

# Women's Professional Employment in Wales 1880-1939

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# Abstract

This thesis examines women's professional employment in Wales between 1880 and 1939. It explores women's negotiation of professional identities, their formation of professional networks, and their relationship with the broader women's movement over this formative period in the emergence of the professions. The thesis contributes to neglected histories of women and the middle class in Wales, and enhances our understanding of the strategies women used to enter professional society. As the first major study of women's professional employment in Wales, the thesis suggests that the Welsh women's experience did exhibit some distinctive features. Women's education attained a political and cultural importance in Wales from the late nineteenth century. But the nation's economic development offered limited opportunities for educated women's paid employment. This exacerbated the high proportion of women in the teaching profession, and meant that women's professional employment was confined to a smaller range of occupations in Wales by the outbreak of the Second World War. Unlike most related studies of women's work which focus on individual occupations, this thesis provides a comparative approach of women's employment in medicine, teaching and academia. Such an approach reveals the interconnections and networks between groups of professional women and allows for analysis of an overarching feminine version of professional identity. In doing so, the thesis argues that women participated in professional society by exploiting – rather than directly challenging – contemporary gender norms and existing professional practices. By exploiting contemporary gender norms, women developed a distinctive feminine professional identity which highlighted their 'natural' skills and, following professional practices, they increasingly institutionalised their networks into women's professional organisations and capitalised upon professional ideals of meritocracy.

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# Abbreviations

AAM	Association of Assistant Mistresses
APEGW	Association for Promoting the Education of Girls in Wales
AUIA	Aberystwyth University Institutional Archive
AWST	Association of Women Science Teachers
BFUW	British Federation of University Women
BL	British Library
BMA	British Medical Association
<i>BMJ</i>	<i>British Medical Journal</i>
BUA	Bangor University Archives
CCL	Cardiff Central Library
CDWCA	Cardiff and District Women Citizens' Association
CDWSS	Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society
CMS	Cardiff Medical School
CRO	Caernarfon Record Office
CUIA	Cardiff University Institutional Archive
GA	Glamorgan Archives
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IOE	Institute of Education
IWM	Imperial War Museum
LEA	Local Education Authority
LSMW	London School of Medicine for Women
MOH	Medical Officer of Health
MRO	Meirionnydd Record Office
MWF	Medical Women's Federation
NAS	National Association of Schoolmasters
NAWCS	National Association of Women Civil Servants
NFWT	National Federation of Women Teachers
NLW	National Library of Wales
NUSEC	National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship
NUT	National Union of Teachers
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
NUWT	National Union of Women Teachers
NWNA	North Wales Nursing Association
RBA	Richard Burton Archives
SCOLAR	Special Collections and Archives, Cardiff University
<i>SWDN</i>	<i>South Wales Daily News</i>
SWH	Scottish Women's Hospitals
SWML	South Wales Miners' Library
SDRA	Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act
TNA	The National Archives
UCNW	University College of North Wales
UCSWM	University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire
VAD	Voluntary Aid Detachment
WA	Wellcome Archives
WGA	West Glamorgan Archives

WL	The Women's Library
WNSM	Welsh National School of Medicine
WUWLA	Welsh Union of Women's Liberal Associations
WCA	Women Citizens' Association
WFL	Women's Freedom League
WLA	Women's Liberal Association
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union

## Map of the Historic Counties of Wales





# Introduction

This thesis examines women's professional employment in Wales between 1880 and 1939. During this period, each generation of professional women faced tensions between gender prescriptions and their paid employment. The main chapters in this study explore how women responded to those tensions in their negotiation of professional identities, their formation of professional networks, and their relationship with the broader women's movement over this formative period in the emergence of the professions. Through an exploration of the strategies women used to enter professional society in Wales, the thesis contributes to our understanding of the gendered nature of the professions, and histories of women and the middle class in Wales in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The introduction outlines the arguments, historiographical contribution and structure of the thesis; it discusses the survival and interpretation of the sources used; and, finally, provides a brief historical overview of women's paid employment in Wales.

## *(i) Arguments, Aims and Contribution*

Unlike most studies of women's professional employment which focus on individual occupations, this thesis examines the professions collectively.<sup>1</sup> As Burrage and Torstendahl note, 'the inclination of historians is to study a particular profession, over a specified time period...few have also considered them collectively as a distinct social formation and tried to assess their significance for British society'.<sup>2</sup> Whilst accommodating occupational differences, a collective approach reveals the interconnections and networks between groups of professional women and the extent to which there was an overarching feminine version of professional identity. Viewing women's professional employment holistically also enables questions to be asked about

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<sup>1</sup> Helen Glew, *Gender, Rhetoric and Regulation: Women's Work in the Civil Service and the London County Council, 1900-55* (Manchester, 2016); Catriona Blake, *The Charge of the Parasols: Women's Entry to the Medical Profession* (London, 1990); Louise A. Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester, 2006); Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics* (Manchester, 1996); Laura Kelly, *Irish Women in Medicine, c.1880s-1920s: Origins, Education and Careers* (Manchester, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Burrage and Rolf Torstendahl (eds), *Professions in Theory and History: Rethinking the Study of the Professions* (New York, 1985), p.18.

why some occupations allowed greater scope for women's employment than others and highlights the uneven historical trajectory of women's paid, professional work. This thesis argues that women participated in professional society by exploiting – rather than directly challenging – both contemporary gender norms and existing practices of professionalisation. By exploiting contemporary gender norms, women developed a distinctive feminine professional identity which highlighted their 'natural' skills and, following professional practices, they increasingly institutionalised their networks into women's professional organisations and capitalised upon professional ideals of meritocracy.

The definition of what constitutes a 'profession', as chapter one will show, has been contested since the early twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> While acknowledging the fluidity of the term, this thesis is primarily concerned with knowledge-based occupations for which a university education or tertiary training was a prerequisite.<sup>4</sup> It predominantly focuses on, but is not limited to, the main professional occupations women in Wales were employed in during this period: teaching, medicine and academia. Throughout the study, professionalisation is taken to be a structural process of 'closure' and a social ideal. Both the structures which underpinned the professions and the professional practices which were enacted in them – intentionally or unintentionally – excluded social groups on the basis of gender, ethnicity and class. The thesis explores how women navigated this interplay of institutional barriers and professional cultures by replicating the professional practices in which they were marginalised, on their own terms. Because sociological and historiographical literature of the professions has such a long a broad trajectory, chapter one provides a more detailed discussion of where this study intersects with and challenges previous scholarship of the professions.

The thesis builds upon recent studies of gendered professional identities by demonstrating how these were also complicated and shaped by place.<sup>5</sup> As chapter two reveals, women could prioritise or relinquish elements of their gender, class and national identities to naturalise their professional employment. For example, in the late nineteenth century professional women drew on a gendered national ideal in Wales that

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview, see Robert Dingwall, *Essays on Professions* (Aldershot, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Julia Evetts, 'The Sociological Analysis of Professionalism: Occupational Change in the Modern World', *International Sociology*, 18, 2 (2003), p.397.

<sup>5</sup> For a good overview of this literature see Krista Cowman and Louise A. Jackson, 'Middle-Class Women and Professional Identity', *Women's History Review*, 14, 2 (2005).

highlighted the special contribution educated women could make to the morality and health of future generations. By the interwar decades, women in healthcare and educational sectors gradually developed a confident, feminine professionalism, supported by ideas of social maternalism. Most powerful was the idea that women innately understood the needs of their own sex, and this was used consistently to justify the initial appointment of women in a range of professions. However, this served to pigeonhole women into lower paid and lower status roles, and opponents of women's employment could also use contemporary ideas of gender difference to exclude them from the professional practices. Women's entry into professional society thus simultaneously confirmed and exploited predominant assumptions of femininity.

Historical and sociological research on women's professional employment shows that women were excluded from professional society as a consequence of the increasing institutionalisation of professional practices in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> But few studies explicitly acknowledge that women also deliberately adopted the practices of professionalisation which had been used to exclude them, in order to build their own organisations and to construct professional identities. An overarching theme of the thesis is how women pursued strategies of separatism in response to their marginalisation within professional society. As chapter three shows, women's professional organisations (including the National Union of Women Teachers, the Medical Women's Federation and the British Federation of University Women) provided personal, financial and legal support to members. They institutionalised women's networks and, as more women entered the professions, provided the structural apparatus for more targeted campaigns for workplace equality.

Women's entry into the professions was concurrent with the growth of feminism in Wales. The development of networks of educated and professional women from the turn of the century provided the indigenous framework from which an organised suffrage campaign could flourish. Chapter four makes a vital contribution to the history of the suffrage movement in Wales and Britain through analysis of the way that women's occupational positions affected their feminist beliefs and, in turn, how the suffrage movement provided the experiences and networks from which women could advance their professional positions. While professional women's relationship with the

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<sup>6</sup> For example, see Anne Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy* (Abingdon, 1992), p.59.

women's movement is assumed self-evident, few studies explore the impact of their occupational positions on their feminist beliefs.<sup>7</sup> Examining the feminism of professional women collectively allows broader conclusions to be drawn about the interrelation between the subordinate economic, social and legal position of women in society.

As the first major study of women's professional employment (and, indeed, the professions) in Wales, the thesis fills an important historiographical gap and allows questions to be asked about the relative homogeneity of women's paid work and gender ideals across late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Britain. Professional women have suffered a double neglect in Welsh historiography: excluded from earlier histories because of their sex, they have simultaneously been neglected as consequence of their class.<sup>8</sup> The dominance of heavy industry in the economic, social and cultural life of Wales has preoccupied the attention of historians. Yet, this focus has led to the neglect of more prosperous parts of Wales and of those social groups who do not fit neatly into a dichotomy based on class conflict. The educated, self-sufficient and (mostly) single, professional woman thus does not sit comfortably within histories of close-knit communities centred on the male breadwinner model. Where the professions have been studied in Wales, the attention has been on the service that they provided, rather than as professional workers in their own right.<sup>9</sup> The one profession that has received considerable attention in Wales is teaching. Sian Rhiannon Williams's research has shown the importance of the teaching profession for women in south Wales, where alternative career options for women were limited.<sup>10</sup> This history of professional

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<sup>7</sup> Notable exceptions include Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1996); Hilda Kean, *Deeds not Words: The Lives of Suffragette Teachers* (London, Pluto Press: 1990); J. F. Geddes, 'The Doctors' Dilemma: Medical Women and the British Suffrage Movement', *Women's History Review*, 18, 2 (2009).

<sup>8</sup> For an overview of dominant trends in Welsh historiography see Martin Johnes, 'For Class and Nation: Dominant Trends in the Historiography of Twentieth Century Wales', *History Compass*, 8, 11 (2010). A detailed discussion of Welsh historiography is included in the following chapter.

<sup>9</sup> Steven Thompson, *Unemployment, Poverty and Health in Interwar South Wales* (Cardiff, 2006); Steven Thompson, 'A Proletarian Public Sphere: Working-Class Provision of Medical Services and Care in South Wales, c.1900-1948', in Anne Borsay (ed.), *Medicine in Wales, c.1800-2000: Public Service or Private Commodity?* (Cardiff, 2003); Pamela Michael and Charles Webster (eds), *Health and Society in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2006); W. Gareth Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience* (Cardiff, 1990); Pamela Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales, 1800-2000* (Cardiff, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, '"The Only Profession that was Around": Opting for Teaching in the South Wales Valleys in the Inter-War Years', *Llafur*, 9, 2 (2005); Sian Rhiannon Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales, c.1870-1950', *Welsh Journal of Education*, 13, 2 (2005). See also Deborah James, 'Teaching Girls: Intermediate Schools and Career Opportunities for Girls in East Glamorgan Valleys of Wales', *History of Education*, 30, 6 (2001).

women builds upon Williams's work across other regions and professions, and contributes towards redressing the gender and class balance in Welsh historiography.

Social mobility was central to contemporary perceptions of the professions. With the exception of teaching, the majority of professional women came from middle-class families, and had fathers who were clergymen, doctors, lawyers or middle managers in the burgeoning industries. With little inherited wealth or social influence, they asserted the superiority of education and examinations over other criteria for judging public worth.<sup>11</sup> Social class undoubtedly shaped employment opportunities available to girls, and class-specific gender ideals dictated which occupations were respectable for women's employment. The importance of parents' attitudes towards their daughters place in society cannot be understated. It is particularly noteworthy that Rev. John Williams, father of the distinguished Swansea academic Professor Mary Williams, upheld the first Welsh woman to proceed to Cambridge, Catherine Davies, as a role model to his daughters.<sup>12</sup> Mary Williams and her sister subsequently attended the North London Collegiate School where the syllabus included physics, mechanics and mathematics.<sup>13</sup> Yet, while most middle-class families sought a good education for their daughters, this was not always coupled with a commensurate support for their paid employment and many still framed it within an essentialist view of women's place in society.

In Wales, class was associated with geography in a stark manner. From the nineteenth century, the working class were overwhelmingly located in the southern and north-eastern coalfields, whereas the relatively small middle class were concentrated in the commercial coastal belt. The foundation of the constituent colleges of the University of Wales in Aberystwyth (1872), Cardiff (1883), Bangor (1884) and Swansea (1920) also established an academic middle class in these localities. The agricultural and rural regions of the west, mid and north of the country contained a more dispersed middle class. Indeed, Wales was not a homogeneous entity: it was punctuated by regional, socioeconomic, linguistic and cultural differences. Urban, cosmopolitan areas

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<sup>11</sup> Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (London, 1985), p.122.

<sup>12</sup> National Library of Wales [hereafter, NLW]: Newspaper cuttings documenting Mary Williams's activities and achievements, 1901-43, 2523-24. For further information on Mary Williams, see biographies section.

<sup>13</sup> NLW: Mary Williams's School and College Notes, 690-94.

offered far greater scope for women's professional employment and, in Wales, was largely concentrated in the affluent coastal centres of Cardiff and Swansea. By contrast, the socioeconomic context meant there were fewer opportunities for working-class women's employment in Wales.<sup>14</sup> Women's relationship with the professions was thus geographically as well as historically specific, and this thesis provides the first historical model of the professional landscape and position of the middle class in Wales.

Place is therefore an important theme throughout the study. The relatively small but concentrated nature of the middle class in the southern coastal and commercial towns of Wales meant that it was easier for women to develop cross-occupational networks in these areas. However, geographical practicalities hampered attempts to form national networks of professional women in Wales and the thesis highlights the importance of the local context in shaping patterns in women's employment. Chapter five in particular explores how the overarching themes played out in the local context through three regional case studies. Ultimately, the types of career a woman entered, where she trained and her ability to advance professionally, were shaped by her socioeconomic background and the local opportunities available to her. An examination of the local context enables a greater insight into the situational relationship between gender and the professions, as well as the impact professional women had on their wider community. Indeed, the precise nature of their employment meant that professional women often played a central role in their localities, social reform movements and the broader political and professional landscape in Wales.

As Daniel G. Williams notes, to reveal that these women were Welsh 'does not take us beyond the somewhat anodyne list of national achievers which are perhaps particularly prevalent in minority cultures'.<sup>15</sup> What is significant, and helps to illuminate how women framed their paid employment, is how contemporaries used – or sometimes negated – their nationality as a rhetorical strategy to justify or oppose women's higher education and paid employment. Consequently, this thesis examines how women's claims to citizenship (which often included their entry into the professions) were constructed in relation to ideas of nationhood, as well as gender. It explores how women appealed to notions of civic or national pride to carve into the

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<sup>14</sup> Dot Jones and L. J. Williams, 'Women at Work in the Nineteenth Century Wales', *Llafur*, 3, 3 (1983), p.24.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel G. Williams, *Black Skin, Blue Books: African Americans and Wales, 1845-1945* (Cardiff, 2012), p.4.

imagining of Wales a role for women's citizenship. Educational developments and distinct legislation meant that education was culturally and politically important to notions of Welshness, and the movement to promote girls' education in Wales during the late nineteenth century created a distinct place for women in Welsh Nonconformist Liberalism. However, these sentiments proved difficult to reconcile with women's paid employment, and the thesis exposes the tensions between contemporaries' support for women's education and their support for women's professional employment.

## *(ii) Sources and Approaches*

The thesis engages with a wide range of sources and uses various methodologies. One of the most comprehensive sources of women's professional networks and campaigns for equality in the workplace is found in the records of women's professional associations. Unfortunately few of the Welsh branch minute books of professional women's organisations survive. The activities of these local associations are therefore pieced together from their correspondence with central committees, branch report summaries published in the associations' journals, and fragmented references to their activities in the local press. The richest surviving material comes almost exclusively from areas where professional women were most concentrated: in the commercial and cosmopolitan coastal towns of Cardiff and Swansea, where there was a professional middle class centred around the university colleges, a strong presence of a women's suffrage associations, and a diverse women's associational culture. That, of course, is not to say that professional women did not exist in rural areas. Rather, they were more professionally isolated and their ability to forge networks with other professional women was more difficult.

Professional women did not operate in an entirely separate female sphere. Minute books and records of professional organisations, notably the British Medical Association (BMA), enable an insight into the male-dominated professional culture of meetings and the professional isolation women often encountered within them. Similarly, a study of the institutional records of hospitals, educational establishments and local authorities, occasionally reveal professional women's remuneration, the appointment criteria and gendered divisions of labour. In particular, the records of the constituent colleges of the University of Wales show the founders' aims of supporting

women's higher education in the late nineteenth century. Oral interviews with the few surviving women who were employed as teachers and nurses before the outbreak of the Second World War, conducted by myself and other historians, provide a vital insight into the everyday experiences that official organisational accounts often do not. These testimonies also reveal the importance of an individual's background in affording opportunities for professional employment, as well as the motives for entering specific occupations.

Statistical information on the number of women employed in the professions throughout this period is problematic. The changing census classifications and inclusion of 'subordinates' reflect fluid definitions of what constituted a profession, and prevent an accurate assessment of changes in professional employment recorded in the census. The accumulation of census data was not a value-free exercise, especially with regard to the work of women.<sup>16</sup> Women tended to be defined as dependants and it was common for nineteenth century enumerators to omit any occupational designation for married women. The census compilers were also cautious about recognising women's claims to be practitioners or students of professional occupations. Where possible, census data has been supplemented with figures obtained from *The Medical Register*, contemporary surveys and the University of Wales's annual calendars. The main sources used in the appendices enumerate the number of women in professional employment and contain further information on the statistical sources used.

Girls' career advice manuals provide a useful source to analyse what social and cultural conventions deemed appropriate work for middle-class girls. These manuals were less explicitly feminist than the other literature.<sup>17</sup> Although they recognised that housewife and mother was not always a desirable or realistic option for women, some maintained that 'there is no work of higher importance to the nation than the running of a home'.<sup>18</sup> The manuals do provide useful information on the practicalities of professional training, the entry requirements, what salary professional women could expect, and the diversity of women's professional employment. The literature reflects

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<sup>16</sup> Edward Higgs, 'Women, Occupations and Work in the Nineteenth Century Censuses', *History Workshop Journal*, 23 (Spring, 1987), p.60.

<sup>17</sup> Christine Etherington-Wright, *Gender, Professions and Discourse: Early Twentieth-Century Women's Autobiography* (Basingstoke, 2009), p.20; Jessica M. Cooke, 'Women and the Professions, 1890-1939' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 1997), p.17.

<sup>18</sup> Leonora Eyles, *Careers for Women* (London, 1930), p.36; Vyrnwy Biscoe, *300 Careers for Women* (London, 1932).



not only the gradual erosion of institutional barriers to women's professional employment, but also changes – and continuities – in attitudes towards gender roles. The increased number of career advice literature following the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act in 1919 were optimistic about the new professions open to women.<sup>19</sup> These manuals often simplistically implied that if a woman heeded this advice, she would obtain her desired post.<sup>20</sup>

The newspaper and periodical press is an essential source for the period under study. Historians have explored the growth of the press in Wales, its 'significance as a social agency' and the symbiotic relationship of sections of the press with the Liberal Party in the late nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The Liberal newspapers of Wales, such as the Cardiff-based *South Wales Daily News*, were generally supportive of a greater role for women in public life.<sup>22</sup> In particular, John Gibson, editor (1873-1915) and owner (from 1880) of the Aberystwyth-based *Cambrian News*, was a long-time supporter of women's suffrage, a member of the council of Women's Franchise League from 1889, and author of *The Emancipation of Women*.<sup>23</sup> His editorials were some of the most forceful and uncompromising arguments in support of women's economic, social and political rights in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Wales. The Liberal press upheld support for women's higher education and enfranchisement as a symbol of the progressiveness of Welsh Nonconformist Liberalism. However, as will be shown in chapter two, this support had its limitations in relation to women's paid work and was generated by essentialist views of what constituted 'woman's mission'.<sup>24</sup> By contrast, the Conservative, Cardiff-based *Western Mail* varied in its opinion of women's employment, and tended to reinforce middle-class ideals of femininity which centred on domesticity and motherhood.

Women's professional achievements could be presented as emblems of patriotism or civic pride. In his study of the interwar press in Britain, Adrian Bingham

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<sup>19</sup> *Careers and Vocational Training: A Guide to the Professions and Occupations of Educated Women and Girls* (London, 1939).

<sup>20</sup> Ethel M. Lamport, 'Medicine as a Profession for Women', in Ethel McKenna (ed.) *Education and the Professions* (London, 1903), p.257.

<sup>21</sup> Aled Jones, *Press, Politics and Society: A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 1993).

<sup>22</sup> Ursula Masson (ed.), *Women's Rights and 'Womanly Duties': The Aberdare Women's Liberal Association, 1891-1910* (Cardiff, 2005), p.7.

<sup>23</sup> John Gibson, *The Emancipation of Women* (Aberystwyth, 1891).

<sup>24</sup> Masson, *Women's Rights and 'Womanly Duties'*, p.10.

argues that there was a widespread assumption that an expansion of women's role in public life was an inevitable aspect of post-war modernity.<sup>25</sup> In particular, the arrival of 'modernity' was linked with women's increasing visibility in, or admission to, male-dominated professions. Consequently, individuals, the press and public bodies would uphold the professional appointment of women as emblematic of their localities' progressive spirit. Popular newspapers focused attention disproportionately upon the 'modern woman' in the 1920s and considerable space was devoted to the first women justices of the peace, jurors, and barristers. However, as Bingham shows, by focusing on the new and unusual, newspapers tended to present a distorted picture of reality.<sup>26</sup> The optimistic narrative of progress conveyed by the press and institutions did not always reflect the discrimination women still encountered.<sup>27</sup> Women sought to navigate these conflicting positions, and could also situate their professional employment in self-conscious claims to 'modernity'.

One aim of this thesis has been to uncover the ways women negotiated gendered occupational identities. To do so, it is necessary to examine how professional women positioned their own individual and collective identities. Like suffrage activists, pioneer professional women wrote their own autobiographies and histories of women's professional associations in the interwar years.<sup>28</sup> Such rhetorical literature is revealing of the collective memory and aims of the first generation of women to record the obstacles they faced to gain institutional admission to the professions. In 1929 Lady Rhondda, reviewing Emily Phipps's account of the feminist women teachers' union, *The History of the N.U.W.T.*, wrote: 'It will be a most valuable book of reference to feminists outside as well as inside the Union and to historians when (as must happen in future) the women's movement comes to be recognised as the greatest and most significant of all the tendencies and movements of the present half century'.<sup>29</sup> Lady Rhondda's prophetic and historicising instincts reflect feminist attempts to prevent their omission from the historical record, as well as their self-conscious positioning of their role as pioneers. It

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<sup>25</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press*, p.64.

<sup>26</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press*, pp.50-51.

<sup>27</sup> Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press*, p.9.

<sup>28</sup> Emily Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T.* (London, 1928); A.M. Pierotti, *The Story of the National Union of Women Teachers* (London, 1963); IWM: Janet Aitken and Beryl Harding, 'Work of British Medical Women during the War', published by the Medical Women's Federation, 1955, K 37217; Flora Murray, *Women As Army Surgeons; Being the History of the Women's Hospital Corps in Paris, Wimereux and Endell Street* (London, 1920).

<sup>29</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 25 January 1929.

can also be seen as an attempt to fuel again the spirit of the suffrage campaign and downplay generational and ideological divisions in the women's movement. It is not surprising that official accounts tend to underline the extent of unity and friendship existing within organisations and, undoubtedly, these women were selective in the events they prioritised and the sources they preserved.

The status of feminist and female pioneer is also differentiated: women pioneers did not necessarily label themselves feminists, although many were both.<sup>30</sup> Yet, for contemporary supporters of sex equality, women who had achieved prominence in any sphere previously confined to men, were assisting in the emancipation process by virtue of the visibility of their success. Indeed the role of a number of exceptional women in aiding women's entry into the professions, locally and nationally, cannot be ignored. By tracing key individuals through their war work, associational memberships and feminist activity, the thesis highlights the overlapping circles that professional women moved in. To help guide the reader, there are biographical summaries of the main women discussed throughout the thesis before the appendices. While the range of their activities was perhaps atypical for most middle-class women in Wales during this period, their lives are illustrative of the overarching themes of gender, class, nationhood and place. The thematic approach used in this study allows for greater analysis of the strategies women used to enter professional society, but as the first major exploration of middle-class women and professional workers in Wales, it is first important to provide a chronological overview.

### ***(iii) Overview of Women's Professional Employment in Wales***

Women's access to higher education was concurrent with their entry into the professions in the late nineteenth century: whilst their admission to higher education institutions facilitated their access to new occupations, the impetus for women's higher education was simultaneously fuelled by campaigns for women's admission into the professions. Dot Jones and L. J. Williams's study of women's paid work in Wales during the nineteenth century outlines that the percentage of women in professional occupations in Wales rose from 2.1 to 9.1 per cent between 1851 and 1911,

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<sup>30</sup> Cheryl Law, *Suffrage and Power: The Women's Movement 1918-1928* (London, 1997), p.5.

predominantly reflecting the growing number of teachers and nurses.<sup>31</sup> Significantly, they note how women's employment in this sector grew at a faster rate than it did in England. Growing numbers of women benefited from major advances in educational and employment opportunities between 1880 and the outbreak of the Second World War, but neither represented a significant break with conservative ideas of appropriate feminine roles. Like elsewhere in Britain, the number of women employed in professional occupations in Wales rose steadily throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but women's penetration of the higher professions (such as law, medicine and accountancy) was slow and their representation in the most prestigious posts was poor [appendix 1].

Before 1880, women who sought a medical education in Britain faced institutional barriers and undertook their training abroad. Frances Hoggan, the first Welsh woman and the second in Britain to qualify as a doctor, obtained her medical doctorate from the University of Zurich in 1870.<sup>32</sup> Most of the first generation of women doctors sought to carve out a separate space for women's medical work and grasped what opportunities they could find on the margins of contemporary medicine, in India or in institutions for women and children. The pre-clinical Cardiff Medical School (CMS), established in 1893, was the only provision for medical training in Wales for the first entrants into the profession.<sup>33</sup> The number of women enrolled at the School did not exceed six until the outbreak of the First World War [appendix 2]. Before the Welsh National School of Medicine (WNSM) was completed in 1921, students had to undertake their clinical training elsewhere, but options for female students were limited and the London School of Medicine for Women (LSMW) dominated the early output of female medical graduates from Wales.<sup>34</sup>

Medicine entailed one of the longest and most expensive courses of professional training and, like their male counterparts, female medical students came from families

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<sup>31</sup> Dot Jones and L. J. Williams, 'Women at Work in the Nineteenth Century Wales', *Llafur*, 3, 3 (1983), p.24.

<sup>32</sup> For further information on Frances Hoggan, see biographies section.

<sup>33</sup> NLW: Correspondence, newspaper cuttings, notes and other literature relating to the General Committee for the Promotion of the Medical Training of Women, 1916-1941, C1/7.

<sup>34</sup> For an overview of the history of the WNSM see Alun Roberts, *The Welsh National School of Medicine, 1893-1931: The Cardiff Years* (Cardiff, 2008).

who were affluent enough and willing to support them through their studies.<sup>35</sup> Medical authorities actively encouraged women to enter this profession during the First World War, and the Committee for the Promotion of Medical Training for Women in Wales was established in 1916 to provide financial support to Welsh women who undertook medical training.<sup>36</sup> In 1917, the thirty-two women students enrolled at CMS comprised 34 per cent of the total student cohort for that year [appendix 2]. In the 1920s several London medical schools which had opened their doors to women during the war, closed them again. Though the WNSM remained open to women, the number of women students in Wales, like elsewhere in Britain, declined towards the end of the decade [appendix 3]. Despite fluctuations throughout the interwar decades, the number of women listed in *The Medical Directory* in Wales and Monmouth increased from nine in 1910 (seven of whom resided in Glamorganshire) to 162 by 1938 [appendix 4].

Teachers formed the largest group of professional women in Wales. The opening of the Swansea Training College in 1872 provided the first institution to train school mistresses in Wales. This was followed by the establishment of three Day Training Departments attached to the University Colleges (Cardiff 1890, Aberystwyth 1892 and Bangor 1894), where the majority of female university students resided.<sup>37</sup> In 1908, provision for the training of teachers in north Wales was also granted by the opening of the Bangor Normal College to women and, from 1914, the Glamorgan Training College catered for the training of teachers in Barry. Training colleges were an acceptable option for lower-middle-class girls and the students were predominantly drawn from the communities surrounding the colleges.<sup>38</sup> However, as Sian Rhiannon Williams cautions, the view of teaching as an attractive profession must be questioned in relation to women teachers.<sup>39</sup> Teachers' experiences and status varied according to qualifications, social background and the nature of the school and its location. Most women were concentrated in the elementary schools and infant sector, whereas men dominated the secondary sector and headships of mixed schools. Women also comprised the majority of uncertificated elementary teachers in Wales throughout the

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<sup>35</sup> A 1911 CMS prospectus estimated that the total cost of medical education was between £145 and £175. Cardiff University Special Collections and Archives [hereafter, SCOLAR]: Faculty of Medicine Prospectus, 1911, UCC/FC/M/SchM/Pro/1-13.

<sup>36</sup> NLW: The General Committee for the Promotion of the Medical Training, 1916.

<sup>37</sup> W. Gareth Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience* (Cardiff, 1990), p.89; Glamorgan Archives [hereafter, GA]: Aberdare Hall Pamphlet, 1885-1935, DUCAH/26/6/1.

<sup>38</sup> *The Cambrian*, 3 December 1880.

<sup>39</sup> Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales', p.71.

period [appendix 5]. An economic depression combined with an oversupply of teachers in the interwar period forced many Welsh teachers, both male and female, to seek posts outside of Wales.<sup>40</sup> Although the rise in training colleges and university-educated teachers saw a commensurate rise in public estimations of the profession, teaching retained an ambiguous professional status which varied across localities.

In theory, women's access to higher education meant a corresponding opportunity for careers in academia. Although the University of Wales accepted women as full members in its 1893 charter, it was extremely difficult for women to obtain research funding and academic appointments. Women first gained posts in universities either in women's colleges, or by taking up posts with pastoral responsibilities for female students. When plans were drawn up for a women's hostel in Cardiff in 1883, the College authorities suggested 'that some Lady interested in the work of Women's Education might be willing to undertake it...at any rate for the first year or two, without a salary'.<sup>41</sup> There was, however, clearly a demand for such (paid) employment opportunities. Four years later, the University College of Aberystwyth received eighty-three applications in response to their advertisement for a Lady Principal for Alexandra Hall.<sup>42</sup> By contrast, female lecturers were rare, although the development of the day training departments in the 1890s led to the appointment of 'Mistresses of Method' or 'Normal Mistresses', who were responsible for women's teacher training. The University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire (UCSWM) in Cardiff appointed the first woman professor in Wales and the second in Britain: Millicent Mackenzie [*née* Hughes].<sup>43</sup> Initially employed as Normal Mistress in the training department, Mackenzie became Associate Professor of Education in 1904 and was granted full professorial status in 1910, a post she held until her retirement in 1915.<sup>44</sup> Yet even by 1930, women only comprised approximately 13 per cent of the profession. According to the British

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<sup>40</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, 'Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border, 1922-1950: A Gendered Perspective', in Jane Aaron, Henrice Altink and Chris Weedon (eds), *Gendering Border Studies* (Cardiff, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> Ladies' Hall Committee, Aberdare Hall, November 1884-1893, cited in Carol Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities 1870-1939* (London, 1995), p.100. Isabel Bruce and Isabel Don, the first two Principals of Aberdare Hall, worked without a salary.

<sup>42</sup> *University College Aberystwyth Council Minutes*, 12 August 1887.

<sup>43</sup> In 1908 Edith Morely was appointed Professor of English Language at University College, Reading. For further information on Millicent Mackenzie, see biographies section.

<sup>44</sup> *The University of Wales Calendar*, 1904-15; Richard Burton Archives [hereafter, RBA]: University College of Swansea Council Minutes, 1921, LAC/115/A/2. Mackenzie's successor, Barbara Foxley, was the second woman Professor of Education in Wales and in October 1921, the newly opened University College of Swansea appointed Mary Williams as Professor of French Language and Literature and Head of the Department of Modern Languages.

Federation of University Women, there were 583 women lecturers and demonstrators in England and Wales in 1931 (compared with 3,103 men), and thirteen women professors (compared with 829 men).<sup>45</sup> In Wales for that year, the University of Wales Calendar records forty-four women lecturers and demonstrators and three women professors: Lily Newton, Professor of Botany (Aberystwyth); Olive Wheeler, Professor of Education (UCSWM); and Mary Williams, Professor of Modern Languages (Swansea).<sup>46</sup>

Employment opportunities for educated women in other national and public institutions were rare. Their employment in senior government positions, such as factory or workhouse inspectors, was unusual because the appointments were made on an ad hoc basis. By 1914, the Board of Education was the only public body in Wales to employ a female inspector, Mary Ellis.<sup>47</sup> The outbreak of the First World War witnessed a number of educated women undertake war work related to their academic expertise, working as chemists or doctors in various government factories. Female physics students from the University College of North Wales, Bangor (UCNW) were engaged in scientific research, and staff and students from the chemistry department undertook research for the Explosives Supply and the Chemical Warfare Departments of the Ministry of Munitions.<sup>48</sup> Others worked in the munitions factory at Pembrey as statisticians or medical officers.<sup>49</sup> The First World War undoubtedly accelerated the number of women in some professional occupations, such as medicine, and also provided interwar campaigners with the additional argument that women had proved their capabilities through their wartime work. However, the war did not fundamentally challenge the underlying gendered ethos of the professions, and women continued to be confined to certain low-prestige and low-paid sectors of the workforce.

The 1918 Maternity and Child Welfare Act, which required local authorities to appoint committees for maternity and child welfare services, provided new opportunities for women to be employed as health visitors, medical officers, or in

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<sup>45</sup> Carol Dyhouse, 'The British Federation of University Women and the Status of Women in Universities, 1907-1939', *Women's History Review*, 4, 4 (1995), p.478.

<sup>46</sup> *University of Wales Calendar*, 1930-31.

<sup>47</sup> *The North Wales Chronicle*, 24 April 1914. Mary Ellis was educated at Dr. Williams' School in Dolgellau, before undertaking a degree at the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth, and then at Bangor College. She was appointed Mistress at Whalley Grange High School, Manchester and then Lecturer in English in Paris, before her appointment by the Board of Education.

<sup>48</sup> Bangor University Archives [hereafter, BUA]: Reports of Departments as to National Service, University College North Wales, c.1918, BMSS/39688.

<sup>49</sup> *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*, 15 June 1918.

related research positions. Others, like Margaret Lloyd Jones of Blaenau Ffestiniog, obtained employment as dental officers in schools.<sup>50</sup> The 1919 Nurses Registration Act marked the end of a protracted campaign for a state-sponsored system of nurse registration. This began in 1887, with the formation of the Royal British Nurses' Association which aimed to obtain the legal status of a profession, grant nurses the autonomy to determine the standard and duration of nurse education, and improve their pay and conditions.<sup>51</sup> The 1919 Act put nursing on a professional footing, for the first time setting a national standard for state registered nurses. Yet, paradoxically, registration marked the failure of nurses' professional project and did not make the General Nursing Council an autonomous decision-making body.<sup>52</sup>

Other women did make legislative gains at the end of 1919 with the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act (SDRA). The Act decreed that: 'a person shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function, or from being appointed to or holding any civil or judicial office or post, or from entering or assuming or carrying out any civil profession or vocation'.<sup>53</sup> Most historians, like contemporaries, have highlighted its weaknesses.<sup>54</sup> Although the Act enabled women to be appointed as justices of the peace, to sit upon juries and to enter the legal profession, it did not permit peeresses to take their seats in the House of Lords, nor did it enable women to enter the state church. Authorities also still found ways to exclude women from certain sectors of the Civil Service: women were barred from the diplomatic and consular services, the government services of the colonies and protectorates, and the commercial diplomatic and trade commission service.<sup>55</sup> But perhaps the most contentious failing of the Act was its inability to prevent the widespread implementation of marriage bars across many professions.

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<sup>50</sup> Meirionnydd Record Office [hereafter, MRO]: Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer for the County of Merioneth, 1924-33, Z/CC/12/55.

<sup>51</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.128.

<sup>52</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.166.

<sup>53</sup> The National Archives, London [hereafter, TNA]: Allocation of posts in the Civil Service between men and women; position with regard to the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, and resolutions of the House of Commons, 5 August 1921, T 162/100/21.

<sup>54</sup> For example Carol Dyhouse, *Feminism and the Family in England, 1880-1939* (Oxford, 1989), p.78. For an exception see Anne Logan, 'Professionalism and the Impact of England's First Women Justices, 1920-1950', *The Historical Journal*, 49, 3 (2006).

<sup>55</sup> *Evening Standard*, 21 January 1924; RBA: Swansea Branch of the Women's Freedom League, newspaper cuttings, LAC/58/D/3.



Marriage bars, which excluded married women from professional or other paid work, were implemented (or reintroduced following a relaxation of wartime regulations) in England and Wales during the 1920s and 1930s. The marriage bar was primarily used to facilitate staff turnover, whilst also underpinning interwar attitudes to gender roles. The idea that a woman should relinquish her employment upon marriage was extremely pervasive. As this practice operated at the discretion of the local authority, not all women workers were affected and implementation of the bar varied across the professions.<sup>56</sup> In academia, marriage bars were not uniformly or officially introduced, but often applied to junior members of female academic staff and those who were not deemed to be past childbearing age.<sup>57</sup> By contrast, most local authorities operated marriage bars for teachers, nurses and civil servants.<sup>58</sup> Some county councils also decreed that their female medical officers must resign their posts on marriage.<sup>59</sup> Alison Oram suggests that by 1926 around 75 per cent of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales operated a bar on married women teachers, which rose to between 80 and 90 per cent by 1938.<sup>60</sup> The operation of marriage bars in Wales varied across counties, but Sian Rhiannon Williams notes that Glamorgan, Carmarthenshire and Merionethshire dismissed all their married women teachers in 1922, while other counties dismissed most.<sup>61</sup> Rural areas, including Caernarfonshire and Cardiganshire, employed a higher proportion of married teachers than the industrial districts because of the difficulty attracting suitably qualified teachers. In these areas, many small county schools were staffed by a husband-and-wife team.<sup>62</sup>

Despite its limitations, women were able to capitalise on the professional openings that the SDRA did enable. Most importantly, the Act allowed women to enter the legal profession for the first time. In 1924 Miss Stephen, daughter of a Swansea solicitor, joined the South Wales circuit and, ‘attractively garbed in correct wig and gown’, took her place amongst the members of the junior bar at the Glamorgan Summer Assizes.<sup>63</sup> Whilst acting as headmistress of the Swansea Municipal Secondary School for Girls,

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<sup>56</sup> *The Merthyr Express*, 18 October 1919.

<sup>57</sup> The Women’s Library, LSE [hereafter, WL]: BFUW questionnaire on married women holding academic appointments, 5BFW/04/21.

<sup>58</sup> *University College of Swansea Council Minutes*, 19 October 1936.

<sup>59</sup> *BMJ*, 29 November 1924.

<sup>60</sup> Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, pp.60-63.

<sup>61</sup> Williams, ‘Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales’, p.78.

<sup>62</sup> Williams, ‘Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales’, p.78.

<sup>63</sup> *The Welsh Outlook*, August 1924, p.221.

Emily Phipps studied in the evenings to become a barrister, gaining admission to the Bar in 1925.<sup>64</sup> However, like Stephen, the majority of professional women came from middle-class families and had sympathetic contacts within the profession. For example, Lillian Richards had parents who were both involved in legal practices: her father was a solicitor and her mother was a justice of the peace. She served articles with her father and joined him as a partner in his firm J.T. Richards & Co. in Cardiff once she qualified in 1927.<sup>65</sup> These examples, however, did not represent any significant entry of women into the legal profession, and it was only an option for those who could afford the long and expensive training. By 1931, only ten women (compared with 1,034 men) were employed in the legal profession in Wales.<sup>66</sup>

Historians have shown that women's philanthropic activities in the nineteenth century were increasingly professionalised into health visiting and social work by the interwar decades.<sup>67</sup> Some women, like Lilian Howell, obtained experience through the University of Wales Settlement which was established on the East Moors in Cardiff in 1900 and subsequently went to London to train as a social worker. However, it was not until the establishment of the Welsh School of Social Service in 1922 that women could undertake their training in Wales.<sup>68</sup> The Census recorded sixty-six women employed as social welfare workers in Wales by 1931.<sup>69</sup> By contrast, women's entry into the veterinary profession, architecture and accountancy was slow: for the same year there were only six women accountants, one woman veterinary practitioner and one woman architect in Wales.<sup>70</sup> In 1925, Olwen Emmerson Price was the first woman to qualify as an architect in Wales after undertaking her training at the Welsh School of Architecture.<sup>71</sup> The period of training for architecture was both long (usually five years) and costly, and, like the majority of women who undertook professional training, Price came from a middle-class background: her father was a school inspector and she was educated at Cardiff High School for Girls and in Paris.<sup>72</sup> By the outbreak of the Second

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<sup>64</sup> Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T.*, p.54. For further information on Emily Phipps, see biographies section.

<sup>65</sup> *The Lady's Who's Who: Who's Who for British Women 1938-39* (London, 1939), p.352.

<sup>66</sup> *The Census for England and Wales*, 1931.

<sup>67</sup> Regina Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945* (New Haven, 1993).

<sup>68</sup> West Glamorgan Archives [hereafter, WGA]: Unidentified cutting 'Boon to Women', Mrs Coombe Tennant on the values of the work, c.1922, D/DT3715.

<sup>69</sup> *The Census for England and Wales*, 1931.

<sup>70</sup> *The Census for England and Wales*, 1931.

<sup>71</sup> *South Wales Daily News (SWDN)*, 12 February 1926.

<sup>72</sup> *SWDN*, 12 February 1926.

World War, a handful of women had made inroads into journalism, librarianship, advertising and marketing. There were also notable examples of female entrepreneurs and businesswomen in Wales during this period who fall outside the scope of this study.<sup>73</sup> However, it is perhaps telling that a Welsh branch of the British Federation of Business and Professional Women was not formed until 1943 in Cardiff, a decade after the organisation was founded to promote and safeguard the interests of business and professional women.<sup>74</sup>

The breadth of professions studied and sources consulted for this study thus enables an important insight into women's professional employment across a range of settings, periods and places. By giving equal attention to the structures and cultural ideals that governed professional society, the thesis explores the discrimination women faced entering and within the professions. While these exclusionary practices formed an important part of the story, the thesis is also concerned with women's agency; how they negotiated contemporary gender norms, and how they established their own professional structures from which to develop campaigns for workplace and wider gender equality. It builds upon gendered analyses of professionalisation to show how women also exploited the structural professional processes that had excluded them to aid their entry into professional society. In doing so, the thesis enhances our understanding of the individual and collective approaches women used to create professional identities and engage with professional practices. Importantly, as the first major study of women's professional employment in Wales it explores significantly neglected aspect of the nation's past: gender, the middle class and professional society.

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<sup>73</sup> A small number of exceptional businesswomen also inherited their fathers' businesses including Amy Dillwyn (Llansamlet Spelter Works) and Lady Rhondda (coalmining, shipping, newspaper and other interests). See Angela V. John, *Turning the Tide: The Life of Lady Rhondda* (Cardigan, 2013). See also Revel Guest and Angela V. John, *Lady Charlotte Guest: An Extraordinary Life* (Stroud, 2007).

<sup>74</sup> GA: Cardiff Business and Professional Women's Club Records, D196.

# Chapter 1

## Concepts and Contexts

This chapter introduces the main scholarship, themes and concepts with which this thesis engages. A wide body of literature was consulted during the research for this study, encompassing the fields of sociology, histories of the professions, gender studies and Welsh historiography. Studies of the professions and their relationship to wider societal changes have been undertaken from various intellectual and disciplinary fields. Although the debate concerning what constitutes a ‘profession’ has a long and broad trajectory, it remains an elusive concept. This chapter addresses these contested definitions and outlines the theoretical approach taken in this thesis. The first section charts sociological, historical and feminist approaches to the professions and highlights their value to a historical study of women’s professional employment. Section two situates the thesis in the broader context and debates of women’s and gender history, while the third section explores why professional women have been neglected in Welsh historiography and highlights the geographic frameworks used throughout the thesis.

### *(i) Sociological and Historiographical Definitions and Approaches to the Professions*

Professionalisation did not follow an even trajectory across different occupations, neither has it been uniformly accepted as an ideal. Indeed, what constitutes a ‘profession’ and the process of ‘professionalisation’ has been a subject of critical debate amongst sociologists since the early twentieth century. Sociological perspectives of the professions can largely be divided into three distinct phases: normative, ideological and cultural interpretations. Early British and American sociologists endorsed the normative claims of professionals and argued that the professions occupied a position of unique importance in society. They perceived professionalisation as central to the advancement of a society’s stability, civility and ultimately, modernisation.<sup>1</sup> Talcott Parsons was one of the first theorists to outline the special characteristics of the professions and their

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<sup>1</sup> A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford, 1933); R. H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society* (New York, 1921).

contribution to social order.<sup>2</sup> He believed that the ‘capitalist economy, the rational-legal social order (of Weber), and the modern professions were all interrelated and mutually balancing in the maintenance and stability of a fragile normative social order’.<sup>3</sup> In this interpretation professionalism was regarded as an important and highly desirable occupational value and professional relations were characterised as collegial, cooperative and mutually supportive. Early historiography of the professions largely comprised established histories of professional societies. Often written by former practitioners or employees, they propagated conceptions of the professions as occupying a position of unique importance within a Whiggish narrative of scientific and humanitarian progress.<sup>4</sup> These interpretations largely reproduced professionals’ own definitions of themselves as possessing distinctive characteristics. They were also constructions based on a gendered self-image of the ‘professional man’.

In the 1960s and 1970s, sociologists were attracted to definitional questions of what comprised a profession as a consequence of the demand for professional status in the expanding service industry and white-collar employment.<sup>5</sup> Using the ‘attribute approach’, sociologists attempted to outline a list of fixed criteria to distinguish ‘professions’ from ‘other occupations’. They argued that during the period of industrial and economic expansion, medicine, law, academia, engineering and other special occupations expanded their monopoly over knowledge, formed associations which established standards for admission, organised systems of peer review, and devised codes of ethics.<sup>6</sup> Yet whilst these approaches attempted to define the structure and organisation of the professions, they lacked consensus about which traits should be emphasised. They also highlighted the unique position of power enjoyed by the professions, particularly in American society which did not have the same hereditary aristocracy or rigid class system as Britain.<sup>7</sup> This development was usually discussed in terms of a ‘professional project’ following Weber’s concept of social closure, whereby

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<sup>2</sup> Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York, 1951).

<sup>3</sup> Talcott Parsons, ‘Professions and Social Structure’, *Social Forces*, 12 (May, 1939), p.460. The work of Parsons has subsequently been subject to criticism mainly because of its links with functionalism: R. Dingwall and P. Lewis (eds), *The Sociology of the Professions: Lawyers, Doctors and Others* (London, 1983).

<sup>4</sup> Harold Howitt, *The History of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, 1880-1965* (London, 1966).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Dingwall, *Essays on Professions* (Aldershot, 2008), p.78.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Abbott, ‘Status and Status Strain in the Professions’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 86, 84 (1981).

<sup>7</sup> This perhaps explains why there has been more scholarship on the professions in an American context. In particular, Bledstein posits the existence of a ‘culture of professionalism’ that shaped the educational system, and through that system, the whole ethos of the American middle-class. Burton Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York, 1976).

“social collectivities” (in this case certain non-manual occupations) sought to maximise rewards by restricting access and opportunities to a limited circle of eligible people’.<sup>8</sup> In this vein, professionalisation was perceived as a process of occupational dominance and self-interest in terms of salary, status and power.<sup>9</sup> Although these authors did not acknowledge it, this notion of social exclusivity was highly gendered and also operated against women, who were often excluded from professional associations, higher education institutions, and prestigious roles within the professions.

From the 1980s, sociologists moved from attacks on professional monopoly to a structural and cultural understanding of the processes by which occupations were professionalised and expertise was institutionalised.<sup>10</sup> This third development advocated the need to move beyond a sociological theorising of ‘professionalisation’, to analyse it as a phenomena in its own right. Criticising the previous ‘attribute approach’, Dingwall argues that we should abandon any claim to legislate a correct use of the term ‘profession’ by examining its practical usage and treating it as a concept invoked by members of particular collectivities:

The central problem with these attempts to define ‘profession’ is their assumption that it has a fixed meaning... We cannot define what a profession is. All we can do is to elaborate what it appears to mean to use the term and to list the occasions on which various elaborations are used.<sup>11</sup>

Whilst this rejection of a static definition of the professions is useful to feminist analyses seeking to challenge the gender of the practitioner as ‘already given’, it still does not provide a sufficient framework for a historical analysis of the professions.<sup>12</sup>

Perkin’s *The Rise of Professional Society* is the first historical study to chart the emergence of professional society in England and the growth in size and importance of what he terms the ‘forgotten middle class’.<sup>13</sup> Offering an alternative narrative to liberal or Marxist analyses of twentieth-century social change, he describes three stages in its

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<sup>8</sup> F. Parkin (ed.), *The Social Analysis of Class Structure* (London, 1974), p.3.

<sup>9</sup> Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley, 1977); G. Larkin, *Occupational Monopoly and Modern Medicine* (London, 1983); Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago, 1988).

<sup>10</sup> Konrad Jarausch, ‘The German Professions in History and Theory’, in J. Cocks and K. Jarausch (eds), *German Professions, 1800-1950* (Oxford, 1990), p.10.

<sup>11</sup> Dingwall, *Essays on Professions*, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> Anne Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy* (Abingdon, 1992), p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England since 1880* (Abingdon, 1989).

development whereby horizontal divisions of class were gradually replaced by vertical hierarchies of expertise and merit.<sup>14</sup> Perkin considers the Second World War and immediate postwar world to mark the triumph of the professional society. He suggests that 'professional society is based on human capital created by education and enhanced strategies of closure, that is, the exclusion of the unqualified'.<sup>15</sup> Central to the 'professional ideal' were the professional values of service, function, efficiency and equity. According to Perkin, these values meant that professional society was the first form of society to offer women a degree of equality based on their access to higher education and the replacement of manual labour with mental.<sup>16</sup> However, Perkin's argument that occupational hierarchies of expertise and merit superseded class inequalities, overlooks how gender and race also delineated these hierarchies and, subsequently, the social as well as structural limitations to meritocracy.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, professionalisation was a system of exclusion by setting up criteria that – intentionally or unintentionally – excluded individuals or groups on the basis of class, ethnicity and gender. Whilst Perkin does not explicitly acknowledge it, this notion of closure is pertinent to a study of women, who have constituted one of the main groups excluded from these professional projects as a consequence of their marginalisation from the structures, organisations and social practices which accompanied them. These structural processes included formal entry requirements, specialised training or tertiary education, high ethical standards and the formation of associations which established standards for admission.

Feminist scholars have long been aware that the general concept of a profession is implicitly a gendered one and that gender shaped the processes of professionalisation.<sup>18</sup> Anne Witz produced one of the first (and few) attempts to synthesise existing historical sociological theories with concepts of a gendered division of labour. Rejecting any generic or rigid concept of the profession, Witz argues that professional projects were historically, culturally and spatially variable and therefore must be studied in their specificity.<sup>19</sup> However, she also highlights the need to develop a conceptual framework and theory of professionalisation which can 'cope with the fact

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<sup>14</sup> Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, p.218.

<sup>15</sup> Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, p.2.

<sup>16</sup> Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, p.xii.

<sup>17</sup> Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society*, p.25.

<sup>18</sup> Joan Jacobs Brumberg and Nancy Tomes, 'Women in the Professions: A Research Agenda for American Historians', *Reviews in American History*, 10, 2 (June, 1982).

<sup>19</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.11, p.64.

that women as well as men have engaged in professional projects'.<sup>20</sup> Witz argues that 'professional projects' are best conceptualised as processes of occupational closure which seek to establish a monopoly over the provision of skills and competencies in a market for services.<sup>21</sup> Developing the work of social closure theorists, she proposes a model of four different closure strategies adopted by professionalising occupations: exclusionary, inclusionary, demarcationary and dual closure.<sup>22</sup> Witz presents the modern university and professional associations as the major sites for the mobilisation of autonomous means of closure, and the state as the institutional location for the mobilisation of heteronomous means of closure.<sup>23</sup> Celia Davies builds upon this in her study of the nursing profession, in which she highlighted the need to focus on women's routine inclusion in ill-defined support roles, rather than solely on their exclusion from work which is defined as professional.<sup>24</sup>

Whilst there are many categories around which the 'professional' can be constructed, this thesis examines occupations for which a university education or tertiary training was a prerequisite. Julia Evetts provides a useful definition of the professions as a 'knowledge-based category of occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary education and vocational training and experience'.<sup>25</sup> Leah Armstrong's study of the design profession in twentieth-century Britain argues that professional identity is never fixed or immutable, but constantly in a state of formation and designed to fit changing audiences, cultures and economies.<sup>26</sup> Instead she explores the structures, organisations and social practices that governed, represented and gave meaning to the identity of the designer in twentieth-century Britain. This thesis also examines how gendered professional identities were enacted in educational institutions, the workplace and professional associations. In doing so, it gives equal weight to the representations and identities of professional women, as well as to the structures and networks which underpinned them. The thesis also draws upon Witz's framework to examine the way that women also engaged with the processes of professionalisation and were sometimes

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<sup>20</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.3.

<sup>21</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.53, p.64.

<sup>22</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.5.

<sup>23</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.59.

<sup>24</sup> Celia Davies, 'The Sociology of Professions and the Profession of Gender', *Sociology*, 30, 4 (1996).

<sup>25</sup> Julia Evetts, 'The Sociological Analysis of Professionalism: Occupational Change in the Modern World', *International Sociology*, 18, 2 (2003), p.397.

<sup>26</sup> Leah Armstrong, 'Designing a Profession: The Structure, Organisation and Identity of the Design Profession in Britain, 1930-2010' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Brighton, 2014), p.26.



able to actively exploit its ideals and structural processes in order to aid their entry into professional society.

## **(ii) Women's and Gender History**

The relationship between women and the workplace has always been a central concern of feminism, women's history and gender studies.<sup>27</sup> In Britain, the development of women's history in the 1970s was intertwined with the politics of the Women's Liberation Movement and socialist feminism. Consequently, early histories of women's employment examined the effect of capitalism on working-class women.<sup>28</sup> This meant that studies of middle-class women's work were slower to materialise. In recent decades a substantial body of research shows that gender was central to ideas of professionalism and the processes of professionalisation. While the initial scholarship focused on the institutional barriers women faced gaining entry into professional society, cultural historians now examine the complex ways gender intersected with ideals of professional identity and the gendered spaces in which these were enacted. This section examines these approaches to women's professional employment and highlights where the thesis intersects with, develops, or challenges previous arguments.

Early histories of women's relationship with the professions largely examined the nineteenth-century pioneers who overcame institutional obstacles to professional employment. Particularly focusing on the opening of the British medical profession to women, these early studies traced the story of sex discrimination using the analogies of a battlefield.<sup>29</sup> Catriona Blake's *The Charge of the Parasols* characterises women's entry into the medical profession 'by feminist campaigning, determined resistance from the professions as a whole, the extreme misogyny of individual men and a final resolution through legislation, marred by the male professional establishment'.<sup>30</sup> Historians also showed that female-dominated occupations, such as teaching, nursing and social work,

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<sup>27</sup> Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850* (Abingdon, 1930); Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (Abingdon, 1919).

<sup>28</sup> Elizabeth Roberts, *Women's Work, 1840-1940* (Cambridge, 1988).

<sup>29</sup> Moberly Bell, *Storming the Citadel: The Rise of the Woman Doctor* (London, 1953); Shirley Roberts, *Sophia Jex-Blake: A Woman Pioneer in Nineteenth Century Medical Reform* (Abingdon, 1993).

<sup>30</sup> Catriona Blake, *The Charge of the Parasols: Women's Entry to the Medical Profession* (London, 1990), p.xii.

were marked by relatively low pay, regimented working conditions with delimited autonomy and a low-prestige status.<sup>31</sup>

Feminist scholarship also examined the strategies women used to advance into professional society. Glazer and Slater's study of early professional women in America outlines four approaches women used in response to the discrimination they faced: superperformance, subordination, innovation and separatism.<sup>32</sup> Most studies identify separatism as the most popular strategy for women seeking admission into professional and wider public society in the late nineteenth century.<sup>33</sup> Martha Vicinus analyses gender-based solidarity between single, middle-class women and their separatist strategies for setting up alternative female communities.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Elston's study of women-run hospitals argues that the earliest women's hospitals were the nucleus of a professional and friendship network that sustained pioneering generations.<sup>35</sup> The strategy of separatism – using female spaces to parody and campaign against male professionalism – is a continual theme throughout this thesis which examines how women in the professions deliberately established their own institutions and replicated traditionally male structures on their own terms. It argues that the separate communities and networks pioneer women forged in the nineteenth century were increasingly institutionalised from the first decade of the following century. By exploring women's networks across a range of spaces and professions, this study reveals the overlapping connections and memberships women held across professional, social and political associations, and questions the extent to which homosocial communities declined as more women entered the professional workforce.

A rich historiography has revealed how women exploited the ideology of domesticity to carve a greater role for themselves in public life during the late nineteenth

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<sup>31</sup> G. Anderson (ed.), *The White-Blouse Revolution: Female Office Workers since 1870* (Manchester, 1988); Sue Hawkins, *Nursing and Women's Labour in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for Independence* (Abingdon: Abingdon, 2010); Sue Hawkins, 'From Maid to Matron: Nursing as a Route to Social Advancement in Nineteenth-Century England', *Women's History Review*, 19, 1 (2010); Jane Brooks and Anne Marie Rafferty, 'Dress and Distinction in Nursing, 1860-1939: "A Corporate (as well as Corporeal) Armour of Probity and Purity"', *Women's History Review*, 16, 1 (2007).

<sup>32</sup> Penina Midgal Glazer and Miriam Slater, *Unequal Colleagues: the Entrance of Women into the Professions, 1890-1940* (New Brunswick, 1987), p.14.

<sup>33</sup> Estelle Freedman, 'Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930', *Feminist Studies*, 5, 3 (1979).

<sup>34</sup> Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (London, 1985).

<sup>35</sup> Mary Ann Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women': Medical Women's Hospitals in Britain, 1866-1948, in L. Conrad & A. Hardy (eds) *Women and Modern Medicine* (Amsterdam, 2001), p.85.

century. Historians show that the association of femininity with domesticity was central to the construction of middle-class values and identities.<sup>36</sup> Analysis of a separate women's culture in British historiography has begun to examine how women made a contribution to associations which have been seen as key to the construction of nineteenth-century middle-class identity.<sup>37</sup> Megan Smitley argues that a 'feminine public sphere' existed in Scotland, where women acted as agents of middle-class identity through their participation in philanthropic, reforming, local government bodies and female associational culture.<sup>38</sup> She suggests that women tended to support a heterodox interpretation of 'complementary natures' ideology in order to carve out a place for themselves in public life.<sup>39</sup> This was also evident in women's attempts to enter male-dominated professions, and Alison Bashford argues that most effort was given to extending the cultural boundaries of femininity rather than inverting the gendered order in women's pursuit of medical practice in Britain.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the concept of social maternalism – the assumption that women, by virtue of their sex, were naturally carers and nurturers – was used by both opponents and supporters of women's professional employment. Other historians have shown that some women attempted to assimilate into male institutions and masculine ideals of professionalism as quickly as possible.<sup>41</sup>

Recent work which examines the gendered cultures and spaces of the professions, illustrates how exclusionary practices operated in a more complex way than just the closing of institutional doors.<sup>42</sup> Highlighting the inadequacy of rigidly gendered conceptions of professionalism, this research reveals the gendered foundations of professional identity and demonstrates how perceptions of professional knowledge and

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<sup>36</sup> Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1950* (London, 1987).

<sup>37</sup> Simon Morgan, "'A Sort of Land Debatable': Female Influence, Civic Virtue and Middle Class Identity, c.1830-1860', *Women's History Review*, 13, 2 (2004); Simon Morgan, *A Victorian Woman's Place: Public Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 2007).

<sup>38</sup> Megan Smitley, *The Feminine Public Sphere: Middle-Class Women in Civic Life in Scotland, c.1870-1914* (Manchester, 2008).

<sup>39</sup> Smitley, *The Feminine Public Sphere*, p.40.

<sup>40</sup> Alison Bashford, 'Frances Gillam Holden and the Children's Hospital Dispute, 1887: Women's Sphere, Feminism and Nursing', *Women's History Review*, 2, 3 (1993).

<sup>41</sup> Carla Bittel, *Mary Putnam Jacobi and the Politics of Medicine in Nineteenth-Century America* (North Carolina, 2009).

<sup>42</sup> Carol Dyhouse, 'Women Students and the London Medical Schools, 1914-1939: The Anatomy of a Masculine Culture', *Gender and History*, 10, 1 (1998); Carol Dyhouse, 'Driving Ambitions: Women in Pursuit of a Medical Education, 1890-1939', *Women's History Review*, 7, 3, (1998); Jones, *Femininity, Mathematics and Science*, p.141; Louella McCarthy, 'All this Fuss about a Trivial Incident? Women, hospitals and medical work in New South Wales, 1900-1920', *Women's History Review*, 14, 2 (2005); Zoe Thomas, 'At Home with the Women's Guild of Arts: Gender and Professional Identity in London Studios, c.1880-1925', *Women's History Review*, 24, 6 (2015).

skill were shaped by the gender of the individual demonstrating them.<sup>43</sup> In particular, historians show how prescriptive ideals of gender, which identified femininity with religiosity, philanthropy and motherhood, served to structure professional identity differently for women. Carroll Pursell's examination of the Women's Engineering Society concludes that its members sought a 'balance between femininity and professionalism, between the gendered roles of woman and engineer'.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, Louise Jackson argues that women police in the twentieth century both absorbed the rhetoric and symbolic order of male policing and created their own styles and approaches that were partly concerned with occupational equality and partly concerned with gender difference – approaches that were not necessarily diametrically opposed.<sup>45</sup> A growing body of scholarship also shows how ideas of masculinity were sustained by new forms of occupational and professional identities. In particular, Michael Roper demonstrates that the professional man was also gendered by deconstructing the idea of the 'organisation man' as an 'impartial, classless, genderless, disembodied administrator'.<sup>46</sup> Such research reveals that the views and identities amongst professional women and men were not monolithic or static.<sup>47</sup> This thesis contributes towards these studies by exploring how women's professional and gendered identities were also complicated and shaped by place.

The demand for opportunities for women's paid work was a central concern of the women's movement from its inception. Historians of feminism have explored the tensions between 'equality' and 'difference' feminism; between feminists fighting for full gender equality and those concerned with social improvements in women's lives.<sup>48</sup> Joan Scott argues that equality and difference have often been used as shorthand to characterise conflicting feminist positions and political strategies.<sup>49</sup> This binary masks the interdependence of the terms, which were often complementary and used

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<sup>43</sup> For a good introduction to this literature see Krista Cowman and Louise A. Jackson, 'Middle-Class Women and Professional Identity', *Women's History Review*, 14, 2 (2005).

<sup>44</sup> Carroll Pursell, "'Am I a Lady or an Engineer?': The Origins of the Women's Engineering Society in Britain, 1918–1940", *Technology and Culture*, 34, 1 (1993), p.78.

<sup>45</sup> Louise A. Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester University Press, 2006). See also Daniel J. Walkowitz, 'Women With(Out) Class: Social Workers in the Twentieth-Century United States', *Women's History Review*, 14, 2 (2005).

<sup>46</sup> Michael Roper, *Masculinity and the British Organization Man Since 1945* (Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>47</sup> Regina Morantz-Sanchez, 'Feminist Theory and Historical Practice: Rereading Elizabeth Blackwell', in A. Sharpio (ed.), *Feminists Revision History* (New Brunswick, 1994), p.96.

<sup>48</sup> Lesley Hall, 'Hauling Down the Double Standard: Feminism, Social Purity and Sexual Science in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Gender and History*, 16, 1 (2004).

<sup>49</sup> Joan Wallach Scott, 'Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism', *Feminist Studies*, 14, 1 (1988).

simultaneously. Scholars of women's professional employment have also shown that equality and difference were not mutually exclusive strands between which they had to make a permanent choice. Rather, women could develop their own distinct articulation of 'professionalism' by seeking true professional equality expressed through feminine difference.<sup>50</sup> Joyce Senders Pederson argues that liberal feminist ideology was closely attuned to emergent professional ideals in the late nineteenth century. These ideals assumed a measure of independence from immediate market constraints and were orientated to an ethic of public service, rather than a direct pursuit of private gain.<sup>51</sup> Chapter four examines professional women's relationship with the feminist movement in Wales and further explores some of these themes. It argues that professional women played a central role in Wales's feminist scene and that, in turn, their occupational positions influenced the fluid ideologies of feminism.

An examination of women's employment in the professions has implications for narratives of continuity and change. As Jackson and Cowman note, the search for continuity and change has been central to the historiography of women's work in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>52</sup> In particular, the issue of change is central to examinations of women's wartime experiences where historiographical debates centre on the extent to which the war helped or hindered women's equality.<sup>53</sup> Like contemporaries, most historians focus on the areas of employment which women entered for the first time, including in munitions factories or the Land Army. However, fewer historians have engaged with the meanings ascribed to war work as an existing vocation, rather than a patriotic duty. For professional women who were often in employment before the war, narratives of dramatic change often did not have the same relevance. Historians also now question the extent to which the interwar period can be regarded as an era of domesticity and retreat. In particular, Adrian Bingham argues that although there was no revolution in gender relations during this period, the 'backlash'

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<sup>50</sup> Both Oram and Copelman argue that historically women teachers combined aspects of equality and difference in complex ways. Diana Copelman, *London's Women Teachers: Gender, Class and Feminism, 1870-1930* (Abingdon, 1996); Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics, 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> Joyce Senders Pederson, 'Victorian Liberal Feminism and the "Idea" of Work' in Krista Cowman and Louise A. Jackson (eds.) *Women and Work Culture: Britain c.1850-1950* (Aldershot, 2005).

<sup>52</sup> Louisa Cowman and Louise A. Jackson (eds) *Women and Work Culture: Britain c.1850 -1950* (Aldershot, 2005), p.1.

<sup>53</sup> There is an extensive historiography on this. For an overview of the debate, see: Laura Doan, 'A Challenge to "Change"? New Perspectives on Women and the Great War', *Women's History Review*, 15, 2 (2006); Gail Braybon (ed.), *Evidence, History, and the Great War: Historians and the Impact of 1914-18* (New York, 2003), p.86.

model employed by many historians inhibits a proper understanding of those changes that did occur.<sup>54</sup> Reassessments of the period have uncovered evidence of women's dynamic political activity, a distinctive female youth culture, and women's employment in a variety of occupations.<sup>55</sup> Cowman and Jackson further note that clear black and white answers of change and continuity have therefore, to a large extent, been replaced with arguments about complexity, continuity and gradual change.<sup>56</sup>

One of the central arguments of this thesis is that women's professional employment in Wales was not one of neat, linear progress. Rather, the period studied can be defined as one of contradictions: a time of continual advances and retrenches in women's legislative gains, contemporary gender norms and employment opportunities. Consequently, a history of women's relationship with the professions does not fit into conventional narratives of Wales, or indeed Britain, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Shepard and Walker argue, historians' use of periodisation inevitably privileges particular symbolic markers in order to classify the past.<sup>57</sup> This is problematic for women's history which, from its inception, confronted established narratives and historical categories. Whilst neatly compartmentalising women's history into a wider narrative of social and economic change, conventional periodisation markers have implications for the overarching narratives of women's employment in the professions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Especially in histories of the First World War and interwar decades, history is seen as a story of teleological progress and women's emancipation is the standard by which 'progress' is often evaluated. While this thesis does not negate the wide-ranging impact of the First World War on women's professional employment, it is also sensitive to the continuities in employment trends and gender ideals during the interwar period and, indeed, beyond.

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<sup>54</sup> Adrian Bingham, 'An Era of Domesticity: Histories of Women and Gender in Interwar Britain', *Cultural and Social History*, 1, 2 (2004); Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-war Britain* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 2004), p.21.

<sup>55</sup> Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane (eds), *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century: What Difference did the Vote Make?* (New York, 2010); Claire Langhamer, *Women's Leisure in England, 1920-1960* (Manchester, 2000); Selina Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family in England, 1918-1950* (Oxford, 2009).

<sup>56</sup> Cowman and Jackson, *Women and Work Culture*, p.1.

<sup>57</sup> Garthine Walker and Alexandra Shepard, *Gender and Change: Agency, Chronology and Periodisation* (Oxford, 2009), p.1.

Following sociological theory, historians largely agree that the processes of professionalisation formally excluded women from professional society.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the institutionalisation of professional practices – through formal professional training and associations – served to keep women on the margins of the learned professions, while feminisation was increasingly linked with de-skilling and declining rewards. Claire Jones notes that although ‘professionalisation’ is often put forward as the reason why women were kept at the periphery, historians fail to examine how this worked in practice, or the complex mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion around which women navigated.<sup>59</sup> As the studies examined in this section show, we cannot trace women’s engagement with the professions by just examining the structures and institutions in which they were employed, but also by studying how ideals of professionalism and gender were enacted in these settings. This thesis will examine the interplay between institutional structures and gendered cultures of the professions in Wales. It will explore how image and dress operated as tools of professional and gendered identities, and how professional women were connected to an extensive network of women’s political, social and philanthropic organisations.

Historians have shown that women also engaged in professional projects in the traditionally female occupations such as nursing, health visiting and social work.<sup>60</sup> However, few studies have examined how women in male-dominated professions, such as medicine and academia, also exploited the structural and ideological processes of professionalisation which had been used to exclude them, to distinguish themselves from other women workers or to advance into professional society. Ruth Livesey argues that professionalisation was also a process shaped by class distinctions, as well as gender. In her study of women factory inspectors, she suggests that the women relied upon aristocratic patronage and an increasing sense of class distinction between themselves and working-class women to reinforce their professional identities.<sup>61</sup> This idea of professionalisation as a process of elite formation that emphasised distinctions between women, whilst simultaneously legitimising new roles for middle-class women on the basis of gender, is also relevant to other professions as this thesis reveals.

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<sup>58</sup> Witz, *Professions and Patriarchy*, p.59.

<sup>59</sup> Claire G. Jones, *Femininity, Mathematics and Science, 1880-1914* (Basingstoke, 2009), p.2.

<sup>60</sup> Regina Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945* (Yale University Press, 1993); Anne Logan, ‘Professionalism and the Impact of England’s First Women Justices, 1920-1950’, *The Historical Journal*, 49, 3 (2006).

<sup>61</sup> Ruth Livesey, ‘The Politics of Work: Feminism, Professionalization and Women Inspectors of Factories and Workshops’, *Women’s History Review*, 13, 2 (2004).

### (iii) *Histories of Wales, and National and Local Frameworks*

The study of professional women does not fit easily into dominant narratives in modern Welsh history. As Martin Johnes outlines, the historiography has largely focused on two interpretations of Wales: those based on the industrial working class or a cultural/political nationalism that had the Welsh language at its heart.<sup>62</sup> Because labour history is the strongest tradition within Welsh historiography, the overwhelming focus is on the south Wales coalfield and, subsequently, the solidarity of a masculine, working-class community.<sup>63</sup> This focus has led to the marginalisation of those groups who do not fit easily into a dichotomy based on class conflict. First, histories of women and gender remain one of the most understudied aspects of Welsh history.<sup>64</sup> Despite the pioneering efforts of a few historians, women's history, and explorations of gender more broadly, remain marginal to the main narratives of Welsh history.<sup>65</sup> Second, the focus on the working class has led to the marginalisation of the middle class, whom Gwyn A. Williams famously termed 'those half-forgotten people of Welsh history'.<sup>66</sup> Professional women have therefore suffered a double neglect in Welsh historiography: excluded from earlier histories due to their sex, they have simultaneously been neglected because of their class. Further, as Angela V. John notes, while Welsh women have not fared well at the hands of historians of Wales, their status as *Welsh* women has, moreover, led to their marginalisation within the wider mainstream of 'British' history.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Martin Johnes, 'For Class and Nation: Dominant Trends in the Historiography of Twentieth-Century Wales', *History Compass*, 8, 11 (2010). See also Neil Evans, "'When Men and Mountains Meet": Historians' Explanations of The History of Wales 1890-1970', *Welsh History Review*, 22, 2 (2004); Neil Evans, 'Writing the Social History of Modern Wales: Approaches, Achievements and Problems', *Social History*, 17, 3 (1992).

<sup>63</sup> For example, Hywel Francis and Dai Smith, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff, 1998).

<sup>64</sup> In 1999 Chris Williams highlighted gender as one of the notable historiographical gaps in studies of coalfield society. Chris Williams, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield, 1898-1947* (Cardiff, 1999), pp.8-9. See also Paul O'Leary, 'Masculine Histories: Gender and the Social History of Modern Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 22, 2 (2004).

<sup>65</sup> Deirdre Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2000); Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mothers' Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830 – 1939* (Cardiff, 1991).

<sup>66</sup> Gwyn A. Wales, *When Was Wales?* (London, 1985), p.183. Exceptions include Julie Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites in Nineteenth Century South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 24, 3 (June, 2009); Neil Evans, 'The Welsh Victorian City: The Middle Class and Civic and National Consciousness in Cardiff, 1850-1914', *Welsh Historical Review*, 12, 3 (1984/5); Louise Miskell, *Intelligent Town: An Urban History of Swansea, 1780-1855* (Cardiff, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> John, *Our Mothers' Land*, p.1. John still highlights this in the reissue of the volume: Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mothers' Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939* (Cardiff, 2011).



Important studies of women and gender have appeared in recent decades and interrogated representations of masculinity and femininity in Welsh history, or explored women's wartime employment.<sup>68</sup> However, these publications are largely restricted to working-class men and women. Others have shown the significant contributions women made to Welsh nationalism, Liberalism, and the Labour Party in Wales.<sup>69</sup> W. Gareth Evans's study of women's education in Wales highlights the relationship between the drive for women's educational provision and the Liberal Nonconformist struggle in Victorian Wales.<sup>70</sup> Yet, although leaders of the girls' education movement in Wales in the 1880s and 1890s argued their case in terms of strengthening and improving the role of women both in the home and in their contribution to society, they did not always view their education as a stepping stone for their entry into professional employment.<sup>71</sup> This thesis explores this tension and also questions the claims of contemporary educationalists that Wales held 'progressive' views towards women's education.

Teaching was the main professional employment available to women in Wales and, perhaps as a result, is the one profession which has received considerable historical attention in Welsh historiography. Sian Rhiannon Williams's pioneering research shows that teaching was a particularly important profession for women in south Wales, where alternative career options for women were limited.<sup>72</sup> Deborah James also argues that a disproportionately high percentage of girls pursued a career in teaching in the East Glamorgan Valleys. She suggests that the economic, social and cultural context of

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<sup>68</sup> Stephanie Ward, 'Drifting into Manhood and Womanhood: Courtship, Marriage and Gender Among Young Adults in South Wales and the North East of England in the 1930s', *Welsh History Review*, 26, 4 (2013); Neil Penlington, 'Masculinity and Domesticity in 1930s South Wales: Did Unemployment Change the Domestic Division of Labour?', *Twentieth-Century British History*, 21, 3 (2010); Mari A. Williams, *A Forgotten Army: Female Munitions Workers of South Wales, 1939-1945* (Cardiff, 2002); Thomas George, 'Women's Work in Industry and Agriculture in Wales during the First World War' (unpublished Ph.D thesis, Cardiff University, 2015).

<sup>69</sup> Ursula Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism?: Women in Liberal Politics in Wales, 1880-1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010); Neil Evans, "'Nothing Much Short of a Revolution": Women in Welsh Political History', *Planet*, 199 (2010); Neil Evans and Dot Jones, "'To Help Forward the Great Work of Humanity": Women in the Labour Party in Wales', in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds), *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000); Lowri Newman, "'Providing an Opportunity to Exercise their Energies": The Role of the Labour Women's Sections in Shaping Political Identities, South Wales, 1918-1939' in Breitenbach and Thane, *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century*.

<sup>70</sup> W. Gareth Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience* (Cardiff, 1990).

<sup>71</sup> W. Gareth Evans, 'The Welsh Intermediate and Technical Education Act 1889 and the Education of Girls: Gender Stereotyping or Curricular Assimilation?', *Llafur*, 5, 2 (1988), p.86.

<sup>72</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, "'The Only Profession that was Around": Opting for Teaching in the South Wales Valleys in the Inter-War Years', *Llafur*, 9, 2 (2005); Sian Rhiannon Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales, c.1870-1950', *Welsh Journal of Education*, 13, 2 (2005).

intermediate education, combined with the gendered ethos within intermediate school communities, explains why so many girls became teachers.<sup>73</sup> Studies which have touched upon women's employment in Wales agree that their participation in paid employment in Wales was lower than elsewhere in Britain, as a consequence of the absence of alternative careers for women and the influence of a specifically Welsh model of femininity.<sup>74</sup> Yet, women working in other professions, such as medicine or academia, are rarely mentioned in histories of Wales. Despite being labelled 'one of the leading feminist pioneers of Victorian Wales', Frances Hoggan, the first Welsh woman doctor and a key proponent in the movement to promote girls' education in Wales, has received scant attention from historians of Wales.<sup>75</sup>

This first major history of women's paid, professional employment in Wales offers an alternative narrative to previous studies of modern Wales in which social class and national identity are the major organising principles. By fore-fronting gender as a category of analysis, the study allows neglected aspects of Wales's history to be explored. Perhaps in an attempt to highlight the distinctive features of the nation's past, historians of Wales tend to overlook the similarities with other parts of Britain. As chapter three shows, cross-border relations largely shaped the nature of the professional landscape and the lives of professional women's lives in Wales. Indeed, Johnes notes that Wales has to be understood both on its own terms, but also as part of the United Kingdom and beyond.<sup>76</sup> This thesis argues that while Welsh women faced many of the same barriers and opportunities to professional employment as their counterparts across the border, socioeconomic and cultural differences complicated a uniform experience of women across Wales and, indeed, Britain.

The national framework has proven fruitful for studies of professional women in other contexts which reveal how they contributed gendered rhetoric of nations more broadly. Jill Stephenson argues that professional women in Nazi Germany played a central role in promoting the ideology which outlined women's role as the guardian of

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<sup>73</sup> Deborah James, 'Teaching Girls: Intermediate Schools and Career Opportunities for Girls in East Glamorgan Valleys of Wales', *History of Education*, 30, 6 (2001).

<sup>74</sup> Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation*, p.32; Deirdre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women Between the Wars 1918-1939* (London, 1989), p.7.

<sup>75</sup> Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation*, p.100. An exception is also Daniel. G. Williams, *Black Skin, Blue Books: African American and Wales, 1845-1945* (Cardiff, 2012).

<sup>76</sup> Johnes, 'For Class and Nation', p.1264.

the future health and strength of the ‘racial community’.<sup>77</sup> Juliette Rennes also shows how women seized on the principles of equal and universally applicable rights of the French political regime in order to gain access to professional work in the French Republic.<sup>78</sup> Recently, historians have paid attention to the discursive forms of modernity, its varied constructions and contested meanings.<sup>79</sup> Women’s inclusion (or exclusion) in society was often used by contemporaries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a ‘modernity’ indicator. As this thesis will show, contemporaries pointed to the position of Wales’s female population to prove the superiority and progressiveness of their nation over others. An exploration of the ways in which gender symbolised, or supported relations of power, therefore, adds to our knowledge of the ways in which ideas of Wales have been constructed.

Historians have also highlighted the different experiences of professional women within Britain and Ireland. The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland was one of the first medical schools to open its examinations to women in 1876. Laura Kelly suggests that there was a greater tolerance towards women’s medical education in Ireland than in Britain, and that ‘Dublin had a history of unusual liberality in the education of women’.<sup>80</sup> Kelly argues that because the majority of graduates were missionaries or students from elsewhere in Britain, they did not constitute a direct threat to Irish jobs. She also attributes the medical profession’s more amenable attitude towards women in senior positions to the Catholic tradition of nuns managing hospitals.<sup>81</sup> Jane McDermid’s study of the feminisation of the Scottish teaching profession argues that the debate on the state of education in Scotland and fears of what were regarded as inferior English practices, led to a strong defence of the male-dominated profession, which by the end

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<sup>77</sup> Jill Stephenson, ‘Women and the Professions in Germany, 1900-1945’, in J. Cocks and K. Jarausch (eds.), *German Professions, 1800-1950* (Oxford, 1990), p.281.

<sup>78</sup> Juliette Rennes, ‘The French Republic and Women’s Access to Professional Work: Issues and Controversies in France from the 1870s to the 1930s’, *Gender and History*, 23, 2 (2011), p.341. See also Linda L. Clark, *The Rise of Professional Women in France: Gender and Public Administration since 1830* (New York, 2000).

<sup>79</sup> Laura Beers and Geraint Thomas (eds), *Brave New World: Imperial and Democratic Nation-Building in Britain between the Wars* (London, 2011).

<sup>80</sup> Laura Kelly, ‘“Fascinating Scalpel-Wielders and Fair Dissectors”: Women’s Experience of Irish Medical Education, c. 1880s-1920s’, *Medical History*, 54, 4 (2010), p.496; Laura Kelly, ‘“The Turning Point in the Whole Struggle”: The Admission of Women to the King and Queen’s College of Physicians in Ireland’, *Women’s History Review*, 22, 1 (2013); Laura Kelly, *Irish Women in Medicine, c.1880s-1920s: Origins, Education and Careers* (Manchester, 2012). See also Irene Finn, ‘Women in the Medical Profession in Ireland, 1876-1919’, in Bernadette Whelan (ed.), *Women and Paid Work in Ireland, 1500-1930* (Dublin, 2000); Beula Bewley, ‘On the Inside Sitting Alone: Pioneer Irish Women Doctors’, *History Ireland*, 2, 13 (2005).

<sup>81</sup> Kelly, *Irish Women in Medicine*, p.36.

of the nineteenth century had become feminised in numbers only.<sup>82</sup> These studies reveal the peculiarities of the opportunities afforded to professional women in different national contexts. As the first major study of women's professional employment in Wales, this thesis enables further questions to be asked about the relative homogeneity of women's paid work and gender ideals across late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Britain.

Regional studies of the professions can also highlight the complexity of the professional landscape within national boundaries. For example, June Hannam's research on women's employment in Bristol during the First World War demonstrates that characteristics of women's employment varied considerably between different cities and regions.<sup>83</sup> Such studies demonstrate how a focus on the local context can offer a more nuanced understanding of women's lives and highlight the need for more localised case studies of professional women, to understand the particular circumstances in which they worked and their wider activities. They also reveal the need for further research on a distinct Welsh tradition in the professions, analysis of regional differences in employment patterns, as well as the experiences of those few that did attain positions in the upper echelons of the professions. Wales was not a homogeneous entity and, as chapter five explores, the local context was an important determinant in affording women opportunities for professional employment.

This thesis thus contributes to scholarship on gender and the professions, and histories of Wales. First, it enhances our understanding of the strategies women used to enter professional society by examining their negotiation of professional identities and their development of parallel networks. In doing so, it builds upon recent studies which have explored the gendered foundations of professional identities by demonstrating

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<sup>82</sup> Jane McDermid, 'Intellectual Instruction is Best Left to a Man: The Feminisation of the Scottish Teaching Profession in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Women's History Review*, 6, 1 (1997), p.98; See also Wendy Alexander's study of the experiences of early Scottish women doctors: Wendy Alexander, 'Early Glasgow Women Medical Graduates', in Eleanor Gordon and Esther Breitenbach (eds), *The World is Ill Divided: Women's Work in Scotland in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Edinburgh, 1990).

<sup>83</sup> June Hannam, 'To Make the World a Better Place: Socialist Women and Women's Suffrage in Bristol, 1910-1920', in Myriam Boussahba-Bravard (ed.), *Suffrage Outside Suffragism: Women's Vote in Britain, 1880-1914* (Basingstoke, 2007). See also June Hannam and Karen Hunt, 'Towards an Archaeology of Interwar Women's Politics: The Local and the Everyday', in Julie V. Gottlieb and Richard Toye (eds), *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945* (Basingstoke, 2013); Esther Brietenbach and Valerie Wright, 'Women as Active Citizens: Glasgow and Edinburgh c.1918-1939', *Women's History Review*, 23, 3 (2014).

how women's claims to professional employment were constructed in relation to ideas of place, as well as gender. Second, it contributes to neglected histories of women and the middle class in Wales, and offers an alternative occupational landscape. Because career trajectories did not always fit neatly into geographical boundaries, women's employment in Wales needs to be viewed on its own terms, but also as part of wider trends, events and networks in Britain. Analysis of the major themes throughout the thesis is therefore structured around three frameworks: the local, Welsh, and British.

# Chapter 2

## Negotiating Femininity

In 1882, Dr Frances Hoggan published *Education for Girls in Wales* in which she argued for improved intermediate and higher education provision for Welsh girls:

Patriots, republicans, friends of the people, and all who deeply care for the welfare of the Principality, all admit that it is only by making the foundations of education strong and deep, so strong and deep that it will reach not one sex only but both, that the full measure of national prosperity and growth can be attained.<sup>1</sup>

Situating her claims within a nationalist rhetoric, Hoggan explicitly linked national progress to the educational progress of women. Feminist approaches to nationalism show how women's 'emancipation' was a global phenomenon in modernising discourses of national identity in the late nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> For Liberal Nonconformists (who embodied the political and ideological hegemony of Welsh 'nationalism' in late nineteenth-century Wales), the improved position of women would be one of the marks of a unique and progressive Welsh culture.<sup>3</sup> However, as Hoggan and her contemporaries were aware, there were significant limitations to this rhetoric which represented a gendered and class-based conception of women's place in society.

It has been well documented that women appropriated discourses of gender difference to claim a greater public role for themselves in the late nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> However, such studies rarely explore how early supporters of women's entry into professional employment also framed their arguments within the unique contribution that women could make to the nation. Debates concerning women's higher education,

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<sup>1</sup> Frances Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales* (London, 1882), p.31.

<sup>2</sup> Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann and Catherine Hall (eds), *Gendered Nations: Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 2000); Ann Curthoys, 'Feminism, Citizenship and National Identity', *Feminist Review*, 44 (1993).

<sup>3</sup> Ursula Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism: Women in Liberal Politics in Wales, 1880-1914* (Cardiff, 2010), p.18.

<sup>4</sup> See Megan Smitley, *The Feminine Public Sphere: Middle-Class Women in Civic Life in Scotland, c.1870-1914* (Manchester, 2008).

enfranchisement and entry into the professions were a regular feature in the press at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Increased secondary and tertiary education opportunities meant an increasing number of women were equipped for the professional employment opportunities that were available to them and that campaigns to open more of the professions to women were supported by their proven intellectual ability. But the intention of campaigners for girls' education in the late nineteenth century was not always coupled with a feminist agenda: while education was believed to enhance women's roles as wives and mothers, it was not necessarily perceived as a stepping stone to paid, professional employment. Despite these limitations, supporters of women's entry into the professions were also able to position educated women as disseminators of a national ideal to naturalise their claims.

The chapter argues that between 1880 and 1939 women who aspired to, or were employed in professional occupations in Wales, drew upon fluid frameworks of gender, class and nationhood. Both supporters and opponents of women's professional employment exploited notions of gender difference to carve a unique role for women in the professions or exclude women from certain occupations. Women could expand notions of women's work by highlighting the different but complementary nature of the sexes. They capitalised on a prevailing middle-class ideal of femininity which stressed religiosity, philanthropy, and moral virtue. However, such strategies based on gender difference were double-edged in that they reinforced conventional stereotypes and pigeonholed women into low prestige and low paid occupational sectors. Women also reinforced their professional status by distancing themselves from other women through their education and class. In doing so, they legitimised new roles for middle-class women on the basis of gender, whilst simultaneously emphasising distinctions between women.

The chapter thus examines how women's professional employment in Wales was regulated by contemporary prescriptions of gender, and how these regulations were negotiated by professional women and their supporters. In particular, it analyses how each generation of professional women navigated the tensions they encountered between their paid employment and contemporary ideas of femininity through their

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<sup>5</sup> *Western Mail*, 2 December 1899.

negotiation of gender, class and national identities. The sections in this chapter explore these themes in three stages of women's movement into professional society. The first section examines the tension between contemporary depictions of a 'progressive' attitude towards girls' intermediate and higher education in Wales at the turn of the twentieth century and support for women's professional employment. The second section analyses how dominant ideas of femininity and class circumscribed the specific professions and occupational roles that women entered. Finally, the chapter considers continuities and changes in gender roles and women's work in the professions during the First World War and its aftermath.

(i) ***Rhetoric and Reality: Girls' Education in Late Nineteenth-Century Wales***

The campaign for girls' intermediate and higher education in Wales shared many features of the campaigns to reform the education of girls in England.<sup>6</sup> However, two events in particular provided the impetus for the growing movement for better educational provision for girls in Wales. The 1847 enquiry into the state of education in Wales, known as the 'Treachery of the Blue Books', was the first significant event. Portraying Welsh women as unchaste and immoral, the findings of the report highlighted a connection between immorality and inadequate educational provision. Historians argue that this event played an important part in the growth of Nonconformist radical opinion in Victorian Wales, whereby religious and educationalist leaders united in a counter-attack on this condemnation and upheld women as symbols of Welsh morality.<sup>7</sup> In late nineteenth-century Wales, education figured prominently in the Liberal-Nonconformist struggle for equality. In 1880, following years of political pressure, the newly elected Liberal government appointed the Aberdare Committee to enquire into the condition of intermediate and higher education in Wales. Some educational reformers were keen to ensure that the interests of girls were also included in the implementation of the committee's recommendations and it was in this context that the second significant event, the Association for

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<sup>6</sup> For an overview of women's education in England see June Purvis, *A History of Women's Education in England* (Milton Keynes, 1991).

<sup>7</sup> Gareth Elwyn Jones, 'The Welsh Language in the Blue Books of 1847', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains, 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 2000); Jane Aaron, *Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Nation, Gender and Identity* (Cardiff, 2007), p.6.



Promoting the Education of Girls in Wales (APEGW), was established in 1886. Formed in London, the original committee comprised twenty-two men and women with the objective 'to raise the standard or ideal of girls' education and arouse public opinion to a fuller appreciation of its value'.<sup>8</sup> The annual meetings were deliberately arranged to coincide with the National Eisteddfod which ensured a large and receptive audience for the association, and by 1887 it boasted a membership in excess of 300 people.<sup>9</sup>

Girls' education in Wales was largely situated within a specific gendered view of women's role in the future of the nation. In this view, an educated female population were the agents of biological reproduction of the nation, the safeguards of the Welsh language and the preventers of moral degradation.<sup>10</sup> This rhetoric was not isolated to Wales, but constituted a gendered moral and religious tone shared more widely in British and European ideas during the late nineteenth century. However, in Wales this became related to a Liberal-Nonconformist struggle for equality. The majority of educationalists who promoted women's further education did so within the belief that education would enhance their role as wives and mothers.<sup>11</sup> In this vein, education was deemed acceptable if it was pursued for cultural means, rather than professional advancement.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, support for girls' intermediate and higher education did not necessarily mean support for their entry into the professions. The aims of educational reformers were also largely conceived in terms of secondary and higher education for middle-class girls. For working-class girls, elementary schooling with a particular domestic orientation was deemed essential to provide them with the skills to be efficient wives and mothers, or domestic servants.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *SWDN*, 10 January 1887. See also SCOLAR: The Association for Promoting the Education of the Girls of Wales: Pamphlets and Reports, 1887, WG12.A

<sup>9</sup> Deborah James, "'Teaching girls': Intermediate Schools and Career Opportunities for Girls in the East Glamorgan Valleys of Wales, 1896-1914', *History of Education*, 30, 6 (2001), p.514.

<sup>10</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, "'The True 'Cymraes': Images of Women in Women's Nineteenth Century Welsh Periodicals', in Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939* (Cardiff, 1991), p.70.

<sup>11</sup> Julia Bush, "'Special Strengths for their Own Special Duties': Women, Higher Education and Gender Conservatism in Late Victorian Britain', *History of Education*, 34, 4 (2005).

<sup>12</sup> *Welsh Outlook*, 1914, p.225.

<sup>13</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.17.

Educational campaigners whose aims were coupled with a more feminist agenda seized upon some of the sentiments embedded in the nationalist rhetoric.<sup>14</sup> One of the most prominent campaigners for girls educational and employment opportunities was Frances Elizabeth Hoggan (*née* Morgan), the first woman from Wales to qualify as a medical doctor. Born in Brecon in 1843, she was the eldest of five children of Georgina and Richard Morgan, a Welsh clergyman. She pursued her medical education in Europe when the Apothecaries' Hall closed its medical examinations to women in 1868.<sup>15</sup> Hoggan was awarded a medical doctorate in 1870 from the University of Zurich, and subsequently undertook postgraduate work in Vienna, Prague and Paris. On her return to Britain, she worked alongside Elizabeth Garrett Anderson at the New Hospital for Women in London before establishing a medical practice with her husband, Dr George Hoggan, in 1874. Between 1878 and 1886 Hoggan became involved in the campaign for equal educational provision for girls in Wales. Although she lived in England for the majority of her adult life and had little else to do with the national affairs of her country of birth, she had a profound influence upon the education scene in Wales during the late nineteenth century, ensuring that the interests of middle-class girls were firmly embedded into the nation's wider educational reform.<sup>16</sup>

A group of professional women with loose Welsh connections were the most vocal advocates for improved educational provision for girls in Wales. Alongside Hoggan, this included Carmarthen-born Elizabeth P. Hughes (the first principal of Cambridge Training College), Dr Sophie Bryant (North London Collegiate School), and Dilys Glynn Jones [*née* Davies] (North London Collegiate School).<sup>17</sup> Their beliefs were undoubtedly moulded by their experiences in middle-class English establishments and their association with prominent educational reformers including Emily Davies, Frances Buss and Dorothea Beale.<sup>18</sup> Whilst these leaders of the women's education movement

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<sup>14</sup> *Transactions of the Liverpool Eisteddfod*, 1884. Cited in Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation*, p.137.

<sup>15</sup> Frances Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', *The Contemporary Review* (1882). See also Thomas Neville Bonner, *To the Ends of the Earth, Women's Search for Education in Medicine* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp.38-40; W. Gareth Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience* (Cardiff, 1990), pp.100-104.

<sup>16</sup> Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation*, p.100 and p.129.

<sup>17</sup> W. Gareth Evans, 'The Welsh Intermediate and Technical Education Act 1889 and the Education of Girls: Gender Stereotyping or Curricular Assimilation?', *Llafur*, 5, 2 (1988); W. Gareth Evans, 'Equal Educational Opportunities for Girls and Women in Victorian Wales: The Contribution of the London Welsh', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 2, (1995).

<sup>18</sup> Dilys Jones was a pupil at the North London Collegiate School under Frances Buss, and after spending a year at Newnham Hall, Cambridge, returned to her former school as an assistant mistress. Elizabeth P. Hughes taught at Cheltenham Ladies' College 1877-1881 with Dorothea Beale, before becoming the first

in Wales were also to argue their case in terms of improving the position of women both in the home and in their contribution to society, they extended the rhetoric of the unique contribution that women could make to the nation to encompass women's professional employment. They recognised that because professional society was largely an examining society, the future advancement of women was connected with the exams that they would take and their ability to gain an education equal to their male counterparts.

One of the few women invited to give evidence to the Aberdare Committee in 1880, Hoggan summarised her recommendations in her book, *Education for Girls in Wales*, together with a series of letters published in the *Western Mail* and *South Wales Daily News*.<sup>19</sup> Highlighting the inadequate educational provision for girls in Wales, she claimed, 'if any one were to ask what Welsh women need more than anything else, the answer would be intermediate and higher education'.<sup>20</sup> She argued that beyond primary education, girls had been almost entirely neglected. Hoggan echoed the calls of Liberal Nonconformists for the need for educational institutions to reflect fairly the religious denomination of the nation in their governing bodies and staff, and extended this to include the representation of women at all stages of the educational cycle. She appealed to the patriotic sentiments of those 'who desire to see Wales take its proper place, side by side with England, Scotland and Ireland, in affording to the young of both sexes those educational advantages'.<sup>21</sup> Hoggan chose to identify herself as a Welsh woman and emphasised her familial links with Wales, despite having not lived in the country for the majority of her adult life.

Hoggan perceived higher education as a vehicle for women's professional employment and ultimately, emancipation. Because of her own experience of exclusion from a medical education in Britain, she was aware of the importance of equal opportunities for women's education and professional training. Advocating fair access to scholarships, she argued that the opportunity for women to gain a scholarship at Jesus College meant the difference between a life of 'monotonous drudgery in an

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Principal of Cambridge Training College, formed by a committee including Frances Buss and Sophie Bryant.

<sup>19</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*; *SWDN*, 22 August 1878; January 1881; February 1881; *Western Mail*, 20 August 1878.

<sup>20</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.11.

<sup>21</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.1

uncongenial home' and independence.<sup>22</sup> Her arguments for coeducation were both theoretical and pragmatic in her recognition that any separate sphere hindered women's full intellectual development, and that separate women's examinations could be regarded as inferior in standard and be detrimental to their status within the professions. Hoggan contested the preconceived notion that women had less mental capacity than men by drawing on her professional expertise.<sup>23</sup>

Careful not to make her demands too radical, Hoggan framed her arguments within prevailing Victorian middle-class ideology. She sought to assuage contemporary fears that higher education, and its accompanying competitive examinations, would harm women's health. Drawing upon her own experience at Zurich, Hoggan claimed that 'women are benefited and in no way injured by this education, and...the young men also benefit; there is a certain softening influence which must always proceed from cultured and educated women'.<sup>24</sup> She also deemed it necessary for 'women to be largely represented in the teaching of girls, not only for their teaching, but for the moral influence they will exert'.<sup>25</sup> Highlighting gender difference, Hoggan outlined the unique benefits that women's presence in higher education institutions – both as staff and students – would bring. She also noted that it would be a necessity to have at least some provision for accommodation of women students because they would be subject to greater scrutiny and mistakes would be more harshly criticised. Hoggan, like many educational campaigners, thus trod a fine line between reinforcing contemporary ideas of sexual difference and challenging the very basis of women's dependence and inferiority in familial and public life.

Echoing a middle-class ideology, she doubted whether a sufficient number of women 'of superior culture, with a practical knowledge of the educational and health requirements of girls and young women, and with powers of organization and business-like habits, could be found in any large town in Wales' to manage the ladies' colleges.<sup>26</sup> By highlighting the dearth of qualified teachers in Wales and the consequences that this

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<sup>22</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.58.

<sup>23</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India'. See also Frances Hoggan, 'The Microscope as Affording Employment and Recreation to Women', *Englishwoman's Review*, 15 May (1879), p.6.

<sup>24</sup> *Aberdare Report, Evidence*, p.349.

<sup>25</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.49.

<sup>26</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.49.

had for women's position in society, Hoggan justified women's admission to university as raising both the status of women teachers and their general capability.<sup>27</sup> Hoggan's belief that the creation of an educated middle class was the most effective way to raise the social and cultural standards of the rest of the population, underlined much of her social campaigning: her involvement with the movement to improve girls' education in Wales, her campaign for medical education for Indian women, and her promotion of African-American racial 'uplift' overseen by white people at the Universal Races Congress in 1911.<sup>28</sup>

By the mid-1880s, women were admitted to the three Welsh university colleges at Aberystwyth, Bangor and Cardiff. For many contemporaries, the establishment of the University of Wales in 1893 cemented the notion of a distinct Welsh education. From its inception, education leaders depicted the University of Wales as progressive in its attitude towards women because of its policy to admit women to its degrees and to membership of its constituent bodies and offices.<sup>29</sup> Mr Mackail, presiding at the opening of the residential hall for women students in Bangor, stated that 'it was the distinguishing glory of the University of Wales...that men and women should be alike human within her borders...the abolition of a purely artificial distinction had cleared the ground for national distinctions to have their fullest scope and most elastic play'.<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth P. Hughes also contrasted Wales's 'advanced position' in removing disabilities of sex in education, to English institutions. She stated that she was 'glad and proud to think that future Welshwomen will never know in our Welsh university educational privations such as we suffer from here [in Cambridge]'.<sup>31</sup> Advocating women's entry into higher education on the basis of gender difference, she wrote:

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<sup>27</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.41.

<sup>28</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*; Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India'; Frances Hoggan, 'The Negro Problem in Relation to White Women', in Gustav Spiller (ed.), *Papers on Inter-Racial Problems Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress held at the University of London, July 26-29, 1911* (London, 1911). See Daniel G. Williams, *Black Skin, Blue Books: African Americans and Wales, 1845-1945* (Cardiff, 2012), p.5.

<sup>29</sup> W. Cadwaladr Davies and W. Lewis Jones, *College Histories: University of Wales* (London, 1905)

<sup>30</sup> Caernarfon Record Office [hereafter, CRO]: Report of the Proceedings at the Formal Opening of the County School for Girls Bangor, and the University Hall for Women Students, 9 October 1897, XM.6149/4; *University College Magazine*, 2 March 1896 and 1 December 1895; *South Wales Echo*, 2 October 1895; *Western Mail*, 23 June 1891; *Cambrian News*, 6 September 1901.

<sup>31</sup> SCOLAR: APEGW Pamphlets and Reports, 1887.

I rejoice greatly over the fact that Wales is awaking to an intense interest in education, because I take it as a sign that Welsh civilisation is rapidly developing...Whatever may be the future work of the Welsh race, it cannot be done satisfactorily unless we women take our part...Men and women being so different, I believe that in the future educated women will grasp some aspect of truth that has not yet been perceived.<sup>32</sup>

As the first Principal of Cambridge Training College, which was founded with the purpose of training university women to teach in girls' secondary schools, Hughes believed that women's higher education would raise the standard of the teaching profession.

Like Hughes, supporters of women's education argued for educational reforms on the basis of economic independence for women and the platform it would provide them with for exerting their influence on wider society. In the nationalist Cymru Fydd movement's journal, *Young Wales*, the novelist Gwyneth Vaughan wrote on the 'Progress of Women in Wales':

I feel that the men of my own land are in the vanguard of reform...[but] let us not rest content until every girl holds in her hand a bread winning weapon, for the economic position of women must attain its proper level before it is possible for them to take their places on that higher platform we would fain see them occupy. It is then, and only then, that there will dawn the new, and better era for the womanhood, and let me add, the manhood of our country.<sup>33</sup>

Whilst this can be seen as an attempt to flatter the Welsh Liberal establishment into conceding feminist demands, Vaughan explicitly linked the position of women to the progress of the nation. Highlighting gender difference in the formulation of feminist ideas, Vaughan used the nineteenth century notion of innate female moral superiority to argue her case. In this vein, a woman's economic independence would allow her to exert an uplifting and refining influence on her profession and, subsequently, wider society.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> E. P. Hughes, *The Education of Welsh Women* (London, 1887); Frances Hoggan echoed a similar sentiment in Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*.

<sup>33</sup> *Young Wales*, 1896.

<sup>34</sup> *The Liverpool Daily Post*, 26 February 1906.

As Julia Bush cautions, there is a tendency to discuss women's entry into higher education mainly or exclusively as a branch of Victorian feminist campaigning.<sup>35</sup> However, supporters of women's university education – both women and men – often promoted women's higher education within a more conservative view of their role in society. Some supporters of women's higher education still framed it within a narrow definition of their role in the family and moral influence they would have on society. For example, at the opening ceremony of residence for women students at Bangor in 1881, Principal Reichel made it clear that education was not commensurate with paid employment when he stated that, the 'female's most profound influence would make itself felt through her general culture and influence on family life rather than through the professions'.<sup>36</sup> Female students were treated as objects of curiosity and the 'woman question' was a pertinent one by the turn of the twentieth century. In Cardiff in 1889, the attendance at a debate on the 'Question of the Higher Education of Women' was reportedly larger than any other of the debating society's meetings that term, and a witness claimed that interest was 'enhanced by the fact that on each side, the debate was to be led by a lady'.<sup>37</sup> The opposing speaker's greatest objection to women's higher education was that it could enable their entry into the professions of the law and medicine. He argued that the training in both branches was unsuitable for girls because it involved 'work in dissecting rooms, or the equally unpleasant task of reading criminal records'.<sup>38</sup>

In her study of women's higher education in Britain, Dyhouse questions the claims of many universities to make 'no distinction of sex' in matters of admission or educational policy.<sup>39</sup> Although the University of Wales claimed equality of the sexes from its inception, women students met with a mixed reception from both university authorities and from their male peers, often finding themselves the subject of ridicule.<sup>40</sup> The three university colleges made separate provision for women in residential halls and dictated strict rules of chaperonage and sex segregation. As Hoggan's previous comments suggest, women's residential halls helped assuage parental concerns about their daughters being away from home. They were also part of a wider culture of

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<sup>35</sup> Bush, 'Special Strengths for Their Own Special Duties', p.391.

<sup>36</sup> Cited in Evans, 'The Welsh Intermediate and Technical Education Act', p.86.

<sup>37</sup> *University College Magazine*, 1 March 1889.

<sup>38</sup> *University College Magazine*, 1 March 1889.

<sup>39</sup> Carol Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities 1870-1939* (London, 1995).

<sup>40</sup> Cardiff University Institutional Archive [hereafter, CUIA]: Prospectus, 1894/95, UCC/R/Pub/Pro/1-39; *University College Magazine*, 1, 2 (1885) and 1, 3 (1886).

separatism for women in public life at this time. For some, a commitment to protecting women's domestic character was for the very purpose of broadening their involvement in life beyond the home. However, strict rules of sex segregation were not without contention, and women's increasing dissatisfaction with what they perceived as old-fashioned rules is explored in the following chapter.

Educationalists' claims that Wales had a progressive view towards women's education were not, however, completely unfounded. At the turn of the twentieth century women comprised a significantly higher proportion of students in the University College of Wales than they did elsewhere in Britain. The Reports of the University Grants Committee show that in Wales' higher education institutions, women represented 38 per cent of full-time students by 1900, compared to 15 per cent in England and 14 per cent in Scotland for the same year [appendix 6]. The majority of these students were in the day education departments, and the proportion of female to male students was not reflected in the composition of academic staff [appendix 7.1]. In the UCSWM there were separate training departments for men and women, although this was not without contention:

The separation of the sexes in this matter of normal training was quite inconsistent with the general policy of the College, where they united all men and women for all subjects outside the pedagogic or educational side, and it was quite contrary, apparently, to the whole theory of their University education in Wales.<sup>41</sup>

By the turn of the twentieth century there was a growing awareness of the employment opportunities available to women who pursued higher education. In 1895, at the laying of the foundation stone of the women's college Alexandra Hall in Aberystwyth, Principal T. Francis Roberts hoped that more women would take advantage of the opportunities now available for those who had received higher education. He noted that women were rapidly entering many professions, including medicine and especially teaching.<sup>42</sup> Female students also took advantage of the opportunities and networks afforded to them at the university colleges, as will be explored in chapter three.

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<sup>41</sup> *University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire Council Minutes*, 7 March 1900.

<sup>42</sup> Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation*, p.35.



The rhetoric of educationalists was therefore used for both reductive and empowering means in relation to women's wider place in public life. Campaigners for the reform of girls' education in Wales rhetorically tied national progress to educational provision for women. Education leaders propagated a view of Wales as having a specifically progressive attitude towards the education of its female population. However, justifications for women's access to educational opportunities were largely framed within the special contribution they could make to the education of their own children, to the education of children as teachers, and to the moral benefit of the nation. This did not always extend to support for women's entry into all professional occupations and educational reformers approached the issue of women's education with quite different priorities. Despite these limitations, supporters of women's professional employment sought to capitalise upon some of these sentiments and rhetorically appealed to sentiments of Welsh national identity to advance their feminist claims. However, even these beliefs were circumscribed by dominant ideologies of class and gender. Whilst the daughters of middle-class families benefited from the implementation of intermediate schools throughout the country and admission to the constituent colleges of the University of Wales, these benefits did not necessarily extend to girls of the working class.

***(ii) Professionalisation, Gender and Class: Women's Entry into the Professions 1880-1914***

Teaching was the main professional occupation which employed upper-working-class and middle-class women in the late nineteenth century. The implementation of the Welsh Intermediate Education Act in 1889 provided publicly-funded intermediate schools for girls as well as boys. These schools, together with the municipal secondary schools established under the Education Act of 1902, increased the demand for teachers and played an important role in educating girls and encouraging them into teaching. The development of university education was intimately connected with the need for educated teachers, and the availability of 'new' occupations for women was also an important justification for the provision of education for secondary and higher education for girls. Teaching was increasingly professionalised in the last third of the nineteenth century: the training of teachers gradually moved from the pupil-teacher system towards the training college, qualified by government certification. However,

historians question any sharp distinction between the mid nineteenth-century 'amateur' governess, and the reformed professionalism of her successor.<sup>43</sup> Teaching largely reflected dominant notions of women's role in society as a consequence of its connotations with public service and domesticity. Yet evangelical notions of women's religious and moral vocation did not sit comfortably with the notion of the professional woman during this period.

Attempts to raise the standard of the teaching profession in Wales were thus entwined with contemporary ideals of femininity. Swansea Training College was the first training college for women to open in Wales in 1872. The founders of the college saw its role as a provider of 'careful training not only in the usual elementary subject but all in habits of order, industry and economy and in the principles of religion and morality'.<sup>44</sup> Institutionalising women's 'natural' role, their view of teaching was inspired by religiosity and maternalism. In 1887, Elizabeth P. Hughes suggested that teachers should possess three requirements: a high moral character, a good education and a thorough professional preparation.<sup>45</sup> By 1910 some teachers still focused on the moral and religious duty of the profession and deflected attention from the remunerative benefits. Miss Bedford, the headmistress of Pontypridd County School, discussed her views on teaching in the school magazine:

Do you know what it means to be a teacher? Many of you, doubtless, have undertaken the work in a thoughtless manner, looking upon it merely as a means of gaining a livelihood. Let me tell you what the work of a teacher, if rightly understood, should mean. It should mean the undertaking of a sacred ministry, a calling which is the noblest of all work.<sup>46</sup>

However, as Bedford implies, this was not an ideal accepted by all women teachers and neither was it representative of the reality of all teachers' experiences. For female teachers at the turn of the twentieth century, there were tensions between being a paid

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<sup>43</sup> Christina de Bellaigue, 'The Development of Teaching as a Professions for Women before 1870', *The Historical Journal*, 44, 4 (2001).

<sup>44</sup> Swansea Training College Report, 1872, p.6. Cited in W. Gareth Evans, 'The Gendering of the Elementary and Secondary School Curriculum in Victorian and Early Twentieth Century Wales', in S. Betts (ed.), *Our Daughters' Land: Past and Present* (Cardiff, 1996), p.88.

<sup>45</sup> SCOLAR: APEGW Pamphlets and Reports, 1887.

<sup>46</sup> Miss C. Bedford, *Pontypridd County School Magazine*, VIII/3 (July 1910), p.9. Cited in James, 'Teaching Girls', p. 521.

member of an increasingly professionalised workforce and gendered perceptions of their role as a ‘vocation’.

The tension between gender and professionalism was also imbued with contemporary perceptions of social class. At Swansea Training College in 1900, the prominent Welsh social reformer and magistrate Daniel Lleufer Thomas stated, ‘as educated women, you can do much for the welfare and happiness of your own sex – and indirectly mine – by quiet unobtrusive talk with mothers and housewives as to the laws of health, the elements of sanitary science’.<sup>47</sup> Thomas echoed a dominant middle-class ideology which presented teachers’ role as moral and practical guiders to the working class. In reality, however, class distinctions were not so clear cut. Sian Rhiannon Williams shows that many teachers had no alternative choice of career at the turn of the twentieth century and, especially in elementary schools, were usually uncertified and employed in lower-status jobs.<sup>48</sup>

Initial attempts to reform the training of teachers drew upon the same rhetoric used for the promotion of girls’ education in Wales. Following the Welsh Intermediate Education Act in 1889, the UCSWM’s student magazine stated:

This question of the training of teachers forms part of the larger question of what is best in the interest of the progress and development of the country. May the future bring wider opportunities for training, practical and intellectual, for all teachers in the schools, and so...ensure that this little island of ours is to hold her place in the front ranks of the nations of the earth.<sup>49</sup>

Teachers were perceived as important agents of this national vision, and represented conservative views of women’s role as transmitters of national culture and education to the future generation. Within the rhetoric of national progress, Elizabeth P. Hughes advocated that Wales should lead the way by insisting on professional preparation for teachers, a feat, she argued, that had already been started in Aberystwyth and Cardiff and was due to begin in Bangor’s Day Training Department in the next session.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> *Cambrian News*, 29 June 1900.

<sup>48</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, ‘Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales, c.1870-1950’, *The Welsh Journal of Education*, 13, 2 (2005), p.71.

<sup>49</sup> *University College Magazine*, 1 June, 1889.

<sup>50</sup> SCOLAR: APEGW Pamphlets and Reports, 1887.

A teacher's ability to speak Welsh was an important concern in the reform of education and the teaching profession in Wales. Educational reformers argued that the needs of Welsh-speaking pupils should not be overlooked.<sup>51</sup> For Hoggan, a teacher's knowledge of the Welsh language was important to further pupils' understanding of English, rather than for the promotion of the language *per se*.<sup>52</sup> She argued that teachers should understand Welsh so that 'they may be in sympathy with people among whom they labour...to help their pupils intelligently to overcome the difficulties which necessarily arise in learning English when the home language is Welsh'.<sup>53</sup> In a similar argument, Hughes considered 'it a distinct gain to have Welsh teachers for the Welsh Schools'.<sup>54</sup> However, she also believed that 'nothing could be more fatal to Welsh progress than to choose an inferior Welsh teacher rather than a superior English one'.<sup>55</sup>

Headmistresses of the new intermediate girls' schools negotiated gender constraints in order to forge new roles for themselves as professional figures and recognised authorities.<sup>56</sup> There was criticism of the elitism of secondary education in Wales in the years preceding the First World War. The advocacy of greater working-class representation in secondary schools met with some reluctance by headmistresses, including Mary Collin, headmistress of Cardiff High School for Girls between 1895 and 1924.<sup>57</sup> Deriving her inspiration from her previous posts at the Girls' Public Day School Company's high schools in Notting Hill and Nottingham, she sought to establish a socially exclusive girls' high school in Cardiff. In 1908, the Board of Education criticised the school for allocating less than 25 per cent of the free spaces available.<sup>58</sup> These secondary schools became producers of their own faculties and were intimately linked to women's university colleges, inspiring pupils to aim to the highest echelons of the professions. A past pupil described Collin as:

an ideal headmistress, the outcome of whose excellent organisation and direction may be seen in the great work achieved, whether attested by the

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<sup>51</sup> SCOLAR: Aberdare Report, Evidence, pp.348-9.

<sup>52</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, pp.51-52.

<sup>53</sup> Hoggan, *Education for Girls in Wales*, p.52.

<sup>54</sup> SCOLAR: APEGW Pamphlets and Reports, 1887.

<sup>55</sup> SCOLAR: APEGW Pamphlets and Reports, 1887.

<sup>56</sup> Carol Dyhouse, 'Miss Buss and Miss Beale: Gender and Authority in the History of Education', in Felicity Hunt (ed.), *Lessons for Life: The Schooling of Girls and Women, 1850-1950* (Oxford, 1987).

<sup>57</sup> For further information on Mary Collin, see biographies section.

<sup>58</sup> TNA: Cardiff Municipal School for Girls: Letter 15 June 1908, Ed. 35/3236.

results of examinations, by the passing on of pupils to the University College, by the after-life and careers of her scholars, or perhaps still more by that 'tone' and 'atmosphere' which have been characteristic alike of the building and its occupants'.<sup>59</sup>

Collin assumed a professional identity based on service which, in many ways, was more compatible with respectable middle-class femininity. The challenge she presented to dominant form of gender roles through academic aspiration was tempered by the modes of behaviour and 'tone' and 'atmosphere' of the school. Furthermore, 'her graceful and dignified manner...and, a most important point, her appearance' mitigated contemporary fears that competitive examinations and professional work would compromise women's 'femininity'.<sup>60</sup>

This tension between gender prescriptions and equal educational opportunities played out in a school's balance of the curriculum between academic subjects and domestically orientated ones. The Welsh Department of the Board of Education and the Central Welsh Board advocated a policy of curricular differentiation which involved a greater role for domestic subjects in the education of girls.<sup>61</sup> Collin sought to balance the two: 'training must be provided which should make it possible for girls to enter professions and business careers, as well as the general culture of mind, and hand, and character which should fit them to be home-makers in the fullest sense'.<sup>62</sup> In response to objections from the Charity Commissioners, Collin succeeded in including a chemical laboratory into the school plans by labelling it 'Sewing Room'.<sup>63</sup> The close relationship Collin forged with the local university college and the academically-orientated curricula encouraged many of the school's pupils to become the next generation of professional women in the city. As will be seen in chapters three and four, a new generation of teachers began to protest against the gendered inequalities in the profession and formed their own professional associations from the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls, 1895-1924* (Cardiff, 1924), p.11.

<sup>60</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.6.

<sup>61</sup> W. G. Evans, 'The Welsh Intermediate Education Act and the Education of Girls: Curriculum Assimilation and the Quest for Differentiation', in O. E. Jones (ed.) *The Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889: A Centenary Appraisal* (Cardiff, 1990).

<sup>62</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.15.

<sup>63</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.18.

<sup>64</sup> Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics, 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1996), p.1.

The gendering of academic discipline formation was mirrored in the departments in which the earliest academic women at the University of Wales were employed. The number of female members of academic staff in the constituent colleges doubled from five in 1896 to ten by the outbreak of the First World War [appendix 7.1]. These first five women were all employed in the education departments and were largely responsible for the female students as women's tutors.<sup>65</sup> Educational segregation between the sexes could also extend to the culture of the workplace. The increase of 'Lady Lecturers' in the UCSWM in 1905 prompted the college authorities to provide a separate common room for them.<sup>66</sup> In December 1919, the UCSWM furnished the common room at the college building on Newport Road to accommodate the increased number of female academic staff.<sup>67</sup> Women were not admitted to membership of the senior common room of the University College of Swansea until after the Second World War and when the Principal of the College, Charles Edwards, discovered this, he reportedly never went in there again.<sup>68</sup>

Feminist historians have shown how the structural processes of professionalisation served to exclude women from dominant sites of academic knowledge.<sup>69</sup> As in other disciplines, the institutionalisation of scientific research served to keep women on the margins of the field as a consequence of their exclusion from laboratories, learned societies and elite university departments. McEwan shows that, in response, some women participated in amateur and popular botany as leisure activities.<sup>70</sup> Hoggan outlined the benefits of the microscope in affording employment and recreation to women 'who are looking about them and longing for work, but who are withheld from choosing a profession or trade by the authority or wishes of parents and friends'.<sup>71</sup> The mechanical and menial nature of laboratory science made it an acceptable hobby for women and Hoggan was keen to demonstrate that it was a pastime 'to fill up some of [women's] idle hours' and would not distract from women's domestic

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<sup>65</sup> *Cap & Gown*, November, 1903.

<sup>66</sup> *Cap & Gown*, February, 1905.

<sup>67</sup> CUIA: Minutes of Council, 3 December 1919, UCC/CL.cm/1-14.

<sup>68</sup> David Dykes, *The University College of Swansea: An Illustrated History* (Gloucester, 1992), p.100.

<sup>69</sup> Cheryl McEwan, 'Gender, Science and Physical Geography in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Area*, 30, 3 (1998); Ann B. Shteir, 'Gender and "Modern" Botany in Victorian England', *Women, Gender, and Science: New Directions*, 12 (1997); Claire G. Jones, *Femininity, Mathematics and Science, 1880-1914* (Basingstoke, 2009).

<sup>70</sup> McEwan, 'Gender, Science and Physical Geography', p.217.

<sup>71</sup> Hoggan, 'The Microscope as Affording Employment and Recreation to Women', p.4.

responsibilities.<sup>72</sup> Whilst framing it as a respectable and not remunerative pastime, she outlined a few openings for women as ‘teachers, specimen makers, [and] assistants to professed microscopists’.<sup>73</sup> In doing so she simultaneously reinforced and challenged contemporary ideas of gender difference.

Medical women also remained on the margins of the profession in the late nineteenth century and the earliest medical women disagreed over the tactics to gain entry into the profession. Medical practice abroad in British colonies provided employment openings for early medical women who had qualified.<sup>74</sup> The most important development in Britain was the National Association for the Supply of Female Medical Aid to India, organised by the Countess of Dufferin.<sup>75</sup> Supporters of this scheme argued that religious proscriptions precluded many Indian women from seeking medical advice from male doctors, and were therefore wholly dependent on such medical assistance that these women could offer them.<sup>76</sup> The medical profession generally perceived it as a respectable path for women to pursue because it did not constitute a direct threat to medical jobs in Britain, was largely within the confines of women’s health and was situated in a framework of religious and missionary duty.<sup>77</sup> Practice abroad provided initial entry into the professions for the first generation of women and afforded them opportunities to gain clinical experience which was often denied to them at home. For example, Dr Mary Josephine Hannan, Cardiff’s first practising female doctor, commenced her medical career in India under Lady Dufferin’s scheme for supplying female medical aid to Indian women.<sup>78</sup> She stayed in India until failing health obliged her to relinquish her appointment in 1895, when she established a practice in Cardiff.

Other medical women expressed reservations about the desirability of British versus Indian recruits and the potentially damaging effect on prospects for medical

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<sup>72</sup> Hoggan, ‘The Microscope as Affording Employment and Recreation to Women’, p.6.

<sup>73</sup> Hoggan, ‘The Microscope as Affording Employment and Recreation to Women’, p.6.

<sup>74</sup> Anne Witz, ‘“Colonising Women”: Female Medical Practice in Colonial India 1880-1890’, in L. Conrad & A. Hardy (eds) *Women and Modern Medicine* (Amsterdam, 2001).

<sup>75</sup> Mary Ann Elston, ‘Women Doctors in the British Health Service: A Sociological Study of their Careers and Opportunities’, (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1986), pp.153-155.

<sup>76</sup> *Western Mail*, 13 December 1892.

<sup>77</sup> Cardiff Central Library, Local Studies Collection [hereafter, CCL]: Medical Mission Auxiliary of the Baptist Missionary Society and the Baptist Zenana Mission, LC10:061.4:266(041) BAP.

<sup>78</sup> *Contemporary Portraits and Biographies: Men and Women of South Wales and Monmouthshire: Cardiff Section* (Cardiff, 1896), p.xiii.

women in Britain. Frances Hoggan criticised the movement for ignoring the dangers for the British medical women and argued that priority should be given to opening medical schools for Indian women rather than training British women to go there.<sup>79</sup> In her case for local Indian women being the best suited to represent their own interests, Hoggan echoed the rhetoric she used in her involvement with the girls' education movement that Wales would be best served by its country women: 'when a movement exactly corresponds to the requirements of a country, and no strong dominant interest clashes with it, its progress may be so rapid as almost to take away the breath of those who have fostered it'.<sup>80</sup> She paralleled arguments of national uplift, believing that 'medical women were urgently needed in India, not alone for their professional knowledge and skill, but also as the most powerful agents for raising the whole tone and worth of women's lives in that vast empire'.<sup>81</sup> Hoggan naturalised the medical training of Indian women through their ability to alleviate suffering of the local female population and downplayed the remunerative benefits of a career in medicine.<sup>82</sup> These views were representative of a Victorian discourse of middle-class uplift, which was also used by proponents of medical women to justify their professional status and authority.

At home, supporters of women's employment sought to carve a separate place for women in the professions within a gendered framework of maternal and child welfare. Mary Ann Elston argues that, especially for the first generation of medical women, the case for women-run dispensaries and hospitals was generally framed as a logical extension of the social maternalist argument of their potential mission to women.<sup>83</sup> For some, this was an explicitly religious interpretation of their mission to working-class women and had connections with their overseas missionary work. Yet separate practice was also a pragmatic response to male doctors' exclusionary practices and provided opportunities for women's professional training. A male doctor extolled the merits of appointing a woman to the hospital for diseases of women and children when he stated that, 'I have known ladies suffer prolonged and excruciating pains from motives of extreme delicacy...I hope our London and provincial schools will establish special instruction for females as midwives, medical officers of public institutions for

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<sup>79</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India'.

<sup>80</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', p.3.

<sup>81</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', pp.1-2.

<sup>82</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', p.9.

<sup>83</sup> Mary Ann Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women': Medical Women's Hospitals in Britain, 1866–1948, in L. Conrad & A. Hardy (eds), *Women and Modern Medicine* (Amsterdam, 2001); Ellen S. More, "A Certain Restless Ambition": Women Physicians and World War I, *American Quarterly*, 41, 4 (1989).



their own sex and for children, dispensers of medicines, chemists, assistants and trained nurses'.<sup>84</sup> Consequently, women were clustered in maternity welfare and public health appointments and were less likely to be in surgery or positions of seniority. The most common post for women doctors was as (usually assistant) medical inspector to school children.<sup>85</sup> For example, Dr Katharine Drinkwater was Assistant Medical Officer of Health for Wrexham, where she established the town's first child welfare clinic.<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Dr Erie Evans was Medical Officer to Howells Girls' School and in charge of medical provision for venereal diseases in Cardiff when she became the WNSM's first female member of academic staff in 1923, lecturing first aid, home nursing, midwifery and venereal diseases.<sup>87</sup> The increasing specialisation within the medical profession afforded women the opportunity to carve a place for themselves in certain 'feminine' medical fields. This was also used by medical authorities to keep women in a marginal position within the profession, where they did not constitute a direct threat to traditionally 'masculine', and subsequently more prestigious, roles.

Women employed in professions in which they were the minority were often treated as a novelty, whereby their femininity was a source of curiosity or amusement. It was common for female doctors to be referred to as 'doctress', or 'lady doctor'.<sup>88</sup> Some contemporaries characterised them as sexless 'blue stockings' who rejected a gendered identity in their transgression of conventional gender norms, and their careers were depicted as a consequence of their failure or inability to marry. The *Western Mail* referred to female medical students at the Royal Free Hospital in London as:

[a] class of plain but clever girls, of whom there is generally one in every family. They had an intellectual cast of features, and were dressed modestly

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<sup>84</sup> *Cambrian News*, 25 July 1873. This echoed the arguments used by Elizabeth Blackwell and Sophia Jex-Blake on their entrance into the profession: Dr Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, 'Medicine as a Profession for Women', *English Woman's Journal*, May 1860, p.100; Sophia Jex-Blake, *Medical Women: Two Essays* (Edinburgh, 1872).

<sup>85</sup> *Cap & Gown*, 3 June 1908; *City of Cardiff Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health*, 1911. Dr Elizabeth Elder held this post in Cardiff in 1907 and supervised the health visitors for the district. She held infant consultations in the city from 1908 to which mothers were invited to bring their infants. These consultations were used as a training centre for the health visitors, school nurses and pupil midwives, with lectures and demonstrations given at the University College and Technical School.

<sup>86</sup> WGA: Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer to the Swansea Education Authority, 1912, HE 3/1; *The Medical Women's Federation Quarterly Review*, April 1940. For further information on Katharine Drinkwater, see biographies section.

<sup>87</sup> Wellcome Archives [hereafter, WA]: *Medical Women's Federation Newsletter*, January 1949, SA/MWF.B2/15; *The University of Wales Calendar*, 1923. For further information on Erie Evans, see biographies section.

<sup>88</sup> *Cardiff Argus*, 23 August 1890.

and unpretentiously. But although all of marriageable age, they had, for the most part, the indescribable blue stocking look from which a man instinctively recoils...May I venture to say that there was not a girl present who had not what is familiarly known as 'a disappointment'.<sup>89</sup>

In response to such charges, Ethel McKenna's career advice manual in 1903 advised prospective female doctors to adopt a heightened femininity in order to counter stereotypes of the 'sexless medical woman'.<sup>90</sup> The author advised them to be a 'Woman first, and the Medical Practitioner afterwards, for so you will best justify your entry into medical practice'.<sup>91</sup> She also outlined that women considering a medical career should 'have good manners, a soft, refined voice...[and] dress well'.<sup>92</sup>

Others sought to downplay notions of sexual difference. While Hoggan highlighted differences between men and women and exploited the image of the woman as the disseminator of culture in society, she also challenged the cult of domesticity when it concerned women's capacity for intellectual work. Auguste Forel, a Swiss psychiatrist who studied in Zurich at the same time as her, recalled that when the Professor of Anatomy raised objections about a woman participating in the anatomical laboratory work, Hoggan replied: 'Herr Professor, it is much more shocking and improper to make exceptions here. We wish to study the subject without restrictions of any kind'.<sup>93</sup> Despite her efforts to assimilate, a female in the presence of male students was perceived as a novelty and Forel recalled how the male students initially found Hoggan's unchaperoned presence 'rather comical'.<sup>94</sup> However, she quickly earned Forel and his peers' respect so that 'none of us would have dared to make a tactless or sarcastic remark'.<sup>95</sup> Her thesis on progressive muscular atrophy differed from the published conclusions of her supervisor, Anton Biermer: Hoggan argued that it was an organic disease of the central nervous system, not as Biermer claimed a muscular disease. As the second woman to defend her thesis before the faculty, Hoggan's examination attracted such a large crowd of spectators that it had to be relocated to the

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<sup>89</sup> *Western Mail*, 3 October 1877.

<sup>90</sup> Ethel M. Lamport, 'Medicine as a Profession for Women', in Ethel McKenna (ed.), *Education and the Professions* (London, 1903), p.257.

<sup>91</sup> Lamport, 'Medicine as a Profession for Women', p.263.

<sup>92</sup> Lamport, 'Medicine as a Profession for Women', p.263

<sup>93</sup> Auguste Forel, *Out of My Life and Work* (London, 1937), p.56; Thomas Neville Bonner, *To the Ends of the Earth: Women's Search for Education in Medicine* (Cambridge MA, 1992), p.38; Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', p.9.

<sup>94</sup> Forel, *Out of My Life and Work*, p.56.

<sup>95</sup> Forel, *Out of My Life and Work*, p.56.

largest auditorium in the university, the Aula.<sup>96</sup> The scrutiny she was under was heightened by Biermer's twenty-five minute critique of her principal conclusions. However, Forel recalled how Hoggan retained a 'cool self-possession with which she continually made notes while Biermer was speaking, and then confuted him in a half-hour's speech, which was altogether too much for him'.<sup>97</sup>

Nursing and midwifery provided more conventional medical roles for women to undertake and, consequently, were problematic in women doctors' claim to be addressing a special need.<sup>98</sup> Nursing reformers used ideals of femininity in an enabling manner in an attempt to professionalise the occupation and attract middle-class applicants. Accounts of nurses in medical journals and the press presented an idealised image of them situated within a virtuous moral framework. Advice manuals highlighted preferable attributes of 'good temper, self-control, patience, punctuality, cheerfulness, and a willing obedience to those in authority', as well as a 'kindness of disposition'.<sup>99</sup> However, the gender-based arguments of nursing reformers were problematic for those seeking admission to the medical profession. As one commentator argued, 'the objections which are urged to medicine as a profession for women never seem to be felt when they desire to become sick nurses, although the one calling is quite as laborious as the other, and there are few of the objections which in fairness would not apply to the sick nurse – the truth being that nursing has been almost exclusively in the hands of women'.<sup>100</sup> Hoggan acknowledged there was a double-standard of respectability for middle and lower-class women: 'women doctors could not go out at night to their patients, but nobody saw any impropriety or danger in midwives – that is to say, *poor* women – doing so'.<sup>101</sup> Whilst medical women could exploit this contradiction when advantageous to their cause, they simultaneously sought to distinguish themselves from nurses. Using the language of gender to justify their initial entry into the profession, medical women also sought to distinguish themselves from nurses and midwives through their class and education.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Bonner, *To the Ends of the Earth*, p.38; Frances Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine', in T. Stanton, (ed.), *The Woman Question in Europe* (1884), p.70.

<sup>97</sup> Forel, *Out of My Life and Work*, p.67.

<sup>98</sup> Vanessa Heggie, 'Women Doctors and Lady Nurses: Class, Education, and the Professional Victorian Woman', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 89, 2 (2015), p.274.

<sup>99</sup> *Girl's Own Paper*, 17 July 1880; *Cardiff Argus*, 25 July 1888.

<sup>100</sup> *Girl's Own Paper*, 24 November 1883.

<sup>101</sup> Hoggan, 'Medical Women for India', p.11.

<sup>102</sup> Heggie, 'Women Doctors and Lady Nurses'.

Although women had made inroads into medical and academic professions by the outbreak of the First World War, they were still excluded from law, accountancy and the higher grades of the Civil Service. In 1915 the all-male South Wales and Monmouthshire Chartered Accountants Students' Society and the Cardiff Law Students' Debating Society held a joint meeting to debate the proposition 'that the admission of women into the professions is to be deplored'.<sup>103</sup> The arguments raised in favour and against provide a microcosm of wider debates concerning women's entry into the professions.<sup>104</sup> Both parties drew upon assumptions about the intellectual and moral capacities of women and contemporary ideals of femininity and masculinity. Darwinian understandings of male and female nature became influential and these pointed to women's less evolved brain, lesser capacity for rationality and greater subjection to the emotions.<sup>105</sup>

The speakers opposed to women's entry into the professions highlighted psychological, physiological and temperamental differences between the sexes. They argued that the atmosphere of the professions was unsuited to women and alleged that women were not mentally or physically strong enough for the stressful and competitive environment of the professions. Opponents argued that if women were allowed to professionally compete with men, their feminine qualities – 'her dignity, her compassion, her virtue' – would be compromised.<sup>106</sup> Drawing upon historical discourse to justify their argument, they noted that 'history showed that the fight for the independence of woman was coterminous with the decline of the good influence of woman upon the community and with a greater moral laxity among the people'.<sup>107</sup> This echoed contemporary fears that women's admission to the professions would detract from their perceived maternal and domestic role and thus constitute 'a very cruel blow at family life itself'.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, pp.127-129.

<sup>104</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, pp.127-129. Similar arguments in support and against were used in relation to women's admission to the legal profession at the Law Society for Cardiff and District's annual meeting in 1912. *The Times*, 25 September 1912.

<sup>105</sup> Jones, *Femininity, Mathematics and Science*, p.9.

<sup>106</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.127.

<sup>107</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.127.

<sup>108</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.127.

The speakers supporting women's admission to the professions also used the language of gender difference. However by highlighting their unique qualities, they argued that women were suited to certain kinds of work: 'powers of argument and...a superior bump of inquisitiveness – two qualities most useful and important in the legal and accountancy professions'.<sup>109</sup> Although they subscribed to the notion that marriage and employment were mutually exclusive, supporters argued that there was a surplus of women to men by sixteen million. Drawing upon successful examples from the medical profession, they demonstrated that women were capable of undertaking the duties of professions as well as men. They also capitalised upon meritocratic values of professionalism and argued that ultimately only those found competent to pass the entrance examination would be allowed to enter. Similarly, supporters of women's professional employment drew upon fears of unqualified professionals to argue that denying women entry to the accountancy profession would encourage them to practise unregulated; in doing so, they defended women's admittance as integral to the processes of professionalisation which ensure standardisation of training, regulation and codes of ethics.<sup>110</sup> Ultimately, they argued, 'the professions had nothing to lose, and possibly much to gain, by her inclusion'.<sup>111</sup> The debate was concluded, by nine votes to eight, that the admission of women into the professions was *not* to be deplored.<sup>112</sup>

On the eve of the First World War, medicine, teaching and nursing were the few occupations available to educated women in Wales. Although women exploited the new opportunities provided by greater access to higher education, the professions they could enter remained limited. Nineteenth-century ideals of middle-class femininity, which highlighted women's maternal and domestic qualities, shaped the particular occupations or roles which were deemed acceptable for women, and were exploited by supporters of women's professional employment. However, there were clear internal hierarchies within the professions and women's work was firmly situated within less prestigious sectors of occupations. The professionalisation of teaching and nursing (and later social work) also entailed attempts to form an elite group of women workers influenced by this middle-class ideology and did not directly challenge conventional notions of femininity. Similarly, women health professionals exploited the dichotomy between

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<sup>109</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.128.

<sup>110</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.128.

<sup>111</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.128.

<sup>112</sup> *The Accountant*, 23 January 1915, p.129.

public and private to gain entry into these professions by arguing that women's 'natural' role as carers could help ensure that the moral and physical welfare of the working class was safeguarded. There were also inter-occupational hierarchies and whilst medical women also framed their work in language of sexual difference, they simultaneously sought to distinguish themselves from nurses and midwives through their education. Contemporary ideas of class were therefore used to empower some women at the expense of others.

**(iii) *Patriotism, Professionalism and Maternalism: Continuity and Change 1914-1939***

During the First World War professional women negotiated the competing, yet not necessarily incompatible, notions of professionalism and patriotism.

Contemporaries often situated women's wartime work within a framework of substitution by highlighting the atypical occupations in which they were engaged. While historians initially focused on those who entered occupations geared towards the war effort, they have started to examine the ways women consolidated the professional positions they had been establishing for themselves before the outbreak of war.<sup>113</sup> In doing so, they have replaced narratives of dramatic change, with ones of continuities, retrenchment and gradual change in relation to ideals of gender and acceptance of women's paid work.

Particularly in the first six months of the war, the nursing of babies, mothering of soldiers and care of the home was presented as women's proper domain.<sup>114</sup> The only accepted persona of working womanhood from the inception of the conflict was the voluntary nurse who, as a symbol of service and self-sacrifice, had a powerful precursor in the figure of Florence Nightingale.<sup>115</sup> The Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) nurses gained a higher public profile – both during the war and since – than the trained professional nurses because they were

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<sup>113</sup> Janet S. K. Watson, *Fighting Different Wars: Experience, Memory, and the First World War* (Cambridge, 2004), p.7; Sara Brady, 'Public Service and Private Ambitions: Nursing at the King Edward VII Hospital, Cardiff during the First World War', in Anne Borsay (ed.), *Medicine in Wales, c.1800-2000: Public Service or Private Commodity?* (Cardiff, 2003); Alison Mackinnon, *Love and Freedom: Professional Women and the Reshaping of Personal Life* (Cambridge, 1997), p.201; Sharon Ouditt, *Fighting Forces, Writing Women: Identity and Ideology in the First World War* (Abingdon, 1994).

<sup>114</sup> Susan Kinglsey Kent, *Making Peace: The Reconstruction of Gender in Interwar Britain* (Princeton, 1993), p.22.

<sup>115</sup> *The War Illustrated*, 14 November, 1914, p.314.

represented in recruitment propaganda for a variety of non-combatant tasks during the First World War. The VAD system routinised a basic form of training in hospital work which could be completed in three to four months.<sup>116</sup> Owing to its perception as 'service', it provided a respectable avenue for many (predominantly middle-class) women to contribute to the war effort.<sup>117</sup> Female students residing at Alexandra Hall in Aberystwyth devoted much of their time to establishing a Voluntary Red Cross detachment which assisted at the Cardiganshire hospital in Aberystwyth.<sup>118</sup> Other women left their full-time employment to engage in war-related activities. For example, in 1915 the Cardiff Schools Management Committee granted eight teachers leave of absence to undertake three weeks' training at the King Edward VII Hospital, with a view to helping at the military hospital.<sup>119</sup>

In recent years, the emerging field of nursing history has outlined the equally important contribution professional nurses made to the war effort.<sup>120</sup> The influx of inexperienced women into VAD and Red Cross detachments threatened to undermine the pre-war state registration campaign which had been fought since 1888 to standardise nurses' training. By 1915 a shortage of civilian nurses was apparent: the demand had exceeded the supply before the war broke out, so during the conflict the shortage of nurses was intensified.<sup>121</sup> As an incentive to retain those already employed and to attract applicants for appointments, the salaries of sisters and staff nurses employed at the Royal Infirmary in Cardiff were increased by special bonuses to the rate of £50 and £35 per annum for the duration of the war.<sup>122</sup> Furthermore, married nurses were often allowed to stay in employment owing to these shortages.<sup>123</sup> In an attempt to increase the number of nurses during the war, nursing associations highlighted the national importance of their work and appealed

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<sup>116</sup> Anne Summers, *Angels and Citizens: British Women as Military Nurses 1854-1914* (London, 1988).

<sup>117</sup> Janet S. K. Watson, 'Khaki Girls, VADs, and Tommy's Sisters: Gender and Class in First World War Britain', *The International History Review*, 19, 1 (1997), p.36.

<sup>118</sup> E. L. Ellis, *Alexandra Hall 1896-1986* (Aberystwyth, 1986), p.14.

<sup>119</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 April 1915; 21 April 1915.

<sup>120</sup> Summers, *Angels and Citizens*, p.264; Alison S. Fell and Christine E. Hallett (eds), *First World War Nursing: New Perspectives* (Abingdon, 2013).

<sup>121</sup> *Cymro*, 30 September 1914.

<sup>122</sup> GA: Cardiff Royal Infirmary Records, Nursing Committee Minute Book, 23 March, 1915, DHC/40.

<sup>123</sup> WA: The Queen's Roll: Wales 2, 1914-1926, SA/QNI/J.3.58.

to women's patriotism.<sup>124</sup> The North Wales Nursing Association (NWNNA) reported:

What is the greatest service we can render to our country in this terrible time of War?...Relax no effort, spare no pains, to save the babies. The waste of life caused by Infant Mortality is far greater than the waste cause by the War.<sup>125</sup>

Anxiety about a declining birth rate from the end of the nineteenth century intensified during the war because of fears about the future generation.<sup>126</sup>

Professional women still failed to sit comfortably within dominant notions of femininity and had to negotiate the contradictory ideals of maternalism and professionalism. There was an underlying disconnection between the prioritisation of motherhood and the promotion of female healthcare workers.<sup>127</sup> When Dr Howie was appointed School Medical Officer for Aberdare in February 1915, the local authority 'hoped [that] the infant and maternity side of the committee's work would be proceeded with. That was the current need of the moment – the care of the future race, and Dr Howie was specially qualified to deal with the subject'.<sup>128</sup> Although she was a mother, Dr Howie's employment was accepted because as a widow and a woman of forty-three years of age, she was not deemed to be in the position of having more children.<sup>129</sup> The Aberdare Education Committee appointed her on the justification that 'a woman was the most fit person to have the medical care of a delicate child'.<sup>130</sup> Yet, she remained ambiguously gendered in newspaper reports as 'Mrs. Dr. Howie'.<sup>131</sup> In 1916, Howie was appointed in charge of Infant Welfare and Maternity Centres under the Monmouth County Council.<sup>132</sup>

Newspaper reports trod a fine line between celebratory accounts and reiterating women's temporary status. This was particularly problematic for women who were undertaking jobs which were a continuation of the careers they had already established

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<sup>124</sup> *The Times*, 17 March 1917.

<sup>125</sup> CRO: North Wales Nursing Association Reports, 1916, XM/47/28-54.

<sup>126</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 10 July 1915.

<sup>127</sup> *The Times*, 13 May 1916.

<sup>128</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 24 April 1915.

<sup>129</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 20 February 1915.

<sup>130</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 10 July 1915.

<sup>131</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 4 November 1916; *Aberdare Leader*, 24 April 1915.

<sup>132</sup> *Aberdare Leader*, 28 October 1916.



themselves in before the conflict. As their wartime work became part of a narrative concerning both Wales's and individual town contributions to the conflict, the war provided women with a platform from which to showcase their professional abilities. The local and national press focused on women's unusual wartime occupations and jobs in which they had not been engaged in before the war.<sup>133</sup> This novelty could also be extended to women employed in male-dominated professions, which were at odds with contemporary perceptions of femininity. The middle years of the First World War witnessed a large influx of women students into the medical schools. Press reports also alluded to women's work in these professions as a new phenomenon and often negated their pre-war employment. In 1915 the *Western Mail* proclaimed that 'a good many people will be surprised to learn that lady doctors are no new thing'.<sup>134</sup> The press also reported in 1916 that the UCNW had 'taken a new departure in the appointment of lady lecturers', despite having employed female academics for at least two decades prior.<sup>135</sup>

By the middle of the First World War, a shortage of professional labour meant that the government actively encouraged women's employment in male-dominated professions and some local authorities allowed the reappointment of women who had been forced to relinquish their employment upon marriage prior to the war. Educated women were also recruited to police other women workers in the munitions factories, act as health inspectors, or conduct scientific research for the Ministry of Munitions.<sup>136</sup> Welsh authorities began to provide financial incentives and loan funds to encourage women to enter professional occupations. In particular, the loss of medical students to the Army and the increasing number of doctors called up for service, meant that the medical authorities actively encouraged women to join the profession in order to replenish the depleting workforce.<sup>137</sup> Following the publication of Dr Mary Davies's pamphlet on careers for women in Wales, the Appointments Board of Wales established a loan fund for women training for a professional or technical career.<sup>138</sup> Davies argued that after completing their degree, Welsh students were often debarred by financial

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<sup>133</sup> *SWDN*, 19 April 1915; *Daily Mirror*, 9 February 1916.

<sup>134</sup> *Western Mail*, 3 April 1915.

<sup>135</sup> *The Cambrian Daily Leader*, 9 October 1916; *The University of Wales Calendar*, 1896.

<sup>136</sup> BUA: 'Reports of Departments as to National Service' University College North Wales and the work of the Women of the College, c.1918, BMSS/39688.

<sup>137</sup> *The Times*, 13 May 1916; *Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard*, 3 October 1919.

<sup>138</sup> *The Welsh Outlook*, 1917, p.267; BL: Mary Davies, 'Employment for Women' (Appointments Board of Wales, 1914), MRF/2456.

considerations from entering professional or business careers which required further specialised training. *The Welsh Outlook* noted that ‘the careers that are open to them are therefore very limited in range, and the majority drift very willy-nilly into teaching’.<sup>139</sup> The fund aimed to address this by providing financial assistance to widen the choice of professional careers available to women. But whilst financial barriers undoubtedly deterred some women from entering the professional workforce, this was intertwined with pervasive contemporary prescriptions of appropriate gender roles and the hostility they faced from male professionals.

In 1916 the General Committee for the Promotion of Medical Training of Women in Wales was established to provide financial assistance to female medical students from Wales during the final part of their medical studies.<sup>140</sup> Local head mistresses argued that girls likely to be successful in a medical career were prevented from embarking on such a path by the heavy expenses incurred from the long period of training.<sup>141</sup> The Committee offered annual grants and loans of up to £50 a year, which could be awarded during the last three years of study. They argued that provision for the training of women had become urgent in wartime because of an increasing demand for medical service, the losses sustained from doctors serving abroad, and the depletion of medical students due to military service.<sup>142</sup> The Chairman stated that it was ‘an urgent national duty to maintain and if possible increase the number of medical students, and they must draw upon the ranks of women for this purpose’.<sup>143</sup> Like the drive for better provision of female education in the country, it was deemed ‘an important Welsh national movement’ and the Committee comprised representatives from the University of Wales and other prominent educationalists, such as Daniel Lleufer Thomas (Chairman), Lady Phillips and Mabel E. Howell.<sup>144</sup> Thomas emphasised that although the medical school was situated at Cardiff and the training would be given there, the organisation was intended to serve the whole of Wales and

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<sup>139</sup> *The Welsh Outlook*, 1917, p.267. The first loan of £50 was made to a female student who had graduated with a First Class Honours in History.

<sup>140</sup> NLW: Correspondence, newspaper cuttings, notes and other literature relating to the General Committee for the Promotion of the Medical Training of Women, 1916-1941, C1/7.

<sup>141</sup> *BMJ*, 4 March 1916.

<sup>142</sup> *SWDN*, 23 February 1916.

<sup>143</sup> *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, February 1916.

<sup>144</sup> CUIA: Annual Reports for the Welsh National School of Medicine, 1932-45, UWCM/ER/1/1-14; *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 7 June, 1918.

assist students from all parts of the country.<sup>145</sup> Students studying for a medical degree in the University of Wales were able to take the first year of their course in any of the constituent colleges of the university, but their second and third year had to be taken at the CMS, which was established in 1893 as a preclinical school.<sup>146</sup>

The foundation of the Committee was reportedly also encouraged by women's medical work overseas with the Scottish Women's Hospitals (SWH). Violet Douglas-Pennant, a National Insurance Commissioner for Wales, said that the movement aimed at turning out women like those who rendered service in Serbia and Salonika, rather than those 'who wished to make a splash in Harley-street'.<sup>147</sup> The Committee suggested that prejudice against women doctors had abated before the war, and that it was now generally agreed that they were well suited, after thorough training, to undertake most of the work of the ordinary practitioner.<sup>148</sup> These arguments, however, were still justified in terms of women being particularly suited for posts as medical inspectors of school children, maternity care or missionary work.<sup>149</sup> The Committee also stressed the importance of training Welsh speaking girls for medical work in Welsh-speaking districts.<sup>150</sup>

After six months of its formation, the Committee had received eight applications from residents of Cardigan, Carmarthen, Caernarvon, Denbigh, Glamorgan and Merioneth. Given the long duration of study, the increased number of women in medical training did not materialise into real figures of women practising during the war years.<sup>151</sup> After a year of the scheme, concerns were raised by the Committee about the standard of the female students. Ernest Griffiths, Principal of the UCSWM, stated that the examination results of the previous session's female medical students were 'quite deplorable'.<sup>152</sup> Many of the students had not passed their examination at the end of their first year and he was afraid that a number would not pass it in their second year either. He attributed this to the poor provision available for girls' science education.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> *BMJ*, 28 July 1917.

<sup>146</sup> Alun Roberts, *The Welsh National School of Medicine, 1893-1931* (Cardiff, 2008).

<sup>147</sup> *BMJ*, 28 July 1917; *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 20 July 1917.

<sup>148</sup> *SWDN*, 23 February 1916.

<sup>149</sup> *BMJ*, 4 March 1916.

<sup>150</sup> *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 21 November 1919.

<sup>151</sup> *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 7 June 1918.

<sup>152</sup> *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 7 June 1918.

<sup>153</sup> *BMJ*, 28 July 1917; *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 20 July 1917.

The Committee encouraged some of the intermediate schools for girls to apply to the medical authorities for the recognition of their laboratories as places where biology as well as physics and chemistry could be taught so that girls intending to be medical students could prepare for the preliminary scientific examinations at school.<sup>154</sup> Early in 1917 Principal Griffiths attended a meeting of the City of Cardiff Building and Sites Committee to encourage the authority to improve the facilities for teaching practical elementary physics at Cardiff High School for Girls. He said that ‘the matter was urgent because the number of girl students intending to enter the medical profession was steadily increasing’.<sup>155</sup> This was quite a change from Mary Collin’s ‘Sewing Room’ two decades prior. Although the fund was initially a wartime initiative, the Committee continued its work in helping Welsh medical students at the co-educational WNSM until the Second World War, despite most London hospitals closing their doors to women from 1922.<sup>156</sup>

Others situated female employment within the same category of replacement and substitution as those women who were entering the munitions factories, undertaking agricultural labour and driving trams. The local press reported in relation to the training of women doctors, ‘there is really no one available except women’.<sup>157</sup> As early as December 1914 the all-male Medical Board of Cardiff’s King Edward VII Hospital voted unanimously in favour of the principle ‘of the employment of Women Residents as a temporary measure in the present emergency’.<sup>158</sup> While medical women had more opportunities to gain clinical experience during the war than their predecessors did, they were still largely perceived as ‘replacements’, rather than as professionals in their own right.<sup>159</sup> Commentators anticipated the problems that would arise when the war was over and soldiers were demobilised, and still questioned whether women were suited to perform particular occupations.<sup>160</sup> This echoed pre-war fears of overcrowding in the professions in opposition to women’s admission.

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<sup>154</sup> *BMJ*, 4 March 1916 and 28 July 1917.

<sup>155</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 February 1917.

<sup>156</sup> NLW: General Committee for the Promotion of the Medical Training of Women, Correspondence.

<sup>157</sup> *SWDN*, 23 February 1916.

<sup>158</sup> GA: Minutes of the Medical Board, 12 December, 1914, D/D/HC/32; *Herald of Wales*, 31 July, 1915; *Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer to the Swansea Education Authority*, 1917-19.

<sup>159</sup> *The Times*, 13 May 1916.

<sup>160</sup> *SWDN*, 6 October 1914.

Employment practices also served to mirror the rhetoric of substitution. From being on a superficial professional equality with men in civilian life, medical women were demoted to an inferior status during wartime because the War Office refused to grant commissions to those who served in the Army.<sup>161</sup> At the beginning of the conflict medical women volunteered their service to the British War Office, but on being told they were amply supplied, formed voluntary units and offered their services to other Allied nations instead.<sup>162</sup> In September 1914, Dr Elsie Inglis, an Edinburgh graduate, formed the Scottish Women's Hospitals (SWH) which comprised units entirely of women drivers, secretaries, interpreters, doctors, matrons, nurses and laundresses.<sup>163</sup> The first unit to leave Britain in December 1914 (which was intended for Belgium, but owing to the German occupation, sent to Calais) included Breconshire-born doctor, Mary Phillips.<sup>164</sup> Among the first women to begin her medical studies at CMS, Phillips served with the SWH in France, Malta, Serbia and Corsica.<sup>165</sup> Along with Dr Alice Hutchinson, Phillips was in charge of the first hospital established at Calais, with a staff of ten fully trained nurses. After working at the Typhoid Hospital until April 1915, Phillips then joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Serbian Unit as a Senior Physician at Valjevo. In April 1916 she travelled to Corsica where she was the Chief Medical Officer at the hospital in Ajacci until her return home in June 1917.<sup>166</sup>

The Welsh press celebrated Phillips' contribution to the war effort and detailed her 'splendid war work' and 'heroic adventures'.<sup>167</sup> Tales of individual contributions to the war effort were a regular feature in local and national newspapers and positioned women's professional work as an integral part of Wales's role in the war.<sup>168</sup> An article in the *Western Mail* proclaimed that 'Wales generally, and Merthyr Cynog, Breconshire (her native place), in particular, may, indeed, be proud' of this 'Welsh Lady Doctor'.<sup>169</sup> At a dinner of the London Association of Past Students of the UCSWM, a tribute was paid to her for her services during the war.<sup>170</sup> Rose Smith, a Bargoed nurse formerly

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<sup>161</sup> *The Times*, 14 October, 1918

<sup>162</sup> *BMJ*, 18 December 1993.

<sup>163</sup> *BMJ*, 18 August 1917.

<sup>164</sup> Cymru WW1 Digitisation Project: Mary Epynt Phillips, letter from the NUWSS and photograph. For further information on Mary Phillips, see biographies section.

<sup>165</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 July 1917.

<sup>166</sup> *BMJ*, 7 September 1918.

<sup>167</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 July 1917.

<sup>168</sup> *Western Mail*, 20 March 1915; *SWDN*, 2 October 1914; 4 March 1916; 15 February 1916; 2 February 1916; 19 February 1916.

<sup>169</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 July 1917; *Brecon County Times, Neath Gazette and General Advertiser*, 9 August 1917.

<sup>170</sup> *Llais Llafur*, 29 March 1919.

employed at the Gelligaer Hospital, also became a local heroine after working in voluntary service in Serbia with the Scottish nursing contingent and being captured and taken to Austria. When she returned home there was a reception committee at Aberbargoed railway station and a procession marched through the local villages behind the nurse in an open carriage, surrounded by an armed escort.<sup>171</sup> Yet the exceptionality of such women did not necessarily reflect genuine support for professional women's employment in medicine outside of wartime conditions.

Welsh women could foreground their nationality when justifying their work as aiding other 'small nations'. Work abroad with the SWH was hard, entailed long drives, extreme weather conditions and poor facilities. Illness forced Phillips to return to Wales temporarily in 1915 where, having recovered, she undertook a lecture tour to raise funds for the SWH.<sup>172</sup> She gave talks about the work being done by the SWH in Serbia around south Wales, including in Llandaff, Abergavenny, Builth Wells and in her hometown, Merthyr Cynog.<sup>173</sup> Although she had worked and lived in Liverpool for the majority of her adult life, Phillips appealed to her Welsh heritage. During her talk in Abergavenny, she explained that the name 'Scottish Women's Hospital' was misleading because although the scheme was originated by Scottish women doctors, its staff was drawn from all parts of the United Kingdom.<sup>174</sup> Similarly, she delivered a lecture on her experiences in Serbia at the High School for Girls in Cardiff, under the auspices of the Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society. Here she referred to the Wales-London Hospital at Valjevo as 'the best hospital in Serbia'.<sup>175</sup> One report stated how:

The lecturer spoke in eulogistic terms of the Serbian people, of their knowledge of the Celtic temperament, and how they seemed to appreciate the Celts more than the Anglo Saxons. Serbia was a little country of intense patriotism; it had kept its language, Church, and ideals.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> *SWDN*, 2 February 1916; 19 February 1916; 4 March 1916.

<sup>172</sup> WL: Records of the SWH, administration, 2SWH/1.

<sup>173</sup> *Western Mail*, 14 July 1917; *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 2 November 1917; *Brecon and Radnor Express*, 19 July 1917.

<sup>174</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 2 November 1917.

<sup>175</sup> *Brecon and Radnor Express*, 16 March 1916.

<sup>176</sup> *Brecon County Times*, 9 August 1917.

Identifying with a small nation like Wales, Phillips sought to evoke compassion and support for their work being conducted there.<sup>177</sup> Following her return home in 1917, Mary Phillips was appointed Medical Officer to the Ministry of Munitions, and after the war, Assistant Medical Officer of Health in Merthyr Tydfil.

Women's employment in positions which were not accepted before the war was justified by professional authorities as exceptional measures in exceptional circumstances. When the LEAs were forced to employ married or retired female teachers to replace those on service, their position as 'temporary substitutes' was reiterated.<sup>178</sup> Due to the exigencies of war, by November 1915 it was being proposed in Mountain Ash that married female teachers be engaged 'as a makeshift'.<sup>179</sup> Emrys Pride, who attended school in Cardiff during the war, recalled that from the middle of 1918 onwards women teachers entered boys' schools when schoolmasters were conscripted. He recalled that it was an 'affront to our personal sense of pride that women were employed in boys' schools and taught subjects as diverse as Latin, Mathematics and physical education'.<sup>180</sup> Thus women who were outside pre-war accepted spheres still met an uneasy and sometimes hostile reception in wartime. During the war women teachers exceeded the number of men teachers in intermediate and secondary schools for the first time.<sup>181</sup> The University of Wales also appointed several women to temporary lectureships during the war and allowed married members of staff to continue their employment.<sup>182</sup>

The war did not necessarily signal a break with class distinctions in employment. This was particularly evident with women factory inspectors who were appointed to oversee the female munition workforces. Angela Woollacott's study of female industrial welfare supervisors during the First World War argues that by conforming to both ideals of maternalism and professionalism, women took advantage of their class superiority

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<sup>177</sup> Scottish women also framed their appeal for support within a similar discourse. See Imperial War Museum [hereafter, IWM]: The call of our allies and the response of the Scottish Women's Hospital for foreign service, K.17110.

<sup>178</sup> *Amman Valley Chronicle*, 5 February 1914; *Llanelli Star*, 12 February 1916.

<sup>179</sup> Anthony Mór-O'Brien, 'A Community in Wartime: Aberdare and the First World War' (unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Wales, 1986), p.221.

<sup>180</sup> IWM: Emrys Pride Interview in 1964, BBC Recording, 4199.

<sup>181</sup> Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues', p.71.

<sup>182</sup> *University College Magazine*, XV, 1 (1918); *University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire Council Minutes*, 28 September, 1916.

over other women workers.<sup>183</sup> Women police were also enlisted during the war in an attempt to make the streets safe for vulnerable women and children, but also in response to fears of immorality, especially in port towns. Louise Jackson argues that women's increased involvement in the policing of the home population was positioned in terms of women's 'war work', undertaken for 'the duration' only and in relation to a feminine duty to serve the nation.<sup>184</sup>

In her diary, Gabrielle Mary West, who served with the Women's Police Service at the munitions factory in Pembrey, noted that 'there are the relatives of miners from the Rhondda and other coal pits near. They are full of socialist theories and very great on getting up strikes'.<sup>185</sup> She stated that these 'very rough girls from the surroundings' were 'anti-police'.<sup>186</sup> West associated their working-class background with their propensity to strike. In many respects, women police and inspectors played a key role in regulating ideals of femininity and reinforcing Victorian binaries of respectability and class. Although the inspectors were working for women's welfare, factory workers sometimes resisted the women inspectors' attempts to enforce regulations. West alluded to tensions between the factory girls and the women in positions of seniority: 'there is one girl here, half negress who is a most extraordinary mimic. She keeps the other girls in fits while she imitates the matrons, foremen, chemists, women police'.<sup>187</sup>

Professional women could be used as emblems of Wales's contribution to the war effort, yet they also remained circumscribed within the gendered parameters of professional life, their particular role within the occupation and the physical arena in which they practised. Despite limitations, women also found in the war opportunities to demonstrate their professional capabilities. In many ways, as Mary Ann Elston has noted in reference to medical women, the war years provided opportunities for 'women to demonstrate their ability to treat men on a large scale

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<sup>183</sup> Angela Woollacott, 'Maternalism, Professionalism and Industrial Welfare Supervisors in World War I Britain', *Women's History Review*, 3, 1 (1994), p.50. See also Ruth Livesey, 'The Politics of Work: Feminism, Professionalization and Women Inspectors of Factories and Workshops', *Women's History Review*, 13, 2 (2004).

<sup>184</sup> Louise A. Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester, 2006), p.17. Like women's place in the military medical service during the war, the Women's Police Service was not affiliated with the police force and afforded the women no rank or status; only some of the counties were willing to swear the women in.

<sup>185</sup> IWM: Gabrielle Mary West Diary, 2 November 1916, 7142

<sup>186</sup> IWM: Gabrielle Mary West Interview 1985, 8779.

<sup>187</sup> IWM: Gabrielle Mary West Diary, 2 November 1916.



without the social fabric collapsing'.<sup>188</sup> Some were able to gain invaluable clinical experience and showcase their professional ability, both at home and abroad. The same arguments in support and opposition of women's professional employment persisted, with the added argument that women had proved their capabilities through their wartime work.

There has been substantial historical debate concerning the long-term impact of the First World War on gender roles. Whilst earlier scholarship depicted the interwar years as a heyday of domesticity, historians now question this 'backlash model' as obscuring those changes that did occur.<sup>189</sup> The interwar period was largely one of contradictions in terms of gender ideals and attitudes towards women's professional employment. Conservative gender roles undoubtedly still had resonance and continued to shape the professions or occupational roles available to women. Professional women benefited from the 1918 Maternity and Child Welfare Act and the subsequent emphasis on welfare provision which was concerned with the relief of poverty, the endowment of motherhood and the health of children. But as marriage bars were implemented by the majority of local authorities, single women faced ridicule in contemporary literature and were often characterised as sexually repressed following fears of declining birth rates. The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act of 1919 was initially regarded as a breakthrough for women's admission into the professions, by removing, in theory at least, legislative and institutional barriers. However, contemporaries, like historians, soon questioned the sincerity of the measure and highlighted its failure to abolish marriage bars and inability to open some areas of the professions.

The new professions that women entered during the interwar period simultaneously challenged and confirmed contemporary expectations of middle-class gender roles. Pre-war notions of femininity continued to shape the occupational roles in which women were employed. Louise Jackson argues that the concept of social maternalism, which emphasised women's supposed innate qualities as carers and nurturers, was used to justify their involvement in a broad range of social welfare orientated work after the First World War.<sup>190</sup> As it had been since the late nineteenth

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<sup>188</sup> Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women', p.87.

<sup>189</sup> For a comprehensive overview of this debate see Adrian Bingham, 'An Era of Domesticity: Histories of Women and Gender in Interwar Britain', *Cultural and Social History*, 1, 2 (2004).

<sup>190</sup> Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance*, p.201.

century, maternalism was deployed as powerful rhetorical and legitimating tool that highlighted women's innate qualities as equipping them for certain roles. By emphasising service, rather than ambition, women's work in these sectors appeared less threatening to their male counterparts. Indeed, supporters of women's admission to public life often centred their arguments on the beneficial moral impact they would have upon the nation.<sup>191</sup> Although the formalisation of welfare provision provided women with opportunities for professional work, it simultaneously restricted them to certain sectors.

Academic women continued to be clustered in certain disciplines: the majority taught in education departments and it was telling that the women's staff common room in the University College of Swansea was relocated to the Arts building in 1932.<sup>192</sup> Women who were employed in scientific disciplines usually specialised in botany or chemistry and were often employed as demonstrators in the laboratories or unpaid assistants.<sup>193</sup> In a testimonial for Mary Williams's application for the post for the Chair of French Language and Literature at the newly-established University College Swansea, her colleague, Victor Spiers, described her as possessing 'in an astonishing degree the power of grasping detail, without losing the due sense of proportion – as women are apt to do – in fact hers is a man's mind in the best sense of the word'.<sup>194</sup> Though intended as a compliment, Spier's testimonial reveals how women were still considered intellectually inferior and different to men: 'feminine' minds were better equipped to attend to the micro detail and accuracy, whereas 'male' minds were considered to be more capable of macro arguments, rational thought, and originality. Those who reached positions of seniority did not fit comfortably within dominant ideas of gender roles and their femininity continued to be a source of wonder and ridicule amongst some male staff members and students. When Professor Mary Williams married her colleague Dr George Arbour Stephens, her professional seniority over her husband was a source of amusement in the college magazine.<sup>195</sup> For a woman to be in a position of seniority was itself perceived as congruent with femininity, but for her to be in a position of seniority over her husband, challenged the very foundation of the accepted gendered order.

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<sup>191</sup> *Cap & Gown*, 11, 2 (1919) – debating society 'that the admission of Women into Parliament will have a beneficial effect on the Nation'; *The Welsh Outlook*, 1920.

<sup>192</sup> RBA: University College of Swansea Council Minutes, 1920-45, LAC/115/A/2.

<sup>193</sup> *Committee Council Minutes*, 1 February 1905.

<sup>194</sup> NLW: Mary Williams' Application for the Chair of French Language and Literature University College, Swansea, with testimonials, 1921, 2459.

<sup>195</sup> *The Undergrad*, 2, 2 (1923).

Similarly, when Dr Florence Mockeridge was appointed head of the department of biology and lecturer in botany at the same institution in 1921, some male colleagues reportedly expressed their disapproval by referring to her as ‘Miss’ Mockeridge.<sup>196</sup>

The occupational fields in which women were numerically dominant continued to be associated with lower pay and prestige. Lecturers in training colleges earned a wage starting at £100, which was significantly more than teachers, but less than those employed in the university departments.<sup>197</sup> Women who lectured in training colleges fitted more comfortably within dominant ideas of appropriate gender roles. Yet, their physical appearance played an important part in how women negotiated entry to the professional workforce, and emphasis was often placed on physical appearance rather than professional competency. In 1927, Glamorgan Training College advertised for a lecturer in education and senior methods. A referee of one of the candidates noted how she was ‘under some disadvantage on the grounds of physique as she is rather short and slight and perhaps not attractive in appearance’.<sup>198</sup> A second referee from the University College Aberystwyth, further noted that ‘possibly you might think any advantage in the matter of personal appearance would lie with Miss Morris’.<sup>199</sup> A career advice manual outlining the qualities necessary to succeed in teaching, stated that ‘on her character, her presence, and even to a certain extent, on her personal appearance, depends to a very large degree her efficiency’.<sup>200</sup> Victorian fears that higher education would ‘un-sex’ women was coupled with a reprise of the ‘single woman’ debate in 1919 which raised concerns about the ‘surplus woman’ and future generation as a result of the high number of male casualties during the war. Yet the widespread implementation of marriage bars institutionalised cultural beliefs that women’s employment and marriage were mutually exclusive, and meant that ideals of femininity were difficult to reconcile with the reality of paid, professional employment.

Interwar arguments in support of women’s employment in medicine were still largely framed within the ‘special’ contribution that they were deemed to be able to make to the profession. Against a background of fears of overcrowding in the

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<sup>196</sup> RBA: University College of Swansea Council Minutes, 27 June 1921. She was appointed to a professorship in 1936.

<sup>197</sup> CRO: Bangor ‘Normal’ Training College, Staff Register, XD91/164.

<sup>198</sup> GA: Glamorgan Training College, Staff Records: Appointments (Women), 1927, ECOLLB/11/1-11.

<sup>199</sup> GA: Glamorgan Training College, Staff Records, 1925.

<sup>200</sup> Beatrice Orange, ‘Teaching as a Profession for Women’, in Ethel McKenna (ed.), *Education and the Professions* (London, 1903), p.90.

profession evident towards the end of the war, some medical men who were supportive of women's employment, stressed that women were naturally suited to particular lower-prestige roles within the profession.<sup>201</sup> Lieut-Colonel A. Lloyd Jones's presidential address to the South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch of the BMA in 1918 summarised this view:

The admission of women into the medical profession will ultimately prove our emancipation from such as cheap contract practice, with its counter prescribing and dispensing, certificate scribbling, and the rest of that mechanical clerical drudgery into which we are gradually being dragged down with each state innovation... Her sphere will always be more in the realms of pure medicine than ours, and her presence and co-operation must exercise a refining and uplifting tendency. The fear of competition from her is groundless.<sup>202</sup>

Women were thought to be suited to remedial, repetitive work due to their perceived limited capacity for independent thought. They were situated within a middle-class ideal of femininity, whose 'uplifting tendency' would exert moral influence and purify the profession. While she did not endorse the claims that women were intellectually inferior to men, Senior Maternity and Child Welfare Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health, Dame Janet Campbell, reinforced ideas of gender difference in her address to the General Committee for the Promotion of Medical Training of Women in Wales in 1924. She stated that women were peculiarly fitted for certain branches of medicine and that their employment in sectors concerning women and children was considered to alleviate the embarrassment and dangers women encountered when having to go to a male doctor.<sup>203</sup> The interwar period did not, therefore, represent a significant break with pre-war ideas of gender difference which had initially shaped women's entry into some professions.

Women's professional employment in the expanding medical and healthcare sector was helped by the increasing specialisation in the professions. They were situated as professional authorities in child and maternal welfare, as school dentists or social workers. The 1918 Maternity and Child Welfare Act, which required local authorities to

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<sup>201</sup> *BMJ*, 4 March 1916.

<sup>202</sup> *BMJ*, 27 July 1918.

<sup>203</sup> *BMJ*, 6 December 1924.

appoint committees for maternity and child welfare, provided new opportunities for women as health visitors, lecturers, school dental surgeons, medical officers or related research positions. With the emphasis on child welfare, an increasing number of women gained employment as dental officers in schools.<sup>204</sup> Dispensing and pharmaceutical work were presented as respectable occupations for which women were particularly suited, because ‘women dispense so accurately and so well’.<sup>205</sup> In the years succeeding the war, career advice manuals advocated women’s entry into the profession following their role as dispensers in military hospitals.<sup>206</sup> By 1934 women comprised 10 per cent of the 22,000 names on the Pharmaceutical Register for England and Wales.<sup>207</sup> Women developed confidence in their ‘natural’ areas of expertise through a language of professional social maternalism or as professional representatives of their own sex during the interwar years.

The belief that women innately understood the needs of their own sex was consistently used to justify the appointment of women into a range of professions during the interwar years.<sup>208</sup> For example, the notion that women were able to understand the interests of female patients, students, clients or consumers was used to carve a unique role for women within certain professions. These roles, concerned with ‘women’s issues’, were confined to marginal and low-prestige sectors within professions. For example, Freda Strawbourn was reporter, sub editor and the women’s and social editor of the *Evening Post*, and had also been the women’s page editor of the *Herald of Wales*.<sup>209</sup> These women also played a role in regulating particular ideals of femininity in their pages. Likewise, women architects were often side-lined into interior decoration.<sup>210</sup> However, initial justifications for their entry into professions did not reflect the reality

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<sup>204</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer for the County of Meirioneth, 1925-33, Z/CC/12/55.

<sup>205</sup> *The Times*, 13 May 1916.

<sup>206</sup> Emily L. B. Forster, *How to Become a Dispenser: The New Profession for Women* (London, 1917); ; *The Times*, 13 May, 1916.

<sup>207</sup> *Careers and Vocational Training: A Guide to the Professions and Occupations of Educated Women and Girls* (Published for the Central Employment Bureau for Women and Students’ Careers Association by The Women’s Employment Publishing, 1934), p.272.

<sup>208</sup> *Careers and Vocational Training: A Guide to the Professions and Occupations of Educated Women and Girls* (The Women’s Employment Publishing: London, 9<sup>th</sup> Ed. 1939), p.169.

<sup>209</sup> *The Lady’s Who’s Who: Who’s Who for British Women 1938-39* (London, 1939), p.396.

<sup>210</sup> Jill Seddon, “Part-time Practice as Before”: The Career of Sadie Speight, Architect’, in Elizabeth Darling and Lesley Whitworth (eds), *Women and the Making of Built Space in England, 1870-1950* (Aldershot, 2007).

of women's professional interests or careers.

Olwen Emmerson Price, the first woman student to undertake all five years of training at the Welsh School of Architecture, gained employment as an assistant in a Cardiff architectural firm in 1926. She was asked by a journalist if she was especially attracted to designing homes, 'bearing in mind the promises of the wonderful houses housewives are to have when there are more women architects', to which she replied, "No I don't think so"... "It's early yet to talk about specialisation, but at the moment I confess I am most interested in the latest methods of construction – reinforced concrete, for instance".<sup>211</sup> Like many of the first women to enter the professions, Price held an awareness of her role as a pioneer and the history of her predecessors. In an interview with the local press, she outlined how:

the Royal Institute of British Architects...admitted women from the first...There was one admitted in 1898 and another two years later. In 1905 a woman won the essay prize, but it was after the war that the profession began to attract the women in bigger numbers. Women won the silver medal for the best work in the school in the years 1923-24-25. There are now about 40 women in the profession.<sup>212</sup>

A journalist who interviewed Price appeared surprised to note that 'there is not a trace of the blue-stocking about her. She is a fair happy-looking girl, with an aureole of pretty, wavy hair, a jolly sense of humour, and a tremendous keenness for work'.<sup>213</sup>

Frameworks of sexual difference were not advantageous to all women. Law offered no such comparable 'natural niches' for women as gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics did for medical women. Women entered the legal profession later and in fewer numbers than in medicine. Exhibiting feminine manners and dress was not necessarily an advantage in the profession. For example, when Dr Ivy Williams became the first woman to enter the Bar, the local Welsh press reported that:

this first lady barrister shows on her entry into the Bar some of the limitations of her sex in relation to that profession. For she is understood to disclaim any intention of appearing in the courts. Her placid appearance, her soft, delicate voice, may suit other circles better than the Bar, and if her

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<sup>211</sup> *SWDN*, February 1926 [newspaper clipping in GA: DX158/2/1].

<sup>212</sup> *SWDN*, February 1926.

<sup>213</sup> Vyrnwy Biscoe, *300 Careers for Women* (London, 1932), p.22.

intention of going in 'for educational work solely' be carried out it will be in good accord with her past.<sup>214</sup>

Like other pioneers, Ivy Williams was tasked with defining an acceptable professional femininity. In some contexts, therefore, it was more conducive for women to downplay their femininity or emulate masculine models of behaviour and pursue strategies of assimilation.<sup>215</sup> Richard Abel notes a higher proportion of women entered the profession as solicitors rather than barristers, and were usually integrated within solicitors' firms where they were channelled into conveyancing, wills and family matters.<sup>216</sup>

#### *(iv) Conclusion*

This chapter has argued that women increasingly adopted a specifically feminine version of professionalism throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which was underpinned by fluid ideas of gender, class and nationhood. From the inception of their entry into the professions, women had to reconcile their working identities with contemporary ideals of femininity. Without previous role models to emulate, the first generation of professional women carved their own parameters within the occupation, tested the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and negotiated tensions between femininity and professionalism. While Victorian gender ideals delineated exclusionary boundaries for women's entrance into the public and professional world, women also used ideas of gender difference to highlight their unique contribution and skills which, some argued, would complement work undertaken by men. The majority of women followed professional specialisms that were particularly amenable to women. These ideals of femininity were initially framed in relation to ideas of nationhood and the specific contribution educated women could make to the morality and future health of the nation. Mirroring the fortunes of nationalist movement in Wales and elsewhere in the early twentieth century, links between women's emancipation and national progress were less prevalent in the social maternalist arguments of the interwar decades.

The argument about sexual difference was also an argument based on class distinctions. Professional women used class specific models of femininity to place a

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<sup>214</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizen's Association Minute Book and Newspaper Cuttings, DX158/2/1.

<sup>215</sup> Hilary Somerland and Peter Sanderson, *Gender, Choice and Commitment: Women Solicitors in England and Wales and the Struggle for Equal Status* (Aldershot, 1998), p.201.

<sup>216</sup> Richard L. Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales* (Oxford, 1988).

distance between themselves and their clients or patients and legitimise their professional roles. Drawing upon a nineteenth-century class ideology of 'social uplift', supporters of women's employment argued that it was educated middle-class women who were needed to help, instruct and supervise working-class mothers and highlighted their moral role as guardians of the nation's spiritual and physical health. This language of mission and philanthropy was one way for middle-class women to resolve the contradictory demands of femininity and independent professional work. However, the class-specific ideals of femininity, which were used by supporters and opponents of women's employment, bore little relation to the lives of working-class women. Class status provided one tool by which the professions legitimated their authority over other occupations and by which professional women were able to differentiate themselves from other female workers.

In many ways, women also exploited the structural processes of professionalisation. The increasing specialisation of many occupations enabled women to claim such spaces as 'feminine' and expand the cultural boundaries of femininity, for example, within the burgeoning public health and sanitary sector. Women were able to capitalise on the new opportunities that legislative gains presented and demonstrated their professional capabilities during the war. The 1918 Maternity and Child Welfare Act enabled them to carve a specific place for themselves in certain healthcare fields and women found opportunities to gain and maintain formal access to training and practice in the new occupations which emerged. Yet whilst women presented their professional roles as an extension of their supposedly innate maternal qualities, the implementation of marriage bars made their negotiation of sexual identities more difficult to reconcile with their paid work. Professional women also negotiated changing and contested ideals surrounding their physical appearance, in order to naturalise their presence and some were self-consciously feminine as an aid to disarm the opposition.

However, notions of sexual difference could simultaneously be a problematic basis for women's professional status. Arguments that promoted women's 'natural' caring, nurturing and maternal qualities provided the justification for guiding women into the lower paid and lower status professions of nursing and teaching. And the very feminine and domestic qualities that observers insisted made women good teachers



justified paying them less. Arguments of sexual difference also raise larger questions concerning the effectiveness of female separatism that will be explored further in relation to women's networks in the following chapter. For some it was more lucrative to pursue a strategy of assimilation, by downplaying their femininity in order to minimise attention or to conform to masculine attributes which were associated with professionalism. Whilst united in resentment of the limitations on their own sex, women aspiring to professional employment thus differed in their methods to achieve it. Consequently, women's initial entry into professional occupations both exploited and confirmed contemporary assumptions of gender difference.

# Chapter 3

## Strategies of Separatism

Strategies of separatism – that is the establishment of women-only communities, networks, institutions and organisations – represented both the limitations and empowerment of professional women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They reflected women’s navigation of societal expectations of appropriate feminine behaviour and female sexuality, while also nurturing a unique women’s culture and forming the institutional networks from which to advocate greater professional equality. This chapter explores the balance between sex-segregation and integration at each stage of women’s career trajectories in Wales: their intermediate education, women’s colleges in the University of Wales, professional training and women’s participation in professional society. Examining the development and changing role of professional women’s separatist strategies over their entry into the professions, the chapter suggests that women’s communities served a range of needs through time and were driven by a complex mix of pragmatism and principle. Separatism was initially a response to women’s exclusion from established routes of professional training, educational authorities’ desire for respectability and as a means of empowerment by isolated professional figures. A separate women’s culture in educational and professional institutions provided a network of support to women entering the newly developed professions, while conforming to contemporary gendered ideas of respectability. As more women entered the professional workforce in the twentieth century, they began to form their own professional organisations in response to their marginalisation within professional society.

Scholarship of women in the professions generally depict a decline in all-female institutions and networks during the interwar years, in tandem with their integration into professional society. Historians of women in the medical profession, in particular, argue that as more medical schools produced women graduates, and their numbers within the profession increased, this sense of being part of a small, tightly-knit group weakened.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia G. Drachman, ‘Female Solidarity and Professional Success: The Dilemma of Women Doctors in Late Nineteenth-Century America’, *Journal of Social History*, 15, 4 (1982), p.607.

Consequently, what Virginia Drachman terms the ‘paradox of progress’ meant that female solidarity lost its professional appeal when male medical institutions opened to women and a younger generation chose to integrate into the medical mainstream.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Mary Ann Elston argues that by the interwar years in Britain, progress towards professional equality reduced the strength of the case for separate women’s institutions.<sup>3</sup> Martha Vicinus links this decline of women’s communities to changing contemporary attitudes towards sexuality and single women.<sup>4</sup> She suggests that late nineteenth-century homosocial communities of middle-class single women failed to meet the changing demands of the interwar period and became ideologically and conceptually obsolete.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, in their study of the feminist teachers’ union, the National Federation (later Union) of Women Teachers, Oram and Kean suggest that its strong sense of identity and commitment to ‘the cause’ of women was rooted in the suffrage era, but was sustained and continued to provide emotional and political support to women in the increasingly hostile interwar decades.<sup>6</sup> By considering a range of professions, this chapter argues that the validity of women’s separatist strategies did not necessarily diminish as more women entered the professions, as Oram and Kean show in the case of teaching, but the aims and nature of them adapted to the changing contexts and problems they faced.

As the previous chapter illustrated, the movement for the promotion of girls’ education in Wales during the last quarter of the nineteenth century united a network of prominent professional women in support of educational opportunities for girls. Subsequently, the establishment of the university colleges and their associated women’s residential halls, provided the institutional focus for networks of educated women in Wales. As more women entered the professional workforce, they were able to establish professional networks in the localities in which they lived and create local branches of women’s professional associations. However, attempts to create national networks of professional women in Wales in the interwar decades were hampered by geographical and cultural divisions. While the relatively small nature of the middle class made it

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<sup>2</sup> Drachman, ‘Female Solidarity and Professional Success’, p.615.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Ann Elston, ‘“Run by Women, (mainly) for Women”: Medical Women’s Hospitals in Britain, 1866–1948’, in L. Conrad & A. Hardy (eds), *Women and Modern Medicine* (Amsterdam, 2001), p.77, p.97.

<sup>4</sup> Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920* (London, 1985).

<sup>5</sup> Vicinus, *Independent Women*, p.292.

<sup>6</sup> Hilda Kean and Alison Oram, ‘“Men Must Be Educated and Women Must Do It”: The National Federation (later Union) of Women Teachers and Contemporary Feminism, 1910-30’, *Gender and Education*, 2, 2 (1990), p.164.

easier to forge cross-occupational networks, these operated at regional levels in towns where women's professional employment rates were highest. The changing form, purpose and meanings attached to homosocial communities of professional women in Wales are all analysed in this chapter. The first section explores the challenges women faced entering professional society in the late nineteenth century and the separatist strategies they developed to obtain medical training, higher education and to participate in professional society. The second section then examines Welsh branches of women's professional associations, including the British Federation of University Women, the Medical Women's Federation, the Association of Women Science Teachers and the National Union of Women Teachers. Examining both the informal and formal networks between educated professional women, the chapter challenges the claim that the importance of women-only institutions and networks declined as their numbers increased. Though they were increasingly presented as a regrettable necessity in the face of persistent discrimination, women's single-sex networks were institutionalised and adopted professional practices as the numbers of professional women increased.

**(i) *Exclusionary Practices and Strategies of Separatism c.1880-1914***

In the second half of the nineteenth century, middle-class women established their own philanthropic associations, institutions and personal networks as a means to enact their agency in the public realm and achieve broader social and political reforms.<sup>7</sup> However, the establishment of women's professional, educational and social communities also needs to be understood in the context of the institutional and cultural obstacles they faced. Following an initial failure to permeate established professional institutions, women in pursuit of a professional education formed their own medical schools, and women's residential halls were created in higher education colleges. Separatism was not solely forced upon women by opponents of their employment: it was also an expedient and pragmatic means of furthering their independence and movement into professional society, and provided women with a nucleus of support and access to friendship networks.

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<sup>7</sup> Karen Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700-1950: A Political History* (Stanford, 2000); Estelle Freedman, 'Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930', *Feminist Studies*, 5, 3 (1979); Megan Smitley, *The Feminine Public Sphere: Middle-Class Women in Civic Life in Scotland, c.1870-1914* (Manchester, 2008); Vicinus, *Independent Women*.

The earliest women entrants into the medical profession were professionally isolated and faced institutional and cultural barriers to medical training, hospital appointments and professional societies. As loopholes in licensing regulations closed, many of the first generation of medical women, like Frances Hoggan, obtained their medical training abroad.<sup>8</sup> However, gaining a medical education was only the first obstacle these women faced.<sup>9</sup> Exclusion from honorary positions at the major general voluntary hospitals limited their chances of obtaining the necessary experience and reputation to establish a lucrative private practice and consultant standing. Separatist practice, which confined their medical work to women or young child patients, was almost universal for women doctors in Britain before 1900.<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth Garrett Anderson established St Mary's Dispensary in 1866, the first public dispensary for women and children. Four years later she was joined by Frances Hoggan, following her graduation from Zurich. In 1872 the Dispensary merged into the New Hospital for Women and became the first general hospital staffed by medical women for women. Between 1866 and 1929 there were at least twenty-one hospitals founded or run by medical women in Britain with explicit policies of restricting paid and honorary medical appointments to women.<sup>11</sup> These institutions enabled women to develop professional skills and achieve positions of responsibility from which they were otherwise excluded. Elston argues that women-run hospitals and their medical staff were constituted through professional and friendships networks and overlapping appointments.<sup>12</sup> Separate institutions were thus a pragmatic response to the prejudice and institutional barriers women faced when applying to hospitals where they were not known.

Some medical men tolerated women's entry into the profession on the condition that women received separate medical training, did not constitute a threat to their professional practice, or did not 'endange[r] existing institutions'.<sup>13</sup> Familiar arguments were used in opposition to women's integration into male professional institutions which concerned the impropriety of anatomy dissections in the presence of mixed

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<sup>8</sup> For a good overview of medical women's international networks see Thomas Neville Bonner, *To the Ends of the Earth, Women's Search for Education in Medicine* (Cambridge MA, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> For a comprehensive overview of women's entry into the medical profession in Britain, see Catriona Blake, *The Charge of the Parasols: Women's Entry to the Medical Profession* (London, 1990); Mary Ann Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service: A Sociological Study of their Careers and Opportunities', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women', p.78.

<sup>11</sup> Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women', p.74.

<sup>12</sup> Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women', p.74.

<sup>13</sup> *BMJ*, 16 February 1878.

company and fears that women's presence would 'harm' the masculine culture of medical associations.<sup>14</sup> Professional associations were an important element of professional society. The main purpose of these organisations was to represent the professional interests of their members, to standardise rules of entrance and to devise codes of ethics for their respective occupations. However, the majority of professional associations initially operated both overt and covert exclusionary practices against women's admission. Most medical societies refused women membership until the last decade of the nineteenth century. When Frances Hoggan and her husband, George Hoggan, presented a joint paper to the Obstetrical Society, an abstract of the paper was published in the society's transactions with Frances Hoggan's name omitted.<sup>15</sup> In 1881, the International Medical Congress, held in London, excluded women from all but 'the social and ceremonial meetings of the Congress'.<sup>16</sup> Hoggan also recalled the hostility she faced from other notable medical societies.<sup>17</sup>

Women's admission to the BMA was the most passionately contested. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson's election to the association in 1873 was followed by Hoggan's election by the Committee of the Council in 1875.<sup>18</sup> However, their first attendance at an annual meeting in Edinburgh caused consternation amongst other members and a debate about women's membership ensued.<sup>19</sup> By 1878 an exclusionary clause was introduced prohibiting the admission of further women.<sup>20</sup> While Garrett Anderson's membership was still considered legal, Hoggan's was reversed because of a legal technicality which also annulled the membership of men elected at the same time.<sup>21</sup> For nineteen years Garrett Anderson was the only woman member of the BMA, until the exclusion clause was reversed by a narrow majority in 1892. Hoggan outlined the professional isolation and consequences of these exclusionary practices when she stated that 'medical women thus miss all the sharpening of wit, and all the advantages of professional intercourse, which such societies afford'.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *BMJ*, 16 February 1878.

<sup>15</sup> Frances Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine' published in T. Stanton (ed.) *The Woman Question in Europe* (1884), p.84.

<sup>16</sup> Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine', p.83.

<sup>17</sup> Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine', p.85.

<sup>18</sup> *BMJ*, 9 February 1878. For more on this debate, see Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service', pp.158-60.

<sup>19</sup> *The Standard*, 18 October 1878.

<sup>20</sup> *BMJ*, 23 February 1878.

<sup>21</sup> Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service', p.159.

<sup>22</sup> Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine', p.83.

Women's response to exclusionary practices was not monolithic. In a letter in the *British Medical Journal* Hoggan stated that she read a paper at the annual meeting in Edinburgh 'on a question of histological chemistry, so framed as not to shock even extraordinary susceptibilities'.<sup>23</sup> Sensing the animosity to her presence, she did not attend subsequent BMA meetings before she was officially excluded because she thought that the best way to serve the interests of medical women's cause was not to draw attention to herself. George Hoggan was a fellow medical practitioner who had studied medicine at Edinburgh University at the same time as the 'Edinburgh Seven' in 1868. Led by Sophia Jex-Blake, a group of seven women fought a four year campaign for admission to clinical teaching in order to meet the requirements of a medical degree at the University of Edinburgh between 1869 and 1873. The struggle between the group of women who battled to obtain a medical education and the medical faculty was an increasingly bitter dispute which attracted widespread publicity. There were differences of temperance and preferred strategy among the supporters. Jex-Blake addressed public meetings and sent frequent letters to the newspapers to maintain public interest. Although the women did not deliberately seek confrontation, they attracted fierce opposition and were formally defeated. George Hoggan described himself as 'one of the most devoted servants and supporters of the cause of medical women at that time in Edinburgh'.<sup>24</sup> However, he and Frances Hoggan opposed Jex-Blake's tactics in her campaign for coeducation at Edinburgh. In contrast, Hoggan's response was not to directly challenge exclusionary practices, but to defuse opposition through her self-demonstration of women's abilities and adherence to contemporary codes of respectability.

From the inception of the CMS in 1893, women were educated with male students, unlike the tradition for separate classes in other medical schools in Britain and Ireland during this time.<sup>25</sup> The number of female medical students remained small and their proportion of the student body did not exceed 7 per cent until 1912 [appendix 2]. Women did not enter the school in significant numbers until they were actively encouraged to do so during the First World War by the educational authorities, when improvements were made in science education provision for girls. Because this was a

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<sup>23</sup> *BMJ*, 23 February 1878.

<sup>24</sup> Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine', p.72.

<sup>25</sup> CUIA: Prospectuses for the School of Medicine, UCC/FC/M/SchM/Pro/1-13.

pre-clinical school, Welsh students had to obtain their clinical training elsewhere. The first two women at the School, Victoria Evelyn May Bennett and Mary Elizabeth Phillips, joined a larger network of British medical women in completing their clinical training at the LSMW. On the outbreak of war, Mary Phillips joined the SWH formed in response to the War Office's refusal of help from medical women who had offered their professional services. Phillips was also an active member of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and connected to prominent women professionals in south Wales and Leeds, where she practised before the war. It was not until 1921 when the clinical Welsh National School of Medicine (WNSM) was opened that separate provision was made for the instruction of women students in certain subjects, with Dr Eirie Evans appointed as a part-time lecturer of venereal diseases in 1923.<sup>26</sup>

By 1913 there were 132 medical societies in Britain, in addition to the regional branches of the BMA. Although the majority of association rules stated that 'all legal qualified medical practitioners shall be eligible for membership', it was the exception for provincial societies to admit female members.<sup>27</sup> The exclusion of women from these associations was complex and not necessarily overt. Deterrents to women's presence operated through the format of the meetings, as well as through institutional policies. For example, when Swansea hosted the annual BMA meeting in 1903 female attendees were grouped with the wives of male members of the association in the ladies' reception, reading and writing rooms.<sup>28</sup> While this could also be a desire on the part of women not to break accepted codes of sexual propriety, such practices meant that medical women missed out on networking and informal professional practices that their male counterparts did not. Where female members of medical societies are mentioned, they are inserted as an afterthought or their presence is underlined as an irregular occurrence. In April 1895 the North Wales Branch of the BMA reported that 'the following Gentleman and Lady [Dr Susan Hughes] were elected members of the branch'.<sup>29</sup> In 1906 Dr Katharine Drinkwater of Wrexham joined the association along with her husband and was an active member until her death. The Cardiff Medical Society was founded in 1870, but it was not until 1905 that its first female member, Dr

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<sup>26</sup> *The University of Wales Calendar*, 1923-30.

<sup>27</sup> B. Jamieson, *The Ideals and Organisation of a Medical Society* (J&A Churchill, 1913).

<sup>28</sup> GA: British Medical Association, South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch: Minute Book, 1903, DBMA/2.

<sup>29</sup> Emphasis in original. BUA: The North Wales Branch of the British Medical Association, Minute Book, 11 April, 1895, BMSS/8466.



Erie Evans, was elected, whereupon she regularly presented papers and was an active participant in the discussions of the society.<sup>30</sup> During the same year Evans also gained admission to the South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch of the BMA and in 1907 acted the proposer for the election of Dr Elizabeth Elder, Assistant Medical Officer of Health (MOH) for Cardiff.<sup>31</sup> As a very small proportion of the medical profession, women remained isolated figures in a male-dominated professional society, lacking the institutional support and networks that their male counterparts enjoyed.

The establishment of women's residential halls associated with the university colleges in Cardiff, Aberystwyth and Bangor in the mid-1880s provided an important institutional focus for networks of educated women, and were central to the development of women's higher education in Wales. Separatism was mirrored in the general culture and institutional practices of the universities. Sex segregation in the form of separate entrances, common rooms, pastoral arrangements and the housing of women students in halls of residence at a distance from male hostels, were taken for granted by all concerned. Segregation also extended to other elements of university life and in 1887 there was ambiguity concerning whether women students were allowed to enter the UCSWM through the front entrance of the College.<sup>32</sup> Research has demonstrated how the nineteenth-century domestic model influenced social and architectural design of the women's colleges, with the residential halls echoing the gendered sentiments of the period through their quasi-domestic feeling.<sup>33</sup> As Hoggan's argument in support of women's residential halls in the previous chapter suggested, separate provision helped assuage parental concerns about women being away from home. Identity of these institutions was structured upon a commitment to protecting women's domestic character, but for the very purpose of broadening their involvement beyond the home.

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<sup>30</sup> GA: Cardiff Medical Society Records: Minute Book of Committee and Ordinary Meetings, 1904-1923, DCMS/4.

<sup>31</sup> GA: BMA, South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch Minute Book, 1907; Cardiff Medical Society Records: Minute Book of Committee and Ordinary Meetings, 1904-1923, DCMS/4.

<sup>32</sup> *University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire Council Minutes*, 4 July 1887.

<sup>33</sup> Lisa Robertson, "'We Must Advance; We Must Expand': Architectural and Social Challenges to the Domestic Model at Westfield College for Ladies", *Women's History Review*, 25, 1 (2015); Elizabeth Edwards, 'Educational Institutions or Extended Families? The Reconstruction of Gender in Women's Colleges in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Gender and Education*, 2, 1 (1990); Carol Dyhouse, 'Driving Ambitions: Women in Pursuit of a Medical Education, 1890-1939', *Women's History Review*, 7, 3, (1998).

Yet strict rules of chaperonage and sex segregation were not always abided by the students. In 1898 relations between men and women students in Aberystwyth came under scrutiny after what the press called the 'Romeo and Juliet' affair. Responding to the whistles of a male student outside her window, a resident of Alexandra Hall called out to the male student from an open window of the hall. The woman was expelled from the Hall but allowed to remain as a student, while the male student was suspended for two terms.<sup>34</sup> On the day of his departure, 200 students formed a mock funeral procession to accompany him from the entrance of the college to the station to condemn the severity of the punishment meted out by the Senate.<sup>35</sup> Two students did not fare so well at the hands of the UCNW three years later when they were spotted holding hands in Anglesey and, soon after, expelled.<sup>36</sup> Dyhouse notes that by the outbreak of the First World War all three colleges in Wales had earned a reputation among the student population in Britain for the stringency with which they enforced their regulations.<sup>37</sup> Awarded its Royal Charter in 1893, arguably the University of Wales was more sensitive to the need for respectability at this point. The Charter was the culmination of the Welsh university movement, in which women's higher education was embedded and the Welsh educational authorities were keen to avoid scandal and any charges of impropriety. The founders were also prominent figures in Nonconformist circles, and their religiosity was undoubtedly a contributory factor.

The post of Principal of women's colleges, responsible for the welfare of women students, was an important element of the gender-segregated labour market before 1914. Principals were also tasked with negotiating appropriate conduct between the sexes in new coeducational universities and were carefully chosen by the Welsh colleges for both their 'business-mindedness' and the moral influence they would exert on the students under their supervision.<sup>38</sup> Frances Hughes, sister of Elizabeth P. Hughes, was appointed as the first Principal of Bangor's hostel for women students in 1886. The Committee of the Hall of Residence for Women at the UCNW hoped that Hughes 'will not only be able to make the Hall of Residence a home for the female students of the North Wales College, but also exert a powerful influence in deepening

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<sup>34</sup> Aberystwyth University Institutional Archive [hereafter, AUIA]: 'Life at Aberystwyth and Alexandra Hall at the End of the Nineteenth Century': Being Extracts from the Letters of Lady Stamp (Olive Marsh), November 1898, UWA/C/9/24.

<sup>35</sup> *Evening Express*, 12 November 1898.

<sup>36</sup> J. Gwynn Williams, *The University College of North Wales: Foundations, 1884-1927* (Cardiff, 1985), p.308.

<sup>37</sup> Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex?*, p.196.

<sup>38</sup> *Minutes of the Council, University College, Aberystwyth*, 24 March 1905; *The Dragon*, 1908, p.2.

and spreading the desire for the education of girls in North Wales'.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, when the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, advertised for a Lady Superintendent in 1887, it sought someone who could exercise 'a salutary influence, and [be] entrusted with general disciplinary authority over the women students'.<sup>40</sup> Miss Carpenter was the first Principal of Alexandra Hall, Aberystwyth, and was renowned for her disciplinary rules and concern with social propriety. On her retirement in 1905, Carpenter explained the reasoning behind her strict approach:

I have had but one purpose, to strengthen the position of our women in their efforts after the higher education and personal freedom that were denied to all women in my young days. And if, at times, I have seemed obstructive, it had only been because it was evident to me that too early an advance would lose them the whole field.<sup>41</sup>

Strict rules of chaperonage offered reassurance to parents and authorities that women's higher education would not harm their respectability. Despite restlessness from some of the women students who viewed Carpenter's policies as old-fashioned, her desire not to break gendered codes of conduct too quickly was a carefully cultivated strategy to prevent any charges of impropriety that may harm their cause and compromise the gains that women had made in higher education.

Helen Stephen was appointed as Carpenter's successor. However, Professor Herford, who had moved from Aberystwyth to Manchester, warned the College authorities that for all her credentials, Miss Stephen would be too unbendingly upper-middle-class and not forthcoming enough to succeed with Aberystwyth students, 'especially the Welsh girls'.<sup>42</sup> Despite Herford's warnings, the senior authorities recognised Carpenter's departure as an opportunity for change:

We need not be provincial because we are Welsh... We must, if we can, touch the level of the older universities. This is a great opportunity of raising the whole tone and level and standing of the women's side of the College.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Carmarvon and Denbigh Herald*, 30 July 1886.

<sup>40</sup> *Minutes of the Council, University College, Aberystwyth*, 15 June 1887.

<sup>41</sup> *The Dragon*, May 1905, p.220.

<sup>42</sup> AUIA: Correspondence between C. H. Herford and T. F. Roberts, 3 and 24 May 1905. For a further discussion of this, see E. L. Ellis, *The University College of Wales, Aberystwyth 1872-1972* (Cardiff, 2004 ed.), p.146.

<sup>43</sup> AUIA: Correspondence between Humphreys-Owen and T. F. Roberts, 25 May 1905; Correspondence between Rendel and T. F. Roberts, 23 May 1905.

The daughter of a distinguished judge and former Warden of Ashborne House in Manchester, Stephen was thought to be the perfect candidate to strengthen the culture and tone of the Hall. In correspondence with Principal Roberts, Herford did suggest that 'her name would probably attract a class of girl who would benefit the college', while another testimonial wrote that she and her sister 'some of the old puritan strain in their characters, which makes us think of them as rocks of righteousness'.<sup>44</sup> However, Herford's warnings over Miss Stephen were not misplaced. As predicted, Stephen was especially strict in her chaperonage rules and in 1906 male students were forbidden from escorting women to social events. In the following year relations between staff and students in Alexandra Hall rapidly deteriorated. Led by future Professor of Education at UCSWM, Olive Wheeler, a group of students submitted a list of complaints to the Senate about the food and service in the Hall and the conduct of the Warden.<sup>45</sup> What became known as the Alexandra Hall 'revolt' of 1907 was illustrative of the students' dissatisfaction with the constraints placed upon them by what they considered old-fashioned codes of discipline and perhaps the unwelcome upper-middle-class demeanour of the Principal. It also encapsulated the tensions in the Edwardian years between pervasive ideas of respectable feminine behaviour and women's growing assertiveness of their right to participate in public life without constraint. Miss Stephen's health deteriorated shortly afterwards and she resigned the following year.<sup>46</sup>

Dyhouse suggests that networks of relationships and activities concentrated in, but reaching beyond, women's halls constituted an important part of a 'feminine subculture' on the margins of university life. She argues that this feminine culture, moreover, was strongly imbued with feminism.<sup>47</sup> Indeed professional women often first encountered the women's movement during their professional training or higher education. Leading suffragists were invited to address the students of the halls and Emmeline Pankhurst visited Aberdare Hall in 1907.<sup>48</sup> There was a consciousness of shared experiences from participation in 'feminine subcultures' and anniversaries commemorating the separate history and foundation of women's halls were celebrated

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<sup>44</sup> AUIA: Correspondence between Herford and Principal Roberts, 3 May 1905; Correspondence between Margaret M. Verney and T. F. Roberts, 28 April 1905.

<sup>45</sup> For further information on Olive Wheeler, see biographies section.

<sup>46</sup> *The Dragon*, 1908, p.23; *University College Aberystwyth Council Minutes*, 24 April 1908.

<sup>47</sup> Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex?*, p.223.

<sup>48</sup> *Cap & Gown*, 3 May 1907.

in most university communities. The feminist culture of women's residential halls was nurtured by the renowned women's tutors. For example, Alice Foxall, who became Assistant Normal Mistress at the UCSWM in 1891, was also a former student of the college and involved in the debating society. In 1889 she advocated at one of the debates 'that the franchise should be extended to all women' and condemned the satirical ridicule which the editor of *Punch* and others directed towards advocates of the movement.<sup>49</sup> Other topics for the women's debate included 'that the enfranchisement of woman will increase her sphere, power and influence, so will the entire condition of the community be improved'.<sup>50</sup> In Aberystwyth, female students debated with male students the topic 'that women play too great a part in business and professional life'.<sup>51</sup>

Students were governed by an earlier generation of professional women and many of the successive female lecturers in the University of Wales had attended one of the constituent colleges as undergraduates. For example, Anna Rowlands was educated at Dr Williams' School in Dolgellau and won a scholarship to the UCNW, Bangor. She was subsequently appointed Mistress of Method and Assistant Lecturer in Education at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.<sup>52</sup> There was a small cohort of women in positions of seniority in the professions – as headmistresses of the prominent girls' schools or in the training departments or colleges – who were connected to education leaders and the girls' education movement in Wales. Ethel Hurlbatt, the first Warden of Aberdare Hall, was a staunch believer in advancing women's education in Wales. She was Honorary Secretary for the APEGW and continually watchful of opportunities for her students.<sup>53</sup> Because the majority of university graduates became teachers, these ideas were also transferred to a younger generation of women and fostered alumni networks in the new intermediate schools.

Separate intermediate schools for girls and boys further cemented a tradition of separatism from a young age, and the importance of the teaching profession to subsequent generations of girls' vocational ambitions cannot be overstated. The new generation of headmistresses was largely concerned with future opportunities and

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<sup>49</sup> *University College Magazine*, 1 June (1889).

<sup>50</sup> *University College Magazine*, 9, 2 (1912).

<sup>51</sup> *The Dragon*, 1908, p.254.

<sup>52</sup> *Contemporary Portraits: Men and Women of South Wales and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1897).

<sup>53</sup> *Contemporary Portraits and Biographies: Men and Women of South Wales and Monmouthshire: Cardiff Section* (Cardiff, 1896).

professional openings for their pupils. From the turn of the twentieth century, prominent headmistresses influenced succeeding generations of girls and teachers in their localities. Barrister Enid Rosser Locket, a former student of Swansea Girls' School between 1909 and 1915, recalled the 'integrity, manners and bearing' that her headmistress Miss Bengier held.<sup>54</sup> She also alluded to the wider legacy of headmistresses for their pupils and education in Wales:

They were a generation of great women who left a heritage behind them and who played so important a part in the social development of the country in their determination to found a proper system of education for women.<sup>55</sup>

Women teachers were important leadership figures who nurtured female students' aspirations towards professional employment on graduation and they served as strong role models for their pupils.

Mary Collin, Headmistress of Cardiff High School for Girls, had close links with other female professionals in the locality whom she invited to provide lectures for her pupils. For example, in 1905, zoologist Helena Jones gave a lecture on the 'Fauna of the North Sea' to the school's Field Club.<sup>56</sup> Dr Mary Phillips gave the address at the twenty-fifth birthday celebrations of the school.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Professor Mary Williams delivered lectures to the pupils at Glanmor Girls' High School in Swansea.<sup>58</sup> These connections provided role models for girls and equipped them with skills necessary for participating in public life. Emphasis was placed on the sciences in the curriculum, and pupils were encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. Collin believed that training must be provided for girls to enter professional and business employment. The Debating Society met every term and held an annual debate with the Boys' High School. Topics included 'equal pay for equal work' for men and women and women's enfranchisement.<sup>59</sup> Such activities provided girls with important training for leadership and public roles.

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<sup>54</sup> *Girls' High School, Swansea, 1888-1948* (Swansea, 1948), p.34.

<sup>55</sup> *Girls' High School, Swansea*, p.34.

<sup>56</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls, 1895-1924* (Cardiff, 1924), p.28.

<sup>57</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.66

<sup>58</sup> *Cambrian Daily Leader*, 12 July 1923.

<sup>59</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.34.

Despite the influence they exerted over their pupils and within their own institutions, women teachers' professional concerns were marginalised in the mixed-sex National Union of Teachers (NUT). Although female teachers formed the majority of the workforce, they only represented one-third of the NUT's membership in the mid-1890s and were underrepresented in the Union's established male hierarchy. Women also comprised the majority of uncertificated teachers in Wales at the turn of the twentieth century and the NUT restricted its membership to certificated teachers until 1919 [appendix 5].<sup>60</sup> In the decade preceding the First World War, women teachers tried to work for equal pay and women's suffrage within the framework of the NUT, establishing a pressure group the Equal Pay League in 1904 to voice their professional concerns. Women felt these were being deliberately ignored and in 1906 the Equal Pay League and the Women Teachers' Franchise Union merged into the National Federation of Women Teachers (NFWT). The NFWT initially worked within the NUT with the aim to get more women on the Executive, but no headway was made. Resistance toward the NFWT's attempts to be recognised on an equal basis within the NUT grew. Emily Phipps, Headmistress of Swansea Municipal Secondary Girls' School, recalled numerous examples of physical and verbal intimidation and institutional practices used by male members to prevent women from gaining positions of power within the union.<sup>61</sup> At the annual NUT conference held in Aberystwyth in 1911, women teachers succeeded in getting a motion expressing sympathy with the principle of women's suffrage on to the agenda. However, a male supporter attempted to introduce the motion:

Then broke out the wildest scenes of disorder...Hundreds of men, massed at the back of the hall, prevented Mr Croft from obtaining a hearing. They stamped, howled, hurling insults at the speaker and at the suffragists...This continued without intermission for thirty minutes.<sup>62</sup>

The conference was regularly cited as the turning point for women teachers and 'Aberystwyth' became a shorthand for the injustice women teachers faced, even in the 1930s.<sup>63</sup> Frustrated by the NUT's inability to listen to women's concerns and its lack of

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<sup>60</sup> Helen Corr, 'Sexual Politics in the National Union of Teachers, 1870-1920' in Penny Summerfield (ed.), *Women, Education and the Professions* (Leicester, 1987).

<sup>61</sup> Emily Phipps, *History of the National Union of Women Teacher* (NUWT, 1928).

<sup>62</sup> A. M. Pierotti, *The Story of the National Union of Women Teachers* (NUWT, 1963), p.5.

<sup>63</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 20 March 1931 and 28 April 1933.

support for the policy of equal pay for men and women, the NFWT seceded from the NUT in 1920 to form a separate women's union.<sup>64</sup>

Largely excluded from the more established employment routes and occupational practices, professional women (also encouraged by educational and professional authorities) built and sustained separate communities as a resource of solidarity and professional support. They established women's communities to enact their agency outside traditional professional structures from which they were excluded or marginalised. The foundation of the University of Wales and its affiliated women's colleges and new girls' secondary schools provided the institutional focus and opportunities for professional women to develop leadership skills and friendship networks. These networks were cemented at various levels of an individual's personal, educational and occupational experience and laid the foundations for women's political activism. By the outbreak of the First World War, women had a base from which to demand political and social change. Some were active in the suffrage campaign or became involved in the medical women's war hospitals.<sup>65</sup> But although professional women had succeeded in establishing institutions and communities which gave them a degree of power and autonomy, these remained on the margins of professional society and had not challenged the fundamental power and gendered structure of the professions.

### ***(ii) Women's Professional Organisations 1900-1939***

Welsh women participated in a broader network of women's professional associations which criss-crossed Britain in the first half of the twentieth century. Groups of professional women (including doctors, teachers, academics, civil servants and businesswomen) created their own professional organisations in response to their marginalisation within professional society. These professional organisations offered alternative spaces to develop and institutionalise female professional networks. They provided legal, financial and personal support to members who were often professionally isolated, faced difficulties travelling alone and financial burdens that their male counterparts did not. The process of demobilisation, with its effects on the labour

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<sup>64</sup> Hilda Kean, *Deeds not Words: The Lives of Suffragette Teachers* (London, 1990), p.64; Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics, 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1996).

<sup>65</sup> Elston, 'Run by Women, (mainly) for Women', p.93.



market, meant that the need for formal institutional structures to protect women's professional interests was particularly evident during the First World War and the years immediately succeeding the conflict. Branches of the major women's professional organisations existed in Wales during the interwar decades, and formalised networks of professional women at local level.

The British Federation of University Women (BFUW) originated in Manchester in 1907 to strengthen women's position in academic life in Britain. Initially concerned with the powerlessness of women in academic communities, the federation became broadly committed to supporting women graduates in the labour market and in public and professional life. The federation's founding objectives were to encourage independent research by women, facilitate networks and cooperation between women at different universities, and 'stimulate the interest of women in municipal and public life'.<sup>66</sup> Dyhouse argues that the balance between these two concerns, on the one hand, networks of women within universities, and on the other, the wider networks of women in public life, shifted through time.<sup>67</sup> Membership to the federation was open to women who held a university degree or its equivalent. The BFUW campaigned for women's admission to a wide variety of public and professional posts and for university fellowships to be open to women.

Regional branches were established in other university towns in England and Wales.<sup>68</sup> Cardiff was one of the first local branches formed in 1909, alongside others in Leeds, Liverpool and Sheffield.<sup>69</sup> A branch was also created in Bangor in 1910 to represent the interests of university women in north Wales, but it was dissolved soon after because of the difficulties its members encountered holding meetings in such a large and sparsely-populated locality.<sup>70</sup> It was not until after the First World War that Aberystwyth and Bangor had separate organisations. The Cardiff branch of the BFUW

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<sup>66</sup> GA: The Federation of University Women, Cardiff and District Association Minutes of Committee Meetings, 1910-1924, D325/2; BUA: Poster of the BFUW listing the objectives of the Federation, BMSS/38964.

<sup>67</sup> Carol Dyhouse, 'The British Federation of University Women and the Status of Women in Universities, 1907-1939', *Women's History Review*, 4, 4 (1995), p.469. See also Alison Golby, 'A Socio-Historical Study of the British Federation of University Women, 1930-57', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Portsmouth, 1999).

<sup>68</sup> Dyhouse, 'The British Federation of University Women', p.472.

<sup>69</sup> WL: British Federation of University Women Annual General Committee Minutes, 1909-21, 5BFW/01/01.

<sup>70</sup> WL: BFUW Annual General Committee Minutes, 8 July 1911.

therefore initially acted as the main representative of Welsh interests in the wider organisation and maintained close correspondence with female graduates at Bangor and Aberystwyth. The branch's members included notable female professionals of the town: headmistresses of the local girls' schools (Miss Collin, Miss Howell and Miss Dobell); female doctors (Erie Evans) and academics at the UCSWM (Millicent Mackenzie and Barbara Foxley). Its bi-monthly meetings were held at Cardiff High School for Girls, the Intermediate School for Girls in Cardiff, Aberdare Hall and the city's Ladies' Club. The prominent role of headmistresses in the organisation was evident when it was decided that the federation's annual meeting should not coincide with the annual conference of the Association of Headmistresses (of which Mary Collin was a Member of the Executive).<sup>71</sup> The majority of the branch's initiatives were linked to advancing women's position within their occupations and expanding the opportunities available to them. It informed the central BFUW of any posts in the area to which women might apply and reported on the position of women in the University of Wales and the newly emerging Welsh civil service.<sup>72</sup> The BFUW continually adapted its demands to reflect the changing professional and public opportunities for women. In 1920 they agitated for the appointment of a woman to the newly created Board of Health for Wales.<sup>73</sup> There was a central concern with women's position in the professions and the branch organised lectures for its members and girls in the region on women in the civil service, law, medicine, and architecture.

The Medical Women's Federation (MWF), which developed from the Association of Registered Medical Women, was founded in 1917 'to safeguard and promote the professional interests of medical women'.<sup>74</sup> The need for a central body that would speak on behalf of medical women and represent their interests became increasingly apparent during the First World War. Although they received the same pay as men serving abroad, medical women were not entitled to ration nor billeting allowance and were still ordered to pay income tax as civilians. They were also refused the privilege given to officers, army sisters and nurses of travelling on leave with half-fare vouchers: when they travelled, they did so as 'soldiers' wives'.<sup>75</sup> A Western and South Wales branch of the MWF was formed in 1923 in Bristol. Dr Erie Evans was the

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<sup>71</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff and District Minutes of Committee Meetings, 8 May 1913.

<sup>72</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff and District Minutes of Committee Meetings, 13 May 1912.

<sup>73</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff and District Minutes of Committee Meetings, 19 May 1920.

<sup>74</sup> WL: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, 1917, SA/MWF/B.2/1-7.

<sup>75</sup> *The Times*, 4 July 1918.

first Vice President of the branch, which had an initial membership of twenty-four. However, no meetings were held in south Wales during its existence and it was difficult for Welsh members to attend meetings which were usually held in Gloucester or Bristol.<sup>76</sup> A South Wales and Monmouthshire Association was formed in February 1934 under the presidency of Dr Gladys Aitken, Medical Officer of Health for Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre.<sup>77</sup> During the same year a MWF North Wales Association was also formed and presided by Dr Edith Shaw, with the majority of meetings held at Shaw's house. The minutes record difficulties arranging meetings in the area covered by the North Wales Association, with some members living 90 miles from its centre. During the winter months these were often cancelled.<sup>78</sup> Prior to the formation of this branch, women doctors practising in north Wales (including Drs Lilian Blake and Katharine Drinkwater) were members of the Liverpool branch. Indeed, professional women in north Wales often had more contact with their northwest English medical counterparts, than they did their south Walian sisters.

Teachers joined professional associations in larger numbers than other women workers.<sup>79</sup> The decision of the NFWT to secede from the NUT and re-form itself as an autonomous union took place in the period immediately at the end of the war, when mass demobilisation and fears of an overcrowded labour market were prevalent. In 1920 the NFWT reconstituted itself as the National Union of Women Teachers (NUWT) with its own paid staff and its own weekly paper, *The Woman Teacher*, which gave the association an official organ through which to publicise women teachers' professional concerns and establish a distinct Union identity.<sup>80</sup> The NUWT had an effective propaganda campaign: local press secretaries worked to explain their position in the press, the union sent deputations to Members of Parliament, and they held conferences, social gatherings, lectures and established women teachers' clubs. Links between the NUWT and feminist organisations were particularly strong and the union's main objectives included equal pay, abolition of the marriage bar and equal opportunities for headships. Emily Phipps, Headmistress of Swansea Municipal Secondary Girls' School, was a central figure in the Union from its inception, acting as

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<sup>76</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, 1923-34, SA/MWF/B.2/2.

<sup>77</sup> *The Lady's Who's Who: Who's Who for British Women 1938-39* (London, 1939).

<sup>78</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, 1934.

<sup>79</sup> Women teachers who worked in fee-paying schools usually joined the Association of Assistant Mistresses.

<sup>80</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.74.

President of the NFWT between 1915 and 1917. She was also *The Woman Teacher's* first editor between 1919 and 1930, carrying out her editorial duties while holding the post of headmistress and studying part-time to become a barrister.<sup>81</sup> Phipps' editorship also meant that *The Woman Teacher* extensively covered issues relating to women teachers in south Wales.

Given Phipps' central role in the Union, it is unsurprising that one of the earliest branches was founded in Swansea in 1908, soon after the formation of the NFWT. The branch was inaugurated by Phipps along with fellow Swansea teachers: Miss Neal, Glanmor School; Miss Evans, Pentrepoeth School; Miss Beatrice Davies, Danygraig School, and Miss Harris, Dyfatty School.<sup>82</sup> The NUWT had members from all regions of Wales from its inception and the Welsh branches were always well represented at the union's conferences and demonstrations.<sup>83</sup> In 1920 branches were formed in Welshpool and Cardiff. In March 1922, the NUWT Organiser, Miss Smith, visited the newly-formed Amman Valley branch and undertook a speaking tour in the nearby coalfield to promote the Union and its objectives.<sup>84</sup> The implementation of marriage bars and diminishing opportunities of headships for women teachers were particularly acute in these localities. Following Smith's tour, new branches were established in Llanelli, Carmarthen, Gwaun-cae-Gurwen, and Pontardawe.<sup>85</sup> The following year a branch was instigated in the Rhondda Valley, with a Penarth branch formed in 1925.<sup>86</sup> Throughout the interwar decades, the Cardiff and Swansea branches were the largest and most active of the Welsh branches and in 1936 they were amalgamated under a South Wales Federation of the NUWT.

The Association of Women Science Teachers (AWST) was formed in 1912, initiated by the science section of the London Branch of the Association of Assistant Mistresses. The initial purpose of the AWST was to provide opportunities for cooperation between science teachers to discuss methods of teaching, exam syllabuses, laboratory management and equipment. A Welsh branch of the AWST existed from

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<sup>81</sup> Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T.*, p.54.

<sup>82</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 November 1937 and 14 January 1938.

<sup>83</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 10 May 1929.

<sup>84</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 24 March 1922.

<sup>85</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 7 and 17 April 1922.

<sup>86</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 2 November 1923.

1921 until the AWST merged with the School Masters Association in 1962.<sup>87</sup> The Welsh AWST branch worked closely with the university colleges and provided an important link between girls' intermediate education, higher education and professional employment.<sup>88</sup> The inaugural meeting of the Welsh branch was held at the newly-opened University College, Swansea on 7 May 1921 where the Principal, Professor Sibley, highlighted the importance of nurturing a strong relationship between schools and science colleges.<sup>89</sup> The branch kept abreast of scientific research by organising an annual series of lectures which were delivered by researchers from the constituent colleges of the University of Wales. The Welsh branch usually alternated the location of its meetings between Swansea and Cardiff. The founding committee comprised female intermediate science teachers from Swansea, Cardiff, Pontypridd and Newport, with Miss Hughes, of Howard Gardens Girls' Secondary School (Cardiff) becoming the branch's first president. Like other nation-wide organisations, the branch struggled to maintain a cohesive network across Wales, and in 1936 they tried to accommodate the scattered membership from the schools of north Wales by meeting in Llandrindod Wells and Shrewsbury.<sup>90</sup>

All associations were thus concerned with building organisational structures to safeguard the professional interests of their members and achieve employment opportunities for educated women and girls. They provided financial support to their members and girls aspiring to a professional career in the form of scholarships and loans. Professional training, especially in medicine and academia, was long and costly. It was common for parents to prioritise their son's education and many fellowships were closed to women because of the perceived wastage of educating girls who may later marry. The BFUW was concerned with the difficulties younger women faced securing grants and fellowships which would enable them to embark on scholarly research. In 1910 the federation collected subscriptions from members and sympathisers to establish an annual fellowship to enable women to undertake further academic research. Women who had demonstrated potential through published work were eligible for this competitive award of £150. Mary Williams, the first woman

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<sup>87</sup> RBA: The Association of Science Teachers, Welsh Branch Minute Book, 1921-1947, MNA/TUG/12/1-2. The organisations merged to form the present Association for Science Education.

<sup>88</sup> RBA: The Association of Women Science Teachers [Welsh Branch] Agendas and Circular, MNA/TUG/12/5.

<sup>89</sup> RBA: AWST Welsh Branch Minute Book, 1921.

<sup>90</sup> RBA: AWST Welsh Branch Minute Book, 1936.

professor at the University College Swansea, was one of the five recipients of the fellowship, which she held between 1912 and 1916.<sup>91</sup> The BFUW also compiled a list of other fellowships open to women, with Annie Dobell (Headmistress, Blaenau Ffestiniog) researching the positions available in Wales. The MWF also created a loan fund to assist medical women who wanted to establish a practice.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, in February 1918 Emily Phipps founded the NUWT's 'Old Guard Fund' to provide financial support for elderly teachers who were not included in the Teachers' Superannuation Scheme and left without pensions.

Living arrangements was a particular concern which faced the increasing number of (largely single) women who entered the professional workforce in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Parental fears for daughters living away from home and societal expectations of respectability made the issue of suitable accommodation for self-supporting women problematic. Women's professional organisations compiled lists of women in different cities who were willing to offer hospitality to fellow members or women who travelled around the country on account of their work. In 1920 the NUWT proposed the establishment of residential clubs or hostels, 'where women could live under conditions of comfort approximating to home life'.<sup>93</sup> The MWF created a list in 1920 and local associations were asked to send in the names of their members willing to host visitors. When a Pathological Conference was held in Cardiff in 1927, the central committee of the BFUW contacted the local branch to see if its members were able to offer hospitality to a female doctor attending.<sup>94</sup> In 1923 the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland created a list of suitable hostels across Britain for women in the professions and industry.<sup>95</sup>

Women's professional associations also provided the structural apparatus from which to advance organised campaigns for professional equality in a systematic and supported manner.<sup>96</sup> They collated information on the position of women in public and

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<sup>91</sup> Dyhouse, 'The British Federation of University Women', p.474.

<sup>92</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Publications: Professional Questions, 1924-1988, SA/MWF/B.4/2

<sup>93</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 10 September 1920.

<sup>94</sup> GA: British Federation of University Women: Cardiff Association, Minutes of Committee, 1927, D325/3.

<sup>95</sup> British Library [hereafter, BL]: List of Hostels for Women in Professions and in Industry (Compiled by the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, 1923), 08248.b.63.

<sup>96</sup> WA: 'The Work of Medical Women Qualified in 1933 and 1948'; WA: Medical Women's Federation Journal, January, 1957; WA: Janet K. Aitken, 'The Status of Women Doctors in Medicine Today', reprinted from Medical Women's Federation Journal, April 1952, SA/MWF/B.4/3/3; WA: 'Women in

professional life to highlight areas for its improvement and support their claims.<sup>97</sup> By publishing annual surveys, pamphlets and articles on the achievements of women in their respective professions, they continually assessed the gains women had made in their occupations and the obstacles they still faced. In her pamphlets for the NUWT, *Equality of Opportunity* and *Equal Pay for Equal Work*, Phipps cited numerous examples of prejudice and discrimination against women in the professions which justified the need for such reform.<sup>98</sup> Phipps's *Equality of Opportunity* detailed the lack of opportunities available for women to gain higher posts in teaching, academia, law and local councils. She argued that this was mainly due to the lack of opportunity for girls, with more scholarships available for boys and believed that teachers had an important role to play in encouraging their pupils to pursue professional careers.<sup>99</sup>

Women's associations used the data they collated on the position of women in professional employment to inform their members of various openings and positions in the professions available to them. They stressed the good work conducted by professional women to support their further encroachment into different occupations and demonstrate the indispensability of their work to the professions. In 1930 the MWF concluded that the continuous and steady demand for medical women's service was evidence of their value and status in the community and noted that it was rare for any distinction to be made between the salaries and conditions of service held by men or women.<sup>100</sup> *The Woman Teacher* continually evaluated the gains women teachers had made and marked significant milestones. Associations also conducted comparative research on women's position in the professions internationally. For example, in 1933 Myfanwy Wood, who held an academic post in a Chinese university, addressed Cardiff's BFUW on the subject of 'university women in China'.<sup>101</sup>

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the Medical Profession: A Retrospect for the Year 1929' by Violet Kelynack, Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, March 1930, SA/MWF/B.2/5.

<sup>97</sup> BUA: Ledger containing information on the Executive Committee meetings of the BFUW, 1934, XD70/268; RBA: Reports of the Swansea Branch of the Women's Freedom League, 1909-10, LAC/58/A/1-3.

<sup>98</sup> Institute of Education [hereafter, IOE]: Miss Phipps, death, obituary, tributes, 1943, UWT/B/13/3.

<sup>99</sup> IOE: Office Staff and Equal Opportunities for Teachers, UWT/B/9/3; Emily. F. Phipps, *Equality of Opportunity* (NUWT, 1928).

<sup>100</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, March 1930, SA/MWF/B.2/5; *BMJ*, 5 September 1931.

<sup>101</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff Association, Minutes of Committee, 1933, D325/3.

The specific objectives of each professional association evolved and adjusted to accommodate the changing position of women in public life and to new openings for women in the new professions. Women's professional organisations were also concerned with broader professional issues and the balance between these two concerns changed over time. The various associations took up specific issues and addressed new policies such as the marriage bar and pay inequality, which will be explored further in the following chapter. The NUWT campaigned for a proportion of headships of mixed schools to correspond to the number of women in the profession.<sup>102</sup> While the MWF opposed medical women undercutting the wages of their male competitors in public health appointments because lower pay implied lower prestige and would antagonise relations between the sexes.<sup>103</sup> The latter appointed committees to address issues of nutrition, lunacy law reform, the menopause and the fitness of women to qualify as commercial aeroplane pilots. The NUWT was also concerned with the latest educational methods and issues such as the influence of the cinema on children. By keeping abreast of contemporary research in the various branches of their disciplines, associations sought to present themselves as legitimate and professional authorities to parallel the official professional and predominantly male, counterpart associations. At a complimentary dinner to celebrate her recent call to the Bar, Emily Phipps stated 'ours is the Union which has always been foremost in the study and practice of new methods in education'.<sup>104</sup>

Although women's associations predominantly focused on issues which affected women in their respective fields, many of the problems women faced were the same across the professions. Consequently, it was often conducive to success for women in different professions to coordinate their overlapping campaigns. There was regular correspondence between the organisations at both national and local levels which fostered a cross-professional female network. Women's professional organisations supported the parallel campaigns waged by their counterparts in other professions. The NUWT archive collection includes numerous press clippings reporting on the position of married women doctors, as well as correspondence with the National Association of Women Civil Servants (NAWCS) regarding issues of equal pay, the marriage bar and

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<sup>102</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 1 June 1923.

<sup>103</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Publications: Professional Questions.

<sup>104</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 27 February 1925.



educational standard of recruits into the civil service.<sup>105</sup> In 1932 the Cardiff and District branch of the BFUW held a debate concerning the employment of married women; three women from medical and academic professions gave addresses covering medical, legal and social viewpoints.<sup>106</sup> Formal connections between associations were also evidenced by joint demonstrations, public meetings, conferences and deputations, lists of subscribers, common speakers and favoured locations.

Women's professional networks were enacted primarily at local level, where women had established reputations and connections. Phipps' central position in the NUWT ensured a large and active branch in Swansea. Indeed, Mary Harris, a Swansea teacher, recalled joining the NFWT after coming into contact with 'the magnetic influence of Miss Phipps, the pioneer of the women teachers' movement in Swansea'.<sup>107</sup> The branch had a close relationship with lecturers at the Swansea Training College and the newly-formed University College, Swansea, including Professor Mary Williams and E. Hewlett who supplied articles to *The Woman Teacher* bearing particularly on educational work in the college.<sup>108</sup> In 1930, Clara Neal was elected as a teacher representative on the Court of Governors of the University Colleges of South Wales.<sup>109</sup> It is also telling that Swansea was the only place outside London which supplied three national presidents to the NUWT during the period under study: Phipps, Neal and Catherine Fisher. This was an achievement which the branch was keen to highlight. When the Swansea branch hosted a dinner to celebrate Neal's presidency in 1927, the guest list is revealing of the local connections and organisations she was involved with: teachers from every grade of education in Swansea, Swansea Training College, the University College, Women's Freedom League, the Mayor, representatives from the education authority, and magistrates.<sup>110</sup>

In Swansea the positive relationship between the NUWT branch and the LEA was undoubtedly, in part, a consequence of the skill and personality of Phipps, but also a result of the strength of the branch and its ability to keep women's demands visible. Members met regularly with the Director of Education for Swansea, Mr T. J. Rees, and

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<sup>105</sup> IOE: National Association of Women Civil Servants, 1921-51, UWT/D/32/2.

<sup>106</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff Association Minutes of Committee, 1924-33.

<sup>107</sup> Cited in Alison Oram, 'Women Teachers and the Suffrage Campaign: Arguments for Professional Equality' in June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton (eds), *Votes for Women* (Abingdon, 2000), p.209.

<sup>108</sup> Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T.*, p.55.

<sup>109</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 10 January 1930.

<sup>110</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 9 December 1927.

the education authority to discuss matters affecting women's professional interests. Throughout the interwar years, they canvassed Swansea LEA for various issues in their promotion of women's equal rights as workers. Swansea was the first Committee in Wales to introduce a system of equal pay. They obtained an equal minimum salary of £225 for men and women certificated teachers in the authority. *The Woman Teacher* reported that these were the highest minimum salaries for women teachers in England and Wales and attributed the favourable pay conditions between men and women to the presence of a strong Union branch in the town.<sup>111</sup> In 1920 the branch negotiated women teachers' salaries with the LEA by sending a deputation, interviewing members, and distributing a statement which highlighted the achievements of previous Swansea women teachers.<sup>112</sup>

For many members of the NUWT, broader issues affecting the teaching profession and women's own professional concerns were interrelated. Arguments of equality, on the basis of fairness and meritocracy, did not sit uncomfortably with the idea that women also had a special contribution to the education of young children. Professor Barbara Foxley encapsulated this when she stated:

The point of view of men and women is practically identical. But on education, particularly with regard to young children, women have something essential to say. In dealing with little children, teachers must be largely what someone has called professional parents... We are regretfully fighting for conditions which will enable us to do as we wish to do by the children.<sup>113</sup>

In this vein, the NUWT argued for professional equality between men and women teachers on the basis that it was 'for the good of the teaching community as a whole, *and* for the children whom we teach'.<sup>114</sup> The NUWT self-consciously labelled itself as a 'feminist organisation... [whose] feminism is uncompromising and unqualified'.<sup>115</sup> However, this explicitly feminist stance was not always looked favourably upon by LEAs. At the 1923 NUWT conference in Cardiff, S. Glyn Jones, the male National Commissioner for Wales, stated that 'their deliberations would reach a higher status if

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<sup>111</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 23 January 1920; 2 July 1920; 1 June 1923.

<sup>112</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 14 December 1923.

<sup>113</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 January 1923. For further information on Barbara Foxley, see biographies section.

<sup>114</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 November 1937.

<sup>115</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 7 December 1934.

they would periodically arrange a Conference where all professional questions were taboo and attention was devoted entirely to educational work'.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, at a South Wales Federation of the NUWT Educational Conference in 1936, Mr T. J. Rees expressed his delight at the educational focus of the conference when he stated that 'it was a fine thing to find a teachers' association getting up a Conference like this on education and not on salaries'.<sup>117</sup> A young teacher reported being deterred from joining the NUWT because of its explicit feminist affiliations and her belief that this could lessen her chances of getting married.<sup>118</sup>

Professional women – particularly those affected by the widespread implementation of marriage bars in the 1920s – confronted changing attitudes towards female sexuality and societal expectations of heterosexual domesticity.<sup>119</sup> The interwar press often mocked and stereotyped single women teachers as sexless and 'unfeminine' and ridiculed communities of single professional women. Contemporary headlines included 'Why Men Do Not Marry Schoolmistresses' and 'Women and Work: The Disastrous Effect of Having a Profession'.<sup>120</sup> Efforts were made by women's professional associations to counter these stereotypes and recruit the membership of new women entrants to the professions. For example, representing the Swansea NUWT branch, Clara Neal addressed the students at the Swansea Training College on the work that the NUWT did and encouraged them to join the union. The branch also invited the training college students to attend its meetings.<sup>121</sup> Neal highlighted the influence and respectability of its members, whom, she reported, served on various public committees. The South Wales and Monmouthshire branch of the MWF attempted to attract the membership of younger medical women in the 1930s by inviting final year medical students of the WNSM to their meetings.<sup>122</sup>

Although professional women in the 1920s and 1930s viewed women-only associations and institutions differently from their Victorian counterparts, some sought to demonstrate the continuing validity of separatist strategies. In the 1920s the NUWT

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<sup>116</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 January 1923.

<sup>117</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 24 July 1936.

<sup>118</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 8 June 1934.

<sup>119</sup> Holden, Katherine, *The Shadow of Marriage: Singleness in England 1914-1960* (Manchester, 2010).

<sup>120</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 17 October 1919.

<sup>121</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 28 August 1925.

<sup>122</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, July 1931; The Medical Women's Federation Quarterly Review, April 1942.

discouraged its members from holding dual membership with the NUT because it could prevent the Union being represented before LEAs if its members already had representation.<sup>123</sup> An older generation of women teachers, who had been members of the union since its inception, sought to market the NUWT to the newly qualified woman teacher as a regrettable necessity, whose ‘aims...are yet to be realised before the need for women to organise separately disappears’.<sup>124</sup> Neal noted in 1933 that ‘until men can accept women competitors for jobs on exactly the same terms as they accept men, the case for separate organisations for women seems unanswerable’.<sup>125</sup> Seeking to enlist new members, she pointed out ‘the special necessity, in present conditions of evolution, for separate organisations for all trades and professions in which both men and women are employed’.<sup>126</sup> In 1924 *Time and Tide*, the mouthpiece of the feminist Six Point Group, argued that women had no alternative but to form their own parallel professional associations ‘not because the interests of men and women in industry are antagonistic, but because their present position is so unequal that the same organisation will not hold both’.<sup>127</sup> It is, however, perhaps telling that they had to justify the continuation of separate organisations.

Similarly, not every woman teacher endorsed the NUWT and many retained their NUT membership. Some women feared that NUWT affiliation would compromise their professional position and hinder their prospects of promotion.<sup>128</sup> Indeed, shortly after a Rhondda NUWT branch was formed in 1923, the Rhondda Education Authority passed a resolution stating that ‘no person shall hereafter be employed by this Authority who is not a member, or does not undertake to become a member, of the National Union of Teachers’.<sup>129</sup> In a series of articles in *The Schoolmaster*, a correspondent ‘Cymro’ argued that ‘it is quite easy to prove, cogently and convincingly, that all sectional organisations on a sex basis are wrong, and even disastrous to the teaching profession’.<sup>130</sup> He further added that ‘professional peace can only be secured and maintained by remaining members of the only recognised national

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<sup>123</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 31 March 1922.

<sup>124</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 1 September 1933.

<sup>125</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 28 April 1933.

<sup>126</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 28 April 1933.

<sup>127</sup> *Time and Tide*, 8 August 1924.

<sup>128</sup> IOE: NUWT Rhondda Branch Records, 1925-29, UWT/F/96.

<sup>129</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 30 November 1923.

<sup>130</sup> *The Schoolmaster*, 11 May 1923.

union, the N.U.T'.<sup>131</sup> The pseudonym 'Cymro' ['Welshman'] had a symbolic meaning, as the author attempted to portray the NUWT as an alien organisation which had no place in Welsh society. The Rhondda NUWT branch was unsuccessful and by 1927 the secretary claimed that 'our branch is certainly a dud one', because of the poor attendance at meetings and lack of fee payment. In the same year it became subsumed within the Cardiff branch, and the context of the debate is explored further in chapter five.

In response to criticism of outdated methods, associations presented a public image of themselves as progressive and at the vanguard of the women's movement. At the opening ceremony of the new NUWT headquarters in Gordon Square, Phipps stated that women teachers were to lead the whole of the women's movement, 'not only for the betterment of women but for the general betterment of all'.<sup>132</sup> Neal situated the Union and its objectives within a framework of modernity: 'the NUWT is in the forefront of progress; its members are progressive women who refuse to be held back by the conservatism of tradition and old age'.<sup>133</sup> The NUWT maintained that 'the keenest and most progressive women in the teaching profession are in the NUWT and have left the NUT'.<sup>134</sup> Speaking at its annual conference in Cardiff in 1923, Professor Barbara Foxley said that 'she had had been asked many questions as to the nature and aims of the N.U.W.T., and she had been able to reply that it was a most progressive militant body'.<sup>135</sup>

During the interwar years, women's professional associations continued to celebrate a distinctive women's culture and celebrated the achievements of pioneers in their fields. Krista Cowman shows that a commitment to writing history for a present day purpose was always an integral part of British feminism.<sup>136</sup> From the inception of their entry into the professions, women

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<sup>131</sup> *The Schoolmaster*, 11 May 1923.

<sup>132</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.105.

<sup>133</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 27 August, 1926.

<sup>134</sup> IOE: Married Women Teachers, 1921-35, UWT/D/11/8.

<sup>135</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 January 1923.

<sup>136</sup> Krista Cowman, "'There is so much, and it will all be history": Feminist Activists as Historians, the Case of British Suffrage Historiography, 1908-2007', in Angelika Epple and Angelika Schaser (eds), *Gendering Historiography: Beyond National Canons* (Frankfurt, 2009). See also Hilda Kean, 'Searching for the Past in Present Defeat: The Construction of Historical and Political Identity in British Feminism in the 1920s and 1930s', *Women's History Review*, 3, 1 (1994); Hilda Kean, 'Public History and Popular Memory: Issues in the Commemoration of the British Militant Suffrage Campaign', *Women's History Review*, 14, 3&4 (2005).

recognised the importance of collective memory and public commemoration to a strong movement by drawing upon historical narratives to justify and naturalise their involvement in the workplace.<sup>137</sup> The practice of history writing of women's involvement in the professions was a tradition which was started by the earliest entrants into the professions. For example, in her essay 'Women in Medicine', Hoggan outlined the history of women's entry into the medical profession in Britain.<sup>138</sup> She referred to the obstacles she faced gaining admission to medical training and argued that there was a long tradition of women's involvement with medicine. This served to normalise women's participation in professional life: to establish precedents for their activities which suggested continuity rather than novelty.

Particularly throughout the First World War, social reform or women's organisations collated data and statistics as testament of women's contribution to their respective professions and to secure their rights to full employment opportunities after the conflict.<sup>139</sup> Others highlighted professional women's contribution to the war effort through the writing of individual biographies, autobiographies or organisational histories.<sup>140</sup> History writing was also a way to justify the existence of women's separate professional organisations during the interwar decades. In many ways, professional women sought not only to confirm their distinguished past, but to validate their current political activity.<sup>141</sup> They wrote histories of their involvement in the professions and continually recorded and preserved the documents of their struggles and successes during the years succeeding the conflict.<sup>142</sup>

Women's professional organisations made a conscious effort to preserve and record the achievements of their members. Like many of her contemporaries, Phipps

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<sup>137</sup> Jane Martin, 'London's Feminist Teachers and the Urban Political Landscape', in Jean Spence, Sarah Jane Aiston, and Maureen M. Meikle (eds), *Women, Education, and Agency, 1600-2000* (Abingdon, 2010).

<sup>138</sup> Hoggan, 'Women in Medicine'.

<sup>139</sup> BUA: Bangor and District Women's Suffrage Society, Minute Book, BMSS/25800.

<sup>140</sup> IWM: Eva Shaw McLaren (ed.), *A History of the Scottish Women's Hospitals* (1919), 63866.

<sup>141</sup> Kean, 'Public History and Popular Memory', p.586.

<sup>142</sup> Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T*; A.M. Pierotti, *The Story of the National Union of Women Teachers* (NUWT, 1963); IWM: Janet Aitken and Beryl Harding, 'Work of British Medical Women during the War', published by the Medical Women's Federation, 1955, K 37217; Flora Murray, *Women As Army Surgeons; Being the History of the Women's Hospital Corps in Paris, Wimereux and Endell Street* (London, 1920); IWM: The Call of our Allies and the Response of the Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service, K.17110.

appreciated the importance of writing an alternative public narrative which included women, and in 1928 she wrote the first history of the NUWT.<sup>143</sup> The NUWT's archive in the Institute of Education today contains multiple scrapbooks of newspaper clippings which record the successes of professional pioneers and their interwar campaigns. Women's professional publications, such as the *Medical Women's Federation Journal* and *The Woman Teacher*, were littered with biographical accounts of professional achievements. For example, when Phipps was called to the Bar, the NUWT held a dinner attended by 180 of its members and friends to celebrate this feminist achievement, which was subsequently reported in its pamphlets and *The Woman Teacher*.<sup>144</sup> Ida Smedley Maclean delivered a short account of the BFUW's early years in her Presidential Address to the Annual General Meeting of Council in 1935 and this was subsequently printed in pamphlet form.<sup>145</sup> These accounts sought to present a particular narrative of a united women's movement and their success in the face of consistent oppression. They also wrote about pioneers as a way of encouraging women to meet contemporary challenges through inspiration of past achievements. History had a personal significance, too: women's own identities were bound up in the publicly recognised events.<sup>146</sup> They were aware of the struggles that their predecessors had faced in order to gain admission to professional occupations. It is particularly noteworthy that the National Library of Wales's copy of Sophia Jex-Blake's *Medical Women: A Thesis and a History* originally belonged to Dr Eric Evans.<sup>147</sup>

Like the feminist movement, professional women were aware of the need to construct a historical narrative of their campaign. Recounting their predecessors' exemplary lives provided female professionals with visible role models in their fields. It also served to showcase the professional abilities of women and support the campaigns for women's equality and further movement into the echelons of the professions. The associations celebrated the successes of its members in their professional journals. Women's occupational successes were used in feminist propaganda as a demonstration of women's capabilities and as an example of their intellectual equality with men. Cheryl Law argues that 'trailblazers' – women who achieved prominence in any sphere

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<sup>143</sup> Phipps, *History of the N.U.W.T.*

<sup>144</sup> IOE: Dinner to Miss Phipps correspondence, 1925, UWT/B/10/11; IOE: Newspaper reproductions of photos of Emily Phipps, menu card and programme for a complimentary dinner to Emily Phipps, 1931, UWTB/5/88.

<sup>145</sup> Dyhouse, 'The British Federation of University Women', p.468.

<sup>146</sup> Kean, 'Searching for the Past in Present Defeat', p.60.

<sup>147</sup> Sophia Jex-Blake, *Medical Women: A Thesis and a History* (Edinburgh, 1886). NLW reference: R133 B63.

previously confined to men – were assisting in the emancipation process by virtue of the visibility of their success.<sup>148</sup> The passing of the first generation of professional women was marked by obituaries in the BFUW's newsletter, the MWF's journal and the NUWT's *The Woman Teacher*. However, because women were keen to highlight the networks of friendship and comradeship which bound them together in their fight for women's subordination in the professions, they subsequently downplayed divisions in their campaigns. There was not one monolithic experience and these accounts should not be taken as representative of all contemporary women.

Furthermore, the significance of women's communities nurtured by residential institutions and sustained by the nineteenth-century women's movement did not necessarily decline in the twentieth century. For example, in the medical profession many women opted to share practices with other women. This was particularly evident in the early interwar period, when women faced difficulties entering male practices after the war.<sup>149</sup> Women doctors could also face difficulties setting up independent practice and some contemporaries were initially distrustful of women doctors. A teacher's experience of training would already have encouraged a homosocial rather than a mixed-sex pattern of friendships. Oram suggests that rather than the school itself being the focus of community life, that role was taken by women teachers' associations in the twentieth century.<sup>150</sup> As both Oram and Kean show, the NUWT provided women with emotional as well as political support: these friendships carried a range of emotional significance, from casual friendships to lifelong partnerships.<sup>151</sup> Friendship ties underpinned the considerable campaigning work the union undertook, while common aims led to shared social activities organised by the branches, including trips to the popular seaside resort of Porthcawl.<sup>152</sup>

The close networks of friendship which underpinned women's associational activities are evident in the correspondence between members and the organisation's newsletters. Although they varied in their personal, political and professional beliefs, there was a sense of sisterhood between them. Women's professional associations

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<sup>148</sup> Cheryl Law, *Suffrage and Power: The Women's Movement, 1919-1928* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997), p.5.

<sup>149</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, July 1925; Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service', p.346.

<sup>150</sup> Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.205.

<sup>151</sup> Kean and Oram, "Men Must Be Educated and Women Must Do It".

<sup>152</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 15 April 1938.



provided social networks within which friendships could be established and sustained. Particularly in the teaching profession where marriage bars were prevalent and women dominated numerically, 'communities' of independent unmarried women were created through their living arrangements. When Emily Phipps moved to Swansea in 1895 as headmistress of Swansea Higher Grade School, her closest associate, Clara Neal, accompanied her. Phipps had accepted the post on the condition that Neal would also receive teaching employment in the authority.<sup>153</sup> Neal was appointed Trained Certificated Assistant at the Central Higher Grade School and was Headmistress of Terrace Road School between 1901 and 1921, before she became Headmistress of Glanmor Girls High School until her retirement in 1930.<sup>154</sup> Phipps and Neal shared a home for thirty years until Phipps moved to London after she was called to the Bar and when Neal retired in 1930, she moved into Phipps' home in London.<sup>155</sup> When Neal died in 1937 her obituary in *The Woman Teacher* revealed the depth and meaning of her friendship with Phipps.<sup>156</sup> At a public dinner in Swansea to celebrate Neal's presidency of the NUWT:

Mr T. J. Rees, Director of Education, referred to the two friends, who were both Devonshire women, as 'Cider and Cream', leaving us to decide which was which. On another occasion, in referring to some criticism which Miss Neal had made on something just done by the Education Committee, the Director said: 'Miss Phipps makes the bullets and Miss Neal fires them.'<sup>157</sup>

Phipps and Neal had been intimately connected for thirty years, in south Wales, at school, at home, in suffrage work and in social work. Their education, employment, social life and political activism in a largely all-female realm was representative of a semi-autonomous female culture in which the professional, social and political aspects of their lives overlapped. Both women were actively involved in the NUWT and were founder members of the Swansea Women's Freedom League branch. Their professional commitments were reflected in the quasi-separatist nature of their lifestyles: their political work was undertaken in the women's movement, their lives as teachers were conducted in girls' schools and their home life was shared with feminist colleagues.

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<sup>153</sup> Avril Rolph 'Definitely not a Doormat: Emily Phipps, Feminist, Teacher and Trade Unionist', *Swansea History Journal*, 22 (2014/15), p.11.

<sup>154</sup> Rolph 'Definitely not a Doormat', p.12.

<sup>155</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.117.

<sup>156</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 15 January 1937.

<sup>157</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 15 January 1937. Cited in Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.210.

Neal paid tribute to her close associate at a complimentary dinner to Phipps in 1930 when she relinquished her editorship of the *Woman Teacher*. Neal recalled: ‘Hers was the spirit of which pioneers were made. She was one of the first women to ride a bicycle, she flew in an aeroplane when flights were first allowed, and was one of the first candidates for Parliament, one of the earlier group of women to be called to the Bar, and was the originator and first secretary of the Old Guard’.<sup>158</sup> In many ways, there was no division between their personal lives and political and professional activism and, characteristically, when Phipps became ill at the end of her life, it was a woman doctor who attended her.<sup>159</sup>

Professional women who married were not necessarily cut-off from the female support networks and women’s associational culture which Phipps and Neal endorsed. Indeed, professional marriages could be mutually supportive, provide professional companionship and allow both partners to pursue common intellectual interests. Dr Katharine Drinkwater [née Jay] married Dr Harry Drinkwater of Wrexham after she had qualified and they had a practice together in Wrexham until her husband’s death in 1925. She was known as the pioneer woman doctor in Wrexham and played a central role in the MWF from its inception in 1917, as well as in the North Wales branch from its foundation in 1934 until her death in 1940.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, Millicent Mackenzie [née Hughes], Wales’s first woman professor, married fellow academic John Stuart Mackenzie. They were both employed at the UCSWM until they jointly retired in 1915.<sup>161</sup> Mackenzie was a key figure in women’s associational and feminist culture of Cardiff through the Cardiff and District Women’s Suffrage Society and the BFUW’s Cardiff branch. She dedicated her book *Freedom in Education* to Elizabeth P. Hughes, the first Principal of the Cambridge Training College and also thanked her husband for his sympathy and encouragement.<sup>162</sup>

In reality female support networks were not mutually exclusive with women’s participation in mixed-sex professional activities, and some women held multiple professional memberships. For example, in 1928 Katharine Drinkwater was elected

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<sup>158</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 23 January 1931.

<sup>159</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.118.

<sup>160</sup> WA: The Medical Women’s Federation Quarterly Review, April 1940.

<sup>161</sup> *Cap & Gown*, 3 May 1915.

<sup>162</sup> H. Millicent Mackenzie, *Freedom in Education: An Inquiry into its Meaning, Value, and Conditions* (London, 1924).

chairman of the Denbighshire and Flintshire Division of the North Wales Branch of the BMA, and Dr Iris Nellis was elected secretary. Drinkwater was also elected president of the Wrexham and District Clinical Society in 1937.<sup>163</sup> Dr Amy Jagger, former pupil of Cardiff High School for Girls and one of the first women to obtain her medical training at the WNSM, was elected president of the Welsh Branch of the Society of Medical Officers of Health in 1936.<sup>164</sup> Women's membership was high in the branch which represented a less prestigious area of medicine and reflected the role that the majority of medical women were employed in. Some women's associations also cooperated with male counterpart organisations. For example, The North Wales Association of the MWF invited Colwyn Bay Medical Society members to their meetings.<sup>165</sup> Similarly, the South Wales and Monmouthshire Association welcomed non-members and medical men in the area to some of their meetings at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary.<sup>166</sup> The Welsh branch of the AWT collaborated with academic staff employed at the University of Wales and the Cardiff Geographical Society. It also held joint meetings with the Association of Science Masters, which, from 1936, was invited to all meetings.<sup>167</sup> Similarly, in 1933 university principals were invited to a conference convened by the BFUW and Council of Women Civil Servants (Higher Grades) concerning appointments for women in the Civil Service.<sup>168</sup> The support of their male colleagues undoubtedly offered prestige to professional women's cause, and collaboration with their counterpart male associations could be courted when advantageous.

Julie Fette argues that in France the associational phenomenon was both a sign of progress (women gathering forces and expressing a feminist message publicly) and of blockage (women responding to continued discrimination and misogyny).<sup>169</sup> Indeed, women formed their own professional associations initially in response to their marginalisation within professional society. The histories of these multiple organisations and associations also represent the varied and overlapping interests of professional women and demonstrate the dynamic nature of women's associational

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<sup>163</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, 1940.

<sup>164</sup> WA: Society of Medical Officers of Health, Minutes of Welsh Branch Sub-Group, 1930-1936, SA/SMO/N.13/8; *City of Cardiff High School for Girls*, p.46.

<sup>165</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter.

<sup>166</sup> WA: The Medical Women's Federation Newsletter.

<sup>167</sup> RBA: The Association of Women Science Teachers, Loose Correspondence, MNA/TUG/12/9.

<sup>168</sup> RBA: University College of Swansea Council Minutes, 13 February 1933, LAC/115/A/2.

<sup>169</sup> Julie Fette, 'Pride and Prejudice in the Professions: Women Doctors and Lawyers in Third Republic France', *Journal of Women's History*, 19, 3 (2007), p.71.

culture in Wales during the first half of the twentieth century. However, the existence of women's professional associations was increasingly justified as a regrettable necessity and reflected the unequal position of men and women in the professions. Practicalities of organising meetings affected women's ability to form national networks of professional women in Wales and accommodation of members residing in north Wales was a continual issue for many of the associations formed along national lines throughout this period.<sup>170</sup> Consequently, Welsh associations were often divided along northern and southern constituents, with the south having close links with the west of England and the north with Liverpool. Members were anchored in a local women's culture, whilst simultaneously connected to a larger network of professional women throughout Britain (and occasionally internationally). Regional clusters of professional women centred on university colleges and urban centres of Swansea and Cardiff during the interwar decades. While women were increasingly able to participate in professional society, the value of female networks did not disappear and the majority of women straddled homo- and hetero-social professional communities.

### ***(iii) Conclusion***

While separatism was imposed on professional women by men who wished to keep their own professional identity intact, women also sought separatism as a means of support and empowerment. Initially excluded or marginalised from membership of existing societies and social practices, women found it necessary, or expedient, to build up their own support mechanisms through the creation of professional associations, or informal friendship networks. Indeed, the founders of women's professional associations' initial concern was the powerlessness of women in professional communities. Without previous role models and professional templates, women constructed their own standards of behaviour and institutional practices. Professional, personal and educational networks provided vital support systems to women who faced cultural, economic and institutional obstacles which their male counterparts did not. Although there were generational divisions between different cohorts of professional women, it is simplistic to present the interwar generation as wholly rejecting female separatism in favour of professional integration.

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<sup>170</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, July 1923 and April 1934.

Professional women's networks were part of a wider culture of female separatism. As they had done so from the inception of their entrance into the professions, women replicated traditional professional structures on their own terms. These professional female networks were often forged in higher education institutions and accompanying women's colleges, providing women with important connections and a feeling of solidarity nurtured through a common objective of sex equality. Professional associations provided women with official representation and the formal structures for organisation. Almost all of the first and second generation of professional women had a long experience of all-female institutions: most attended girls' schools, women's colleges, trained in women's medical school or teacher training colleges, taught in girls' schools and were members women's professional associations. As Dorothy Marshall, an economic historian at UCSWM, recalled about her time in Cambridge in 1918: 'In the early days of the college Girtonians had been very conscious of standing alone, of having to balance the traditions of the men's colleges by traditions of their own'.<sup>171</sup> She added that 'the majority of my fellow students were in essence what one would call career women, who went serenely on with their way of life, taking advantage of their intellectual opportunities, and such societies as were open to them, but essentially rooted in a female world'.<sup>172</sup> Separatism engendered a feeling of solidarity between professional women through common objectives and goals, and shared successes and defeats. In particular, the shared values of the first generation of professional women fostered a network of educated, middle-class feminists who agitated for equality in the professions.

During the interwar period, some questioned the efficacy of separatist organising, although these were isolated voices. Professional women during the first half of the twentieth century increasingly pursued strategies of separatism as a regrettable necessity, in opposition – rather than complementary – to existing male-dominated institutions. These networks were of particular importance to those occupations, such as teaching, that implemented marriage bars. The increased numbers of women made it possible for professional women to institutionalise their networks into professional organisations. These provided the structural apparatus and platforms from which women could agitate for professional equality in a more targeted and

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<sup>171</sup> Dorothy Marshall, *The Making of a Twentieth Century Woman: A Memoir* (London, 2003), p.53. For further information on Dorothy Marshall, see biographies section.

<sup>172</sup> Marshall, *The Making of a Twentieth Century Woman*, p.75.

focused manner. The meanings women attached to homosocial communities also changed. While the initial pioneers had framed separate women's colleges and institutions within contemporary ideas of modesty, respectability and religiosity, twentieth century women's associations highlighted values of meritocracy and positioned their role as safeguarding the professional interests of their members. However, given the widespread implementation of marriage bars, professional isolation and obstacles women still faced, these organisations and other informal networks continued to provide personal support to their members. The first generation created structures in response to the obstacles they faced, from which the second generation of professional women benefited. Women's nineteenth century social and educational networks also laid the foundation for women's political activism in their organised suffrage and workplace equality campaigns. Indeed, women's professional organisations and their campaigns for women's employment rights played an important part in shaping the women's movement and its contested priorities during this period, which is explored in more detail in the following chapter.

# Chapter 4

## Suffrage, Citizenship and Workplace Equality

During the Edwardian period, Wales was the scene of high profile anti-feminist incidents: just as ‘Aberystwyth’ became a shorthand for the injustice women faced in the NUT following the riotous 1911 annual conference, so ‘Llanystumdwy’ became emblematic of the violence endured by suffrage campaigners when hecklers were violently attacked at Lloyd George’s opening of the village institute the following year.<sup>1</sup> For some contemporaries it was perhaps convenient to label feminism as an English imposition, alien to Welsh values.<sup>2</sup> But Welsh society also harboured domestic forces that supported a mass suffrage movement when triggered from elsewhere. As Ursula Masson argued, while the stimulus for the suffrage movement did come from England to a degree, this was brought together with indigenous moral and social reform movements that had already laid the foundational support for suffrage in Wales.<sup>3</sup> While feminist activity in Wales was not, of course, solely the domain of middle-class women, teachers, academics, medical doctors and nurses played prominent roles in harnessing these external forces and developing a mass suffrage movement.<sup>4</sup> As shown in the previous chapter, by the first decade of the twentieth century professional and educated women in Wales had the ready-made networks and foundations from which to advance an organised campaign. This chapter explores the influence of their experience as gendered workers on the development of their feminist consciousness and how their

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<sup>1</sup> Angela V. John, “‘Run like the Blazes’”: The Suffragettes and Welshness’, *Llafur*, 6, 3 (1994), p.34.

<sup>2</sup> John, “‘Run like the Blazes’”, p.32.

<sup>3</sup> Ursula Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism: Women in Liberal Politics in Wales 1880-1914* (Cardiff, 2010), p.16.

<sup>4</sup> Laundry workers, domestic servants and cooks also played active roles in all of the major suffrage societies. However, as Evans and Cook note, in Wales there was little possibility of the working-class movement which existed among the textile workers in Lancashire because the proportion of women engaged in waged work outside the home was unusually low, especially in the burgeoning coalfield communities. Much more work is needed to reveal working-class women’s involvement in the suffrage campaign in Wales, as well as how organisations such as the Women’s Cooperative Guild and Railway Women’s Guild played an equally pivotal role in campaigning for improvements in the political and social status of women in twentieth-century Wales. Kay Cook and Neil Evans, “‘The Petty Antics of the Bell-Ringing Boisterous Band’?: The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Wales, 1890-1919”, in Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mothers’ Land: Chapters in Welsh Women’s History 1830-1939* (Cardiff, 1991), p.159.

own professional concerns shaped the precise nature of the women's movement in Wales.

The relationship between feminism and women's entry into the professions is often assumed self-evident.<sup>5</sup> With strong views on their right to participate in professional life, it is deemed logical that these women played a central role in the broader women's movement in their local and national communities. This assumption is not unfounded: in 1908, when the Association of Registered Medical Women (precursor to the MWF) sent a questionnaire to its 553 members to ask whether they were in favour of women's suffrage, 538 responded in favour and only 15 against.<sup>6</sup> But few historians have rigorously explored how women's professional position influenced their feminist beliefs or particular organisational affiliation. A notable exception is historians of the teaching profession who highlight the close relationship between the professional experiences of women teachers (particularly members of the NUWT) and their feminism.<sup>7</sup> While it is easy to attribute professional women's work to their firm belief in sex equality, for some, a direct engagement with the women's movement was problematic. Indeed, Geddes has shown that support for the suffrage campaign, particularly the militant strand, was difficult for medical women: success in their own careers was crucial to the long-term goals of the women's movement, but militancy could harm their professional reputations.<sup>8</sup> This chapter explores how their economic positions shaped professional women's engagement with suffrage societies, and how their participation in the suffrage movement inspired their campaigns for workplace equality.

The chapter contributes to a growing body of research which challenges arguments of decline in the organised women's movement following the partial

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<sup>5</sup> Rosemary Pringle, *Sex and Medicine: Gender, Power and Authority in the Medical Profession* (Cambridge MA, 1998), p.27; Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (Oxford, 1985).

<sup>6</sup> *Pembrokeshire Herald and General Advertiser*, 18 December 1908.

<sup>7</sup> Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-1939* (Manchester, 1996); Diana Copelman, *London's Women Teachers: Gender, Class and Feminism, 1870-1930* (Abingdon, 1996); Hilda Kean, *Deeds not Words: The Lives of Suffragette Teachers* (London, 1990); Alison Oram, 'Women Teachers and the Suffrage Campaign: Arguments for Professional Equality', in June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton (eds.), *Votes for Women* (Abingdon, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> J. F. Geddes, 'The Doctors' Dilemma: Medical Women and the British Suffrage Movement', *Women's History Review*, 18, 2 (2009).



enfranchisement of women in 1918.<sup>9</sup> As Marie Sandell argues, the interwar years witnessed many different kinds of women's organisations which were in various ways committed to improving the status of women in society, but which had different ideas about what feminism signified.<sup>10</sup> Historians have also questioned a sharp distinction between 'equality' and 'difference' feminism: between those who downplayed gender difference and asserted equality on the same terms as men, and those who claimed that women could only achieve true equality if their gender-specific attributes were recognised.<sup>11</sup> Divisions within feminism were not always clear-cut and women in the professions played an integral role in the constantly shifting and complex debates between equality and difference feminism. While recent scholarship reveals a more nuanced interpretation of gender politics during the interwar decades, insufficient attention has been directed to the role of women's professional associations and their campaigns for equality in the workplace during these decades. To date historical research on these organisations has largely examined them individually in relation to their specific occupational sector.<sup>12</sup> But this focus overlooks the integration between organisations at a local level and the networks that led to unified campaigns, for example, in promotion of equal pay and in opposition to marriage bars. Examining the feminism of professional women collectively allows broader conclusions to be drawn about the interrelation between the subordinate economic, social and legal position of women in society.

Professional women – in particular, the numerically dominant group of female teachers – were central figures in the organised suffrage and wider feminist movement in Wales. Indeed, Deirdre Beddoe highlights that the 'one striking feature in Wales is

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<sup>9</sup> Cheryl Law, *Suffrage and Power: The Women's Movement, 1919-1928* (London, 1997); Julie V. Gottlieb and Richard Toye (eds), *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945* (Basingstoke, 2013); Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane (eds), *Women and Citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Marie Sandell, *The Rise of Women's Transnational Activism: Identity and Sisterhood between the Wars* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2015), p.7. See also Myriam Boussahba-Bravard (ed.), *Suffrage Outside Suffragism: Women's Vote in Britain, 1880-1914* (Basingstoke Macmillan, 2007); Caitriona Beaumont, 'Citizens not Feminists: the Boundary Negotiated between Citizenship and Feminism by Mainstream Women's Organisations in England, 1928-39', *Women's History Review*, 9, 2 (2000).

<sup>11</sup> Gisela Bock and Susan James (eds), *Beyond Equality and Difference: Citizenship, Feminist Politics and Female Subjectivity* (Abingdon, 1992); Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.221. See also Copelman, *London's Women Teachers*, p.199.

<sup>12</sup> Karina Michaelsen, "'Union is Strength": The Medical Women's Federation and the Politics of Professionalism, 1917-30', in Krista Cowman and Louise Jackson (eds), *Women and Work Culture: Britain c.1850-1950* (Aldershot, 2005); Hilda Kean and Alison Oram, "'Men Must Be Educated and Women Must Do It": The National Federation (later Union) of Women Teachers and Contemporary Feminism, 1910-30', *Gender and Education*, 2, 2 (1990).

the role played by educated women', arguing that 'it was that new generation of intermediate and secondary school heads who were the main standard bearers of the revolution'.<sup>13</sup> Their employment was crucial in the development of their feminist consciousness: while expanded education and employment opportunities enhanced their belief in their fitness for active citizenship, the continuing gender constraints they encountered heightened their awareness of women's subordinate social, political and economic position in wider society. The chapter develops the argument that the two strands of 'equality' and 'difference' feminism were not mutually exclusive. The general language of professionalism – of liberalism, individualism and merit – could be used by women to argue for participation in the profession and in their campaigns for equal pay and opportunities. However, these claims often coexisted with ideologies which highlighted their distinct role as women and the contribution they could make to improved educational, welfare and health services for women and children. The sections in this chapter examine professional women's relationship with feminism in Wales in two interrelated causes: first, their campaigns for equal political citizenship and second, their advancement of the rights of professional women workers.

*(i) Professional Women and Political Citizenship*

In April 1909, the Artists' Suffrage League and the London Society for Women's Suffrage organised the Pageant of Women's Trades and Professions at the Albert Hall.<sup>14</sup> A pamphlet outlined why the extension of the franchise was essential to women workers. It stated that medical women were taxpayers and graduates of universities and whilst being debarred from exercising the elementary rights of citizenship, as doctors they possessed the legal power to sign certificates of insanity which could deprive men of their right to vote.<sup>15</sup> Nurses were reported to want the vote for the influence they could have on the social reform of issues that they confronted in their everyday work. Teachers suffered from lower salaries and the marriage bar, while sanitary inspectors enforced laws dealing with the home and workshop, but had no influence in making or amending them.<sup>16</sup> While largely a propagandist strategy, the pageant made a number of points pertinent to women, work and female enfranchisement. It highlighted the

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<sup>13</sup> Deirdre Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2000), p.45.

<sup>14</sup> WL: Albert Hall Meeting, Pageant of Women's Trades and Professions, 1909, 2/LSW/D/1/01.

<sup>15</sup> WL: Albert Hall Meeting 1909.

<sup>16</sup> WL: Albert Hall Meeting 1909.

importance of the economic interests of the vote for the employment opportunities and working conditions of women struggling to enter the professions. Their subordinate economic position was clearly a contributory factor in the development of professional women's feminist consciousness and their motivation to join the suffrage movement. For many women, their unequal professional position was inseparable from their broader feminist beliefs.

Ursula Masson argued that women's claims to citizenship in the last half of the nineteenth century were intertwined with education, temperance, religious and national causes in Wales. Nonconformist Liberalism, with its accompanying social and moral reform organisations, had links with the early suffrage movement and anti-Contagious Diseases Acts campaign which validated women's role in public life.<sup>17</sup> As shown in the previous chapters, there were also enclaves of feminist activity in university women's colleges, in the ideologies of prominent headmistresses and in campaigns for girls' education and wider employment opportunities for them. Professional women thus largely had the structures and networks in place from which to develop organised campaigns for women's suffrage. This support, combined with a succession of touring suffrage speakers from England, provided fertile ground for the development of an organised suffrage movement in Wales. Ryland Wallace's comprehensive study shows that all the major suffrage societies made headway in Wales.<sup>18</sup> While initially slow to develop, it is telling that some of the first – and what were to become the most active – branches sprang up in areas where there was a relatively large female professional workforce, notably in Swansea and Cardiff. Welsh women who campaigned for the extension of the franchise were, on the whole, suffragists, but different societies flourished in different regions. Although the potentially harmful association with militancy did play an important part in determining the specific tactics and association which professional women were attracted to in Wales, a complex mix of party political traditions, local socioeconomic contexts and the specific professional occupations of its members were also important factors.

The suffrage society that prospered most in Wales was the constitutionalist National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), boasting fifty Welsh

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<sup>17</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.16.

<sup>18</sup> Ryland Wallace, *The Suffrage Movement in Wales, 1866-1928* (Cardiff, 2009). In particular, see the introduction.

branches by August 1914.<sup>19</sup> In south Wales, suffrage support was largely centred on the Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society (CDWSS) which became in 1912-13, albeit briefly, the largest branch outside London.<sup>20</sup> The CDWSS was formed in June 1908 with an initial membership of 70. The founding Executive Committee comprised the same figures that would provide the core membership of Cardiff's BFUW branch the following year: Millicent Mackenzie (Vice-President); Dr Erie Evans (Hon. Treasurer); Miss Maud Rees Jones (Hon. Sec); Ethel Hurlbatt, Miss Mary Collin and Miss Janet Price (Committee).<sup>21</sup> Other prominent members included staff and past students of Cardiff High School for Girls and Mackenzie's successor at the UCSWM, Barbara Foxley. These women arguably already had the platforms, resources and networks from which to launch a local campaign. In 1913, Foxley held speakers' classes to enhance members' oratory skills because a reported difficulty facing local societies was a shortage of members confident to assume a public-speaking role. Along with Erie Evans and Ethel Barke (later to become Lecturer in Education at UCSWM), Foxley also represented the CDWSS as a speaker at various trade union meetings in the district which were supportive of women's enfranchisement.<sup>22</sup>

Professional figures in Wales were also important links with visiting suffrage speakers from London and the south west of England. For example, it was Millicent Mackenzie who spoke with Millicent Fawcett on a platform in Cardiff the month prior to the establishment of the CDWSS. The women, however, met with a hostile reception and their attempts to speak were reportedly 'drowned by the belling-ringing, whistling, shrieks, and groans from the students'.<sup>23</sup> Mary Collin hosted Helen Fraser on her numerous visits to Cardiff in her house attached to Cardiff High School for Girls. Fraser was sent as an NUWSS organiser from London to develop Wales' local branches. Remembering her time in Wales, she identified local headmistresses as instrumental to the development of suffrage branches.<sup>24</sup> She recalled how she

got to know all the headmistresses and nearly all of them suffragists. They were swooped into the suffrage movement so that Wales had a very representative group of women...there was a woman in Penarth who was

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<sup>19</sup> Wallace, *The Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.157.

<sup>20</sup> CCL: National Union of Women's Suffrage, Cardiff and District Society, Annual Reports, 1912-13.

<sup>21</sup> *Evening Express*, 3 July 1908.

<sup>22</sup> CCL: CDWSS Annual Reports, 1912-13.

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Express*, 12 May 1908.

<sup>24</sup> WL: Helen Moyes [née Fraser] Interview with Brian Harrison, 18 September 1975, Tape 16, 8SUF/B/055.

very nice, she was a head. And a woman in Newport, she was an awfully nice headmistress too. You see, I got to know all the headmistresses. And Miss Davies from Carmarthen was a delightful headmistress, as Welsh as you like, but delightful.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, headmistresses and their colleagues comprised the core support for Wales's NUWSS branches. Mabel Vivian (headmistress of Newport Intermediate School) was chairman of the Newport branch and would become president of the Cardiff and District BFUW the following year. Similarly, Beatrice Holme (headmistress of Carmarthen Girls' School) was chairman of her town's NUWSS branch.

Fraser recalled how she travelled by train from 'town to town. Carmarthen, Pontypool and right up to Aberystwyth. They had good groups among the university people. And young girls, they're interested, the students you see'.<sup>26</sup> The NUWSS developed a network of support, particularly in the coastal and border areas and the university towns. At least one meeting was held at the women's college, Alexandra Hall.<sup>27</sup> Fraser further highlighted that in Wales 'the [suffrage] movement got the most intelligent women, it got the women that were leaders'.<sup>28</sup> Although in recent years historians have questioned a sharp distinction between militancy and constitutionalism, the Welsh NUWSS branches appeared keen to reinforce this distinction by distancing themselves from the militant tactics of other societies and presented a public image of the branches as comprising respectable, educated women.<sup>29</sup> On 13 June 1908, Cardiff and Llandudno were among the provincial societies represented at the NUWSS mass demonstration in London. Highlighting the academic credentials of its members, gowned female graduates were a visible part of the suffrage spectacle included in the CDWSS contingent. Women's academic achievements were a powerful tool for suffragists to demonstrate women's intellectual equality with men. The same procession from Embankment to the Albert Hall included groups of medical

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<sup>25</sup> WL: Helen Moyes [née Fraser] Interview.

<sup>26</sup> WL: Helen Moyes [née Fraser] Interview.

<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain and Ireland: A Regional Survey* (Abingdon, 2006), p.218.

<sup>28</sup> WL: Helen Moyes [née Fraser] Interview.

<sup>29</sup> *Evening Express*, 3 July 1908.

women, university women and nurses headed by a banner depicting Florence Nightingale in the Crimea.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 1:** ‘Cardiff contingent on the Embankment with the Cardiff banner’, 13 June 1908.

**Source:** Cardiff Central Library, SUF001.

Each contingent was headed by specially designed banners pronouncing the branch’s identity: a leek for Llandudno and a red dragon for Cardiff.<sup>31</sup> Angela V. John argues that although Welshness could be used against suffragists, it might also be redirected to further their cause.<sup>32</sup> In this cultivation of Welsh symbolism, suffragists were asserting a right to citizenship and a belief that suffrage should be associated with national identity. The CDWSS’s use of Welsh iconography in their ceremonial propaganda also needs to be situated within Cardiff’s claim to be the national leader of Wales, which is explored further in the following chapter.

Other suffragists recognised the need to appeal to the Welsh-speaking heartlands of mid and north Wales. The Bangor NUWSS branch assumed leadership in north Wales: a key figure was Charlotte Price White, former student of the town’s

<sup>30</sup> *Cardiff Times & SWDN*, 20 June 1908.

<sup>31</sup> Wallace, *The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.137.

<sup>32</sup> John, ‘Run Like the Blazes’, p.35.

university and a teacher. She was secretary of the Bangor branch at its foundation, served on the regional executive and was nominated for the national executive. Although she was not a native of Wales, she understood the importance of translating literature into Welsh and the branch assumed the role of translator for the whole of Wales and helped to disseminate literature after 1910.<sup>33</sup> Dr Mary Phillips was also a prominent figure in the Welsh NUWSS scene. In 1914, she spoke at a suffrage meeting in Llanwrtyd Wells, near her native town in Breconshire. Phillips addressed the audience in Welsh and the meeting was opened with the singing of the hymn 'Aberystwyth' and closed with 'Hen wlad fy Nhadau'.<sup>34</sup>

The NUWSS also developed branches in the northern coastal tourist towns. Medical doctor Lilian Blake emerged as a central figure in the Colwyn Bay Branch of the NUWSS established in late 1909 and spoke alongside Millicent Fawcett in February 1910.<sup>35</sup> Introducing Norwegian suffragist Fru Anker at a branch meeting in 1913, Blake

referred to the great progress made in the cause of equality, as evidenced by the opening of the medical and other professions to women...Some posts were still closed, and others offered to women at a lower rate of pay. That was because there would never be equality in professional life until there was political equality. Women were not clambering for the vote simply to enable them to put a cross on the ballot paper. What they desired was the power to make their opinions of some value to the nation and that would enable them to render better help in uplifting the race.<sup>36</sup>

For Blake, professional and political equality were inseparable. Her belief in women's *right* to vote was superseded by her belief in the *duties* citizenship entailed and the unique contribution women could make to the betterment of society. Blake's particular conception of citizenship can be seen within a wider language of 'duty' when situated with her involvement in other social reform organisations: she was Vice-President of Colwyn Bay Women's Liberal Association and an active member of the North Wales Temperance Federation.<sup>37</sup> Masson argued that Liberal women entered as a majority group within the NUWSS in Wales and that the concept of duty – of engaged and effective citizenship driven by moral and religious precepts – characterised Welsh

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<sup>33</sup> Cook and Evans, 'The Petty Antics of the Bell-Ringing Boisterous Band', p.170.

<sup>34</sup> *Brecon County Times, Neath Gazette and General Advertiser*, 11 June 1914; *Brecon and Radnor Express, Carmarthen and Swansea Valley Gazette and Brynmawr District Advertiser*, 16 March 1916.

<sup>35</sup> *The Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 3 February 1910. I am grateful to Neil Evans for this reference.

<sup>36</sup> *The Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 26 June 1913.

<sup>37</sup> *The Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 16 January 1908.

women's liberalism at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> Three years prior in 1908, Blake delivered an address on purity to the North Wales Temperance Federation. She highlighted the role of the unique moral contribution women could make:

we feel that the influence of all earnest women is needed to help the men of the nation...we have one great source of power in the training of our children. We can teach them the principles of Liberalism from the earliest days...by teaching them that the good of the family and then of the nation is incomparably more important than their own profit or pleasure.<sup>39</sup>

Blake's feminism, liberalism and professional identity thus all sat concurrently under a wider concept of duty, which stressed the role of the educated woman as a reformist agent in society.

The Women's Freedom League (WFL) – which broke away from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1907 to form a democratic militant suffrage organisation – also had pockets of support in Wales. It was the branches in Swansea (established March 1909) and Montgomery (established July 1911) that were the most active.<sup>40</sup> The Swansea branch had strong connections with the teaching profession and its founding membership overlapped with the town's NFWT branch which had been formed the previous year. Prominent members included Emily Phipps, Clara Neal, lecturers at Swansea Training College Winifred Hindshaw and Hilda Davies and some of their students.<sup>41</sup> The branch's membership also included local businesswomen, Margaret Kirkland and Amy Dillwyn.<sup>42</sup> The extent of branch activity was dependent on the energy and enthusiasm of local members. This was the prime factor in Swansea, where the presence of committed individuals ensured an active organisation which built up a large membership, raised its own funds and continued to function into the 1930s.

As one of the original members of the town's WFL branch, Emily Phipps became a leading spirit in a group of Swansea women seeking the vote and, as an accomplished public speaker, lost no opportunity advancing this claim at events of all

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<sup>38</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.15.

<sup>39</sup> *The Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 16 January 1908.

<sup>40</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.108.

<sup>41</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, pp.117-18.

<sup>42</sup> RBA: Reports of the Swansea Branch of the Women's Freedom League, 1909-10, LAC/58/A/1-3.



kinds.<sup>43</sup> Phipps later described the events which led her to become a ‘militant suffragette’ after she had witnessed the treatment afforded to suffragists at a Liberal Party meeting in Swansea in 1908. She recalled:

The audience listened with rapt attention to the speaker until, suddenly, a small voice said ‘We pay taxes’. And what was Mr. Lloyd George’s reply? ‘The lady says she pays taxes. I wonder how much she was paid for coming here this evening’. Then pandemonium; stewards rushed on the speaker, seized her roughly and flung her from the hall. While this was being done, Lloyd George called out, ‘fling them out ruthlessly; show them no mercy’.<sup>44</sup>

Within months, she and Clara Neal, along with ten other founding members of the Swansea WFL, had hired the same hall for a suffrage meeting.<sup>45</sup> As chair of the branch’s first meeting, Phipps ‘spoke strongly in justification of militant tactics’.<sup>46</sup> The WFL’s non-violent militant strategies included tax resistance and boycotting the Census enumeration. In 1911, Phipps, Neal, two Training College lecturers (presumably Hindshaw and Davies), and a businesswoman, hid in a cave on the Gower coast on Census night. They determined that since they could not be citizens for the purpose of helping the government to compile statistics, they would not be included in the Census Returns.<sup>47</sup> The following morning, the women ‘returned to school, college, and shop, and the secret was well kept’.<sup>48</sup>

So why did the NUWSS prosper in Cardiff and the WFL in Swansea? A contributory factor can perhaps be attributed to the professional composition of their memberships. Kean and Oram argue that women teachers’ position as state employees was an important determinant of their involvement in the WFL.<sup>49</sup> The WFL addressed the relationship between women and the state, attacking its role in taxing women, passing legislation which affected women, and discriminating against women in the courts of law – all without women’s representation. The focus of the League, therefore, had a particular resonance for women teachers who, like their male colleagues, were employed by the state, but were excluded on the basis of their sex from the political

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<sup>43</sup> IOE: Miss Phipps, Death, Obituary and Tributes, 1943, UWT/B/13/3.

<sup>44</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 5 October 1928.

<sup>45</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.23.

<sup>46</sup> RBA: Margaret Kirkland Papers.

<sup>47</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 5 October 1928. See also Ryland Wallace, ‘No Votes for Women, No Information from Women: The Suffrage Boycott of the 1911 Census in Wales’, *Llafur*, 11, 2 (2013).

<sup>48</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 5 October 1928.

<sup>49</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.20; Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.121.

processes which determined the conditions of that employment.<sup>50</sup> Unlike the CDWSS's Mary Collin, who was headmistress of an independent girls' school, both Phipps and Neal were employed by the LEA, and the Swansea Training College produced certificated elementary school teachers. The NFWT, in which both Phipps and Neal were instrumental figures, was always more explicitly feminist and concerned with the material position of its members than the AAM or Association of Headmistresses, the latter of which Collin was on the Executive Committee. At the annual NFWT conference in April 1912, Fannie Thomas, Headmistress of Pontycymer Elementary School, asked 'why should they teach girls how to think for themselves and explain citizenship, and yet not hold out the hope of some day aiding by their vote the ideals they would like to attain?'<sup>51</sup> Thomas, like many other teachers, believed that she had a social as well as educational responsibility for her pupils and that the vote would be one means of fulfilling this duty.<sup>52</sup> Teachers were entrusted with the task of creating citizens, but for a state which did not properly recognise the teachers themselves as citizens. There were also local political and socioeconomic factors which may have shaped the town's feminist scenes, which are explored further in the following chapter.

The militant WSPU did make inroads in Wales and also attracted the membership of some professional women. Former nurse, Elsie McKenzie, became the WSPU's Cardiff Organiser in September 1909. McKenzie spoke at Barry and Penarth and visited 'almost every place in South Wales'.<sup>53</sup> Following her later arrest at a demonstration in London, a short biography in *Votes for Women* stated that she:

was drawn into the fight for her more unfortunate sisters through her experiences as a nurse in hospitals and as a worker in the slums. The former gave her an insight into the bad conditions of a large class of professional women, while her time among the poor showed her the terrible condition of the women and children.<sup>54</sup>

McKenzie's employment as a nurse thus played a formative role in the development of her feminist consciousness. It was also a wider conception of 'sisterhood' which was concerned with furthering the interests of all women, regardless of social status. For

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<sup>50</sup> Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.121.

<sup>51</sup> *The Times*, 8 April 1912.

<sup>52</sup> *The Times*, 8 April 1912.

<sup>53</sup> Graham Martin, 'The Culture of the Women's Suffrage Movement: The Evidence of the McKenzie Letters', *Llafur*, 7, 3, (1998/99), p.110.

<sup>54</sup> *Votes for Women*, 2 July 1909, p.878. Cited in Martin, 'The Culture of the Women's Suffrage Movement', p.102.

McKenzie, the double oppression of class and sex inequality thus inspired her suffragism. Another nurse, Nurse Rose, was secretary of Carmarthen's WSPU society from 1913. Although the society claimed an independent political stance from 1906, its links with socialism were not completely severed. At the East Carmarthen by-election in 1912, the Carmarthen branch worked with the Labour Party to challenge the long-established Liberal stronghold.<sup>55</sup>

Following the split with the WFL, Wales was given its own permanent WSPU Organiser in early 1910, Rachel Barrett. Brought up in a middle-class, Welsh-speaking home in Carmarthenshire, Barrett studied at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, before joining the teaching profession. In 1906, while working as a science teacher in Penarth County School, she came into contact with the WSPU as it made its first inroads in south Wales. The following spring she assisted Adela Pankhurst when she came to Cardiff to promote the WSPU. This, however, was much to the displeasure of her headmistress who considered all public work unsuitable for a woman teacher, especially when her science mistress was drenched with flour at an open-air meeting at Cardiff docks.<sup>56</sup> Barrett resigned her teaching post in 1907, briefly dividing her energies between suffrage work and study at the LSE, before eventually taking up the role of Chief WSPU Organiser for Wales. For the next two and half years she arranged meetings throughout Wales, organised election campaigns and led deputations to MPs.<sup>57</sup> She was later imprisoned several times under the Cat and Mouse Act. Barrett's resignation of her teaching post demonstrates how, unlike her headmistress at Penarth, some women's commitment to the cause was at the expense of their career, freedom, and even health. She recalled in her autobiography deposited in the Suffragette Fellowship Collection that it was 'a definite call and I obeyed', and that she 'had always been a suffragist – since I first began to think of the position of women at all – but with no hope of ever seeing women win the vote'.<sup>58</sup> Following Barrett's transfer to London in June 1912, Annie Williams, also a former teacher and headmistress from Cornwall, took up the Welsh WSPU Organiser post, which she held until the outbreak of the First World War.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Kenneth O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (University of Wales Press, 1991), p.252.

<sup>56</sup> Rachel Barrett, 'Autobiography c.1924' in Jane Aaron and Ursula Masson (eds), *The Very Salt of Life: Welsh Women's Political Writings from Chartism to Suffrage* (Dinas Powys, 2007), pp.298-302.

<sup>57</sup> Barrett, 'Autobiography c.1924', pp.299.

<sup>58</sup> Barrett, 'Autobiography c.1924', pp.299.

<sup>59</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.57.

Suffrage supporters did not unanimously endorse the suspension of the campaign on the outbreak of the First World War. Another active figure in the WSPU in Wales was Llanrwst-born medical doctor, Helena Gertrude Jones. She was an original Fabian and regarded as one of the best orators in the movement.<sup>60</sup> Jones was a regular speaker at meetings, undertook campaigns in north Wales and, alongside Rachel Barrett, spoke to the Welsh contingents on the platforms of the WSPU demonstrations in London in the years preceding the First World War.<sup>61</sup> Although the WSPU, among other suffrage societies, suspended its campaign on the outbreak of war, Jones was a central figure in a separate group, ‘Suffragettes of the WSPU’, which continued to pursue franchise reform throughout the conflict.<sup>62</sup> She was a regular correspondent in the *Suffragette News Sheet*, which served as a focus for its activities. Through this, Jones was highly critical of the official WSPU position and went as far as to state that Mrs Pankhurst had ‘gone over to the enemy’.<sup>63</sup> She wrote that ‘the political machine during the war may be likened to sealing wax to which heat has been applied: it is in a condition to receive new impressions, such as the entrance of a new sex. After the war it will harden again and the old difficulties with party shibboleths will be revived’.<sup>64</sup> Capitalising on women’s highly visible position in the workplace and the malleable context of war, Jones highlighted the contradictions in their contemporary legal position. Using women’s war-time work as justification, she argued that the time was ripe to demand the admission of women to the franchise.<sup>65</sup> In a later article she argued that:

there is a ridiculous anomaly today in our land. Women are everywhere being forced into the limelight; in professions, in munition factories, on the land, in trams, in Government offices they are taking the place of the men who have gone or are going to the front...And yet – and this is the anomaly – these indispensables, these upholders of the Empire are still classed with idiots who cannot be trusted to vote.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *BMJ*, 21 September 1946. For further information on Helena Jones, see biographies section.

<sup>61</sup> *Votes for Women*, 7 May 1908 and 22 July 1910; *SWDN*, 25 July 1910.

<sup>62</sup> Krista Cowman, *Women of the Right Spirit: Paid Organisers of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) 1904-18* (Manchester, 2007), p.189.

<sup>63</sup> *Suffragette News Sheet*, September 1916. Cited in Aaron and Masson (eds), *The Very Salt of Life*, pp.284-287.

<sup>64</sup> *Suffragette News Sheet*, September 1916.

<sup>65</sup> *Suffragette News Sheet*, September 1916 and December 1916.

<sup>66</sup> *Suffragette News Sheet*, December 1916.

The war provided professional women with a visible platform from which to demonstrate their professional worth, yet they were still not given the same employment or political privileges as their male counterparts. Jones served in Corsica with the Serbian Relief Fund and on her return established a fund to aid Welsh wives of German miners.<sup>67</sup> Her contributions were written when government was beginning to consider franchise reform to deal with the issue of voter registration and entitlement to citizenship created by the war. For Jones, the war represented both an opportunity and danger for women: women's wartime work entitled them to equal citizenship, but she also feared that 'men may succeed and the women be left behind' in franchise reforms as a consequence of gratitude to the nation's male soldiery.<sup>68</sup>

Professional women in Wales therefore differed in their conceptions of citizenship and their strategies to achieve the vote. Socioeconomic structures, local political traditions and personalities of local leaders all determined which suffrage societies predominated and who was involved in the suffrage movement.<sup>69</sup> In Wales, NUWSS membership largely overlapped with WLA membership, although these allegiances were tested when the former created an electoral pact with the Labour Party from 1911 under the Election Fighting Fund. The NUWSS also sat more comfortably in areas in which Liberal Nonconformist and the temperance movement was strongest. Within this, women's political and professional rights were compatible with women's 'special' duties to the moral and social wellbeing of the nation. The WFL's emphasis on women's rights as citizens, property-owners and taxpayers was particularly attractive to teachers employed by the state, and it was in no doubt these inequalities which attracted many teachers to the suffrage movement in Swansea. While the need to safeguard professional reputations likely deterred some professional women from engaging in more militant acts, some did join the WSPU and locally it appeared more common for women from a Labour or socialist background to be drawn to this society. However, it was not solely the formal organisations which were important, but also the existing informal connections and friendship networks of professional women which underpinned them and, in many instances, predated them. One common factor for all professional women engaged in the suffrage movement was the interrelation between

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<sup>67</sup> *BMJ*, 21 September 1946.

<sup>68</sup> *Suffragette New Sheet*, December 1916.

<sup>69</sup> June Hannam, "I Had Not Been to London" Women's Suffrage – A View from the Regions', in June Purvis and Sandra Stanley Holton (eds), *Votes for Women* (Abingdon, 2000), p.230.

their own professional positions and their belief in the right to equal political citizenship. However, the balance between the two varied. For some women, their professional reputations were too fragile to risk association with any suffrage society. For others, like Barrett, a dedication to the cause superseded a dedication to their profession.

Following the granting of the Representation of the People Act in 1918, professional women continued to play an important role in the Welsh feminist scene. As newly-enfranchised women citizens, their immediate focus was to equip women for their new role and to take advantage of new opportunities for political and public citizenship. The general election of December 1918 was the first in which women could vote and be voted for. Emily Phipps and Millicent Mackenzie were among the seventeen women candidates who stood throughout Britain. Phipps competed in the Chelsea constituency because it was deemed a straight fight against a Conservative, Sir Samuel Hoare, and because there were more women voters than in other London constituencies. The NFWT supported her candidature: it purchased a copy of the Corrupt Practices Act regulating the election and appointed a woman agent.<sup>70</sup> Although Phipps stood as an Independent, she hoped that support would be given by Liberals in the area.<sup>71</sup> She canvassed voters, spoke daily at open-air and indoor meetings, and distributed leaflets, posters and handbills. The *Western Mail* reported that she

swept through the constituency like a whirlwind. She speaks incessantly. She holds meetings for men only, meetings for women only, and meetings for both. She visits women in their homes. Her supporters patrol the streets with sandwich-boards, after the manner of suffragette days.<sup>72</sup>

Phipps and her supporters also made arrangements for taking care of small children so their mothers could vote.<sup>73</sup> Although the time period for organisation was short, she secured the not inconsiderable total of 2,419 votes against her opponents' 9,159 and, importantly, retained her deposit.<sup>74</sup> After the campaign Phipps returned to Swansea to take up her duties at the Municipal Secondary School. Addressing her pupils about the

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<sup>70</sup> Emily Phipps, 'Impressions of the General Election', *The Englishwoman*, February 1919, p.53

<sup>71</sup> IOE: Emily Phipps election campaign pamphlet, 1918, UWT/D/35/31; *Western Mail*, 5 December 1918.

<sup>72</sup> *Western Mail*, 5 December 1918.

<sup>73</sup> *SWDN*, 13 December 1918.

<sup>74</sup> The Sinn Fein candidate Constance Markievic was the only woman to be elected and she did not take her seat.

significance of women's vote, she stated that 'in all the history of this country, nothing has ever happened of such importance to women as that which this year of 1918 had brought'.<sup>75</sup>

Following the election, Phipps gave her assessment of the campaign and expressed frustration with the fruits of franchise extension.<sup>76</sup> Commenting on the demographic make-up of the electorate, she highlighted that the majority of women on the register were "voters" wives, unfamiliar with the political world.<sup>77</sup> There were also the 2 million women over thirty, especially single professional women renting accommodation, who were disqualified by the technicalities of the 1918 Act.<sup>78</sup> In response to an NUWT questionnaire which sought to highlight local injustices, Neal reported in 1927 that seven lecturers over thirty (plus some younger ones) at the Municipal Training College in Swansea did not meet the franchise qualifications, nor did the headmistress of Swansea High School and the senior woman doctor at the school clinic, all of whom lived in 'furnished lodgings' and failed to meet the property qualification.<sup>79</sup> Phipps argued that these women were politically and socially informed and not subject to their husbands' influence:

professional women living in 'furnished' lodgings were definitely excluded in many boroughs...Now, with all due respect to the average wife and mother...she is apt, from her circumstances, to be less in the vanguard in political and social thought than the professional woman, who has to mix in the outer world with men and with other women; the wife and mother is very liable to take her ideas of politics from her husband; in such circumstances is it only the woman with a very strong personality who can avoid being unconsciously influenced.<sup>80</sup>

For Phipps, her professional status had imbued her with a strong sense of her own fitness for active citizenship and the duties this entailed. This also accorded with her view on the importance of education. While voicing the liberal principle of equal rights, Phipps conformed to the political realities of an age that stressed personal fitness for the franchise, based on the independent tax-paying or

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<sup>75</sup> *Swansea Municipal Secondary School Magazine*, 1918. Cited in Rolph, 'Definitely Not a Doormat: Emily Phipps', p.14.

<sup>76</sup> Phipps, 'Impressions of the General Election'.

<sup>77</sup> Phipps, 'Impressions of the General Election'.

<sup>78</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.280.

<sup>79</sup> IOE: Letter Clara Neal to Ethel Froud, 6 March 1927, NUWT Archive Box, 522.

<sup>80</sup> *The Englishwoman*, February 1919.

householder woman. Phipps added that, 'our next political aim must be to widen the franchise so as to include all those professional and industrial women now living in lodgings, and to lower the age from its present limit of thirty'.<sup>81</sup>

Millicent Mackenzie stood as the only female candidate in Wales in the 1918 election. She contested the newly created University of Wales seat as a Labour candidate against the experienced Liberal, Sir Herbert Lewis. Despite her defeat with 19.2 per cent of the vote, she later recalled how she stood 'to emphasise the importance of the part that should be played by women in national affairs'.<sup>82</sup> A group of University of Wales women graduates wrote to *The Welsh Outlook* in March 1922 proposing that women should organise to ensure the selection of a female candidate for the university seat in that year's general election.<sup>83</sup> Olive Wheeler, UCSWM's third female professor of education, stood for this seat, representing one of the 33 women candidates in 1922.<sup>84</sup> Like Mackenzie, she had also stood unsuccessfully as the Labour candidate, but fared slightly better with 24.5 per cent of the vote.<sup>85</sup> As newly-enfranchised citizens, professional women thus took advantage of the opportunities for political engagement. Most importantly, they had the resources, platforms and networks from which to launch their election campaigns.

There was a continuation of pre-war suffrage networks and personnel in the interwar women's movement. Caitriona Beaumont argues that the concept of citizenship, rather than feminism, was a more effective way to secure social and economic rights in the interwar period as more women exercised their political agency in non-party organisations.<sup>86</sup> From 1913, autonomous local Women Citizens' Associations (WCA) were formed throughout the United Kingdom. WCAs were a non-party initiative which aimed to bring together existing women's organisations to refocus their efforts by using their new political voice in concerns affecting them.<sup>87</sup> In Wales, the Newport Women's Suffrage Society took the lead in bringing other local organisations into a WCA in May 1918. While supporting the formation of a WCA in

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<sup>81</sup> *The Englishwoman*, February 1919.

<sup>82</sup> H. M. Mackenzie (ed.), *John Stuart Mackenzie* (London, 1936), p.116.

<sup>83</sup> Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, p.58.

<sup>84</sup> *The Times*, 20 November 1922. Only two women were elected: Lady Astor (Plymouth, Sutton) and Mrs Wintringham (Louth).

<sup>85</sup> *The Times*, 17 November and 20 November 1922.

<sup>86</sup> Beaumont, 'Citizens not Feminists', p.411.

<sup>87</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book and Enclosed Papers, DX158/1/2-17.



the town, the Bangor Women's Suffrage Society continued to work to obtain votes for women on the same terms as they were granted to men.<sup>88</sup> In Cardiff, the CDWSS reconstituted itself as a WCA branch in 1921. The character of the local associations varied in their objectives, as Sue Innes has shown for Edinburgh and Michael Savage for Preston.<sup>89</sup> They fought a wide range of campaigns on several fronts including, but not limited to, full enfranchisement, property holding rights, guardianship of children and proportional representation in public elections. The associations sought to encourage women's representation on civic, political and economic bodies to equip women for their new place in public life.

The Cardiff and District Women Citizens' Association's (CDWCA) initial 400 strong membership included the familiar names of Mary Collin, Barbara Foxley, Millicent Mackenzie, Olive Wheeler, Mabel Howell and Ethel M. Barke (Lecturer in Education at UCSWM), the latter of whom became President of the Association in the 1930s.<sup>90</sup> Collin and Foxley were on the branch's Executive Council from its inception and were regular speakers at the meetings. Assistant Lecturer in English at the UCSWM, Catherine Maclean, considered that women's (partial) enfranchisement was largely due to the work which women had done during the war and she stated that the branch sought to educate women to fulfil their new responsibility as citizens.<sup>91</sup> Objectives concerning women's position in the professions intersected with these broader non-party goals of women's representation in public life and boards. The large professional composition of branch's membership undoubtedly shaped the agenda and aims of the CDWCA. Unlike other regional WCAs which had purely a municipal focus and no stated aims of seeking equality with men, the CDWCA campaigned to allow women to enter the diplomatic and consular service on the same terms as men. They also fought for equal pay and conditions for women employed in the Civil and Local Government Service and the removal of the marriage bar.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.257.

<sup>89</sup> Sue Innes, 'Constructing Women's Citizenship in the Interwar Period: the Edinburgh Women Citizens' Association', *Women's History Review*, 13, 4 (2004); Michael Savage, *The Dynamics of Working-class Politics: The Labour Movement in Preston, 1880-1940* (Cambridge, 2009).

<sup>90</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book; *The University of Wales Calendar*, 1919-1942.

<sup>91</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book and Newspaper Cuttings, DX158/2/1.

<sup>92</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book, 1921.

The CDWCA repeatedly crossed the division between equality and difference feminism. Innes argues that within a gendered conception of citizenship, ideas of social reform and women's equality were conceptually close as well as organisationally so: to extend the social rights of citizenship to women in family and private roles would enable their full participation as citizens; equality for women in public life would ensure that those social rights became a priority.<sup>93</sup> The branch's objectives included the appointment of women police, admission to the franchise on the same terms as men, equal pay, in addition to campaigns for maternity and child welfare, clean milk supply and birth control.<sup>94</sup> The branch led the campaign for women police in Cardiff, arguing that their existence would greatly improve the safety of women and children in parks and open spaces in the city.<sup>95</sup> WCAs were continually watchful of political and employment opportunities for women during the interwar decades. Mary Ellis, Inspector of Schools in Wales, was among the deputation of women who visited the *Western Mail* offices in 1923 to advocate the representation of women in public life in the paper's coverage.<sup>96</sup> In 1920 the Welsh Insurance Commission, which had comprised four members – three men and one woman (Violent Douglas-Pennant) – was replaced by the Board of Health for Wales with no women members. Dr Addison, the Minister of Health for Wales who made appointments to the Board, further provoked Welsh feminists by saying that he knew 'no woman in Wales fit for the job'. CDWCA sent him a list of suitable women.<sup>97</sup>

The CDWCA cooperated with other women's groups in the city including the BFUW and NUWT. The associations were particularly keen to promote the election of women to local councils. With a membership of around 550 for most of the 1920s, the CDWCA formed an effective pressure group. When Barbara Foxley ran as the Liberal candidate for the Cathays ward in the local council elections in 1924, the Cardiff NUWT branch supported her campaign by canvassing, through clerical work, or by attending and speaking at meetings. Foxley secured 1,621 of the votes, winning by a majority of 786, and became the second woman councillor elected to the Cardiff City Council.<sup>98</sup> In November 1926 the CWCA held a joint public meeting at Cardiff High

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<sup>93</sup> Innes, 'Constructing Women's Citizenship', p.635.

<sup>94</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book, 1927.

<sup>95</sup> GA: Correspondence of chief constable Lionel Lindsay – invitation to public meeting on women police officers, 1931, DCON/82/302.

<sup>96</sup> *Western Mail*, 11 April 1923.

<sup>97</sup> Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, p.102.

<sup>98</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 4 July 1924. Rhoda Parker was the first woman elected.

School for Girls with the local NUWT branch to campaign for ‘an equal franchise measure granting votes to women at the same age and on the same terms as men’. Mary Collin presided and the meeting was addressed by Ethel Froud, General Secretary of the NUWT.<sup>99</sup>

For many women, political citizenship was an extension of their professional position. The NUWT encouraged members to attend equalitarian meetings held in their locality, whether under the auspices of the NUWT or any other society, to extend public opinion in favour of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as citizens and workers, and to demonstrate the strength and sincerity of the existing support for these demands.<sup>100</sup> For this aim, the NUWT addressed open-air meetings, lobbied the House of Commons, wrote letters to MPs and participated in processions and demonstrations. In the 1923 University of Wales by-election the NUWT sent questionnaires to parliamentary candidates to gauge their sympathy with the Union’s policy of equal pay, equal employment opportunities and the appointment of women magistrates and police.<sup>101</sup> When equal franchise was granted to women in 1928, the Swansea NUWT branch held a victory dinner in celebration with other women’s organisations in the town.<sup>102</sup> Phipps stated that the NUWT comprised ‘women who were politically minded, and took a prominent part in the public work carried on in their respective districts. While some of them were members of political parties, a great many of them were not, because they put equal treatment of women with men workers first’.<sup>103</sup>

In the interwar period, professional women grasped opportunities afforded to them and capitalised on legislative breaks, while recognising that there was still much to be done for women’s political equality with men. Though this section has been concerned with professional women who engaged with the women’s movement, it would be unfair to generalise about professional women as a homogeneous group of proponents of women’s rights. For some, their professional reputation was too fragile to risk being associated with the more militant strands of the suffrage movement, while others simply saw their occupation as an extension of their accepted feminine role.

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<sup>99</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 3 December 1926; GA: Cardiff Women Citizens’ Association Sixth Annual Report.

<sup>100</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 November 1937.

<sup>101</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 26 October 1923.

<sup>102</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 26 October 1928.

<sup>103</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 28 May 1920.

Indeed, as seen in the previous chapter, a direct engagement with feminist campaigns could be problematic for professional women to make. For others, the professional inequalities they encountered shaped their feminist beliefs of the inferior position of women in wider society. Women's professional employment was bound with broader questions and conceptions of citizenship and perceived as a central element of their inclusion into the public and political realm: the vote was seen as a means to rectify the unequal pay and treatment they faced in their profession. Indeed, the NUWT believed that women's possession of the franchise was the 'foundation which must be securely laid before the superstructures of equal pay and equal opportunities could be raised'.<sup>104</sup>

### *(ii) Women's Campaigns for Professional Equality*

Women's paid employment had always been a central concern and cause of contention in the women's movement. This problem intensified during the First World War, which brought new opportunities and risks for women as workers. Once the vote had been obtained, feminist campaigners focused more attention on women's employment and representation in public positions. Cheryl Law suggests that the interwar feminist movement was largely sustained by professional women's workers' rights, large numbers of whom were involved in the movement from the earliest years.<sup>105</sup> During the interwar decades women repackaged tactics which had been used in the suffrage movement to agitate for equal pay, the abolition of marriage bars and equal opportunities in the professions. Many of these concerns predated the suffrage movement, but also gained impetus from it. Experiences in suffrage campaigns and their accompanying networks provided the foundation of women's movement for workplace equality in twentieth-century Wales. Women's occupational positions were also part of a wider conception of citizenship: their professional knowledge and status became an avenue through which to further advance sex equality and their professional networks provided the organisational frameworks from which to promote their concerns. While their campaigns focused on specific issues, most shared a belief in women's right to enter the workplace on the same terms as men.

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<sup>104</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 25 January 1929.

<sup>105</sup> Law, *Suffrage and Power*, p.228.

Legislative acts and celebrations of women's wartime efforts contributed to an initial feeling of confidence about women's position in the professions in the years immediately succeeding the conflict. Outlining the unique contribution newly enfranchised women could make to the nation, the UCSWM's student paper, *Cap & Gown*, proclaimed that 'to-day is woman's greatest day. A greater opportunity never presented itself. She *can* create a new personality in the world: and the only way to do it is to avoid the methods of men. Let her retain her womanhood and all that it means, then the world will be re-created'.<sup>106</sup> Cause for optimism was further evident in the flurry of 'firsts' who were regular features in the press following the SDRA.<sup>107</sup> The vote was regarded as the platform from which women could achieve reforms in other areas of public life, including the professions. An article in the *Woman Teacher* in 1923 stated:

What the women's suffrage movement began is left for women workers generally to continue: it is for us to establish a freedom of opportunity amongst women which has been denied them hitherto. The present is a most critical time for all women engaged in professional and industrial pursuits.<sup>108</sup>

However, the initial optimism concerning women's place in the profession was short-lived and two years after the SDRA had been passed *Time and Tide* proclaimed: 'for the past two years or more it had been gradually dawning upon women of all classes, ages and professions that the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act does not remove sex disqualification'.<sup>109</sup> Advocates of women's entry into the professions quickly labelled the Act as a 'vote-catching measure'.<sup>110</sup> By 1923 a deputation on which twenty-six of the leading non-party women's organisations (including women's professional organisations: MWF, NUWT and the Association of Headmistresses) were represented, went to the Home Secretary to point out the failures of the Act.<sup>111</sup> By the end of the decade feminist campaigners were frustrated that legislative concessions to women's employment rights did not directly translate into equality of opportunity.

One of the main criticisms of the SDRA was its failure to prohibit the implementation of marriage bars, both official and unofficial, in many of the

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<sup>106</sup> Emphasis in original. *Cap & Gown*, January 1919, p.13.

<sup>107</sup> *Time and Tide*, 26 June 1925; 27 June 1924; 9 February 1923.

<sup>108</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 13 May 1923.

<sup>109</sup> *Time and Tide*, 23 May 1922.

<sup>110</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 18 January 1924.

<sup>111</sup> *Time and Tide*, 8 August 1923.

professions. In July 1919, Breconshire Education Committee, among others, voted to reinforce the marriage bar.<sup>112</sup> Three years later the Rhondda Education Authority controversially adopted the marriage bar and dismissed all sixty-three married women teachers in the district, prompting a high-profile legal dispute.<sup>113</sup> What was referred to in the press as ‘Price vs. Rhondda UDC’ became a test case which the women ultimately lost, demonstrating the indiscriminate nature of the marriage bar during these decades. The practice varied according to the supply of teachers in the locality and the specific context of the Rhondda case is explored further in the following chapter. Supporters of the marriage bar centred their argument on two main tenets: first, if a married woman worked she was taking a job which an unemployed man or single woman could have and, second, that a married woman’s place was in the home. Although supporters of the marriage bar attempted to create divisions in the movement by arguing that married women were taking jobs that single women needed, campaigners sought to dispel this myth that unmarried teachers wanted their married counterparts to relinquish their employment.<sup>114</sup>

Some opponents of the marriage bar located their arguments in a framework of sexual difference by suggesting that women’s ‘special’ qualities were enriched by marriage. They argued that the marriage bar ‘prevents admirable women of a certain character marrying at all’.<sup>115</sup> Others noted that it led ‘women, of more perfect balance, who demand the right to be both normal women as well as intelligences’ to conceal their marriage from their employers or live with a man without the legal title of marriage.<sup>116</sup> *Time and Tide* argued that ‘the community cannot afford to force the women, who will in all probability make the best mothers, to renounce all thoughts of marriage’.<sup>117</sup> Teachers and doctors also capitalised upon contemporary discourses of motherhood and domesticity to argue that a married woman, and especially a mother, had the experience which enabled her to deal more effectively with children. Opponents of the marriage bar therefore highlighted the contradictions in ideals of womanhood and discriminatory practices: ‘for maternity and child welfare work women have been found to be peculiarly suited; but, by a curious economic limitation, married

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<sup>112</sup> *SWDN*, 16 July 1919.

<sup>113</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 18 January 1924.

<sup>114</sup> *Western Mail*, 4 April 1919.

<sup>115</sup> *Monmouth Guardian*, 17 April 1914.

<sup>116</sup> *Monmouth Guardian*, 17 April 1914.

<sup>117</sup> *Time and Tide*, 9 June 1922.

women, who would appear the most suitable of all, are, by many public authorities, excluded from service'.<sup>118</sup>

Others opposed the marriage bar on the grounds that women's right to equal employment opportunities had been established in the SDRA of 1919, framing their arguments for workplace equality within discourses of equal rights. The MWF petitioned councils who refused to employ married medical women.<sup>119</sup> It asked: 'must a girl who takes up a profession be faced with the prospect that she can only marry at the price of that profession and the loss to herself and the public of the time and money spent on her training?'<sup>120</sup> This economic argument highlighted that 'the training of those entering these professions involves in many cases considerable expenditure of public money, the fruits of which are lost to the community if the career of every woman is terminated on marriage'.<sup>121</sup> Opponents of the bar argued that many of the best women were prevented from working in professional occupations, because it was uneconomical for them to pursue costly training in a service from which they would be excluded.<sup>122</sup> The marriage bar not only acted as a disincentive for women to pursue the often costly teacher training courses, but also resulted in secret marriages.<sup>123</sup> Supporters of married women's employment further argued that 'the local administration has no right to interfere in the domestic affairs of their teachers'.<sup>124</sup>

For some professional women, the implementation of the marriage bar was not as clear-cut and not all unanimously opposed it. In 1921, a deputation representing the local branches of the WCA, BFUW and AAM attended a Cardiff Education Committee meeting to discuss the implementation of the marriage bar in the authority.<sup>125</sup> Barbara Foxley, representing the BFUW, was the chief speaker. She argued that the committee should retain its power to employ married women teachers if they thought suitable. Foxley added that they had no desire to see the schools flooded with married women teachers; 'that would be disastrous to the schools and disastrous to the homes, but they felt that the committee should keep open the door to employ

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<sup>118</sup> *BMJ*, 5 September 1931.

<sup>119</sup> *The Times*, 6 December 1921.

<sup>120</sup> F. May Dickson Berry, 'Married Women in the Professions', *BMJ*, 29 November 1924.

<sup>121</sup> *BMJ*, 20 July 1935.

<sup>122</sup> *BMJ*, 5 September 1931.

<sup>123</sup> *Evening News*, 30 June 1933.

<sup>124</sup> *Western Mail*, 4 April 1919.

<sup>125</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book, 1921.

married women in exceptional cases'.<sup>126</sup> A committee resolution was carried by nine votes to one that in ordinary circumstances, women teachers would tender their resignation on marriage, but exceptions would be made when it was in the interests of the cause of education. Following this decision, a married woman teacher in Glamorgan, with three children and an unemployed husband, won a case against the education committee to continue her employment.<sup>127</sup> At the NUWT's 1923 annual conference in Cardiff, the city's first woman councillor Rhoda Parker, 'felt bound to disagree with those who approved the employment of married women teachers at the present time, but she expressed her great pleasure in being present at such a gathering'.<sup>128</sup> Headmistresses would sometimes not intervene in the decisions of education committees regarding the employment of their married staff through fears of compromising their own relationship with the committee.<sup>129</sup> Women's ability to engage in feminist campaigns could, therefore, be constrained by gendered notions of respectability and a need to protect their professional reputations.

Equal pay was a prominent issue in campaigns for sex equality in the workplace from the beginning of the twentieth century, when feminist teachers created the 'Equal Pay League' as a pressure group inside the NUT in 1904. The remuneration women received was usually lower than their male counterparts, although pay varied between professions. With the inauguration of the School Medical Service, and later when the maternity and child welfare posts were created, local authorities attempted to pay their assistant medical officers below the BMA minimum and to secure women at a lower rate than men. With a few exceptions, the efforts were a failure and 'black-legging' was so uncommon that relatively few authorities advertised posts below the agreed minimum.<sup>130</sup> Lower pay invariably implied lower status and salaries were significantly less in professions dominated by women such as teaching and nursing. It was the pay differentials between men and women teachers which were the most contested and were to reach their most bitter climax in the interwar decades. The establishment of national salary scales for teachers by the newly formed Burnham Committee in 1921, raised salaries and did away with such inequalities as Cardiganshire teachers receiving 20 per cent less in salary than those in Glamorgan. But Burnham did

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<sup>126</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book, 1921.

<sup>127</sup> GA: Cardiff Women Citizens' Association Minute Book, 1921.

<sup>128</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 12 January 1923.

<sup>129</sup> GA: BFUW Cardiff Association Minutes, 1934.

<sup>130</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Publications.



not introduce equal pay between men and women: women teachers were paid on average four-fifths of the male rate.<sup>131</sup>

Opponents of equal pay often cited the loss of women teachers through marriage as the reason why men should receive higher remuneration and in 1920, Denbighshire LEA differentiated between married and unmarried women teachers.<sup>132</sup> A Cardiff headmaster at an NUT meeting attributed the high unemployment rate among teachers to the money the LEAs spent on women teachers' supposedly high salaries.<sup>133</sup> The National Association of Schoolmasters defended unequal pay scales for men and women teachers on the basis that men needed a greater income to support their families and that it would be an incentive to induce men into teaching in order to rectify the proportion of women in the profession.<sup>134</sup> Highlighting biological and psychological differences between the sexes, the Association claimed that:

the women who regard us as opponents are mostly the unmarried, who have no stake in the country but their own individual interests – birds of passage, who abrogate to themselves the championship of women, but who fail to realise the prior claims of those women who are of most importance to the nation – the mothers, without whom there would be no nation, and be it stressed, no children to teach.<sup>135</sup>

When five members of the Cardiff Schoolmasters' Association sent a letter to the *South Wales Daily News* outlining their opposition to equal pay, Alice Howell of Aberdare Girls' County School replied with the argument that men and women were required to undertake the same examinations, held the same professional responsibilities and incurred the same expenses.<sup>136</sup> *The Woman Teacher* stated that 'the argument of family responsibilities in support of higher pay for men falls to the ground. It is our duty to secure Equal Pay – our duty to the girls in our schools, to women and even to men

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<sup>131</sup> Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, p.83.

<sup>132</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 7 May 1920.

<sup>133</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 9 March 1923.

<sup>134</sup> NLW: National Association of Schoolmasters Pamphlet, *Equal Pay and the Teaching Profession: An Inquiry into, And the Case Against, the Demand for Equal Pay for Men and Women Teachers of the Same Professional Status*, 1937.

<sup>135</sup> NLW: National Association of Schoolmasters Pamphlet.

<sup>136</sup> Reply cited in *The Woman Teacher*, 21 November 1919.

themselves, for whom there is no economic instability while there is cheap women's labour'.<sup>137</sup>

In the interwar decades, Welsh contingents participated in a series of marches and demonstrations organised by the NUWT to campaign for equal pay.<sup>138</sup> Following the Cardiff branch's participation in one such demonstration in November 1920, the President, Rosina Williams, described their Welsh banner and the meaning behind it:

With us of the N.U.W.T it is day! We are awake and can see the needs of all women in the labour market. Our appeal, by means of our procession, seemed to me to be to all those people who are not awake...Hence my motto 'Deffro mae'n ddydd' i.e. 'Awake! It is day!' The time is fully ripe for justice to be done to all Women...The Dragon and the daffodils symbolise Wales. I chose the rampant dragon deliberately to show that we ourselves are awake and active...The numerous expressions of surprise and delight overheard en route at seeing Wales in the procession quite proved the wisdom of emphasising our origin by word and symbol. 'Unity is Strength'.<sup>139</sup>

Repackaging pre-war tactics, these processions echoed the suffrage marches of the early twentieth century. The national symbols used in the pageantry sought to include women in the language and representation of the nation. Like the CDWSS, the Cardiff NUWT branch asserted leadership among the Welsh branches and, in an increasingly anglicised city, Welsh iconography can be seen as a means to validate this claim. Similarly, the Cardiff branch created a cake decorated with a Welsh lady with a steeple hat to mark the twenty-first anniversary of the Union.<sup>140</sup> While asserting a distinctive Welsh identity, the Cardiff branch was embedded into a wider British network of women workers.

National identity was claimed by both opponents and supporters of women's professional equality with men. Echoing late nineteenth century gendered modernising discourses, feminists could use equality of the sexes as a yardstick to measure the progress of a nation. While praising local authorities and towns which treated their female workers fairly as progressive, they also shamed those who did not. In 1920, in

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<sup>137</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 14 January 1938.

<sup>138</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 16 May 1924.

<sup>139</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 5 November and 26 November 1920. The same banner was used by the Cardiff and Swansea branches in July 1926 participating in the Equal Franchise Demonstration in London. *The Woman Teacher*, 9 July 1923.

<sup>140</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 8 May 1930.

contrast to the forty-three women magistrates appointed in England, only one had been elected in Wales: Mrs Lloyd George at Criccieth. *The Woman Teacher* reported:

We have had occasion before to refer to the slowness with which it appears to dawn on public authorities in Wales that women are capable of undertaking certain of the duties which have hitherto been performed only by men. Wales appears reluctant to share with women the work of, for example, Housing and the League of Nations; it appears to be behind in appointing women police, and now it is behind England in this matter of women magistrates. Democratic Wales, wake up!<sup>141</sup>

Like women's suffrage, women's representation on public and professional boards served as a measure of how far along the linear path of progress Wales had travelled. Though this was largely a rhetorical strategy, the paper's claims were not completely unfounded: the appointment of women police proved a controversial issue in Wales throughout the interwar years and none were appointed until the Second World War.<sup>142</sup> Phipps, who was editor at the time, also appealed to the national sentiments of Welsh women to agitate:

Are the women of Wales so far behind their English sisters in intellect and judgement to justify such a discrepancy? Or is the defect rather in the men of Wales, who are so satisfied with things as they are that they scorn the help of women? Is Wales democratic, after all? Or androcratic?<sup>143</sup>

Women's employment in positions of seniority was a particular concern of women's professional organisations during the interwar years. At an NUWT South Wales Federation Educational Conference in 1936, lecturer Ethel Barke highlighted the underrepresentation of women in senior positions in the education sector. She stated that 'in the highest regions of education there are very few women, there were not women directors or assistant directors of education. There had been a few women assistant directors of education but they had disappeared. This meant that women had no hand in shaping the educational policy of the country'.<sup>144</sup> Headships of mixed schools were also a concern for feminist teachers during the interwar years because the number of senior mixed schools increased in the 1920s, but women were rarely

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<sup>141</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 11 June 1920.

<sup>142</sup> Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows*, p.123. See also Louise Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester, 2006), p.28.

<sup>143</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 2 July 1920.

<sup>144</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 24 July 1936.

appointed to the headships. In 1924, although the girls' and infants' departments outnumbered the boys' departments by 914 in Wales, the number of headmasters exceeded the number of headmistresses by 200. Out of the 1,561 mixed departments, where boys and girls were taught together, 1,167 of the headships were held by men.<sup>145</sup> In 1928, the NUWT reported that of the thirty-one Senior Schools in Wales, nineteen were mixed and all these were under headmasters. By the following year, the number of mixed senior schools increased to twenty-five, but all remained under the headship of men.

Women teachers were also engaged in public debates concerning the content of the curriculum and sought to expand the employment opportunities available to their pupils. The Wales AWST Branch was continually watchful for professional openings available for girls who undertook science degrees. It was particularly concerned with requirements of entry for medical courses, corresponding with the WNSM regarding the best means for girls to gain admission.<sup>146</sup> It advocated a wider introduction of physics, the replacement of botany by biology and highlighted the need for better laboratory facilities and more science staff. The AWST challenged the contemporary gendered curricula and highlighted the poor science provision and employment opportunities available to girls, arguing that 'physics and mechanics should be essential for all, and physics and mathematics should not be made a "bogey" for girls'.<sup>147</sup> Here, sympathetic teachers were crucial. When Rosentyl Griffiths of Cyfartha Castle School in Merthyr aspired to study medicine, physics and chemistry were not on the curriculum for girls. Her headmistress, Miss Davenport, arranged for her to study at the twinned boys' school which provided laboratory facilities so that she was able to gain the qualifications to enter the WNSM.<sup>148</sup>

Emily Phipps also wrote a pamphlet for the NUWT in which she argued that girls did not need a separate curriculum.<sup>149</sup> She lobbied the Swansea Education Committee to ensure there were adequate facilities for teaching commercial subjects to

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<sup>145</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 4 July 1924.

<sup>146</sup> RBA: AWST, Loose Correspondence, MNA/TUG/12/9.

<sup>147</sup> RBA: AWST Loose Correspondence.

<sup>148</sup> Rosentyl Griffiths (1903-1999), unpublished transcript. I am grateful to Angela V. John for providing a copy of Rosentyl's memoirs. See also Angela V. John, 'Cures from Carmarthenshire: Generations of Alternative Medicine', *Carmarthenshire Life*, 142 (Summer, 2008).

<sup>149</sup> IOE: Emily Phipps, 'Equality of Opportunity' Pamphlet, 1928, UWT/D/37/3.

them.<sup>150</sup> Phipps saw education as one of the most important ways to advance the women's cause: a belief she put into practice in her professional role by nurturing high academic standards in her pupils. From 1895 she transformed the failing Swansea Central Higher School into the Municipal Secondary School for Girls, which became well known for its teaching of Latin and excellent examination results. Phipps argued that 'it was necessary to train girls so that they would become proficient and not amateurs at whatever work they took up'.<sup>151</sup> In seeking educational equality for their pupils, women teachers challenged women's domestic role and subordinate economic position in society.

Professional women also used the tools of their profession to contribute to the women's movement, and served as a visible demonstration of women's capabilities in the workplace and their intellectual equality with men. As seen in chapter two, medical women drew upon their professional expertise to refute arguments about women's biological inferiority to men. They used the professional knowledge of their members to agitate for social and welfare reform and improve women's position in public life. The MWF appointed committees to address issues including women commercial aeroplane pilots, the menopause and the improvement of women's health in India.<sup>152</sup> The federation was also concerned with inadequate provision of birth control information, and petitioned for a woman gynaecologist to be included on the Birth Control Investigation Committee. The MWF was particularly active in contemporary debates about venereal disease and prostitution, as well as concerns for maternity and infant welfare. Following the SDRA, which enabled women to enter the legal profession, Emily Phipps studied in the evening to become a barrister, gaining admission to the Bar in 1925. Her prime motivation was that women teachers could be legally advised by a woman who knew the practical side of a teacher's work. She subsequently became the legal consultant when difficulties arose between union members and their LEAs.<sup>153</sup> A complimentary dinner to celebrate Phipps's call to the Bar stated: 'it is probably unique in the history of Education that one woman should combine in herself teacher, headmistress, editor and barrister. This combination,

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<sup>150</sup> Kean, *Deeds not Words*, p.53.

<sup>151</sup> IOE: Phipps, 'Equality of Opportunity'.

<sup>152</sup> WA: Medical Women's Federation Publications: Professional Questions, 1924-1988, SA/MWF/B.4/2A.

<sup>153</sup> IOE: Dinner to Miss Phipps, Correspondence, 1925.

wonderful as it seems to us, representing years of earnest labour, is but the result of a great devotion to a great cause'.<sup>154</sup>

### **(iii) Conclusion**

Women's professional concerns and feminist objectives were thus often inseparable. The exclusion of women from professional projects, in part, provided the impetus for the organised women's movement in the late nineteenth century. Consequently, workplace equality was embedded into the aims of the movement from its inception and, in many ways, the discriminatory and gendered policies which regulated women's working lives energised their suffrage campaigning. Similarly, party activism and participation in the suffrage movement introduced women to public speaking, committee work, propaganda and local politics which would reveal the value of representation and organisation for their own professional concerns. During the twentieth century professional women participated in a vibrant and dynamic array of women's organisations in their localities, and the political, social and ideological variety that existed among professional women contributes to our understanding of the diverse way women conceptualised their citizenship. Ideas of equal rights and women's special moral contribution to society articulated in the pre-war years continued to be voiced in the interwar decades, as well as those of fairness, justice and public welfare. Feminists sought to secure equality of opportunity for women and a fairer representation of them in all areas of the life, including in politics, on public bodies and within the workplace. Agitation for sex equality in a professional capacity was intertwined with the aims of the wider women's movement and, for many women, their professional and feminist concerns were inseparable. As June Purvis notes, the struggle for women's enfranchisement was 'never a single-issue campaign but part of a wider reform movement to end women's subordinate role in British society'.<sup>155</sup>

In Wales, professional women comprised the core membership of local suffrage societies and were central to the formation of the wider feminist political landscape. There were clear continuities in the personnel of the Edwardian suffrage campaign and the interwar women's movement, with networks nurtured through

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<sup>154</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 27 February 1925.

<sup>155</sup> June Purvis, 'Gendering the Historiography of the Suffragette Movement in Edwardian Britain: Some Reflections', *Women's History Review*, 22, 4 (2013), p.582.

personal and professional overlaps. Professional women were also active in contesting gendered definitions of the nation. Symbols of Welshness were used by opponents and supporters of women's suffrage and professional equality, as feminists sought to carve a role for professional women into the political and professional life of the nation.

Promoting the 1938 annual conference to be held in Swansea, *The Woman Teacher* recalled the town's presence of a strong NUWT branch and predicted that 'the pages of history will show that Wales has had pioneers in every progressive movement, not least in the causes of feminism and education'.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 11 June, 1937.

# Chapter 5

## Place, Politics and Class

In recent decades historians have highlighted the importance of place in offering a more nuanced understanding of gender relations in the past and revealing the diversity of women's experiences.<sup>1</sup> For example, Hunt and Hannam propose a 'new archaeology of "women's politics"' to map the effect of women's enfranchisement at a local level and examine how individual women conceived of politics over a long period of time.<sup>2</sup> They argue that instead of compartmentalising women's experiences in parallel histories of political parties, movements and organisations, women's politics should be seen as something which happened in a range of spaces.<sup>3</sup> While this approach is also relevant to a study of professional women, who were engaged in multiple organisations, activities and networks, this work has not yet been undertaken. The local community was the place within which women lived, worked, forged networks and served on overlapping committees and associations. This enabled them to act as authoritative public figures in their community, in ways that were often at odds with contemporary gendered perceptions of women's place in the wider public sphere. However, local prejudices and ingrained traditions could also threaten women's claim to the public and political space of the locality. A study of women's employment in its local context, therefore, is crucial for understanding the gains that women made as well as the limits of their successes.

Wales was not a homogeneous entity and there was no uniform experience of women's professional employment throughout the country. As Ursula Masson argued, 'Wales in the late nineteenth century was a politicized landscape: the word "heartland" was both a geographical expression and a term which contributed to the "imagined" nation of values and culture'.<sup>4</sup> An attachment to the land and to rural life as the source

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<sup>1</sup> June Hannam, 'To Make the World a Better Place: Socialist Women and Women's Suffrage in Bristol, 1910-1920', in Myriam Boussahba-Bravard (ed.), *Suffrage Outside Suffragism: Women's Vote in Britain, 1880-1914* (Basingstoke, 2007), p.157.

<sup>2</sup> Karen Hunt and June Hannam, 'Towards an Archaeology of Interwar Women's Politics: The Local and the Everyday', in Julie V. Gottlieb and Richard Toye (eds), *The Aftermath of Suffrage: Women, Gender and Politics in Britain, 1918-1945* (Basingstoke, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Hunt and Hannam, 'Towards an Archaeology of Interwar Women's Politics', p.137.

<sup>4</sup> Ursula Masson, *For Wales and For Liberalism: Women in Liberal Politics in Wales, 1880-1914* (Cardiff, 2010), p.19.



of national values were key elements in nationalist writings and rhetoric, but was strongly located in the rural regions of north and mid Wales. Economic and social change was most apparent in urban areas and the industrial and cosmopolitan south-east was frequently identified with ‘de-nationalizing’ forces and values. Yet, within the south, geography was associated with class in a stark manner. The working class was disproportionately concentrated in the industrial coalfield in the southern valleys, Carmarthenshire and north-east. These communities were overwhelmingly reliant on the fortunes of a staple industry, and this was to have profound negative repercussions by the interwar decades. Wales’s small middle class developed in the commercial centres supporting the mining, iron and steel industries, whereas a more dispersed middle class was found in the agricultural and rural regions of the west, mid and north of the country.

The assertion of class and political difference expressed as location was also mirrored in Wales’s professional landscape and the nature of women’s employment outside the home. Professional women were largely concentrated in south Wales. Glamorgan County consistently retained the largest number and proportion of women employed in professional occupations in the country, with women exceeding the number of male professionals in 1921 [appendix 8]. Yet Glamorgan was also a diverse county, punctuated by uneven socioeconomic contexts and cultural values. Professional employment comprised a higher percentage of women’s paid employment in the industrial districts than it did in the more affluent coastal towns or urban centres [appendix 9]. The 1931 Census records 21 per cent of Rhondda’s female workforce employed in professional occupations, in contrast to 8.2 per cent in Cardiff County Borough. The former figure largely accounts for the significantly high proportion of women teachers in coalfield towns which were dominated by a low overall female formal employment rate and limited opportunities for women’s full-time waged work. In coalfield communities, the professional class comprised a small proportion of the population, with teachers, doctors and dentists primarily existing to serve the working class.<sup>5</sup> Female doctors in Wales were geographically concentrated in the southern urban centres of Newport, Cardiff and Swansea (see figure 2 below), which had a more diverse professional class. By the mid-1920s a small number of women doctors were also

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<sup>5</sup> Stephanie Ward, *Unemployment and the State in Britain: The Means Test and Protest in 1930s South Wales and North-East England* (Manchester, 2013), p.10.

evident in the southern industrial towns and northern urban centres of Colwyn Bay, Wrexham and Bangor. However, there remained few female doctors in the sparsely populated regions of mid and west Wales. These maps thus present a starkly different landscape to the traditional focus of Welsh history.

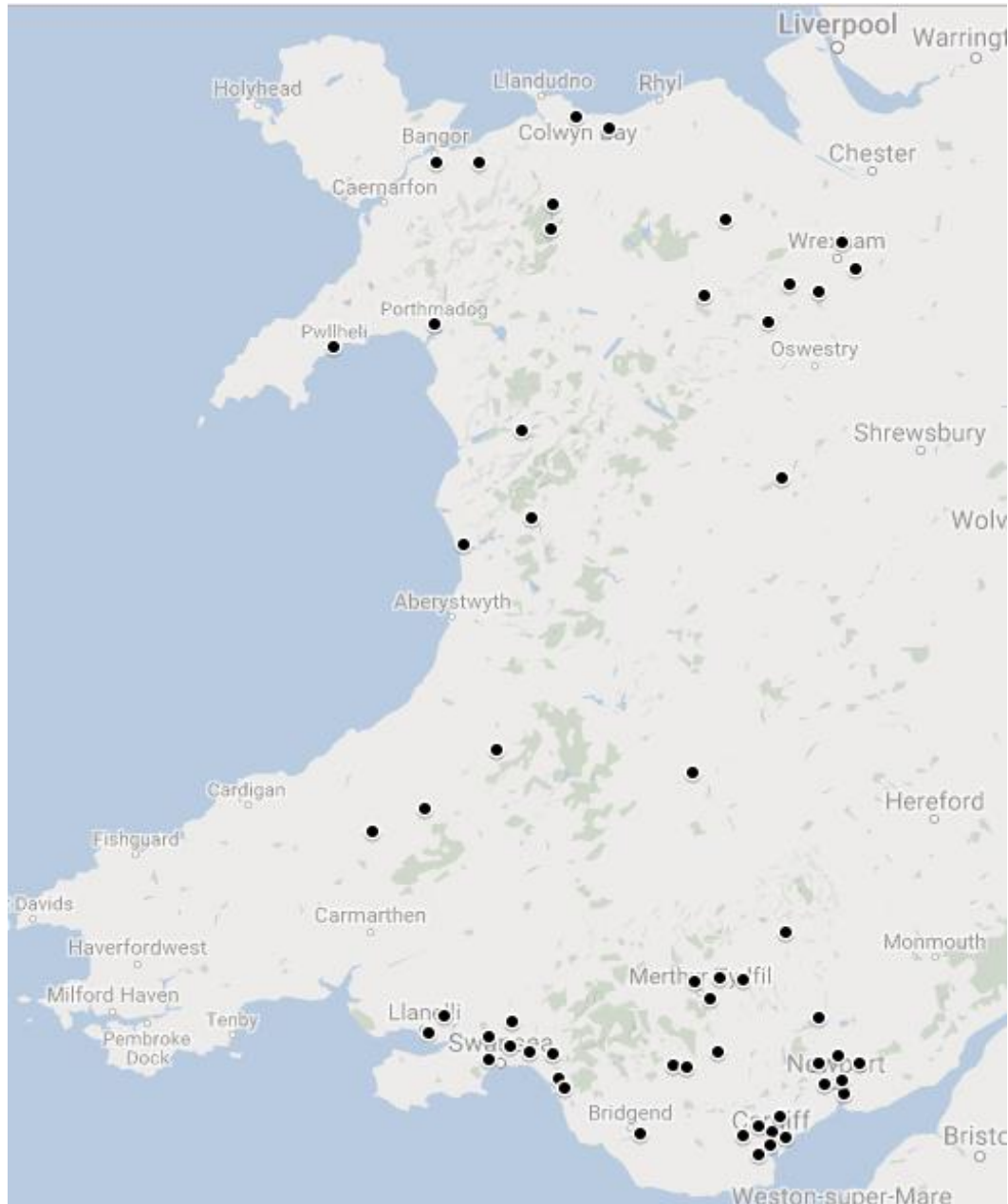
### Female medical practitioners in Wales and Monmouth 1912



**Figure 2:** Geographical distribution of female medical practitioners in Wales and Monmouth, 1912.

**Source:** *The Medical Directory*, 1912 [appendix 4]

### Female medical practitioners in Wales and Monmouth 1924



**Figure 3:** Geographical distribution of female medical practitioners in Wales and Monmouth, 1924.

**Source:** *The Medical Directory*, 1924 [appendix 4]

This chapter explores the regional variations in women’s professional employment through case studies of Cardiff, the south Wales coalfield and rural mid and north Wales. By examining these diverse regions, the chapter aims to reconfigure a historical

professional landscape for both women's professional employment in Britain, and the position of the middle and professional class in Wales. The chapter also highlights the importance of local political traditions, cultural norms and economic structures in determining opportunities for women's paid employment. In doing so, it provides an important nuance to previous chapters by considering how the overarching themes explored throughout the study played out in the local arena. The rich diversity of their economic, political and social activities reveals the important contribution that professional women made to the wider community in which they worked. But it was the local context, party political traditions and individual backgrounds which shaped the particular manifestation of the public role they assumed in their locality. Each case study represents a particular theme. Cardiff is used as an example of an urban town and then city, and highlights the importance of the cosmopolitan mix of the city in affording women more opportunities for paid employment. The section on rural Wales examines the place of the Welsh language in the professions, as well as the concentration of women in lower professions. Finally, the south Wales coalfield counteracts the image of the independent woman at the very top of her profession and highlights the centrality of class to conceptions of the professions.

*(i) Cardiff: Civic Identity and Women's Networks*

Through a study of the rapidly expanding commercial town of Cardiff, this section outlines the central role professional women played in contesting these gendered boundaries through their participation in the associational and civic life of their communities. As a predominantly English-language town with an expanding and more diverse middle class by the early twentieth century, Cardiff encapsulates some of the changes that occurred in Welsh society. This section shows how the changing urban environment offered women more opportunities for professional employment and, in turn, how the existence of a more concentrated group of professional women made it easier for women to coordinate campaigns for professional and political representation. As seen in the previous chapter, professional women were also to provide the leadership of Cardiff's suffrage and feminist societies formed in the first decade of the twentieth century. They used these networks to agitate for the representation of women in Cardiff's burgeoning civic institutions and to claim a unique public role for women in the soon-to-be city.

Cardiff grew from relatively insignificant origins at the turn of the nineteenth century to the largest town in Wales by 1871, with a port of worldwide significance. By the turn of the twentieth century it had reached the peak of its commercial and civic development, and in 1905 it was denoted city status. The rapidity of its expansion, however, led to a crisis of identity. As Neil Evans argues, ‘Cardiff sought to dominate a Wales which regarded it as anglicised and cosmopolitan, a city which could never express Welsh traditions’.<sup>6</sup> The civic leadership of the movement to assert the city’s status as the ‘Metropolis of Wales’ was largely provided by the new commercial and professional class. Indeed, Cardiff’s cosmopolitan society included a larger and more diverse professional class than elsewhere in the country and this was also reflected in the composition of women’s employment. Prominent professional women – doctors, academics and headmistresses – played an active role in the plethora of associations and societies concerned with the moral, social and cultural condition of Cardiff, which were founded from the late nineteenth century.

The first round in Cardiff’s struggle to dominate Wales had been fought in the 1880s over the siting of the UCSWM. The presence of the university college in the town from 1884 was a contributor to the development of ‘civic’ rather than a merely ‘urban’ society; to the commercial and clerical middle class of the town was added an academic and intellectual middle class who contributed significantly to the political and civic life of the city. Women associated with the university – academics like Millicent Mackenzie and Barbara Foxley, graduates and the successive wardens of Aberdare Hall – were respected public figures who were active in a range of civic and political associations. In 1896, the *Western Mail* published *Contemporary Portraits and Biographies*, described as ‘a portrait gallery, enshrining the men [sic] who at the present time are contributing, each in his special sphere, to forward the commercial, social, moral and intellectual progress of one of the most flourishing communities in the United Kingdom’.<sup>7</sup> Notable women featured included; Mary Josephine Hannan, medical practitioner; Millicent Mackenzie, Lecturer of Education at the UCSWM; and Ethel Hurlbatt, Principal of Aberdare Hall. All were acknowledged for their commitment to public life in Cardiff, and in various ways their occupations were deemed worthy

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<sup>6</sup> Neil Evans, ‘The Welsh Victorian City: The Middle Class and Civic and National Consciousness in Cardiff, 1850-1914’, *Welsh History Review*, 12, 3 (1984/5), p.386.

<sup>7</sup> *Contemporary Portraits and Biographies: Cardiff Section* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1896).

enough for them to be placed as visible symbols of the town's contested identity. Each figure was embedded into the wider Welsh framework, either as a proponent of Welsh women's education, the 'first Lady Doctor in Wales', or through their representativeness of an aspect of national culture.

Emanating from the longer connection of education with national progress outlined previously, the suggestion that Wales was particularly supportive of the equality and education of women was an integral element of Welsh national identity in the late nineteenth century. Although largely a rhetorical device, this was used by educationalists in the constituent colleges who placed emphasis on the fact that women had been admitted to the University of Wales on the same terms as men from its inception, unlike other educational institutions of the time.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, two of the women featured in *Contemporary Portraits* were affiliated to the UCSWM. Millicent Mackenzie was the first female professor at the College.<sup>9</sup> She was upheld in the university magazine as a symbol of national advancement when it was claimed that she was the first woman in Britain to be awarded a professorship in 1904:

We must congratulate those lecturers of the College who have recently been exalted to seats upon the Senate, viz., Professors Barbier, Boulton, Raymont, Trow and Millicent Mackenzie. The last named is, we believe, the first woman in Great Britain who has received the title of professor. It will no longer be possible to address the members of the Senate as *Patres conscripti*.<sup>10</sup>

Despite these claims there seems to have been an absence of standardisation around job titles in training departments. Although, in 1904, Millicent Mackenzie may have been the first woman in Britain to be addressed as Professor, her official status was Associate Professor until she was formally appointed Professor of Education in 1910.<sup>11</sup> She also remained on a salary of £300 while her male counterparts received £425.<sup>12</sup>

The expanding and diverse number of professional women played a central role in the civic culture of Cardiff, creating their own associations and forging their own networks. A strategy was to work for targeted, individual public and professional

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<sup>8</sup> *University College Magazine*, 8, 1, (1895), p.1.

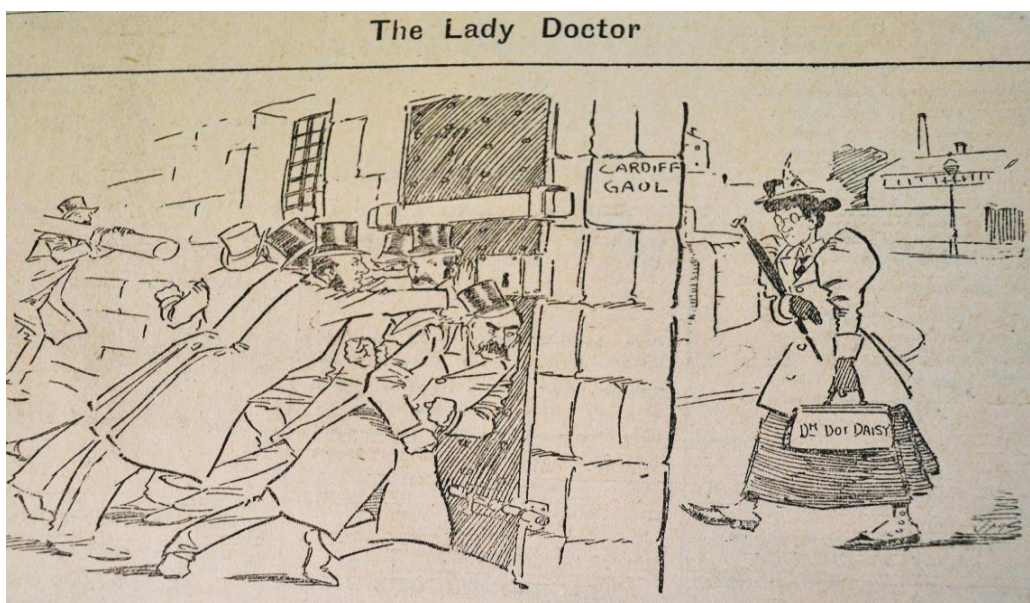
<sup>9</sup> *University College Magazine*, 7, 3 (1915).

<sup>10</sup> *Cap & Gown*, November 1904.

<sup>11</sup> CUIA: Minutes of Senate, 1883-1911, UCC/Sn/M/1-5.

<sup>12</sup> CUIA: Monthly Salary Books, 1883-1931, UCC/FN/Sal/2.

appointments of women. This was to ensure that women were represented and that their interests would be taken into consideration in the emerging civic institutions. The other UCSWM-affiliated woman featured in *Contemporary Portraits*, Ethel Hurlbatt, was a key figure in sending a petition to the Home Secretary in 1896 in favour of the appointment of a female Medical Officer for female prisoners at Cardiff Gaol, following the retirement of the male Medical Officer, Dr Hardiman.<sup>13</sup> A high profile public debate ensued, with a variety of groups and individuals mobilising to contest or support the proposal. Familiar arguments in opposition to the appointment were used: fears of overcrowding in the profession, women's supposedly inferior intellect and the idea that the appointment would transgress acceptable realms of the medical profession for women.<sup>14</sup> A local doctor, Herbert Vachell, expressed concern 'that ladies, after being admitted to the medical profession, might find a difficulty in rigidly drawing the line that they only attended to female patients, and exclude applications from sick male persons'.<sup>15</sup> The press sensationalised the debate by pitting women against the medical establishment in their reports of the 'opinions of local medical men'.<sup>16</sup> As the 'bluestocking' caricature below illustrates, women who transgressed accepted gender roles were ridiculed and depicted as lacking feminine attributes.



**Figure 4:** 'Chorus of Medical Men: "She is not coming in here if we can help it"'

**Source:** *Evening Express*, 13 February 1896.

<sup>13</sup> *South Wales Echo*, 24 January 1896.

<sup>14</sup> *Evening Express*, 11 and 12 February 1896.

<sup>15</sup> *Evening Express*, 11 February 1896.

<sup>16</sup> *Evening Express*, 12 February 1896.

Notably, supporters of the appointment of a female medical officer framed the argument in a contemporary discourse of civic pride. One report stated that ‘Cardiff has led the way in the matter of agitating for a lady doctor at the Cardiff Gaol. Warwick is now following suit and there is every prospect that the Home Secretary will shortly have representations from many other towns in favour of the appointment of female physicians in prisons’.<sup>17</sup> The double petition was signed by members of various local committees, boards, political associations, professional organisations and institutions.<sup>18</sup> It was situated within a nineteenth-century class-based ideology of social uplift when a supporter argued that ‘if a lady doctor (and the more a ‘lady’ in the truest sense the better) can, and will, undertake such work, I feel sure both the patient and the public will benefit by it’.<sup>19</sup> Aware of the professional rivalry the appointment could provoke, they also argued that this position would not usurp any of the supervising powers and prestige of the medical man because female patients were not as numerous as male.<sup>20</sup> Supporters confined their arguments within parameters of ‘woman’s sphere’ by arguing that the purpose of women doctors would be to treat those diseases peculiar to women. They argued that there were female wardens and nurses, so why not doctors of that sex?<sup>21</sup> In many ways supporters embedded women deeper into contemporary norms of femininity through their argument that a woman would have the tact, discretion and ‘the touch of womanly sympathy’ necessary for such a role.<sup>22</sup>

The case was also linked to the local women’s movement and emblematic of women’s wider admission to the professions. Supporters were keen to highlight women’s professional competency and argued that ‘if the appointment is made there need be no fear that a fully qualified woman can be found for the position. The faculty of women doctors are always on the watch for such appointments and it is not difficult in these days to find ladies with great experience of hospital work and who have had plenty of clinical experience’.<sup>23</sup> Support for the employment of a woman doctor was part of a broader movement to gain entrance for women into other public institutions, but the resignation at Cardiff Gaol gave the opportunity for a specific request to be made. One report proclaimed that ‘now is the time for all who are interested in the

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<sup>17</sup> *Evening Express*, 23 January and 11 February 1896.

<sup>18</sup> *Evening Express*, 1 February and 8 February 1896.

<sup>19</sup> *Evening Express*, 30 January 1896.

<sup>20</sup> *Evening Express*, 12 February 1896.

<sup>21</sup> *Evening Express*, 24 January 1896.

<sup>22</sup> *Evening Express*, 30 January 1896.

<sup>23</sup> *Evening Express*, 8 February 1896.



question of women to exercise all their influence... Women Doctors in Hospitals and Prisons. This is becoming a question of the day: whether it will be expedient to have women doctors to attend to their own sex'.<sup>24</sup> Advocates also expressed a desire to have a female doctor in connection with the post-office, hospitals, work houses, asylums and gaols, for the purpose of their female staff or patients. Although the petition was ultimately unsuccessful, the case was emblematic of how Cardiff's new professional and middle class sought to carve a unique place for women in the structural reform and civic identity of the burgeoning town.

As respected public figures, these professional women, like their male counterparts, played a prominent role in the public life of the city in which they worked. Megan Smitley argues that women contributed to the production of civic identity through their participation in a range of institutions, including local government, philanthropic organisations and reform movements.<sup>25</sup> In Cardiff, professional women contested the gendered boundaries of public space and lobbied for the representation of women in the city's new civic institutions. For example, the Cardiff and District Association of the BFUW promoted the election of women to the Council of Graduates of the Welsh University, the Free Libraries Committee and the Council of the Welsh Museum.<sup>26</sup> Its proposal in 1913 that a woman should be elected as a member of the Free Libraries Committee, was met with a favourable reception and was fulfilled in 1914 with the appointment of Mary Collin, headmistress of Cardiff's High School for Girls.<sup>27</sup> Their professional standing gave women a strong voice on a wide range of issues and the close connection many occupations had with the public embedded women within the life of the towns in which they worked. Women doctors were particularly active in their localities, undertaking voluntary work as an extension of their professional concern and expertise. Cardiff's female doctors presented public lectures at the various branch libraries: Drs Erie Evans and Elizabeth Elder presented lectures for only women attendees on topics ranging from women during the Middle Ages, medical advice for the care of infants and teeth, as well as the negative effects of alcohol.<sup>28</sup> Dr Helena Jones presented numerous lectures detailing her foreign expeditions in the years

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<sup>24</sup> *Evening Express*, 30 January 1896.

<sup>25</sup> Megan Smitley, *The Feminine Public Sphere: Middle-Class Women in Civic Life in Scotland, c.1870–1914* (Manchester, 2008).

<sup>26</sup> GA: BFUW, Cardiff and District Association: Minutes of Committee Meetings, 1910-11, D325/2.

<sup>27</sup> *Borough of Cardiff Reports*, 1913.

<sup>28</sup> *Cardiff Free Libraries and Museum Reports*, 1908-13; *Western Mail*, 1 September 1885.

preceding the First World War.<sup>29</sup> Others, such as Dr Mary Hannan, were honorary advisers to the Salvation Army.<sup>30</sup> These activities represented an acceptable extension of their professional roles.

As seen in chapter four, professional women were also engaged in the political life of their communities. In Cardiff, professional women were, on the whole, Liberals.<sup>31</sup> Ursula Masson has traced the existence of a distinctive women's Liberalism in Wales during the late nineteenth century. She argued that the rapid growth of the Women's Liberal Associations (WLA) provided the main organisational base for suffrage advocacy in the 1880s and 1890s: the Welsh Union of WLAs was committed to women's suffrage from its inception in 1892 and Welsh delegates played a highly visible role in pressing the Women's Liberal Federation to include women's suffrage in its programme during the 1890s.<sup>32</sup> Cardiff WLA developed in the 1890s to become more representative, in its membership profile, of the social composition of the town: it enrolled as members many working-class women, while increasingly its activists included women who were highly educated, professional, independent and in many cases, not the product of Welsh Nonconformist Liberalism. Professional women in Cardiff played an important part in the tension between the competing ideologies of Liberalism and suffragism, which Masson has detected in the WLAs.<sup>33</sup>

Dr Erie Evans was a central figure in the Cardiff WLA. However, she became disillusioned with the Liberal Party following a party meeting in Cardiff in 1909. Women were only able to obtain tickets for the meeting through male members who, in return, had to extract a pledge of good behaviour from them.<sup>34</sup> In an attempt to minimise disruption from suffrage hecklers, the party excluded women from the body of the hall and relegated them to the balcony where they would be inaudible. Although women were not usually permitted to ask spoken questions during a meeting, the Liberal executive also prevented women submitting written questions. Evans's letter following the meeting reflects the frustration of women at the humiliating conditions imposed on their participation in Liberal politics:

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<sup>29</sup> *Cardiff Free Libraries and Museum Reports*, 1908-13.

<sup>30</sup> *Contemporary Portraits and Biographies*.

<sup>31</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.127.

<sup>32</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.48.

<sup>33</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.135.

<sup>34</sup> 'Dr Erie Evans correspondence, Cardiff, 29 April 1909', in Aaron and Masson (eds), *The Very Salt of Life: Welsh Women's Political Writings from Chartism to Suffrage* (Dinas Powys, 2007), pp.260-61.

Mr Lester Jones gave me a ticket for Mr Harcourt's meeting having first extracted a pledge from me that I should be silent throughout the meeting...That pledge it was easy for me to give, in as much as I am strongly opposed to any attempt at interfering with free speech...I recognise that owing to our disfranchisement it is illegitimate for women to put spoken questions at public meetings because they occupy time which might be used by a voter. But that it should be regarded as illegitimate for unenfranchised sections of people to put written questions had never occurred to me.<sup>35</sup>

Although Evans attempted to distance herself from hecklers, the Party did not distinguish between militant and constitutionalist suffragists, nor between Liberal and non-party women.<sup>36</sup> The ticketing of Liberal meetings was tightening up, creating humiliating conditions on women's entry. This would be part of a sequence of events which would destroy relations between the Cardiff WLA and the Liberal Party, and lead many women to conclude that their feminism was best served outside the party.<sup>37</sup> It was professional women – with their new resources, networks and confidence – who would play a central role in this split.

Evans was also a member of, and the vice-President from 1912, of the CDWSS. Presiding at an NUWSS garden meeting, she sketched in a few words the election policy of various societies and unions which have women's suffrage for their aim, and showed how the NUWSS, by converting the electorate, would eventually convert the Government.<sup>38</sup> Up until 1912, the NUWSS was not allied with any party, a feature which the CDWSS was keen to stress.<sup>39</sup> It is well known that suffrage militancy escalated as it became increasingly clear that a Liberal government would not introduce a women's suffrage Bill. Constitutional suffragists, within and outside the Liberal Party, also became disaffected. By 1912, disillusionment with the Liberals was complete and the NUWSS introduced its Election Fighting Fund (EFF) to support Labour parliamentary candidates against anti-suffrage Liberals. Welsh suffrage societies, led by the CDWSS, initially provided the strongest resistance to the policy.<sup>40</sup> Masson argued that opposition to the EFF from Wales was more complex than simple Liberal loyalism.

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<sup>35</sup> 'Dr Eric Evans correspondence, Cardiff, 29 April 1909', pp.260-61.

<sup>36</sup> For a greater discussion of this, see Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, pp.158-9.

<sup>37</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.135.

<sup>38</sup> *Evening Express*, 3 August 1908.

<sup>39</sup> *Evening Express*, 3 July 1908.

<sup>40</sup> CCL: CDWSS Report of the Executive Committee, 1913-14.

Resistance to the EFF also stemmed from a wider desire not to become involved in partisan politics and also represented members' distrust of the Labour party and miners' MPs in south Wales.<sup>41</sup> Sceptical of Labour's commitment to women's enfranchisement, Mabel Howell wrote to the NUWSS Secretary that 'Cardiff is in the mining district', and argued that 'this accounts for the difference in our estimate of their value as supporters'.<sup>42</sup> Howell claimed the superiority of local knowledge of coalfield politics, fearing that they could not rely on the support of miners' MPs in the votes on the Franchise Bill. In the wake of the split over election policy, membership of the WLA in Cardiff fell dramatically, from 845 in 1910 to 150 in 1912.<sup>43</sup> As Masson summarised: 'it might justifiably be said that by 1914 suffrage organisation had effectively replaced Liberal organisation for women, in Cardiff and south Wales'.<sup>44</sup>

The CDWSS promoted its claim to represent Wales in much the same way as the city claimed to be the capital of Wales and, as seen in the previous chapter, professional women comprised active membership of the suffrage branch. Cardiff High School for Girls provided a core support for suffrage activity in the town following its opening in January 1895. Its first head, Mary Collin, was a member of the Roath ward WLA. Collin took no executive role in the WLA, but would take a leading role in suffrage activity, both inside the WLA and as chair of the executive of the CDWSS. In the Welsh context, Mary Collin represented a new Liberalism and element of Welsh society: highly educated, professional, independent and mobile. English born and educated at Bedford College, London, she was unconnected to the old Nonconformist liberalism of the town which had been so apparent at the beginning of the association and was one of the first to put feminism before the party.<sup>45</sup> Arguably, the more cosmopolitan mix of the town was important in affording women new educational and employment opportunities.

Collin's belief in women's right to public and political representation was also evident in her school's ethos. Cardiff High School for Girls produced pamphlets outlining possible careers for high school girls. The school's magazine annually reported on the achievements of its past pupils, providing appropriate professional

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<sup>41</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.11.

<sup>42</sup> Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.167.

<sup>43</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.165.

<sup>44</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, p.170.

<sup>45</sup> Masson, *For Women, for Wales and for Liberalism*, pp.137-8.

templates for current pupils to aspire to.<sup>46</sup> Many former students attended the WNSM. For example, former pupil Dr Amy Louisa Jagger attended the medical school from 1920. She won the Alfred Hughes medal in anatomy and qualified in 1926 becoming one of the earliest 'MD Wales'.<sup>47</sup> After several house posts in Cardiff Royal Infirmary, she was appointed as School Medical Officer for Glamorgan County Council, a post she held until retirement. She was a founding member of the Cardiff and South Wales Association of the MWF and served as its chairwoman and secretary for many years, as well as being an executive committee member of the MWF. Jagger was also the first chairwoman of the Cardiff Division of the BMA and the Cardiff Medical Society. In their locality, where they had established reputations and connections, women were able to assume leadership positions in the professional life of the city. Arguably their distinct professional profile also imbued them with the confidence to take leadership roles in other aspects of public life: Jagger served on the Cardiff Standing Conference of Women's Organisations, the United Nations Women's Auxiliary Committee and was a fundraiser for the Freedom from Hunger Campaign.<sup>48</sup> While individual figures like Collin were important in encouraging girls to aspire to the highest echelons of the professions, place was also a central factor in providing girls with the opportunities to fulfil these ambitions.

Professional women assumed leadership roles in other aspects of public life in their localities. When Foxley stood as the official Liberal candidate in the Cathays ward bye-election of June 1924, she had the support of various non-party women's organisations, notably the CDWCA.<sup>49</sup> In her election address, she outlined the need for female representation on the City Council:

Half the inhabitants of Cardiff are women; many of these are now voters and have the duty of helping to choose the City Council. All of them have to spend their lives under conditions largely dependent on Municipal government. The City Council employs large numbers of women teachers, clerks, cleaners, etc. It deals with matters in which women are keenly interested e.g. Infant Welfare, Education, Housing, the control of the streets and of places of amusement.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *City of Cardiff High School for Girls Magazine, 1937-1938.*

<sup>47</sup> WA: Women in Medicine/Medical Women, 1988, SA/MWF/B.2/75.

<sup>48</sup> *BMJ*, 16 July 1988.

<sup>49</sup> GA: CDWCA Minute Book and Enclosed Papers, 1924, DX/158/1/2-17

<sup>50</sup> GA: CDWCA Papers, 1924.

Appealing to the civic sentiments of the voters, she outlined that the election of a woman would be a mark of the city's worthiness to be the capital of Wales:

I hope the Progressive electors in Cathays will secure the election of a progressive woman. For many years I have taken an active part in political and social work in Cardiff and South Wales. I have special knowledge of Education and Housing...In our splendid Town Centre in Cathays Park, we have the beginnings of a worthy capital for Wales.<sup>51</sup>

She also used her reputation as a high profile woman in the locality on academic, social and public bodies. There was great enthusiasm, especially among women's associations in the area, when Professor Foxley was elected by a majority of 786 votes, becoming the second woman to enter the Council.

Professional women were thus enthusiastic participants in, and creators of, the civic culture of Cardiff during this period. Educational developments in the 1890s brought into Wales and Cardiff a new professional and intellectual middle class, which made its mark on the politics and culture of the nation and the town. Through their work and participation in political, social and professional organisations, they contributed to the creation of a local civic society. At the same time they shared a culture with women throughout Britain which was to enable them to articulate a special role for themselves in the life of their communities. Events at a local level did not always mirror the official policy of an organisation and it was often difficult for women to remain outside party politics in their community – an allegiance which was not always compatible with their feminist beliefs. In Cardiff, the political candidacy of women was linked to civic progress, and women's professional appointments were also an integral part of this. Their professional position undoubtedly informed their wider involvement in social, political and civic movements. They sought to carve a role for women in the contested civic – Welsh and British – identity of Cardiff. In 1929, the Cardiff WCA held a Suffrage Relics Exhibition, which displayed banners, photographs, posters, placards and other mementos associated with the city's role in the suffrage campaign. Outlining the history of the items, Mary Collin expressed the hope that 'these treasures might be placed in the National Museum of Wales', which had become a powerful symbol in the Cardiff's movement to assert itself as the 'Metropolis of Wales'.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> GA: CDWCA Papers, 1924.

<sup>52</sup> *Western Mail*, 26 April 1929; Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*, p.295.

(ii) *Rural Wales: Linguistic Differences and Limited Opportunities*

The quite different culture of rural areas highlights the limited opportunities for women's paid employment in regions with a dispersed population and middle class. Moreover, sparsely populated counties, lack of educational facilities, sociolinguistic differences and high maternal and infant mortality rates posed significant challenges to professionals in these localities. While some women who undertook professional training did return to the area in which they had grown up, it was unusual for people with little affiliation to the region to migrate into it. The movement of people from rural areas into industrialised districts was one of the most striking features of nineteenth-century Wales, like elsewhere in Britain. Mass out-migration meant that many rural counties found it particularly difficult to attract and retain suitably qualified teachers and healthcare professionals. This section explores the impact of these issues on professional women in the rural counties of Merionethshire and Denbighshire.

There were limited employment opportunities for both women and men in rural districts. Although by 1921 there were clusterings of women doctors in northern urban centres of Bangor, Colwyn Bay and Wrexham (figure 2), women doctors remained isolated figures in most towns of mid and north Wales. The number of women physicians in Wales's rural counties did steadily increase: in the 1931 Census there were eight in Flint (compared with 58 men) and six in Carmarthen (compared with 93 men). Others, like Margaret Lloyd Jones of Blaenau Ffestiniog, obtained employment as dental officers in schools.<sup>53</sup> Jones worked full-time in Merioneth between 1924 and 1933. After a career break when she married and had children, she returned to work in 1948 on a part-time basis.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, Dorothy Marshall, of Colwyn Bay, was appointed assistant school dentist for Denbighshire in 1937. She trained at Liverpool School of Dental Surgery, and afterwards Liverpool Dental Hospitals. Prior to her appointment by Denbighshire Education Committee, Smith was a dental assistant to her father, who ran a practice at Colwyn Bay.<sup>55</sup> However, these were exceptional and isolated figures. Attempts by professional women to form networks were, as we have seen, largely hampered by geographical considerations. While a north Wales branch of the MWF

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<sup>53</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer for the County of Merioneth, 1924-33.

<sup>54</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer for the County of Merioneth, 1948.

<sup>55</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 26 February 1937

was formed in 1934, the minutes record difficulties arranging meetings in the area covered by the branch, with some members living 90 miles from its centre. During the winter months meetings were often cancelled.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, an attempt to create a Bangor branch of the BFUW in 1910 was soon abandoned because of the difficulties its members encountered holding meetings in such a large and sparsely-populated locality.<sup>57</sup>

Dr Ceinwen Evans was appointed pathologist at Denbighshire Mental Hospital in 1928, where she remained for the rest of her career. The hospital, seeking a Welsh speaker, asked the WNSM in Cardiff to recommend a suitable candidate.<sup>58</sup> The School recommended Evans because she had ‘extensive experience of pathological work’, gained in the tuberculosis laboratories of the university and the Welsh National Memorial Association.<sup>59</sup> She worked for several years identifying the cause of the recurrent outbreaks of dysentery and colitis in Denbigh. She also carried out joint investigations with her former colleagues in Cardiff into tuberculosis, which similarly presented a considerable problem for the Denbigh asylum.<sup>60</sup> Pamela Michael interviewed Evans in 1994 and suggests that a minor physical handicap partly contributed to Dr Evans’s decision to follow a career in pathology.<sup>61</sup> She had a mild form of deafness, which was predicted to get progressively worse. Because it presented a problem for detecting heartbeats, her professors in Cardiff advised that it would be better for her to become a pathologist. Michael notes that it was not uncommon for women to be directed into this occupation and also into mental hospitals, which had low status relative to general hospitals.<sup>62</sup>

A prominent difference between rural regions and the industrial and urban towns of south Wales was the proportion of Welsh speakers. In 1921, 29.7 per cent of Merioneth’s population were monoglot Welsh speakers, in contrast to 0.3 per cent in Cardiff and 3 per cent in the Rhondda Valleys.<sup>63</sup> From the late nineteenth century, nursing associations and local authorities attempted to prevent

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<sup>56</sup> WA: The Medical Women’s Federation Newsletter, 1934, SA/MWF/B.2/2.

<sup>57</sup> WL: BFUW Annual General Committee Minutes, 5BFW/01/01.

<sup>58</sup> Pamela Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales, 1800-2000* (Cardiff, 2003).

<sup>59</sup> Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill*, p.139; Glynne R. Jones ‘The King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association, 1912-1948’, in John Cule (ed.), *Wales and Medicine*, (Llandysul, 1975).

<sup>60</sup> *BMJ*, 13 May 1933, pp.815-17.

<sup>61</sup> Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill*, pp.139-40,

<sup>62</sup> Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill*, p.140.

<sup>63</sup> John Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics, Vol.1* (Cardiff, 1985), p.86.



the exodus of Welsh women seeking employment outside of their region because the ability to speak the Welsh language was essential to communicate with patients. In 1895 the North Wales Nursing Association (Nwana) highlighted that there was no Welsh word in general use for ‘nurse’ and ‘nursing’ and members of the council were asked to consult authorities on the Welsh language with a view to rectifying this.<sup>64</sup> Welsh was a prerequisite for nurses in many of the rural districts and local authorities sought to attract Welsh-speaking applicants for posts.

Pamela Michael’s study of mental health provision in north Wales reveals how the appointment of Welsh-speaking staff was a priority throughout the history of the North Wales Lunatic Asylum.<sup>65</sup>

The difficulty of attracting female nursing staff – both English and Welsh speakers – was a continual problem throughout the period and authorities sought to attract suitable women. In 1909, the Nwana appealed for support for the training of Welsh women as village nurses and midwives for service in the rural districts. The association believed that many districts would support a nurse if there was a trained Welsh woman ready for the role. It was almost impossible for trained midwives to make a decent living in the rural districts where they were most needed, because the births were too few. The only way to resolve this was to guarantee them a livelihood, which was the principle upon which the Nwana worked, when it gave midwives eight months’ additional training in general district nursing.<sup>66</sup> Further, the association offered financial incentives by awarding a bonus of £5 to every nurse who completed four years’ service. From 1889, district nursing was organised on a national basis and conformed to training standards set by the Queen’s Nursing Institute. Training was in approved hospitals or infirmaries for a minimum of three years, with additional training in district nursing for six months.<sup>67</sup> Wales was divided into two administrative areas to keep pace with the demand for Queen’s nurses: north and south Wales.<sup>68</sup> However, the introduction of district nursing was not uniformly well-received and by 1892 it had not spread as far as the Welsh Branch of the Queen’s Institute of District Nursing had hoped.<sup>69</sup> The branches were heavily dependent on local donations and subscriptions,

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<sup>64</sup> BUA: North Wales Nursing Association Annual Reports, 1895, BMSS/33280.

<sup>65</sup> Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales*, p.58, p.138.

<sup>66</sup> BUA: Nwana Annual Reports, 1911.

<sup>67</sup> GA: Agreement of affiliation between the Wick District Nursing Association and the Queen Victoria’s Jubilee Institute for Nurses, 1910, D19/45/2.

<sup>68</sup> WA: Report of a meeting of Provisional Councils for North and South Wales, 1908, SA/QNI/Q.10.

<sup>69</sup> GA: Queen’s Institute of District Nursing Records, Welsh Branch, Annual Reports, 1892, D776/2/1.

which embedded nurses into the local community. District nurses were responsible for a particular geographical ‘patch’ and so had a strong relationship with their local constituency.<sup>70</sup>

Limited educational and training opportunities meant that many north Walian nurses undertook their training in Liverpool. Every year Brownlow Hill Infirmary, Liverpool, reserved eight vacancies specifically for Welsh-speaking probationers willing to work afterwards as Queen’s Nurses in Wales.<sup>71</sup> Former nurse, Eluned Evans, was a chapel minister’s daughter born in 1919 in Wallasey.<sup>72</sup> Her family moved to Dolgellau when she was young, where Eluned attended Dr Williams’ School, an endowed school for girls. She obtained a nursing probationer’s post at the Liverpool Royal Infirmary, where, she recalled ‘anybody from Dr Williams was accepted’.<sup>73</sup> Former members of her father’s chapel congregation, relatives and other Welsh probationers provided comfort during her stay away from home for the first time. Eluned later recalled the chapel she attended in Liverpool, ‘where you did hear a bit of Welsh’.<sup>74</sup> She undertook her nursing training for three years at the Infirmary, followed by six months of midwifery training. Her first post was in Machynlleth Hospital, before she worked as a district nurse in Worcester. She eventually returned to north Wales in 1944 to look after her elderly parents and she remained as a district nurse in Bala until she married. Recalling the limited employment opportunities available to girls at that time, she noted that ‘you either went to the county offices or you went teaching or nursing – those were the popular choices really. Or you went as maids to those big houses’.<sup>75</sup> Eluned’s sister chose the other option of teaching, after studying botany at the UCNW. Yet for the majority of women in Wales, like elsewhere in Britain, the higher professions were out of reach.

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<sup>70</sup> BUA: North Wales Nursing Association Annual Reports, 1911.

<sup>71</sup> GA: Queen’s Institute of District Nursing Records, 1895.

<sup>72</sup> Eluned Evans, interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Llanuwchllyn, Bala, 12 May 2012. For further information on Eluned Evans, see biographies section.

<sup>73</sup> Eluned Evans interview.

<sup>74</sup> Eluned Evans interview.

<sup>75</sup> Eluned Evans interview.

Maternal mortality rates were particularly high in Wales's rural counties.<sup>76</sup> In her report on maternal mortality in Wales, Dr Dilys Menai Jones, of the Welsh Board of Health, outlined that:

the highest maternal mortality rates are to be found in the most rural and sparsely populated areas or in industrial districts. Broadly speaking, Wales is a country consisting of the two extremes, sparsely populated rural areas and highly industrialised districts.<sup>77</sup>

Between 1923 and 1929 she studied ten Welsh counties where the rate was noticeably higher than the average death rate of 5 for England and Wales: Anglesey, Brecon, Carnarvon, Cardigan, Carmarthen, Denbigh, Flint, Glamorgan, Merioneth, and Radnor. She outlined the particular difficulties facing rural communities:

The ante-natal clinics and maternity hospitals are mostly of recent origin and still far from adequate. In the scattered and hilly districts it is difficult both for the mother to get to a centre and for doctor or midwife to get to the home. Small cars and telephones for the nurses might solve the difficulty. The county of Cardigan, where the rate is very high, is not adequately supplied with midwives, but in Merioneth, where there is an adequate midwifery service, many mothers still prefer the 'handy woman'.<sup>78</sup>

Contemporary medical practitioners equated high maternal mortality rates in these areas with the prevalence of 'handywomen', or untrained midwives. Following the passing of the Midwives Act of 1918, only women certified by the Central Midwives Board could lawfully call themselves midwives. But in 1921 the percentage of total registered births attended by midwives was still as little as 21 per cent in Merioneth.<sup>79</sup> Many 'handywomen' remained operating in these areas where there was a shortage of trained midwives because they left for more remunerative posts in other counties, or relinquished their appointments on marriage.<sup>80</sup> An article in the *Medical Officer*, discussing the report, argued that the most 'obvious need of Wales is an adequate supply of competent midwives'.<sup>81</sup> Dr Janet Campbell also suggested that 'women in rural

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<sup>76</sup> Mari A. Williams, "'The Growing Toll of Motherhood': Maternal Mortality in Wales, 1918-1939", in Pamela Michael and Charles Webster (eds), *Health and Society in Twentieth-Century Wales* (Cardiff, 2006), p.129.

<sup>77</sup> *BMJ*, 1 October 1932.

<sup>78</sup> *BMJ*, 1 October 1932.

<sup>79</sup> CRO: North Wales Nursing Association Reports, 1921, XM/47/28-54.

<sup>80</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Merioneth, 1925-38, Z/CC/12/8; WA: Copies of tables of maternal and infant mortality in different parts of the country, 1934, SA/NBT/T.4/1.

<sup>81</sup> *Medical Officer*, 29 May 1937.

communities are somewhat out of touch with new ideas, and are apt in consequence to be more than usually prejudiced and conservative in their habits'.<sup>82</sup> The Medical Officer for Festiniog mirrored these sentiments in his report: 'there seems to be a general antipathy to accepting the services of trained nurses through the area'.<sup>83</sup> While these sentiments are revealing of contemporary stereotypes of rural women, the persistence of untrained midwives and poor obstetric provision cannot be solely attributed to the poor infant mortality rates, and other factors such as malnutrition and insanitary conditions were also key determinants.

### ***(iii) South Wales Coalfield: Class, Politics and Community***

The social and economic impact of the rise and decline of heavy industry in south Wales is well documented in histories of Wales.<sup>84</sup> A consequence of the dependence on male-dominated heavy industry was an overwhelming sexual division of labour. As the *Industrial Survey of South Wales* concluded in 1932, 'one of the outstanding characteristics of the industrial life of the region was the extremely small proportion of female to male workers'.<sup>85</sup> The absence of any significant manufacturing sector in the Welsh economy meant there were few opportunities for working-class women's paid employment. The female employment opportunities that did exist were confined to a narrow range of occupations, including domestic service, shop work or teaching. This gendered division of labour was reflected in other aspects of social and cultural life and Sue Bruley suggests that a 'high degree of sexual segregation, and gender boundaries were rigidly enforced' within these mono-industrial communities.<sup>86</sup> This section highlights the limited range of careers available to working-class girls in industrial communities, as well as the powerful ideology that positioned marriage and work as mutually exclusive for women. It also reveals the similar problems healthcare and educational professionals experienced to those endured by their rural counterparts.

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<sup>82</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Merioneth, 1923.

<sup>83</sup> MRO: Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Merioneth, 1925.

<sup>84</sup> Chris Williams, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield, 1898-1947* (Cardiff, 1999); Chris Williams, *Democratic Rhondda: Politics and Society, 1885-1951* (Cardiff, 1996); Sue Bruley, *The Men and Women of 1926: A Gender and Social History of the General Strike and Miners' Lockout in South Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010); Hywel Francis and Dai Smith, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff, 1998).

<sup>85</sup> *Industrial Survey of South Wales* (The Board of Trade, 1932), p.7.

<sup>86</sup> Sue Bruley, 'Women', in John McIlroy, Alan Campbell and Keith Gildart (eds), *Industrial Politics and the 1926 Mining Lockout: The Struggle for Dignity* (Cardiff, 2004), p.231.

Following the onset of the economic depression from the mid-1920s, mass unemployment on an unprecedented scale had disastrous effects on the health and material standards of those communities dependent on heavy industry. These poor conditions, along with the harmful effects of industrial work, posed specific problems for healthcare professionals during the interwar decades. While historians have begun to consider the impact of working conditions on the health of miners, to date there has been little consideration of the impact for health professionals.<sup>87</sup> The centrality of the mining industry in Wales and its associated diseases particularly informed research agenda in the WNSM. Dr Enid Williams held a Cecil Prosser Research Scholarship in Tuberculosis before being appointed assistant lecturer at the School.<sup>88</sup> Dr Mary E. Hewart Jones was also among a cohort of Welsh women doctors who dedicated their professional careers to the battle against tuberculosis in Wales. After various house appointments she became an assistant chest physician at Cefn Mably Hospital and worked for chest clinics in Cardiff and Caerphilly. She also worked for the Welsh National Memorial Association, the voluntary body established to tackle tuberculosis.<sup>89</sup>

Exceptionally high infant and maternal mortality rates also shaped the medical research of a number of women doctors in Wales. This was largely within the acceptable professional parameters of ‘women’s issues’. In 1930, Dr Dilys Menai Jones of the Welsh Board of Health, investigated the nutrition and health of the mothers and children under five in the industrial districts of south Wales.<sup>90</sup> Seven years later, Dr Nancy Howell and Dr A. Trevor Jones published a report on maternal mortality in the country.<sup>91</sup> Their report pointed towards lower standards of obstetric facilities, less available hospital accommodation and argued that ‘the practice of midwifery...had not attained a high standard of efficiency’ in Wales.<sup>92</sup> Yet, as Mari A. Williams shows, the growing number of puerperal deaths could not solely be attributed to ‘meddlesome’ and ‘ignorant’ midwives.<sup>93</sup> The lack of investment in maternity services, coupled with the decline in the birth rate, meant that practical experience and knowledge of obstetric practice among general practitioners was not as high as it should be. The number of midwives on the Roll in Glamorgan also decreased in the 1930s owing to the death or

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<sup>87</sup> Steven Thompson, *Unemployment, Poverty and Health in Interwar South Wales* (Cardiff, 2006).

<sup>88</sup> CUIA: Annual Reports for the Welsh National School of Medicine, 1932-45, UCWM/ER/1/1/1.

<sup>89</sup> *BMJ*, 30 September 1989; See also A. Ceinwen Evans, *BMJ*, 13 May 1933; *BMJ*, 1 February 1947.

<sup>90</sup> *The Times*, 29 December 1930.

<sup>91</sup> *Medical Officer*, 29 May, 1937, p.215.

<sup>92</sup> *Medical Officer*, 29 May, 1937, p.215.

<sup>93</sup> Williams, “‘The Growing Toll of Motherhood’”, p.129.

retirement of older midwives and out-migration of others whom, because of the falling birth-rate and depressed industrial conditions, failed to earn a livelihood.<sup>94</sup> Despite very different socioeconomic contexts, women working in industrial districts faced similar challenges to rural midwives.

A continual issue throughout the first half of the twentieth century was the high infant and maternal mortality rates in these working-class communities. Wales was a notorious maternal mortality blackspot during this period, especially in areas with high unemployment.<sup>95</sup> In 1934, when the maternal mortality rate of England and Wales stood at 4.41 deaths per 1,000 live births, a maternal mortality rate of 11.99 was recorded in the Rhondda UD.<sup>96</sup> This shaped the nature and specific challenges in the work of healthcare professionals. The 1907 *Rhondda Medical Officer of Health Report* noted that:

the experience of other districts serves to show that the most effectual method of imparting useful and beneficial knowledge of this subject is by the employment of well-qualified women as lady doctors, or 'health visitors', or both. Properly qualified and tactful women, imbued with the importance and possibilities of their work, are believed to have proved of great service throughout the country in affording necessary and generally welcome instruction in the upbringing of infants, with highly beneficial results to the community midst which they labour.<sup>97</sup>

Although they were also largely confined to maternal and child welfare, there were clear class distinctions between the women and the community in which they worked. It was rare for women to be employed as 'lady doctors' or in other professional occupation in coalfield districts, aside from teaching and nursing. There were, however, a few anomalies. In 1916, Dr Helena Jones obtained the post of Assistant Medical Officer of Health in charge of the maternity and child welfare clinic in the Rhondda Valley, where she worked until her retirement in 1935.<sup>98</sup> Jones was not a native of the district. Born in Conwy, north Wales, she was the daughter of a Welsh-speaking, middle-class family and held posts in London and Yorkshire before taking up the appointment in Rhondda.

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<sup>94</sup> WA: National Birthday Trust Fund, Rhondda UDC, 1932-36, SA/NBT/T.19/1/1.

<sup>95</sup> *Medical Officer*, 29 May 1937; Williams, "The Growing Toll of Motherhood", p.124; Irvine Loudon, 'On Maternal and Infant Mortality 1900-1960', *Social History of Medicine*, 4, (1991).

<sup>96</sup> Mari A. Williams, *A Forgotten Army: Female Munitions Workers of South Wales, 1939-1945* (Cardiff, 2002), p.26.

<sup>97</sup> *The Rhondda Medical Officer of Health Report*, 1907. Cited in Neil Evans, Pamela Michael and Annie Williams (eds), *Project Grace: Sources for Welsh Women's History* (Bangor, 1994) [document 5].

<sup>98</sup> *BMJ*, 21 September 1946.

The 1931 Census records three female doctors and two female dental practitioners in Rhondda UD, compared with 58 and 24 men respectively.<sup>99</sup> But, in many ways, they had more in common with her professional sisters in the commercial centres, than other professional women workers in the coalfield districts.

For women who grew up in these industrial districts, there was a distinct lack of employment opportunities. Financial circumstances largely determined the educational and limited employment opportunities available to girls. Deborah James argues that school girls in the East Glamorgan coalfield were propelled into teaching as a consequence of the absence of alternative careers which recognised their academic level of achievement, rather than through a sense of vocation.<sup>100</sup> Two former teachers I interviewed, Ceridwen Richards (born in Blaina in 1918) and Margaret Griffiths (born in the Rhondda Valley in 1921), both highlighted the limited employment opportunities available to girls in these communities.<sup>101</sup> Few people attended university, although both respondents noted there were a limited number of grants and scholarships available. The majority of girls from working-class families who became teachers in the interwar years undertook a two-year course at a training college because it was cheaper than a university degree, followed by a year of professional training.<sup>102</sup> Ceridwen's uncle contributed towards the cost of her training, and the Methodist Chapel she attended in Cheltenham provided her with a small contribution when she began her first teaching post. For many women in the industrial communities, teaching was one of the few opportunities for social mobility. Margaret recalled:

I was brought up in the background where if a girl had anything in the way of further education, she either drifted into teaching or nursing or work in an office, and since I came from a family which produced an awful lot of teachers, it was assumed that I would do teaching.<sup>103</sup>

The idea that girls 'drifted' into certain jobs was a common metaphor in the first half of the twentieth century in south Wales. In 1917, an article in the *Welsh Outlook* noted that

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<sup>99</sup> *The Census of England and Wales*, 1931.

<sup>100</sup> Deborah James, "'Teaching Girls': Intermediate Schools and Career Opportunities for Girls in the East Glamorgan Valleys of Wales, 1896-1914", *History of Education*, 30, 6 (2001), p.515.

<sup>101</sup> Ceridwen Richards, Interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Blaina, 19 April 2013; Margaret Griffiths, Interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Ynyshir, 1 May 2013. For further information on Margaret Griffiths and Ceridwen Richards, see biographies section.

<sup>102</sup> Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales', p.76.

<sup>103</sup> Margaret Griffiths Interview, 1 May 2013.

the majority of Welsh girls ‘drift very willy-nilly into teaching’.<sup>104</sup> For some, of course, this was a conscious decision and driven by vocational or professional ambition, but it also highlights the limited careers open to many young girls in these communities. Education was perceived as a way out of poverty and parents were keen to encourage their children, if possible, into the local grammar school and then into college.

Financial considerations also dictated where women trained and taught. The more expensive route through university training departments was deemed to be superior to that of the training colleges. However, although it was not as expensive as medical education, teacher training was still out of the reach of a large proportion of society. The two means of funding were either state or familial. There were also local philanthropic sources of funding and from the beginning of the twentieth century the ‘Howell’s Surplus Income Fund’ administered by Glamorgan County Council, provided partial support to women wishing to train as teachers in the county. One woman recalled the financial difficulties of going to college and how her plans to attend Cardiff University were halted by the 1926 lock-out, when her father and brother were not in employment:

I was ready to go to College. I was supposed to have gone to Cardiff University, and the headmaster was very annoyed about that, and he had arranged a special class for me in Anglo-Saxon, so that I would have Latin and Anglo-Saxon to go to Cardiff University. Well, it wasn’t possible. And my mother said, ‘Well you’ve just got to tell him, you can’t go. You can manage perhaps two years in a training college, but you can’t go to University for four years’.<sup>105</sup>

Instead, she attended Barry Training College for two years. However, training college was not always the liberating experience away from home that some contemporaries presented and she recalled the strict curfews: ‘in by six, lights out by eight, that kind of thing. Not that I wanted a wild life, but oh, it was very drab and miserable’.<sup>106</sup>

Both female and male teachers usually preferred to undertake their training locally, primarily for financial reasons, but also to be close to home and family.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> *Welsh Outlook*, 1917, p.267.

<sup>105</sup> ‘Interview 6’ in Evans et al. (eds), *Project Grace: Sources for Welsh Women’s History*.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Interview 6’ in Evans et al. (eds), *Project Grace: Sources for Welsh Women’s History*.

<sup>107</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, ‘Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border, 1922-1950: A Gendered Perspective’, in Jane Aaron, Henrice Altink and Chris Weedon (eds), *Gendering Border Studies* (Cardiff, 2010), p.86.



Parents also preferred their daughters to attend local institutions, where knowledge of its reputation and the close proximity to home was a reassurance. However, unlike in the late nineteenth century where the shortage of teachers in Wales necessitated calls for more training schemes, the interwar years witnessed an over-supply of teachers.<sup>108</sup> In an attempt to reduce the number of teachers due to financial cuts, LEAs restricted training college intakes, employed a greater number of uncertificated teachers, implemented marriage bars and combined infant and junior departments. This meant that many prospective training college applicants went to England to complete their training. Like the majority of Sian Rhiannon Williams's respondents, both Ceridwen and Margaret had attended training college in England: Ceridwen attended Cheltenham Training College for two years between 1937 and 1939 and Margaret was educated at the local grammar school before attending a teacher training college in London.<sup>109</sup> Ceridwen recalled the other Welsh girls in her halls of residence in Cheltenham: 'Connie from Brynmawr, a girl from Ebbw Vale, Frances Stephens from Abertillery and Besta Theyar from Llanhilleth'.<sup>110</sup>

On completion of their training, certificated, college-trained teachers found few employment opportunities in Wales between the wars.<sup>111</sup> A falling birth rate, economic depression and education cuts meant that most newly qualified teachers had to move to England to obtain their first post.<sup>112</sup> Those whose training was funded by the county were prioritised when jobs were available. The NUWT expressed concerns about the exodus of young Welsh people to English industrial centres in the 1930s. They argued that Wales 'had concentrated too much in the past on two professions: teaching and preaching', at the expense of alternative employment opportunities.<sup>113</sup> Williams's research has revealed clusterings of newly qualified Welsh teachers in certain parts of Essex and the Midlands.<sup>114</sup> They used their Welsh networks to find employment or lodgings in England: networks based on family, college or school contacts. Co-inhabitants of 'digs' were often from the same colleges or regions in Wales.<sup>115</sup> College networks were often carried through to employment and some college friends

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<sup>108</sup> Williams, 'Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales', p.77.

<sup>109</sup> Ceridwen Richards Interview; Margaret Griffiths Interview.

<sup>110</sup> Ceridwen Richards Interview.

<sup>111</sup> Williams, 'Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border', p.83.

<sup>112</sup> Williams, 'Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border'

<sup>113</sup> *Swansea Post*, 4 July 1938; *The Woman Teacher*, 18 March 1938.

<sup>114</sup> Williams, 'Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border', p.92.

<sup>115</sup> Williams, 'Teacher Supply and the Wales-England Border', p.94-5.

deliberately applied for their first posts in the same area. When Ceridwen obtained her first teaching post in an elementary school in Mountsorrel, near Loughborough she would catch a lift with ‘Connie from Brynmawr’s’ father, when he took Connie to her school in Hinckley.<sup>116</sup> Margaret Griffiths reaffirms clusterings of Welsh newly qualified teachers in Essex: ‘now Essex was an area that was always able to appoint teachers, they seemed to specialise in it. I mean teachers from Wales – a strong Welsh contingent always in Essex’.<sup>117</sup> After Margaret had completed her training in 1942, she returned to south Wales. Although unable to obtain a teaching post in the Rhondda Valley, she gained her first appointment in a nearby school where she taught until she obtained a headship position in 1962 at a school in Cardiff.

In his study of a south Wales mining community, American sociologist, Eli Ginzberg, noted the importance of headmistresses in nurturing and facilitating employment opportunities for their students. He described the role of the headmistress of a leading girls’ school in south Wales in facilitating transference for her pupils:

She made every effort to send her girls forward in groups, for it seemed to her that this policy was a safeguard against homesickness, an important factor in unsuccessful transference. In particular she sent her graduates into nursing, a profession which she held in high esteem. During her vacations she also made contacts with commercial concerns in London and the Midlands, which enabled her to place a considerable number of her graduates in good positions. She estimated that of every 70 girls who completed secondary school 10 remained at home, 15 found jobs in their home towns, 15 continued their education preparatory to teaching, 15 entered nursing school, and the remainder secured commercial positions in expanding areas.<sup>118</sup>

Those who were unable to obtain a post in Wales immediately after qualifying often returned home at the first opportunity. Others did not want to return and enjoyed the new opportunities and freedom they experienced, while some were forced to return home to care for elderly relatives. After two years in Mountsorrel, Ceridwen returned to Wales because her father became ill and her mother was no longer alive. Despite being the youngest sibling, it was deemed the daughter’s responsibility to care for elderly parents. Following her return, she obtained a temporary post at West-Side

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<sup>116</sup> Ceridwen Richards Interview.

<sup>117</sup> Margaret Griffiths Interview.

<sup>118</sup> Eli Ginzberg, *Grass on the Slag Heaps: The Story of the Welsh Miners* (London, 1942), pp.50-52.

Primary School to replace a male teacher who had been enlisted and stayed there for the remainder of her working life. Williams notes that almost all the retired teachers she interviewed for her research said that a substantial portion of their income in the interwar years went to support younger siblings through school or to help other relations.<sup>119</sup>

Often the product of the close-knit communities in which they taught, teachers held an ambiguous class and social status in the south Wales coalfield. The overwhelmingly working-class demographic of the mining districts affected the nature of women's professional experiences and the needs of pupils. Sue Bruley notes the support teachers provided to families in south Wales affected by the 1926 general strike and miners' lockout. Teachers were represented on distress committees and closely involved with school feeding, which was conducted on a seven-day basis and throughout the school holidays.<sup>120</sup> When asked what it was like being a teacher in an impoverished mining community, a former teacher replied, 'I don't know that it sort of stood out in school any more than anywhere else, because it was poverty all around so that you more or less accepted it in school...children of course weren't well clothed but none of them were'.<sup>121</sup> While they were not affluent relative to other professionals, teachers were better off than the majority of working-class inhabitants in their community. Recalling childhood Sundays spent in Bethesda Chapel in the Rhondda, Gareth Alban Davies, noted the presence of schoolteachers in fur coats, that ubiquitous symbol of women's affluence.<sup>122</sup>

Davies also noted that while the fur coat set those teachers apart, 'there was something else, too: they were unmarried'.<sup>123</sup> The widespread implementation of marriage bars meant that the overwhelming majority of teachers in the south Wales coalfield were single during this period. Moreover, in a community dominated by the male-breadwinner model, their status as single-women was inherently problematic. Stephanie Ward shows that marriage was a key marker of adulthood in interwar coalfield

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<sup>119</sup> Sian Rhiannon Williams, "The Only Profession that was Around": Opting for Teaching in the South Wales Valleys in the Inter-War Years', *Llafur*, 9, 2 (2005).

<sup>120</sup> Sue Bruley, 'The Politics of Food: Gender, Family, Community and Collective Feeding in South Wales in the General Strike and Miners' Lockout of 1926', *Twentieth Century British History*, 18, 1 (2007), pp.71-72. See also *The Woman Teacher*, 17 September 1926.

<sup>121</sup> 'Interview 6' in Evans et al. (eds), *Project Grace: Sources for Welsh Women's History*.

<sup>122</sup> Gareth Alban Davies, 'The Fur Coat', *Planet*, 102 (1993).

<sup>123</sup> Davies, 'The Fur Coat', p.47.

towns and had an exaggerated significance, given the low rates of female employment.<sup>124</sup> In 1921 when 9.1 per cent of all married women in England and Wales were occupied, only 2.2 per cent of married women were engaged in full-time employment in Aberdare UD and 2.4 per cent were occupied in Rhondda UD.<sup>125</sup> The assumption that the man earned a ‘family wage’, enough to maintain a wife and family, had a powerful influence on perceptions on women’s marital status and employment. One woman recalled:

Married women had more status. I went to teach in South Wales, where single women were more denigrated than they were in London...one of the staff said to me, one day, that one of the miners’ wives had said to her – this is a miner’s wife speaking to a teacher – ‘You know, you must enjoy life, mustn’t you, when you’ve got over the shame of being single’. And the teacher was amused at this, not having thought of herself like that. But it was a very general attitude.<sup>126</sup>

Oram argues that changing attitudes towards women’s sexuality over the first half of the twentieth century particularly affected women teachers. She suggests that they encountered tension between gender-specific occupational structures they inhabited and dominant forms of femininity.<sup>127</sup> Although women teachers were able to frame their work within a discourse of maternalism, their employment was still difficult to reconcile with the contemporary emphasis on their reproductive roles. Positive portrayals of spinsterhood emphasised women’s service, rather than ambition. For example, when a spinster teacher Miss Edwards was recognised for her work as the headmistress at Merthyr Vale Infants School for 25 years, it was her selfless commitment rather than professional achievements were celebrated.<sup>128</sup> The school was presented as her sacrifice and familial tropes were deployed. The local press reported how, ‘she was always sympathetic to child and teacher. They were really a happy family...Happiness in school work soon puts a kind atmosphere around the children, and this inevitably reacts on the home life’.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Stephanie Ward, ‘Drifting into Manhood and Womanhood: Courtship, Marriage and Gender among Young Adults in South Wales and the North-East of England in the 1930s’, *Welsh History Review*, 26, 4 (2013), p.626.

<sup>125</sup> Williams, *A Forgotten Army*, pp.18-19.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Miss Vera Reid b.1910 (pseudonym), 6 Sept 1989. Cited in Alison Oram, “‘To Cook Dinners with Love in Them’? Sexuality, Marital Status and Women Teachers in England and Wales, 1920-39”, in Kathleen Weiler and Sue Middleton (eds), *Telling Women’s Lives: Narrative Inquiries in the History of Women’s Education* (Buckingham, U.K: Open University Press, 1999), pp.99-100.

<sup>127</sup> Oram, “‘To Cook Dinners with Love in Them’?”, p.98.

<sup>128</sup> *Merthyr Express*, 6 December 1919.

<sup>129</sup> *Merthyr Express*, 6 December 1919.

Teachers thus held an uneasy social position in these mono-industrial communities: an anomaly to the occupational culture dominated by male, physically-intensive labour, they also differed as a consequences of their education and marital status from miners' wives. Alys Grenfell recalled how her parents prohibited her eldest sister Ruth, who was a trained teacher, marrying a miner. After her training, she found a job in Gilfach Goch, in the Ogwr Fach valley, teaching miners' children, when she became engaged:

It created quite a stir at home...All I know is that Ruth was forced to break off the engagement: they would *not* have it. The man was a miner. Whether it was that which bothered them I don't know. Or it might have been the fact that married women could not teach in the 1920s: as soon as they married they had to leave the profession. Well, Ruth was newly trained. Our parents had spent a lot of money educating her to be a teacher, and all this would be thrown away if she married.<sup>130</sup>

Families' economic sacrifice for their training and the need to support extended families prevented many teachers relinquishing their employment in favour of marriage. Some women accepted the marriage bar as 'well only fair anyway'.<sup>131</sup>

Other women evaded the marriage bar by eloping in secret. It was not just teachers who had to relinquish their employment on marriage and Mrs Davies described how she kept her marriage a secret in order to avoid losing her job as a health visitor in Aberdare:

So at that time you see, no woman should work as a married woman, you had to finish work. And there I was with all this training...Well you know, this is why we had all the spinster teachers wasn't it, and also Matrons of hospitals...but they were all spinsters, this is why our life in hospitals as trainees was pretty bad you know, because spinsters were disagreeable, there's no doubt about that...So I'd been working there, I think about six months probably, may have been a little longer, and the clerk said to me one day when I went to the office, he said, 'Doc wants to see you'...So I sat down, and he pulled a letter of his desk and he said, 'here you are, read this'. The letter was an anonymous letter, saying that I was married, and that it wasn't right that there was people unemployed, and that I was being employed and being married you see.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> 'Alys Grenfell of Swansea, born 1912' in Jeffrey Grenfell-Hill (ed.), *Growing Up in Wales 1895-1939* (Llandysul, 1996), p.109.

<sup>131</sup> South Wales Miners' Library [hereafter, SWML]: Mrs Lucy James. Interviewed by Hywel Francis, 1973/74, AUD/216.

<sup>132</sup> 'Interview 5' in Evans et al. (eds), *Project Grace: Sources for Welsh Women's History*.

At a time of widespread unemployment, the idea that a married woman was taking a job someone else could have was particularly resonant. It also threatened dominant ideas of masculinity as the economic provider for the family. But women who remained single were the target of stigma, whereby negative perceptions of spinsterhood depicted them as bitter and sexually frustrated. Women workers were, therefore, also victims of social values and sustained economic depression.

An overwhelming allegiance to class politics precluded support for women's political rights. Indeed the socialist and feminist, Elizabeth Andrews, recalled that women were 'afraid of being called suffragettes' in the Rhondda.<sup>133</sup> She described the hostile reception two prominent suffragists faced from the local young Liberals League who 'crowded outside shouting slogans and throwing rotten fruit and stones'.<sup>134</sup> As Labour Organiser for Wales, Andrews was, however, keen to highlight that 'Labour pioneers were great fighters for the political freedom of women'.<sup>135</sup> For Andrews, work for her party and for women sat concurrently. This was also true for female teachers, who were a significant occupational bloc in the WLA and later the Independent Labour Party (ILP).<sup>136</sup> In February 1906, when the Aberdare Debating Society pondered the question: 'should the parliamentary franchise be extended to women?', the main proposer for its extension was Miss Jenny Phillips BA, a teacher of Aberdare Girls' Intermediate (County) School. Two years later, Phillips, along with her sister, who also took part in the debate, was among the twenty women who founded the women's branch of the ILP in Aberdare, with Phillips elected as chairman. The secretary was a young elementary school teacher Florence Rose Rees, who, as Rose Davies, was to have a long and impressive career in the Labour Party. According to her own account, Davies's first political awakening was through the consciousness of being a gendered worker in the teaching profession, and only after that through ILP socialism. This was described by the author of a profile of Davies in *The Labour Woman* in 1920:

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<sup>133</sup> Elizabeth Andrews, *A Woman's Work is Never Done* (Ystrad Rhondda, 1956), p.25.

<sup>134</sup> Andrews, *A Woman's Work is Never Done*, p.16.

<sup>135</sup> Andrews, *A Woman's Work is Never Done*, p.19.

<sup>136</sup> Ursula Masson (ed.), *Women's Rights and 'Womanly Duties': The Aberdare Women's Liberal Association* (Cardiff, 2005), p.57. See also Neil Evans and Dot Jones, "'To Help Forward the Great Work of Humanity': Women in the Labour Party in Wales", in Duncan Tanner, Chris Williams and Deian Hopkin (eds), *The Labour Party in Wales 1900-2000* (Cardiff, 2000).

Until her marriage she was a certificated infant teacher, and it was during that time that she first became interested in politics. As a member of that profession she felt the need of placing men and women on an equal footing and giving the same pay for equal work, and it also brought her to recognise the need for women's suffrage.<sup>137</sup>

As in other regions of Wales, teachers formed a significant element of the suffrage movement in coalfield communities. The inequality women teachers faced in their professional position undoubtedly contributed toward their suffrage activism: equal training and responsibility for the nation's children, combined with unequal pay and no political rights, led to an irreconcilable contradiction.

Because political activism among women teachers was high, it is unsurprising that they also participated in issues affecting their profession. Gwen Ray, secretary of the Mid-Rhondda Teachers' Association, played a prominent part in the 1919 Rhondda teachers' strike over national pay disparities. In early 1917, prior to the strike, Ray had taught a Central Labour College class in English to miners in mid-Rhondda.<sup>138</sup> Martin Lawn's study of the 1919 strike highlights how the local tradition of industrial trade unionism also had an impact on the teaching profession.<sup>139</sup> Lawn argues that the teachers used syndicalist and socialist arguments in support of national salary scale for teachers, an issue which united both certificated and uncertificated, as well as male and female teachers in the Rhondda Valley. Although men gained the solidarity of their womenfolk, the underlying belief was that women's occupational position was secondary. Indeed, when sixty-three women teachers were dismissed by the LEA in 1922, the NUT President, W.G. Cove, who had been one of the leaders of the 1919 Rhondda strike, did nothing to support their case.<sup>140</sup>

This tradition of militancy and political engagement can be seen in the Rhondda women's contestation of the LEA's implementation of the marriage bar in July 1922, which led to the dismissal of all married women teachers in the authority. The following year, fifty-eight of the married women teachers, led by Mrs Elizabeth Price of Cwmclydach Infants School, brought a case for wrongful dismissal against the Rhondda LEA in the High Court, but lost their case. The married women teachers claimed that

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<sup>137</sup> *The Labour Woman*, 20 October 1920. Cited in Masson, *Women's Rights and 'Womanly Duties'*, p.77.

<sup>138</sup> Martin Lawn, 'Syndicalist Teachers: The Rhondda Strike of 1919', *Llafur*, 4, 1 (1984).

<sup>139</sup> Lawn, 'Syndicalist Teachers: The Rhondda Strike of 1919', p.92.

<sup>140</sup> Hilda Kean, *Deeds not Words: The Lives of Suffragette Teachers* (London, 1990), p.96.

their dismissal was in breach of the SDRA and they questioned the validity of the notices served to them.<sup>141</sup> However, the court's interpretation of the Act was conservative and the judge ruled against them on each point. The LEA justified the dismissal in the interests of education because 'women's periodical temporary absences from work...had a deleterious effect on the children's education'.<sup>142</sup> The judge preferred 'the continuous service of unmarried women to the broken service of married women'.<sup>143</sup> The idea that married women did not need the income and that their employment deprived single women teachers of opportunities, was the most common defence of marriage bars. Some women teachers also upheld the marriage bar, arguing that married women teachers should relinquish their employment in order to make room for newly qualified teachers. The defence stated that there were about 1,000 students who had left training college the previous July and were still unemployed.<sup>144</sup>

During the case, a series of letters published in the *South Wales Daily News* were particularly revealing of how ideas of gender, family and class assumed different meanings according to place and were reinforced or contested by different groups. A correspondent from Cardiff, 'Justice', challenged the view that (single) students 'fresh from college' cannot compare as teachers with women who had years of practical experience behind them. 'Justice' further argued that the high cost of living, coupled with the drastic cuts in wages, meant that many husbands were unable to properly support their wives. To dismiss the latter to make room for girls who could be supported by their parents, was grossly unfair.<sup>145</sup> 'Justice' therefore used notions of fairness and equal rights to argue the case for the married women teachers. His/her claim that women's wages were essential to the family income, challenged the very premise of the male breadwinner model. Responding to the letter, a 'Student' from Treherbert, claiming to represent 'the great majority of Rhonddaite's', defended the ruling:

If 'Justice' lived in the Rhondda, he would find that his assertion is ludicrous. On what grounds does he state that while the married women teachers' husbands are quite unable to properly support their wives, that the girls and boys who are unemployed can be supported by their parents

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<sup>141</sup> *SWDN*, 3 May 1923.

<sup>142</sup> *SWDN*, 2 May and 4 May 1923.

<sup>143</sup> *SWDN*, 4 May 1923.

<sup>144</sup> *SWDN*, 2 May 1923.

<sup>145</sup> *SWDN*, 8 May 1923.



without hardship? Does he know that the husbands of the majority of the women are professional men, and that the parents of the young teachers are struggling miners, who have, in many cases, mortgaged their homes in order to maintain them in college? On 'Justice's' last point, the least said the better. The married woman's rightful sphere is in the home, and if she has a proper conception of her duties as a wife and mother she has no use for such things as the Sex Disqualification Removal Act.<sup>146</sup>

Claiming superior local knowledge, 'Student' reinforced dominant ideas of women's role in society and depicted the SDRA as alien to the local community's values. S/he highlighted generational divisions between women teachers: a new, younger generation were drawn from a lower strata of society and had been able to complete a two years' training course as a consequence of the economic sacrifice of their parents. By contrast, 'Student' argued, the majority of the married women had no teaching qualifications. Thus married women teachers – posing a significant threat to dominant ideas of the family and gender roles – became a convenient scapegoat for the oversupply of teachers in the labour market.

It is particularly noteworthy that the married women teachers had taken the case to court at their own expense, without the backing of either the NUT or NUWT. Despite their lack of affiliation with the case, the dispute became emblematic of the animosity between the two unions and was used as propaganda by both sides. Although many of the women had been NUT members for many years and their posts and pensions were in danger, the NUT refused to help because it was advised by lawyers that there was little chance of success. The Rhondda women were angered by this lack of support and pointed out that the union normally used all its legal resources in tenure cases.<sup>147</sup> The NUT condemned the perversity of the Rhondda women and justified their stance, taking the view that the failure of the case would threaten the position of married women teachers elsewhere by publicising the freedom of LEAs to carry out these dismissals.<sup>148</sup> Following the court action, a correspondent in *The Schoolmaster*, 'Cymro', attempted to implicate the NUWT, arguing that the outcome had 'done great harm to married women'.<sup>149</sup> He suggested that the NUWT was 'not free from blame' and hoped that they would support the Rhondda women 'out of [their] subscription'.

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<sup>146</sup> *SWDN*, 11 May 1923.

<sup>147</sup> Alison Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-39* (Manchester, 1996), p.167-8.

<sup>148</sup> Oram, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics*, p.167.

<sup>149</sup> *The Schoolmaster*, 11 May 1923.

Yet none of the 58 women concerned were members of the NUWT when the action was undertaken and the union was not consulted about the case. In a later article 'Cymro' suggested that the 'the Rhondda married women teachers' case provided members of the National Union of Women Teachers with an opportunity of displaying a motherly interest in the women of the Rhondda'.<sup>150</sup> The pseudonym 'Cymro' assumed a symbolic meaning when the author attempted to present the Rhondda women as misguided by the alien NUWT.

In response, the NUWT presented the case as an example of the NUT's inability to advise their female members and the need for a separate women's union.<sup>151</sup> It also contested statements that it had encouraged the married women to take the LEA to court: it was not consulted, did not give any advice, nor were any of the women involved members of its union.<sup>152</sup> A branch of the NUWT was formed in the Rhondda Valley in autumn 1923, but the impetus appears to have come from the officers and committee of the Cardiff NUWT branch following 'dozens' of Rhondda women joining their branch.<sup>153</sup> Two years prior, the Rhondda Education Authority passed a resolution prohibiting the employment of teachers who did not hold NUT membership.<sup>154</sup> Although the LEA amended the resolution after the issue was raised in the House of Commons, in February 1925 the press reported that applicants for a headmistress post were still interrogated as to whether they were members of the NUT.<sup>155</sup> The NUWT presented this as a coercive attempt by the NUT to undermine the legitimacy of its rival union and enforce women teachers' membership of the latter. This placed NUWT members in a precarious position and compromised their prospects of gaining a headship. Thus the Rhondda married women's case was used by various groups – including both teachers' unions - for different means.<sup>156</sup> The NUWT frequently cited it as an example of the unfair treatment of women in the teaching profession, while feminist groups upheld it as an example of the failures of the SDRA. In May 1923, the London and Extra-Metropolitan Married Women Teachers' Association made an appeal in *The Woman Teacher* for donations towards the heavy costs incurred by the dismissed

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<sup>150</sup> *The Schoolmaster*, 25 May 1923.

<sup>151</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 18 May 1923.

<sup>152</sup> *The Schoolmaster*, 25 May, 1923; *The Woman Teacher*, 1 June 1923.

<sup>153</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 27 May, 1921; 2 November, 1923.

<sup>154</sup> IOE: Rhondda dispute between Education Authority and the NUWT, Correspondence, 1921-29, UWT/D/10/42.

<sup>155</sup> IOE: Rhondda dispute between Education Authority and the NUWT, 25 September 1926.

<sup>156</sup> *The Times*, 15 July and 5 November 1925.

married women teachers in their action against the Rhondda UDC.<sup>157</sup> The incident in the Rhondda Valleys reflected the widening animosity between the two unions. Tensions between them became bitter and the issue was reported in the press as ‘Tyranny in Rhondda’.<sup>158</sup>

It is perhaps telling that the Rhondda women took action against the LEA independently of both unions and outside dominant structures. While the case has been interpreted as a feminist act, the ambiguous position of the NUWT in the district and the aftermath of the case suggest a more nuanced motivation. Indeed, it would be simplistic to present supporters and opponents of the marriage bar as reflective of feminism or anti-feminism. The official NUWT view was libertarian: that women, married or single, had a right to choose their way of life.<sup>159</sup> In this vein, the economic dependence of women was at the root of many evils. This was a view which was at odds with that of the majority of inhabitants. Rhondda had one of the lowest proportion of women in paid work in the coalfield towns: 14.4 per cent compared with 18.9 per cent in Aberdare. The reality of women’s personal lives did not fit neatly within the dichotomous picture presented by those who supported the implementation of marriage bars. The economic realities faced by women whose husbands were unable to work, were widowed, or had children, parents and younger siblings to support, must also be acknowledged. Women’s wages were often essential to the family income and cases of hardship of women forced to relinquish their employment were regularly reported.<sup>160</sup> Indeed for many married women, the ability to work in the professions was not necessarily driven by a belief in women’s right to equal employment opportunities, but, rather, an economic necessity.

In a region dominated by heavy industry, interwar unemployment and strict codes of gender, women in coalfield communities had few options for professional employment outside the teaching profession. However, the professional status of many women teachers, themselves low-paid in comparison to other professional workers and with minimal qualifications, is questionable. In class terms, too, their position was ambiguous: in the interwar period the majority attended training college, but this was

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<sup>157</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 18 May 1923.

<sup>158</sup> IOE: Rhondda dispute between Education Authority and the NUWT, 25 September 1926.

<sup>159</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 2 April 1920.

<sup>160</sup> *The Woman Teacher*, 5 July 1929.

subordinate to university-educated teachers and did not necessarily provide middle-class status or lifestyle. They also had different motivations and experiences from women in other regions and from many women who ‘drifted’ into teaching: this was a path determined more by the prospect of financial stability than vocational ambition. Professional women in these communities were also victims of the economic depression, cuts in public expenditure and the widespread introduction of marriage bars. Considerations of occupational and class interests so dominated the ethos of the local labour movement as to exclude almost completely any sense of gender. The response to the ‘Price versus Rhondda LEA’ case provides an example of the hostility women faced when they transgressed established gendered codes. However, it also shows how, despite being circumscribed by dominant ideologies of gender roles, women could exercise their agency outside established structures to contest regulations and shape their own lives. Professional women in coalfield communities, therefore, experienced tension between family, class and community allegiances on the one hand, and on the other, their status as an (often single) independent, educated professional woman.

#### ***(iv) Conclusion***

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of place in the experiences of women employed in professional occupations in Wales. The character of Welsh economic development – rapid industrialisation followed by economic decline and burgeoning commercial centres with mass inward migration – contributed to a complex and uneven professional landscape in the country. Larger commercial centres (such as Cardiff, Newport and Swansea) offered far greater opportunities for women’s employment in a more diverse range of professions than were available in mining and rural districts. Timing, context and individual circumstances also affected women’s ability to pursue a professional career and the occupation they chose: a woman’s opportunities for professional employment was determined by where she lived, her socioeconomic background, and the individuals she encountered. For some professional women, especially teachers, their employment was an economic necessity, rather than a vocational choice or a feminist statement. Yet, perceptions of teaching as a profession for women also varied within Wales: social divisions existed in relation to training and subsequent posts obtained. In commercial areas, where there was a greater and more

diverse middle class, teaching was increasingly viewed as a last resort for the recently graduated.<sup>161</sup>

In this chapter, social class is most evident as a determinant in women's ability to enter professional employment and the occupational roles they entered. As Ceridwen concluded: 'I mean you couldn't do medicine, dentistry, law, or anything like that – didn't have the money in any case. So it was training college'.<sup>162</sup> Oral histories also remind us of the influence of family and local traditions in determining which occupations were suitable for women to engage in, educational and professional training opportunities, and perceptions of married women's work. Opportunities for women's professional employment in the agricultural and rural regions of west, mid and north Wales were also limited. While a few exceptional women did gain employment as medical or dental practitioners, they were geographically isolated and lacked the institutional focus, evident in the commercial towns, from which to forge networks and agitate for political and professional equality. Rural regions also experienced difficulty in attracting suitable applicants to professional posts. These problems were compounded by a professional's ability to speak Welsh, which was particularly important for health professionals in areas dominated by higher proportions of monoglot Welsh speakers. Class, rooted in local occupational structures, also had a powerful influence on conceptions of femininity and indeed the professions. Consideration of how these issues played out in the local arena thus adds further nuance to findings in previous chapters by revealing the limitations on – as well as opportunities for – women's agency.

The professional experiences of women were also shaped by the local social, economic and cultural contexts in which they were employed. High maternal mortality rates, the density of the population and local traditions affected the precise nature of their professional work. Female doctors, academics and headmistresses often held prestigious positions in their communities and contributed to its civic culture. In turn, women's professional concerns were informed by issues directly affecting the areas in which they worked. Geographical barriers served to hinder the formation of national networks, with professional women in south Wales often identifying more with their counterparts in Bristol and the south west of England, than they did with their north

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<sup>161</sup> *Welsh Outlook*, 1914, p.196.

<sup>162</sup> Ceridwen Richards Interview.

Walian sisters. In Cardiff, feminist campaigners tied women's representation in professional positions to a wider movement to assert the city's status as the 'Metropolis of Wales' in the early twentieth century. Yet in coalfield communities, sex equality could be subordinate to other social referents including class and community. Pervasive codes of gender and perceptions of the family limited the employment of married women; this notion was also formalised through the widespread implementation of marriage bars. Situating women's professional employment within its geographical and historical context offers a better understanding of changes and disparities in their employment patterns. The economic, social and political context affected women's ability to participate in the professions and, in turn, shaped the nature of that engagement.

# Conclusion

This thesis is the first major study of women's professional employment in Wales during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It has suggested that although the Welsh experience mirrored many of the patterns of women's employment elsewhere in Britain, it did exhibit distinctive features. The most important differences were a consequence of the unique development of the educational system and the economic structure of the country. The inclusion of the educational interests of girls in the country's wider educational reform was the first major factor in shaping women's employment opportunities in Wales. From the late nineteenth century, education attained a political and cultural significance and the progress of women was used by some educationalists as a yardstick to measure the progress of the nation. In this vein, the equality of women in the University of Wales from its inception was seen by some as a sign of the progressiveness of Liberal Wales. This was, of course, largely a rhetorical strategy, and the claims were not always reflective of the reality of women's position, nor commensurate with support for their professional employment. However, the importance of these new educational developments should not be underestimated in affording women opportunities for economic independence and providing an institutional focus for the development of a network of educated women in Wales.

Second, the character of Welsh economic development meant that the limited opportunities for women's paid employment was most acutely felt in mono-industrial communities. Fuelled also by the programme of educational reform, teaching became the main employment opportunity for educated girls in Wales. While this was similarly the case for their British counterparts, the notably high proportion of women employed in the teaching profession in Wales was exacerbated by these two factors. By contrast, the urban commercial centres, which were predominantly located along the southern coastal belt, offered women greater scope for professional employment in a more diverse range of occupations. The smaller and concentrated nature of the middle class in Wales arguably provided more opportunities for professional women to forge cross-occupational networks and play a central role in the social, political and economic life of their communities. However, women's entry into many professions (including law, accountancy and architecture) was slow to materialise in Wales and women remained

confined to a narrow range of professional occupations by the outbreak of the Second World War.

Regional case studies have further highlighted the complex professional landscape of Wales. Place had a distinct impact on the way that women experienced professional employment and there was not a monolithic experience for women across the nation. In particular, linguistic, cultural and economic differences affected the nature of women's relationship with paid employment, and professional women played an important role in the contested meanings of Wales. The circumstances of individual women also shaped opportunities for professional employment; the timing of women's claims for admission into the profession, the local context in which they sought to carve their careers, the economic climate, and their access to informal and formal networks all contributed to the success of their entry. The local culture of professional practices reveals the diversity of the networks and feminist agitation, as well as the fluid and situational relationship between gender and the professions. These regional features of women's professional employment, in addition to the peculiar features of women's occupational experiences in Wales, show that gender ideals, opportunities for women's paid work and conceptions of the professions were geographically as well as historically specific.

By the outbreak of the First World War, there was a small group of professional women in Wales (including doctors, academics and teachers) who played a central role in promoting women's equality in public life and were active in the development of an organised suffrage movement. Analysis of their late nineteenth-century networks shows that support for women's suffrage had more indigenous roots in Wales than some historians have suggested. Women's professional employment was an avenue to advance feminist agendas and, for some, was the primary vehicle of their emancipation. In many ways, the efforts of women to gain entry into the professions forced further redefinition and repositioning of the women's movement. Similarly, women's involvement in suffrage campaigns also provided a context in which to make sense of their own professional concerns. The First World War gave women a platform from which they could showcase their professional ability and their work was included within a holistic narrative of Wales's contribution to the war effort. Welsh women acted as health inspectors in munitions factories, served abroad with the Scottish Women's



Hospitals, taught in mixed-sex schools, conducted scientific research for the War Office and continued their employment in their pre-war roles. The entry of women into higher education and traditionally male-dominated professions was undoubtedly accelerated by the war. Crucially, it also equipped women with the additional argument that they had proved their professional competency.

In the years succeeding the war, new professions were opened to women, notably the legal profession and the civil service. But women's entry into these was slow, and their representation in positions of seniority was poor. Feminist aims adapted to changing professional practices and socioeconomic contexts, in particular, for equal pay and for the abolition of marriage bars. Although the interwar period has been depicted in historical scholarship as one of retrenchment in feminist campaigning, an examination of professional women's engagement with it reveals the diversity and vibrancy of the women's movement during these decades. Yet, while more women entered the professional workforce during these years, the gendered ethos of the professions remained fundamentally unchallenged. Women experienced the liberating impact of earning a regular wage, and thus having increased autonomy over their economic lives. At the same time, however, they were still at a disadvantage to their male counterparts. Institutional obstacles were only part of the story and once they had gained a post, or set up independent practice, female professionals still encountered discrimination. They were likely to be clustered in certain fields within the profession, their chances of promotion were extremely limited and their pay was lower than their male colleagues. Overall, the interwar period was a decade of contradictions; defined by both advances and retrenchment in women's entry into the professions and not neat, linear progress.

Indeed, the story of women's entry into professional society was not one of neat, linear progress at all; apparent advances were made only through adherence to certain gendered ideologies and the gender composition of the higher professions did not significantly change for many more decades. Although the Second World War laid the foundations for a growing acceptance of women's employment, the sexual division of labour, particularly in the working class industrial communities of south Wales, remained largely unchallenged.<sup>1</sup> In the post-war period women faced the 'double

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<sup>1</sup> Mari A. Williams, *A Forgotten Army: Female Munitions Workers of South Wales* (Cardiff, 2002), p.262.

burden' of paid and unpaid work; a period of Welsh women's history still yet to be studied.<sup>2</sup> The marriage bar was finally abolished in 1944 in teaching and in 1946 in the Civil Service, but not before a generation of married women had had to choose between marriage and a career they had trained for.<sup>3</sup> The amalgamation of former single-sex schools into coeducational institutions after 1944 caused women to lose their headships. After many years of tireless struggle, not least by members of Wales's two strongest NUWT branches, Swansea and Cardiff, equal pay for teachers was eventually won in 1961, but even then was only introduced incrementally.

But to focus solely on the marginalisation of professional women is to obscure the integral part they played in the wider social, political and economic life of Wales and the development of the professions. Women used various strategies to aid their movement into the professions and sustain their occupational positions. These included negotiating societal norms and cultural ideals, forging their own professional networks, and working with the wider women's movement. Without previous female figures to emulate, many of the first women to qualify in the professions in the nineteenth century had to continually test boundaries of respectability, create alternative ideas of femininity centred on their occupational identity, or claim certain sectors as 'woman's domain'. By analysing the individual and collective approaches women used, the thesis has suggested that professional women exploited – rather than directly challenged – contemporary gender norms and professional practices.

The thesis has contributed to recent work on gendered professional identities by suggesting that women who aspired to, or were employed in, professional occupations in Wales, drew upon fluid frameworks of gender, class and nationhood. The contribution women could make to the morality, education and health of Wales was used to justify women's paid employment in medicine and to reform teaching in the late nineteenth century. Although Welsh symbolism and gendered ideas of nationhood were still used in propaganda in the interwar period, national identity was marginal compared to gendered identities which were shared with women across Britain, and more widely. Women's professional identities were partly concerned with occupational equality and partly concerned with gender difference; ideologies which were not mutually exclusive

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<sup>2</sup> Selina Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family in England, 1918-1950* (Oxford, 2005), p.229.

<sup>3</sup> Women's admission to the diplomatic profession in Britain was not achieved until 1946 and the Foreign Office did not abolish the marriage bar until 1973.

nor rigidly defined in practice. The earliest women entrants into the professions naturalised their employment by exploiting contemporary ideals of femininity. Occupations where they could be seen to make a unique gendered contribution, or to represent the interests of their own sex (as happened in medicine), were far easier to justify than when their employment was in direct competition with men. But notions of gender difference pigeonholed women into peripheral occupational roles and failed to challenge the underlying gendered nature of the professions. Arguments of sexual difference were thus used for different ends by both opponents and advocates of the women's movement; both as a means of empowerment and to undermine women's position in the public realm.

An overarching theme of this thesis is the way that professional women operated in a semi-detached feminine sphere outside of established male professional structures. This was evident in separate women's colleges, professional associations and their accompanying feminine cultures. The first generation of professional women in Wales created structures to negotiate the obstacles that they faced, which the second generation of women would benefit from. The interwar decades were the heyday of women's associational culture and these associations gave members recognition within British professional networks, as well as access to international networks. In Wales, geographical considerations and cultural differences hampered attempts to create nation-wide networks of professional women. National connections nurtured in the late nineteenth century through the movement to promote girls' education in Wales were eventually replaced by women's networks which operated at levels above or below the nation. The increasing number of women entering the professional workforce contributed towards a more targeted and institutionalised style of women workers' campaigns through women's associations in the interwar decades. Adopting the language of meritocracy, these organisations provided the structural platforms from which to advocate professional equality and created a more distinctive professional identity. While this should not obscure political, regional and class divisions, conclusions can be drawn about an overarching professional network of women during this period who sought to improve (predominantly middle-class) women's economic, social and political position.

Shifting the focus of Welsh occupational history from industrialisation to professionalisation has enhanced our understanding of class and gender relations in Wales. This first major study of the professions in Wales offers an alternative occupational historical landscape, which was actively shaped by women and their associations. Such a narrative provides an essential basis for further studies on women's paid work in Wales and makes an important contribution to our understanding of the uneven trajectory of women's professional employment in Britain. By studying women's employment across a range of professions and over a long time period, we are able to gauge a more holistic view of women's networks, their negotiation of gender ideals, and crucially their impact on wider society. This develops a model to base parallel studies of other British regions and nations, which would further enhance our understanding of the way women's relationship with the professions was geographically as well as historically specific.

# Biographies

Where possible, I have included the place of birth (*b.*) and death (*d.*), family background (*dau.*) and marital status (*m.*).

***Collin, Mary*** (1 April, 1860 – 22 July, 1955): headmistress, *b.* Cambridge, *d.* Cardiff.

***Education:*** Cambridge; Notting Hill High School for Girls, London; French and German (Hons), Bedford College, London; University of London.

***Career:*** Jersey Ladies' College; Assistant Mistress, Nottingham High School, 1884; Principal of St Catherine's School, Cardiff, 1892-95; Headmistress of Cardiff's High School for Girls, 1895-1924.

***Association membership:*** Association of Welsh Head Teachers; University of Wales; Central Welsh Board; Women's Liberal Association (Roath Ward); Chairman, Cardiff and District Women's Suffrage Society; Cardiff Women Citizens' Association; Ladies' Club, Cardiff; Executive Member, Head Mistresses Association; President, BFUW Cardiff and District Branch; Executive Member, International Federation of University Women.

***Other activities:*** Hon. Sec, Local Recruiting Committee for Women's War Service; Lady Mayoress' Committee for Women Workers; Recruiter, Women's Army Auxiliary Corps; Cardiff Free Libraries Committee; Member of the Council, UCSWM; Member of the Council, Aberdare Hall; Central Welsh Board of Intermediate Education and of the University Court of Wales; Awarded MA by the University of Wales for services to Welsh education (1925).

***Sources:*** Deirdre Beddoe, 'Mary Collin (1860-1955)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004); C. Carr, *The spinning wheel: City of Cardiff High School for Girls, 1895–1955* (1955); *City of Cardiff High School for Girls, 1895-1924* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1924); Arthur Mee (ed.), *Who's Who in Wales* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1921).

***Drinkwater [née Jay], Katharine Rosebery*** ([?] - 29 December 1939): medical doctor, *d.* Wrexham, *dau.* Dr Henry Jay M.D., F.R.C.S., *m.* Dr Henry Drinkwater, Wrexham.

***Education:*** Bath High School; BSc Bedford College; London School of Medicine for Women; Doctor of Public Health, University of Liverpool (1909).

***Career:*** Science Teacher; Commanding Officer, Military Families Hospital in Malta, 1916; Assistant Medical Officer of Health, Wrexham; established first child welfare clinic in Wrexham; joint medical practice with husband in Wrexham (after the death of her husband in 1925, she gave up general practice for a few years owing to ill-health, but resumed it in 1932).

***Association membership:*** BMA; MWF, Liverpool Branch; President, MWF North Wales Association; Chairman, Denbighshire and Flintshire Division of the North Wales Branch of the BMA (elected 1928); President, Wrexham and District Clinical Society (elected 1937).

**Other activities:** Lecturer, Order of St. John Ambulance Brigade Wrexham; the Red Cross, Denbighshire; awarded an OBE for work with the Military Families Hospital; in 1920 she was one of the first two women magistrates to be appointed in north Wales; first woman to be elected as Visitor to the North Wales County Mental Hospital.

**Sources:** *Wellcome Archives*: Medical Women's Federation Newsletter, January 1939 – October 1940, SA/MWF/B.2/10; *The Times*, 29 January 1909 and 10 June 1918.

**Eppynt-Phillips, Mary Elizabeth** (18 October 1874 – [?]): medical doctor, *b.* Priory Hill, Brecon.

**Education:** Cardiff Medical School, 1893-96; London School of Medicine for Women, 1897-1900; Royal Free Hospital, London.

**Career:** Medical Officer, Leeds; Medical Officer, Scottish Women's Hospitals in Serbia, Salonika and Corsica, 1914-17; Endell Street Military Hospital, 1918; Assistant Medical Officer of Health, Merthyr Tydfil.

**Association membership:** NUWSS; International Women's Franchise.

**Other activities:** By deed poll adopted the additional surname of Eppynt (Eppynt-Phillips) in September, 1919; Churchwoman; Committee for the Promotion of Medical Training for Women in Wales.

**Sources:** Alun Roberts, *The Welsh National School of Medicine, 1893-1931: The Cardiff Years* (University of Wales Press, 2008), pp.29, 43 and 49; Arthur Mee (ed.), *Who's Who in Wales* (1920); *The Times*, 26 September, 1919.

**Evans, Eluned**, (1919 - ): midwife, *b.* Wallasey *dau.* Chapel Minister

**Education:** Dr Williams' School, Dolgellau; Nursing and Midwifery Training, Liverpool Royal Infirmary.

**Career:** Machynlleth Hospital; District Nurse, Worcester; District Nurse, Bala 1944-52. Relinquished post on marriage.

**Other activities:** Methodist Chapel.

**Sources:** Eluned Evans, interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Llanuwchllyn, Bala, 12 May 2012.

**Evans, Erië**, (12 July 1873 – September 1948): physician, *b.* Woolwich, *dau.* Dr Griffith Evans (veterinary surgeon) and Catherine Mary, grand-daughter Rev. Owen Jones, *d.* Bangor.

**Education:** UCNW Bangor, 1894; London School of Medicine for Women.

**Career:** Medical Officer, Howell's Girls' School; Anaesthetist, Cardiff School Clinic; Medical Officer, Ministry of Health Clinic for Women, King Edward VII Hospital, Cardiff; Venereologist; Lecturer in Venereal Diseases, WNSM (appointed 1923); private practice, Dumfries Place, Cardiff.

**Publications:** Erië Evans, 'Influence of Parentage upon Infantile Mortality', *Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute* (1908).

**Association membership:** Cardiff Medical Society; BMA, South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch; Assessor of Division on Maternity Department of the Queen's

Nurses' Institute; WLA; Executive Committee, CDWSS; BFUW Cardiff and District Branch; League of National Union; NUSEC; Standing Committee for Venereal Diseases, MWF; Vice-President, Western and South Wales Association of MWF, 1923.

**Sources:** Arthur Mee (ed.), *Who's Who in Wales* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1920); *British Medical Journal*, 8 July 1916 and 14 December 1935; WA: *Medical Women's Federation Newsletter*, January 1949, SA/MWF.B2/15.

**Foxley, Barbara** (20 August 1860 – 26 August 1958): academic, *b.* East Riding, Yorkshire, *d.* Llandrindod Wells.

**Education:** private schools, Manchester and London; Newnham College, Cambridge, 1879; Historical Tripos, 1881; teaching certificate; MA, Trinity College, Dublin.

**Career:** Headmistress, Dewsbury Church School, 1885; Headmistress, Queen Mary's High School, Walsall; Mistress of Method, Manchester University; Mistress of Method, UCSWM, 1911-15; Professor of Education, UCSWM, 1915-1925.

**Publications:** Translation of Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Emile* (Everyman's Library edition, 1911).

**Association membership:** CDWSS; Executive Committee, NUSEC; Liberal Party; Teacher's Guild; President, CDWCA; NUWT, Cardiff Branch; BFUW, Cardiff and District Branch.

**Other activities:** Councillor, Cardiff City Council (elected 1924); Cardiff's Unitarian Church.

**Sources:** *The Times*, 28 August 1958; Deidre Beddoe, 'Barbara Foxley (1860-1958)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

**Griffiths, Margaret Eurfron**, (1921 -): teacher, *b.* Rhondda Valley.

**Education:** Local grammar school, Rhondda; Teacher Training College, London (1940-42).

**Career:** Teacher, Tonyrefail, 1942-62; Headmistress, Whitchurch Cardiff, 1962-81; taught communications skills at the Royal College of Music and Drama, Cardiff.

**Sources:** Margaret Eurfron Griffiths, interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Ynyshir, Rhondda Cynon Taf, 1 May 2013.

**Hoggan [née Morgan], Frances Elizabeth**, (20 December 1843 – 5 February 1927): physician. *b.* Brecon, Wales, *m.* George Hoggan, 1874, *d.* Brighton.

**Education:** Girls' School, Windsor; Paris, 1858; Dusseldorf, 1861; articled medical practitioner to Dr Elizabeth Garrett, 1866; University of Zurich, Doctor of Medicine, 1867-1870; clinical training, St Mary's Dispensary for Women and Children, London; clinical training, Vienna, Paris and Prague; Licentiate of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians, Ireland (1877) and member (1881); Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, Ireland and Licentiate in Midwifery (1887).

**Career:** Assistant Physician, St Mary's Dispensary, 1871; Assistant Physician, New Hospital for Women, 1872; Joint practice with George Hoggan (from 1874), 13 Granville Place, London.

**Publications:** ‘Verber Progressive Muskelatrophie’ (Thesis, University of Zurich, 1890); *On the Advantages of a Vegetarian Diet in Workhouses and Prisons* (1883); *Education for Girls in Wales* (London: Women’s Printing Society, 1879); ‘Women in Medicine’ in T. Stanton (ed.), *The Woman Question in Europe* (1884); ‘Medical Work for Women in India’, *Contemporary Review*, August 1881, and *Englishwoman’s Review* 15 April and 15 May 1885; ‘The Position of the Mother in the Family and its Legal and Scientific Aspects’ (1884); ‘The Microscope as Affording Employment and Recreation to Women’ (with hints for beginners how to set to work), *The Englishwoman’s Review*, 15 May, 1879; *On Swimming and its Relation to the Health of Women. On the Physical Education of Girls* (London, 1880); ‘Medical Women for India’, *The Contemporary Review*, August 1882; with George Hoggan, ‘Notes of a Case of Transfusion by Aveling’s Apparatus’, *British Medical Journal*, 31 March 1877; with George Hoggan, ‘On the Development of the Fat-Cell’, *Journal of Royal Microscopical Society*, 2, 4, (1879); with George Hoggan, ‘On the Lymphatics of Cartilage or of the Perichondrium’, *Journal of Anatomy & Physiology*, XV; with George Hoggan, ‘On the Comparative Anatomy of the Lymphatics of the Mammalian Urinary Bladder’, *Journal of Anatomy & Physiology*, (1881); with George Hoggan, ‘On the Comparative Anatomy of the Lymphatics of the Uterus’, *Journal of Anatomy & Physiology*, XV, (1881); with George Hoggan, ‘On the Lymphatics of the Pancreas’, *Journal of Anatomy & Physiology*, XV, (1881); with George Hoggan, ‘The Lymphatics of the Walls of the Larger Blood-Vessels and Lymphatics’, *Journal of Anatomy & Physiology*, XVII, (1882); with George Hoggan, ‘On some Cutaneous Nerve-terminations in Mammals’, *Linnean Society’s Journal – Zoology*, XVI (1882); ‘The Negro Problem in Relation to White Women’ in Gustav Spiller (ed.), *Papers on Inter-Racial Problems Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress held at the University of London, July 26-29, 1911* (London: The Peace Foundation, 1911), pp.364-7; ‘The American Negro and Race-Blending’, *Social Review*, (1909); ‘The Admission of Women to the Membership of the British Medical Association’, *British Medical Journal*, 23 February 1872.

**Association memberships:** Founder Member, Cobbe’s Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals Liable to Vivisection (from 1875); Society for Promoting the Employment of Women; Women’s University Club; founder and Hon. Sec. of the National Health Society, 1871.

**Other activities:** Preventive health measures and moral and sanitary reform; anti-vivisection campaigner; women’s suffrage; campaigner for girls’ education in Wales; campaigner against racial inequalities in the United States and South Africa.

**Sources:** Mary Ann Elston, ‘Hoggan, Frances Elizabeth (1843-1927)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004); Thomas Neville Bonner, *To the Ends of the Earth: Women’s Search for Education in Medicine* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp.38-41; *The Lancet*, 19 February, 1927; *BMJ*, 19 February, 1927; Frances Hoggan, ‘Women in Medicine’, *Contemporary Review*, August 1881.

**Jones, Helena Gertrude** (1870 – 4 September 1946): medical doctor, *b.* Llanrwst, north Wales.

**Education:** London School of Medicine and Royal Free Hospital, 1898-1901; Bachelor of Medicine, London; Doctor of Public Hygiene.

**Career:** worked in prison mission; Woolwich Infirmary; Medical Officer, Greenwich Infirmary; School Medical Officer, Yorkshire; Medical Officer, King’s Norton Education Board; Serbian Relief Fund, Corsica 1915; Assistant Medical Officer of Health, Rhondda 1916-1935.

**Publications:** Ethel Mary Elderton, Amy Barrington, Helena Gertrude Jones, Edith M.



M. de G. Lamotte, H.J. Laski, and Karl Pearson, 'On the Correlation of Fertility with Social Value. A cooperative study', *Eugenics Laboratory Memoirs*, 18 (1913); Correspondent for *The Suffragette News Sheet*.

**Association membership:** WSPU; Votes for Women Fellowship; Suffragettes of the WSPU.

**Other activities:** entered the Church of England sisterhood at 18 years old.

**Sources:** *British Medical Journal*, 21 September 1946; Ryland Wallace, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales, 1866-1928* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), p.71; *Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 1946; *Rhondda Leader*, 14 September 1946.

**Mackenzie [née Hughes], Hettie Millicent** (1863 - 10 December 1942): academic, *m.* John Stuart Mackenzie, 1898.

**Education:** Clifton; Switzerland; Bristol College; Cambridge Training College.

**Career:** One of five women appointed by the Gilchrist Trustees to the special Travelling Scholarships for Women Teachers in 1892, she was awarded a grant of £100 to spend two months studying at teacher training institutions for women and secondary schools in America; her work focused on methods for preparing teachers to work in schools across Wales and she became a firm advocate of co-educational instruction; Professor of Education, UCSWM, 1904-15; Hon. Dean of Education National Service Scheme, 1916.

**Publications:** *Freedom in Education: An Inquiry into its Meaning, Value, and Conditions* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925); (ed.), *John Stuart Mackenzie* (London, 1936); *Hegel's Educational Theory and Practice* (S. Sonnenschein & Co, 1909); *The Training of the Teacher* (1909).

**Association membership:** CDWSS; BFUW, Cardiff and District Association.

**Other activities:** Labour candidate for the University of Wales seat, 1918 parliamentary election.

**Sources:** *University College Magazine*, 1 December, 1892, p.68; *UCM*, 1, December, 1897; 2 December, 1902; *The Times*, 4 November 1922; *The Welsh Outlook*, December 1922; *Contemporary Portraits: Men and Women of South Wales and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1897); *The Times*, 15 December 1942.

**Marshall, Dorothy** (26 March, 1900 - 13 February, 1994): economic historian, *b.* Morecambe, Lancashire.

**Education:** Park School, Preston; History Tripos, Girton College, Cambridge, 1918-22; J. F. Cairnes Research Scholar in Economic History, 1922; PhD, Girton and LSE, 1923-26.

**Career:** Lecturer at Vassar College, New York, 1924-25; history teacher, Redhill and Reigate County School for Girls, 1925-27; Lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 1927-28; Visiting Tutor in Economic History at Girton, 1929-30; Lecturer, Bedford College, London, 1930-34; Senior Tutor, St. Mary's College and Lecturer at Durham University, 1934-36; Lecturer and Reader in History, UCSWM, 1936-67; Visiting Professor, Wellsley College, Massachusetts, 1962-63.

**Publications:** *The English Poor in the Eighteenth Century* (unpublished PhD thesis, LSE, 1926); *The Rise of George Canning* (London: Longmans, 1938); *The English People in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1956); *The English Domestic Servant in History* (London: Historical Association, 1949); *John Wesley* (Oxford University Press, 1965); *Dr Johnson's London*; *Industrial England 1776-1850* (London, 1982); *Life and Times of Queen Victoria*

(London, 1972); *Life of Lord Melbourne* (London:, 1977); *Fanny Kemble* (London, 1977); *Eighteenth Century England* (London, 1962).

**Association membership:** Hon. Fellow, University College, Cardiff (elected 1981); awarded an honorary doctorate at the University of Lancaster, 1984.

**Other activities:** Church of England.

**Sources:** Dorothy Marshall, *The Making of a Twentieth Century Woman: A Memoir* (London, 2003); *The Times*, 17 February 1994.

**Phipps, Emily Frost**, (7 November 1865 – 3 May 1943): headmistress and barrister, *b.* Devonport, England.

**Education:** Devonport Elementary School; Homerton Training College, Cambridge; Latin and Greek (First Class Hons.), London University; admitted to the Bar in 1925.

**Career:** Pupil teacher, Devonport, 1877; Headmistress of the infants' school attached to Homerton Training College, Cambridge; Headmistress, Storehouse, Devon; Headmistress, Higher Grade School, Devonport; Headmistress of Swansea Municipal Secondary Girls' School, 1895-1925.

**Publications:** *History of the National Union of Women Teacher* (NUWT, 1928); *Equality of Opportunity* (NUWT, 1928); *Equal Pay for Equal Work* (NUWT); correspondent for *The Vote*.

**Association memberships:** WFL (j.1908) and founder member of the Swansea branch (1910); NUT; NFWT (President 1915-1917, central council member 1913-1937, joint trustee 1918-1937, Editor of *The Woman Teacher*, 1919-1930, standing counsel from 1925); Swansea WLA; Open Door Council.

**Other activities:** Independent parliamentary candidate, Chelsea 1918; spoke French, German, Italian, and Welsh; vegetarian; contralto.

**Sources:** Hilda Kean, 'Emily Frost Phipps (1865–1943)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004); *The Lady's Who's Who: Who's Who for British Women 1938-39* (London), p.336; A. M. Pierotti, *The Story of the National Union of Women Teachers* (1963); IOE: Miss Phipps, death, obituary, tributes, 1943, UWT/B/13/3; *The Times*, 27 April, 1929; *The Vote*, 25 April, 1930; Avril Rolph 'Definitely Not a Doormat: Emily Phipps, Feminist, Teacher and Trade Unionist', *Swansea History Journal*, 22 (2014/15).

**Richards, Ceridwen**, (1918 - ): teacher, *b.* Blaina.

**Education:** Grammar School (1931-37); Cheltenham Training College (1937-39)

**Career:** Junior Teacher, Primary School, Mountsorrel, Leicester, 1939-41; West-Side Primary School, Blaina, 1941-61.

**Other activities:** Methodist Chapel.

**Sources:** Ceridwen Richards, interviewed by Beth Jenkins, Blaina, Blaenau Gwent, 19 April 2013.

**Wheeler, Olive Annie**, (4 May 1886 – 26 September 1963): academic, *b.* Brecon, *d.* Cardiff.

**Education:** Brecon County School for Girls; University College of Wales, Aberystwyth (BSc 1907; MSc 1911); Bedford College, London (DSc in Psychology, 1916); University of Paris.

**Career:** Teacher, Chesterfield High School; St George's Training College, Edinburgh; Lecturer in Mental and Moral Science, Cheltenham Ladies' College; Lecturer in Education, Manchester University, 1918-23; Dean of Education, Manchester University, 1923-25; Professor of Education, UCSWM, 1925-51; Dean of the Faculty of Education, 1948-51; Professor Emeritus, University of Wales, 1951-63; lecture tour, Canada, 1954. Her reputation as an educationist was based on her application of psychology to issues of educational policy and practice. As Dean of the Faculty of Education at Cardiff she helped develop closer links between the teacher training colleges and the universities, and established a collegiate centre in Cathedral Road, Cardiff, where local teachers could develop skills for research in schools and classrooms.

**Publications:** *Anthropomorphism and Science: A Study of the Development of Ejective Cognition in the Individual and the Race* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1916); *Bergson and Education* (Manchester University Press, 1922); *Youth: The Psychology of Adolescence and its Bearing on the Reorganisation of Adolescent Education* (1929, 2nd edition 1933), *The Adventure of Youth* (1937, further editions 1945 and 1950); *The Psychological Basis of Adult Education* (1938), *Nursery School Education* (1939); *Ludwig Beethoven and the Chiming Tower Bells* (Faber & Faber, 1951); *Creative Education and the Future* (University of London Press, 1936); *Mental Health and Education* (1961).

**Association membership:** Vice-President BFUW, Cardiff and District Branch; Executive Member, South Wales Association of Girls' Clubs; regional adviser to the South Wales Women's Voluntary Service; NUWT; Chair of Cardiff and District Nursery School Association; Chair of the South Wales District of the Workers' Educational Association; Welsh Joint Education Committee; Central Advisory Council for Education (Wales); Chair of the Welsh Advisory Committee for Youth Unemployment, 1947; Welsh representative on the General Advisory Council of the BBC; Fellow of the British Psychological Society; British Delegate to the International Congress of Psychology in Montreal, 1954; Council of the Welsh National School of Medicine, University Guild of Graduates.

**Other activities:** President of the Students' Representative Council at Aberystwyth, 1908; Labour parliamentary candidate, University of Wales seat, 1922; made a DBE in 1949 for services to education in Wales; Park End Presbyterian Church, Cardiff.

**Sources:** John B. Thomas, 'Wheeler, Dame Olive Annie (1886-1963)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2004); *The Times*, 15 November 1963; *Western Mail*, 28 September 1963; Mary Auronwy James 'Dame Olive Annie (1886-1963)', *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* (2009).

**Williams, Mary**, (26 June 1883 - 17 October 1977): linguistics professor. *b.* Aberystwyth,  *dau.* Rev. John Williams,  *m.* George Arbour Stephens, 4 January 1922.

**Education:** Aberystwyth Elementary School; Camden School, North London Collegiate School for Girls; Double First in French and German, University College of Aberystwyth [scholarship] (1901-05); M.A University College, Aberystwyth (1907); Research Fellowship, University of Wales (1907-10); Doctorate of the University of Paris (1910); National University of Ireland; BFUW Fellowship (1914).

**Career:** Junior Form Mistress in French and English, Portsmouth County Secondary School for Girls, 1905-06; Senior Mistress in French, Llandilo County School [Boys and Girls], 1906-07; Assistant Lecturer in French, University of Manchester, 1912-13; Lecturer in French, King's College London, 1913-18; Reader in French Language and Literature, King's College London, 1919-20; Head of Department and Reader in Romance and Philology, King's College London, 1920-21; Chair of Modern Languages, University College Swansea, 1921-1948; Professor of French and Acting Head of

Department, University of Durham, 1948-1952.

**Research:** Williams wrote her thesis on the French sources for Wolfram von Eschenbach's poem Parzival; she specialised in the influence of French Arthurian literature on Wales; Middle French, Middle Welsh; medieval literature; Arthurian studies.

**Publications:** 'Essai sur le Roman Gallois de Peredur' (PhD thesis); 'Llyma Vaoinogi lesu Grist' in *Revue Celtique*, t.XXXIII, pp.184-248; 'Life in Wales in Medieval Times', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1914-15, pp.136-194; *The Arthurian Romances. The Inter-relation of the French, German and Welsh Versions, and the Question of their Origin* (The Guild of Graduates, University of Wales).

**Association membership:** Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur, Officer d'Academie; President and Founder of the South Wales branch of the Modern Language Association; Vice-President, Swansea Liberal Association; Fellow of Royal Anthropological Society; Fellow of the University of Wales; Aberystwyth Old Students' Association; President of the London Society of Old Aberystwythians; President of University of London Welsh Society; Vice-President Young Wales Association; Vice-President Cercle Français, King's College; Life Member of Cymmrodorion Society; Life Member of Welsh Folk Song Society; Entente Cordiale; Modern Humanities Research Association; BFUW; Celtic Congress; President of Folklore Society, 1961-1963; International Universities' League of Nations Federation.

**Other activities:** Spoke Latin, Provençal, Italian, Welsh, French and German; renowned for being the first woman aeroplane passenger to fly the English Channel; history of Welsh music; tennis; swimming; golf; supporter and benefactor of the National Library of Wales.

**Sources:** NLW: Mary Williams Papers, GB0210; David Dykes, *The University College of Swansea: An Illustrated History* (Allan Sutton, 1992), p.99; *The Lady's Who's Who: Who's Who for British Women 1938-1939* (London: Pallas Publishing, 1938), p.445; *Who's Who in Wales* (Cardiff: Western Mail, 1937).

# Appendices

## Further notes on sources

*Census:* Edward Higgs argues that the accumulation of census data was not a value-free exercise, especially with regard to the work of women.<sup>1</sup> Women tended to be defined as dependants and it was common for nineteenth century enumerators to omit any occupational designation for married women. As a consequence it is problematic to accurately reconstruct the number of women engaged in professional employment.<sup>2</sup> The census compilers were cautious about recognising women's claims to be practitioners or students of professional occupations, no distinction was made between active and retired professionals, and part-time work was grossly under numerated. The figures only include professionals who were in the country at the time, and thus exclude those British women who were training or practising overseas, which is a particular problem for doctors.<sup>3</sup> Therefore the census data between 1881 and 1931 probably underestimates British-trained women relative to men. Furthermore, as Carr-Saunders and Wilson caution, 'the Census does not give any reliable indication of the total number of persons practising any profession, since with a few exceptions such as patent agent and veterinary surgeon, it is open to anyone to assume any general designation [s/]he pleases'.<sup>4</sup> Changing and discontinuous geographical, occupational and marital categories also make it difficult to analyse specific occupational employment trends over a longer period of time.

*The Medical Register:* Since the mid-1870s, each annual volume of the printed *Medical Register* has included tables giving the total number of registered doctors, new registrations and removals. However, the register only includes those who held registerable qualifications and applied to the General Medical Council.<sup>5</sup> Thus all those

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Higgs, 'Women, Occupations and Work in the Nineteenth Century Censuses', *History Workshop Journal*, 23 (Spring, 1987), p.60.

<sup>2</sup> Higgs, 'Women, Occupations and Work in the Nineteenth Century Censuses', p.63.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Ann Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service: A Sociological Study of their Careers and Opportunities', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1986)', pp.49-56: Elston provides a good discussion on reliability of data relating to numbers of medical women.

<sup>4</sup> A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford University Press, 1933), p.505.

<sup>5</sup> Elston, 'Women Doctors in the British Health Service', p.44.

who continued to practise unregistered after 1858 were omitted, including the small number of women with European medical degrees in the early 1870s.

*The Medical Directory:* The *Medical Directory* is compiled from forms sent to all whose names appeared in the previous year's *Medical Register*. Unlike the Register, the Directory's lists are arranged by area of residence, and the summary tables identify various geographical locations, including Wales and Monmouth. Inclusion in the *Medical Directory* was voluntary. Although totals of entries are tabulated, no separate totals for men and women are provided. It also includes retired doctors. Women changing their name on marriage makes it difficult to trace them continuously.

*University of Wales Calendar:* The Calendar annually recorded the number of staff and students at each constituent college of the University of Wales. However, the university did not always record those members of academic staff who were engaged on temporary contracts.

**Appendix 1** Number of men and women employed in professional occupations in Wales, 1881-1921

Year	Males	Females
1881	12,413	6,512
1891	14,814	10,147
1901	18,519	14,406
1911	22,367	18,453
1921	24,802	23,911

*Source:* John Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics* (Cardiff: Welsh Office, 1985), Vol.1, p.96.

**Appendix 2** Male and Female Students at the Cardiff Medial School/ Welsh National School of Medicine, 1903-21

<b>Academic year</b>	<b>Total male students</b>	<b>Total female students</b>	<b>Percentage of women students</b>
1903/04	40	3	7%
1904/05	40	2	5%
1905/06	48	3	6%
1906/07	54	2	4%
1907/08	54	2	4%
1908/09	60	3	5%
1909/10	52	1	2%
1910/11	54	2	4%
1911/12	44	3	6%
1912/13	36	6	14%
1913/14	32	5	14%
1914/15	33	4	11%
1915/16	56	8	13%
1916/17	54	21	28%
1917/18	63	32	34%
1918/19	128	37	22%
1919/20	204	44	18%
1920/21	210	42	17%

*Source:* Alan Roberts, *The Welsh National School of Medicine 1893-1931: The Cardiff Years* (University of Wales Press, 2008), p.258.

**Appendix 3** Number of full-time women medical and dental students attending university institutions in England, Scotland and Wales, 1924-1930

	<i>1924-25</i>	<i>1925-26</i>	<i>1926-27</i>	<i>1927-28</i>	<i>1928-29</i>	<i>1929-30</i>
England	1,197	1,059	933	862	821	842
Scotland	431	313	274	254	270	275
Wales	32	30	32	30	14	19
Total	1,660	1,402	1,236	1,146	1,108	1,136

*Source:* Returns made to the University Grants Committee, *BMJ*, 5 September, 1931 and 2 September, 1939.

**Appendix 4** Number of female medical practitioners in Wales and Monmouth, 1910-1938

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total number of female practitioners</b>
1910	9
1914	16
1918	24
1922	41
1926	88
1930	123
1934	135
1938	162

*Source: The Medical Directory, 1910-1938*



**Appendix 5** Full-time elementary school teachers by qualification in Wales, 1905-1937

	Certificated		Uncertificated		Others	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1905	2,281	2,414	675	3,321	12	1,572
1906	2,337	2,566	593	3,322	98	2,087
1907	2,433	2,801	618	3,479	125	2,295
1908	2,519	2,896	698	3,804	141	2,325
1909	2,637	3,115	841	3,871	96	2,284
1910	2,704	3,240	983	4,119	38	2,029
1911	2,799	3,409	1023	4,263	1	1,695
1912	2,907	3,504	1017	4,320	36	1,580
1913	3,058	3,612	960	4,343	32	1,525
1914	3,187	3,699	871	4,331	30	1,567
1920	3,444	4,700	463	4,506	15	1,567
1921	3,442	4,951	376	4,639	10	1,491
1922	3,650	5,111	384	4,632	3	1,389
1923	3,741	5,036	351	4,339	19	1,280
1924	3,886	5,082	340	4,184	11	1,078
1925	3,996	5,323	381	4,358	11	1,078
1926	4,040	5,318	400	4,393	39	1,008
1929	4,138	5,442	411	4,177	102	1,068
1931	4,218	5,530	427	4,080	111	1,012
1933	4,300	5,566	437	3,893	123	960
1935	4,317	5,487	415	3,629	134	913
1937	4,317	5,315	406	3,395	138	873

*Source:* John Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics Vol. 2* (Cardiff: Welsh Office, 1985), pp.225-26.

**Appendix 6** Number of university students and percentage of women students in Britain by country, 1900-1938

	<i>England</i>		<i>Wales</i>		<i>Scotland</i>		<i>Great Britain</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1900	13,845	15	1,253	38	5,151	14	20,249	16
1910	19,617	18	1,375	35	6,736	24	27,728	20
1920	33,868	23	2,838	28	11,746	26	48,452	24
1930	33,808	25	2,868	33	11,150	32	47,826	27
1938	37,189	22	2,779	27	10,034	27	50,002	23

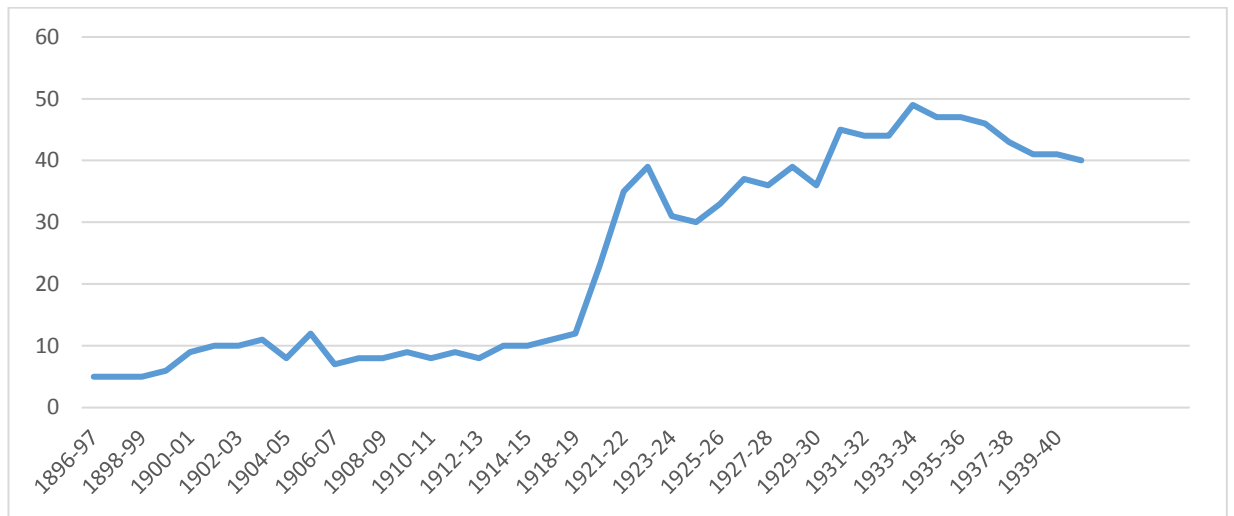
*Source: University Grants Committee Reports, in Robert D. Anderson, Universities and Elites in Britain since 1800 (Basingstoke, 1992), p.23.*

**Appendix 7.1** Total number of female members of academic staff employed at the constituent colleges of the University of Wales, 1922-1940.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Aberystnyth</i>	<i>Bangor</i>	<i>Cardiff</i>	<i>Swansea</i>
1922-23	13	9	11	6
1923-24	10	8	9	4
1924-25	9	7	10	4
1925-26	9	7	12	5
1926-27	9	10	12	6
1927-28	9	10	12	5
1928-29	9	10	15	5
1929-30	9	8	14	5
1930-31	13	10	16	6
1931-32	11	12	15	6
1932-33	11	11	16	6
1933-34	12	12	18	7
1934-35	12	10	18	7
1935-36	12	9	19	7
1936-37	10	9	21	6
1937-38	8	10	19	6
1938-39	8	10	17	6
1939-40	8	9	18	6

*Source:* Calendar of the University of Wales and College magazines, 1896-1942. From 1931 the WNSM is incorporated and recorded as a separate institution.

**Appendix 7.2** Number of female academic staff employed by the University of Wales, 1886-1942



*Source:* University of Wales Calendar, 1886-1942.

**Appendix 8** Number of men and women classified as employed in professional occupations in Wales, according to county, 1881-1921

	1881		1891		1901		1911		1921	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Anglesey	254	100	277	155	471	276	541	402	584	520
Breconshire	497	218	472	268	551	372	565	468	575	649
Caernarvon	1,090	447	1,288	796	1,450	882	1,621	1,043	2,038	1,686
Cardigan	813	205	857	309	762	368	792	459	1,040	601
Carmarthen	894	364	980	523	1,278	769	1,389	996	1,603	1,249
Denbigh	1,101	504	1,173	722	1,354	940	1,598	1,280	1,657	1,670
Flint	353	183	355	256	782	676	975	912	1,110	1,125
Glamorgan	3,674	2,437	5,268	4,243	7,388	6,435	9,622	8,297	10,745	10,760
Meirioneth	641	192	698	301	565	366	546	388	604	494
Monmouth	1,579	1,204	1,975	1,727	2,330	2,326	3,023	2,951	3,169	3,587
Montgomery	682	261	600	306	529	315	554	395	488	458
Pembroke	694	322	705	446	812	548	885	678	879	863
Radnor	141	75	166	95	247	133	256	184	310	249

*Source:* John Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics Vol.1*, (Cardiff: Welsh Office, 1985), pp.106-18.

**Appendix 9** Number of females employed in professional occupations shown as percentage of total females occupied in administrative counties in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire, 1921-1951.

<i>County</i>	<i>1921</i>		<i>1931</i>		<i>1951</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Glamorgan</b>	9,999	11.2	10,535	11.8	13,606	11.0
Cardiff CB	1,850	8.1	2,268	8.2	2,790	8.8
Merthyr Tydfil CB	669	14.2	606	15.5	674	10.9
Swansea CB	1,457	10.1	1,420	9.4	1,853	10.6
Aberdare UD	385	13.7	370	15.0	464	13.0
Bridgend UD	116	12.0	161	14.5	307	20.8
Maesteg UD	176	13.2	197	18.9	191	10.6
Mountain Ash UD	307	16.7	324	21.4	328	11.0
Neath MB	123	7.7	237	9.2	404	11.3
Ogmore and Garw UD	176	14.8	192	20.3	195	11.8
Pontypridd UD	342	11.6	368	14.2	393	9.1
Rhondda UD	1,043	15.3	1,151	21.0	1,232	11.8
<b>Monmouthshire</b>	3,373	11.9	3,735	13.5	4,642	11.6
Newport CB	795	9.0	809	8.9	1,183	9.7
Abertillery UD	188	12.4	192	15.7	225	10.8
Blaenavon UD	74	13.3	75	16.3	62	8.6
Ebbw Vale UD	249	15.6	215	16.3	275	13.0
Nantyglo & Blaina UD	103	16.8	127	26.4	144	16.6
Pontypool UD	53	9.4	51	10.8	544	13.1
Tredegar UD	177	14.6	197	19.7	228	14.0

*Source:* Mari A. Williams, *A Forgotten Army: Female Munitions Workers of South Wales, 1939-1945* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002), pp.264-270.

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*Cardiff Argus*  
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### 2.3. Theses and Papers

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