary and Scientific Institution was formed in Rhymney, which moved in 1858 to the National School which had been built by the Rhymney Iron Company. The Rhymney Literary and Scientific Institution was managed by the leading officials of the Company together with the local church and chapel ministers.⁴⁷¹

On Guy Fawkes Night of 1849 the Ebbw Vale Mutual Improvement Society was formed by a small group of local workmen and farmers who met at the Old Penuel Chapel, at the foot of Christ Church Hill (or Gin Shop Hill). The rules they agreed should included the establishment of a reading room and library and the holding of regular lectures on 'Topical and Technical' issues. In their Annual Report of 1851 the committee proudly announced that they had been able to make a number of periodicals available for use by the members, including Blackwood's Magazine, Illustrated London News, The Electric Review, The Working Man's Friend, British Controversialist, Monmouthshire Merlin, and The Hereford Times.⁴⁷² In 1852 the name was changed to the Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institute. Like many of

⁴⁷⁰ G. S. Kenrick, 'Statistics of the Population in the Parish of Trevethin (Pontypool) and at the Neighbouring Works of Blaenavon in Monmouthshire, chiefly employed in the Iron Trade, and inhabiting part of the District recently disturbed.' Journal of the Royal Statistical Society of London 3:4 (1841), 366-75 (p. 374). Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2337721> [accessed 5 May 2010]

⁴⁷¹ E. T. Davies, pp. 142-3

⁴⁷² Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institute: A History of a Hundred Years (Ebbw Vale: [printed by Hughes and Son, Griffin Press, Pontypool], 1949), p. 5-7

the English Mechanics' Institutes, the Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institute kept a collection of scientific models and fossils which became in time a substantial museum in its own right. The collection of fossils which were gathered from the working coal face was considered in the nineteenth century to be amongst the best in the country.⁴⁷³

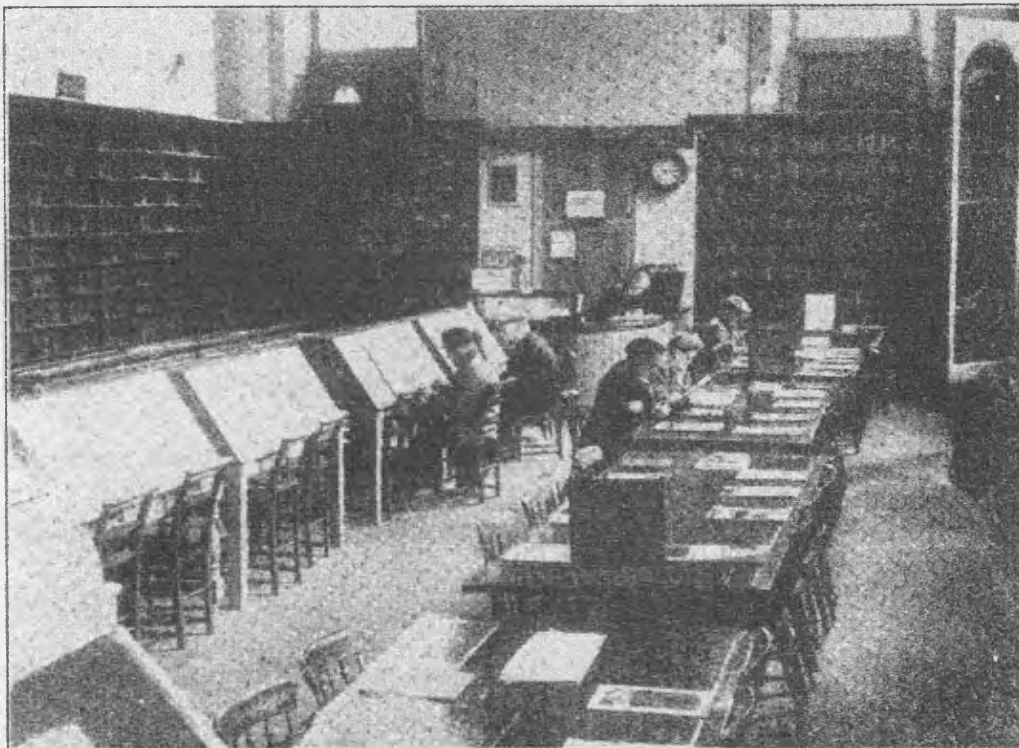


Figure 5.1 The Reading Room at Ebbw Vale (Source: *Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institute: A History of a Hundred Years* (Ebbw Vale: [printed by Hughes and Son, Griffin Press, Pontypool], 1949), p. 11)

The famous Tredegar Workmen's Hall (where the young Aneurin Bevan and

⁴⁷³ *Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institute*, p. 19 By the twentieth century most of this valuable material had been lost.

Archie Lush educated themselves after work) had more humble origins. In 1849 a library was formed by the leading citizens in Tredegar, including the ironmaster Samuel Homfray who acted as President. Although a reading-room followed, neither flourished, probably because the workers distrusted the motives of the ironmasters.⁴⁷⁴ In 1862 the Monmouthshire Merlin reported that 'This once flourishing institution, unless speedily resuscitated, will, before many months have elapsed, have become defunct.'⁴⁷⁵ The last probable report of this library comes from August 1869 when the Merthyr Express reported that: 'A library and reading room has lately been opened at the house of Mr T. Price at Old Bank where numerous books are lent and periodicals are laid upon the table for the use of subscribers.'⁴⁷⁶

In 1859 a local trader known as 'Cheap John', or 'Cheap Jack Reece' (John Reece) agitated amongst the workmen of Tredegar against the inn-keeping class and the drinking they encouraged. Cheap Jack Reece was so successful that, together with the local Nonconformists, he started a temperance movement in the town and in 1860 construction began on the Temperance Hall which was to be used for 'entertainment, instruction, and for the propagation of temperance.'⁴⁷⁷ Meanwhile, in 1877 the Tredegar Literary and Scientific Institute was formed and it brought to Tredegar some of the most eminent experts of the day to speak; however, in September 1890 the institute library, which contained 1,500 volumes, was failing and was reported to be in a state almost of 'complete ruin'. The response of the working-class was quick and in November 1890 union representatives of the steelworks,

⁴⁷⁴ D. J. Davies, The Tredegar Workmen's Hall, 1861-1951 (Tredegar: Tredegar Workmen's Institute Society, [1952?]), p. 22.

⁴⁷⁵ D. J. Davies, p. 23

⁴⁷⁶ D. J. Davies, p. 23

⁴⁷⁷ D. J. Davies, p. 23

furnaces, and collieries met in the Assembly Room of the Castle Hotel 'for the purpose of conferring together to establishing an Institute upon similar lines to that at Blaenavon.'⁴⁷⁸ The proposal was voted through with an overwhelming 80% support, and shortly afterwards the Tredegar Workmen's Hall was established.

In contrast to the more formal academic scientific institutions and the educational institutes were the Mutual Improvement Societies where skilled workers assisted the unskilled: 'they met in homes or whatever location was convenient, mainly providing instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, along with general discussion.'⁴⁷⁹ Many societies met in public houses, which in the nineteenth century were often a site of cultural activity and debate in the local community (from listening to a scientific lecture, taking part in a debate, or reading aloud from Shakespeare). Misunderstood as pits of debauchery and sin by the middle classes, many Victorian pubs became active centres for working-class communal education.⁴⁸⁰ In Wales many of the Miners' Libraries of the twentieth century started as collections of newspapers and periodicals which were stored in the front room of a miner's house or upstairs in the local pub. Many of these collections evolved into small reference and lending libraries, such as the reading room that was opened in Pontlotyn in 1867, closely followed by similar libraries in Abercynon and Nelson.⁴⁸¹ Although many of the coastal dock cities of South Wales opened public libraries in the latter half of the nineteenth century (many of which were funded by the

⁴⁷⁸ D. J. Davies, p. 48

⁴⁷⁹ Erin McLaughlin-Jenkins, 'Walking the low road: the pursuit of scientific knowledge in late Victorian working-class communities' *Public Understanding of Science* 12:2 (2003), 147-66 (p. 156)

⁴⁸⁰ McLaughlin-Jenkins, p. 157

⁴⁸¹ C. N. Baggs, 'The Miners' Institute Libraries of South Wales, 1875-1939', in *A Nation and Its Books* ed. by Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1998), 297-305 (p. 298).

philanthropy of the American industrialist Carnegie), the industrial communities of the coalfield relied instead on their own resources and used the well-stocked libraries of the Miners' Institutes which levied a charge on their users instead of drawing a tax on the local community as a whole.⁴⁸²

There is evidence to show that from the start the libraries and reading-rooms that the working class of South Wales established for themselves were well-stocked. In 1841 Kenrick described the books which the members of the Reading Society in Blaenavon voted should be bought and placed into circulation:

Natural History and Natural Philosophy, by Arnott; Connexion of the Physical Sciences, by Mrs Somerville; Chemistry, by Donovan; Steam-engine, by Lardner; Machinery and Manufactures, by Babbage; Introduction to the Sciences, Chambers' Edition; Locomotion, by Gordon; Commercial Power of Great Britain (Dupin); Constitution of Man (Combe); Natural Theology (Paley); Self-culture (Channing); Lives of Jackson, Bruce, Peter the Great, Columbus, Nelson, Napoleon; Poems of Milton, Burns, Scott, &c.⁴⁸³

These early Welsh libraries contrast significantly to those English Mechanics' Institutes which stocked what can only be called 'light' reading. In many of the coal communities in South Wales the first public institutions to be established were the chapels and pubs, followed closely by the libraries, which were built by the communities themselves. In the 1890s the purpose-built Miners' Institutes which incorporated 'libraries, meeting rooms, theatres, and even gymnasia and swimming pools' started to be built.⁴⁸⁴ Although they went on to become formidable organisations in their own right many of the twentieth-century, Workingmen's Institutes of South Wales had their origin in the libraries and reading-rooms of the

⁴⁸² Philip Henry Jones, p. 279

⁴⁸³ G. S. Kenrick, 'Statistics of the Population in the Parish of Trevethin (Pontypool)', p. 374.

⁴⁸⁴ C. M. Baggs, 'The Miners' Institute Libraries of South Wales, 1875-1939', p. 299.

nineteenth century.

5.4 The Victorian Print Industry

In 1840 many of the factors which were to make Western print capitalism such an important ideological instrument in the hands of the bourgeois State were in place. The Victorian print industry built on these technical developments so that at the end of the century the modern print industry as we now know it was more or less fully developed.

Experiments with the stereotype process can be dated as far back as the sixteenth-century in Holland⁴⁸⁵ but the first experiments to mechanise and perfect the process were conducted in Edinburgh in 1727. The stereotype process was finally perfected in Glasgow and the patent was awarded to the Glasgow printers Andrew Foulis and Alexander Tilloch who cast the master negative from plaster in 1784. The stereotype plate (also known as a cliché) takes a negative image from a typeset galley which can then be used to produce any number of positive metal plates for use on the press. At first unpopular, by 1840 the process was in use for larger print runs.⁴⁸⁶ As the plaster negative moulds were easily broken, the metal positive plates were instead kept in store. This was no small task:

According to Edward Cowper, in 1828, Clowes had on his premises between 700 and 800 tons of stereotype plates belonging to various booksellers. Their value was estimated at £200,000. In 1843, the stereotype department of the same firm contained plates “whose estimated value is not much less than half a million sterling! And even the plates, valued as old metal, are estimated at seventy thousand pounds!” Each single plate weighed about 7lb, and in all they were reckoned to weigh 2,500 tons. A single plate would print one page of a book, so

⁴⁸⁵ Plant, p. 299.

⁴⁸⁶ Plant, p. 302.

that a ton of them would print a complete book of 320 pages.⁴⁸⁷

The use of stereotype plates meant that it now became possible to increase the scale of the print run thanks to the ability to replace worn plates quickly with fresh: it also helped to reduce the costs and time taken in typesetting by hand. Technical development in the print industry has always had an immediate impact on literature and the use of stereotype was particularly important to the late development of the English novel. Poetry was easier to typeset by hand than prose because it did not require time-consuming justification of the line, it conformed to the ideal line length for typeset English (which is eight to nine words), and it would have placed less stress on the typeset because it was on the whole less dense on the page. The novel in contrast placed heavy demands upon both the compositor and the typeset, and until type started to be manufactured industrially in the nineteenth century the typesets would have quickly become worn. The English realist mode of fiction was enabled by a print industry which was for the first time able to supply the particularly heavy demands which the genre placed upon the press, and it was able to address a new mass audience which included a literate working class.⁴⁸⁸

The first whole-page stereotype plates of The Times were produced in 1857, and in 1860 the process of curving the plates for use on a rotary press was first used commercially when the The Times used them on their new Hoe rotary machines. The old vertical Applegath machines were now made obsolete by a press that was developed in America; however, the Hoe rotary presses were still hand-fed with paper, which slowed down the speed of the press considerably. In the 1860s considerably faster reel-fed rotary machines

⁴⁸⁷ Plant, p. 303.

⁴⁸⁸ The Victorian triple decker would have placed enormous strain on the more primitive print technology of the eighteenth century. So extreme would these demands have been that it is doubtful that these earlier presses could have produced realist novels even for an elite market, let alone a popular mass market.

began to be developed and in 1869 The Times was using four reel-fed Walter presses. These presses were capable of printing 10,000 8-page copies of a newspaper an hour, a considerable improvement over the earlier hand-fed Applegath presses which could only print 1,000 sheets of two-sided print an hour. By 1880 the new Walter presses were being installed in provincial newspaper offices. Folding equipment began to be fitted to the printing presses in 1870 and by 1885 they were being added to the Walter presses. When The Times eventually replaced their Walter presses with Hoe machines in 1895, the new machines were capable of printing, cutting, and folding 24,000 copies of the newspaper an hour.⁴⁸⁹

At the start of the Victorian era the British print industry faced two significant bottlenecks: the first was the availability of loose type and the second was the speed at which type could be set by hand.⁴⁹⁰ By 1850 there were eleven different inventions for the mass production of loose type, including one by Henry Bessemer (1838).⁴⁹¹ Hand composition from movable type was one of the worst bottlenecks which the print trade faced in the 1840s because of the natural limit to the speed of typesetting by hand from loose type, no matter how skilled the compositor. The first successful typesetting or composing machine to be used in this country was the Hattersley which was first used in 1866 in the offices of the Eastern Morning News in Hull.⁴⁹² by the 1890s they were in 'fairly general use.'⁴⁹³ The Hattersley was a cold-type composing machine: the type was stored in inclined channels and when selected from a keyboard the letter fell down another

⁴⁸⁹ Twyman, p. 55

⁴⁹⁰ Typesetting by hand has strict limits as to how much can be physically set: a hand compositor could typeset 2,000 ens or about 250 words an hour as compared to 10,000 ens an hour on a late nineteenth century mechanical compositor (Twyman, p. 48).

⁴⁹¹ Plant, p. 292

⁴⁹² Twyman, p. 61

⁴⁹³ Plant, p. 284

channel from which it was assembled into the galleys ready for the printer.

What sounds like a good idea in theory was from the start problematic in practice and the Hattersley machines never worked smoothly: dust, broken or twisted type, and any number of other issues all caused delay and breakdown. It was said that an operator of a Hattersley machine needed two qualifications: 'he must be endowed with a good patience, and also be a downright honest swearer... the first named is difficult to acquire, but the latter is easily managed. Contact with the machine teaches it.'⁴⁹⁴ Nobody expected the Hattersley to survive for long because of its unreliability, yet it was popular in provincial newspaper offices and in 1915 a Hattersley was still in use in the offices of the South Wales Daily News.⁴⁹⁵ In the 1890s the unreliable cold-type composing machines were replaced by the more reliable hot-type Linotype and Monotype machines which were introduced from America, these hot-type machines dominated the pre-press operations of many printers and newspapers until the arrival of computerised typesetting in the 1980s.⁴⁹⁶ One of the benefits of hot-type machines was that they were able to justify the line of type, a process which until this point had been slow and labour intensive; it was, however, their speed and reliability which transformed both the print industry and the literature which it was able to produce.

As Victorian production in the print and textile industries grew rapidly, it quickly outstripped the supply of natural pigments. In retrospect, natural pigments were always going to be superseded by synthetic dyes: production of natural pigments is lengthy and labour-intensive; hence, they are always expensive and in limited supply; they are difficult

⁴⁹⁴ Plant, p. 285

⁴⁹⁵ Twyman, p. 61

⁴⁹⁶ Twyman, p. 60

to make colour-fast; and they will always tend to be inconsistent in quality. The solution to this limit on mass production was to come, ironically, from a by-product of the gas and coke industries – in short, from the coal industry. In 1856 the young William H. Perkin had been experimenting with a synthetic organic ‘base’ to produce the natural alkaloid quinine under the direction of Professor Hoffman (who had been working on the organic chemistry of coal tar and naphtha). After yet another failed experiment Perkin was cleaning out a dirty flask when he noticed that the thick black tar turned purple in the presence of a mild acid.⁴⁹⁷ Perkin made his discovery during the Easter vacation of 1856: by August 26th he had taken out a patent for the production of mauveine.⁴⁹⁸ Perkin’s mauveine became the first commercially available synthetic dye of the nineteenth century.

The synthetic dye industry was able to fill the gap in the supply of dyes quickly: it was estimated that in Britain in 1884 the annual consumption of the red-orange synthetic alizarin dye alone was 6,360 tons.⁴⁹⁹ Yet despite this success, in 1880 the British dye industry began to collapse rapidly and by 1886 90 percent of the dyes used in Britain were produced abroad (predominantly in Germany),⁵⁰⁰ despite being produced from coal-tar and naphtha which was produced and exported from the British coal industry. A number of reasons were put forward for this collapse in the early British chemical industry, but Perkin himself pointed out that Germany had been able to establish a chemical industry which

⁴⁹⁷ W. H. Perkin, ‘The Aniline or Coal-Tar Colours’, in The British Coal-Tar Industry: Its origin, development, and decline ed. by Walter M. Gardner (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott; and London: Williams & Norgate, 1915), 1-45 (p. 5) [originally published as ‘Cantor Lectures’, Journal of the Society of Arts (1868), 99-121].

⁴⁹⁸ W. H. Perkin, ‘The Colouring Matters Produced from Coal-Tar’, in The British Coal-Tar Industry ed. by Gardner, 75-105 (p. 76) [originally published as ‘Presidential Address, Society of Chemical Industries (1885)’, Journal of the Society of Chemical Industries (1885)].

⁴⁹⁹ R. Meldola, ‘The Scientific Development of the Coal-Tar Industry’ in The British Coal-Tar Industry ed. by Gardner, 121-40 (p. 134) [originally published in the Journal of the Society of Arts (1886)].

⁵⁰⁰ R. Meldola, ‘The History of the Coal-Tar Colour Industry Between 1870 and 1885’ in The British Coal-Tar Industry ed. by Gardner, 228-31 (p. 228) [originally published in the Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists (1905)].

placed more value upon their research chemists and fostered theoretical chemistry, while in Britain it was not unusual for skilled chemists to be paid the same wage as a bricklayer.⁵⁰¹

The obstacles to a mass capitalist print culture were rapidly eliminated in the nineteenth century: new web-fed letterpresses (1869), offset printing machines (1824), lithography (1854), the arrival and revival of types (1840), mechanical typesetting (1838), new typographical layouts (1840s), new synthetic inks (1860s), wood-pulp paper (1850s), new composing machines (1866), half-tone prints which could be produced from photographs (1881), and finally the arrival of offset-litho machines which used a metal plate (1903). In the space of roughly two generations, the trade had changed beyond all recognition. The age-old problem of distribution had been eliminated by the arrival of rail, and this in turn made the novel available to a new mass audience. The industry could now produce cheap popular novels that could be distributed quickly and cheaply to the market.

As the means of production changed, so did the social relations of production. The age of the artisan printer who had worked more or less alone (such as Zachariah Morris and the Rev. John Jenkins) was well and truly over. Following the transitional crisis at the end of the Industrial Revolution, the print industry transferred production to the factory system: this change in the social relations of production was enabled by the technological development of the process of print. Before the industrialisation of the print trade, large print firms had little or no advantage over the smaller artisan presses; for example, on 1 April 1828 Jacob Unwin wrote in his diary, 'Very busy; five men at work.'⁵⁰² Despite the depression in the print trade at the start of the nineteenth century most printers before the 1840s would normally have employed only forty compositors and pressmen to run at most

⁵⁰¹ Perkin, 'The Colouring Matters Produced from Coal-Tar', p. 104

⁵⁰² Plant, p. 357

nine presses.⁵⁰³

Following the transition at the end of the Industrial Revolution the print trade industrialised. In 1840 the firm of Clowes had nineteen Applegath and Cowper steam-presses, twenty-three hand-presses, and five hydraulic presses which were printing books, magazines, and other periodical literature.⁵⁰⁴ To run these machines, a factory had been built. At the centre was an engine-room and a machine-house for the steam-presses; around these were several large buildings which contained composing-rooms, readers' rooms, type-making shops, stereotyping shops, paper warehouses, hand-printing shops, machine-printing shops, wood-block and stereotype-plate stores. The type which was available to the compositors at Clowes weighed about 80,000 lb and the stock in the paper warehouse averaged 7,000 reams (about a month's supply).⁵⁰⁵ The type which Clowes used for the catalogue of the Great Exhibition in 1851 weighed over fifty tons.⁵⁰⁶ Two hundred men worked in the firm's composing-rooms alone. Although these large firms are not representative of the entire industry, even the smaller Victorian printers employed twenty to thirty workers.⁵⁰⁷ The social relations of production in the Victorian print industry had changed completely with the changes to the technology of print.

The effects of the development of the capitalist mass production of print were particularly felt in literature. In England the effect of the transition was to elevate the novel and the newspaper to dominance. In Wales the transition enabled new modes of discourse to be deployed for the first time.

⁵⁰³ Plant, p. 356

⁵⁰⁴ Plant, p. 357 Plant adds that none of the machines were dedicated to a particular work, although this has to be questioned given that the nineteen steam-presses would have been more suited to volume production than the hand-presses which were more suited to jobbing or book work.

⁵⁰⁵ Plant, p. 358

⁵⁰⁶ Twyman, p. 50

⁵⁰⁷ Plant, pp. 357-9

5.5 *The Print Culture of Victorian Wales*

The Victorian era was one of the most productive and profitable periods in the history of the Welsh print trade, due principally to the expansion of the Welsh coal industry in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire.⁵⁰⁸ Ifano Jones's History of Printing and Printers in Wales includes two sections, the second entitled A History of Printing and Printers in Monmouthshire to 1923. All but four of the twenty-one Monmouthshire towns which are included in this section are in the industrial coalfield; most are iron towns along the northern edge of the coalfield (from Rhymney, Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, to Blaenau).⁵⁰⁹ In this section I will look at the context and production of the Victorian printing and publishing trades in Wales.

At the end of the Victorian era the majority of the one-million Welsh-speaking population of Wales had been born and bred in the industrial areas.⁵¹⁰ The English language still largely followed the pattern of English settlement within Wales which has typically been found in South Pembrokeshire, the Vale of Glamorgan, and along the Clwyd coast. In the coalfield the south tended to become more Anglicised while the north remained largely Welsh speaking and of Welsh origin, a pattern which is as true in Monmouthshire as it is in Glamorgan.⁵¹¹ It is of little surprise that this large industrial population, which was instilled with a strong self-education ethos and which had the ability to organise itself effectively,

⁵⁰⁸ See, for example: Tim Williams, 'The Anglicisation of South Wales', p. 195.

⁵⁰⁹ Ifano Jones, pp. 215-85

⁵¹⁰ Brinley Thomas, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Welsh Language', in Modern South Wales ed. by Baber, 6-21 (p. 21).

⁵¹¹ For example, in his brief analysis in 1959 Roland Jones found that the industrial populations of Rhymney, Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, and Brynmawr can be traced to an origin in South and West Wales (in particular, the Central Welsh moorlands). See Roland Jones, 'Racial Relationships in South Wales' Man 59 (1959) 45-46 Available at: <http://jstor.org/stable/2796177> [accessed 13 December 2009].

became a large consumer of Welsh print. So large in fact was the demand for Welsh-language print in parts of the Victorian era that for a while several London and Scottish publishers sought to profit from the Welsh-language book trade. From 1865 Hughes & Sons in Wrexham were having their higher-status books printed in London and Scotland because the demand for Welsh books had outstripped their productive capacity.⁵¹²

Welsh-language publishing reached a peak between 1860 and 1890, due in no small part to the development of the steam-coal industry in the valleys of the South Wales coalfield. Tim Williams describes this moment:

Up until the 1870s the coalfield's demands for labour were being met by migrants from other parts of Wales. Fleeting, this massive movement of people formed a Welsh-speaking industrial labour force, with the resources to support sophisticated and costly vernacular publishing ventures of a sort unrealisable in rural societies. In other words, the Welsh, through industrialisation, were colonising their own country.⁵¹³

Just how significant the demand from this industrial workforce was can be seen from some of the production run figures for Welsh-language books in this period:

Cheap items were often produced in large editions: 70,000 copies of a 16-page penny almanac in 1877, 27,000 copies of a 1s. 6d English-Welsh letter writer between 1870 and 1898, 10,000 copies of most titles in Thomas Gee's cheap Sunday-school series, *Cyfres yr Ysgol Sabbothol* during the 1870s. From the 1860s onwards, shilling volumes of verse could sell in large numbers—Hughes printed 17,500 copies of the third collection of verse by Richard Davies, *Mynyddog*, between 1877 and 1899, including two impressions of 5,000 in 1877. More expensive works were riskier: Gee ventured to print 3,000 copies of the third edition of William Owen Pughe's two-volume Dictionary in the late 1860s and early 1870s for sale at 30s, but 1,000 remained unsold in 1903.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹² Philip Henry Jones, 'Scotland and the Welsh-Language Book Trade during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century' in *The Human Face of the Print Trade* ed. by Peter Isaac and Barry McKay (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1999), 117-136 (pp. 128-9).

⁵¹³ Tim Williams, 'The anglicisation of South Wales', p. 195.

⁵¹⁴ Philip Henry Jones, 'A Golden Age Reappraised: Welsh-Language Publishing in the Nineteenth Century', in *Images & Texts: Their Production and Distribution in the 18th and 19th Centuries* ed. by Peter Isaac and Barry McKay (Winchester: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1997), 121-41 (p. 122).

The immediate appearance is of a native print industry which was thriving thanks to the booming growth in the industrial communities in the coalfield.

Yet, although the Welsh print industry in the Victorian era reached something of a zenith, it still suffered from a number of serious structural defects which it inherited, and which still affect the modern Welsh publishing industry. Although there was no shortage of printers who were also acting as publishers in Victorian Wales, they were still acting for the most part as local suppliers of a local market (despite the national characteristics of significant parts of the Welsh newspaper trade there was only an undeveloped national market). The earlier complete dominance of Nonconformity over the Welsh print industry still meant that religious publishing acted as a constraint on the trade. Ieuan Gwynedd (a former minister) in 1850 complained that the excessive production of ‘thousands of sermons that are nothing but jabbering, and thousands of elegies worth less than the braying of an ass’ had been at the neglect of work on other subjects such as the sciences and the arts so that ‘the study of useful knowledge is postponed until several days after the millennium.’⁵¹⁵

Most Welsh authors in the nineteenth century continued to publish their own work: in part to maximise their profits, in part because publishers concentrated on commercial work, and in part because the authors did not trust publishers who wanted to purchase their copyright outright. Consequently, authorship in Wales tended to remain a part-time amateur occupation.⁵¹⁶

One of the biggest problems that Welsh publishers faced in the nineteenth century

⁵¹⁵ ‘A Golden Age Reappraised’, p. 126

⁵¹⁶ ‘A Golden Age Reappraised’, p. 129 and p. 130

was distribution. There was little if any retail book trade which was available to be used by Welsh printers as a means to get their books to market. Welsh printers tended to rely instead on itinerant canvassers and deliverers to distribute their output (not all of whom were entirely honest or trustworthy).⁵¹⁷ The unscrupulous itinerant Bible seller whom Caradoc Evans describes in 'Be This Her Memorial' was a well known hazard of Welsh life in the nineteenth century.⁵¹⁸ When he gave evidence to the Aberdare Committee, Charles Hughes of Wrexham described how there had been no means of distribution for Welsh books until the 1860s when he had created a network of people to distribute the work, but even at this point Wales lacked a central wholesaling service for Welsh books and each printer/publisher acted independently.⁵¹⁹ This lack of distribution would have placed Welsh publishers at a distinct disadvantage in a period when English publishers were distributing their books through new outlets and were able to take advantage of the new railway market.

Welsh books in the Victorian period were still being distributed for the most part through old and somewhat antiquated distribution networks. Many Welsh-language books were sold on Sundays in Nonconformist chapels, or by itinerant booksellers, and although booksellers such as David Davies in Ferndale had started to develop in the Victorian period, the Welsh literature that they carried was still very localised and few carried a good stock.⁵²⁰ In 1861 the Llanelly printer, the Rev. David Rees (who, in partnership with John Williams, published the Independents' monthly magazine Y Diwigiwr) spoke in defence of the system of bookselling through the Nonconformist chapels:

⁵¹⁷ 'Scotland and the Welsh Language Book Trade', p. 128

⁵¹⁸ Caradoc Evans, 'Be This Her Memorial', in My People (London: Andrew Melrose, 1915; repr. Bridgend: Seren, 1987), 108-12

⁵¹⁹ 'A Golden Age Reappraised', pp. 131-2

⁵²⁰ 'A Golden Age Reappraised', p. 134

Undoubtedly, that which is now denounced has preserved our dear country from the vortex of atheism into which the common people of England have fallen... Emerson, Carlyle, Thackeray, Dickens, Holyoake, and their kind, reign over the thoughts of millions... Wales so far has been preserved from such a terrible curse because the press has been linked to the pulpit, and because one has supported the other, and because the sanctuary has been thought to be an appropriate place to distribute religious books under the supervision of the ministers and churches. So far no atheistic, sceptical, fictional, distasteful, or filthy book has been allowed to appear in our dear language, and the gwerin of Wales has been preserved by its language to a great extent and by the pure literature to which it is accustomed from the mental rubbish of fiction, atheism, and filth of the English press.⁵²¹

David Rees in this quotation convincingly answers my original research question about the absent Welsh novel: until the 1860s the novel in Wales faced such fierce opposition from Welsh Nonconformity, which controlled both the means of production and the means of distribution, that with the exception of Twm Shon Catti, it was impossible for it to have developed. The Welsh novel began to emerge from the twilight as the control of Nonconformity over Welsh cultural life started to decline from the 1860s. In 1885 Daniel Owen's novel Rhys Lewis was published, as early as 1888 an English-language translation was published.⁵²² Ironically, Rhys Lewis can be read as essentially a Welsh Calvinist-Methodist novel, something which would have been a complete abhorrence to an earlier generation of Nonconformists such as David Rees.

Most of the literature relating to industry was in the south. The rapid development of the South Wales steam-coal trade generated a new mining literature: text-books and mining manuals, academic and trade journals, not to mention the large amount of documentation such as underground maps and financial accounts

⁵²¹ Quoted in 'A Golden Age Reappraised', p. 133

⁵²² Daniel Owen, Hunangofiant Rhys Lewis, Gweinidog Bethel (Wrexham: Hughes and Son, 1885). For more details of the English-language translation see Daniel Owen, Rhys Lewis, Minister of Bethel: An Autobiography trans. by James Harris (Wrexham: Hughes and Son, 1888)

which grew around every colliery. The technical literature of coal-mining in South Wales which was written to answer the needs of this large new industry started to be published comparatively early, such as William Fairley's Glossary of the Terms Used in the Coal-Mining Districts of South Wales, Bristol and Somersetshire (1868).⁵²³ As implied by the title of Fairley's glossary, the coal industry also impacted upon the language which was used in South Wales. As we will shortly see, by the middle of the nineteenth century, Welsh publishers had given themselves something of a problem as they had almost exclusively concentrated on printing spiritual work in Welsh which was more often than not sold through local chapels. The Welsh miners had to turn for their technical and educational literature to English publishers, who inevitably published their work in the English language. The Welsh miners were forced to learn the language of the English in order to carry out their work safely and to advance themselves and the industry as a whole, if only because this technical literature was not being published by the Welsh print trade. Meanwhile, the local newspapers also carried a large variety of mining literature, from accounts of public inquests into accidents and explosions, to the daily gossip of industrial towns like Tredegar, to the narratives, songs, and poetry written underground by the colliers at the pit face. It is largely these nineteenth-century mining discourses which entered the twentieth-century Welsh industrial novel. The iron and steel industries which lacked this distinctive discursive structure never really entered the literary imagination in Wales.

⁵²³ William Fairley (Mining Engineer), Glossary of the Terms Used in the Coal-Mining District of South Wales, and Bristol and Somersetshire (London: W. M. Hutching (The 'Colliery Guardian' Office), 1868; repr. Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2009)

By the 1890s the peak of Welsh-language publishing had been reached and it had started a long, slow decline that was not reversed for nearly a century. This decline happened despite the large numbers of Welsh-speakers in the coalfield areas of South Wales and Monmouthshire (in the 1911 Census there were about a million Welsh-speakers, the highest number recorded).⁵²⁴ The causes for the decline in Welsh publishing could be said to have been almost completely internal. The problems only became more acute with the emergence of a generation that, unlike its predecessors, was now mobile thanks to the development of one of the world's most densely built rail networks. Publishing in Wales had remained a localised and largely amateur industry, authors tended to distrust publishers (perhaps with good reason) and instead published their own work, and there was an almost complete lack of a means of distribution.⁵²⁵ But I would suggest that the main reason why Welsh-language publishing begun to decline was that it failed to supply market demand: even at the end of the century spiritual publishing still dominated the Welsh printing presses. Welsh cultural life re-centred in the Victorian period from the countryside which was still dominated by the gentry to the new prosperous industrial areas which were less socially polarised than the Welsh countryside had been. In the Welsh countryside there were only two classes (the gentry and the tenant farmers), but in the industrial areas a whole new range of classes developed: from coal and royalty owners, to the new middle class professionals (surgeons, managers, shop-keepers), to the new industrial proletariat which was beginning to organise.⁵²⁶ While this new social organisation had begun to develop in Wales quite early, its development was given new force by the development of

⁵²⁴ Philip Henry Jones, "'Business is Awful Bad in these Parts': New Evidence for the Pre-1914 Decline of the Welsh-Language Book Trade", in *The Mighty Engine: The Printing Press and its Impact* ed. by Peter Isaac and Barry McKay (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 2000), 33-42 (p. 33)

⁵²⁵ 'A Golden Age Reappraised', p. 129

⁵²⁶ Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, *The Dynamics of Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales press, 1971), p. 21-5

the coal industry. As much of Welsh society re-centred on industrial South Wales the printers and publishers moved with it. Following the 1860s, the Welsh press was no longer simply a means of educating a small rural elite but it had started to become central to Welsh cultural and political life: little wonder, then, that the old spiritual dominance of the Welsh presses had become so disabling.

The 1860s were a great turning point in Welsh history: the growth in the coal industry was starting to dominate Welsh economic life and, following the repeal of the Tax on Knowledge in 1854, and Gladstone's repeal of the tax on paper in 1861 a new structural element entered Welsh life—the newspaper displaced the old denominational magazines and became the dominant cultural form in Victorian Wales. By the end of the 1860s practically every industrial town in Wales had its own printer who was producing a newspaper. The importance of the arrival of newsprint in Wales cannot be overstated: for the first time remote rural and industrial communities which had been isolated from each other were able to communicate with each other and something of a national 'gwerin' began to be formed. Even in the industrial south, the geography of the coalfield is such that each valley is more or less isolated from its neighbour.⁵²⁷ The development of a Welsh newspaper industry which had a strong radical tradition meant that the idea of Wales as a nation could begin to be formed, and in the south the newspapers were able to transform isolated working-class communities into a powerful and well-organised industrial proletariat.

Between 1800 and 1900 over five hundred newspaper titles were produced in

⁵²⁷ In the north of the South Wales coalfield there was more communication between the industrial iron settlements than has previously been taken into account. Rhymney, Tredegar, and Ebbw Vale were more closely connected, for example, than Senghenydd, Llanbradach, and Bedwas in the south.

Wales. The vast majority of these new titles were short-lived and produced in the latter half of the century. In the 1840s 35% of the newspapers published in Wales were Welsh-language titles, but just a decade later in the 1850s this figure had fallen to 25%.⁵²⁸ These statistics could be a little misleading as most English-language newspapers (such as the Tredegar Times) carried some stories, letters, or articles in Welsh and many Welsh-language newspapers carried English-language letters and advertisements; often the same writers would write for both the English and Welsh language press. Much English-language news in the Welsh Victorian newspapers was bought-in already typeset on stereotype flanges from the English news-agencies, and this news was filled out with local reports. The consequence was that much Welsh reporting was reduced to the involvement of local amateur correspondents who were paid by the line.⁵²⁹ Success in the newspaper trade in Victorian Wales came thanks to the development of the railways and the emergence of a new, literate, and educated market in the rapidly developing industrial communities of the coalfield. Whereas it had once been an expensive preserve of a small rural elite, the press now became central to a new economic, cultural, and political life which was being formed on the backs of the colliers underground.

Many of the early newspapers and magazines were denominational, such as:

Cyfrinach y Bedyddwyr [The Secret Baptist] (Merthyr and Maesycwmwr, 1827), Gedeon: neu, Ddiwgiwr Wesleyaidd [Gideon: or, the Wesleyan Reformer] (Aberystwyth, 1853-4; and, Tredegar, 1855), Yr Athraw [The Teacher, a Welsh Sunday-school monthly] (Merthyr, 1827-1829; and, Pontypool, 1829-1830),⁵³⁰ Y Bedyddiwr [The Baptist] (Cardiff 1834-

⁵²⁸ Aled Jones, 'The Welsh Newspaper Press', in A Guide to Welsh Literature, c. 1800-1900 ed. by Hywel Teifi Edwards (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 1-23 (p. 5)

⁵²⁹ Aled Jones, p. 10

59),⁵³¹ Yr Ymgeisydd [The Candidate] (Ebbw Vale, 1861-62), and Y Tyst Cymreig [The Welsh Witness] (Liverpool, 1867).⁵³² Meanwhile, many of the early Welsh newspapers were published in the radical tradition, so radical that a number of the early Welsh newspapers were monitored for the British government by paid agents and volunteers drawn from the Tory magistrates and clergy, who sent translations of the newspapers to the Home Office.⁵³³ In 1835 Robert Jones of Bangor published a satirical English-language newspaper, Figaro in Wales. The caricatures and satire of the Figaro in Wales were so 'scurrilous' that Lewis Evan Jones in Caernarfon published the Anti-Figaro (1835) in response. Ifano Jones records that eventually the two editors became so abusive towards each other that the officers of the Law closed both papers.⁵³⁴ Meanwhile, in the south there were a number of newspapers which supported Chartism. In Newport John Frost, Etheridge, Partridge and a number of other local radicals published The Newport and Monmouthshire Register (1822). In 1839 the short lived Chartist newspaper, The Western Vindicator was published in Bristol. Following the failure of the insurrection in Newport the Chartists Morgan Williams and David John in 1840 started in Merthyr the Welsh-language newspaper Udgorn Cymru [The Trumpet of Wales] together with a short lived

⁵³⁰ Yr Athraw was printed in Pontypool by William Rowlands, who was described as a travelling missionary. In the summer of 1830 William Rowlands bought shares in a coal-pit in Blackwood, but was later bankrupted after moving to Blackwood to run his colliery and manage two shops. On 6 August 1836 he arrived in New York and there took charge of the Utica Welsh Calvinistic-Methodist Church. From 1838 he published the monthly Cyfaill o'r Hen Wlad yn America: sef, Cylchgrawn o wybodaeth fuddiol i'r Cymry [Friend of the Old Country in America: namely, the Journal of useful information for the Welsh], which ceased publication in 1933. See, Ifano Jones, p. 219.

⁵³¹ Y Bedyddiwr was a Baptist monthly that was first published in Cardiff by Llewelyn Jenkins, the son of Shōni Shincyn. It was originally published as Greal y Bedyddwyr [The Baptist Grail] (1834-37), next came Ystorfa Weinidogaethol [Ministerial Repository] (1838-41), then came Y Cenhadydd [*sic.*] [The Mission] (1841-42), finally Y Gwir Fedyddiwr [Baptist Truth] (1842-44) was renamed Y Bedyddiwr in 1844. See, Ifano Jones, p. 269.

⁵³² This list has been based upon the information contained in the Newsplan catalogues. I have cross-checked and corrected the errors in the Newsplan list using a number of sources (Ifano Jones included), and have added the location of the presses. Beti Jones, Report of the NEWSPLAN Project in Wales (London and Aberystwyth: British Library and the National Library of Wales, 1994).

⁵³³ Beti Jones, NEWSPLAN, p. 41

⁵³⁴ Ifano Jones, p. 67

English-language newspaper The Advocate and Merthyr Free Press to propagate Chartist principles.⁵³⁵ Once again the British government feared sedition in Wales and sections of Udgorn Cymru were translated and sent to the Home Office together with those of another Merthyr newspaper, Y Gweithiwr [The Workman] (1834).⁵³⁶

The rapid development of the newspaper in the Welsh print trade brought with it a new sort of printer. Whereas previously Welsh printers had been uniformly Nonconformist and reliant on the jobbing trade, a new more professional printer emerged to supply the needs of the new literature. George Jenkin Jacobs was representative of this new generation of professional printers. Jacobs was born in Whitland (Carmarthenshire) in 1837 but was apprenticed in the office of the newspaper Y Diwigiwr in Llanelli at the age of 12 (instead of serving his apprenticeship in Carmarthen, as had the previous generation of Welsh printers). In 1857 Jacobs moved to Cardiff, working first for John Young Walters, whose printing office was located in the front room of his house (22 Great Frederick Street), and then for Henry Webber in the office of the Cardiff & Merthyr Guardian. A year later Jacobs was working on Y Gwron Cymreig [The Welsh Hero], and Y Gweithiwr in the office of J. T. Jones in Aberdare. In 1865 Jacobs was working for Peter Williams in the office of the Merthyr Telegraph, but later in the same year he left Merthyr during a printers' strike in the town. He next worked in Newport in the office of the Star of Gwent but in 1868 he returned to Merthyr to work for Rees Lewis who was about to launch the weekly paper Y Fellten [The Lightning].

In 1870 Jacobs published his first newspaper, The Tredegar Telegraph, from his own printing office in Rhymney. In 1883, after expanding his printing office a number of

⁵³⁵ Walter T. Morgan, 'Chartism and Industrial Unrest in South Wales in 1842', p. 1

⁵³⁶ Beti Jones, NEWSPLAN, p. 41

times, Jacobs bought a treadle machine and renamed the office as ‘The Minerva Printing Works.’ In 1886 Jacobs published an eight-page weekly newspaper The Tredegar Guardian, Ebbw Vale, Rhymney, Brynmawr, Blaina, & West Monmouth Advertiser (the newspaper ceased publication early in 1887). In 1896 the firm of G. J. Jacobs & Co. (George Jacobs had taken his two sons into the firm) published the first issue of an eight-page newspaper called The West Monmouth Guardian: by the eighth issue the title had already grown to The Monmouth Guardian (Rhymney), with which is incorporated the New Tredegar Herald, Bargoed and Caerphilly Observer, Tredegar Leader, and Rhymney Valley Counsellor. By the start of the twentieth century the firm of G. J. Jacobs had a modern printing office located in a large purpose-built factory known as the ‘Victoria Building’ that housed the latest equipment (including a monotype typesetter) which was supplied with electricity.⁵³⁷

A number of patterns can be identified in the biography of George Jenkin Jacobs: the earlier generation of printers had relied almost entirely on the jobbing trade and had only produced other work coincidentally (e.g. Shoni Shincyn), but the Victorian printer in Wales was for the most part involved in the newspaper trade. Towards the end of the century a period of merger and consolidation in the Welsh newspaper trade had begun (as evidenced in the extended new title which Jacobs gave to The Monmouth Guardian); the artisan’s printing office had given way to well-equipped printing works and factories; and, perhaps most importantly of all, the printing trade had re-centred on the steam-coal industry in the south of the country.

In 1867 Aberdare claimed that ‘what we think today, Wales will think tomorrow.’

⁵³⁷ Ifano Jones, pp. 282-3

Ieuan Gwynedd Jones suggested that this was no idle boast: Aberdare like Merthyr, Swansea, Caernarfon, and Denbigh had become provincial capitals thanks to their presses and newspapers.⁵³⁸ Aberdare in particular became one of the largest centres for the Welsh print trade, displacing the old centre in Carmarthen, and the majority of the literature which it produced was published in Welsh. The story of print in Aberdare begins when the Rev. Josiah Thomas Jones (the radical printer of the second edition of Prichard's Twm Shôn Catti) moved his press there from Carmarthen in 1854. As we saw earlier,⁵³⁹ J. T. Jones had already moved his press a number of times, including a move to Cowbridge from Merthyr after Jones claimed to have been forced out of the town by the ironmasters for establishing several uncompromisingly radical newspapers there in 1836. Jones resurrected one of his earlier radical newspapers in Carmarthen in 1852: Y Gwron Cymreig a Chyhoeddydd Cyffredinol i Dywysogaeth Cymru [The Welsh Hero and General Advertiser for the Principality of Wales].

In the first editorial article, the editor of Y Gwron claimed that, 'We shall attack nothing—except oppression, deception and disorder': the newspaper was consciously anti-Tory, anti-coal owner, and anti-Established Church.⁵⁴⁰ In April 1854 Jones moved from Carmarthen to industrial Aberdare, and he took his newspaper with him. In 1855 Jones had been joined by an editor (Rev. Dr. Thomas Price, a leading Baptist minister and politician) and an assistant editor (Rev. John Davies, a radical Congregationalist) and taking advantage of the end of the Stamp Act he increased the paper's circulation to weekly from

⁵³⁸ Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, The Dynamics of Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Wales: An Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth on 20 January 1971 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1971), p. 29. I am indebted for this quotation to Brynley F. Roberts who used it in his paper 'Printing at Aberdare, 1854-1974' (see below for full reference). Roberts slightly misquotes by placing emphasis on Aberdare, which is why I have used the original here.

⁵³⁹ Chapter 4 - '4.5 The second edition of Twm Shôn Catti: Cowbridge, 1839', pp. 129-30

⁵⁴⁰ Brynley F. Roberts, 'Printing at Aberdare, 1854-1974', The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society s5-XXXIII:2 (1978), 125-142 (pp. 127-8)

fortnightly. Y Gwron was a national paper and Brynley Roberts (using Jones's account and note books) reports that the paper was circulated through agents and distributors in Glamorgan, the Swansea valley, Monmouthshire, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, and Brecknockshire, but with typically few if any in North Wales (there was at that time very little, if any, cultural or literary cross fertilisation between the south and north of Wales). Roberts reports that bundles of papers would be made up for distribution (probably via rail). In the rural areas the bundles could be as small as two dozen copies while in the industrial south-east bundles of one hundred to one hundred and fifty copies were not uncommon. J. T. Jones used the same distribution network for his books, but added a number of individuals who distributed his books through the chapels. In addition to the newspapers which Jones published he also sold collections of poetry (including some written by his workmen who were also popular poets), political pamphlets, religious works, ballads, popular songs, topical poems on pit accidents, humorous verses, and a 680-page Welsh biographical dictionary Y Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol (which was published in several volumes over three years, much like Shoni Shincyn's Esponiad).⁵⁴¹

In 1858 Y Gwladgarwr: cofnodydd llenyddiaeth, gwleidyddiaeth, newyddion tramor a cartrefol [The Patriot: Recorder of Literature, Politics, Foreign and Domestic News] was published by William Morris (the local postmaster) and Walter Lloyd (a native of Carmarthen). Unlike Y Gwron, the 8 page weekly paper Y Gwladgarwr was deliberately popular and contained features of general interest, such as the Worker's College; Biographical Corner; Literary News; Poetry Column; Notes from America, Patagonia, South Africa; and, News from London and Liverpool.⁵⁴² In 1858 Jones's assistant editor

⁵⁴¹ Brynley Roberts, p. 128

⁵⁴² Brynley Roberts, p. 129

moved to the new popular paper and relationship between both papers, ‘deteriorated into libellous mud-slinging as the dirty linen was washed publicly and weekly.’⁵⁴³

In 1858 Jones changed Y Gwron to a tabloid format and launched a new paper, Y Gweithiwr [The Worker] to try to respond to the more professional journalism of Y Gwladgarwr. Y Gweithiwr was a lighter paper and included features such as a serialised novel and family corner ‘to enlighten, instruct and entertain the working class.’⁵⁴⁴ In 1861 Jones launched a new paper, The Aberdare Times, which was started as an English-language Welsh national paper. By the end of the century national news was being covered by the London and Cardiff papers and The Aberdare Times was forced to cover local news in order to survive. In 1902 it had a weekly circulation of only 3,200 copies.⁵⁴⁵ In 1871 Jones published the short lived Y Tŵr [The Tower] a fortnightly eight-page religious and family newspaper. Following Jones’s death in 1873, the press was continued by his widow and son until it finally closed in 1908. Jones’s contribution to Welsh literature is not insubstantial and the catalogue of Cardiff University library lists a total of ninety-two entries for his press in Aberdare.

The coal strikes of the early 1870s created a new radical political atmosphere in South Wales, and several newspapers were published to address the market of newly politicised colliers in South Wales. The radical newspaper Amddiffynydd y Gweithiwr [The Workman’s Advocate] was published in Merthyr in 1873, but from 1875 the most influential radical newspaper of the organised working class in Victorian Wales, Tarian y Gweithiwr: Cofiadur sifil, diwydiannol a llenyddol [The Workman’s Shield: Civil,

⁵⁴³ Brynley Roberts, p. 129.

⁵⁴⁴ Brynley Roberts, p. 130

⁵⁴⁵ Brynley Roberts, p. 136

industrial and literary recorder] was published in Aberdare. Tarian y Gweithiwr (described by Roberts as the most important and longest running non-local newspaper to come from Aberdare)⁵⁴⁶ was published by three workmen from Lloyd's Y Gwladgarwr office who established their own steam-printing works to produce the paper. The first leading article of the newspaper set out its position:

To care for the conscience of the worker as a SHIELD in the face of any attack upon it by rapacious Ecclesiasticism and a feudal dogmatic priesthood... In fact, the workers are the masters of the whole world. Were it not for the workers, all the well-born idlers of the world would swiftly perish. Were there no workers, there would be no crowns, thrones, parliaments to sustain the luxury and pomp of all the world's princes.⁵⁴⁷

Tarian y Gweithiwr published home and foreign news, union lodge announcements and union affairs, the state of the markets, economic and industrial news, it also more pragmatically published accounts of preaching services, of eisteddfodau, popular columns of local history, poetry, grammar lessons, book news, and a serialised novel with the aim of attracting a wider audience.⁵⁴⁸ At the turn of the century Tarian y Gweithiwr had a weekly circulation of ten-thousand to fifteen-thousand copies but it had started to lose ground as an old liberal newspaper to the new spirit of socialism which was sweeping the coalfield. Eventually in 1911 Tarian y Gweithiwr was renamed simply as Y Darian by its new owners. Although the new paper Y Darian maintained a strongly pacifist view throughout the First World War, its main appeal was to a Welsh chapel-going audience who were more interested in cultural questions than in politics.⁵⁴⁹

Aberdare in the nineteenth century published a number of Welsh newspapers which

⁵⁴⁶ Brynley Roberts, p. 134

⁵⁴⁷ Brynley Roberts, pp. 134-5

⁵⁴⁸ Brynley Roberts, p. 135

⁵⁴⁹ Brynley Roberts, p. 136

dominated the national market; however, several Aberdare printers never produced a newspaper and it still tended to be the more socially, politically, or spiritually committed printers who were drawn towards newspaper production. Jones advertised himself as ‘Printer, Bookbinder, and Stationer’ but many of the Aberdare printers were unable to do much finishing beyond stapling pages and print finishing continued to be sent out to specialist companies. Many of the later newspaper offices in Aberdare also produced a range of novels and popular books: these came particularly from the offices of Y Darian. Often these novels were produced from the newspaper galleys of the serialised novels, which were saved to be re-used so that a book could be produced for sale quickly and cheaply. These ‘galley’ novels are distinctive as they are set in newspaper column inches and contrast to contemporary books like those produced in the Rhondda by the bookseller Daniel Davies which (although poorly produced) have clearly been typeset as books. The example which Roberts gives is Brynfab’s serialised novel Pan Oedd Rhondda’n Bur⁵⁵⁰ which was obviously set from newspaper galleys in 1912. In contrast an earlier book like Isaac Lewis, Y Crwydryn Digrif⁵⁵¹ [Isaac Lewis: The Comic Tramp] by Pelidros (William Richard Jones), which was printed in Ferndale in 1901, is obviously typeset in book form.

Aberdare was not alone, however, as a centre for the Victorian print trade in Wales. The first printing press in Cardiff was moved there in 1791 by John Bird, surprisingly early given that it was a year after the Glamorganshire Canal had started to be built towards the iron towns of the north and a year before the first section of the canal (between Merthyr and Pontypridd) was completed. Cardiff at this time was little more than a handful of streets around the castle. The Butes controlled the printing presses of Cardiff closely and

⁵⁵⁰ Brynfab [Thomas Williams], Pan Oedd Rhondda’n Bur (Aberdare: Pugh and Rowlands Printers (Y Darian office), 1912)

⁵⁵¹ Pelidros [William Richard Jones], Isaac Lewis, Y Crwydryn Digrif (Ferndale: Daniel Davies, 1901)

John Bird was no exception: when he moved his press to Cardiff from Cowbridge he did so as a servant of the Lord of the Castle, Baron Cardiff (who became the first Marquess of Bute in 1796).⁵⁵² When Cardiff developed as the principal docks for the steam-coal trade, its status and wealth also grew. It was inevitable that such a large docks at the heart of the coal trade would develop its own newspapers and in total it produced eleven titles in the nineteenth century—the most important of which was Bute's own paper, the Western Mail. Sir Emsley Carr in his article the 'History of the Western Mail', written to celebrate the newspaper's jubilee in 1919, described how the paper was started:

The origin of the Western Mail was of a modest character—so modest, indeed, as to suggest that it was produced for a temporary and not an enduring purpose. No advertisement campaign heralded its coming; no preparations proclaimed it as an event of public interest. There was not even an editorial foreword to reveal its aspirations.

The first issue was printed on a second-hand machine, an old four-feeder. This was housed in a lowly structure...

[The young third Marquess of Bute] set himself to continue his father's enterprise in developing the vast mineral wealth that lay about him... he quickly arrived at the conclusion that the first need was a great dock basin, and that before this could be attained a healthy public opinion had to be created and kept alive.

To attain this object he decided to start a daily paper.⁵⁵³

The Western Mail was started in 1869 by the Marquess of Bute in order to propagandise the case for the building of the Roath Basin and so ensure that the Bill for the Roath Basin dock passed successfully through Parliament. The original sea-pond at the end of the Glamorganshire canal which had been used as a harbour thanks to a tide-lock was closed in 1868, and in 1874 the third Marquess of Bute opened the new Roath Basin docks. The young Marquess of Bute must have had in mind the experience of his trustees in 1864

⁵⁵² Ifano Jones, p. 92

⁵⁵³ Emsley Carr, 'History of the Western Mail', in Jubilee of the Western Mail, 1869-1919 (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1919), 1-7 (p. 7)

when their Parliamentary Bill to extend the docks in Cardiff was thrown out by a House of Lords Committee because of the high risks involved in such a large capital project.⁵⁵⁴

The first two printers used by the Western Mail were an old four-feeder and a two-station Applegath which was bought second-hand from the offices of the Western Morning News in Plymouth. S. W. Allen (Bute's dock engineer who was given the job of dismantling the two printers and bringing them to Cardiff) recalled that when the machines were brought to Cardiff they were found to be too big for their accommodation and the floor had to be sunk by two feet and pits three to four feet deep still had to be dug. On the first night the type galleys were fitted into the machines and the print run started before a crowd of eager on-lookers, but before long a belt had flown off and the machines had to be stopped. The old Applegaths rattled so much that the type came loose no matter how tightly it was clamped into the galleys, the result being that the first editions of the paper were covered with little black smudges where the spaces in the type had worn loose and on many of the spaces the name of 'Figgins' the type-founder was clearly seen.⁵⁵⁵ A new four-feeder rotary Hoe machine was installed the next year in new purpose built offices on St. Mary Street. The new rotary Hoe machine could produce 10,000 sheets an hour and was revolutionary for its time, it was also the first to be installed outside of London. In 1873 the Western Mail was circulating a daily average of over 12,000 copies. During the General Election of 1874 the Western Mail became the first eight-page newspaper in Wales or the West of England.⁵⁵⁶ In 1880 the Western Mail added the ability to print from stereotype plates and it also had a new Hoe press: it was now producing 24,000 copies of the paper

⁵⁵⁴ Lewis, William Thomas (1st Baron Merthyr), 'The Bute Docks, Cardiff', p. 12

⁵⁵⁵ S. W. Allen, 'How the first issue was printed. Reminiscences of the man who erected our first printing press', in Jubilee of the Western Mail, 1869-1919 (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1919), 30-2 (p. 31-2)

⁵⁵⁶ The Western Mail was probably taking advantage of the two Hoe presses which were now installed in the new machine room.

every hour.⁵⁵⁷

The Western Mail was always something of an anachronism: Bute converted to Catholicism but his paper represented the views of the Established Church in Nonconformist Wales; it was always essentially a Tory paper in the heart of Liberal Wales. And yet for all of its drawbacks, the first daily paper in Wales succeeded. There were a number of reasons for this success. A well-capitalised newspaper with the capacity to produce print in such large quantities was always going to have a natural competitive advantage over the smaller presses. It must also have been able to leverage an efficient distribution system for circulation. Another of the main reasons for the young paper's success was Henry Lascelles Carr, a young sub-editor Bute brought from the Liverpool Daily Post to act as manager for the new paper. It was Carr who ensured the success of the young paper, in part because he brought with him a new and more professional form of journalism.

While Bute had started the press there is little trace of Bute in the early editions, although it was widely known that he was capitalising the project.⁵⁵⁸ While always self-consciously a conservative newspaper, the Western Mail often adopted unconventional positions and on a number of occasions in the nineteenth century the paper supported the cause of the colliers against the coal owners. In the strike of 1871 the Western Mail was critical of the coal owners and supported the colliers in their action: 'under the spirited leadership of its editor large sums were collected for the starving people in the mining districts, and soup kitchens opened in a number of districts.'⁵⁵⁹ In the 1870s, over twenty

⁵⁵⁷ Emsley Carr, p. 2-6

⁵⁵⁸ Emsley Carr, p. 2

⁵⁵⁹ Emsley Carr, p. 3. Emsley Carr describes this as 'the great coal strike of 1870', but given that there was no strike in 1870 it can only be assumed that he meant the 1871 strike in the Rhondda and Aberdare valleys.

years before the SWMF was established, the Western Mail advocated the right of the workers to freely organise in a union and elect their leaders, a position which drew criticism of the paper from some quarters of Welsh society. In the strike and lock-out of 1875 the Western Mail once again supported the colliers claiming that, 'they wanted to be treated as reasonable men, not machines.'⁵⁶⁰ Much of this reputation was due to the influence of Lascelles Carr, who bought the paper from Bute in 1877.

The Western Mail started publishing books surprisingly early in its career. The first book recorded in Cardiff University's collection which was published by the Western Mail was a book on the Church in Wales which was written by the rector of Merthyr, John Griffith: The Welsh Church Congress at Llanidloes: What did it aim at? (1872). From the 1870s the press equipment at the Western Mail probably included a number of platen presses specifically to handle the book and jobbing work. Until 1960 when the jobbing section was sold off and became the firm of Tudor Printers, the Western Mail press had a long tradition of accepting jobbing work. In 2000 the Trinity company (who now own the Western Mail) bought new flat bed presses and once again started producing jobbing work.⁵⁶¹ At some point in the nineteenth century the jobbing work and the newspaper work must have been split as the newspaper presses continued to work from the original office on St Mary Street, while the jobbing press was relocated in the Tudor Works.⁵⁶² Many of the books are labelled as printed at the Tudor Works and are published by the Western Mail.⁵⁶³ That the paper could afford the investment of running two sets of printing plant at

⁵⁶⁰ Emsley Carr, p. 6

⁵⁶¹ John Sweeney (Production Manager at the Western Mail and South Wales Echo), interview by author, 2 November 2008

⁵⁶² These were located on Tudor Street.

⁵⁶³ See for example, History of the Barry Railway Company, 1884-1921 compiled by R.J. Rimell, in collaboration with Messrs. Joseph Davies and Hailey (Cardiff: Tudor Printing Works [Western Mail], 1923)

two different locations in Cardiff is indicative of the high status of the firm's book trade. The National Library of Wales has over 630 books catalogued which have been published by the Western Mail in the 140 year history of the press, my suspicion is that many more were printed on these presses under the names of different publishers (e.g. Tudor Press).

The early books which the paper produced are diverse and they are published in both languages. Many are public reports (such as the Annual Report of the Glamorgan County Medical Officer, 1895) and histories (such The Fishguard Invasion by the French, 1897); some are high-status books (such as The Catalogue of the Cardiff Fine Art, Industrial and Maritime Exhibition of 1896) and a few are technical (such as the The Welsh coal & shipping handbook: tide tables for Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, Port Talbot, Barry and Llanelly (1881)). Included amongst the bibliography of the early books produced by the Western Mail are a handful of novels. The first was a Welsh-language book which was originally published in Aberdare: Isaac Hughes, Y Ferch o Cefn Ydfa, gan William Hopkin, bardd o Langynwyd, Sir Forganwg : bu farw yn 1741, yn 40 mwlydd oed. Bedyddiwyd ef yn 1700; Bugeilio'r gwenith gwyn (Aberdare: Jones & Sons Printers, [1864?]).⁵⁶⁴ In 1881 the Tudor Works of the Western Mail press republished the novel as: The Maid of Cefn Ydfa: An Historical Novel of the Eighteenth Century. By the end of 1881 an impressive twenty-three editions of the novel had been produced, by 1938 the Western Mail had produced a total of thirty one editions of the novel. The last available edition was produced in 1979 by John Jones of Cardiff, who is bizarrely trying to claim that he holds copyright on the novel—the book was printed in Exeter.⁵⁶⁵ By the turn of the

⁵⁶⁴ There are four copies of Y Ferch o Cefn Ydfa which may pre-date the Western Mail 1881 imprint: the first was written by William Hopkin and printed in Aberdare by Jones and Son and is undated; the second was written by Wil Hopcyn and was printed in Aberfan by Thomas Jones (possibly in 1860); the third was printed in Bala by H. Evans (undated); and the last was printed in Merthyr by T. Howells (again undated).

⁵⁶⁵ Isaac Hughes, The Maid of Cefn Ydfa (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1881; repr. Cardiff: John Jones, 1979)

century the press at the Western Mail was publishing a number of novels including Twm Shôn Catti and the works of a new local author, Joseph Keating. As Cardiff's importance as a coal port developed the status of its printers and newspapers also grew and it was at this time that the novel appeared.

Many of the novels produced in Victorian Wales had originally been serialised in newspapers, such as Rhys Lewis, but not all. The Maid of Cefn Ydfa by Isaac Hughes offers one possibility of a novel which is written without the intention of serial publication, but the novel which still goes against the grain in this period is Prichard's Twm Shôn Catti which, as far as I am aware, escaped serialisation altogether.⁵⁶⁶ Many of the novels which did appear towards the end of the Victorian era in Wales are reprints of the serialised newspaper novels; sometimes they are simply cheap imprints which are taken from the newsprint galleys and sometimes (like Rhys Lewis) they have been more expensively produced as books in their own right. The Welsh Victorian novelists are all essentially amateur in that they made their living elsewhere and none (except Prichard) looked to novel writing as a primary livelihood or profession.

5.6 Conclusion

By the end of the nineteenth century Welsh publishing was in crisis and decline. Welsh-language books simply were not selling and Welsh printers were once again falling back on jobbing work to support the press. The main cause of this decline was that Welsh publishers had failed to adapt to the changes in Welsh society. In the south, because Welsh

⁵⁶⁶ There are a number of novels published in the Aberdare newspapers which have been suggested by this research but which I have so far been unable to track down. They would make a profitable avenue for further research.

publishers had concentrated almost exclusively on religious books for so long they created a vacuum, which was filled by English publishers. The large technical and educational body of literature which was needed to support the technically demanding mining industry was unavailable from Welsh-language publishers. It was inevitable then that the colliers, who had a strong belief in self-education, were forced to learn English in order to access the technical literature which they needed to work safely underground. Philip Henry Jones records that in 1909, three years before The Miners' Next Step was published in the Rhondda, the main concern of the agent of Thomas Gee (at that time the largest Welsh-language publisher), 'was to persuade local booksellers to stock a scholarly new study of Calvin.'⁵⁶⁷

Despite the Nonconformist Revival of 1904-05, which was led by the 26-year-old former collier, Evan Roberts, Welsh publishing would never really recover from this moment of crisis and the new generation of writers who came from the coal communities of South Wales looked instead towards the large London publishing houses. In the next chapter I will analyse the work of Joseph Keating who, although being about thirty years too early, was the first of this new generation of collier writers. Aside from two reprints of his collected short stories by the Western Mail, all of Keating's books were produced by London publishers. Meanwhile, his large number of short stories were published in the London and American news and periodical press. The Welsh writers (such as Allen Raine and Joseph Keating) at the end of the century began to look away from Wales and, as they did so, a new, more professional, author was born.

⁵⁶⁷ 'Business is Awful Bad', p. 40

Chapter Six - Joseph Keating: Hybridity and the Literature of Labour

Glyn Jones in his ground-breaking work on the Anglo-Welsh writers The Dragon has Two Tongues writes that 'the first modern Anglo-Welsh novelist noted by Professor Lucien Leclaire in his General Analytical Bibliography of the Regional Novelists of the British Isles, 1800-1950 is Joseph Keating, born in Mountain Ash, Glamorgan.'⁵⁶⁸ Leclaire in his analytical bibliography describes Keating's first novel Son of Judith as, 'Dark and melodramatic, but giving a faithful picture of the miner's life.'⁵⁶⁹ It could be projected from this that Leclaire could have known very little indeed about the life of Welsh miners because, as we shall shortly see, although Keating's first novel is dark, is melodramatic, it is essentially written in a completely alien mode to Wales and it bears very little relationship to its subject. So alien is this novel to its subject that it includes a number of deeply offensive descriptions of the Welsh miners. However, whether it is a faithful and accurate description of mining life in Victorian Wales or not, Keating's work can be identified as the start of a new literary genre.

The Welsh industrial novel was born nearly sixty years after the English industrial novels of the 1840s. Raymond Williams says that:

Yet some other moves were possible, within these conditions. They are well exemplified in the Welsh industrial novel. This began with the work of Joseph Keating... but with all the marks of the nineteenth-century difficulties... His novels

⁵⁶⁸ Glyn Jones, The Dragon has Two Tongues: Essays on Anglo-Welsh writers and writing (London: J. M. Dent, 1968), p. 57. Glyn Jones repeats a number of Leclaire's errors, including the suggestion that Keating's first novel Gwen Lloyd was published in 1901. Although Keating wrote two novels before Son of Judith (Merva Brully and Gwen Lloyd), neither were published and the manuscripts for both novels have long since disappeared.

⁵⁶⁹ Lucien Leclaire, A General Analytical Bibliography of the Regional Novelists of the British Isles, 1900-1950 (Clermont-Ferrand: Imprimerie G. de Bussac, 1954), p. 238

include some of the finest direct descriptions of colliery work that we have, but in The Flower of the Dark these are inserted in, and in effect overwhelmed by, a bourgeois romance of a familiar nineteenth-century kind.⁵⁷⁰

Raymond Williams here has put his finger on one of the key problems in Keating's work: the descriptions from his short stories of the colliers working underground are amongst the few first-hand descriptions that we have from this, or any, period, but he narrates the story with another's voice (like an English ventriloquist's dummy with the hand of the Welsh collier working the hidden mechanism). This Anglo-Welsh hybridity marks Keating's first novel deeply but the hybridity in Keating's short stories is significantly different; it is Welsh with ambivalence and is deployed to altogether different ends.

In his lecture on the Welsh industrial novel, Raymond Williams expanded on his earlier thoughts:

From the beginning of the formation of the industrial working class... there were always individuals with the zeal and capacity to write, but their characteristic problem was the relation of their intentions and experience to the dominant literary forms, shaped primarily as they were by another and dominant class. Within a relatively coherent religious culture, the difficulties were less formidable: the modes of witness, confession and praise were more generally accessible... The formal features of the novel, on the other hand, had no such correspondence. The received conventional plots—the propertied marriage and settlement; the intricacies of inheritance; the exotic adventure; the abstracted romance—are all, for obvious reasons, at a distance from working-class life. It is hardly surprising that for several generations the most powerful writing of working-class experience is in autobiographies... But there is of course another and at first sight plausible tactic: to accept one of the dominant forms and to insert, to graft on to it, these other experiences, of work and struggle.⁵⁷¹

As we have already seen there were a number of examples of early industrial writers in

Wales. Writers like Shôn Shincyn (who came from the industrial proletariat of the Welsh

⁵⁷⁰ Raymond Williams, 'Region and Class in the Novel', in Writing in Society (London: Verso, 1991), 229-38 (p. 236)

⁵⁷¹ Raymond Williams, The Welsh Industrial Novel: The Inaugural Gwyn Jones Lecture (21 April 1978) (Cardiff: University College Cardiff Press, 1979), pp. 8-9

Industrial Revolution) wrote a wide range of material, but it was essentially at odds with the dominant English bourgeois literary forms which favoured the novel. Joseph Keating essentially represents a break with this Welsh literary tradition, but as I will shortly show, the break was not to be a clean one and the hybridity which resulted (the effect of grafting a native narrative onto an alien literary form) has left its mark on Keating's work.

Joseph Keating died in 1934, some eight years after his last book had been published.⁵⁷² He had at the end of his life turned his back on a literary career and become instead a local councillor for the Labour party. Yet despite this he was well remembered as a successful writer in the Welsh, British, and American press. This is the short obituary which the Times in London published:

MR. JOSEPH KEATING

Mr. Joseph Keating, the writer of a number of novels, died on Friday at Mountain Ash, Glamorgan. Born in Wales, 63 years ago, the son of immigrants from Cork, and educated at an elementary school, he was at work in the coal-mines at the age of 12 and continued to earn his living underground until his late twenties. But he was a great reader, a keen observer, and developed a faculty for writing. In 1901 he had completed his first novel, "Son of Judith," which showed remarkable maturity, and had a large sale. Several others followed, mostly less popular in style, but of finer texture and quality, and in 1914 his only play, *Peggy and her Husband*, based upon one of his novels, had a successful run in London. Subsequently he wrote his autobiography, a history of the Tyneside Irish Brigade, and translated Zola's novel "Nana." Although born in Wales and actually speaking Welsh, he was, like his brother, Mr. Matthew Keating, the former Nationalist M.P. for South Kilkenny, deeply interested in Irish politics and literature. He married in 1926 Miss Catherine Annie Herbert, the younger daughter of Mr. W. Lloyd Herbert, of Mountain Ash, who survives him. There is no family.

Figure 6.1 Joseph Keating, Obituary The Times 9 July 1934 (p. 9)

In contrast is this much longer obituary in the New York Times:

⁵⁷² The bibliography of Keating's work which I have included

JOSEPH KEATING, NOVELIST, IS DEAD

Noted Welsh Writer Worked in
Coal Mine as a Boy and
Until His Late Twenties.

AUTHOR OF POPULAR PLAY

Story of His Experiences Is Told
in His Autobiography, 'My
Struggle for Life.'

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, July 8.—Joseph Keating, the novelist, who was working in a Welsh coal mine when he was 12 years old, died today at Mountain Ash, Glamorganshire. His age was 63.

The son of Irish immigrants, he was born in Wales. As a boy he was a great reader and a keen observer, and early developed the faculty of writing, although he continued to earn his living underground until his late twenties.

His first novel, "The Son of Judah," was published in 1901 and had an immediate success. In 1914 his only play, "Peggy and Her Husband," was produced in London. It scored a success and had a long run.

The article on the novelist in the British "Who's Who," evidently contributed by himself, after setting forth that he was educated at "Mountain Ash, Cardiff, Swansea, Ostend, Brussels, Paris, London, and, in fact, everywhere he went," continues as follows:

"From the age of 12 to 13 he passed his time very pleasantly in Navigation Colliery, Mountain Ash, earnings six shillings and ninepence per week as a door-boy; at 13 he fancied he would like to be an oliver-boy; after twelve months at the oliver-fires he decided that the coal pit was more attractive; from the age of 14 to 18 he was one of the unlucky people who work for a living; he was a collier boy; later he worked as a pit-laborer, whose duties were those of unloading or removing twelve to sixteen tons of stones and dust each day for two shillings and sixpence; then he discovered that only manual labor was work, and that work was not a blessing but a curse; at 18 he became a pit hauler, a delightful profession in which a horse does the work and the haulier draws the pay; afterward he became a novelist and a dramatist."

Keating's books include the novels "Queen of Swords," "Great Appeal" and "Flower of the Dark"; his autobiography, "My Struggle for Life," a history of the Tyneside Irish Brigade (in "Irish Heroes of the War"), and a translation of Zola's "Nana." His recreations were "politics, chess and music." In 1928 he married a daughter of W. Lloyd Herbert of Mountain Ash.

Figure 6.2 Joseph Keating, Obituary *The New York Times* 9 July 1934 (p. 15)

In both obituaries Keating is remembered both as a successful novelist and as a Welsh miner. Despite its many errors, the obituary from the *New York Times* gives us more detail about Keating's working life in the pits, but the *London Times* more accurately describes Keating's books. In both Keating's first novel, *Son of Judith*, is described as a success in

the marketplace; however, in his autobiography Keating tells us that the royalties he received from the 'large sale' of Son of Judith were one shilling and five pence which was sent to him in stamps.⁵⁷³ Successful or not, it is the idea of Keating as a collier turned novelist which has persisted to this day: the novel in Wales had finally come of age. Yet Keating's novels had apparently come from nowhere; they represent the start of a new literary genre but they seemingly have no roots. It is this idea of Keating the miner who became a novelist and who starts a new literary tradition that I want to examine in this chapter.

⁵⁷³ Joseph Keating, My Struggle for Life (London: Simpkin, Marshall Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1916; repr. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005), p. 200. All further references are to this edition and are given in parenthesis in the text.

6.1 Keating and his World

On the 6th of April 1883 the 12 year old Joseph Keating started working underground as a door-boy at Nixon's Navigation Colliery in his native village of Mountain Ash. By 1883 Nixon's Navigation colliery was again expanding to increase production: two steam winders were being fitted at the top of the shafts and two large forty-feet diameter Waddle ventilation fans had just been fitted to the colliery. When he started work as a door boy the young Keating would have been part of an underground workforce of well over a thousand men in a modern and well-equipped deep coal mine. Shortly after he started working underground Keating's brother John (who had just stopped playing games with the children and started 'passing the time looking at books') (My Struggle for Life, p. 55) encouraged him to read Dickens and Byron instead of the three-penny story books he had been reading, such as The Prey of the Tiger; or The Thugs of India:

The one John wanted to get would cost sixpence. We would do practically anything John suggested; so Matt and I subscribed three halfpence each, and John provided the other threepence. He wrote the author's name, Charles Dickens, and title of the story, on a torn bit of paper, and sent me to Grier, the stationer, to order the book. (My Struggle for Life, p. 55)

Here we have first-hand evidence of the nature of the book market in industrial South Wales in the 1880s. The old itinerant booksellers had largely gone and the business was now being conducted through booksellers and stationers which stocked a predominantly English catalogue. Like the rest of his generation, Keating was influenced from a young age by the popular and cheap colonial books.

After a year working underground with the hauliers as a door-boy Keating moved to a job on the pit head working as an 'Oliver Boy', working the large hammer for the

blacksmith in the colliery yard (My Struggle for Life, p. 61). He did not last long in this job and it was while working in his next job as a 'butty' for Sammy Hill, a hewer on the coal-face, that the fourteen year old Keating accidentally fell asleep and awoke on his own in an empty colliery with no light. The story of how he managed to rescue himself and find his way to the shaft bottom by following the rail with his foot was retold in his first novel, Son of Judith. Although the 'lost narrative' (which at that time was a familiar device of the Welsh industrial narrative) was retold, it was fundamentally displaced by the bourgeois frame.

At the age of sixteen Keating moved from Nixon's Navigation Colliery to a job working with a collier on double-shifts in the Penrhiwceiber (Penrikyber) Colliery.⁵⁷⁴ A total of thirty-eight collieries or levels were operating in the Aberdare valley, and by the 1870s the north of the valley had become saturated with collieries. Consequently, when the Penrhiwceiber Colliery began to be sunk in 1872 the only space left was on the unexploited farmland to the south of Mountain Ash where the coal was thought to be deeper and harder to work. Sinking the shaft at Penrhiwceiber was difficult and significant problems were experienced with water and sand, but by 1878 the colliery had started production. I suspect that when Keating talks about the picturesque rural village of his youth which is destroyed by the coal industry, he is talking about the sinking and opening of the Penrhiwceiber Colliery. In his autobiography Keating talks about how much he disliked working in this pit; his aversion was so intense that when the hewer he was working with left for another pit, Keating took a job as a boiler-stoker at a level near his

⁵⁷⁴ Although it may be more usual to use the registered name of the colliery even if it is incorrect (i.e. Penrikyber (see Walters, p. xiv)) as Keating uses Penrhiwceiber I will maintain this spelling of the colliery in this thesis.

house rather than stay in the Penrhiwceiber Colliery (My Struggle for Life, p. 70-1). When the level failed the only work that Keating could find was labouring at Nixon's Navigation Colliery. Labouring work underground predominantly involved packing the gob (i.e. the empty space left behind the working coal face) with the waste dust and stones left over from mining the coal. On every shift Keating would have physically unloaded from twelve to twenty-four tons of rubbish from trams into an empty rubbish stall, and was paid half a crown a day for this back-breaking work. Keating describes this work accurately and simply: 'It was not work. It was murder.' (My Struggle for Life, p. 72)

Although he was labouring and physically breaking himself in one of the hardest jobs in the coal industry, Keating continued to read and educate himself. Just how well-read the colliers of South Wales were can be seen in the following experience which Keating describes:

Two of us were 'shifting muck'; that is, we were removing twenty or forty tons of dust and stone from one spot to another. My colleague, with a long gauze-lamp, was on top of the heap, his legs in sight, his head and shoulders up in a hole.

'Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,' he said, coming down the heap...

'You are quoting Pope,' I said, in astonishment.

'Ahy—me and Pope do agree very well,' he answered slowly. He took up his shovel, and said no more. (My Struggle for Life, pp. 73-4)

In almost any other context to find a labourer quoting Pope would be a point of note, in the coal industry of South Wales it is almost to be expected. Keating continues to tell us what he was reading at this point:

I bought cheap, paper-covered, miserably-printed editions of Goldsmith, Fielding, Dickens, Smollet, Pope, and others... I read Vanity Fair in weekly instalments, in a half-penny paper called Dicks's English Library. (My Struggle for Life, p. 74)

Shortly afterwards the eighteen-year-old Keating managed to get a job as a haulier on the night-shift, or as he puts it: 'I joined the ranks of the rodneys, and became a night haulier.'

(My Struggle for Life, p. 78) The horses were used to pull the filled drams of coal from the

coalface to the main road, where they would be formed into larger 'journeys' of drams

which were attached to a rope and then hauled the long distances to the pit bottom by a

steam-engine. If the main road was inclined, as they usually were, these journeys of drams

were exceptionally dangerous because when the rope broke the heavy drams would run

free until they slammed into an obstacle. The colliers were absolutely forbidden to ride

these journeys of coal to the pit bottom at the end of the shift, but human nature being what

it is the colliers sometimes took an easy ride on the journey. One night when Keating was

riding the journey the rope broke and the drams broke free. Keating barely managed to

throw himself free before the drams smashed into the wall and brought the roof down on

top of them (My Struggle for Life, p. 85). If Keating had not jumped off the journey he

would have been killed in the accident. It was shortly after this accident that Keating

started to turn away from working underground:

Quite unexpectedly, I began to dislike pit-work. My duties were easy, and the pay satisfactory. My colleagues, the hauliers, were the best-humoured and best-natured fellows. The colliers were in every way excellent. I was on the happiest terms with those in authority over me. I had once believed that if I could achieve the height of 'driving by day' my greatest ambition would have been realized. All along, I had desired nothing more than what was now in my grasp. I had no objection to the pit itself; yet I began to dislike being in it. That was just when I was half-way between eighteen and nineteen. No explanation could I find for my change of feeling. (My Struggle for Life, p. 85)

In the winter of 1889 Joseph Keating left the coal industry: he was eighteen and had been

working underground from the age of twelve. Although he had only worked underground

for six years, the experience stayed with him for the rest of his life.

On the face of it, Keating's departure from the pits is mysterious; he simply tells us that he suddenly developed an irrational dislike for the work underground. He had started work underground during a relatively quiet phase in industrial relations in the coal industry, when the colliers were comparatively poorly organised and the sliding-scale was being ruthlessly used by the coal owners to control dissent and prevent industrial action. He left when unionism had started to be revived in the valleys of the South Wales coalfield. Within three years the Hauliers' Strike brought the coal-owners to their knees and established a new radicalism within the coalfield. Keating writes at the same time that the colliers were fighting to establish the SWMF. This is not to suggest that Keating left the coal industry because of the revival of unionism, far from it, but he did leave the industry at a point of transition which would lead to the well-organised industrial actions of the 1890s and 1900s. This departure may have introduced the retrospective element in his work which leads Keating to write about a coal industry that is essentially de-unionised and de-politicised.

After he left the pits, Keating moved into a number of jobs including working as a fitter's buttly in the Duffryn Colliery and cleaning engines on the pit head. Cleaning the engines was such an easy job that Keating found himself with so much free time at work that his 'hut became a study, library, and a university' (My Struggle for Life, p. 99). There he read Thackeray, Swift, Goldsmith, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Sheridan, Fielding, Smollet, and Dickens. Shortly afterwards Keating tells us that the Duffryn Colliery was closed when its coal-seams were declared unprofitable, the pumps were removed and the pit was allowed to flood (My Struggle for Life, p. 100). At this point Keating's involvement with the coal industry ended.

Exactly which colliery Keating is talking about here is unclear. The most likely candidate is the Middle Duffryn Colliery which ceased working in the late 1880s, but it was kept open as a pumping station for the Powell Duffryn Collieries in the Aberdare Valley. Between 1890-93 the winding shaft at Middle Duffryn was deepened and eight old pumping engines were replaced with new duplicate steam pumps, each capable of raising 85,000 gallons an hour from a depth of 275 yards. As a result five districts of drowned-out workings were pumped dry and the lower seams over a wide area were opened to economical working.⁵⁷⁵ The quantity of water being pumped was so large that in 1900 Powell Duffryn built a new washery at Middle Duffryn which was capable of cleaning 160 tons of small coal an hour. At the same time a centralised power station was built at Middle Duffryn which supplied power to the firm's Aberdare collieries via an electrical grid.⁵⁷⁶ If the Powell Duffryn company had dismantled the pumps and allowed Middle Duffryn to flood completely, as Keating describes, then it would also have flooded practically every colliery in the Aberdare district. In reality while Middle Duffryn Colliery ceased winding coal altogether in the late 1880s, it became the central pumping station for the Powell Duffryn's pits in the Aberdare district in line with the company's policy of centralising its services.⁵⁷⁷ In light of this Keating's description of Middle Duffryn in My Struggle for Life appears to be more than a little unreliable.

After leaving the coal industry, Keating worked at any number of odd jobs,

⁵⁷⁵ The Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co. (Cardiff: Business Statistics Company, [1914?]), p. 23

⁵⁷⁶ The Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co., pp. 30-2

⁵⁷⁷ The Powell Duffryn Steam Coal Co., p. 23

from painting gasometers to scavenging for the local board.⁵⁷⁸ During this time Keating tells us that he was 'reading... all sorts—philosophy, history, politics, poetry, and novels' but that 'the authors whom I read were all a century old. Some were older. Volumes by living writers were too high-priced for me.' (My Struggle for Life, p. 112-3) Despite living so close to the centre of the print and newspaper industry in Victorian Wales, Keating never mentions having had contact with this literature in his autobiography; the books which he tells us he reads are old, second-hand, and English.

Although Keating later gravitated towards the newspaper industry, his disastrous experiences as a reporter for The Gloucester Mail (he was dismissed after failing to get the story of a murder: My Struggle for Life, pp. 125-7 and pp. 131-4) meant that when he did eventually start working for The Western Mail in the summer of 1893 it was as an accounts clerk in the paper's business department (My Struggle for Life, p. 153). Once again it seems a little odd that Keating, who lived most of his life less than four miles from Aberdare, never looked to the busy presses of the town for work but turned instead towards Cardiff, a more English context, for work.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁸ Keating describes scavenging as: cleaning street lamps, digging drains, weeding the surveyor's garden, painting railings, and doing other odd jobs. (My Struggle for Life, p. 104) This description is a little odd as at the time 'scavenging' in South Wales was used to describe the removal of excrement from backyard toilets before the development of a sewage system (known locally as working on the shit-cart): these 'scavengers' were employed by the local public health authority. See, for example: W. Williams, Annual Report of the County Medical Officer, For the Year 1893 (Cardiff: William Lewis, 1894), p. 27

⁵⁷⁹ It would have been tempting to say that his Welsh was not quite fit for purpose but given the evidence of his obituary and the amount of English-language printing taking place in Aberdare it seems unreasonable to look to language as an answer. Cardiff was, and is, a more anglicised town than Aberdare (which to this day still retains many of its Welsh characteristics). For example, recent research for the Welsh Assembly has shown that the lowest rates of Welsh family names in Wales are to be found in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Pembrokeshire, and along the Clwyd coast (see: Richard Weber, The Welsh Diaspora: Analysis of the geography of Welsh names (Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government, 2006)).

While working in Cardiff Keating developed an urge to write: 'A secret upheaval had begun to distress me. A confusing storm of thoughts was lashing me towards the strange idea of writing novels.' (My Struggle for Life, p. 166) The twenty-four year old clerk had developed another unexplained desire, this time for a literary career—Keating developed a five-year plan and promised himself that if he failed to get a novel published by the turn of the century he would abandon his dreams of becoming a novelist (My Struggle for Life, p. 169).

Keating wrote his first novel, Merva Brully, in his evenings and weekends while working in the office by day; he also wrote a number of short stories, character-sketches, and articles so that he could develop his writing. Merva Brully was unpublished and is now lost; of his other works at this time we know very little as he does not tell us if any were published. Meanwhile Keating used the resources of the local library, paying close attention to anything that he could find on 'dramatic construction' and he tried to analyse 'De Maupassant, Tolstoy, Thomas Hardy, Stevenson, Flaubert, and Meredith' (My Struggle for Life, p. 174). Keating's reading had broadened by the time that he wrote his first novel.

In 1898 Keating was persuaded by the leader-writer of The Evening Express (an evening newspaper produced by the Western Mail press) to enter the National Eisteddfod's competition for an English-language novel on 'Welsh life.' Keating then wrote a self-described 'novel of the mines' called Gwen Lloyd. Although the unpublished manuscript did not win the competition he received generous feedback from one of the judges (the novelist William Edwards Tirebuck). He was also

encouraged to write novels by the eccentric professional short-story writer Purcell, who had befriended Keating.⁵⁸⁰ The novel which won the Eisteddfod competition was published in the journal of the printer who had supplied the prize money. In his autobiography Keating expresses his surprise that the Eisteddfod had been looking not for a novel but for a newspaper serial, to which purpose Gwen Lloyd had been unsuited (My Struggle for Life, p. 189).

Following the experience of writing Gwen Lloyd, Keating began writing short stories and articles which he sent to London publishers. In 1899 he began writing what would become his first published novel, Son of Judith. The manuscript of Son of Judith was rejected by seven publishers but accepted by the eighth on the grounds that Keating not demand a sum in advance, allow the publisher to sell five hundred copies free of charge, and accept a ten percent royalty (My Struggle for Life, p. 194). This was not the last poor deal which Keating made with a publisher; for example, when living as a short-story and article writer in London he found out that his editor had been selling his short stories in America for four times the price that he was paying Keating (My Struggle for Life, p. 209-10).

When Keating's first novel, Son of Judith, was published it was warmly received by both the critics and by the book buying-public, on both sides of the Atlantic. In New York The Academy said that:

Although this 'tale of the Welsh mining valleys' has barbaric faults, it has also the incommunicable breath of life. Now melodrama, when it is handled with sufficient

⁵⁸⁰ The eccentric Purcell is described by Keating as in reality the last Baron of Loooughmore, but we are never told his first name (My Struggle for Life, p. 184).

power and sincerity, seems to lose its baser characteristics.⁵⁸¹

Keating's first novel was both a critical and financial success if the reviews which are available for his second novel, Maurice, are accurate:

If Mr Keating achieved a success with his Son of Judith he deserves to add another with his latest romance, which has the Welsh coalfields as its background and two accidents in the mine as its most powerful scenes.⁵⁸²

As we have already seen, his obituary in The Times records that Son of Judith had a large sale, and yet Keating appears to have made very little money from its publication; following his recovery from a nervous breakdown in 1903, he writes that:

The temptation to drink or vice is nothing compared with the temptation to write. As soon as energy began to come back, I wrote another novel.

Probably the crisis through which I had passed made this story abortive. At any rate, no publisher would accept it.

Then I wrote many short stories of mining life. Six of these were sold at three pounds each. My royalties on Son of Judith had amounted to one shilling and five pence, which the publisher had sent me in stamps. (My Struggle for Life, p. 200)

There is something a little disturbing in the disjunction between reviews which praise the success of Keating's first novel and the idea of the novelist being paid for his success in one shilling and five pence worth of stamps. In 1908 Keating was introduced to Joseph Nelson, who taught him how to make money out of writing and how to construct short stories and novels for a commercial market (My Struggle for Life, pp. 251-3). Keating tells us that he eventually found literary success when his play Peggy and Her Husband was produced in 1914 (My Struggle for Life, pp. 299-306).

As a writer Keating was not uncontroversial: when his novel The Great Appeal was

⁵⁸¹ 'Review of Son of Judith', The Academy, vol 60 (1901), p. 145

⁵⁸² 'Joseph Keating's New Novel Maurice', The Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 299 (1905), p. 9

published in 1909 he was accused by the London Opinion of insulting the King (possibly because of Keating's close association with Republican politics in Ireland—his brother was a Nationalist MP for South Kilkenny);⁵⁸³ and in 1926 Keating published a translation of Zola's novel Nana which would have been considered even then to be on the edge of obscenity (in 1888 Henry Vizetelly was successfully prosecuted under the 1857 Obscene Publications Act for publishing translations of Zola's novels).⁵⁸⁴

The entry for Keating in the New Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales tells us that:

After the failure of his play, he began to spend more time in Mountain Ash embittered and poverty-stricken—he became involved in political life: he was elected as a Labour councillor in 1923 and in 1931 became chairman of the local education committee. As an author, Joseph Keating may be seen as an obscure pioneer, a precursor of those more gifted writer from the valleys of South Wales who began to emerge at the time of his death.⁵⁸⁵

This interpretation seems a little harsh. Paul O'Leary in his introduction to the recent facsimile reprint of Keating's autobiography reports that following his radicalisation by the First World War Keating moved towards the republicanism of Sinn Féin, which was accompanied by his adoption at home of the independent Labour politics which were sweeping the South Wales coalfield. O'Leary observes that: 'In 1918 Joseph Keating made a bid for the Labour parliamentary candidacy in the new constituency of Aberdare.'⁵⁸⁶ Keating failed in his bid and in 1918 Charlie Stanton⁵⁸⁷ won the new seat as an

⁵⁸³ See Obituary for Joseph Keating, The Times 9 July 1934 (p. 9)

⁵⁸⁴ John Feather, A History of British Publishing (London: Croom Helm, 1988), p. 157

⁵⁸⁵ The New Companion to the Literature of Wales compiled and edited by Meic Stephens (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), p. 418

⁵⁸⁶ Paul O'Leary, 'Introduction', in My Struggle for Life, ix-xxx (p. xxviii)

⁵⁸⁷ Stanton was the miners' agent for Aberdare and one of a new generation of radical miners' leaders; he also had a reputation as a syndicalist.

Independent Labour representative.⁵⁸⁸ Keating's involvement in local politics grew as his career as a novelist waned following the war and in 1923 he was elected as a Labour councillor, a position that he kept until his death in 1934.

A Bibliography of Joseph Keating (1871-1934)	
1.	<u>Merva Brully</u> [unpublished, n.d.]
2.	<u>Gwen Lloyd</u> [unpublished, n.d.] ⁵⁸⁹
3.	<u>Son of Judith: A Tale of the Welsh Mining Valleys</u> (London: George Allen, 1900)
4.	<u>Maurice: A Romance of Light and Darkness</u> (London: Chatto & Windus, 1905)
5.	<u>Adventures in the Dark</u> (Cardiff: Western Mail [1906?]) ⁵⁹⁰
6.	<u>The Queen of Swords: The Story of a Woman and an Extraordinary Duel</u> (London: Chapman & Hall, 1906)
7.	<u>The Great Appeal</u> (London: Everett & Co., 1909)
8.	<u>Son of Judith</u> (London: G. Newnes, 1912)
9.	<u>Maurice: A Romance of a Welsh Miner</u> (London: Hutchinson, 1912)
10.	<u>The Perfect Wife</u> (London: William Heinemann, 1913)
11.	<u>The Marriage Contract: A Novel</u> (London: Hutchinson, 1914)
12.	<u>Peggy and Her Husband</u> [unpublished play] (1914)
13.	<u>Adventures in the Dark</u> (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1915)
14.	<u>Tipperary Tommy: A Novel of the War</u> (London: Methuen & Co., 1915)
15.	<u>My Struggle for Life</u> (London: Simpkin, Marshall Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1916)
16.	<u>Flower of the Dark</u> (London: Cassell & Co., 1917)
17.	John E. Redmond, M.P.; T. P. O'Connor, M.P.; Joseph Keating, <u>Irish Heroes in the War, The Irish in Great Britain, The Tyneside Irish Brigade</u> (London:

⁵⁸⁸ In 1922 Charlie Stanton lost the Aberdare seat to the official Labour party candidate, George Hall. Following the Cambrian Combine dispute the leadership of the SWMF was changed for a new radical generation of miners of which Stanton was a member. In the vote for the Executive Committee of the International Miners' Federation Stanton defeated Mabon by 27,008 votes to 13,450. Shortly afterwards Mabon stood down as a leader of the miners of South Wales (see Page Arnot, p. 268).

⁵⁸⁹ Leclaire in his General Analytical Bibliography of the British Isles lists this as written in 1901, a date which is probably in error as the manuscript of the novel pre-dates the publication of Son of Judith.

⁵⁹⁰ Leclaire lists an edition of Adventures in the Dark which was produced in London by Chapman & Hall (1906); however, as Leclaire had not seen a copy and had conjectured the details from Keating's autobiography, this London edition has to be treated with some scepticism. There may also be a later imprint of Adventures in the Dark which was produced by the Western Mail press in 1915.

Everett & Co., 1917)
18. <u>The Exploited Woman</u> (London: Cecil Palmer, 1923)
19. Émile Zola, <u>Nana</u> translated by J. Keating (London: Cecil Palmer, 1926)
20. <u>The Fairfax Mystery</u> (London: Wright & Brown, [1935?])
21. <u>A Woman Fascinates: A Modern Novel</u> (London: Wright & Brown, 1935)
22. <u>My Struggle for Life</u> (London: Simpkin, Marshall Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1916; repr. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005)

Table 6.1 Joseph Keating's Bibliography

The first point of note in Keating's bibliography is that the only book which he published outside London was the Western Mail Cardiff edition of Adventures in the Dark: all of his other books were published by a diverse range of London publishing houses. Of eleven novels, only three were written about the industrial coalfields of South Wales—Son of Judith (1901), the semi-autobiographical Maurice (1905), and the later Flower of the Dark (1917). He published a large number of short stories in the London and American newspaper and magazine press, but only the Western Mail in Cardiff published a collected edition using them.

The dates of the reprints of Keating's books Son of Judith, Maurice, and Adventures in the Dark are suspiciously coincidental with a number of protracted strike actions in the coal industry. In 1910 the year-long Cambrian Combine strike began in the Rhondda and Aberdare valleys; the heavy handed response to this strike by the authorities has gone down in infamy.⁵⁹¹ During the Aberdare Powell Duffryn strike of 1910 the Aberdare Miners' Joint Committee published a syndicalist influenced newspaper: The Coal War Bulletin, Manifesto by the Aberdare Miners: A Call to Arms!⁵⁹² The Powell Duffryn Strike of 1910 was focused on the company's collieries in Aberdare and Mountain Ash.

⁵⁹¹ See Page Arnot's South Wales Miners, vol. 1; or for a more partisan account see David Evans, Labour Strife in the South Wales Coalfield, 1910-1911 (Cardiff: Educational Publishing, 1911; repr. Cardiff: Cymric Federation Press, 1963).

Shortly afterwards two of Keating's industrial novels (Son of Judith and Maurice) were reprinted by new publishers. Newnes and Hutchinson were no doubt interested in cashing in on the public interest which had been generated by the Cambrian Combine Dispute and by the Great Strike of March 1912, a general strike in the British coal industry during which the overwhelming majority of British miners came out on strike (of 1,089,090 people employed in Britain's collieries only the officially-sanctioned safety men remained in work).⁵⁹³ The miners' strike in the summer of 1915 in South Wales had happened despite a proclamation from the King which declared taking part in a strike or a lockout to be a criminal offence under the Munitions of War Act; and in 1915 the Western Mail press in Cardiff was busy printing a new copy of Keating's collected short stories, Adventures in the Dark.

As a writer, as a politician, and as a miner Keating had followed an unconventional career. Born the son of two Irish immigrants, a Catholic in Nonconformist Wales, he was in many ways naturally a hybrid, but in this thesis it is his record as a Welsh collier and as the first Welsh industrial novelist that I wish to emphasise and develop—paying particular attention to the rich layers of hybridity within Keating's literary work.

6.2 Hybridity and the Novel in Wales: Son of Judith (1900)

In one of the more revealing sections of his autobiography, Keating describes his walk

⁵⁹² Aberdare Miners' Joint Committee, Coal War Bulletin, Manifesto by the Aberdare Miners: A Call to Arms! (Merthyr Tydfil: [printed by the Labour Pioneer Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.], 1910). This bulletin famously begins: 'To our Fellow Slaves of the Lamp.'

⁵⁹³ For the best account of this period see Robert Page Arnot, South Wales Miners, Glowyr de Cymru: A History of the South Wales Miners' Federation (1914-1926) vol. 2 (Cardiff: Cymric Federation Press, 1975), pp. 19-230. A copy of the King's Proclamation Under the Munitions Act of 1915 is included on p. 91.

home at the end of his first working day as a door boy in Nixon's Navigation Colliery:

Finishing time came as a disappointment.

But there was a consolation: there would be daylight enough left for people to see me going home, black—legitimately black...

My pride in being the associate of men could not be put into words. To be seen returning home at evening time with all the big miners and their boys, stained by dust and toil, was a thing that had, for years, filled my imagination as the most exalted achievement of a life-time... I wanted to be seen going home from the pit, black, vividly black, so black as to be nearly invisible...

My wish was granted. I was seen by most of my friends in my black clothes, with my face black, my hands black, and my pit-lamp and 'box-and-jack' black, as I came home. My mother smiled at my comical appearance as I walked in the house. (*My Struggle for Life*, p. 52-3)

Keating's emphasis on his coal-blackened face here is no accident. It constructs him as working-class, as a collier, and it is ultimately a racialised description. This might sound like an odd thing to say: it may appear to be the most natural thing in the world for a young door-boy in a Welsh colliery to be going home from his first shift at work proud of being turned black by his day's work but, as Colette Gullaumin points out in 'Race and Nature: the system of marks' there is in reality no natural group which can be identified from marks which are written on the body of the Other, specifically on the face: what we encounter are a series of social relationships which ascribe a class location on the body.⁵⁹⁴

David Trotter in his work on the Edwardian English novel describes Keating's description of the boy's black face as 'a fantasy, a "vanity", as well as a uniform.'⁵⁹⁵ I would suggest that there is more going on here, for Keating's black face at the end of the shift is not simply an indication that he had been working down the pit, it is more than a

⁵⁹⁴ Colette Gullaumin, 'Race and Nature: the system of marks. The idea of a natural group and social relationships', in *Racism, Sexism, Power and Ideology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 133-152 (pp. 144-7)

⁵⁹⁵ David Trotter, *The English Novel in History, 1895-1920* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 34

vanity or a uniform: it constructs the boy within a complex of class relationships and it does so using the conveniently available racial mode of representation.⁵⁹⁶ There are several threads which need to be unravelled at this point, the first of which is that between the 1840s and the 1920s the Irish were constructed in the British and American press as black, along with all of the stereotypical racial baggage that the idea of the black Irishman brought along with it.⁵⁹⁷ Secondly, Anne McClintock in her analysis of imperialism which looks in part at the representation of the mining industry, argues that, 'In newspapers, government reports, personal accounts and journals, the pit miners were everywhere constructed as a "race" apart, figured as racial outcasts, historically abandoned, isolated and primitive.'⁵⁹⁸ McClintock's sources are all English or Scottish and although some parts of her analysis translate well into the Welsh context (her argument that working women tended to leave waged labour upon marriage, for example)⁵⁹⁹ other parts do not necessarily translate so neatly. In particular her argument that the miners were constructed as a race apart I would suggest fails in Wales: miners who were constructed as a different race would have been a familiar image to an English audience, but this was a uniquely alien mode of representation in Wales and to date the only material that I have come across that uses this construct has been written from outside of these Welsh mining communities.⁶⁰⁰ It is here that we begin to get a sense of Keating's hybridity: he is writing for an English audience and does so using a representative mode which was bourgeois, and British, but

⁵⁹⁶ Convenient because it would have made the job of selling a Welsh novel by an unknown second generation Irish immigrant to an English editor that much easier because he was providing a book which was readily saleable to the market.

⁵⁹⁷ See for example, Richard Dyer, *White* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 52-7. Also, Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 52-6.

⁵⁹⁸ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, p. 115

⁵⁹⁹ McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, p. 118

⁶⁰⁰ This is a typical problem for the discourse of race: few, if any, communities will consciously write about themselves racially. The question of race is external, not internal.

foreign to industrial South Wales which had a long history of acting as a well-organised, communal, and self-contained cultural unit.

Race has often been read as ultimately a displacement of class, as in this example from Étienne Balibar:

Several historians of racism... have laid emphasis upon the fact that the modern idea of race... did not initially have a national (or ethnic), but a class signification.... it is only retrospectively that the notion of race was 'ethnicized', so that it could be integrated into the nationalist complex...

The industrial revolution, at the same time as it creates specifically capitalist relations of production, gives rise to the *new racism* of the bourgeois era... the one which has as its target the *proletariat* in its dual sense as exploited population... and politically threatening population.⁶⁰¹

When Keating narrates the story of his walk home following his first shift down the pit he constructs himself within a series of class relations, but he does so using the late-Victorian visual language of race. Writing in his autobiography in 1916, Keating describes his entry into the industrial proletariat within a racialised discourse which would have been familiar to his intended English audience, but which now seems outlandish to a modern audience.

The description of his first shift underground which Keating uses in his autobiography was even in 1916 already something of a well-established narrative device in the industrial literature of South Wales. It would go on to become a key structural element of the industrial writing which was produced by Welsh writers in the twentieth century. In earlier books like John Protheroe's *Little Johnny* (1891) the first shift underground was a formative element of the narrative; however, in 1916 Keating is doing something unusual and at the time unique in industrial South Wales: he writes the

⁶⁰¹ Étienne Balibar, 'Class Racism', in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* trans. by Chris Turner (London: Verso, 1991), 204-16 (p. 207 and p. 209)

experience of work in the collieries of South Wales from within an English bourgeois frame using a racial narrative of representation.⁶⁰² Encapsulated at this early age is a colonial encounter which would ultimately produce the first Welsh industrial novelist, an encounter which is reinforced by the unconscious racial emphasis which Keating places on returning home from work on his first day blackened by coal dust.

Throughout his life, Joseph Keating must have been continually negotiating these sorts of social positions: Irish-Welsh; collier-novelist. Just how much they marked his life can be read in his obituary: out of the fifteen books which Keating published eleven were novels; only three were Welsh industrial novels and one of the fifteen was a collection of his industrial short stories; he had only worked in the coal industry for six years (leaving at eighteen to find 'work in the sun'); his career as a journalist ended as abruptly as it started; but Keating is still remembered primarily as a Welsh-speaking collier who wrote novels about his experiences underground.

One of the points I would like to emphasise is that the hybrid novel in Wales is ultimately a product of its immediate environment—although Keating is writing in an English mode, he does so from within a Welsh literary tradition. Even when he later moves to London to write, Keating is still writing in a mode that owes much to the earlier Welsh narrative traditions which I have identified in this thesis. Keating's writing may best be described as following a 'hybridity cycle': that is, 'a cycle that goes from "hybrid" form, to "pure" form, to "hybrid" form.'⁶⁰³ Keating writes a hybrid text, a novel which includes an earlier Welsh folkloric narrative tradition. This is then assimilated by an editor in George

⁶⁰² For more on the idea of a racial narrative of representation see David Lloyd, 'Race under Representation', *Oxford Literary Review* 13:1-2 (1991), 62-94 (p. 64).

⁶⁰³ Brian Stross, 'The Hybrid Metaphor: From Biology to Culture', *The Journal of American Folklore* 112:445 [Theorizing the Hybrid] (1999), 245-67 (p. 265)

Allen into a 'pure' novel of interest to a romance inclined English middle class. However, the text on publication once again becomes a hybrid which belongs to two distinct cultures. The cultural idea of hybridity is drawn from the discipline of biology but, like Linnaeus's system for cataloguing nature, it was used from an early point to support the discourse(s) of race.⁶⁰⁴ Stross identifies three implied stages to the hybridity cycle: birth of the hybrid, naming the hybrid, and finally the refinement of the hybrid. The processes of hybridisation can include, 'adapting to environment, adopting formats, adapting conventions, creating rules, generating traditions.'⁶⁰⁵ Keating's industrial novels observe all of these processes of hybridisation.

To return to the example of the twelve-year old boy returning home from the pit, Keating writes from within a familiar Welsh narrative form (the first shift down the pit): this is one pole of the cycle and the second is the racial discourse through which Keating writes. Keating's first published novel Son of Judith is a romance between Howel Morris (a self-educating collier and illegitimate son of Griffith Meredith, a colliery surveyor, head manager of the fictionalised Glamorgan Colliery Company, and a share owner in two collieries) and Morwen Owen (daughter of Morgan Owen, who owns an estate in the Vale of Glamorgan). Son of Judith is almost one of the most deeply hybridised literary productions to come out Wales. Even the title Son of Judith is problematic as it refers to the nationalist Old Testament Book of Judith which is included in the Catholic and Orthodox Bibles but not in the Protestant. The Son of Judith would have been a familiar reference for a Catholic audience, it would have been especially meaningful for an Irish nationalist Catholic audience, but it would have been unfamiliar to a Welsh Nonconformist audience.

⁶⁰⁴ See for example, Rev. F. W. Farrar, 'On Hybridity', Journal of the Anthropological Society of London 2 (1864), ccxxii-ccxxix (p. ccxxii)

⁶⁰⁵ Stross, 'The Hybrid Metaphor', p. 265

The title, Son of Judith plays on this layered level of meaning.

The central scene of Son of Judith is a hybrid interpretation of the Welsh first shift underground narrative, which is later described as a picnic in a pit.⁶⁰⁶ It begins:

The half-dozen components of the party—a doctor, with iron-grey hair; an elderly clergyman, whose hair was long and white; his middle-aged sister, who had given up all things to devote herself to her bachelor brother as his housekeeper; her would-be lover and husband who, in spite of all she said to discourage him, never lost hope of one day making her his wife; and a clear-eyed, vivacious girl of nineteen, who clearly ruled the rest by reason of her complacent affection, clustered in a happy group at the pit-head. (Son of Judith, p. 38)

Notice here how the idea of the marked face has inverted: the white bourgeois face is marked by an emptiness, by a curious silence. These inversions are common in the construction of whiteness.⁶⁰⁷

The fictional Caegarw Colliery is described as belonging to the Glamorgan Colliery Company (Son of Judith, p. 14). The company's offices in the Cynon Valley are central to the narrative plot of the novel. The Glamorgan Colliery Company is an interesting choice here: the company was formed as the Ely Valley Coal Co. Ltd in 1861 by the Scottish mining agent and engineer Archibald Hood. The company owned pits in Llwynypia in the Rhondda, and had a small level called Gilfach in the Ogmore Valley.⁶⁰⁸ Like most other Welsh colliery companies, although small offices were kept close to the collieries, the main offices of the Glamorgan Colliery Company were centralised, and in Cardiff.⁶⁰⁹ Between 1892 and 1900 the company made no profit and it only paid a dividend on its shares in 1908 but, unlike other colliery companies which failed because of their large trading

⁶⁰⁶ Joseph Keating, Son of Judith: A Tale of the Welsh Mining Valleys (London: George Allen, 1900), p. 154. All further references are to this edition and are given in parenthesis in the text.

⁶⁰⁷ See for example Richard Dyer's sixth and last chapter 'White Death', in: White (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 207-23.

⁶⁰⁸ Walters, p. 55 and p. 107

⁶⁰⁹ Walters, p. 179

losses, the well-capitalised Glamorgan Colliery Company was able to survive.⁶¹⁰ In 1907 the company's Llwynypia collieries were taken over by the Cambrian Combine, and they were at the heart of the Cambrian Combine Dispute of 1910-11. Central to Keating's first novel is an unprofitable and comparatively small colliery company that had no involvement with Aberdare or Mountain Ash. The offices which Keating describes are, like the Caegarw colliery itself, a fiction; yet there are a number of details in the novel which link it to Mountain Ash. Caegarw Colliery is a fiction, but the Glamorgan Colliery Company is not. This point is crucial: Keating in his first novel has fictionalised a typical Welsh coal-owner, one which after amalgamation became infamous. The colliery company at the heart of Keating's novel is essentially a displacement, and would have been obviously so to a local Welsh audience. The displaced and fictionalised Glamorgan Colliery Company is also used by Keating in a number of his short stories, such as 'Yanto, The Waster.'⁶¹¹ Similar acts of displacement are among the key features of Keating's fiction.

Keating describes why on the day of the visit the pit is not working:

'I thought,' mildly put in the clergyman, 'that you brought up coal, for your lives, in the day-time, and coal only.'

'That's right, sir. But to-day, you see, the colliers are out—a little strike.'

'Oh, yes, I remember. You're the cause of that, Lloyd.'

The doctor smiled back at the clergyman.

'I believe I am, Mr Rhys.'

'How is that, Doctor?' asked Miss Rhys' follower.

'A curious thing, Mr Swinford: The colliers want the management to deduct three-thirds of a shilling a month from their wages for medical service, instead of two-thirds which the management thought enough for me.'

⁶¹⁰ Walters, p. 287

⁶¹¹ Joseph Keating, *Adventures in the Dark*, (Cardiff, Western Mail, [1906?]) p. 27. All further references are to this edition and are given in parenthesis in the text.

‘But, Doctor Lloyd, you are good friends with men and managers,’ exclaimed the girl, with the earnestness of one interested in such matters. ‘Couldn’t some arrangement be made by the men, instead of going on strike, Mr Jones?’

‘Oh, bless you miss,’ the guide exclaimed, ‘they are ready to go strike any time for the least thing. It’ll be over to-morrow. They’ll ‘ave a little holiday; that’s all.’ (Son of Judith, pp. 139-40)

Bear in mind that this is being written just after the South Wales Miners’ Federation had been formed following the long strike of 1898; the reality on the ground was that union representatives were being blacklisted by the coal owners and an insurgency was brewing in the South Wales coalfield—a little holiday was the last thing on the miners’ minds.

Keating has reinterpreted the life of the coalfield through an English bourgeois frame. In another example, Keating describes the encounter of his young hero, ‘Howel’, a scab who had been working during the strike, with a group of striking miners:

But when the young man came within speaking distance, these men with the low deceit, which is one of the worst traits of Welsh character, greeted him in hearty friendship. (Son of Judith, p. 185)

This sort of negative description of the colliers is typical of Son of Judith: just how alien this point of view must have been to Keating can be seen in a later description of the Welsh collier which comes from his autobiography:

My acquaintance with miners in various districts made me regard the Welsh collier as a very high type of citizen, good-humoured, kind, skilful, hard-working, and naturally intellectual and pious. (My Struggle for Life, p. 84)

Like many of his descriptions in Son of Judith, his description of the character of the group of striking Welsh miners comes straight out of the Victorian discourse of race. Compare Keating’s description from Son of Judith with that of Dr John Beddoe in his notorious book The Races of Britain:

The rest of [Giraldus de Barry's] description of [the Welsh] character is so vivid and striking that it may be quoted with advantage... "They are inconsistent," he says, "mobile: they have no respect for their oaths, for their promises, for the truth: they will give their right hands in attestation of truth, even in joke: they are always ready for perjury."⁶¹²

To understand these diametrically opposed descriptions of Welsh miners in Keating's work it is necessary to trace the position of the intended audience for the novel. Unlike other Welsh writers, like T. J. Ll. Prichard or Jack Jones who have consciously written for their own people, Keating is writing consciously for a middle-class English audience. Keating was not the first Welshman to write for an English audience, his contemporary Allen Raine also used the melodramatic romance to successfully access the London market.⁶¹³ However, unlike Keating who practically had a new publisher for every book, Allen Raine seems to have found more success with her London publisher, Hutchinson. Keating in Son of Judith is essentially using a racial mode of representation which was completely alien to industrial South Wales, and to do so he draws heavily on the deeply racial anthropological work of Beddoe (a point to which I will return).

Keating's first novel compulsively returns to the question of the marked body—descriptions of the face litter the text as when, for example, the group of visitors arrives at pit bottom after descending the shaft in the cage:

'Beautiful!' exclaimed Morwen. The face of the girl was now flushed with delight, as she laughed at the terrors which a moment before had blanched her cheek. (Son of Judith, p. 46)

Another example occurs when Morwen gets lost. The party search the underground

⁶¹² Dr. John Beddoe, The Races of Britain: A Contribution to the Anthropology of Western Europe (Bristol: Arrowsmith; and London: Trübner and Co., 1885), p. 261

⁶¹³ For more on the work of Allen Raine see: Katie Gramich, Twentieth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Land, Gender, Belonging (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007)

workings:

‘Well,’ Jones said emphatically, ‘she’s not in Twm Jack’s heading, anyhow. Here we be in the ‘face’—right up the top.’

‘We must try elsewhere,’ the vicar said quickly. ‘Take us somewhere at once, Mr Jones.’

‘We’ll go round the ‘face’ and up and down the stalls.’ (Son of Judith, p. 69)

Here the coal face is played off against both the white middle-class face, and the black working face. When Howel (the novel’s hero) rescues the lost Morwen (the novel’s romance interest) the two meet in the dark of the pit:

Once again she rejoiced that darkness—which covers a multitude of sins—hid her from his gaze and left her tell-tale colour undiscovered. (Son of Judith, pp. 101-2)

The girl is blushing in the collier’s company. Later, when Howel has managed to relight their lamps Morwen’s annoyance grows because she cannot see Howel’s face:

He ought, she said to herself in displeasure, to let his face be seen—why would he hide it from her as he did? He knew she wished to see him. (Son of Judith, p. 108)

And then at the end of the picnic underground:

‘Picnics are very well in their way,’ Mr Swinford said wrathfully. He had stopped, as they were passing, to look at his besmirched person in the windows of the colliery offices. ‘But they leave one in such an unpresentable state, hang it! Look at me!’...

‘Is my face really as dirty as that?’ he cried incredulously.

‘Its as black as a mourning bonnet,’ said Morwen.

‘And your’s is as black as a funeral,’ he retorted, annoyed.

‘Oh!’ exclaimed she, horrified.

‘But look at me!’ exclaimed Miss Rhys, staring at the dusky reflection of her besmudged face in the square panes. (Son of Judith, pp. 154-5)

And so the novel goes on, compulsively drawing on descriptions of the face: blushing

faces, besmudged faces, dirty faces, clean faces, black faces, white faces, working faces, empty white bourgeois faces. This feature of the novel is so compulsive that it is difficult to find a page which does not use the reference at least once.

These are all examples of how deeply hybridised Keating's first novel is. The text has an unconscious compulsion to record marks of race upon the face, even some of its descriptions of place are marked on the face; however, the racial mark on the face is typically an unstable signifier:

'By the look of his white face,' remarked old Owen gruffly, from his sofa, 'it's a serious matter.' (Son of Judith, p. 259)

The white bourgeois face cycles between superiority and crisis (health and disease, control and emotional breakdown). There are passages of Keating's novel, however, which are consciously hybrid in that they are written about industrial South Wales, but not with the hand of someone who is writing from within that community, but of one who is writing about that community from within an English bourgeois frame. As we have already seen, Keating's descriptions of the miners of South Wales in Son of Judith are particularly problematic, as in this extended quotation:

His height reached just the average five feet six inches of the sturdy Celt, and in physical proportion he was identical with his fellows. But the superior face of the man placed him apart from common men, raised him above them like honour above meanness. The faces of his associates in the mines expressed in the main—nothing. They all had the square, flat forehead, the lack-lustre eye due to working in bad artificial light, high and wide cheek-bones, and pointed chin, with the blue marks of old wounds disfiguring every part of their features; while their expression was that of hopeless slaves who, with nothing but toil to look to, and having no liberty to use what thoughts came to their minds, gradually but surely lost the power to think; so that the face looked as blank and dreary as an uninscribed tombstone.

His face, with the high wide brow which overhung outstarting eyes, through whose fullness gleamed the light of inward fire; the somewhat aquiline nose and thin nostrils; the drawn cheeks that gave undue squareness to his chin, and a

sternness rather than firmness to his expression, emphasised by the compressed lips, bespoke a fierce mental and spiritual conflict that rarely allowed its victim respite. It would have been better for him that the prominent eyes were of the gentle blue which so often indicates mental incapacity. Instead his eyes were a deep brown which, with their fullness indicating the tendency to idealise thought, and the frowning brow above them expressing gloom, told of strong emotions—like rebellious nobles with a weak king, easily aroused, difficult to overcome. (Son of Judith, pp. 177-8)

As in the earlier example, Keating's descriptions in this passage come straight from the same racial discourse as that of Dr. John Beddoe's book The Races of Britain. It is easier perhaps to map Keating's description:

Howel Morris (Irish-Saxon)	Welsh Colliers (Africanoid)
5 feet 6 inches tall, sturdy Celt	
Superior Face	'Nothing,' blank and dreary faces
High, wide brow (possibly Irish/Kerry: Beddoe, p. 265; or educated Englishmen who tend to have long broad heads: Beddoe, p. 235; or South Welsh: Beddoe, p. 260)	Square, flat forehead (prehistoric 'prognathous'/Africanoid type found in Wales and Ireland: Beddoe, p. 10-1; also Kymric: Beddoe p. 94)
Outstarting eyes (shine with inward fire)	Lack-lustre eyes (miners' nystagmus)
Drawn cheeks (possibly Frisian) (flat cheek bones): Beddoe p. 40; contrasts to the prominent cheekbones of the Irish: Beddoe, p. 264	High and wide cheek-bones (prehistoric pre-Celtic: Beddoe, p. 257; Welsh: Beddoe, p. 260
Square chin (contrast to the narrow chin of the Irish/Kerry) Beddoe, <u>Kelts of Ireland</u> , p. 121 ⁶¹⁴	Pointed chin ('prognathous'/Africanoid type) Beddoe, p. 10-1
Aquiline nose and thin nostrils (Frisian) Beddoe, p. 40	Disfigured by blue coal scars (marks of labour, likely to have been ignored by Beddoe)
Compressed lips	
Stern expression	Expression of hopeless slaves
Deep brown eyes (typical of upper-class Irish, comes from infusion of English blood into Irish landed and professional classes) Beddoe, p. 262	
Idealised thought - Strong emotions	No liberty of thought - No power to think
No complexion or skin colour detailed No hair colour detailed	

Table 6.2 Keating's racial description in Son of Judith

Dr. John Beddoe was a founder member of the Ethnological Society, president of the Anthropological Institute, and a fellow of the Royal Society. The vague and contradictory descriptions of Beddoe's key work The Races of Britain are typical of the discourse of race and his authority is not helped by his use of Iolo Morgannwg's unreliable Triads (many of which he forged) or by the small numbers of his sample sizes (for example, he bases his

⁶¹⁴ John Beddoe, 'The Kelts of Ireland' Journal of Anthropology 1:2 (1870), 117-131.

argument about the distribution of his ancient prognathous or Africanoid type on a sample of ‘over forty’ people across the entire country).⁶¹⁵ Beddoe even tells us explicitly, ‘in truth, the Welsh are anything but a homogenous race.’⁶¹⁶ But for all these qualifications it is possible, I believe, to identify from Keating’s descriptions that Howel Morris is intended to be read as an Irish-Saxon type from the west of Ireland,⁶¹⁷ whereas the Welsh colliers are intended to be read as a borderline cross between the Kymric race and the prehistoric Africanoid race.

Beddoe works from within the same Enlightenment racial discourse that was established by Linnaeus and the early anthropologists such as Blumenbach who, in 1775, proposed for the first time that there were four varieties of humankind (Europeans, Asians, Africans, and Eastern Americans). Blumenbach based his anthropology on the measurement of skulls, in his case from his collection of eighty-two skulls, and his varieties he insisted were liable to revision and refinement—Beddoe extended his techniques.⁶¹⁸ In Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century, racial theory was used by anthropologists to search for the origins of the English; for example, Luke Owen Pike in The English and Their Origins: A Prologue to Authentic English History (1866) had ‘examined the physical and psychical evidence of the true origins of the English in the light of the new theory of evolution and the cranial evidence that had so recently become available.’⁶¹⁹ Beddoe is working within the same scientific moment as Pike, Arnold, and Bagehot and is doing so for much the same purposes—to justify and extend the British

⁶¹⁵ Beddoe, Races of Britain, p. 28, p. 23, p. 33, and p. 10 respectively.

⁶¹⁶ Beddoe, Races of Britain, p. 260

⁶¹⁷ See for example, John Lubbock, ‘The Nationalities of the United Kingdom. Extracts from Letters to the Times’, The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 16 (1887), 418-422.

⁶¹⁸ Ivan Hannaford, Race: The History of an Idea in the West (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1996), p. 206

⁶¹⁹ Hannaford, Race, p. 279

colonial project. This was not simply an academic debate, for these racial theories were discussed in the letter pages of The Times⁶²⁰ and were part of the popular cultural baggage of the British Empire.

Keating in Son of Judith uses a racial discourse which is quite particular to Britain in the age of Empire. It may seem foreign to us but to his intended English audience at the end of Victoria's reign it would have been familiar and easily interpretable. The hero of Son of Judith is able to triumph over the obstacles in his way not because of his intelligence or ability but because of the racially superior genetics of his birth, which mark him out from the degenerate and atavistic Africanoid Welsh colliers who are his companions. These are not the ancient Kymry of Beddow, or the race of ancient Britons of the English imagination: the Welsh colliers in Keating's novel Son of Judith are the politically threatening, atavistic, degenerate, and racialised industrial proletariat. Keating in this novel writes about Wales but he does so for an English audience in terms that an English audience would have been uniquely placed to understand.

Even the descriptions of working life in the Victorian coal industry in South Wales in Keating's novel are hybridised. They cycle between describing the chronically antiquated pillar and stall method of working the coal and the modern longwall method which had been introduced in the 1860s. To return to an early description at the start of the picnic down the pit scene (where the young Morwen has become lost underground):

'We'll go round the 'face' and up and down the stalls.'

'The Stalls?' echoed Mr Swinford. 'You don't mean to say you keep horses here?'

'No, sir, colliers' stalls. You seen all them turnings to the right, just by every door we passed?'

⁶²⁰ See for example: John Lubbock, 'The Nationalities of the United Kingdom: Extracts from Letters to the Times', The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 16 (1887), 418-422.

'Yes.'

'That's where the colliers get the coal; we call 'um stalls.'

'Oh.'

'By going through the 'face' we can get into every one of 'um, an' we'll sure to find her in one or other of the stall roads.' (*Son of Judith*, p. 69)

Keating describes here the older pillar and stall method of working the coal:

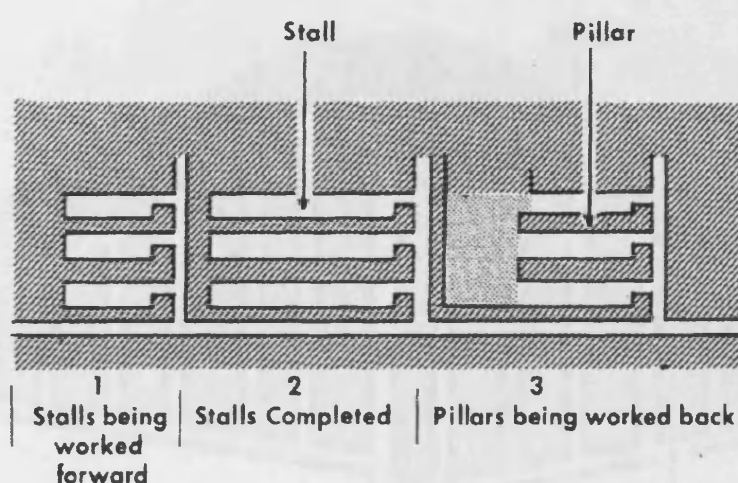


Figure 6.3 Pillar and Stall (from M. J. Daunton, 'Down the Pit: Work in the Great Northern and South Wales Coalfields, 1870-1914', *The Economic History Review* [new series] 34:4 (1981), 578-97 (p. 581))

Although the pillar and stall method may still have been used in a handful of small levels and in some house-coal seams, it is highly unlikely that Keating would have had first-hand experience of this method as the pits he worked in underground would have been amongst the first to convert to longwall working (e.g. Nixon's Navigation). The description continues:

The party now had reached the extreme end of the heading; their further progress was barred by the actual coal glittering in its natural bed...they pushed rapidly along the face of the coal until they reached the next roadway. Down this one and up the

next they travelled until they had explored every foot of ground in their immediate neighbourhood. (*Son of Judith*, p. 69)

Here Keating appears to have switched to a description of longwall working in a crystalline steam-coal seam (crystalline because the coal glitters):

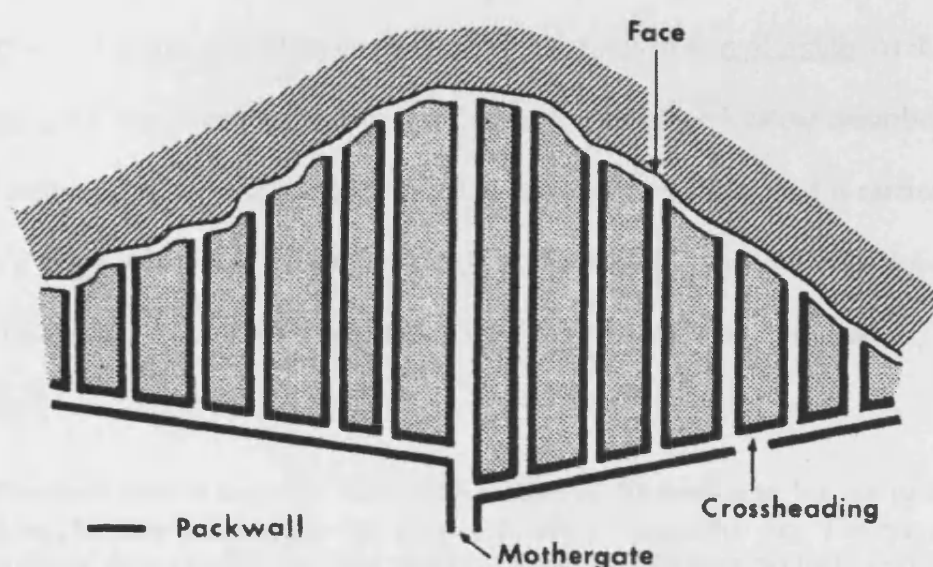


Figure 6.4 Longwall (from Daunton, 'Down the Pit', p. 581)

In reality not even where the coal beds were lying level and free from faults did the workings look exactly as laid out in these text-book diagrams, but Keating's descriptions of stall and headings are accurate enough to be able to identify a switch in his descriptions of how the coal face is worked. His descriptions of the underground workings cycle between the older pillar and stall method and the new longwall method of working. When he writes the 'picnic down a pit' scene in *Son of Judith* Keating falls back on earlier modes of writing and so triggers the start of yet

another hybridity cycle;⁶²¹ consequently, the descriptions of the underground workings switch between old and new. There are a number of similar micro and macro hybridity cycles within Keating's unstable first novel, but the one which dominates is the novel's obsession with descriptions of marked faces.

Curiously, although faces do appear in Keating's second novel, Maurice (1905), their use stands in contrast to those racialised faces of Son of Judith. At the start of Maurice is another return from work scene, but this time Keating describes how the body of a miner who has been killed in an accident underground is carried home on a rough bier (an all too common sight in the mining communities of South Wales). This is how he describes the colliers who carry the body of their dead colleague:

The black dust of the mine was on the clothes of the workmen, but not upon their faces; for they had scarcely had time to do any pit-work that day. The bringing home of their unlucky comrade had kept them busy enough; so that, with their dusty clothes and pale faces, they made a curious effect in black and white.⁶²²

At the end of the novel Keating describes an explosion underground in considerable detail. Most of the colliers who survived the initial blast of an explosion were killed by the carbon monoxide of the after-damp.⁶²³ This is how Keating describes the body of a collier who had been killed by the after-damp:

He looked peaceful; his lips were almost smiling. There was nobility in his handsome face. Underneath the black dust upon his cheeks there was the warm blush which gave him the appearance of sleep; for the poison that had killed him gives the cheeks of its victims a pink, roseate tint like the flush of dawn. But no

⁶²¹ I use 'cycle' here because I am drawing on the ideas of cultural hybridity that were outlined by Brian Stross in 'The Hybrid Metaphor: From Biology to Culture' (see page 252).

⁶²² Joseph Keating, Maurice: A Romance of Light and Darkness (London: Chatto & Windus, 1905), p. 28. All further references are to this edition and are given in parenthesis in the text.

⁶²³ The few colliers that did survive would have been close to one of the shafts.

sunrise ever follows that dawn; it is the red of a life's sunset. Most innocent it looked. But the poison that brought the beautiful tint to his cheek and the ripe redness to his lips was so deadly—even now—that it could kill many another; no living lips dared touch his, for in the absorption of their innocence was quick death. (Maurice, p. 353)

Keating's description of the affect of after-damp here is accurate enough to have been drawn from an official inquiry into an explosion.⁶²⁴ These descriptions can be seen to be immediately much more sympathetic to their subject. They also lack the heavily racialised descriptions of the face which are so prominent in Son of Judith. Assuming that Son of Judith was as successful as its contemporary reviewers claimed it to be, this would have given Keating more agency in his second novel than in the first—and the result is a novel which lacks the overtly racist discourse of the first.

Work in Son of Judith is something to be escaped, worth visiting on a picnic maybe but most definitely not worth staying in on imminent threat of racial degeneration and loss of individual identity. The hybrid permeates this novel: from the compulsive preoccupation with racially marked faces; to the racial descriptions of the main character and the amorphous, threatening industrial proletariat; even to the landscapes of the mining valley and the descriptions of how the coal is worked underground. This hybridity is unstable, perhaps inevitably so, and it cycles between addressing the concerns of its English audience and means of production, and the Welsh subject which it is trying to describe.

6.3 *The Hybrid Literature of Labour: Adventures in the Dark (1906)*

Just how hybridised Keating's novel is can be seen if it is read in contrast to his short

⁶²⁴ See, for example: Ivor J. Davies, 'Carbon Monoxide Poisoning in the Senghenydd Explosion', British Medical Journal 2:2793 (1914), 49-68

stories. In 1906 the Western Mail press published a collection of short stories by Keating called, Adventures in the Dark. In a note at the start of the book Keating writes:

The element of universal interest in Adventures is shown through the differing kinds of journals that published them. Young Wales led the way. The Idler was the first English magazine to publish them; then—the London, Pall Mall, Daily Mail, Daily News, Sunday Chronicle and Munsey's Magazine.

America opened its arms wide to them and called loudly for more.
(Adventures in the Dark, p. iv)

Despite the success and warm reception of his first two novels in the London newspapers Keating tells us in his autobiography that he made very little money from them and supported himself as a writer by selling short stories to the London press:

Short stories in The Strand and other magazines had brought me a few pounds to pay for food and shelter. By the summer of 1907, I had enough to be certain of being able to live for three months; and, with this advantage behind me, I began my novel, The Great Appeal. (My Struggle for Life, p. 246)

Aside from the original short stories which he published in Young Wales and his collection of short stories which was published by the Western Mail, all of the documentary evidence suggests that Keating never published in Wales, seeking instead to publish with a succession of London publishers and papers who often syndicated his work in the United States. This is perhaps one of the biggest difficulties when reading Keating—as we have seen, Aberdare was a centre of the Welsh Victorian print trade and consequently there was a healthy local print industry which was capable of publishing his work together with a ready newspaper market for his writing and yet, for the most part, he consciously turned his back on Wales and looked to London for publishers instead. It could be suggested that Keating was trying to become a professional novelist and so sought out the London publishers who were more likely to push him towards fame, but he wrote no journalism

which would normally have supported an aspiring writer. Keating turned his back on professional writing shortly after the end of the First World War: his career as a novelist had been successful but brief. The same is true of his reading lists which he details in his autobiography—the books he tells us he reads are all English, none are Welsh (or Irish for that matter). And yet there is a trace in his work which shows that he was familiar with and drew upon the Welsh literary traditions which had developed since Isaac Carter had established his press in Trefhedyn.

The first point of note is that Adventures in the Dark is laid out in column inches and was in all likelihood produced by the Western Mail press at its Tudor Street Works from the same stereotype plates which were used to produce the newspaper. The cover of Adventures in the Dark is a technically well-executed (if poorly designed) four-colour print of an injured miner which, like the slightly earlier two-colour litho cover of the Western Mail edition of Twm Shon Catty, is printed on yellow paper stock. Adventures in the Dark is in many ways a typical Western Mail book; it has been produced cheaply in-house and is aimed at a national Welsh popular audience.

Keating has included a dedication at the start of Adventures in the Dark:

These Adventures are dedicated to the people 'Up the Hills' where I began life by coming into it...

"Up the hills," they play with death as if it were a toy; and rush to danger as light-heartedly as if it were some form of entertainment—like a football match. So in these "Adventures" you will find laughter and tragedy quite astonishingly mixed up. (Adventures in the Dark, p. 3)

Already Keating can be seen to be using a tone which is completely different from that of Son of Judith, whose descriptions of the Welsh miners were, if anything, hostile.

Adventures in the Dark includes seventeen short stories, of which three are themselves collections of short narratives. Most are reprints of the short stories which Keating was publishing in the London magazine and newspaper press and which had crossed the Atlantic to find a ready audience in the US. They are representative of his short-story work up to this point but they are not a complete collection: Keating tells us in his autobiography that he wrote fourteen short stories in the spring of 1910 alone (My Struggle for Life, p. 265). Keating also wrote for the London press under a series of pen-names, including his mother's maiden name, Hurley (My Struggle for Life, p. 207). There is, then, an extensive body of literature by Keating waiting to be recovered in the metropolitan and American press, of which Adventures in the Dark represents only the tip of an iceberg. Both Son of Judith and Adventures in the Dark appear to be an identifiable start of a new tradition, a new literary genre (the Welsh industrial novel) but they were not a complete break with the past and they were not without precedent.

Many of the key elements of Keating's writing appear in Little Johnny: A true narrative of seven years of my life in the coal mines, a little-known book which was published by its author John Protheroe in Cardiff in 1891. The writer of the book worked in the collieries of Tredegar, Sirhowy and Ebbw Vale in the 1860s from the age of seven and a half. Little Johnny is an odd book in many ways: it is an autobiography but it is unsettling as it is written by a third-person narrator. For example, at the start of the chapter 'Powder Bags Passing the Flames' the narrator describes an older type of colliery which is ventilated by a furnace:

The pit called No. 8, at Sirhowy, had two flues in it, one in the middle and the other at the bottom of the pit...

In the days of the old style of ventilation, a man had to keep the fire continually burning, and a wonderful fire it was. Its flames went into the pit with wild force, and was often found to interfere with the workmen as they ascended and descended the pit.

The first time little Johnny went down No. 8 Pit he was frightened very much as he felt the hot sulphur coming up to meet him, and filling his nose and mouth as he held fast to the iron stay on the cage.⁶²⁵

But for all its historical importance Little Johnny is still a literary text, and it is one which is written from within a firmly Nonconformist frame:

Dear reader, if you are down in the pit of sin and darkness, let me remind you that there are carriages of Mercy and Grace ascending from your pit very frequently, and what I should urge you to do is, make a rush at the mercy and grace of God, as he has come down to the bottom of the pit where you are.⁶²⁶

Little Johnny continually makes this hybrid switch between an autobiography of working life which is written in an indirect narrative voice and a direct first-person narrator who preaches to the reader from the present: the book constantly cycles between the two modes of writing. The result of these hybrid cycles between first and third person narration is a tension which in an autobiographical narrative frame is nothing if not unsettling. My immediate suspicion is that Protheroe wrote Little Johnny for use in local Nonconformist Sunday Schools. This may seem odd today given the modern association between Nonconformity and the Welsh language but throughout the nineteenth century Welsh Nonconformity had shown an evangelical zeal for preaching and teaching in English and it would have been natural for a book like this to have been produced for use in those chapels which preached and taught in English.⁶²⁷ Little Johnny demonstrates that in 1891 in

⁶²⁵ J. Protheroe, Little Johnny: A true narrative of seven years of my life in the coal mines (Cardiff: published by the author, 1891), p. 27

⁶²⁶ Little Johnny, p. 14.

⁶²⁷ See, E. T. Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales, p. 70-4

Cardiff both the religious book market and the author found it convenient to produce an autobiographical book of working life in the Monmouthshire steam-coal districts which was written firmly in English, just how firmly can be seen in the title—*Shôni Bach* has been published as Little Johnny. But for all the problems that it has with language, Little Johnny is still recognisably Welsh and it is written in Welsh narrative patterns.

In the book Johnny is described as coming originally from Llanthew, Brecon; when the family moved to Rhaser [*sic*] in 1865 (Protheroe means Rassau, Ebbw Vale) the young boy started work in the Gantra Pit, Ebbw Vale at the age of 'seven and a half.'⁶²⁸ He was able to work underground despite the Mines Regulation Act of 1861 which set the minimum age of 12 probably because he had obtained a certificate saying that he could read and write which excepted him from the Act.⁶²⁹ Keating worked from the age of 12 to 18 in the Welsh coal industry in the 1880s when it had been modernised and was working the deep steam coals, whereas Johnny worked from the age of 7 to 13 in the coal industry in the 1860s when it was undergoing major structural transition from the older ancillary mining, which had supplied the iron industry towards the new steam-coal trade. From the description of Johnny's first shift down the Gantra Pit it sounds as if it is working both ironstone mine and coal, which was natural as the ironstones of South Wales are to be found within the coal measures:

The stall was reached where Johnny had to work for his first master in the coal-mines. The top was rather low—it was the red vein—but they worked only the lower part of it. The walls (which are called gobs) were nicely built, and the road kept clean and in perfect order, and altogether presented a very snug workshop...After Johnny had worked about fourteen days with Mr. Jones, he was taught to "pick" *i.e.*, to pick the mine from the rubbish, and throw the rubbish into

⁶²⁸ Little Johnny, p. 3-5

⁶²⁹ Walters, p. 192

the gob (wall).⁶³⁰

This description is typical of the pits in Little Johnny, practically all of which are comparatively shallow pits which were worked to supply the Ebbw Vale, Tredegar, and Sirhowy ironworks. Although most of the pits which Protheroe describes were sunk around the 1840s, the method of working which Protheroe describes would have been familiar to an earlier pre-Victorian generation of miners: they were comparatively shallow, worked by naked lights, ventilated by fire or furnace, and the shafts were fitted with water-balance winders. This context very much informs the narrative of Little Johnny, and it means that Protheroe's rather awkward autobiography can be read as a unique historical record of working life in the Welsh coalfields before the development of the steam-coal industry.

In 1911 Beriah G. Evans wrote an article for the first edition of Wales: A National Magazine⁶³¹ asking why Welsh life had failed to be represented accurately in English fiction; in it he describes Joseph Keating's short stories:

Mr Joseph Keating's pen-pictures in the English magazines of Welsh collier life are, perhaps, a nearer approach to accurate representation of what really is than are most of the stories foisted on English readers as "Welsh"—but even his are insipid to a taste accustomed to, let us say, Mr Mardy Rees's delightful stories in Rhonddaese.⁶³²

Evans is being a little unjust to Keating here, as Keating's short stories are among the few detailed popular literary descriptions we have of working life on the coal face in this or any other period—but they cannot be read as history. Most of Keating's short stories feature

⁶³⁰ Little Johnny, p. 45

⁶³¹ The magazine Wales was edited by the Liberal M.P. For Mid Glamorgan, J. Hugh Edwards.

⁶³² Beriah G. Evans, 'Wales and its Novelists', Wales: A National Magazine [ed. J. Hugh Edwards] 1 (May 1911), 35-8 (p. 35)

explosions (e.g. 'Seth and the Fire Dragon' or 'After Dinner' which is part of the 'Flood and Fire' series) , flooding (e.g. 'Yanto, the Waster' and 'The Wisdom of Solomon') , or accidents (be it caused by roof falls as in 'Little Ivor's Vigil', or shaft accidents as in 'In Suspense' which is part of the 'Four Adventures' series). Yet even in those stories which are essentially early documentary descriptions, such as 'Death in Colours' which is part of the 'Flood and Fire' series of stories, the descriptions are detailed and among the few that we have from this period, but once again they are not able to be read as history, for example:

Every man and boy in the pit cries out with terror. They know that the rolling thunder they hear is the roar of death. Even the horses—there may be three or four hundred of them—understand why the roads and sides are trembling. Then men, boys, and horses rush out. The only way to escape is where the light of day comes down the shaft.

This is far away from where they are, and they scream with the horror that is upon them.

Just as they turn the corner of their little roadway to get to the main artery they see the fire. It fills the whole road. It is a great river of red, blue, and green. The gases and dust of the roads give it many colours. ('Death in Colours', Adventures in the Dark, p. 82)

Keating's descriptions of an explosion here are as accurate as any outside of an inquest; if anything, they are more detailed than those of an inquest; yet there is no way to link this explosion to an historical event. It could be a literary description of the explosion at the Albion Colliery in Cilfynydd which killed 290 men and boys in 1894 (next to Senghenydd, the second worst loss of life in an explosion in South Wales), but 'Death in Colours' is ultimately indeterminate—it could just as easily have been one of the two key explosions at Middle Duffryn (1850 and 1852) which changed national colliery legislation.

If Keating's short stories are not historical, what then are they? I would suggest that they occupy the same mythic space and deploy very much the same folkloric traditions as Edmund Jones had used in the eighteenth century at the start of the Industrial Revolution. In stories such as 'The Under-Secretary and the Mystery' Keating makes use of the same Welsh superstitions as Jones had documented in his two books: A History of Aberystroth and Apparitions of Spirits. The story opens in the office of the Under-Secretary of State (an ex-Inspector of Industry, Mr Tony Hervey) who is discussing the problems of Lord Glyncynon who is about to be ruined by a boundary dispute between his Glyncynon Colliery and the neighbouring abandoned Garth Colliery.⁶³³ The dispute is made worse by a mystery—the colliers at Glyncynon are refusing to work because they believe that the pit is haunted. On the request of Lord Glyncynon's beautiful daughter, Miss Molly Price, the Under-Secretary travels to the colliery where he is joined by Molly's brother, Harry Price who offers to go with him down the pit as he knows the roadways from his time spent in the pit during his holidays from school. When they arrive at the pithead the two men find that the colliers are worried because the plans have been badly drawn and the barrier between Glyncynon's workings and the flooded workings in the Garth Colliery next door is too small and liable to break and flood the Glyncynon at any time, which is disputed by the coal owner, Lord Glyncynon:

'That's where the mistake in the plans comes. The men say the barrier is worked too thin; and there's a swamp of five hundred yards in the Glyncynon, which would be a death trap for 'em all if the water came through.' ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 17)

At the pit head we have another of Keating's descriptions of the Welsh colliers:

⁶³³ Glyncynon Colliery is fictitious, but the Garth (Merthyr) Colliery in the Llynfi Valley, near Maesteg was working until 1930. In 1867 an explosion and subsequent fire forced the owners of the Garth Colliery to flood the pit in an attempt to put out the flames. Ray Lawrence, The South Wales Coalfield Directory: Collieries of the South Wales Coalfield: G, p. 34

The men who had followed him crowded the place. The bright black eyes, pale cheeks, the rough beards, the short, sturdy stature of the men, proclaimed their nationality and their calling to anyone acquainted with South Wales colliery people. ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 17)

Notice how different this description is from the racist descriptions which were used in Son of Judith. Hervey causes much excitement when he tells the men that he intends going down the pit that night to do his measurements:

'The men,' cried Griffiths, 'are afraid to go in because, when the fire broke out in the old Garth pit next to the Glyncynon, they heard the same warnings, and they saw the *red dog*. And if the men only took notice of this *arwydd* (sign), there would not have been over two hundred of 'em burned in the explosion.'

'I remember the explosion,' very quietly said Hervey, his face pale.

'There's six of the corpses in the old pit now,' put in the check-weigher.

'Tis they are sending the warnings,' affirmed another man. 'The same as the warnings came before that explosion.'

'What warnings? You surely do not believe they were supernatural?'

'Taint what we believe, sir' returned Griffiths. 'It's what the colliers saw. It's a proved fact that, before the explosion, the men in the district where the fire broke out heard in the old black workings the awful shriek of the *tylwyth teg* (fairies), and saw the lights of the red dog.' ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 18)

He continues:

'He didn't take the *arwydd* (sign),' added his friend. 'But the Glyncynon men, when they heard the wailings and warning cries of the *bendith y mamau* (spirit cries: blessings of mothers), they knew it was a warning against flood or fire.' ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 18)⁶³⁴

The manager who had earlier descended the pit on a ghost hunt arrives back on the surface, terrified; he swears that a man had come up with him in the cage after it had started its journey to the surface, but the ghost had left the cage on a lower landing before the carriage arrived at the pit head:

⁶³⁴ The italics here are Keating's.

Terrified silence fell upon the crowd of men. The awe-struck whispers *drychiolaeth* (apparition) went around. ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 19)

The two bourgeois men ignore the advice of both the superstitious colliers and the terrified manager and descend the pit. From the pit bottom the two descend into the district called the 'swamp'; going through an air tight door which the men have erected they enter the haunted workings.⁶³⁵ What follows is a series of encounters with shrieks around the men in the blackness of the workings, panic, extinguished lights, and a series of strange smells which are associated with the ghostly sobbing and wailing of the Cyhyraeth or Bendith y Mamau trapped underground:

They sat down in the side of the roadway. Now one peculiarity of a rest underground expresses itself in the way you dispose of your lamp. Instinctively you put it at your head if you lie down; and, if sitting, you make a firm place for it on the ground between your feet. So did these two.

The timber at their backs, and above their heads, and across the other side of the road, by its cracked and bent condition, told of enormous pressure—"squeeze," the colliers call it.

'Here is that death-smell more than ever,' said Harry.

'I think—' began his friend.

But he could say no more.

A scream, a fiendish yell, terrible and terrifying, burst out from the stones upon which they sat. ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 23)

The two men run to escape the fiend. Once they have escaped the swamp and have managed to relight their lamps they re-enter the haunted workings. This time they see a ghostly light in the workings, a Corpse Candle. Hervey has gone on ahead of the young man:

⁶³⁵ There are overtones here of the haunted 'Soldier's Deep' in Nixon's Navigation Colliery which Keating tells us scared him as a boy, see My Struggle for Life, p. 49.

Harry, watching in agony, saw the light move from spot to spot. He heard the screaming and wailing. He saw Hervey's light move slowly to a particular spot of the timbered sides. Then a shriek of terror came from the youth, for he saw—he actually saw a ghostly blue form suddenly leap out and snatch away the light. ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 25)

Hervey survives his encounter with the ghost:

'Did you see it?' asked [Hervey], panting.

'The ghost?'

'Ghost, Harry. There's more danger in the thing you saw than a million ghosts. There's death for a thousand men in it. If your light came a yard closer, we'd see no more ghosts.'

'What is it, Hervey?'...

'The colliers said they were warnings of danger. And so they are. It's a wonder a man of them was left alive a day! The barrier *is* too thin. The pressure on the old workings upon this part has had a dangerous effect. The squeeze you saw is forcing gas out of every crevice with a power that makes it screech. The odour of the death chamber is the peculiar smell. There are chemical elements in it beyond my knowledge.'

'But,' earnestly asked his companion, "didn't you see a ghost?"

'No[. . .] You saw the gas catch my lamp and swell into a great blue flame and vanish. The miracle is that it didn't burst the lamp and mix with the oxygen around us.'

'What would happen then?'

'We would be burned to cinders.'

'Oh!' ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery', Adventures in the Dark, p. 25-6)

What started as a short story which drew upon Welsh superstition and folklore has been resolved as an industrial narrative which has a simple solution: the haunted heading and its gas blower is walled up and the Glyncynon Colliery is saved.

Marie Trevelyan in her collection of Welsh folklore records the following story:

In July, 1902, there was a panic in Glyncorrwg, because a dove had been

seen hovering over the colliery level, and other omens of trouble had been experienced.

Glyncorrwg, near the head of the Cwmavon Valley, is one of the most dreary and desolate places in Glamorgan.

The South Wales Echo of July 15, 1902, contained the following particulars under the heading "A Batch of Evil Omens" which caused three hundred colliers to refuse to work in the pit:

'The men have been whispering their fears to each other for some time past, but the drastic action of Monday was probably the outcome of so-called evil omens which are said to have been heard in the mine. About two months ago the night-men began to tell 'creepy' tales of the strange and supernatural happenings which took place in the colliery every night... Now and then a piercing cry for help would startle the men... and during the night-shift horrid shrieks rang through the black darkness of the headings, and frightened the men nearly out of their wits... There is, of course, the usual tale of the dove hovering over the mouth of the level.'⁶³⁶

This story so closely mirrors that of 'The Under-Secretary and the Mystery' that it has to be the source for Keating's short story: the haunted Glyncorrwg levels have become the fictionalised Glyncynon colliery. There is no record of a major accident at Glyncorrwg in this period and it has to be assumed that the 'haunting' which was reported by the South Wales Echo was satisfactorily resolved. Comparing what we have of the source text to hand with the fictionalised narrative it can be seen that some considerable displacement has happened as Keating hybridises the story for use within a bourgeois frame. The haunted pit of Keating's short story almost ruins its benevolent coal-owner who is saved from ruin by the dashing figure of the Under-Secretary (whose reward is marriage to the coal-owner's daughter). Yet despite this bourgeois appropriation and displacement, much of the author's experience of working life in the collieries of industrial South Wales remains. We have here a good example of how the new industrial literary tradition developed from the newspaper presses of Victorian Wales, and behind both lies much older

⁶³⁶ Trevelyan, p. 107

Welsh folklore traditions.

The blue light at the end of 'The Under-Secretary and the Mystery' is frequently used by Keating in his short stories; more often than not when he used the blue light he also drew upon the superstition of the Corpse Candles. The blue light gathered around the old bare gauze safety lamps in the presence of an explosive mixture of fire-damp, its glow was a sure indication that action had to be taken immediately to avoid disaster. Keating's use of this blue light in his fiction is specific to the deep steam-coal collieries of South Wales at the end of the nineteenth century. All of the deep steam-coal collieries in South Wales worked a number of coal seams at a number of depths, and most also worked a shallow bituminous 'house-coal' seam. In his 1912 study of Miners' nystagmus, Lister Llewellyn reported that there were a number of such 'twin collieries' working in South Wales; he also tells us that the more dangerous steam-coal was worked with safety lamps while the house-coal was worked with naked lights (i.e. candles).⁶³⁷ Safety lamps were introduced in the 1850s. The first to be introduced were the Davy Lamps which had an oil reservoir and a metal gauze covering the flame. The later designs, which have become synonymous with the Welsh colliers, added a double gauze and a glass cylinder surrounding the flame which allowed the lamp to give off more light.⁶³⁸

However, when the safety lamps were first introduced, they were not used for the purpose that they had been intended for: 'In nine cases out of ten the safety lamp is not used to work by, but as a test for the presence of fire damp.'⁶³⁹ In the best run collieries in the 1850s the new safety lamps were used by the firemen at the start of the shift to look for

⁶³⁷ Llewellyn, *Miners' Nystagmus*, p. 55

⁶³⁸ Llewellyn, *Miners' Nystagmus*, p. 77

⁶³⁹ MIR Mackworth's Report for July-Dec 1852, p. 159. Quoted in Morris and Williams, p. 189

foul air or fire damp which was indicated by an elongated cap on the flame; if the conditions appeared to be safe, the men would start work using candles or open lamps.⁶⁴⁰

These reckless working conditions inevitably led to disaster and in the gassy steam-coal workings safety lamp discipline was soon enforced. When electric lamps were first introduced they were unpopular because they failed to indicate the presence of gas: of the 749,177 miners' lamps in use in 1912, only 10,727 were electric.⁶⁴¹ In the presence of foul air the flame on the safety lamp elongated, but in an explosive mixture the safety lamps were filled with a bluish flame: an immediate signal of danger which demanded that action be swiftly taken.⁶⁴²

One of the most dangerous problems underground were sudden blowers of gas from the coal face, it still is.⁶⁴³ this was more of problem in the deeper pits where the coal is under more pressure. Some blowers were so violent that they would blow tons of coal off the face and completely overwhelm the ventilation systems.⁶⁴⁴ Some coal seams were more dangerous than others:

In the Aberdare valley the Upper Four Feet seam was particularly dangerous, being liable to sudden 'blowers' or excessive discharges of gas which normal ventilation could not sufficiently dilute, and here alone, between 1845 and 1852, in four explosions at the collieries of Upper Duffryn, Llety Shenkin, and Middle Duffryn 159 lives had been lost.⁶⁴⁵

As early as 1836 The Merthyr Guardian reported that not a week passed by without

⁶⁴⁰ Morris and Williams, p. 189

⁶⁴¹ Jevons, p. 395

⁶⁴² Jevons, p. 396

⁶⁴³ The explosions at the Pike River Colliery, New Zealand in November 2010 must have been caused by a very large blower of gas which swamped the ventilation systems at the mine.

⁶⁴⁴ Jevons, p. 396

⁶⁴⁵ Morris and Williams, pp. 188-9

accidents arising from the use of candles instead of lamps.⁶⁴⁶ In another report, this time from 1846, it was thought that unless improved methods were introduced 'South Wales will undoubtedly become a huge charnel-house.'⁶⁴⁷

Keating in many of his short stories ('The Under-Secretary and the Mystery' included) draws on these all-too-frequent experiences of fire-damp, explosion, and violent death. In his short stories he writes the industrial experience: the problem that he has, it seems, is that there is no available narrative form for these and he instead has to borrow some from elsewhere. Once again, the result is a hybrid text, but this time it could not be more different from that of his novels. The short stories are written from within the industry, narrated by the voice of a collier, while the novels are essentially English melodramas which are written in another's voice altogether. Although Keating writes these short stories for an essentially foreign audience (in the English and American press) he does so from within what are essentially Welsh narrative structures which have been hybridised and used to narrate a new subject – the Welsh coal industry.

6.4 The Beginning of a Whole New Literary Genre

The state of the Welsh mining industry in 1900 was very different from the state of the iron industry in the 1820s – the steam-coal trade had gone through a long period of expansion, it dominated the British export markets, it had professionalised, and it had developed a sophisticated technology which was necessary to access the deepest and highest quality

⁶⁴⁶ Quoted in Jevons, p. 108

⁶⁴⁷ Quoted in Jevons, p. 117

steam-coals. The steam-coal industry in South Wales had also developed a sophisticated set of discourses of power and knowledge that made it unique. The miners themselves were highly skilled and, thanks to their own efforts, they were also well-educated. Culturally, South Wales had developed and the newspaper press, which had once been absent altogether, was now thriving. And yet, much like the 1820s, this society was one which was in the midst of a crisis: the 1890s saw the return of organised resistance and unionism and, following the disastrous strike of 1898, the South Wales Miners' Federation was formed.

Keating's work in part documents working life during this turbulent period. His short stories in particular record the everyday life of the mining valleys of South Wales and they anticipate the family-based Welsh industrial novels of the 1930s. This record of everyday working life underground is what differentiates Keating's short stories from his first novel where, although the descriptions are accurate, they are written from an outsiders perspective. Yet Keating's short stories are not historical as such, for there are no points of reference that can be used to date the text. Take for example 'The Under-Secretary and the Mystery': the detail of this story is so closely observed that it is possible to identify which seam in which district Keating describes (the Upper Four-Feet in the Aberdare District), but it lacks any point by which we could date the narrative; it could just as easily have been set in the 1860s as in the 1890s. It does this despite being based on a daily news story of a haunting at the Glyncorrwg level from the South Wales Echo of 15 July 1902.

While Keating uses native Welsh narrative forms and devices in many of his short stories they are depoliticised: the radical text of the South Wales coalfield in the 1890s has

been neutered. In Keating's short stories there are no strikes, no unions, no politics, and no chapels—dissent has altogether been silenced. Keating's short stories are about as radical as Richard Llewellyn's How Green was my Valley. Here hybridity has led to the adaptation of old Welsh folklore into modern narrative forms via newsprint; it has also led to the incorporation of everyday working life into a new, popular literary form. Perhaps this is the reason why Keating's descriptions of working life in his short stories are unique in the amount of detail of working life that they include: unlike his early novels, here hybridity has given this working class industrial experience agency. But this agency was bought at a high price, the new literary text has been neutered: it is fundamentally displaced, depoliticised, and hence controlled.

In contrast, Keating in Son of Judith writes very much as an outsider. William Greenslade in the introduction to his ground-breaking book Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel finds that 'Gissing is an interesting example of a writer whose novels capitulate (more wholeheartedly than one would like) before the forces of assimilation.'⁶⁴⁸ Keating, it seems, had faced similar forces of assimilation when trying to get his first novel published. In his short stories, however, we experience a completely different view of industry (albeit it one that is occasionally still seen through the eyes of managers and coal-owners). The difference between Keating the short story writer and Keating the novelist can in part be explained by the different modes of literary production: put simply, magazine and newspaper editors would have been looking to publish different types of writing to that demanded by a publisher's editor looking for a profitable novel—the first set of editors were looking to fill column inches while the latter was looking for a novel that would sell

⁶⁴⁸ William Greenslade, Degeneration, Culture and the Novel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 4.

reasonably well in the market place. This contrasting set of demands changed the dynamics of the two very different forms of writing, it also meant that their agency to speak of everyday working class experience differed. Even in his second, more accurately described, novel, Maurice Keating's descriptions of working life on the coal face lack the detail and vigour of those in his short stories. In Son of Judith the result of the demands of the English editors is a novel which is permeated by hybridity cycles, the most important of which is that of race. The encounter of the ex-Welsh collier and the metropolitan English editor produces a novel which is penetrated by hybridity cycles: 'neither One nor the Other'⁶⁴⁹ the text moves between two worlds, two languages, two classes, two races (between black faces and white faces), two distinct ideological world views (although the one is suppressed), between hybrid vigour and racial degeneration, 'from "hybrid" form to "pure" form (from heterogeneity to homogeneity), to parenting a new hybrid.'⁶⁵⁰ But this movement towards hybridity is no monolithic experience, a one way traffic, it is a complex dynamic, a dialectic and the boundaries it transgresses are clinal. This is perhaps an inevitable consequence of writing in an alien narrative mode. Raymond Williams recognises a similar pattern:

Within this direct presentation of the patriotic romance, the other elements—all potential elements of a quite different kind of novel; realistic accounts of strikes, of blackleg colliers, of conscription, of a slide of a slagtip—are not only diluted; they are fundamentally displaced; incidentally substantial... but then formally instrumental to the structure which overrides them.⁶⁵¹

Raymond Williams talks here about Keating's wartime novel The Flower of the Dark, but what he says is essentially true of Son of Judith: Keating writes a dark and melodramatic

⁶⁴⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 219.

⁶⁵⁰ Stross, 'The Hybrid Metaphor', p. 256.

⁶⁵¹ Raymond Williams, The Welsh Industrial Novel, p. 11.

novel in the populist romance mode, and by so doing he has displaced the everyday experience of working life on the coal face in Victorian South Wales. It is this act of displacement, of moving away from the long Welsh literary tradition, that is the genesis of Keating's hybridity. Keating's unconscious displacements neutralise what would otherwise have been a radical text. This is the moment of contradiction which gives birth to a new literary genre: the Welsh industrial novel. It is fitting that he should do in the novelistic genre. Bakhtin uses Bakhtin used the Russian '*gibrid*' [hybrid] to describe 'the mixing of two languages within the boundaries of a single utterance'.⁶⁵² In 'Discourse in the Novel' he tells us that in 1930 Vinogradov already viewed the novel as a 'syncretic, mixed form ("a hybrid formation")'.⁶⁵³ Bakhtin returns to this point: 'Every novel, taken as the totality of all the languages embodied in it, is a hybrid. But we emphasize once again: it is an intentional and conscious hybrid, one artistically organized, and not an opaque mechanistic mixture of languages.'⁶⁵⁴ To return to Keating, his first two industrial novels, Son of Judith and Maurice can be said to be the birth of the hybrid novel in industrial Wales. In the 1930s the hybrid finds a name and is refined into a genre. The hybrid has now become a pure form and one hybrid cycle has been completed and another is about to begin.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵² M. M. Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', in The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 259-422 (p. 268).

⁶⁵³ Bakhtin, p. 268.

⁶⁵⁴ Bakhtin, p. 366.

Chapter Seven - Conclusions

I started writing this thesis with a simple question in mind: why was the novel so late in arriving in Wales? What I have found is a story that is as fascinating as the plot of any novel.

Book production was never going to be easy in Wales, a nation which is loosely formed from geographically isolated communities. In his 1895 paper, 'Welsh Publishing and Bookselling' W. Eilir Evans paints a remarkably bleak picture:

The author has seldom done well in Wales. The late Kilsby Jones, a man who thoroughly knew Wales and its people, once shrewdly remarked to a friend: 'If you want to know what true repentance is, publish a Welsh book.'... Generally speaking, the history of Welsh printing and publishing is the history of failures and losses.⁶⁵⁶

On the one hand Evans is correct. Welsh printing and publishing has had a difficult history and when he gave his paper to the Library Association meeting in Cardiff he spoke at a

⁶⁵⁵ Defining hybridity is a topic which could justify a thesis of its own. The term 'hybrid' is a cross over from the sciences, where it has been extensively used in the field of biology. The idea of hybridity is a familiar one in postcolonial analysis. It was first used by Homi K. Bhabha, most importantly in papers such as: 'Of Mimicry and Man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse' *October* 28 (1984), 125-33; and, 'Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of ambivalence and authority under a tree outside Delhi, May 1817' *Critical Inquiry* 12:1 (1985), 144-65. These and other papers by Homi K. Bhabha are now collected as *The Location of Culture*. In 1999 the *Journal of American Folklore* published a special edition on 'Theorizing the Hybrid'. These articles, which build on the earlier work of the original postcolonialists, were originally presented at a conference in the University of Austin in 1996. In his article 'The Hybrid Metaphor: from Biology to Culture', which is included in this important collection, Brian Stross returns to look at the cultural concept of hybridity in terms of its biological origins; predicting, for example, that the cultural hybrid should show signs of hybrid vigour (heterosis). At the end of this work Stross defines an 'hybridity cycle': 'Finally, one can also examine the larger diachronic process of what could be called a "cycle of hybridity": a cycle that goes from "hybrid" form, to "pure" form, to "hybrid" form: from relative homogeneity, to homogeneity, and then back again to heterogeneity. We can investigate and document how over time the hybrid offspring of divergent "pure" strains can come to be (seen as) more legitimate and "purer" themselves by inbreeding or by adapting to the environment, becoming conventionalized and more homogenous, until finally "pure" enough to inbreed with other purebreds (which are themselves former hybrids), thus beginning anew the cycle of hybrid production.' (Stross, p. 265) It is this sense of a hybridity as a transgressive dynamic, as a dialectic, and as a cycle that I have sought to emphasize in this thesis.

⁶⁵⁶ W. Eilir Evans, 'Welsh Publishing and Bookselling', pp. 393-4

time when Welsh print was in a period of decline.⁶⁵⁷ However, to say that the Welsh print trade has only known failure and loss is something of an exaggeration. Hopefully this thesis will have given an impression from an alternative point of view, of a busy radical press which, for the most part, refused to follow blindly the English example.

Welsh print culture and modern Welsh industry both essentially began at the same time: the Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542. Although Welsh industry actually pre-dates both of these Acts it was small and the rule of the Marcher Lords meant that it was difficult for independent capital to be used to develop the trade. Following the Acts of Union, a series of mines and furnaces were opened across the southern, eastern, and western edge of the South Wales coalfield basin. Welsh print culture also begins with the Acts of Union: the first of several sixteenth-century books to be printed in the Welsh-language, Yny Lhyvyr Hwnn was produced in London in 1546 with the support of the Welsh Tudor administration of the English State. Despite the support of the Tudor Crown for Welsh book production, in 1586 the Star Chamber issued a decree which outlawed printing outside the strictly controlled presses of London, Oxford, and Cambridge. The Tudor government looked to control English society through the press, and an independent Welsh print culture was an innocent victim of this extension of State control. The Star Chamber decree was followed in 1662 by a new Licensing Act which, in principle, was established to control the press. The Licensing Act was largely ignored and in 1695 it was allowed to quietly lapse; regional printing was once again legally permitted in the United Kingdom.

In 1718 Isaac Carter established the first independent press in Wales in Trefhedyn, and over the next seven years Carter produced two ballads and three books in the Welsh

⁶⁵⁷ See, Philip Henry Jones, 'A Golden Age Reappraised', pp. 136-7

language. Like many of the Welsh printers who followed him, Carter relied on jobbing work to support himself and his press. In 1725 he moved his press to Carmarthen, which at the time was the centre for a new and thriving charcoal-furnace iron industry. Soon afterwards Carmarthen became the centre for the eighteenth-century Welsh print trade. Meanwhile, in Britain as a whole there was little technical development of the print trade at this time: it was still run by artisan printers who worked on wooden presses that would have been recognisable to Gutenberg. However, two important social developments had begun to change the print trade in England: firstly, the trade, which had started with artisanal printers who also acted as publishers, during the eighteenth century was divided into a publisher who commissioned a printer to produce books on his behalf; and secondly, towards the end of the eighteenth century the printers, compositors, and bookbinders began to gather together in friendly societies through which they were able to organise and agitate to improve conditions.

A preliminary analysis has shown that while over 200,000 books were produced in Britain in the eighteenth century, only 1,224 were produced in Wales. Despite this very low figure, Wales during the course of the eighteenth century developed a healthy, and independent print culture. In 1752 a Religious-Industrial commune known as 'the Family' was established at Trevecka; it gathered around Howell Harris, one of the leaders of the eighteenth-century Revival in Wales who had formed the first Methodist Association in Watford, Caerphilly in 1743. The Family at Trevecka soon obtained a printing press and, like many Welsh Nonconformists, they looked to the press with an evangelical zeal to propagandise the good word. The press at Trevecka was successful and it produced over a hundred books in both the Welsh and the English languages. The work produced on the

Trevecka press included religious books, a Pharmacopoeia, poetry by Twm o'r Nant, and five books by the Old Prophet, the Rev. Edmund Jones.

The tradition of industrial writing in South Wales has its roots in the writing of Edmund Jones and his Account of the Parish of Aberystroth, which was published by the Family at Trevecka while the first iron furnaces were being built in the Beaufort ironworks. Shortly afterwards the rural parish of Aberystroth became better known as the industrial towns of Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo, and Abertillery: soon after the name of Aberystroth, much like the idyllic rural vale which Jones described, was lost from memory altogether. Although Edmund Jones's work is difficult to define generically because it covers so many modern literary forms (e.g. biography, travel writing, conversion narrative) his two books An Account of the Parish of Aberystroth (1779) and Apparitions of Spirits (1780) have become well-known for their record of Welsh folklore. Although he was writing on the eve of the Industrial Revolution in the parish of Abersystroth there are, as has been shown above, a number of reasons why Edmund Jones could be called the first industrial writer of South Wales, and as such it can be claimed that the industrial literary tradition in South Wales had its roots in part in Welsh oral folklore narratives. Edmund Jones takes the pre-print culture oral narratives of Wales and hybridises them into a new narrative form: the result is, as his printer describes, an entire new work and on a new plan.

The Industrial Revolution began early in Wales, on the 19th of September 1759 when the Dowlais Iron Company was formed as nine partners signed a lease on 'a great, barren extent of mountain land' on the undeveloped mountainous northern rim of the coalfield basin.⁶⁵⁸ By the end of the eighteenth century a belt of ironworks had been

⁶⁵⁸ Charles Wilkins, The History of the Iron, Steel, Tinplate, and... Other Trades of Wales, p. 35

established along the northern edge of the coalfield basin: from Aberdare and Hirwaun in the west, to Blaenavon in the east. At first the iron was carried to the docks by pack horses, but from the 1790s a network of canals and tramroads was rapidly constructed to carry the iron to the docks of Newport and Cardiff.

The Welsh Industrial Revolution ended in the major economic crises of the 1820s and 1830s. In the midst of this period T. J. Ll. Prichard, an out of work Welsh-born actor from the London stage, published The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti in Aberystwyth. Prichard's novel was the first to be produced in Wales and it was printed by John Cox, a new and inexperienced printer who had produced a number of Prichard's other books. Prichard was lucky in finding a friendly printer: at this time the Nonconformist control of the printing press in Wales was almost total and most Welsh printers would have refused to produce a novel because they would have viewed it with hostility and distrust. Ten years later the second edition of Twm Shôn Catti was printed in Cowbridge by the radical preacher J. T. Jones, who had earlier been forced to move his printing office from Merthyr because his radical politics upset the local ironmasters. Just before Prichard died in poverty in Swansea in 1862 he claimed to have been working on a new edition of what he called 'his fortunate novel.' After his death the manuscript disappears from the record but when John Pryse published his third edition of Twm Shon Catti in Llanidloes in 1871 he claimed that it was from Prichard's missing manuscript. A number of unauthorised copies of Twm Shôn Catti appeared in the 1880s and 1890s, before it was appropriated in one last unauthorised edition by a London publisher. While Prichard published the first edition of his novel in an Anglicised seaside resort in the middle of Wales, Twm Shôn Catti was also as much a product of industry as Edmund Jones's books: many of the most

important editions of Prichard's novel were produced on presses that had strong links with the industrial south, and over the course of the century it was written and amended during periods of severe economic crises.

In the 1840s economic collapse once again pushed British society into crisis but in 1842, in the midst of a crisis that became known as 'the hungry forties', John Nixon, a young mining engineer from the North of England, started the export trade of steam-coal from South Wales. Nixon personally supervised the first trials of Welsh steam-coal in Nantes, and proved it has a significantly higher calorific value than the coals in use before. Shortly afterwards Welsh steam-coal was listed for exclusive use by the French Admiralty because its smokeless quality gave ships that used it a significant advantage over those that burned smoky Newcastle coals. Despite the economic depression of the 1840s the Welsh steam-coal industry grew rapidly, and for almost a hundred years it dominated Britain's export trade.

The steam-coal industry was so technically demanding that it created a number of superstructural institutions to support itself, the most important of which were the numerous educational institutions that developed across the coalfield. On the one hand there were professional bodies such as the South Wales Institute of Engineers, formed in Merthyr Tydfil in 1857, on the other hand there were the educational institutions which the miners and ironworkers established for themselves—many of which at first were little more than a collection of books and newspapers kept in a collier's front room or upstairs in the local pub. The movement started early and in 1840 the Blaenavon Mechanic's Institute had an impressively well-stocked Reading Room whose books were selected by a vote of the members. Soon these local collections grew and by the end of the nineteenth century

the Miners' Library was often one of the first institutions established in the new mining communities which were emerging across the coalfield. The Welsh miners earned a justified reputation for self-education and many were as well read as many an Oxford student.⁶⁵⁹

In the 1890s a young ex-coller from Mountain Ash started to write novels: he was working as a clerk for the Western Mail at the time. Joseph Keating, the son of two Irish immigrants, had started work underground at the age of 12 in 1883. For a while the young boy settled down into the routine of working-life and was proud to be seen going home with his face blackened by coal dust, but after moving around a number of collieries and working in a number of jobs he suddenly, and apparently without reason, turned against the work underground. Keating left the pits for good in the winter of 1889, and in the 1900s he became a successful novelist who wrote literally hundreds of short stories about the coal industry, which were sold to the London and American newspaper and magazine press.

Keating essentially writes looking back to the coal industry as he experienced it in the 1880s, a period when the unions were broken and the Sliding Scale was used by the coal owners to control the miners. This context has left its mark on Keating's writing. Only three of Keating's eleven novels were written about industrial South Wales, and all three generate pro⁶⁶⁰blems. His first novel, Son of Judith is written as a romantic melodrama between a coal-owner's daughter and a young, illegitimate collier whose father is a colliery

⁶⁵⁹ See, for example: Hywel Francis, 'Workers' Libraries: the Origins of the South Wales Miners' Library', History Workshop Journal 2:1 (1976), 183-205. Hywel Francis opens this paper with this quote from Archie Lush (who was a lifelong friend of Aneurin Bevan): 'When I went up [to Oxford University], and this tutor fellow saw me about June [1927], and I was going up in October and he gave me a long list of books to read before I came up, and when I told him I had read so and so and so, he just didn't believe me. And he said "Well where would you get these books?", because I was this sort of working class extra-mural student you know. And I said, "Tredegar Workmen's Library". Well that convinced him I couldn't [have]... But I had read them and was able to tell him what was in them.'

⁶⁶⁰ Son of Judith (1900), Maurice (1905), and Flower of the Dark (1917).

manager and coal-owner. Keating as a novelist writes as an outsider.

In contrast to this, Keating's short stories are some of the most closely-observed descriptions of working life on the coal-face that we have from any period. Yet despite their close attention to the everyday reality of working life in the Victorian collieries of South Wales there are no historical points of reference in Keating's short stories; none can obviously be located by the casual reader to a particular time or a particular location. They have similarly been depoliticised: in Keating's short stories there are no strikes, no unions, no politics, and no chapels. The reality of the South Wales coalfield area at the time when Keating was writing in the late 1890s and 1900s was of a community that was organising to take action to improve society. When Keating's books were republished shortly before the start of the First World War, the South Wales coalfield was once again on the edge of insurgency. But none of this context has found its way into Keating's work: it resists this experience. The result is a hybrid literature which is addressed to the demands of a middle-class English audience.

Keating can be seen as starting a new literary tradition, he is the first of the twentieth-century Welsh industrial novelists. He can also be seen as being the last in an older tradition which has been identified in this thesis. Keating was the last of the industrial writers of Wales to use Welsh folklore as a dominant narrative theme of his work; after him this mode of writing all but disappears. But while Keating often writes from within what are essentially Welsh narrative structures, in his work they have been displaced in order to narrate a new subject: the Welsh steam-coal industry.

Writing a hundred years after Keating, Stephen Knight found that 'Wales has been notable both for the extent to which its history had been changed by industrialism and also

for the vigour with which its literature has responded to those changes.⁶⁶¹ The writers which I have looked at in this thesis have all proved his point. Edmund Jones wrote at the start of the Industrial Revolution and his much-neglected books represent the start of a new tradition of industrial writing in Wales; they also represent a new-found confidence in the book in Wales. Prichard initially writes Twm Shôn Catti in response to a moment of colonial hybridity, but thereafter the locus of the reception of his novel moves to the industrial south. Keating writes for an English audience, for an English editor essentially, and the result is a body of work which is deeply marked by this encounter. To return to Knight's point: Jones wrote at a moment of social crisis as the ironworks of the Industrial Revolution started to be built across the iron-belt district; Prichard's fortunate little novel Twm Shôn Catti was a product of a society in crisis and economic collapse at the end of the Welsh Industrial Revolution; Keating wrote at a later time of massive industrial development, when the steam-coal industry was sinking deep, modern pits and unionism was resurgent (he writes his first novel and many of his short stories at essentially the same time as the miners were fighting to establish the South Wales Miners' Federation). Keating marks as much an end to a tradition as the start of a new; he writes in the tradition which has been outlined in this thesis but he looks instead to London publishers to produce his novels.

To return, finally, to the question of the absent novel. Far from being absent, the means of literary production was thriving in Wales well before the arrival of the Welsh industrial novelists in the 1930s. Industrial towns such as Pontypool, Tredegar, and Ebbw Vale had a long history of printing and by the turn of the twentieth century they each had a

⁶⁶¹ Stephen Knight, 'The Uncertainties and Hesitations that were the Truth': Welsh Industrial Fictions by Women', in British Industrial Fictions ed. by H. Gustav Klaus and Stephen Knight (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 163-80 (p. 163)

number of printers who were kept busy producing books, newspapers, and jobbing work for both local and national consumption. Victorian Aberdare was the centre for the South Wales steam-coal trade, and it has been claimed to have also been the centre of the Victorian Welsh print trade.⁶⁶² Most Welsh Victorian newspapers were producing serialised novels which were being republished in book form. The Welsh book in English had been thriving in Wales before the start of the twentieth century, and by the end of the nineteenth century even the novel had overcome the resistance of the Nonconformists and, thanks to writers such as Allen Raine and Joseph Keating, the English-language Welsh novel had become a popular literary form. Both Raine and Keating found the romance novel a means to describe Welsh life, and both found that London publishers were prepared to print their work. However, whereas we know that Raine was a publishing phenomenon whose novels on rural Cardiganshire were produced in print runs of hundreds of thousands of copies,⁶⁶³ we are left with a far more fragmentary record of the sales of Keating's industrial novels. While his reviewers and obituaries describe the success of his industrial novels, he tells us in his autobiography that his royalties on Son of Judith were one shilling and five pence, which was paid in stamps.⁶⁶⁴ This fragmentary record is typical of the literature of industrial Wales, and there is more work yet to be done on reconstructing this record, but at this point it is possible to say that industrial Wales has a long history of writing and book production, and it is a history which is largely independent of the neighbouring English example. The industrial literature of Wales was no more regional than that of colonial India or Africa, and it was no more missing than that of colonial India or Africa. The real

⁶⁶² See, Brynley F. Roberts, 'Printing at Aberdare, 1854-1974', The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society s5-XXXIII:2 (1978), 125-142

⁶⁶³ Gramich, p. 44.

⁶⁶⁴ My Struggle for Life, p. 200.

question it finally turns out is not so much 'Why was the Welsh novel missing?', quite so much as 'Why has this long industrial literary tradition so quickly been forgotten?' By the time that the new generation of Welsh industrial writers arrived on the scene in the 1930s they appeared to have come from nowhere.

Appendix One - A Bibliography of the Work of T.J. Ll. Prichard

The Precursors of Twm Shôn Catti

1763

The Joker; or, merry companion. To which are added Tomshone Catty's tricks
(Carmarthen: J. Ross and Swansea: M. Bevan) [1803, 1811, 1844]

Y Digrifwr: Casgliad o Gampiau a Dichellion Thomas Jones, o Dregaron, yn Sir Aberteifi: Yr hwn sydd yn cael ei adnabod yn gyffredin wrth yr enw Twm Sion Catti. Hefyd chwedlau digrif eraill [The Comedian: A Collection of the Games and Wile of Thomas Jones of Tregaron, in Cardigan; otherwise known as Twm Sion Catti. Also with other humorous tales] [1803, 1811, 1844]

1823

William F. Deacon, 'Twm John Catty, The Welch Rob Roy.', in The Inn-Keeper's Album (London: Thomas McLean, 1823), p. 258-319

Other Works by T.J. Llewelyn Prichard

1822

My Lowly Love and Other Petite Poems, Chiefly on Welsh Subjects (Worthing: printed by William Phillips, 1822)

1823

Mariette Mouline, The Death of Glyndower, and Other Poems, Partly on Welsh Subjects (London: printed by W. Hersee, 1823)

1824

Aberystwyth in Miniature, in Various Poems (Covent-Garden, London: Messers. John and H. L. Hunt, 1824) printed by John Cox, Aberystwyth [Digitised by Google]

Welsh Minstrelsy: Containing The Land Beneath the Sea; or Cantrev y Gwaelod, A Poem, in Three Cantos, with Various Other Poems (Covent-Garden, London: Messers. John and H. L. Hunt, 1824) printed by John Cox, Aberystwyth [Digitised by Google]

The New Aberystwyth Guide to the Waters, Bathing Houses, Public Walks, and Amusements; including Historical Notices and General Information (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox for Lewis Jones, 1824)

1825

The Cambrian Balnea: Or Guide to the Watering Places of Wales, Marine and Inland (Part I: The Llandrindod Guide) (London: John and H. L. Hunt, 1825) printed by Price, Hay

1828

The Cambrian Wreath: A Selection of English Poems on Welsh Subjects, Original and Translated from the Cambro-British, Historic and Legendary, including Welsh Melodies: by Various Authors of Celebrity, Living and Departed edited and illustrated by T. J. Llewelyn Prichard (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox, 1828) [Digitised by Google]

1854

The Heroines of Welsh History: Comparing Memoirs and Biographical Notices of the Celebrated Women of Wales, Especially the Eminent for Talent, the Exemplary in Conduct, the Eccentric of Character, and the Curious by Position, or Otherwise (London: W. and F. G. Cash; Bristol: C. T. Jefferies; Swansea: William Morris, 1854) printed by C. T. Jefferies, Bristol [Digitised by Google]

Twm Shôn Catti

1828

The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti; Descriptive of Life in Wales: Enterspersed with Poems (Aberystwyth: printed by John Cox for the author, 1828) [1st edn]

1839

The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shôn Catty, alias Thomas Jones, Esq., of Tregaron, A Wild Wag of Wales (Cowbridge: Printed and Published by J. T. Jones for E. Pool, 1839) [2nd edn]

1848

Traethhawd ar anturiaethau, a gwib-dybiau, Twm Shon Catty, alias Thomas Jones, Yswain, Tregaron, digrifwr gwyllt Walia (Merthyr Tydfil: printed by Rees Lewis, 1848)

1858

Twm Shon Catti, or the Welsh Robin Hood ([Llanidloes?], 1858) - abridged compilation of only 18 pages – this edition is only recorded by Ifano Jones who lists it in his Catalogue of the Welsh Library and so must be left open to question: if it still exists it may be script of the play.

1869

The Humorous Adventures of the Welsh Robin Hood, commonly known as Twm Shon Catty (London: Griffith & Son, 1869) [Ifano Jones in his Catalogue of the Welsh Library notes that this is an unauthorised edition]

1871

The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1871) with

editions, now first printed from mss left by the author [3rd edn]

1872

The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1872)

Difyr Gampau a Gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: Gwron Cymreig. Wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesoneg y diweddar translated by Eilonydd [John Evans], illustrated by E. Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1872)

1873

The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti, alias Thomas Jones, esq., of Tregaron, a Wild Wag of Wales translated by Eilonydd [John Evans], illustrations by Edward Salter (Llanidloes: John Pryse, 1873)

1882

The Laughable Adventures of Twm Shon Catty! The Wild Wag of Wales (Cardiff: E. Jones & Son, 1882)

1880s

Difyr-gampu a gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesonaeg translated by Eilonydd [John Evans] (Bala: H. Evans, [188-?])

1891

The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti (Swansea: printed at Cambrian Daily Leader Office, 1891)

1896

Difyr-gampu a gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: wedi ei gyfieithu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesonaeg translated by Eilonydd [John Evans] (Bala: H. Evans, [1896-?])

1890s

The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti, a wild wag of Wales (Ferndale: David Davies, [189-?])

The surprising adventures of Twm Shon Catti, a wild wag of Wales (Ferndale: D. Davies (Bookseller), [189-?])

1896

Difyr Gampau a Gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: Gwron Cymreig. Wedi ei gyfiethu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesoneg y diweddar translated by Eilonydd (Bala: H. Evans, [1896])

1900

The Adventures of Twm Shon Catty : alias Thomas Jones Esq., a wild wag of Wales (Cardiff: Western Mail, [1900?])

The Comical Adventures of Twm Shon Catty (Thomas Jones, Esq.) Commonly known as the Welsh Robin Hood (London: W. Nicholson & Sons (Printers), [1900?])

1904

Difyr Gampau a Gorchestion yr enwog Twm Shon Catti: Gwron Cymreig. Wedi ei gyfiethu, a'i gyfaddasu i'r Cymru, o Saesoneg y diweddar translated by Eilonydd (Ystalyfera : E. Rees a'i Feibion, 1904)

1991

The Comical Adventures of Twm Shon Catty (Thomas Jones, Esq.) Commonly known as the Welsh Robin Hood (London: W. Nicholson & Sons (Printers), [1900?]; repr. Felinfach: Llanerch, 1991)

Appendix Two - A Bibliography of the Printer John Cox

1817

Selection of Psalms and Hymns adapted to the Organ in the Chapel of Aberystwyth Printed by Samuel Williams and sold by W. Cox [48pp]

1824

New Aberystwyth Guide TJ Llewelyn Prichard - Printed by J. Cox [196pp]
Welsh Minstrelsy TJ Llewelyn Prichard [319pp (*sic.*)]

1826

Can Newydd (Shipwreck of Francis Mary, Capt. Kendall) David Rice [12pp]
Can o Alarnad am D. Evans (ail agraiffiad) Evan Rees, Llanon.
Joy in the Tents of Zion, Hymns etc Welsh and English David Williams, Llandeilo Fach [52pp]

1826

Ar ddylanwadau yr Ysryd Glan. Ymadrodd ar y pwnc. [with a hymn by the translator, the Rev. Daniel Evans ('Daniel Ddu o Geredigion')] [22pp.]

1828

Twm Shon Catti TJ Ll. Prichard
Cambrian Wreath, Selections of English Poems on Welsh Subjects TJ Ll. Prichard [200pp]
Religious Tracts (over 100 different ones)

1829

Pedwar ar ddeg o Bregethau John Hughes

1830

Caniadau Byrion S. R. (Samuel Roberts, Llanbryn-mair) [38pp]
Can i Ieuenctyd R. Morgan [38pp]
Dyledswydd yr Eglwysi at eu Gweinidogion D. Morgan

1831

Geiriadur Ysgrythyrol, 2 vols. W. Gurney, trans. by Isaac Jones, Aberystwyth

1832

A Review of the Two Letters on Baptism in the Evangelical Magazine Rev. John Roberts, Sen, of Llanbryn-mair

1833

Form of Worship used at Consecration of St. Michael's, Aberystwyth [4 pp.]
Hanes yr Eglwys Gristionogol yn Gyffredinol D. Morgan (Llanfyllin) [2 vols. 539 pp. and 675pp. (*sic.*)]

Cyfieithiad o Eiriadur Ysgrythyrol Isaac Jones [416pp.]
Psalms and Hymns, for Public and Private Use John Hughes (Aberystwyth)
Traethawd ar Edifeirwch, etc. John Owen (Thrussington) Griffith Jones (Llanddowror)
[88pp.]
Meditations on Jewels, etc. Azariah Shadrach

1834

Act for Repairing Harbour of Aberystwyth

1835

Traethawd are Ymneillduaeth David Morgan (Llanfyllin)
Pregeth ar Fwrdd y "Victoria" William Davies

1836

Harbour Act

1839

Rules and Regulations of a Society of Gentleman, Merchants, and Tradesmen; Inhabitants
of Aberystwyth; called St. David's Club, established March 1838

1840

Deffroad y Nabl sef Detholiad o Salmau, etc. J. Hughes, Vicar, Llanbadarn
Caniadau Byrion [3rd edn?] S. R. (Samuel Roberts, Llanbryn-mair) *circa*. 1840

1841

Ffurf Cyssegriad Eglwys Neu Gapel... Llangorwen [16pp]
Golwg o Ben Nebo ar Wlad yr Addewid Morgan Rhys (original printed by John Ross,
Carmarthen in 1775)
Gweithrediadau yr Eglwys Sefydledig David Owen (Brutus)
Sermon Preached at Consecration of Church of Llangorwen Rev. Isaac Williams
(Cwmsyfelin)

1842

Myfyrdodau, Joseph Hall, Bp. of Norwich Parch. John Hughes
Hanes Bywyd a Ffoedigaeth Moses Roper [68pp]

1843

Blodau Ieuainc Daniel Silvan Evans (Chancellor of Bangor)
Drych y Merthyron... yn amser Harri VIII a'r Frenines Mary Robert Williams
Sermons Preached at St. Michael's Chapel Rev. John Hughes

1845

Caradoc 'A Lady' [M.J.H.] [24pp]

1846

Carol Plygain ac Emynau...

Psalms and Hymns [3rd edn] John Hughes, Ministers of St. Michael's [280pp.]

1848

Adduniad a Hunan-Ymholiad Anthony Horneck, D.D. [36pp.]

Rheolau Cymdeithas Gyfeilligar Blaenpenal

New Guide to Aberystwyth Thomas Owen Morgan [156pp.]

First Annual Report of Cambrian Institution for Deaf and Dumb

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