

The Welsh Revival (1904-1905):
Recovering the Role of Welsh Women.

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Abstract.

The Welsh Revival of 1904-05 marked a period of social and religious change throughout Wales. For eighteen months, chapels were filled and public houses emptied as the country was engulfed in an emotional, religious frenzy, which many believed to be the work of God. Previous research has focused on the role of Evan Roberts, the enigmatic revivalist who was portrayed as the divinely appointed leader of the movement. My original contribution to knowledge is an analysis of the role of women during the Revival, an aspect of the Revival's history which has remained unexamined. In particular, this work analyses the contribution of Jessie Penn-Lewis, Allen Raine and the revivalist women who worked both alongside, and independently of, Roberts. Although Penn-Lewis has been included in most Revival studies, she has been wrongly portrayed as a divisive woman who sabotaged the movement by deliberately ending Roberts's ministry, acting as a spiritual Jezebel. Although a popular author at the turn of the twentieth century, Allen Raine's Revival critique, told through her novel *Queen of the Rushes*, has yet to be included within an examination of the Revival. Although Roberts was a key figure in the development and success of the movement, the 1904-05 Revival was the first of its kind to allow women to lead meetings and address congregations. This work examines the role of these women, questioning why so little is known of their wider identities or what happened to them once the Revival ended, following Roberts's departure from Wales in August 1906. The final chapter considers the afterlife of the Revival, questioning the way in which the movement enabled women to move beyond the role of wife and mother, assessing its role in the emancipation of Welsh women.

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Introduction.

In June 2002, the school room of Moriah Chapel, Loughor, was registered as a grade two listed building. It was granted historical status because it was where ‘Evan Roberts addressed [a] youth meeting on 31 October 1904 that [marked the] beginning of the Welsh Revival of 1904–05.’¹ In 2004, the Revival’s centenary renewed both public and academic interest in the phenomenon. The National Library of Wales held an exhibition commemorating the movement and contemporary eyewitness and newspaper accounts were re-published.² *Amazing Grace*, a musical production, written by the Welsh singer-songwriter Mal Pope, dramatized the story of Roberts and the Revival and was performed in a number of venues in Wales, whilst S4C commissioned a two-part documentary, chronicling the development of the phenomenon.³ Yet, the legacy and afterlife of the Revival is something of an anomaly. Although the Revival only lasted for a period of eighteen months both Roberts and the Revival are considered an important part of early-twentieth century Welsh history. Today, echoes of the Revival remain popular in the mind of Welsh evangelical churches and it has been claimed that the phenomenon was of significant inspiration to the development of the Pentecostal movement.⁴

¹ file:///C:/Users/welrish%20II/Downloads/LB479_-_Schoolroom_at_Capel_Moriah.pdf [accessed 21 January 2018].

² Examples include: D. Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1951 reprinted by Belfast, Ambassador Productions, 2004), J. V. Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, (London, Chapman & Hall 1909 reprinted by Oswestry, England, Quinta Press, 2004), G. Campbell Morgan, ‘The Revival: Its Power and Source’ in *The Welsh Revival*, (Boston, Pilgrim Press, 1905 reprinted by Charleston, USA, Biblio Press), *Religious Revival in Wales: ‘Awstin’ and Western Mail special correspondents 1904-1905*, (Original Publication the Western Mail reprinted by Shropshire, Quinta Press, 2004).

³ <http://www.malpope.com/grace/> & <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/reviving-revival-100-years-2417621> [accessed 1 February 2018].

⁴ D. R. J. Ollerton, *The Revival’s Children: Early Welsh Pentecostalism in the Growth of Bethlehem Pentecost Church*, (Port Talbot, Talbot Printing Company, 1980).

Historically, Wales experienced successive local and national revivals which strengthened the importance of Welsh Nonconformity. The 1904-05 Welsh Revival was, to date, the last of its kind, appearing to mark the end of this religious tradition within Wales. In 1904, Roberts and his Revival ministry captured the imagination of both the Welsh people and the Welsh national press. Roberts, a former collier with modest education and no theological training, began conducting Revival meetings in his home parish, Loughor. These meetings were popularised by the *Western Mail* and the *South Wales Daily News*, which claimed that the chapels were full, people queued to hear Roberts speak and Loughor had become a spiritually conscientious town, caught in the grip of a great Revival.⁵ Welsh theologian Robert Pope observed that the Revival was remarkable as it was one of only a few events in early twentieth century Welsh history which ‘elicited such various responses.’⁶ Roberts was seen as an attractive young man, a mysterious evangelist, and was compared to previous revivalists and religious reformers such as John Wesley and Daniel Rowland.⁷ Described as a ‘strange, wonderful young man sent from God, with a wonderful smile and [... a] piercing glance [in] his dark eyes,’ popular opinion claimed that Roberts was the instigator of the Revival and God’s chosen revivalist.⁸ In contrast, Revival critics argued that Roberts was not a divinely appointed figure and that he was leading an emotionally charged, fraudulent movement which detracted from the true Revival of God.⁹ The Revd V. J. Morgan, described Roberts’s impact upon the Revival thus: ‘With Evan Roberts, it can be safely said that people were moved more by the mystery

⁵ *Western Mail*, 10 November 1904, p. 4.

⁶ R. Pope, ‘Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05’ in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 57, No. 3, (2006), p. 515.

⁷ Matthews, *I Saw the Welsh Revival*, (reprint 2004), p. 123.

⁸ M. Bickerstaff, *Something Wonderful Happened: A little book about Revivals for children*, (Liverpool, Hugh Evans and Sons, 1954), p. 76.

⁹ This view was expressed by Revd Peter Price, Allen Raine, Rosina Davies and, to an extent, Jessie Penn-Lewis, all of whom are discussed within this thesis.

of the man than by his cause.’¹⁰ For some, the emotional exuberance of the Revival was insincere and unsustainable and although the Revival inspired congregations, once it had ended Welsh Nonconformity was left in a state of irreparable decline.¹¹ D. R. Davies, the brother of two prominent revivalist women Annie and Maggie Davies, described the Revival as: ‘the swan song of the old religious tradition,’ claiming that it had marked the end of a dying Welsh religious tradition.¹² However, the majority of contemporary accounts emphasised the importance of Roberts’s role in the movement and subsequent studies have followed suit. Roberts played an undeniably important role in the Revival, yet his involvement was exaggerated by the Welsh daily press which presented him as a religious ‘hero.’¹³ This has had a lasting impact upon the Revival’s historiography, developing a mythology which has perpetuated the view that this was the ‘Evan Roberts Revival.’

This thesis, comprised of seven chapters, aims to rediscover the role of Welsh women as significant contributors to, and commentators on, the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. The examination of the role and views of women throughout the Revival provides a significant contribution to knowledge that can inform future studies of both the Revival and twentieth-century Welsh history. Previous Revival studies have focused on Roberts and the development of the phenomenon, with very little information regarding the roles and identities of the Revival women being included in earlier work. Despite a resurgence in academic interest in the Revival, little has been done to establish the extent of women’s ministry or the wider role of women during this time.

¹⁰ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and A Criticism*, (reprint 2004), p. 40.

¹¹ M. Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales: 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2016), p. 219.

¹² D. R. Davies, *In Search of Myself: The autobiography of D. R. Davies*, (London, Geoffrey Bless, 1961), p. 37.

¹³ J. A. Owen, ‘A Study of Orality and Conceptuality During the Welsh Religious Revival of 1904-06’, (unpublished doctoral thesis, Birmingham University, 1997), p. i.

Women were integral to the success and development of the movement. Probably, there were more female than male revivalists – a point which is difficult to prove as so many of the women who actively participated in the movement were not named by contemporary sources. Women preached, sang, encouraged conversions and supported new converts. They worked alongside, and independently, of Roberts and other male figures, yet their role as revivalists has been largely forgotten. Instead, they have been remembered as Revival singers and Roberts’s helpers and followers. In contrast, Jessie Penn-Lewis, the only woman to have been included in the majority of Revival studies, has been vilified as a spiritual ‘Jezebel.’¹⁴ She was accused of luring Roberts away from Wales, forcing him to abandon his country and ministry and ending the Revival. Her achievements as a prolific theologian and international evangelist have been ignored in favour of presenting her as a dangerous woman who spiritually damaged Wales.

Welsh literature written in English, played an important role in the recording and retelling of Wales history. Life in industrial Wales was a popular topic and the 1904-05 Welsh Revival featured in a range of novels. Jack Jones, whose work is discussed in chapters one and six, included the Revival in *Black Parade* (1935) and *Some Trust in Chariots* (1948).¹⁵ In *Black Parade*, Jones described the Revival and Roberts: ‘Out of the west, came the Welsh John the Baptist of the twentieth century, and like a wildfire the great Revival spread through Wales. A pale faced collier armed with power from God started on his task of saving Wales.’¹⁶ Rhys Davies’s *The Withered*

¹⁴ K. Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, (Llanelli, Shedhead Productions, 2004), p. 139.

¹⁵ J. Jones, *Some Trust in Chariots*, (New York: William Sloane Associates inc, 1948) & J. Jones, *Black Parade*, (London, Faber & Faber 1935 reprinted by Swansea, Parthian Press & Library of Wales, 2009) Kindle Edition.

¹⁶ S. Knight, ‘On Stony Ground’ in K. Gramich (ed), *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English*, (Swansea, Parthian Press & Library Press, 2011), p. 19.

Root (1927), focused on the protagonist Reuben Daniels, a parody of Roberts. He presented the Revival as debauched and emotionally indulgent.¹⁷ Through Davies's narrative, Welsh Nonconformity was 'seen as a negative, [...] unnatural sublimation of desire, [told] through the special lens of the Revival and the experiences of Evan Roberts.'¹⁸ However, the most significant, fictional, Revival account was written by Ann Adaliza Puddicome, a Welsh author writing in English, who wrote under the male pseudonym 'Allen Raine.' Raine's *Queen of the Rushes* (1906) was a critical examination of the Revival and its impact upon the lives of Welsh people.¹⁹ In the novel, Raine examined the social consequences of the Revival, particularly the effect of the emotionally intense meetings upon Welsh working-class women. From the narrative, it is clear that she was concerned by the emotional intensity of the Revival and thought that this was distracting congregations from the true Revival of God, which, for Raine, was a peaceful, reflective movement led by the Holy Spirit. In 1904, Raine raised these concerns in a letter to the *Western Mail*. However, this letter received no response. In 1906, she published a fictional account of the phenomenon, which included a description of Roberts conducting a Revival meeting. *Queen of the Rushes* was an international best-seller and arguably the most widely read account of the movement. However, despite the significance of this novel, Raine's work has yet to be analysed as part of a comprehensive study of the Revival. As a result, a significant female voice has been absent from the historical understanding of this religious phenomenon. Establishing Raine as an important critic of the Revival is

¹⁷ R. Davies, *The Withered Root*, (London, Robert Holden, 1927, reprinted by Swansea, Parthian Press & Library of Wales Press, 2008).

¹⁸ Knight, 'On Stony Ground' p. 19.

¹⁹ A. Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1906, reprinted by Cardiff, Honno, 1998).

central to this work and analysing her Revival novel, in the context of a Revival study, is an important and original contribution to the Revival's historiography.

To date, there has been no published comparison between Raine's letter published in the *Western Mail* and the letter written by Revd Peter Price. Price's letter was published in the same newspaper a month later than Raine's and expressed many of the same views. Price's letter received numerous replies and has been included in the majority of Revival studies. In contrast, Raine's letter received no response and has yet to be included in the Revival's historiography. An examination Raine's letter to the *Western Mail*, and a critical comparison of her views and the views expressed by Price, are included in chapter five. Chapter three of this thesis provides evidenced arguments in support of a new understanding of the life and work of Jessie Penn-Lewis. Previous Revival studies have supported the view that Penn-Lewis played a significant role in spiritual downturn and ending the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. However, these views were largely based on the personal accounts of disappointed Revival converts and the Welsh newspapers. Chapter three challenges this former view and presents a new understanding of Penn-Lewis's international ministry and involvement with Roberts and the Revival. This work has been evidenced by examining her personal papers and diary accounts which have yet to be analysed and presented as part of a study on the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. Chapter six investigates the role of the female revivalists, establishing that their Revival ministries were not restricted to hymn signing. Where possible, this work expands on the wider identities of these women, whilst establishing the need for further investigation into their post-Revival lives. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to engage with a variety of different research methods and to draw on sources that had not previously been considered within the Revival's scholarship.

In general, the rediscovery of lost women's lives has presented feminist historians with a complex problem, requiring a multifaceted approach. One method has been to publish excerpts of diaries through which women accounted for their experiences of daily life. This has enabled fresh insight in the lives of women of previous eras, enabling historians to 'flesh out the skeletal pictures of women's lives over the last centuries.'²⁰ For obvious reasons, diary writing was 'most popular among the leisured and literate upper and middle classes, though by no means confined to them.'²¹ Although the female revivalists were from the industrial, Welsh working-class communities, it is reasonable to presume that the majority of them were literate and had received a moderate level of education. Given the popularity of diary writing during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, it is probable that at least some of these women kept diaries, documenting the Revival and their post-Revival lives. However, if they did, the significance of these records was not recognised at the time, and their accounts have become a forgotten history.

It seems unlikely that any of the Revival women wrote an autobiography. There are no records of manuscripts, and it was rarer for women to produce this type of work. Although none of the male revivalists were known to have written an account of the Revival, Roberts maintained that *War on the Saints* was his spiritual autobiography, a discussion of which is included in chapter three. Interestingly, the only known autobiographical accounts of women who experienced the Revival were written by Penn-Lewis and Rosina Davies. Both of these women were successful evangelists in their own right prior to the Revival. Perhaps the Revival women themselves did not recognise the significance of their role in the phenomenon, or perhaps the active

²⁰ S. Gristwood, *Recording Angels: The Secret World of Women's Diaries*, (London, Harrap, 1988), p. xi.

²¹ *Ibid* p. 5.

participation of women throughout the Revival, and the way in which they travelled alongside and independently of male revivalists, may have damaged their subsequent reputations. This may have deterred them from providing a detailed account of their Revival work.

The opening chapters of this thesis contextualise the Revival and the position of women during the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth-century Welsh society, and the role of Evan Roberts and his Revival ministry. Chapter one provides an analysis of the impact of the Industrial Revolution upon the role of women within the home and the lasting legacy of the 'Blue Books' reports, a government inquiry into the state of education in Wales which depicted Welsh working-class women as immoral and incapable wives and mothers. This chapter also offers an historical account of the importance of Nonconformity in Wales and the prevalence of revival movements as a social and religious mechanism which shaped Welsh religiosity. Chapter two considers current scholarship on the 1904-05 Welsh Revival, including both contemporary and later accounts as well as an analysis of the newspaper reports which publicised Roberts and the Revival. This chapter also provides a biographical account of Roberts and his role in the phenomenon, challenging the view that his ministry was the sole source of the phenomenon. Throughout 1904-05, merchandise and memorabilia depicting Roberts and some of his fellow revivalists were extremely popular. Included in chapter two are examples of this merchandise, including crockery displaying Roberts's image, analysing the impact that this material had upon public awareness and engagement with the Revival.

Chapter four examines Raine's work, assessing the portrayal of Nonconformity and Welsh working-class women in her writing. Raine's novels were lost from literary and critical attention in favour of the works of the Welsh author Caradoc Evans. Evans's

descriptions of the degrading poverty of Welsh life and the tyranny of Nonconformist clergy were controversial but critically acclaimed and he was credited as the first author of Welsh novels written in English worthy of literary note. Chapter four establishes Raine as a credible author, commentator and critic of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival Chapter five analyses Raine's Revival novel, *Queen of the Rushes*, examining her portrayal of the consequences of the emotionally fuelled chapel meetings compared to peaceful, private examples of individuals and a oneness with God – examples of what Raine believed to be the true Revival.

The concluding chapter considers the afterlife of the Revival, questioning its effect upon the development of Pentecostalism and considering the role of Moriah Chapel, Loughor, in perpetuating the belief in Roberts as the central revivalist. Finally, this thesis will consider how and why the Revival impacted upon the lives of Welsh women, questioning why so little is known of these women today and reflecting on the impact of the Revival upon the legacies of Raine and Penn-Lewis.

Chapter one:

The Religious and Gender Context of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Introduction.

Religious revivals were an important feature of both Welsh society and Nonconformity. The country became known as “Gwlad Y Diwygiadau,” (the Land of Revivals), with the Welsh expecting a major regional, if not national, revival every ten years or so.¹ The 1904-05 Revival was the best documented example of its kind, largely due to the publicity it received from the daily Welsh press, especially the *Western Mail* and the *South Wales Daily News*. Newspaper accounts reported on the positive influence of the Revival, emphasising a decrease in crime, an increase in sobriety and a general improvement in the attitude and behaviour of colliers, in particular. To date, this was the last of the great Welsh revivals and its legacy has endured within the popular mind, conjuring images of large congregations and fervent prayer meetings, a time when Wales was in communion with the divine.

It is important to consider the social, cultural and religious topography of nineteenth and early twentieth century Wales. Today, Britain is sometimes considered a post-Christian country, aptly examined by the work of Callum Brown in his work *The Death of Christian Britain*.² Throughout England and Wales, churches and chapels have witnessed a dramatic decline in membership, finance and clergy as Christian practice is no longer considered central to British life. With significantly fewer couples choosing to marry within the Church and Baptism numbers in decline, Brown argued

¹ J. A. Owen, ‘A Study of Orality and Conceptuality During the Welsh Revival of 1904-05’, (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1997), p. 37.

² C. G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000*, (Oxford, Routledge, 2009).

that British Christianity has seen the end of the ‘inter- generational renewal of Christian affiliation, a cycle which had tied people [...] to Christian moral benchmarks.’³ The 2011 decennial census for England and Wales found that fifty-nine percent of the country viewed themselves as Christian, a decline of twelve percent, and that ‘Wales had the highest proportion of people reporting no religion, at nearly a third of the population.’⁴ Given these figures, it is difficult to comprehend the importance of religious life for previous generations of Wales. This chapter will give context to the Revival, examining the impact of the Industrial Revolution within Wales and the importance of Nonconformity as a spiritual and cultural institution during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This will be followed by an analysis of Welsh revivalism prior to 1904 and a discussion on the impact of industrialism upon women’s lives and their position in Welsh Nonconformist society. Women were integral to the success and development of the 1904-05 Revival; to fully understand the phenomenon, it is important to consider the difficulties that women faced at the start of the twentieth century. This analysis will enable an accurate reading of the work of Jessie Penn-Lewis, Allen Raine and the female revivalists. These women participated in, and commentated on, the development of the Revival yet have been misrepresented, forgotten and marginalised within the Revival’s historiography.⁵

³ *Ibid*, p. 5.

⁴ *Religion in England and Wales 2011*, (London, Office for National Statistics, 2012), pp. 1, 3 & 5.

⁵ The life and work of Jessie Penn-Lewis will be examined in chapter three. Chapters four and five will present an analysis of the work of Allen Raine, and her contemporary critique of the Revival. Chapter six will consider the importance of the Revival women and their significant contribution to the development of the phenomenon.

Wales and the Industrial Revolution.

The 1985 ITV documentary, *The Dragon has Two Tongues*, claimed that Welsh history can either be read through the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the political struggles of the Welsh, or through the country's Christian heritage and, ultimately, the prominence of Nonconformity.⁶ This is a rather unsophisticated distinction. For the Welsh working classes, both industry and Nonconformity were the intertwined reality of daily life. The Industrial Revolution transformed Wales, dramatically changing its landscape, life-style and culture. Although agriculture was important in Denbighshire, Carmarthenshire and Caernarfonshire, these counties were economically affected by industrialism. Caernarfonshire produced a significant percentage of Welsh slate, increasing the output 'from under 20,000 tons in 1786 to over 90,000 tons in 1831.'⁷ Denbighshire was the second largest lead mining region in Wales, whilst copper mining was a crucial source of employment throughout South-East Carmarthenshire.⁸ Yet, it was the coal industry which 'dominated the Welsh economy' owing to the large coal fields which spanned around one thousand square meters.⁹ Welsh coal was used to power railways and ships, and by 1840 1.5 million tons of Welsh coal was being shipped to Bristol and Plymouth each year.¹⁰ Collieries expanded throughout the second half of the nineteenth-century and South Wales became one of the most important sources of coal in the world. By 1870, Wales produced sixteen million tons of coal annually, which rose to forty-two tons by 1900.

⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound and Archive, AGSSC / SM (SM 001333/01 Cell E123), G. A. Williams and W. Vaughan - Thomas, *The Dragon has Two Tongues*, (HTV Cymru, 1987).

⁷ D. G. Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 23.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 17.

⁹ G. E. Jones, *Modern Wales*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 171 & D. Jones, 'Counting the Cost of Coal: Women's lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911' in A. V. John (ed), *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 110.

¹⁰ Jones, *Modern Wales*, pp. 171-172.

This was shipped from the Southern ports of Cardiff, Barry, Swansea and Newport, marking the South Welsh coast as the ‘trading centre of Wales and a focal point of the world’s economy.’¹¹

Industrialism particularly affected South Wales with large population increases, driven by the copper, coal and iron industries. In 1800, the total population of Wales was less than six-hundred thousand, with agriculture the largest source of employment. By 1900 the population was over two million people, with over half of the populace living in the South Wales valleys.¹² Large scale employment encouraged migration from England and Ireland but also inspired a population shift from North to South Wales. Historian Gwyn Williams stated that to fulfil the increased demand for labour in South Wales ‘the population was forcibly relocated [and the] rest of Wales had to adjust’¹³ Between 1851 and 1910, 366,000 people migrated to South Wales. By 1911, over sixty-two percent of the population lived in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire, compared with just 19.7 percent in 1801.¹⁴ Glamorgan experienced the highest increase in population as by 1911, over one million additional inhabitants had moved into the county, meaning that forty-six percent of Wales’s total population resided within this county.¹⁵ As a town, Merthyr Tydfil saw one of the largest population rises, from 22,083 in 1831 to 51,979 forty years later.¹⁶ Before the mid-seventeenth century, Cardiff was a small market town, yet as Cardiff docklands was

¹¹ *Ibid*, pp. 171-174.

¹² D. Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 9.

¹³ G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales*, Transcript of BBC Wales Annual Radio Lecture 1979, (Cardiff, Qualitex Printing Limited, 1979).

¹⁴ Population growth and percentage changes were calculated using the figures published by L. J. Williams. L. J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Statistics: Volume One*, (Pontypool, The Welsh Office, 1985), pp. 7, 17 & 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁶ P. O’Leary, *Claiming the Streets: Processions and Urban Culture in South Wales c. 1830-1880*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 43.

the means of exporting the products of heavy industry, by 1871 it became ‘the most populous town in Wales.’¹⁷ In contrast, the largest population declines were in the Northern and Western rural counties such as Cardiganshire and Montgomeryshire.¹⁸

As workers migrated to the industrialised regions of Wales, overcrowding and poor sanitation became problematic for both health and sobriety.¹⁹ In Merthyr Tydfil, numerous workers were housed in small stone huts that lacked ventilation, lighting and sanitation. Houses were built in rows, often ‘two to five deep and sometimes, three stories high.’²⁰ Inadequate planning regulation led to dense housing developments and small roads that were filled with household rubbish. Those lodging with families found living conditions difficult as each home contained up to six lodgers and a large family. It was thought that this intense overcrowding encouraged men to spend time in public houses, where workers were often paid their wages.²¹ This led to increased levels of drunkenness. By the mid-nineteenth century, Merthyr Tydfil became known as ‘the hell of the Principality’; a government led report into the state of housing in 1849 stated that within this district ‘there was almost a complete absence of drainage; a complete absence of public water supply [...]. Most roads were unmade and the infant mortality rate was very high.’²² Despite the economic importance of Welsh coal, little was done to support and improve the living conditions of the workers and their families.

¹⁷ D. C. James, ‘The Cholera Epidemic of 1849 in Cardiff’ in *Morgannwg: The Journal of Glamorgan Local History*, Vol. 25, (1981), p. 166.

¹⁸ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales*, p. 9.

¹⁹ W. R. Lambert, ‘Drink and Work-Discipline in Industrial South Wales’ in *Welsh History Review Cylchgrawn Hanes Cymru*, Vol. 3, No. 7, (1975), p. 290.

²⁰ E. T. Davies, *Religion in the Industrial South Wales*, (Cardiff University or Wales Press, 1965), p. 44.

²¹ Lambert, ‘Drink and Work-Discipline in Industrial South Wales,’ pp. 290 -291.

²² Davies, *Religion in the Industrial South*, p. 46.

Wales and Nonconformity.

As the Industrial Revolution impacted on Welsh working lives, Nonconformist chapels stood as important landmarks in each town and village, providing a religious, educational and social centre to the community. Nonconformity became ‘the means of directly and indirectly, effecting changes – social, religious and political,’ throughout the country.²³ The Welsh were proud of their Christian heritage, exemplified by the words of Sanders Lewis, founder of the Welsh national party, Plaid Cymru: ‘We are a Christian country. When Wales was formed, [...] we were already Christians.’²⁴ It was thought that Welsh was one of the God-given languages at the *Tower of Babel* and that this placed the Welsh language ‘on a par with the great classical languages of Hebrew, Greek and Latin.’²⁵ Wales was ill prepared for the population increase and radical cultural changes that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. The Welsh language was an increasingly important means of preserving Welsh national identity. Language was an undeniable distinction between the Welsh and the English, and to be Welsh was to speak Welsh. The 1904-05 Revival was, for the most part, conducted in Welsh. Evan Roberts, a collier turned revivalist, whose name became indelibly associated with the phenomenon, conducted the majority of his meetings in Welsh.²⁶ At times he refused to speak in English, claiming that the Holy Spirit would only permit him to speak in Welsh because Welsh was the language

²³ V. Cambrenesis, *The Rise and Decline of Welsh Nonconformity: An Impartial Investigation*, (London, Pitman & Sons, 1912), p. 1.

²⁴ E. W. James, “‘The birth of a people’: Welsh language and identity and the Welsh Methodists, c. 1740-1820” in R. Pope (ed), *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland c.1700-2000*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 14.

²⁵ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 21.

²⁶ For further discussion on Roberts and his role in the Revival, see chapter two.

of the Revival.²⁷ This was a cultural and nationalistic statement, an indication of his Welsh heritage and the authenticity of the movement as a ‘true’ Revival of Wales.

To understand the religiosity of nineteenth-century Wales, it is worth considering the 1851 religious census. This report, commissioned by the Whig government of Lord John Russell, was unique as ‘never before, nor since, has the state attempted to discover in such detail the worshipping habits of the entire population.’²⁸ The census recorded the population of each parliamentary borough, the seating capacity of religious buildings, and the denominational affiliation of each person who attended a religious service on the day of the census, Sunday 30 March 1851.²⁹ Although the reports contained inconsistencies, for example, there was no means of determining how many participants attended more than one service on the day of the census, the 1851 census remains important to the study of Welsh religious life.³⁰ The census found that not only did the Welsh hold a greater affiliation with Nonconformity than the established Church of England and Wales but proved that Wales had a higher level of religious attendance than England.³¹ Over eighty-seven percent of the worshipping population of Wales attended a Nonconformist chapel on the day of the census. Wales was, evidently, ‘a Nonconformist country and the masses had rejected the established Church.’³² Census returns for Merthyr Tydfil show that there were only ten Anglican

²⁷ D. Morgan, “‘The Essence of Welshness’?: Some Aspects of Christian Faith and National Identity in Wales, c. 1900-2000”, in R. Pope (ed) *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland c.1700-2000*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 51.

²⁸ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 38.

²⁹ W. S. F. Pickering, ‘The 1851 Religious Census - A Useless Experiment?’ in *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 18, (1967), p. 382.

³⁰ For example. the Rector of Itton, Monmouthshire, refused to participate in the census, stating: ‘I consider it to be an intrusion and therefore decline to answer.’ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 38.

³¹ Evans, *A History of Wales*, p. 219.

³² *Ibid.*

churches within the borough, compared to the sixty-six Nonconformist chapels.³³ In 1851, the population of this borough was 63,08. On Census Sunday, 55,801 people attended a place of worship. Only 3,356 attended an Anglican church whilst 49,114 were present at a Nonconformist service.³⁴ The census found that Nonconformity was the dominant religious force within Wales and that the Welsh were a ‘chapel-going folk.’³⁵ Arguably, the lifestyle and culture changes brought about by industrialism furthered the development of Welsh Nonconformity, rather than acting as ‘a harbinger of secularization.’³⁶

Nonconformist chapels dominated Welsh life throughout the South Wales valleys and beyond. Chapels were built at a remarkable speed during the second half of the nineteenth-century and ‘it has been calculated that in Wales, as a whole, a chapel was built every eight days.’³⁷ Importantly, the term ‘Nonconformity’ did not refer to one institution but a series of separate societies which, at times worked together but mainly stood as separate to one another as they did to Anglicanism. Wesleyan Methodists, Calvinist Methodists, Baptists and Independents were autonomous denominations within each community. With the exception of the Baptists, revivals were periods of interdenominational fellowship, which would lapse once a revival ended.³⁸ Revivals, national and localised, demonstrated a desire to save converts from the difficulties of the world, inspiring them to Christian faith and the promise of eternal life. Given the frequency of industrial disasters and the living conditions of these overcrowded

³³ H. Mann, *Census of Great Britain 1851, Religious Worship in England and Wales: Abridged from the Official Report*, (London, George Routledge, 1854), p. 125.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 45.

³⁶ Morgan, ‘The Essence of Welshness? Some Aspects of Christian Faith and National Identity in Wales, c. 1900-2000’, p. 140.

³⁷ D. Egan, *Coal Society: A History of the South Wales Mining Valleys, 1840-1890*, (Llandysul, Gomer Press, 1987), p. 100.

³⁸ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, pp. 50 - 53.

communities, it seemed that people needed saving from the harsh reality of their environment, as demonstrated by the Cholera revivals which shall be discussed later.

Chapels were not only a place of worship but provided a cultural and social centre for the community. Nonconformist denominations were united in a desire to promote temperance and discourage anti-social behaviour. They provided entertainment and activities to encourage people to come together for the greater good. The Chapels encouraged 'reading, musical activities, eisteddfodau, [...] and schooling' as positive, wholesome pursuits.³⁹ Sunday Schools became increasingly popular, with children, and sometimes adults, taught to read the Bible and to recite particular passages, in Welsh. Although a limited form of education, prior to the 1870 Education Act, it was the only form of education that many received.⁴⁰ The majority of people saw the chapel as the recreational hub of the community, organising 'Sunday School parades, outings and teas.'⁴¹ Chapel activities, including the Sunday Schools, were usually conducted in Welsh, 'so whilst the schools and churches taught English, the chapels helped sustain the Welsh language,' furthering the sense of cultural identity.⁴² At the start of the twentieth-century, approximately 500,000 children attended Sunday schools and 'nearly 1.5 million adults, [from a] population of 2.5 million' were enrolled in chapel membership.⁴³ Nonconformity provided people with a focal point

³⁹ Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, pp. 220 - 221.

⁴⁰ The Education Act of 1870 legislated for the provision of school boards to build and oversee additional schools, providing a greater number of school places. However, compulsory attendance at school was not enforced until the Education Act of 1880. <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/livinglearning/school/overview/1870educationact/> [accessed: 25 November 2018]

⁴¹ Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, pp. 284 - 285.

⁴² E. White, *Rats, Pigs and Privies: A Cardiganshire Life*, (Aberystwyth, Cymdeithas Lyfrau, 2005), p. 56.

⁴³ Morgan, 'The Essence of Welshness? Some Aspects of Christian Faith and National Identity in Wales, c. 1900-2000', p. 140.

and a means of escaping the drudgery of everyday life. This was particularly true during the heightened periods of emotionally charged revivals.

Wales the ‘Land of Revivals’.

In 1898, Edward Parry catalogued the history of Welsh revivalism, claiming that these religious awakenings began during the Reformation. Later, in 1904, the journalist, W. T. Stead, argued that British revivals could be traced back as far as the signing of the *Magna Carta* and that Welsh revivalism had played a significant role in their development.⁴⁴ Yet, as observed by Revival historian Christopher Turner, the majority of historical accounts of revivals, including Parry’s and Stead’s, were written from ‘a theological or denominational standpoint or even as contributions in themselves to the work of evangelisation.’⁴⁵ As a result, these catalogues of religious activity often ignored the social context and consequences in which the revivals occurred.⁴⁶ Instead, they emphasised the idea that ‘periodic awakenings were all part of the Divine plan for the nation of Wales.’⁴⁷ Historically, revivals were understood as religious movements which revived congregations and encouraged new converts through ‘miraculous acts of divine grace.’⁴⁸ In an analysis of Victorian revivals, David Bebbington wrote that, initially, these movements had two objectives. They were primarily a way of ‘rousing’ and encouraging existing believers, whilst attracting non-believers to faith and chapel membership. Bebbington argued that as revivals became

⁴⁴ Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, pp. 89 - 90 & W. T. Stead, *The Welsh Revival: The Narrative of Facts*, (London, Pilgrim Press, 1905 reprinted by Charleston, USA, Biblio Press), p. 25.

⁴⁵ C. B. Turner, ‘Revivals and popular religion in Victorian and Edwardian Wales’, (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Aberystwyth, 1979), p. 2.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.1.

⁴⁸ Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, pp p. 90.

more common, the first objective was forgotten and revivals were solely understood as periods of religious excitement, generating significant numbers of new converts.⁴⁹ This was true of the 1904-05 Revival as accounts emphasised the number of conversions without referring to the impact of the phenomenon upon the lives of existing chapel members. The term ‘revival’ became exclusively used to describe a ‘spontaneous’ outburst of religious fervour which was expressed through an ‘anxiety about sins and a widespread desire to turn to righteousness.’⁵⁰ From the early eighteenth-century, until 1862, there were ‘at least fifteen outstanding revivals in Wales.’⁵¹ Some of these were small scale movements, whilst others had a larger impact. Through this succession of revivals, Welsh Nonconformity became a hybrid of ‘obedience to Biblical revelation’ and outpourings of the Holy Spirit.⁵² Arguably, this dual nature strengthened Welsh Nonconformity as it combined tradition and religious experience with ‘organizational stability and dynamic spirituality.’⁵³ However, this amalgam proved problematic as conservative clergy found it difficult to accommodate the emotional, charismatic periods of revivalism, and evangelical preachers rejected the rigidity of Nonconformist tradition. This was evident throughout the 1904-05 Revival as many traditional ministers felt unable to lead what was largely a young person’s movement, characterised by highly emotional meetings. Therefore, the Revival was led by untrained men and women and their lack of theological knowledge may have impeded the long-term success of the Revival, an issue discussed in chapters two and three. Bebbington argued that following a revival,

⁴⁹ D. Bebbington, *Victorian Religious Revivals: Culture and Piety in Local and Global Contexts*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 3.

⁵¹ E. Evans, *Revival Comes to Wales: The Story of the 1859 Revival in Wales*, (Bridgend, Evangelical Press Wales, 1967), p. 10.

⁵² R. T. Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004), p. 37.

⁵³ *Ibid*.

Welsh Methodists expected a significant number of new converts to lose their religious enthusiasm until their faith was ignited by the next revival.⁵⁴ Emotionally enthused revivals became ‘the accepted criterion of spirituality’ throughout Wales, and people ‘either looked back to previous revivals or yearned for the next.’⁵⁵ This cyclical view of Welsh revivalism may help to account for the sense of nostalgia and mythology surrounding the Revival of 1904-05. Once it had ended, and many lapsed to their pre-Revival lives, no future awakening occurred, thus leaving the cycle incomplete, generating a sense of religious expectancy for a future revival within the Welsh evangelical community.

The first Welsh revival, ‘the great awakening,’ arguably began in 1735 with the conversion experiences of Daniel Rowland and Howell Harris.⁵⁶ Following their religious awakenings, Rowland and Harris ‘influenced people in their localities’ and further afield. As Rowland was curate in the parishes of Llangeitho and Nantcwnlle, congregations travelled to hear him preach. In contrast, Harris was an itinerant

⁵⁴ Bebbington, *Victorian Religious Revivals: Culture and Piety in Local and Global Contexts*, p. 9.

⁵⁵ Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, p. 239.

⁵⁶ Daniel Rowland (1711-1790) was born in Cardiganshire. He was the youngest son of Daniel Rowland, the rector of Llangeitho, Cardiganshire. Rowland was educated at Hereford Grammar School and later ordained as a deacon by the Bishop of St David’s in 1734. He was appointed as the curate of Llangeitho and Nantcwnlle. In 1735, he experienced a spiritual conversion which altered the course of his preaching and ministry. At first, he began chastising congregations of their sinful behaviour, gaining himself a reputation as ‘the angry cleric.’ Later, he focused on the importance of forgiveness through Christ. Under his leadership, Llangeitho experienced two periods of revival and Rowland became known as the leader of Welsh Methodism. He continued preaching until his death in October 1790 and was buried at Llangeitho church. Howell Harris (1714-1773), was born in Trefeca, Breconshire. In 1735, Harris experienced a spiritual conversion. He began preaching in Talgarth and then further afield, encouraging converts to become part of new societies. Despite being refused ordination, Harris ‘with his genius for fiery, extempore preaching and organising his followers,’ and Rowland became the instigators of the Welsh Methodist revival. Both Harris and Rowland were independent men who aspired to lead the religious revival in Wales, resulting in a difficult relationship which divided Welsh Methodism into ‘Rowland’s people’ and ‘Harris’s people.’ They were reconciled in 1762, after a second revival began in Llangeitho. E. M. White, ‘Rowland Daniel (1711-1790)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & D. L. Morgan, ‘Harris, Howell (1714-1773)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

preacher who travelled throughout Wales.⁵⁷ Rowland and Harris met during 1737, and their meeting marked ‘the foundation of the Methodist movement within Wales,’ as they began to ‘co-ordinate their work.’⁵⁸ Although there had been Welsh evangelical preachers prior to Rowland and Harris, their preaching styles and the development of Methodist societies, kindled the Welsh revival tradition. Frequent, small scale revivals, interspersed larger, national revivals and ‘every generation considered it their right to see God revive His church and awaken communities to the things of God.’⁵⁹

Revivals were a successive feature of Welsh life from ‘the eighteenth century until 1904.’⁶⁰ These revivals ‘heightened consciousness of sin, concern for one’s salvation, unusually sustained and passionate prayer [along] rejoicing.’⁶¹ In 1778, there was a revival of the Congregationalist churches at Llanbryn-mair, Montgomeryshire, which was followed by the Trecastle, Brecon, revival of 1785. In West Wales, the Aberystwyth revival of 1805 led to an increase in chapel attendance that was replicated throughout the county as the revival spread to the surrounding communities:

At Aberystwyth and in the adjacent parts, there are general and powerful awakenings. [...] Some hundreds have joined the religious societies in these parts.⁶²

⁵⁷ E. M. White, ‘Revival and Renewal amongst the Eighteenth Century Welsh Methodists’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2009), p. 2

⁵⁸ E. M. White, ‘Rowland, Daniel (1711-1790)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & White, ‘Revival and Renewal amongst the Eighteenth-Century Welsh Methodists’.

⁵⁹ B. Harper, *History Makers: Evan Roberts*, (Pensacola Florida, Christian Life Books, 2004), p. 7.

⁶⁰ D. Jenkins, ‘The Religious Revival of 1904 and 1905’ in *Agricultural Community in South-West Wales at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1971), p. 244.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Evans quoted from earlier revival reports. However, he did not include a reference for this material in his work. Evans, *Revival Comes to Wales: The story of the 1859 Revival in Wales*, p. 13.

Revivals occurred in Bontuchel, Denbighshire in 1821, Carmarthenshire in 1828 and Caernarfonshire in 1832.⁶³ It was reported that during Bala revival of 1871:

There was nothing to be heard from one end of the town to the other, but the groans of people in distress of soul. And the very same night, a spirit of deep conviction and serious concern, fell upon the whole congregations in this neighbourhood.⁶⁴

Christopher Turner stated that ‘any review of religious revivals of this period must emphasise the local context of their occurrence and the particular anxieties that encouraged their appearance.’⁶⁵ This was echoed by Welsh historian Gareth Evans who claimed that revivals became so frequent because they were ‘a reaction to the social pressures of the age and ministers capitalised on certain tensions within communities.’⁶⁶ Evans argued that revivals were ‘the language of the lower classes,’ their response to the difficulties of living in squalid, unsanitary conditions, subjected to disease, poverty and industrial disasters. This was particularly true of the Cholera revivals. These movements began in the Tredegar district between 1831-1832, and coincided with outbreaks of Cholera, caused by the lack of sanitation in the poorly planned towns of South Wales.⁶⁷ During these revivals, many claimed to be converted, yet once the epidemic subsided, ‘places of worship began to be vacated, and the terrified converts “went on their own way.”’⁶⁸ The largest Cholera revival occurred in Merthyr Tydfil in 1849. It spread to Monmouthshire and became officially known as ‘diwygiad y Colera (the Cholera revival).’⁶⁹ This was part of a national outbreak of

⁶³ *Ibid*, pp 14 – 18.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 12.

⁶⁵ C. B. Turner, ‘Revivals and popular religion in Victorian and Edwardian Wales’, p. 283.

⁶⁶ Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906*, p. 91.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*.

⁶⁸ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 55.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 56.

the disease, with Cardiff, Swansea and Merthyr Tydfil listed amongst largest affected areas.⁷⁰ Cholera was ‘the shock disease of the century.’⁷¹ Although it had a higher survival rate than other diseases such as tuberculosis, it was widely feared and when an outbreak was reported, communities became acutely aware of their own mortality. It has been claimed that 10,000 people joined Calvinistic Methodism during ‘the Cholera revival’ of 1849. The custom of requiring people to attend the chapel for a month before being admitted into full membership, was suspended as, ‘during the epidemic they were admitted without delay.’⁷²

In the Tredegar Cholera revival of 1866, the chapels were overcrowded with ‘anxious souls’ and many of the meetings carried on into the early hours as people were:

... unwilling to leave the place, without first being reconciled to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The presence of God’s judgement may, at least, account for this extraordinary state of feeling.⁷³

Although the Cholera outbreak of 1866 was ‘less devastating’ than the previous outbreak in 1849, it generated a sense of ‘fear and alarm.’⁷⁴ Fear of death and disease encouraged individuals to ‘consider seriously the important truth with which they were well acquainted theoretically.’⁷⁵ The correlation between a sudden sense of mortality and the need for spiritual fulfilment, demonstrates that further to any desire for an

⁷⁰ E. G. Parry, ‘A Poor Man’s Plague’ in *Brycheiniog*, Vol. 22, p. 44.

⁷¹ D. C. James, ‘The Cholera Epidemic of 1849 in Cardiff’ in *Glamorgan Local History Society*, Vol. 25, (1981), p. 164.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ J. Thomas, “Sunshine on the Hills.” *A Narrative of Revival of the Lord’s Work at Tredegar, in the Year 1866*, (Swansea, Herbert Jones, 1875), p. 7.

⁷⁴ C. B. Turner, ‘Revivals and popular religion in Victorian and Edwardian Wales’, p. 283.

⁷⁵ Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales*, p. 56.

experience of the Divine, revivals were a religious mechanism within Wales, that were, at times, driven by social circumstances.

In contrast to these regional, localised, revivals, the larger, national revivals of 1859 and 1904 occurred throughout Wales. Whilst the 1859 revival was thought to be ‘the most powerful and effective awakening of all those which took place in Wales in the nineteenth century,’ the 1904 Revival was the only revival of its kind to occur within the twentieth century.⁷⁶ Throughout these national revivals, it was claimed that a significant number of people were converted to the chapels. In 1859, ‘an estimated 110,000 were added to the churches,’ and similarly, it was believed that 100,000 souls ‘would be won over during Revival of 1904-05.’⁷⁷ In Aberystwyth, on 12 July 1859, 3,000 miners attended a revival meeting and ‘by midsummer the whole county of Cardiganshire had become provided with the most fervid religious feeling, and the Calvinistic Methodist converts alone numbered 9,000.’⁷⁸ During September 1859, 30,000 were thought to have attended a meeting which lasted over twelve hours, alternating between preaching and enthusiastic prayer.⁷⁹ Eyewitness reports from across Wales demonstrated the geographical scale of the 1859 revival. As a clergyman from Glamorgan, wrote: ‘The Spirit of God is working powerfully within Carmarthen on the Lord’s side, there seems to be an extraordinary work of grace going forward among us.’⁸⁰ Likewise, an account of the revival in Monmouthshire claimed ‘there is scarcely a congregation in the whole of the Welsh district of this county which has not

⁷⁶ D. Jenkins, ‘The Religious Revival of 1904 and 1905’ in *Agricultural Community in South-West Wales at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1971), p. 4.

⁷⁷ White, ‘Revival and Renewal amongst the Eighteenth-Century Welsh Methodists’, p. 1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 80 - 81.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 85.

⁸⁰ T. Phillips, *The Welsh Revival: Its origins and development*, (Scotland, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1989), p. 18.

been more or less moved. [...] I am certain that at least two thousand have joined our societies since April 1859.’⁸¹

It has been suggested that the national revivals of 1859 and 1904 were ‘as alike as two gold sovereigns.’⁸² Whilst this is not entirely correct, comparisons can be drawn between them. For example, whilst both of these movements were claimed to have impacted the whole of the Wales, yet the 1859 revival ‘was irregular in its progress and some localities were more influenced than others.’⁸³ Likewise, the Revival of 1904-05 was highly successful in some areas of the country, yet some towns saw little or no evidence of the phenomenon.⁸⁴ during the 1859 revival, ‘prayer meetings were [...] held underground in the mines, one such lasting from six a.m. until two p.m.’⁸⁵ This was replicated throughout the 1904 Revival. In December 1904, the *South Wales Daily News* published an article, entitled: ‘Revival Service in a Coal Mine’, this account, which was accompanied by an artist’s impression of the meeting,⁸⁶ stated:

The most remarkable phase of the Revival is seen in the collieries of South Wales, where prayer meetings are held three and four times a day. It was at the unearthly hour of half-past three (writes the correspondent) that I left home to attend one of these unique services. [...] Here some scores of men had assembled for their customary devotions, and although they had been toiling in the mine for ten hours, they spent another hour in prayer without a murmur. And it was a typical Revival service. No one led; everything was spontaneous.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 45.

⁸² R. T. Jones, *Faith and Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1840-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004), p. 136.

⁸³ C. B. Turner, ‘Religious Revivalism and Welsh Industrial Society: Aberdare in 1859’, p. 4.

⁸⁴ The progress and development of the 1904-05 Revival will be discussed in chapter two.

⁸⁵ Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, p. 81.

⁸⁶ A copy of this artist’s impression was also included in a Revival pamphlet published by the *Western Mail*, ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet One, (Cardiff, *Western Mail*, 1904).

The overman struck up “In the deep and mighty waters” and the singing of the colliers made the pit echo and re-echo.⁸⁷



Figure I.

‘Revival at the Coal Face.’

*South Wales Daily News, 22
December 1904, p. 6.*

Certainly, both the 1859 and 1904-05 revivals were alike in emotional fever, in a high number of claimed conversions and a national sense of religious awakening. Yet, the Revival of 1904-05 was unique in the way that it was publicised by the press and was largely attributed to the work of one man, Evan Roberts.

⁸⁷ *South Wales Daily News*, 22 December 1904, p. 6.

The political context of early twentieth-century Wales.

The 1906 general election ‘was a watershed in the political history of Britain,’ as the Conservative government was defeated by the Liberal Party.⁸⁸ This was of significant importance for the Welsh as ‘not a single Tory M.P. was returned from Wales.’⁸⁹ This was a time of ‘great political excitement in Wales,’ as following the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884, Liberalism had been a growing political force, with ‘Welsh allegiance to the Liberal Party remaining steadfast from 1868 until 1922.’⁹⁰ The Second Reform Act of 1867, significantly altered the Welsh political landscape, as it increased the number of men entitled to vote in parliamentary elections. In Merthyr Tydfil and the surrounding area, the number of those eligible to vote rose from ‘1,387 to 14,577’ which Welsh historian Gwyn Williams argued marked this constituency as ‘the most democratic in Britain.’⁹¹ The Third Reform Act of 1884 ensured that all working-class men were entitled to vote and parliamentary seats were redistributed around the country. This had a revolutionary impact upon the face of Welsh politics as, for example:

Glamorgan was turned from a two-member county, with under 13,000 voters into five new divisions with 44,000; in Monmouthshire a two-member county constituency with 7,600 voters became three constituencies with nearly 32,000. [...] Wales was overrepresented at Westminster and by a large preordinance of working-class single-member constituencies.⁹²

⁸⁸ K. O. Fox, ‘The Merthyr Election of 1906’ in *The National Library of Wales Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 2, (1965), p. 237.

⁸⁹ G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?*, (London, Penguin Books, 1985), p. 226.

⁹⁰ Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, p. 244.

⁹¹ Williams, *When Was Wales?* p. 216.

⁹² G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?*, (London, Penguin Books, 1985), p. 219.

With a significant increase in both Welsh votes and political enthusiasm, the Liberal Party gained strength within Wales, as Liberal 'Welsh M. P.s became increasingly determined to press for solutions to specifically Welsh problems.'⁹³ Land ownership, and the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales were key concerns and the Welsh Liberal M. P.s 'thrust these issues to the fore.'⁹⁴ Throughout 1905-06, the question of Disestablishment became a 'sectarian war,' between the Liberal Party and the Conservative government, a war that was championed by the enigmatic M. P. for Caernarfon - David Lloyd George.⁹⁵ Lloyd George was regarded as a great political orator, a champion of Wales who rose through the ranks of the Liberal Party.⁹⁶ He became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1908, eventually becoming Prime Minister in 1916 replacing the liberal Prime Minister Henry Asquith.⁹⁷

On 14 June 1905, during his tour Revival tour of North Wales and Anglesey, Evan Roberts travelled to Caernarfon to hear Lloyd George speak at a local convention. However, news of his arrival had spread throughout the town and Roberts was 'greeted at the station by a great crowd.'⁹⁸ Roberts was unable to attend the convention but later

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?*, (London, Penguin Books, 1985), p. 226.

⁹⁵ David Lloyd George was born in Manchester in 1863. Although born in England, his parents were both Welsh. His father, William George, was from Pembrokeshire whilst his mother, Elizabeth Lloyd, was from Caernarfonshire. Following William George's death in 1864, the family relocated to Caernarfonshire where Lloyd George was educated in the local National school at Llanystumdwy. In 1877, he 'passed the Parliamentary law examinations' and joined a firm of solicitors in Portmadoc in 1878. In 1884 he passed final the 'Law Society final examinations with honours' and set up his own legal practice. Lloyd George was first elected to Parliament in 1890, taking the seat from the Conservative Party in what was thought to be 'one of the few really marginal seats in Wales.' Lloyd George retained his seat for fifty-five years, becoming Prime Minister in 1916 and remained in office until 1922. In 1922 the Conservative Party won the general election and Lloyd George was succeeded by the Scottish M.P. Bonar Law. K. O. Morgan, 'George, David Lloyd, first Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor (1863-1945)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004), E. M. Hymphreys, 'Lloyd George, David (1863 - 1945), the first Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor' in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, <https://biography.wales/article/s2-LLOY-DAV-1863> & E. Price, *David Lloyd George*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2006).

⁹⁶ K. O. Morgan, 'George, David Lloyd, first Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor (1863-1945)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Welsh Gazette and West Wales Advertiser*, 15 June 1906, p. 6.

that day Roberts and Lloyd George met. Although their meeting was short, it was significant as ‘the political hero of the Welsh nation addressed the religious hero of Wales.’⁹⁹ Lloyd George reportedly said that he was pleased to meet with Roberts and informed him of the parliamentary interest in the development of the Revival.¹⁰⁰ Their conversation then became, what Revival historian Brynmor Pierce Jones referred to as, ‘a polite duel of words.’:

D. L. G.: “I am very sorry I have not been able to attend any of your meetings as yet. I would certainly like to see.”

E. R.: “Yes, and I would like to hear you some day but I am busy, as you see, with all these wonderful meetings.”

D. L. G.: “Perhaps I can come and visit you some time with I am free.”

E. R.: “Yes, and I should like to visit you if the Spirit permits.”

D. L. G.: “This thing I know. My work is to wield the sword but your work it to build the Temple.”¹⁰¹

It is unlikely that Lloyd George attended any of the Revival meetings as, being such a public figure, he would have been recognisable and this would have been reported by the press. Furthermore, whilst as an M. P. he was a supporter of the Welsh Nonconformist chapels, he ‘loathed the hypocrisy of the Welsh deacons’ and informed his wife that he did not enjoy sitting in ‘suffocating malodorous chapels listening to some superstitions I had heard thousands of times before.’¹⁰² The two men met twice

⁹⁹ D. B. Rees, *Mr Evan Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, (Llangoed Wales, Ty Rhys Chapel, 2005). p. 23.

¹⁰⁰ *The Cambrian*, 16 June 1905, p. 6.

¹⁰¹ B. Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The Complete Life of Evan Roberts 1871-1951*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing, 1995), p. 133.

¹⁰² K. O. Morgan, ‘George, David Lloyd, first Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor (1863-1945)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

more during Roberts's visit to Caernarfon, once at Lloyd George's home in Criccieth, a village near Porthmadog, and later in the residence of the Mayor of Caernarfon where they posed for a photograph which became part of the *Western Mail's* Revival postcard series.¹⁰³ A photograph taken in 1939, now housed at Moriah Chapel, Loughor, depicts a further meeting of Roberts and Lloyd George. Presumably the photograph was taken in Wales but there is no further information as to the whereabouts or what they discussed.



Figure II.

'Evan Roberts and Lloyd George.'

Postcard from the *Western Mail* 'Great Welsh Revival' series.

¹⁰³ B. Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The Complete Life of Evan Roberts 1871-1951*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing, 1995), p. 134.



Figure III.

Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel, Loughor.

Photograph of Evan Roberts and David Lloyd
George.

Photograph dated 1939.

The Revival appeared to have no impact upon Lloyd George's political or personal life. As national politics did not play a role in the Revival, it is likely that whilst they were aware of each other's work and their impact upon the lives of the Welsh people, both the politician and the revivalist, 'the two reformers', continued in their work, independently of each other.¹⁰⁴

Although the rise Liberal Party and the 1906 general election were significant events within British history, there is no evidence to suggest that they impacted upon the

¹⁰⁴ *The Cambrian*, 16 June 1905, p. 6.

development of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival, or vice versa. Political discussion was not a feature of the Revival and there is no indication that those women who were involved as female revivalists joined the campaign for women's suffrage. However, as discussed in chapter six, many of the identities of the Revival women have been lost and so it may be possible that some of them were figures in the suffragette movement. However, this would be an avenue for future scholarship.

The role of women in Industrial Wales.

The impact of the Industrial Revolution within Wales has been considered by a number of historians.¹⁰⁵ These studies predominantly 'focused on men's lives – on industry and industrial disputes between a male workforce and male coal mine or slate-quarry owners,' as well as patriarchal organisations such as the established Churches, Nonconformist Chapels and the male political sphere.¹⁰⁶ Indeed, throughout the industrial era, 'the voice of Wales' was represented through male employment and the emerging labour movement.¹⁰⁷ As a result, women were excluded from this 'Welsh voice.' Although their domestic roles enabled the male workforce to function, their work was seen as subordinate, rather than the cornerstone of Welsh life. Thus, 'Welsh historians [...] have considered it something of an exception for any woman to have made any contribution to Welsh cultural life' and consequently, little has been written

¹⁰⁵ Historical studies of Industrial Wales include: C. Evans, *Debating the Revolution: Britain in the 1790s*, (London, I. B. Tauris, 2006), I. Gwynedd Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1992), K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981), Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, G. Evans, *A History of Wales: 1815- 1906*, D. B. Rees, *Chapels in the Valleys*, (Denbigh, The Ffynnon Press, 1975) and R. M. Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen 1847-1922*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1981).

¹⁰⁶ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁷ J. Aaron, 'A Review of the Contribution of Women to Welsh Life and Prospects for the Future' in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, Vol. 8, (2002), p. 200.

about the lives of Welsh women during this period.¹⁰⁸ As will be demonstrated in chapter six, the absence of women's everyday experiences from the historical record has raised questions for feminist historians, including how to address this balance and develop a narrative that represents the everyday lives of both men and women.

Whilst heavy industry provided a significant level of employment for Welsh men, there was little or no paid work for women. This was reflected in the census figures of 1901 and 1911 which found that 'only 23.6 percent of women of working age in Wales were in employment,' and fifty percent of those women were working in domestic service.¹⁰⁹ For a significant majority of women, their lives centred on accommodating the working needs of their husbands, sons and lodgers. Meal times were organised around colliery shift patterns and domestic chores completed while men were at work. Women prepared baths by hand, ready for when the men returned home, a physically demanding and dangerous task, involving carrying large quantities of water from outside taps, into the home and boiling it. In 1881, twelve percent of the population of the Rhondda valley were lodgers and, if accommodation was scarce, lodgers on opposite shifts would share a bed. This significantly increased women's workloads as they were expected to take care of their lodgers, alongside their families, cooking evening meals, washing clothes and filling baths.¹¹⁰ Large families were a social norm. Children were required to provide future financial support for their parents and abstinence was the only assured method of contraception. These large families were, for the most part, housed in cramped terraced houses constructed by 'speculative builders and contractors, with a total absence of urban planning or amenity

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 188.

¹⁰⁹ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales*, p. 31.

¹¹⁰ Jones, 'Counting the Cost of Coal: Women's lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911' p. 120.

provision.’¹¹¹ Women endured many pregnancies, during a time when childbirth was considered highly dangerous. With such a high frequency of pregnancies, both women and their babies were often weak and women sometimes struggled to produce enough milk.¹¹² Midwives reported that the ‘physical strain ‘of preparing baths was a prevalent cause of miscarriages and premature births.’¹¹³ The more workers a woman had to cater for, the more exhausting and physically demanding her work. The following excerpt, published in a collier’s magazine (1882), reported on the daily life of a typical collier’s wife:

She gets up [between 5 and 6am, prepares breakfast and sends off [...] her son, next comes in another son from the nightshift. She prepares a hot bath for him. [...] He goes to bed. Then the younger children get up and get ready for school. [...] Then dinner has to be cooked and her husband got ready for the afternoon shift. Then her son returns from the morning shift and a bath is prepared for him. She cleans and tidies [before tea time] when her children return from school. [...] Again, she has to prepare water and supper for her husband returning from the afternoon shift.¹¹⁴

Welsh women catered for the needs of the male workforce whilst ‘reproducing the next generation’ of industrial Welsh workers and were ultimately the ‘overworked servant of the industrial machine.’¹¹⁵ Women were financially dependent upon their husbands and sons and lived in fear of industrial accidents which could result in death

¹¹¹ Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980*, p. 72.

¹¹² White, *Rats, Pigs and Privies: A Cardiganshire Life*, p. 143.

¹¹³ Quoted in Jones, ‘Counting the Cost of Coal: Women’s lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911’, p. 122 & D.

Draisey, *Women in Welsh History*, (Swansea, Draisey Publishing, 2004), p. 122.

¹¹⁴ Draisey, *Women in Welsh History*, p. 115.

¹¹⁵ Aaron, ‘A Review of the Contribution of Women to Welsh Life and Prospects for the Future’, p. 200.

or injury of their loved ones and breadwinners. The hidden cost of the Industrial Revolution was the toll placed upon the everyday lives of women. In an analysis of the impact of coal mining upon women in the Pontypridd district of the Rhondda valley between 1878–1910, it was found that the mortality rate of women aged 22 - 44 was significantly higher than men within the same age range.¹¹⁶ Although it was known that childbirth was a significant cause of premature death in young women, the long-term impact of the physically demanding domesticity was not recognised before 1914. Previously, it was thought that the high level of both infant and maternal mortality rates was caused by women themselves as ‘mothers and midwives were ignorant and careless.’¹¹⁷ In general, government inquiries into the disparaging state of Welsh life blamed women for the consequences of the social and familial difficulties that were the direct result of industrial life.

Welsh women and the 1847 ‘Blue Books Report.’

In 1841, the government commissioned a report into the provision for education in Wales. Although its findings were deeply controversial, the historical importance of the report has been widely recognised. In an analysis of language of the report, historian Gwyneth Roberts quoted Saunders Lewis as saying that the three parts of the report are ‘the most important nineteenth-century historical documents we possess.’¹¹⁸ The report, infamously known as the Blue Books Report, was published in 1847 and had a tremendous impact upon the perception of Welsh women. It was seen as an outright attack on Welsh identity, depicting them as an immoral, uneducated peasantry

¹¹⁶ Jones, ‘Counting the Cost of Coal: Women’s lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911’, pp. 124 - 125.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p.127.

¹¹⁸ G. T. Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books: The Perfect Instrument of Empire*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1998), p. 35

and contained harrowing descriptions of the living conditions of working class families.¹¹⁹ The report, commissioned in response to the social and political unrest demonstrated by the Rebecca Riots and the Chartist Movement, was seen as a means of evaluating the root causes of this disaffection.¹²⁰ It was thought that the Welsh suffered from a combination of a lack of education and the continuation of the Welsh language, which was seen as primitive and ‘a handicap to progress.’¹²¹ The investigation was launched by William Williams, a Welshman who had ‘amassed a great fortune’ through the cotton industry, before becoming the MP for Coventry in 1835.¹²² The inquiry was conducted by a team of Englishmen who compiled the report

¹¹⁹ Draisey, *Women in Welsh History*, p. 109.

¹²⁰ The Rebecca Riots occurred between 1839 and 1842-3. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the low price of food and high level of taxation proved increasingly difficult for Welsh farmers to generate an income. In 1834, the Whig government passed the Poor Law Amendment Act, which removed any government-based efforts to assist the poor. Instead, the government established work houses. Parishes were expected to deal directly with pauper children, the sick and the elderly. In 1836, the government stated that land-owners had the right to purchase and enforce tithes on their land. The tithes entitled land owners to collect taxes based on the average price of wheat, barley and oats. Most land owners within Wales were now English members of the Anglican Church, which furthered the sense of oppression and occupation amongst the Welsh, Nonconformist poor. Tenant farmers in financial difficulty ‘were forced to pay tithes to the Established Church to which they [...] did not belong.’ Welsh roads were governed by Turn Pike trusts, companies established to maintain the roads that were legally able to implement toll gates. Farmers were taxed for the movement of animals, wagons and lime – an important fertilizer at the time. On 13 May 1839, the toll gate at Efailwen, Carmarthenshire, was heavily vandalised. It was rebuilt but it was attacked again by a group of protesters who called themselves ‘the daughters of Rebecca.’ They were men dressed in traditional Welsh women’s clothing, with blackened faces.

The riots abated until 1842 when toll gates were attacked throughout South Wales. In June 1842 ‘over three hundred horsemen augmented by rioters from the town, ransacked a warehouse in Carmarthen.’ Further attacks continued including an attack at Hendy during which a woman was shot. Two of the leading rioters were incarcerated and ‘sentenced to transportation.’ The treatment of the poor and working conditions also led to the Chartist movement. This grew out of the Working Men’s Associations which had been established between 1838-1839. In 1838 the ‘People’s Charter was published, [...] and called for] political democracy, universal male suffrage and annual parliaments.’ The Chartists, which were largely made up of Welsh Nonconformist men, disagreed with the violence demonstrated by ‘Rebecca’ and conducted peaceful demonstrations throughout Mid and South Wales. However, in 1839 a group of workers lay siege to the town of Llanidloes and it took soldiers a week to regain control of the town. The most famous of the Chartist demonstrations occurred in Newport in November 1839. Many of the Chartists were shot at by government troops who were lying in wait. The Chartist leaders were arrested and deported. Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, pp. 229 - 237 & Evans, *A History of Wales*, pp. 139 - 153.

¹²¹ Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, p. 288.

¹²² William Williams (1788-1865), was born in Carmarthenshire. He left school and became an apprentice to a shopkeeper in Carmarthen. In 1804, he applied for a position at a cotton warehouse in London. He was successful and by 1820 he was running his own business as a cotton warehouseman. He was highly successful and travelled internationally. In 1825 he became the member of Parliament for Coventry and was seen as a ‘radical’ reformer. In March 1847, he addressed Parliament on what

from 334 written testimonies, outlining the educational, social and moral practices of Welsh people. Eighty percent of these testimonies were from representatives of the Church of England, and so the report was seen as an anglicised attack on the Welsh, particularly Welsh women who were portrayed as sexually immoral.¹²³ The testimony from Revd John Griffith, incumbent in the district of Taff Vale and Aberdare, stated that:

Nothing can be lower, I would say more degrading, that the character in which women stand relative to men. The men and women, married as well as single, live in the same house and sleep in the same room. The women do not hesitate to change their under-garments before the men. Promiscuous intercourse is most common, it is thought of as nothing, and the women do not lose chaste by it.¹²⁴

This was echoed by a report from Dewisland, Pembrokeshire, demonstrating that this lack of morality was believed to occur in the rural communities as well as the industrial counties:

Gross immorality [prevails] among the unmarried population of both sexes. Little care is taken to separate the male and female servants [...] in the farm houses at night. [...] The unmarried men servants [...] are admitted by the women servants to the house to which they come. I have heard the most

he believed to be the inadequate provision of education for the Welsh working classes. He argued that this was a disparity within the country as wealthy families were able to privately fund education for their children but that working-class families had limited access to education. He argued that it was imperative that the state supported the 'labouring classes [to acquire] a knowledge of the English tongue.' In his will, Williams left £1,000 to support university education within Wales. D. Williams, 'Williams William (1788-1865)' in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, (1959), <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-WILL-WIL-1788.html> & Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, p. 288.

¹²³ Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, p. 288.

¹²⁴ *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, Volume one, (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1847), p. 489.

revolting anecdotes of the gross and almost bestial indelicacy with which sexual intercourse takes place on these occasions.¹²⁵

The report not only depicted Welsh women as promiscuous but also claimed that they were often unable to carry out basic household chores. The Revd P. M. Richards of Rhosllanerchrugog, Denbighshire, claimed that in this northern parish he saw greater levels of social deprivation and immorality than he had witnessed in South Wales. He complained that ‘throughout the district the women have no kind of knowledge of the duties of their sex, or of common household occupation and requirements.’¹²⁶ This was seconded by Mr Thomas Fransic, a Wrexham shopkeeper, who claimed that upon marriage many young women were incapable of adequately caring for their homes and husbands:

They are unable to make or mend any article of clothing, even a pair of stockings for their husbands. [...] The women have no knowledge of housewifery or economy; and their ignorance and inefficiency produce all kind of domestic dissension and distress.¹²⁷

The report concluded that Welsh education was in a state of crisis. However, little or no attention was given to the extreme levels of poverty which was the true source of this problem. Families could not afford to send children to school. As soon as they were eligible to work, it was necessary for them to earn a wage. Communities could not finance the building of new schools or repair existing ones. These issues were dismissed and the blame was firmly placed on Welsh women, many of whom were seen as unfit mothers, inadequate wives and morally remiss. Welsh historian Gwynedd

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 394.

¹²⁶ *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, Volume two, (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1847), p. 65.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p.76

Jones wrote that throughout the nineteenth-century ‘the ratio of deaths to 1,000 live births [within Wales] was around 120,’ although he noted that these figures were largely inaccurate as they did not account of miscarriages and many pregnancies would not have been registered at this time.¹²⁸ Throughout the 1890s, one in twelve children under the age of five died as a result of pneumonia, diphtheria and whooping cough, with the committee referring to this as: ‘The annual sacrifice of infants.’¹²⁹ When women discussed their children, it was common for them to differentiate between those living and those who were deceased. Hannah Roberts, the mother of the 1904 revivalist Evan Roberts, ‘described herself as having fourteen children, eight living.’¹³⁰ This illustrates that the Roberts family experienced the difficulties of working-class Welsh life, which was central to the popularity of Roberts and his Revival ministry. For Welsh working-class women, death was a part of everyday life as they struggled to cope with the demands of their daily lives and the constant threat of illness, pregnancy and industrial accidents, ‘it is not surprising that playing funerals was a popular childhood game.’¹³¹ The obvious causes were poverty, lack of sanitation and poor housing. Low wages made it difficult to provide nutritious food or pay for medical treatment; housing was crowded and damp and clean water was scarce. This was reflected in 1893 by the medical officer for health who was commissioned to outline any medical and hygiene concerns that had been caused by the vast overcrowding in the Rhondda Valley. The report stated that:

The river contains a large proportion of human excrement, stable and pigsty manure, congealed blood, offal and entrails from the slaughter houses [...] old

¹²⁸ I. Gwynedd. Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed*, p. 30.

¹²⁹ Jones, ‘Counting the Cost of Coal: Women’s lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911’, p. 121 & Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales*, p. 21.

¹³⁰ K. Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The Women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*. (Llanelli, Shedhead Productions, 2004), p. 8.

¹³¹ Jones, ‘Counting the Cost of Coal: Women’s lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911’, p. 121.

cast-off article of clothing, bedding [...], street refuse and a host of other articles. The water is perfectly black from small coal suspension [...]. In dry weather the stench becomes unbearable.¹³²

This investigation found that water supplies were filthy ‘with frogs coming down the taps,’ yet a report, compiled by a government committee in 1904 to investigate the increasingly high level of infant mortality within Wales, concluded that the ‘annual sacrifice’ of childhood deaths was due to the ‘the fecklessness and ignorance of working-class mothers in matters of nutrition and hygiene.’¹³³

The Blue Books report of 1847 deeply affected the domestic life of Welsh women and had far-reaching consequences for future generations. Jane Aaron observed that particular historical events and ideologies impacted upon the literary fiction produced by woman during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This included the Blue Books report which altered the way in which women were portrayed within Welsh literature. The heroines of Welsh author Allen Raine were morally virtuous home makers, demonstrating that Welsh ‘women writers felt the pressure to refute the allegations of the Blue Books.’¹³⁴ In an attempt to re-build their reputation, Nonconformist leaders championed the doctrine of ‘separate spheres’, which had been popular with the Victorian English middle-classes, as a desirable model for Welsh life. This theory suggested that a man's domain was in the work place and his role, as head of the household, was to support his family financially. In turn, a woman's place was in the home. Her role was to support her husband by managing the household accounts, domestic chores and child rearing.¹³⁵ By 1870, ‘separate spheres’ was central to the

¹³² *Ibid*, p. 117.

¹³³ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth-Century Wales*, pp. 15 & 21.

¹³⁴ K. Gramich, *Twentieth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Land, Gender and Belonging*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 10.

¹³⁵ Draisey, *Women in Welsh History*, p. 112.

Welsh way of life. The chapels were eager to promote this model of domesticity, claiming that it was akin to biblical teachings. In the Industrialised South, there was a complete adoption of the concept of ‘separate spheres,’ which was probably due to the fact that although this doctrine ‘identified all women with domesticity, [...] there were different ideals for women in different classes.’¹³⁶ Middle-class women were expected to display ‘mildness, passivity, emotionality, and a self-acknowledged physical and intellectual ineffectiveness by comparison with the male.’¹³⁷ These women came to represent the: ‘Angel in the house,’ a woman who busied herself, caring for her home and family, whilst refraining from gossip or idleness.¹³⁸ In contrast, working-class women were expected to run an effective and efficient home, provide child care, carry out all housework, cook and expertly ‘make bread and shirts.’¹³⁹ As mothers, women were expected to ‘ensure that [their] offspring were a beneficial influence on society at large.’¹⁴⁰ Throughout Victorian Wales, the chapels emphasised the importance of the family unit, as this was seen as the cornerstone of all communities, and ‘its influence was sanctioned by perceptions of its sanctity.’¹⁴¹ Welsh working-class women adopted this way of life and found their identity in the figure of ‘Welsh Mam’ – a strong, determined women who guarded her home and her family with ferocity and a ‘nurturing commitment.’¹⁴² The Welsh Mam was ‘the backbone of the family, the

¹³⁶ Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books: The Perfect Instrument of Empire*, p. 151.

¹³⁷ Aaron, ‘A Review of the Contribution of Women to Welsh Life and Prospects for the Future’, p. 200.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books: The Perfect Instrument of Empire*, p. 151.

¹⁴⁰ G. Evans, *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience, 1847-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1990), p. 13.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² M. Basini, ‘Forward’ in J. Jones, *Black Parade*, (London, Faber & Faber, 1935 reprinted by Swansea, Parthian Press & Library of Wales, 2009), Kindle Edition.

peace-keeper, the self-sacrificer, a tower of strength,' who did all within her power to ensure the respectability of her family and home.¹⁴³

The role of the industrial 'Welsh Mam' was epitomised by the character of Saran Morgan, the protagonist of Jack Jones's novel *Black Parade* (1935).¹⁴⁴ Set in Merthyr Tydfil, the novel followed Saran's life through her marriage, children and wider relationships and examined the impact of the industrial revolution upon the Welsh working-classes. In the novel, Saran was presented 'with breast bared, suckling the latest of her brood,' later handing the reproductive mantle to her daughters in law in 'a seemingly endless production line.'¹⁴⁵ Through Saran, Jones demonstrated the harsh realities and risks of industrial life and the impact that this had upon working class women. Saran lost two sons in colliery explosions and endured the financial hardships of successive redundancies and strikes which embroiled her husband and, later, her remaining sons. Throughout these difficulties, she remained 'steadfast and loyal, and was as crucial to the support and well-being of her loved ones as pit props were to the lives of her men.'¹⁴⁶ Women were the backbone of working Wales, yet the importance of their work is often overlooked in favour of male-centric accounts of Welsh history.

¹⁴³ E. Morgan, 'Olive' in C. White & S. R. Williams (ed), *Struggle or Starve: Women's Lives in the South Wales*

Valleys Between the Two World Wars, (Cardiff, Honno), p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ Jack Jones (1884-1970) was born in Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorganshire. He was the eldest son of David and Sarah Ann Jones, with his mother's name and life providing the inspiration for the character of Saran Morgan. Aged twelve, he became a collier. He fought in the First World War and was mentioned in dispatches, later he was honourably discharged following an injury. In 1923 he joined the Labour Party. He began writing, publishing his first novel Rhondda Roundabout in 1934. By 1939 he had established himself as a well-known Anglo-Welsh writer, setting each of his novels in Industrial South Wales. His work was a commentary on Welsh life with *Black Parade* and *Some Trust in Chariots*, referring to the Welsh Revival of 1904-05. K. Edwards 'Jones, Jack (1884-1970)' in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, (1971), <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-JONE-JAC-1884.html?query=jack+jones&field=content>

¹⁴⁵ M. Basini, 'Forward', Kindle Edition.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Welsh women and Nonconformity.

Women played an important role in the development of the early Methodist societies. During the eighteenth century, women could ‘exert considerable influence’ within their local society, particularly those who had financial and social means, or were married to influential men.¹⁴⁷ At times, women were able to play a prominent role in organising leaders to preach at their local society, and they provided ‘hospitality for exhorters.’ As women formed the majority of most Methodist societies, they were able, and required, to organise meetings, venues and preachers. However, as Methodism became more structured, women were encouraged to take a less active role in these matters. By the early 1800s they were discouraged from ‘issuing invitations and organising timetables,’ although they were still ‘expected to prepare tea for the minister.’¹⁴⁸ Women cared for new converts, encouraging and supporting them, giving Methodism a social dimension, which was both appealing and important for Welsh women. At a time when there were few leisure activities for women, Methodist societies ‘offered a change from the daily routine and a chance to feel part of a select group.’¹⁴⁹ Although working class women were generally unable to gain a position of influence within Methodism, the early societies did enable them to contribute to wider society and establish a sense of identity and belonging beyond the confines of the home. Although women were ‘not appointed as preachers or leaders of meetings’ early Methodism would not have succeeded without their participation and:

¹⁴⁷ E. M. White, ‘Women in the Early Methodist Societies in Wales’ in *Journal of Welsh Religious History*, Vol. 7, (1999), p. 96.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 96 - 97.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 103.

Records show that revivals would never have succeeded as they did without the [...] vast of female enthusiasts, who walked hundreds of miles to secure the services of preachers for their local gatherings and were often the first to invite them into new parishes.¹⁵⁰

However, by the nineteenth century, women's roles and opportunities became increasingly restricted as Nonconformity emerged as increasingly patriarchal denominations.¹⁵¹

Through Sunday Schools, working-class women were encouraged to read and the increased level of literacy 'created an appetite for periodical literature.'¹⁵² In January 1850, the first periodical written specifically for Welsh working-class women was published. *Y Gymraes*, was intended as an antidote to the allegations raised by the Blue Books report. It was believed that if women could be educated in the desired ways of womanhood, namely as homemaker, wife and mother, then she would become a positive role model in the family and wider society. In effect:

Y Gymraes set out to create a perfect Welshwoman whose Christian morality, in particular virtues of sobriety and thrift would ensure that in future the Welsh nation would be above all criticism.¹⁵³

The periodical romanticised domestic lives, offering advice on how to support a husband following a difficult day at work, how to cook, clean and advised women to

¹⁵⁰ J. Aaron, 'A Review of the Contribution of Women to Welsh Life and Prospects for the Future' in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, No. 8, (2002), p. 193.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 107.

¹⁵² Jones, *Modern Wales: A Concise History*, p. 284.

¹⁵³ S. R. Williams, 'The True 'Cymraes': Images of Women in Women's Nineteenth Century Periodicals' in A.

V. John (ed), *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 74.

speak in hushed tones.¹⁵⁴ It failed to recognise the difficulties of ordinary women's lives and so failed to appeal to working-class women. Nonconformist preachers became the guardians of Welsh respectability, promoting 'separate spheres' as the most desirable way of life. Women were to be virtuous, remaining within the home, fulfilling their domestic roles. The chapels were dominated by older men who exerted control over both their congregations and communities. This was later illustrated by the novels of Caradoc Evans, whose work will be discussed in chapter four. Evans depicted the dominance of Nonconformity as a hypocritical, demeaning period of Welsh life. Women were 'excluded from elite circles of power' and within the chapel were 'regarded as subordinate and marginal, [and were] refused permission to become chapel elders or ministers.'¹⁵⁵ However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the accepted view of 'the angel in the house' began to change and some women became accepted as 'the angel out of the house.'¹⁵⁶ This new view included women who worked as missionaries abroad and temperance workers.¹⁵⁷ During this time, there were Welsh women who emerged as evangelical speakers and revivalists, the most notable being Rosina Davies.

Rosina Davies was born in Glamorgan in 1863. She experienced a spiritual awakening during a meeting led by the Salvation Army in 1877. Aged just fourteen, Rosina Davies left home, joined the Salvation Army and began assisting the Salvation Army with their mission in Maesteg. She went on to conduct a series of preaching tours

¹⁵⁴ Williams, 'The True 'Cymraes': Images of Women in Women's Nineteenth-Century Periodicals', pp. 78 - 84 & R. Jones, "'Separate Spheres?'" Women, language and respectability in Wales' in *A Social History of the Welsh Language: The Welsh language and its social domains 1801-1911*, G. H. Jenkins (ed), (University Press Wales, Cardiff, 2000), p. 180.

¹⁵⁵ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales*, p. 11 & Jones, "'Separate Spheres?'" Women, language and respectability in Wales' p. 204.

¹⁵⁶ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The Women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05, Their Impact then, their challenge Now*, p. 13.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

throughout Wales and ‘several hundred missionary meetings,’ through which she gained the reputation as ‘the little Welsh girl.’¹⁵⁸ She was widely criticised because ‘chapel authorities regarded such women as threatening and subversive.’ In her autobiography, she stated that:

A girl evangelist in Wales was a phenomenon; for women to take part in any public capacity was unthinkable, and that sentiment continued amongst ministers and laymen for a long time.¹⁵⁹

In 1886, Rosina Davies received vocal training at the Royal Academy of music, London, and then continued to conduct tours as both a preacher and singer. In 1893, She was invited by the Welsh Churches in America to preach in chapels throughout a range of states.¹⁶⁰ At a time when the doctrine of ‘separate spheres’ was prevalent throughout Welsh Nonconformist society, Rosina Davies’s achievements were remarkable and she was clearly a forerunner to the revivalist women who evangelised throughout the Revival of 1904-05. Interestingly, the practice of ‘separate spheres’ was abandoned during the Revival as some women worked alongside men to further the movement, whilst others evangelised individually or with other women. Female leadership was an accepted part of the Revival model, yet Rosina Davies chose to have very limited involvement with the movement. She was concerned by the emotional intensity of the Revival and feared that the unstructured meetings and the focus on spiritual experiences rather than ‘Biblical knowledge’ were dangerous and unhealthy.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ M. A. Williams, ‘Davies, Rosina (1863-1949)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & R. Davies, *The Story of My Life*, (Llandysul, Gomerian Press, 1942), p. 31.

¹⁵⁹ R. Davies, *The Story of My Life*, (Llandysul, Gomerian Press, 1942), p. 31.

¹⁶⁰ Williams, ‘Davies, Rosina (1863-1949)’, in *ODNB*.

¹⁶¹ Davies, *The Story of My Life*, pp. 187 - 188.

Conclusion.

The belief that Wales, between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries can be understood exclusively in terms of religion or industrialism and politics is incorrect. The industrial revolution dramatically altered the course of Welsh life and culture, whilst Nonconformity became the dominant form of Christianity within the country. It was against this backdrop of industrialism and Nonconformity that the Welsh Revival of 1904-05 occurred. To try and understand the Revival, outside this social and religious culture would be a mistake. Certainly, the central revivalist, Evan Roberts, was a product of both the colliers and Calvinistic Methodism and, arguably, his ability to communicate with and enthuse the working populace greatly contributed to the success of his Revival campaigns. Women were central to the Welsh way of life and were essential to the development of the 1904-05 Revival. Yet, before examining their role in the movement, it is important to understand the character of the Revival, the role of Roberts and the development of his Revival ministry.

Chapter Two:

Evan Roberts: The Man, the Myth and the Revival.

Introduction.

Evan Roberts was the most prominent figure of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. Indeed, the Revival's historiography has placed Roberts at the epicentre of the movement, echoing the claim that: 'As the sun is in the centre of the planetary system, so Evan Roberts was in the centre of the Revival.'¹ Roberts, supported by a team of both male and female revivalists, led six Revival campaigns throughout Wales and Liverpool, and was central to the popular interest and religious enthusiasm generated by the Revival. Although Roberts's name is indelibly associated with the phenomenon, this was largely because the press depicted him as the divinely appointed revivalist.

This chapter will evaluate Roberts's Revival ministry, examining the impact of the local and national Welsh press in promoting the movement, and evaluating the publicised accounts of Roberts's spiritual encounters with God. These accounts were central to the public's interest in Roberts, as they depicted him as a mystical phenomenon in contact with the divine. Through popular history, and evangelical writings, Roberts became immortalised as the Revival's charismatic leader, despite clear evidence that the phenomenon developed independently of him and the majority of his campaign stops were in places where the Revival had already begun. Following a literature review of the Revival and a biographical account of Roberts's life and evangelism, this chapter will evaluate the view that Roberts was the instigator of the Revival. This chapter will demonstrate that although his ministry was important to the

¹ R. Ellis, *Living Echoes of the Welsh Revival*, (London, Delyn Press, 1954), p. 21.

development of the movement, Roberts's Revival ministry began after he attended a series of Revival meetings in 1904. This work will then evaluate the newspaper portrayal of the 'Evan Roberts Revival,' analysing the impact of the press in promoting Roberts as the central figure of the Revival, showing that although Roberts's ministry was important, he was not the epicentre of the phenomenon. To gain a clear understanding of this subject, it is important to build upon the work of theologian, Robert Pope, and 'demythologise' the Revival, dispensing with the myths and misconceptions that surrounded Roberts's involvement in this religious movement.²

The 'newspaper Revival' of 1904-05.

The Welsh Revival of 1904-05 is the most documented example of its kind. In part, this was due to the continuing success of the newspaper industry, with Revival reports published in Welsh broadsheets and articles printed in regional and national publications.³ The *Western Mail* and the *South Wales Daily News* first reported the Revival in November 1904 and published daily accounts until March 1906. *The Manchester Guardian* began publishing Revival reports in November 1904 but these were not a regular feature of the newspaper until April 1905.⁴ Newspaper accounts referred to the Welsh revival of 1859, highlighting the similarities between these two religious' movements in a bid to strengthen the credibility of the 1904 phenomenon.

² R. Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,' in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 53, No. 3, (2006).

³ Daily Revival reports were published in the *South Wales Daily News*, the *South Wales Daily Post* and the *Western Mail*. Less frequent reports were published in *The South Wales Argus*, *The Aberdare Leader* and *The North Wales Guardian & The Times*.

⁴ *The Manchester Guardian* regularly featured Welsh News, owing to the city's large Welsh community. The increase in Revival reports coincided with Roberts's Liverpool campaign, and visits to North Wales, reflecting the readership's interest in Revival locations that were geographically closer.

One of the earliest Revival articles in the *South Wales Daily News*, entitled: ‘Wales’s Last Revival: A glance at the records,’ reminded readers that many who had experienced the ‘awakening’ of 1859 would be able to vouch for the authenticity of the 1904 Revival:

What is today happening in Loughor, New Quay, and elsewhere [...] recalls the great revival which swept over the Principality in 1859-60, producing effects which are still visible even unto this day. Those privileged to witness and to participate in the soul- stirring events of that period, and many hundreds of them are still living, are doubtless discussing the points of resemblance between Diwygiad [Revival] ’59 and the movement which is so rapidly spreading among the churches.⁵

The London Welshman, published details of a public lecture at Blaenau Ffestiniog, entitled ‘How revivals have benefited Wales,’ describing how previous revivals had prepared the country for the 1904 Revival:

This present-day Revival seemed to be a gathering of the forces of the early three in permanent influence for the salvation of the whole man. [...] One might infer that this Revival might well become the rediscovery of the Kingdom of Heaven.⁶

These articles reminded the readership that revival movements had played a prominent role in Welsh religious history. To challenge the validity of the 1904 Revival was to question the authenticity of the previous revivals that had formed the basis of Welsh Nonconformity and were seen as a matter of Welsh national pride. The suggestion that

⁵ *South Wales Daily News*, 17 November 1904, p. 5.

⁶ *The London Welshman*, 29 April 1905, p. 2.

the 1904 Revival was the fulfilment and culmination of previous revivals strengthened the claim that this was an authentic movement of the Holy Spirit. In December 1904, the *South Wales Daily Press* published an article outlining the revival prophecy of Dr Joseph Parry, claiming that Parry had predicted that ‘the next Revival to take place in Wales would be a singing Revival.’⁷ Music was an important feature of the 1904 Revival, with many of the revivalist women remembered for leading rousing choruses and hymn singing. This was seen as the fulfilment of Parry’s prophecy, strengthening the view that the Revival had been ordained by God.

Of particular importance were a series of six Revival pamphlets, entitled *The Religious Revival in Wales*, written by the *Western Mail* journalist. T. Awstin Davies and published under the name ‘Awstin.’ These pamphlets chronicled the early months of the Revival, featuring articles, photographs of prominent Revival figures, testimonies and advertisements for Revival memorabilia.⁸ The first pamphlet contained a preface by William Eilir, the lead journalist of the *Western Mail*, which highlighted the relationship between the Revival and the press:

The daily press in Wales during the present Revival is passing through a new and strange experience. For the first time in its history its columns are devoted to reporting the proceedings in connection with any movement of the kind. [...]

⁷ Joseph Parry was born in Merthyr Tydfil in 1841. He married in 1862 and fathered five children, one of whom became widely known as the composer William Haydn. Parry was well known for his musical work and received public donations to support his musical education. After graduating from Cambridge (1871), Parry returned to Wales, opening a music college and working at the University of Aberystwyth. Parry was a national celebrity who, prior to his death in 1903 made a prediction regarding his belief in a future Welsh revival. T. Herbert, ‘Parry, Joseph (1841-1903) in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & *South Wales Daily News*, 20 December 1904, p. 6.

⁸ E. Evans, ‘Introduction’ in *Religious Revival in Wales: ‘Awstin’ and Western Mail special correspondents 1904-1905*, (Shropshire, Quinta Press, 2004), p. v.

In the estimation of some critics, indeed, so successfully does it work that the present awakening has been called [...], “a newspaper revival.”⁹

Jessie Penn-Lewis, a prominent figure in the Revival, considered in chapter three, echoed this view. She described the interest of the press as being ‘to the wonderment of all,’ and wrote that the newspaper industry had done ‘much in the providence of God, to noise abroad that which God was doing among His people.’¹⁰ For Penn-Lewis and Eilir, the mass publication of testimonies and conversion accounts, added to the credibility of the phenomenon. It was unprecedented and ensured that communication about the Revival was not restricted to word of mouth or dependent upon Nonconformist publications, such as *The Methodist Times*.¹¹ Letters of thanks were written by members of the public to the editor of the *South Wales Daily News*, with one stating: ‘By dedicating so much space to the wonderful work God is accomplishing today in Wales, you are doing more than you think to spread the Holy fire.’¹² ‘Awstin’s’ work included articles from well-known journalists and public figures who provided a commentary of the Revival, including its wider social impact. Sir Marchant Williams, the stipendiary magistrate for Merthyr Tydfil, declared that the Revival was directly responsible for a decline in crime, particularly public drunkenness and the use of inappropriate language.¹³ This was emphasised by a

⁹ ‘Eilir’, ‘Past and Present Revivals’ in Awstin, *The Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet No. 1, (Cardiff, Western Mail, 1904), p. 1.

¹⁰ Penn-Lewis’s involvement with both Roberts and the Revival became a controversial subject and will be examined in chapter three. J. Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904*, (first printed as *The Awakening in Wales and Some of the Hidden Springs*, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1905 reprinted by Fort Washington, CLC Publications, 2002), p. 67.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *South Wales Daily News*, 6 December 1904, p. 6.

¹³ E. M. Humpherys, ‘Williams, Sir Thomas Merchant (1845 - 1914)’ in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & M. Williams, ‘Some practical results,’ in Awstin, *The Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet No. 4, (Cardiff, Western Mail, 1904).

cartoon of a judge asking the duty sergeant why there are no cases to hear. The sergeant replied: “Revival, sir!”

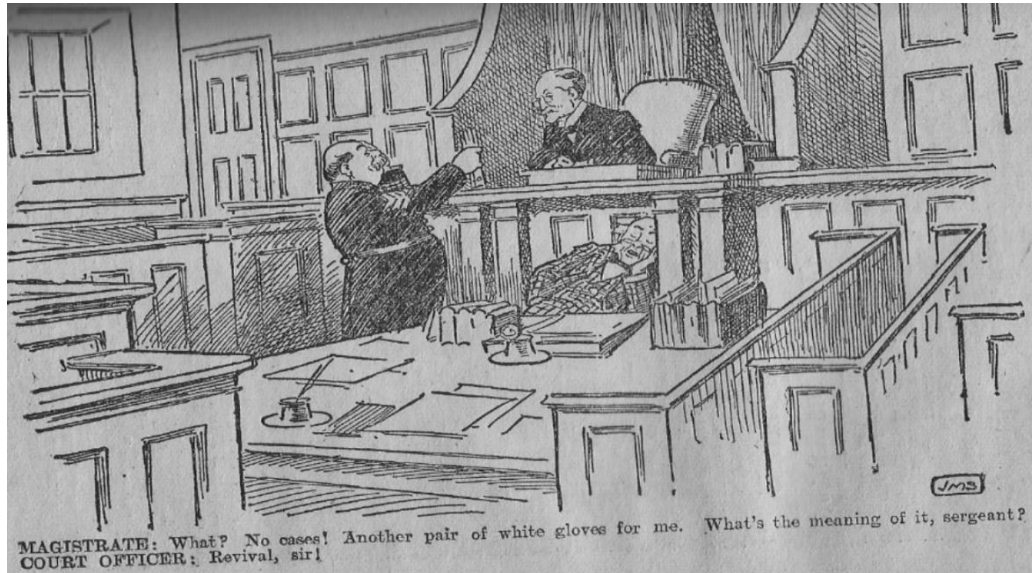


Figure IV.

‘His Occupation Gone.’

Awstin, *The Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet No. 4, (Cardiff, Western Mail, 1904), p. 23.

‘Awstin’s’ second pamphlet introduced a column entitled ‘Harvest of the Revival’, outlining the number of people who claimed to have received conversion experiences.¹⁴ More frequent examples of conversion figures were published by the *South Wales Daily News*, often reported under sensationalist headlines such as: ‘The Revival: The roll of converts, 20,000 more within a fortnight.’¹⁵ However, ‘Awstin’s’

¹⁴ These columns were also printed in the Western Mail. ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet No. 2, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), pp. 25 - 26 & *Western Mail*, 28 January 1905, p. 6.

¹⁵ *South Wales Daily News*, 23 December 1904, p. 5.

method of publishing data, in a consistent format, provides the most accurate summary of conversions reported during Roberts's first Revival campaign. The importance of 'Awstin's' work was noted in 2004 when, to mark the Revival's centenary, the six pamphlets were reprinted as a collection. Included was an analysis of the conversion figures, listing the towns, and the number of chapel members reported in December 1904, January and February 1905. These figures were cumulative, showing the increase in chapel membership during the initial three months of the Revival. When combined, these figures suggest that throughout Wales there were a total of 87,548 converts reported by February 1905.¹⁶ Other newspapers reported conversion figures in a similar vein to sports results or league tables:

Revival converts in South Wales now number over 71,000, Abertillery still heading the list with 3,112 or 1,000 beyond Maesteg which ranks second. In South Wales over 600 converts were added last week. The North Wales converts are now estimated at over 10,000, of whom Rhos, near Ruabon claims 1,740, Cefn Mawr being second with about 710.¹⁷

This report, entitled 'Welsh statistics', suggests that the Revival created a sense of competitive rivalry on both a local and national scale. Neighbouring towns could compare their reported levels of religiosity, whilst the national picture suggested that South Wales had received 61,000 more converts than the North. This was hardly surprising given the disparity between the populations in the North and South of the country, a distinction which was not highlighted by the press. Conversion figures provided the readership with tangible evidence of the Revival's growing popularity

¹⁶ *Religious Revival in Wales: 'Awstin' and Western Mail special correspondents 1904-1905*, (Shropshire, Quinta Press, 2004), pp. 541 - 548.

¹⁷ *The Manchester Guardian*, 2 March 1905, p. 12 & 'Awstin' *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet No. 3, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), pp. 32 - 33.

and impact. Advertisements for Revival memorabilia, including hymn books, prayer cards and Revival crockery, are further examples of how the newspapers added to the success of the movement and the sense of national religious excitement. The marketing of Revival memorabilia ranged from half page features in ‘Awstin’s’ Revival pamphlets, advertising the price and order number of Revival postcards, to short articles featuring company statements and a description of their merchandise:

The Cymric Publishing Company, 58, Charles Street, Cardiff, which are advertising the “Evan Roberts enlarged autograph portrait” [...], have also lately published Revival Teachers’ Editions of the Bible at 10s. 6d. These are beautifully bound in Morocco.¹⁸

Following the phenomenon, the production of Revival memorabilia continued. Collections of Revival hymns were sold as a means of reminding the Welsh of the importance of hymn singing during revival movements.

¹⁸ *The London Welshman*, 3 June 1905.

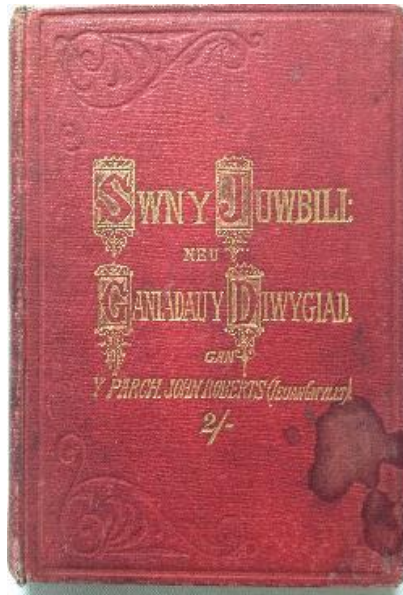


Figure V.

**Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel,
Loughor:**

'Swn y Jiwbili: neu Ganiadau Y Diwygiad'

A hymn book of Revival songs.

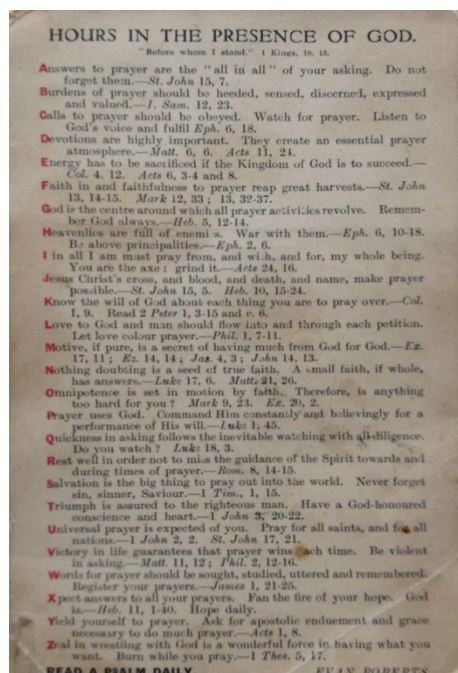


Figure VI.

Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel, Loughor:

'Hours in the Presence of God'

An acrostic of spiritual instructions for Revival converts, citing Biblical references. Written by Evan Roberts.

The extent to which Revival memorabilia advanced the movement is difficult to assess. There are no records of production volumes or sales figures and no data of the generated profits. Roberts featured in many of the products, including Revival crockery sets and prayer cards which, presumably, were in higher demand than the more generic items.

Eilir's reference to the 'newspaper Revival' of 1904, should not be underestimated. The press transformed the way in which the Welsh engaged with the Revival, and their revivalist past. Post-Revival publications, eyewitness accounts and testimonies, reiterated much of what had been reported in the newspapers. Daily Revival reports generated a sense of national

excitement and immediate expectancy which increased interest in the 'Evan Roberts Revival.'¹⁹

A literature review of Revival testimonies and current research.

Accounts, published shortly after the Revival, were largely written from an evangelical perspective and championed Roberts as a divinely appointed revivalist. In December 1904, *The Times* journalist W. T. Stead travelled to Wales to interview Roberts, and became increasingly involved with the Revival, attending meetings and consulting with the press.²⁰ Stead's reports were published and he was considered an

¹⁹ J. A. Owen, 'A Study of Orality and Conceptuality During the Welsh Religious Revival of 1904 - 06', (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Birmingham University PhD/ thesis, 1997), p. 64.

²⁰ William Thomas Stead (1849-1912), wrote for a number of national and local newspapers, demonstrating a considerable interest for political and religious affairs. Whilst writing for *The Times*, he reported on the development of the 1904 Revival, befriending Roberts and partaking in Revival meetings. Stead died 15 April 1912, whilst aboard the Titanic. J. O. Baylen, 'Stead, William Thomas

authority on Roberts and his Revival ministry.²¹ Further accounts of Roberts's involvement in the Revival included the work of David Matthews, a Revival convert, Jessie Penn-Lewis and Percy Hicks.²² These testimonies chronicled the development of the Revival, portraying Roberts as the principal revivalist, with Hicks describing him as 'the mystical evangelist who has led the spiritual transformation of Wales.'²³ D. M. Phillips's extensive biography of Roberts's life and ministry is significant as he accompanied Roberts throughout the Revival and was permitted to publish some of Roberts's sermons and personal correspondence.²⁴ Phillips wrote to endorse the view that Roberts had been predestined to bring about the spiritual transformation of Wales, describing Roberts's birth as: 'The day of possibility.'²⁵ He claimed that Roberts's favourite childhood game was 'to get other children to play at religious meetings, he himself being the leader,' and believed this was proof that Roberts was destined to lead the Revival.²⁶ Although Phillips's work provided 'little appraisal' of the Revival, the biographical account of Roberts's pre-Revival life was thorough, and provided the frame-work for all later accounts of his youth.²⁷

Revd J. Vyrnwy Morgan's *The Welsh Religious Revival* criticised Roberts and his revivalism.²⁸ In 1908, Morgan returned to Cwmafan, South Wales, which had been

(1849-1912)' in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010).

²¹ Stead's work formed the basis of Mal Pope's 2004 production *Amazing Grace*, a dramatization of Roberts and the Revival, written to commemorate the Revival's centenary, and performed throughout South Wales. <http://www.malpope.com/grace/synopsis.html> [accessed 10 February 2014].

²² Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904* (reprint), D. Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1951 reprinted by Belfast, Ambassador Productions, 2004) & P. Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, (London, Charles H Kelley, 1906).

²³ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 14.

²⁴ D. M. Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The great revivalist and his work*, (London, Marshall Brothers, Paternoster Row, 1906).

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 33.

²⁷ G. Davies, 'Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout,' in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster Press, 2009), p. 107.

²⁸ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, (London, Clapham & Hall, 1909 reprinted by Oswestry, England, Quinta Press, 2004).

deeply influenced by the Revival, providing Morgan with a basis for evaluating the success and legacy of the phenomenon.²⁹ Morgan's contemporary critique, examined Roberts's ministry and the role of imagination and religious enthusiasm in the development of the Revival, which he believed was inherent in the Welsh personality.³⁰ As Morgan neither witnessed the Revival, or met with the principle revivalists, his work offers a more neutral assessment than that of other contemporary critics, such as Peter Price.³¹ These accounts, along with newspaper reports, provided the evidential basis for the work of academics such as Robert Pope and M. Wynn Thomas, and Robert Tudor Jones, whose *Faith and Crisis of a Nation* examined the faith and religiosity of Wales throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³² Further

work, published by Eifion Evans, Noel Gibbard, Geraint Tudur, Karen Lowe and Kevin Adams, focused on the development of the Revival, its aftermath and legacy and the role of the revivalist women.³³ Brynmor Pierce Jones, a prolific Revival scholar, published biographies of both Roberts and Penn-Lewis as well as a collection

²⁹ Morgan, (1860-1925) was born in Cwmafan, South Wales and was ordained as a Nonconformist minister in 1884. He was appointed as the pastor of a Congregationalist chapel in the Vyrnwy Valley. After working as a Nonconformist leader in Wales, London and America, Morgan became disillusioned with Nonconformity and converted to Anglicanism.

³⁰ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, (reprint 2004) pp. 29 & 39.

³¹ Prices's critique and role in the Revival will be examined later in this chapter and again in chapter five.

³² R. Pope, 'Evan Roberts in Theological Context', in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (2005), pp. 144 - 169, Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,' M Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of Nonconformity: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), M. Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2016) & R. T. Jones, *Faith and Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004).

³³ Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904*, Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar: A history and evaluation of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival*, N. Gibbard, *On the Wings of a Dove: The international effects of the 1904-05 Revival*, (United States, Wellspring, 2002), G. Tudur, 'Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival', (United States, Wellspring, 2002), G. Tudur, 'Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival', in *Journal of Welsh Religious History*, Vol. 4, (2004), Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, (Llanelli, Sheadhead Productions, 2004) & K. Adams, *A Diary of Revival: The Outbreak of the 1904 Welsh Awakening*, (Farnham, Crusade for World Revival, 2004).

of eyewitness testimonies and evaluations of the Revival.³⁴ Like Hicks and Phillips, these scholars adopted a pro-Revival perspective, seeking to promote the 1904-05 Revival as the direct work of God, made possible through Roberts's revivalism. Their work lacks the objectivity of Pope, Thomas and Jones, portraying the Revival from an evangelical perspective.

Some Revival accounts included an historical overview of the nature of Welsh revivalism and emphasised the frequency of national revivals. Like the press reports of 1904, these accounts were intended to bolster belief in the integrity and authenticity of the 1094-05 Revival. Both Evans and Gibbard concluded that prior to this Revival, Wales was a place of moral turbulence and religious decline. This reflected Hicks's earlier claim that 'the spiritual life of Wales prior to the Revival was at a low ebb [and that] outside the churches, the morale of the people was in some districts deplorable.'³⁵ Eifion Evans suggested that Welsh religiosity was suffering from a theological decline, exacerbated by the rise of evolutionary science. He referred to Welsh scholars who had attempted to merge evolutionary theory with Biblical instruction,

suggesting that the true nature of mankind could only be understood by examining Christian teaching in the light of Darwinism.³⁶ For these writers, the Revival was an antidote to the decline in Welsh religiosity and the perceived threat from scientific development.

³⁴ B. Pierce Jones, *The King's Champion's: (1905-1935) The Revival and the Reaction*, (Wales, Christian Literature Press, 1968), B. Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878- 1951*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing Inc, 1995), B. Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn- Lewis*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing Inc, 1997).

³⁵ Hicks, *The Life Story of Evan Roberts, and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 12.

³⁶ Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904*, p. 41.

Evans and Gibbard paralleled the earlier texts of Penn-Lewis, Stead and Matthews, affirming the authenticity of both the Revival and Roberts's ministry. Like the newspapers, Stead's account emphasised the importance placed upon the historical role of revivalism and suggests that the strength of Welsh Nonconformity, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was based on successive revivals, each building upon the reputation of the last. Typically, Welsh revivals followed periods of religious decline and were seen as remedies to spiritual apathy. Indeed, 'gloomy reflections preceded the outbreak of all the great revivals, which went on down to 1904-05 [...] and created their own momentum.'³⁷ Claiming that a Revival had been anticipated and prayed for added to the legitimacy of the event, suggested that the Revival was the fulfilment of petitionary prayer. Hicks wrote that prior to November 1904 'it was fully believed that a revival was coming – no one knew how or where, but the feeling became general that 'the Lord is at hand.'³⁸ Revival accounts were also a means of endorsing a revival figure head, comparing them with the leaders of previous movements. For example, Matthews included Roberts's name with a list of notable revival leaders, including Daniel Rowland, and Howell Harris, and claimed that Roberts had eclipsed his predecessors as 'the name of Evan Roberts is the most fascinating of all the honoured revivalists.'³⁹ Again, this echoed the contemporary press reports, with 'Awstin' writing that Roberts had become 'the Wesley of Wales.'⁴⁰

The majority of Revival literature has focused on Roberts as the Revival's protagonist. The few publications offering a different view examined the Revival's impact in

³⁷ G. Williams, *The Welsh and Their Religion: Historical essays*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1991), p. 61.

³⁸ Hicks, *The Life Story of Evan Roberts, and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 13.

³⁹ Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (reprint, 2004), p. 11.

⁴⁰ 'Awstin,' *The Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet No. 1, (Cardiff, Western Mail, 1904), p. 9.

places that Roberts did not visit.⁴¹ With most sources reiterating facts, based on a selection of newspaper reports, first-hand accounts and focusing on Roberts as a way of understanding the Revival, Pope surmised that there remained:

... a folk memory, much elaborated by the passage of time, of the Revival, which clung to the hope that a further renewal would soon occur and revive the ailing and declining Nonconformity.⁴²

This folk memory has influenced how the Revival was reported in the early twentieth century and has been perpetuated by later studies. To accurately understand how Roberts became central to the Revival's historiography, it is important to consider his wider identity and the press portrayal of 'the Evan Roberts Revival.'

Evan Roberts: A biographical account.

Evan John Roberts, born on 8 June 1878, at Island House, Loughor, was the second son of Henry and Hannah Roberts, née Edwards.⁴³ Henry Roberts was a miner at Loughor's Mountain Colliery, whilst Hannah Roberts cared for the family and the home.⁴⁴ They were devout members of the Calvinistic Pisgah Chapel, Bwlch Mynydd, a branch of Moriah Chapel, Loughor. Aged five, Roberts entered into Loughor's National School, where he met Sidney

⁴¹ For example, Simon Hancock's article analysed the history of the Revival in Neyland, Pembrokeshire. S. Hancock, 'The 1904-05 Religious Revival at Neyland' in *Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society*, V. 9, (2002).

⁴² Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,' p. 516.

⁴³ G. M. Roberts, 'Roberts, Evan John (1871-1951),' in *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-ROBE-JOH-1878.html?query=evan+roberts&field=content> [Accessed 10 March 2013].

⁴⁴ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 3.

Evans, who became his close friend, fellow revivalist and brother-in-law.⁴⁵ In 1890, aged twelve, Roberts left school to work at Mountain Colliery, alongside his father.⁴⁶ Following redundancy in 1894, he procured work in collieries at Maesteg and Blaengarw, near Bridgend. In 1898 he was employed at Mountain Ash colliery, north of Cardiff. He returned home a year later to work at Loughor's Broad Oak Colliery.⁴⁷

In September 1902, Roberts informed the minister and elders of the Moriah Chapel, that he intended to train for ordination.⁴⁸ However, before attending a preparatory college he became an apprentice to his uncle Evan Edwards, a blacksmith in Pontarddulais. During 1902, Roberts met with a phrenologist, who recommended that he seek a career in either ministry or public speaking.⁴⁹ In 1903, Roberts relinquished his apprenticeship and requested that his name be put forward for preparatory study at the Newcastle Emlyn Grammar School, after which he hoped to be accepted at Trefeca College.⁵⁰ From September 1903, until the summer of 1904, Roberts prepared for his theological training, playing an active role in chapel life, teaching in the Sunday School and preaching. Roberts and Sidney Evans were admitted into the school on 13 September 1904.⁵¹

Robert's spent a total of forty-nine days at Newcastle Emlyn. During this time both he and Sydney Evans attended Revival meetings at Blaenannerch, Cardiganshire, led by

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Tudur, 'Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival.' p. 80.

⁴⁷ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 8.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 13 & D. B. Rees, 'Roberts, Evan John (1878-1951),' in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁴⁹ Tudur, 'Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival.', pp. 80 - 81.

⁵⁰ Trefeca was the home of the eighteenth-century revivalist, Howell Harris. Harris was an important figure throughout the eighteenth-century Methodist revival and was a contemporary of Daniel Rowland and the Wesleys'. In 1842, Trefeca became a training college 'for young men with a little education, but a great desire to serve the Lord.' The college was dissolved in 1964, re-opening in 1966 as a retreat house and conference centre. <http://www.trefeca.org.uk/English/history> [Accessed 02 January 29017].

⁵¹ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, pp. 13 - 17.

the well-known evangelist, Seth Joshua, and a group of young women.⁵² These women, including Florrie Evans and Maud Davies, had been instrumental in facilitating the Revival that had already begun in New Quay, Cardiganshire.⁵³ During one meeting, Seth Joshua asked those present to ‘bow’ to God’s will. Roberts stated that he became overwhelmed with a desire to pray. He called out: “Bend me! Bend me! Bend me!” and claimed that ‘a wave of peace filled [his] bosom.’⁵⁴ He considered the number of people who had not had an experience of God and said that ‘the Salvation of [their] souls weighed heavily’ upon him and that he was ‘on fire for going through all of Wales and telling people about the Saviour.’⁵⁵ On 31 October 1904, Roberts left Newcastle Emlyn, and returned to Loughor, believing that the Holy Spirit had commissioned him to encourage those in his home parish to pray for a national revival.⁵⁶ Roberts began holding evening meetings at the school room of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor. At first only a few attended but within a week, it was reported that ‘the whole community was shaken,’ and that ‘the “Revival fever” soon became gloriously infectious, and prayer-meetings were held from seven in the evening till half past four in the morning.’⁵⁷ Reports of Roberts’s Revivalism were printed in *South Wales Daily News* and the *Western Mail*, which led to him being invited to speak in Calvinistic Methodist chapels at Gorseinon, Trecynon and Aberdare. These meetings

⁵² Seth Joshua was a Presbyterian minister and well-known evangelist. He travelled throughout Northern America and Britain, preaching and leading mission events. During 1903, Joshua was appointed as an evangelist by the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. He travelled to New Quay in September 1904 having heard that people were beginning to experience a revival. R. L. Jones, ‘Joshua, Seth (1858-1925)’ in *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s3-JOSH-SET-1858.html> [accessed 14 September 2017] & Tudur, ‘Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival,’ p. 83.

⁵³ Hicks, *The Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences in the Welsh Revival*, p. 19. For an account of the Revival ministry of Florrie Evans and Maud Davies, see chapter six.

⁵⁴ Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The Great Revivalist and his Work*, p. 125.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Tudur, ‘Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival’, p. 84.

⁵⁷ Stead, *The Welsh Revival: The Narrative of Facts*, (reprinted), p. 54 & Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 21.

were successful and Roberts was noted as a revivalist whose ‘zeal knew no limit’ and whose revivalism had ‘revolutionised’ the religious life of the town.⁵⁸

Throughout the following eighteen months, Roberts conducted six Revival campaigns, leading meetings throughout Wales and Liverpool. He became a household name and his activities were a daily feature in local and national Welsh newspaper reports. Hymn singing and testimonies characterised the emotionally intense Revival meetings that were replicated around the country.⁵⁹ Throughout the Revival, Roberts emphasised the need for repentance and championed the importance of obedience to the Holy Spirit. He repeated the need for people ‘to obey the Spirit in all His promptings’ and would chastise the congregation if he believed they were not following this edict.⁶⁰ Following his earlier experience at Blaenannerch, Roberts adapted Seth Joshua’s prayer and fervently prayed for the congregations: “Bend them, O God, Bend them!”⁶¹ He encouraged the congregations to praise God, praying: “Diolch Iddo” (Thank Him).⁶² Roberts attended numerous Revival meetings, often addressing multiple congregations a day. His health began to deteriorate and he suffered a series of nervous breakdowns. The most significant of these became known as the ‘week of silence,’ (February 1905). Roberts claimed that God had forbidden him to speak to anyone and for a week he shut himself away.⁶³ Following this, Roberts continued his Revival campaigns and, for a short time, his popularity continued to rise.

⁵⁸ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, pp. 21 - 22 & Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (reprinted 2004), pp. 28 - 29.

⁵⁹ Rees, ‘Roberts, Evan John (1878-1951),’ in *ODNB*.

⁶⁰ Pope, ‘Evan Roberts in Theological Context’, p. 159.

⁶¹ D. B. Rees, *Mr Evans Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, (Llangoed, Ty Rhys Chapel, 2005), p. 46.

⁶² Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (reprinted 2004), p. 39.

⁶³ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 43

The Revival ended in August 1906, leaving Roberts, aged twenty-eight, in a state of exhaustion and general ill health. He retreated from public life and moved to England to live with Jessie Penn-Lewis, and her husband William Penn-Lewis at their home at Great Glen, Leicestershire.⁶⁴ Roberts remained with the Penn-Lewises for eighteen years, occasionally travelling to London and Wales but never holding public meetings. Together, Roberts and Penn-Lewis wrote the controversial book, *War on the Saints*, which was written both as a manual for spiritual warfare, and as an analysis of the 1904-05 Revival.⁶⁵ Contemporary and later accounts have questioned the nature of Penn-Lewis's involvement with the Revival and the motives behind her relationship with Roberts. An analysis of this can be found in chapter three. Despite rumours and speculations, there is little doubt that when Roberts withdrew from public life he was on the verge of mental collapse and was apparently 'unable to stand or walk' for a year.⁶⁶ The contemporary belief that had he remained in Wales the Revival would have reached even greater heights is incorrect as his role in the Revival was unsustainable. In 1924, Roberts left the Penn-Lewises and moved to Brighton. Little is known of this period of his life, except that, in 1925, he was listed amongst the mourners at William Penn-Lewis's funeral.⁶⁷ In 1927, Roberts returned to Wales, and lived in Cardiff. He frequently visited his ailing father and became reacquainted with a wider circle of former friends and Revival converts. This marked the beginning of what Pierce Jones termed 'the little revival.'⁶⁸ In November 1928 Mary Davies, one of the original five revivalist women, invited Roberts to attend a small prayer meeting in Gorseinon. He

⁶⁴ Rees, 'Roberts, Evan John (1878-1951),' in *ODNB*.

⁶⁵ J. Penn-Lewis & E. Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, (London, Marshall Brothers, Paternoster, 1912).

⁶⁶ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 167.

⁶⁷ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 8. Newspaper cutting from Leicester Mail, 28 March 1925.

⁶⁸ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 217.

accepted the invitation and then began addressing weekly prayer meetings which became so popular that they were relocated from a small room to the Moriah Chapel, Loughor. These revival style meetings continued until 1931, and were marked by ‘healings, conversions and wonderful answered prayers.’⁶⁹ They were accompanied by a weekly Bible class, where Roberts explained ‘the eternal things of heaven.’⁷⁰ He may have seen these classes as an antidote to the failures of the Revival. In *War on the Saints*, he and Penn-Lewis concluded that the lack of theological teaching for converts left them open to Satanic attack. They believed converts were deceived into mistaking the presence of evil spirits for the Holy Spirit.⁷¹ By teaching alongside the emotionally charged meetings, Roberts may have believed that he had found the answer to sustaining a revival. However, ‘by 1931, there were few signs of the revival’s lasting influence’ and by 1932 Roberts retired into relative obscurity.⁷² Between 1932 and 1937, he led a solitary life, writing letters and claiming that God had asked him to pray for the world. Following the Second World War, Roberts spent more time with family and friends and began annual visits to Sam Jenkins, his former Revival colleague, in London. Together, they attended the theatre, concert halls and other cultural events.⁷³

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 219, 220 & 223.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 224.

⁷¹ For further discussion, see chapter three.

⁷² Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p 224

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 248.



Figure VII.

Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel, Loughor.

Photograph of Evan Roberts, seated, with Sam Jenkins and his wife.

Date unknown.

It has been claimed that Roberts ‘remained penniless’ throughout his life, although this was not true.⁷⁴ As Roberts had no formal employment, or salary, since working as a collier, his small state pension was subsidised by food parcels, owing to the continuation of rationing, from North America and Canada and financial ‘thank-offerings’ from Welsh friends.⁷⁵ Following a period of unspecified illness, Roberts died on 29 January 1951. At the time of his death, Roberts’s estate was valued at £808, the equivalent of £23,290 today.⁷⁶ He was buried in the family plot in the graveyard at Moriah Chapel, Loughor. The grave itself is unremarkable; however, a monument

⁷⁴ J. A. Lewis, ‘Evan Roberts the Welsh Revivalist’ in *Merthyr Historian*, Vol. 17 (2004), p. 102.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 246 - 247.

⁷⁶ Rees, ‘Roberts, Evan John (1878-1951),’ in *ODNB*. Inflation costs were calculated using the Bank of England’s inflation calculator.

was raised in the chapel grounds in 1953, to commemorate the Revival and the legacy of Mr Evan Roberts, the Welsh revivalist.

Did Evan Roberts instigate the 1904-05 Welsh Revival?

The *Western Mail* first referred to the Revival on 10 November 1904, and stated that:

A remarkable religious Revival is now taking place at Loughor. For some days a young man named Evan Roberts, [...] has been causing great surprise by his extraordinary orations [...]. Such excitement has prevailed that the road in which the chapel is situated has been lined with people from end to end.⁷⁷

Despite clear evidence that Roberts attended Revival meetings at Blaenannerch prior to his departure from Newcastle Emlyn, the *Western Mail* reported that: ‘It was absolutely incorrect to say that there was a Revival movement in Wales prior to the meetings which Mr Roberts and his friends held in Loughor.’⁷⁸ The belief that Roberts’s ministry was the origin of the Revival is central to the mythology that has surrounded the phenomenon. Despite claims that Roberts was the instigator of the Revival, there were examples of Revival meetings occurring throughout Wales from as early as 1902. Examples included a series of weekly prayer meetings at Ffordd Ffrith, Denbighshire. It was reported that these meetings were blessed by the Holy Spirit and were ‘quite as refreshing and without doubt as edifying many months before the winter of 1904.’⁷⁹ Similar meetings took place in Wales throughout 1903-1904,

⁷⁷ *Western Mail*, 10 November 1904, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *Western Mail*, 13 January 1905, p. 4.

⁷⁹ D. R. J. Ollerton, *The Revival’s Children: Early Welsh Pentecostalism in the Growth of Bethlehem Pentecost Church*, (Port Talbot, Talbot Printing Company, 1980), p. 2.

the best known of which were held in New Quay.⁸⁰ Roberts never claimed to be either the instigator or leader of the Revival. He maintained that it was led by God and that when he conducted Revival meetings, he was guided by the Holy Spirit. In an interview, Roberts stated:

I never prepare the words I speak. I leave all that to Him. I am not the source of the Revival. [...] I am not moving men's hearts and changing men's lives; not I but God worketh in me.⁸¹

Although the majority of first-hand accounts were written to endorse Roberts and the Revival, they often acknowledged that Roberts was not the source of the phenomenon. Hicks, under the heading 'Origin of the Revival,' wrote that Roberts, whilst studying at Newcastle Emlyn, heard that the 'Revival had broken out in [...] New Quay,' and that he attended those Revival meetings.⁸² Likewise, Eifion Evans who, 'associated the Revival more than most with Evan Roberts,' acknowledged that there were many areas of Wales where the Revival had begun independently of Roberts and that after 'instigating' the Revival at 'Loughor, Gorseinon and Trecynon,' the movement spread independently of Roberts.⁸³ Revival convert H. Elvet Lewis, described the phenomenon as a series of individual fires, burning intently. He wrote that Roberts became 'the herald of fire' and through his revivalism 'joined together the separate patches of fire.'⁸⁴ For both Lewis and Hicks, Roberts was not the instigator of the Revival but his evangelism was central to the success of the phenomenon, rendering

⁸⁰ Lewis, 'Evan Roberts the Welsh Revivalist', p. 89.

⁸¹ A. Goodich, *The Story of the Welsh Revival as Told by Eyewitnesses: Together with a Sketch of Evan Roberts and his Message to the world*, (London, Fleming H Revell Company, 1905), p. 5.

⁸² Hicks, *The Life Story of Evan Roberts, and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p 18.

⁸³ Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,' p. 518.

⁸⁴ H. Elvet Lewis, 'With Christ Among the Miners,' in R. O. Roberts (ed), *Glory Filled the Land: A Trilogy of the Welsh Revival (1904-1905)*, (Wheaton, Illinois, USA, International Awakening Press, 1989), p. 60.

it impossible ‘to separate Evan Roberts from the Revival.’⁸⁵ Contemporary accounts cited an outpouring of intercessory prayer as the origin and driving force of the Revival. Later, more critical accounts have suggested that it was the ‘ghost dance’ of Welsh Nonconformity, born out of a politically oppressed nation who were struggling to maintain a sense of national identity and purpose.⁸⁶ Despite this range of opinion, the Revival ‘remains thoroughly associated [...] with Evan Roberts.’⁸⁷ In 1905, the evangelist G. Campbell Morgan wrote that it was impossible to trace the precise origin of the Revival but he believed that Roberts was best understood as ‘a product of the Revival.’⁸⁸ Similarly, Pope claimed that ‘Evan Roberts Revival’ was very much a product of the media,’ presenting an inaccurate view of Roberts’s role.⁸⁹ Morgan aptly summarised the lasting effect of the press, writing:

They canonized him [Roberts], and gave him a name and a fame that caused people from far and near to prejudice his relationship to the Revival of which he was not the originator and not the medium.⁹⁰

Newspapers played a vital role in the development and success of the Revival, making the movement widely accessible and bringing it to the public’s attention. Yet, equally, it damaged the integrity of the Revival, thrusting Roberts onto a pedestal and creating a series of myths and legends, which has hindered subsequent research.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales: 1890-1914*, p. 218.

⁸⁷ Pope, ‘Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,’ p. 518.

⁸⁸ G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945), was an English congregationalist minister. He was a well-known evangelist and theologian. E. Kaye. Morgan, George Campbell, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) & G. Campbell, *The Welsh Revival its Power and Source*, (London, Pilgrim Press, 1905 reprinted Charleston, USA, Biblio Press), p. 83

⁸⁹ Pope, ‘Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,’ p. 518.

⁹⁰ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p. 57.

The 'Evan Roberts Revival.'

On 30 January 1951, Roberts's death was announced on the front page of the *Western Mail*. His obituary demonstrated that although it had been forty years since the Revival, he was still considered as 'the man who changed [the] nation's life.'⁹¹ His funeral was attended by 'hundreds who loved and honoured' him.⁹² This was extraordinary, given that he had recoiled from public life in 1906, the Revival had ended and Welsh Nonconformity was in serious decline. Despite Roberts's 'meteoric' rise to fame during 1904-05, he quickly retreated 'into the shadows of history.'⁹³ Yet, he remains an indelible feature of early twentieth century Welsh history as the leader of the 1904-05 Revival, and the rise of the 'Evan Roberts myth.'⁹⁴ As newspapers only began reporting on the Revival in November 1904, it was 'hardly surprising' that they attributed the Revival and its success to Roberts.⁹⁵ There was a bias in the way the Revival was reported, which reflected the fact that the 'Evan Roberts Revival' was a popular, lucrative story. Newspapers focused on Roberts's Revival activities, with the *Western Mail* publishing a column entitled: 'Revivalist engagements' announcing in advance the dates and locations of Roberts's Revival meetings.⁹⁶ Numerous reports were printed regarding Roberts's campaign locations, many of which were reprinted in local publications throughout Wales. Indeed, 'the frenzied press reports in newspapers seemed to present Roberts as omnipresent.'⁹⁷ Articles enthused the readership with emotive headlines such as: 'Religious Ecstasy: The Revivalist's

⁹¹ Lewis, 'Evan Roberts the Welsh Revivalist' p. 89 & *Western Mail*, 30 January 1951, pp 1 & 4.

⁹² Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p 250.

⁹³ Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales: 1890-1914*, p. 214.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 215.

⁹⁵ *Western Mail*, 13 January 1904, p. 4. & R. Pope, 'Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-05,' p. 518.

⁹⁶ *Western Mail*, 24 January 1905, p. 6.

⁹⁷ R. Davies, *People, Places and Passions: 'Pain and Pleasure' A Social History of Wales and the Welsh 1870- 1945*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2015), p. 87.

visions.’ ‘Exciting Incidents: Revivalists aggressive. Public houses stormed.’ ‘The Religious Revival in Wales: Extraordinary enthusiasm.’ ‘Mr Evan Roberts: Exciting adventure and escape.’⁹⁸ The press moulded Roberts into their Revival champion and, for them at least, it was a fortunate choice. Aged just twenty-six at the start of the Revival, he was described as ‘a tall, graceful young man,’ who ‘with his chiselled good looks was the Ivor Novello of evangelists.’⁹⁹ Roberts was a photogenic, enigmatic man, whose character endeared him to his many followers. His photograph was readily available, published alongside newspaper reports, and he was featured in the *Western Mail* postcard series.



Figure VIII.

Mr Evan Roberts in his Study.

Postcard No. 193 of the *Western Mail*
'Great Welsh Revival' series.

⁹⁸ *South Wales Daily News*, 19 November 1904, p. 6, *South Wales Daily News*, 12 December 1904, p. 5, *The Manchester Guardian*, 14 December 1904, p.12 & *The Manchester Guardian*, 10 April 1905, p. 8.

⁹⁹ Stead, *The Welsh Revival: The Narrative of Facts*, (reprint), p. 48 & Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 3



Figure IX Evan Roberts

Postcard from the *Western Mail* 'Great Welsh Revival' series.



Figure X.

Mr Evan Roberts

Postcard No. 190 of the *Western Mail* 'Great Welsh Revival' series.



Figure XI.

Postcard dated 24 August 1905.

'I thought you might like a postcard of *the Evan Roberts*. [...]

We have heard E. R. is staying next door to us.'

At a time when Welsh national identity was under threat, owing to the large influx of migrants from England and Ireland, Roberts was unashamedly Welsh and so was his Revival. Wynn Thomas argued that the Revival was ‘fascinatingly bi-lingual and bi-cultural in character.’¹⁰⁰ As English was an increasingly spoken language in South Wales, for the Revival to have affected such large numbers in the South of the country, English speakers must have been drawn to the movement. Wynn Thomas cited Phillips’s account of a meeting in December 1906 when ‘young converts took part in Welsh and English,’ and wrote that this pleased Roberts as it indicated that the Revival was powerful enough to bridge the language divide that was evident within the industrial South.¹⁰¹ Yet, in spite of this, and his ability to speak in English, Roberts believed that ‘Welsh was the language of his faith and his theology.’¹⁰² With the exception of his Liverpool campaign, he conducted the Revival in Welsh, which became a source of national pride.¹⁰³ Roberts’s working class background, lack of formal education and theological training, which was possibly a source of antagonism to ministers such as Price, commended him to many of his Revival followers.¹⁰⁴ Roberts was presented both as a man of the people and as a ‘virtually infallible’ instrument of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁵ Although not considered a remarkable preacher, when he addressed meetings, he spoke ‘simply, unaffectedly and earnestly.’¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales: 1890-1914*, p. 220.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 221.

¹⁰² Rees, *Mr Evans Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, p.18.

¹⁰³ Owen, ‘A Study of Orality and Conceptuality During the Welsh Religious Revival of 1904-06’, p. 259.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 294.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 260.

¹⁰⁶ Stead, *The Welsh Revival: The Narrative of Facts*, (reprint), p. 44.

Rather than structured sermons, Roberts encouraged the congregations to participate in the meetings by singing hymns, openly confessing their sins and giving testimonies. He described his visions and encounters with God, which furthered the sense of mythology that developed

around him. He stated that prior to travelling to Newcastle Emlyn, he had been reflecting on the failed state of the church when:

At one o'clock in the morning suddenly I was waked up out of my sleep, and I found myself, with unspeakable joy and awe, in the very presence of Almighty God. And for the space of four hours I was privileged to speak face to face with him as a man speaks face to face with a friend.¹⁰⁷

He claimed that these visitations were nightly occurrences for 'three or four months' and that he feared going to Newcastle Emlyn in case they stopped.¹⁰⁸ Stead quoted an article from the *South Wales Daily News*, reporting a vision that Roberts had claimed to receive whilst walking in a garden:

Suddenly, in the hedge on his left, he saw a face full of scorn, hatred and derision, and heard a laugh as of defiance. It was the prince of this world, who exalted in his despondency. Then there appeared another figure gloriously arrayed in white, bearing in hand a flaming sword borne aloft. The sword fell athwart the first figure, and it instantly disappeared.¹⁰⁹

Roberts believed that, through this vision, God had shown him that the Christ would be triumphant over Satan. The most well-known of Roberts's visions was of 'Jesus

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p.55.

presenting a cheque to His Father, and on it the figure “100,000.”¹¹⁰ Roberts believed that this was proof that God was going to save 100,000 souls during the course of the Revival.

These visionary experiences, and the publicity which surrounded them, added to the sense of Roberts as a mystical evangelist. This was enhanced by the popular belief that Roberts possessed psychic powers and his ability to sense the presence and will of the Holy Spirit. This was ‘the hallmark of his mysticism,’ his unwavering belief that he was continually in direct communication with the Holy Spirit, or ‘a hot-line to God.’¹¹¹

In a study of the visions associated with the Revival, Gaius Davies, consultant psychologist at King’s College Hospital, London, wrote that ‘Roberts’s visions were invisible and transcendental images (internal icons) which sought to convey the Revival’s divine causation and spiritual underpinning.’¹¹² These visions could not be corroborated by witnesses as they were a form of religious experience which was personal to Roberts. However, these visions not only pointed to Roberts’s spiritual authority but were a form of divine revelation that was ‘accessible’ to the generally uneducated population. Roberts communicated these visions as simple images and simple messages that did not require detailed theological knowledge or understanding.

Throughout the Revival, Roberts maintained that he was directed by the Holy Spirit and that he was obeying the will of God. This statement was in itself ‘very influential,’ as who would question ‘the wisdom of the Holy Spirit’?¹¹³ ‘Awstin’ reported that the ‘Holy Spirit spoke through him’ as he was ‘simply the medium of His wisdom.’¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p. 49.

¹¹¹ Davies, ‘Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout,’ p. 110.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 130

¹¹³ Tudur Jones, *Faith and Crisis of the Nation (1890-1914)*, p. 295.

¹¹⁴ ‘Awstin’, *The Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet No. 1, (Cardiff, Western Mail, 1904), p. 2.

Roberts spoke as if he was engaged in a continual conversation with the divine, sometimes entering into trance-like states. When Revd Hugh Williams first invited Roberts to lead a Revival campaign in Anglesey, Roberts agreed but said that he didn't know if God would agree to it. He waited and then:

His countenance changed. His body was [there ...] but his thoughts were far away, and in a few minutes, he turned [...] and said "The Lord is calling now." [...] Tears began to flow down his face. "Here it comes," said Evan Roberts. "Remember the blood." He extended his hand to [...] Williams who experienced a warm feeling though his body."¹¹⁵

Williams was impressed by this dramatic encounter, which convinced him that Roberts really was communicating with God. Roberts frequently claimed that the Holy Spirit was unable to move freely during a meeting as people were deliberately 'obstructing the Spirit' and that some were 'wearing the mask of hypocrisy.'¹¹⁶ In January 1905, Roberts stopped a meeting, claiming that two of the congregation had previously quarrelled and that this was preventing the work of the Holy Spirit. The congregation was in 'uproar' and began earnestly praying for the obstacle to be removed.¹¹⁷ R. Tudur Jones noted that one of Roberts's most alarming meetings took place at Cwmafan on 20 February 1905. A young woman began to sing but Roberts interrupted her, claiming that he knew that someone had 'smiled or laughed' during the hymn:

At once his body began to twist and contort. [...] He told the people that he had a message of the gravest importance to convey to them. He fell to his knees

¹¹⁵ Rees, *Mr Evans Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 April 1905, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ Tudur Jones, *Faith and Crisis of the Nation (1890-1914)*, p. 316.

and the congregation was shaken by the volubility of his sobs. [...] He explained [...] that someone had disobeyed the promptings of the Holy Spirit [...] and cried out again and again, “O! Forgive Lord! Forgive.”¹¹⁸

At times Roberts claimed that members of the congregation had particular sins that they needed to confess, or that people were deliberately trying to avoid conversion – charges which people responded to, furthering the belief that Roberts had supernatural gifts. Stead claimed that Roberts was ‘very psychic with clairvoyance’ and that he had ‘a strong visualizing gift.’¹¹⁹ Perhaps the most bizarre example of this took place during the Liverpool campaign when Roberts stopped a meeting, announcing: “An English friend in this meeting is [...] trying to hypnotise me.” The congregation was shocked and Roberts declared that God would not be ‘mocked.’¹²⁰ He asked the person to leave the chapel, but no one did. Roberts remained ‘visibly agitated [...] and the meeting [...] almost paralyzed with wonder and dismay.’¹²¹ After a while, a group of people left the chapel and the meeting continued. Three days later, a well-known ‘professional hypnotist’ claimed responsibility for Roberts’s strange behaviour, stating that he had sent an assistant to try and hypnotise Roberts during the meeting.¹²² Although these strange occurrences led some to question Roberts’s mental health, the majority accepted this behaviour as evidence that he was led by a supernatural force.

As his popularity increased, Roberts-themed merchandise added a further commercial dimension to the Revival. The movement was not confined to the chapels, the prayer meetings or word of mouth. It was physically brought into the home, providing a visual reminder of Revival, and reinforcing the importance of Roberts as its leader. Examples

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Stead, *The Welsh Revival: The Narrative of Facts*, (reprint), p. 63.

¹²⁰ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 48

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 49 – 50.

included a tea cup and saucer, printed with Roberts's face and an 'Evan Roberts' mug. The mug also incorporated the Welsh crest and the declaration 'Cymru am Byth' (Wales forever). This was a statement of Welsh pride in the Revival and the belief that Wales was the 'Land of Revival.'



Figure XII.

**Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel,
Loughor.**

Evan Roberts Mug.



Figure XIII.

**Revival Collection: Moriah Chapel,
Loughor.**

Evan Roberts Cup and Saucer.

Roberts became so popular that by the time he conducted the Anglesey campaign in June 1905:

... there were all kinds of souvenirs and mementos to assist his crusade. [Roberts] was not responsible for this but enterprising small businesses saw a golden opportunity of earning extra cash.¹²³

The production of this memorabilia strengthened the view of Roberts as the Revival's figure head. He became 'a celebrity in his own right,' and some believed that he 'possessed powers of life and death.'¹²⁴ Many clambered to get close to him, hoping to touch God's chosen messenger. On one occasion, some touched Roberts's hat as they believed it was covered in 'Holy dust.'¹²⁵ As the Revival continued, the strain of public life and the high level of expectancy within the meetings caused Roberts to suffer a series of breakdowns, thus ending his Revival ministry in August 1906.

Roberts: Breakdowns and the 'week of silence.'

Despite the public and press attention that he received, friends and family described Roberts as a 'sensitive' man who was 'not an extrovert and detested showy people.' His personality appears to have been at odds with his Revival ministry and this was the likely cause of his ill-health. As noted by Pierce Jones, the first indication that Roberts was under strain occurred when he began trying to control the meetings. Although he maintained that the meetings were guided by the Holy Spirit, he became frustrated when the congregations were unruly and so he began directing the meetings.

¹²³ Rees, *Mr Evans Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, p. 1.

¹²⁴ Davies, 'Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout,' p. 110 & Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p 37.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

He would berate the congregations for not being open to the Holy Spirit, ask them to leave if he thought they were mocking him and began abruptly leaving meetings if he believed there were spiritual ‘obstacles.’¹²⁶ At a meeting in the Afan Valley the minister of the chapel announced that he believed the Holy Spirit was within the chapel, as the congregation were fervent in prayer and worship. Roberts joined the meeting, but after five minutes left it claiming that ‘the Holy Spirit was not there because they had hindered His operations and refused to give obedience.’¹²⁷ In another example, Roberts arrived at a chapel in Neath where a meeting was already taking place. Eyewitnesses described the meeting as being ‘full of Holy fervour,’ yet, Roberts declared: “The Spirit of God is not here,’ and he ‘abruptly’ left.¹²⁸

On 31 January, 1905, the *Western Mail* published a letter from Peter Price, minister of the Congregationalist Church, Dowlais.¹²⁹ Previously, Roberts had attended a Revival meeting at Price’s chapel and had announced that there were ‘two in the sedd fawr who were extinguishing the Spirit.’¹³⁰ Price was outraged by this claim, given that he was one of the accused. He argued that Roberts was wrong and that the Revival had begun in Dowlais six months prior to Roberts’s arrival and that more than three hundred people had joined his church directly because of the Revival.¹³¹ Price claimed that there were two Revivals, a true Revival brought about by Divine power which had

¹²⁶ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 100.

¹²⁷ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p. 44.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Peter Price, was born near Barmouth on 11 July 1864. After attending Dolgellau Grammar School, Price studied at University Colleges Aberystwyth and Bangor, during which time he was ordained. In 1898 he was admitted to King’s College Cambridge. He moved to Dowlais in 1904, prior to Roberts’s involvement in the Revival. Following his public condemnation of Roberts and his revivalism, Price became known for ‘this protest and the agitation which followed it.’ In 1913, Price relocated to America, where he was honoured by Washington University, before returning to Aberystwyth. He retired in 1928 and died on 1 July 1940 at his home in Prestatyn. D. J. Roberts, ‘Price, Peter (1864-1940)’ in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, (2001), <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s3-PRIC-PET-1864.html> [Accessed 19 November 2013].

¹³⁰ Tudur, ‘Evan Roberts and the 1904-05 Revival’, p. 89.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

touched thousands of lives, and the ‘revival’ which was led by Roberts. He accused Roberts of being shallow and that he mistakenly believed that he was led by the Holy Spirit. Price accused Roberts of leading a ‘sham revival,’ writing that it was:

.... harmful to the true Revival – very harmful. And I am horrified lest visitors and people who trust what they see at Evan Roberts’s meetings and to newspaper reports should identify the two Revivals – the true and the false – the Heavenly fire and the ignis fatuus.¹³²

Price’s letter received numerous replies, which were largely in support of Roberts. One stated that Price’s efforts to disparage Robert’s work and the Revival ‘will certainly meet with the contempt it deserves.’¹³³ Others supported Price, describing him as courageous for standing up against Roberts.¹³⁴ Further critics began to question Roberts’s lack of theological teaching and the emotional intensity of his Revival meetings. His behaviour became increasingly eccentric and at one meeting he demanded ‘total silence’ from the congregation and ‘accused them of hypocrisy.’¹³⁵ Roberts’s most significant breakdown began on 24 February 1905 and was arguably triggered by Price’s critique. Roberts cancelled his imminent tour of Cardiff and remained in absolute silence for a week. He wrote letters to friends and family, and issued a public statement explaining that he believed God had commanded him to remain in silence for a week. He compared himself to Ezekiel, quoting: ‘I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth and you will be silent,’ (Ezekiel 3: 26). Roberts apologised for cancelling his Revival campaign in Cardiff but wrote that he

¹³² *The Rev. Peter Price and Evan Roberts: Controversy on the Welsh Revival*, (London, Fleet Street, reprinted from the Western Mail, 1905), p. 2.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p. 7.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹³⁵ P. Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2009), p. 124.

was following a ‘divine command.’¹³⁶ He kept a diary of his experiences during the week and allowed ‘Awstin’ to publish excerpts in the fifth Revival pamphlet.¹³⁷ The diary contained Biblical quotations and the claim that God was speaking to him in English and Welsh.¹³⁸

News of Roberts’s ‘silence’ was widely reported. Shortly after this time, Percy Hicks was invited to preach in London, on the Revival. He was informed that after his talk had been announced, a girl told her mother that ‘a gentleman was coming to talk to them about the man in Wales who had gone mad.’¹³⁹ Following the ‘week of silence,’ Roberts travelled to Liverpool and continued his Revival ministry. However, by March 1905, ‘the public had so many doubts concerning [Roberts’s] psychological stability that he was persuaded to undergo a medical examination.’¹⁴⁰ A team of doctors certified that Roberts was in good physical and mental health but that he was ‘overworked’ and needed rest.¹⁴¹ He spent six weeks in Snowdonia, staying at the Royal Hotel, Capel Curig with his sister, Mary Roberts and Annie Davies, a female revivalist who travelled with him throughout the Revival. In June 1905 he began his fifth Revival campaign to Anglesey which was arguably when ‘Roberts was seen at his best.’¹⁴² However, by September 1905, Roberts was torn between his desire to continue as a revivalist and the need to rest.¹⁴³

¹³⁶ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 43.

¹³⁷ For a copy of his letter, written to the *Western Mail*, explaining his ‘week of silence,’ see appendix A. Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 43.

¹³⁸ ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904, Pamphlet No. 5*, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), p. 4.

¹³⁹ Hicks, *Life Story of Evan Roberts and Stirring Experiences of the Welsh Revival*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁰ Tudur Jones, *Faith and Crisis of the Nation (1890-1914)*, p. 325.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.* p. 326.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 329.

Conclusion.

Roberts never recovered from the strain and anxiety of being thrust into a public life and, ‘to a degree suffered until the end [...] from the terrible strain of being a vessel in God’s hand.’¹⁴⁴ Gaius Davies suggested that Roberts may have experienced a combination of ‘burn out’ and ‘post-traumatic stress disorder,’ as a result of the excessive strain of his Revival ministry.¹⁴⁵ In 1906, Roberts left Wales broken and in need of complete rest. It is likely that a considerable cause of this stress and anxiety was Roberts himself, as during the early months of the Revival he refused to rest. The press attention that surrounded Roberts added to his Revival burden, forcing him to step onto the national stage, a challenge which he accepted but one which did not suit his quiet, reserved personality. Roberts truly believed that he was working for God and ‘possessed a high grade of spiritual excellence,’ but he was one of many revivalists who ministered throughout Wales at this time.¹⁴⁶ Price’s forceful criticisms marked a watershed in Roberts’s life, and became an almost obligatory topic in the Revival’s historiography. The following chapter will analyse the life and evangelism of Jessie Penn-Lewis, examining her role in the Revival and her efforts to support Roberts following the end of his Revival ministry.

¹⁴⁴ Ellis, *Living Echoes of the Welsh Revival*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ Davies, ‘Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout,’ p. 108.

¹⁴⁶ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p. 37.

Chapter Three.

Redeeming ‘Jezebel’: Jessie Penn-Lewis and the 1904 Welsh Revival.

Introduction.

Jessie Penn-Lewis remains one of the most controversial figures associated with the 1904 Welsh Revival. Her name has become indelibly linked with Roberts and she is the only woman to feature in the majority of Revival accounts. Views on Penn-Lewis are polarised and ‘her name provokes strong reactions, revered in some circles she is strongly disliked in others.’¹ Depicted as both a ‘spiritual Deborah,’ who prepared Wales for the Revival and a demonised woman who persuaded Roberts to abandon both his ministry and his country, Revival studies have described her as ‘a saint, a devil, a messenger from God,’ ‘Jezebel’ and a woman who has been ‘unjustly treated by most writers.’² Views on her involvement in the Revival can be considered in a number of ways. Firstly, Penn-Lewis was drawn to Roberts’s charismatic personality and ‘did more than any one person to ensure that, when the first phase of the Revival was over, no second phase followed.’³ By orchestrating Roberts’s departure from Wales, Penn- Lewis damaged the reputation of subsequent Christian women, undermining ‘confidence in the ability of women to minister safely.’⁴ Secondly, as a childless woman Penn-Lewis may have seen Roberts in the guise of a son. By allowing

¹ K. Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, (Llanelli, Sheadhead Productions, 2004), p. 139.

² R. Ellis, *Living Echoes of the Welsh Revival 1904 -5*, (London, The Delyn Press, 1951), p. 96 & Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, and challenge now*, p. 139 & Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2009), p. 128 & K. Walters, *What Happened to Evan Roberts and the Welsh Revival?* (USA, Good News Fellow Ministries, 2013), p. 34.

³ W. K. Kay, ‘Why did the Welsh Revival stop?’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2009), p. 184.

⁴ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 148.

her overzealous affection to taint her efforts to aid his recovery, she became ‘guilty of dominating [him], trying to save him from himself.’⁵

By separating Roberts from Wales in order to fulfil her maternal desires, Penn-Lewis ended the Revival. Thirdly, Penn-Lewis played a vital role in Roberts’s rehabilitation. In August 1906, he was suffering from both mental and physical exhaustion.⁶ By providing a place of retreat, she enabled Roberts to evaluate his ministry and renew his spiritually, saving him from further anguish. Although Roberts recovered well enough to address small meetings, he continued to suffer from periods of exhaustion and continued to suffer from ill health.

This chapter will critically examine these claims, demonstrating that Penn-Lewis, with the support of her husband, William Penn-Lewis, provided Roberts with a home in which to convalesce. The view that Penn-Lewis deliberately sabotaged the Revival, or lured Roberts away from Wales to fulfil her maternal desires are unsubstantiated misrepresentations of Penn- Lewis’s character and ministry. The ending of the Revival, and Roberts’s ill health, were difficult for the Revival followers to comprehend and are still problematic for evangelical Christians today.⁷ If Roberts was communicating with the Holy Spirit, and following God’s edict, why did the Revival end? Why did God allow Roberts to suffer a breakdown? This chapter will argue that Penn-Lewis became a scapegoat for the contemporary press, Revival followers and subsequent evangelical thinkers. If the Revival’s end, and Roberts’s apparent abandonment of Wales, could be dismissed as Penn-Lewis acting as a ‘spiritual

⁵ Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’, p. 128.

⁶ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing Inc, 1995), p. 161.

⁷ Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*.

Jezebel’, the difficulties surrounding Roberts’s relationship with God and the nature of the Revival need not be addressed.

A detailed understanding of her life and work, demonstrates that Penn-Lewis was an influential woman, who broke with the social understanding of what it was to be a ‘good’ woman in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. She did not comply with the convention of separate spheres but distinguished ‘herself as a theologian and an emancipator of women.’⁸ Her actions were accepted, and respected, by her ministerial colleagues but were largely unknown by the general public. The misinterpretation of her character occurred solely from her connection to Roberts’s departure from Wales, the portrayal of their relationship in newspaper reports, and a general lack of understanding regarding Roberts’s state of health. It is clear from their personal correspondence that Penn-Lewis, and her husband, shared in a loving and mutually supportive relationship and that her connection with Roberts was based on a sympathetic friendship and shared Christian faith. Although Penn-Lewis is chiefly remembered for her involvement with Roberts and his post Revival years, this only amounted to a small portion of her life and work. This chapter will critically evaluate the relationship between Penn-Lewis and Roberts, her role in the 1904 Revival and their controversial book, *War on the Saints*.⁹

⁸ M. R. Haddad, ‘The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)’, (unpublished doctoral thesis, Durham University, 2005), p. 24.

⁹ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, (London, Marshall Brothers, Paternoster, 1912).

Jessie Penn-Lewis: Her life and work.

Jessie Elizabeth Penn-Lewis, née Jones, was born in Neath, Glamorgan, on 28 February 1861 and was the eldest surviving daughter of Elias and Heziah Jones.¹⁰ Elias Jones, son of the Revd Samuel Jones, a Calvinistic minister, was a member of the temperance movement, whilst Heziah Jones was ‘an ardent temperance worker’ and a member of Neath’s Good Templar Society.¹¹ Describing her family home as ‘a rendezvous for the leading ministers as they passed hither and thither on the Master’s business,’ Penn-Lewis believed that she ‘was brought up in the very heart of the religious life in Wales.’¹² Aged twelve, she was initiated into the Good Templar Society and saw this initiation as a rite of passage, ‘to prove a good soldier in the Temperance Cause.’ She was quickly appointed to the role of ‘chief presiding officer of juveniles,’ and in 1875, became the secretary of the adult lodge, displaying her aspiration and ability for leadership roles within the Nonconformist community.¹³

Described as ‘a sickly child,’ Penn-Lewis claimed that she was unable to attend school until she was eight years of age because a doctor had warned her mother not to over stimulate her daughter’s brain as she was already highly intelligent. However, her persistent ill health was more likely to have been caused by her slow recovery from tuberculosis; a condition which left Penn-Lewis with a weak heart and lungs, causing recurrent illness throughout her life. When she was sixteen, Penn-Lewis’s father died leaving Heziah Jones to bring up the family of eight children. She wrote that her father

¹⁰ R. Hayward, ‘Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn- (1869-1927)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹¹ M. N. Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, (London, The Overcomer Book Room, 1930), p. 4.

¹² National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 4, printed article, J. Penn-Lewis, ‘The Leading of the Lord,’ in *The Christian*, 24 December 1903, p. 17.

¹³ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, (New Jersey, Bridge Publishing Inc, 1997), p. 6 & Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, pp. 4 & 5.

was ‘not a good business man. He dreaded handling accounts or setting out wills,’ and that following his death his professional debts ‘took all the means.’¹⁴ To support the family, Heziah Jones was ‘compelled’ to run her own business, generating enough income to support her sons as they entered into a profession or university:

By skilful efforts my mother made an income sufficient to give one lad a course at Oxford, another training as a civil engineer and a third training as a surveyor.

This she did until all were on their feet.¹⁵

At the time of Elias Jones’s death their youngest son was just twelve weeks old.¹⁶ Heziah Jones’s ability to provide for her children, for at least eighteen years, suggests that she was a resilient, independent woman who occupied both the domestic and professional working spheres.¹⁷ This was a remarkable achievement for a Welsh, middle class woman at this time and arguably provided Penn-Lewis with a model of womanhood that inspired her to forge her own sense of independence and purpose.

In 1880, aged nineteen, she married William Penn-Lewis in the Anglican church, Neath.¹⁸ Penn-Lewis wrote that her uncle advised William against the marriage as her health was so fragile that he would be bound to an invalid. William ignored this advice and the marriage, which Penn-Lewis described as ‘a genuine love match,’ lasted for forty-five years, until William Penn-Lewis’s death in 1925.¹⁹ For the first three years of their marriage, the Penn- Lewis’s resided in Brighton where William Penn-Lewis

¹⁴ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, pp. 1-2 & 5- 6.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁷ Penn-Lewis did not describe her mother’s business in great detail. However, Pierce Jones noted that in 1886 Penn-Lewis returned to Neath to support her mother who was nursing Penn-Lewis’s paternal grandfather. Penn- Lewis ‘had to deputize for her mother in the Neath shop and was sent to inspect the family farm called Llwyngriffith.’ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 13.

¹⁸ Hayward, ‘Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn- (1869-1927)’ in *ODNB*.

¹⁹ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, pp. 4 & 6.

was employed as a clerk for Sussex County Council.²⁰ It was during this time that Penn-Lewis, found that she was unable to conceive.²¹ Although the cause of her infertility remains unknown, it was perhaps a further consequence of the tuberculosis that she had contracted during childhood. Penn-Lewis's reaction to her inability to conceive is unknown but it certainly affected the way in which her historiography has been read. The Penn-Lewis childless marriage has been referred to in Revival accounts and critics have implied that it was surprising that the Penn-Lewis marriage survived 'even though her doctors pronounced her too frail to have children.'²² Rather than considering that the marriage overcame this difficulty because it was a mutually loving relationship, the lack of children has led to the view that 'she seems to have had a strange, emotionless marriage to William,' and that she was only 'apparently happy.'²³ Such claims were made because Penn-Lewis did not conform to the traditional view of womanhood. As discussed in chapter one, women were expected to conform to the role of supportive wife and mother. The doctrine of 'separate spheres' demanded that:

The respectable Victorian wife and mother, [...] the 'angel in the house,' was expected to attend dutifully to the household [...], and refrain from active participation in any 'public' activities.²⁴

In 1896, she was invited to tour Scandinavia, in her capacity as 'spokeswoman for the Y.W.C.A.'²⁵ The tour lasted for three months, during which William Penn-Lewis

²⁰ Hayward, 'Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn- (1869-1927)' in *ODNB*.

²¹ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 8.

²² Prosser, 'Jessie Penn-Lewis', p. 116.

²³ *Ibid*, p. 128.

²⁴ R. Jones, "'Separate Spheres?'" Women, language and respectability in Wales' in G. H. Jenkins (ed), *A Social History of the Welsh Language: The Welsh language and its social domains 1801-1911*, (University Press Wales, Cardiff, 2000), p. 121.

²⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 45.

remained in England. This marked the beginning of Penn-Lewis's international ministry and her prolonged periods away from her husband and her home. She received a letter claiming that William Penn-Lewis was 'a neglected man.'²⁶ Thus, Revival scholars have assumed Penn-Lewis's relationship with Roberts compensated for a lack of marital fulfilment. However, these claims are in stark contrast to the letters written between Penn-Lewis and her husband, which demonstrate that when apart, the couple frequently wrote to each other. These letters revealed a warmth and intimacy within the marriage. Penn-Lewis referred to her husband as 'my beloved one,' 'my precious boy' and 'my darling boy.'²⁷ From these letters, it is evident that they had an intimate, playful relationship. In March 1904, she wrote:

My darling boy [...]. You are a darling - steady, cheery, loving, patient with your little woman. [...] A birthday present! I would like a kiss rather than a present to get just now. I'll tell you again, presents don't seem necessary between you and me, sir. You are my present and I am content. My heart loves you my laddie. Every thought of you is mingled with thanksgiving to God for all that you are to your wife. A pillar of strength.²⁸

William Penn-Lewis supported his wife's vocation and they were united in their commitment to furthering the work of God. He urged her to continue with her work, writing, 'may you be guided into being and doing only that which shall be to the glory of God and the salvation of others.'²⁹ Penn-Lewis gave public recognition to her husband for his love and understanding in the preface to *The Cross of Calvary*:

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 54.

²⁷ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, letter dated 9 January 1897 & 9 February 1898 & 4 December 1916.

²⁸ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, letter dated 3 March 1904, f. 2.

²⁹ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, letter dated 4 December 1916, f. 1.

To my husband who has so freely given me to the service of the Master and encouraged and strengthened me in every step of obedience to the heavenly vision, I dedicate these pages.³⁰

This acknowledgment was quoted by F. B. Meyer in the eulogy given at William Penn-Lewis's funeral.³¹ Meyer paid tribute to William Penn-Lewis's recognition of his wife's 'world-wide ministry to the Church of God.'³² This support was privately acknowledged in a letter of condolence written to Penn-Lewis, following her husband's death: 'The Church of Christ owes a great deal to his memory for standing so splendidly with you, although practically unknown publicly, in your very special ministry.'³³ Although William Penn-Lewis did not play a public role in his wife's ministry, those close to the couple understood the supportive relationship that they shared. In light of these examples, claims that their marriage was loveless are unsubstantiated.

In 1883, the Penn-Lewis's moved to Richmond, Surrey, as William Penn-Lewis was appointed accountant for Richmond Borough Council. During this time, Penn-Lewis established the Richmond branch of the Y.W.C.A. and was involved in a variety of Christian work throughout Richmond and Kew. In March 1892, she had a spiritual experience which she referred to as her 'spiritual breakthrough.'³⁴

³⁰ J. Penn-Lewis, *The Cross of Calvary and its Message*, (London, The Overcomer Book Room, 1929).

³¹ Frederick Brotherton Meyer (1827-1929), was a Baptist minister and an international evangelist. He was a prolific author of 'devotional' books and booklets. He was an influential member of the Keswick convention, during which time he met Penn-Lewis. He was invited to become Keswick's 'international representative,' and travelled throughout America, Canada and Europe. During 1905, he addressed a conference in Los Angeles, speaking on the 1904 Welsh Revival and is believed to have directly influenced the 'early Pentecostal' movement. I. M. Randall, 'Meyer, Frederick Brotherton (1847-1929)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004).

³² National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 8, Leicester Mail, 28 March 1925.

³³ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 8, letter dated 3 April 1925.

³⁴ Hayward, 'Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn- (1869-1927)' in *ODNB*.

When travelling alone in a railway carriage from Wimbledon to Richmond [...], it seemed as if suddenly my spirit broke through into the spiritual world and caught the bosom of the Father. For days afterwards I felt that I was a babe lying in my Father's bosom [...]. The morning following, the Lord stood by me and I clasped His very feet. That night when I entered the prayer meeting, all who were present [...] were crying, sobbing, before the Lord. [...] Three months after this sudden breaking through into the supernatural world, I lived in joy and light and gladness. The very name Jesus was so sweet that the very sound of it caused me to melt into tears.³⁵

This experience signalled a significant change in Penn-Lewis's life. She claimed that it marked the beginning of her ministry and had given her a glimpse of the divine. She attended the Keswick Convention in 1893, during which she described a prayer meeting where she believed that she met with God: 'We were verily drunk with the favour of the Lord, and with the vistas of the possibilities of faith opening up to the fully surrendered life of the believer.'³⁶ Influenced by these experiences, Penn-Lewis continued her work in Richmond and began writing her first theological essay, *The Pathway to Life in God* (1895).³⁷ In March 1896, the Penn-Lewises relocated to Leicestershire, following William Penn-Lewis's appointment as treasurer of Leicestershire County Council. In June 1896, during her first Scandinavian tour, Penn-Lewis met the Russian Princess and Prince Oscar Bernadetta, who invited her to conduct missionary work amongst the Russian aristocracy.³⁸ In 1897, Penn-Lewis travelled to St Petersburg. Her visit was successful and she undertook an annual

³⁵ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 4, hand written notes 'The Day of Blessing,' f. 1-2.

³⁶ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, pp. 35 & 37.

³⁷ J. Penn-Lewis, *The Pathway to the Life in God*, (Richmond, Y.W.C.A. Institute, 1895).

³⁸ Hayward, 'Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn- (1869-1927)' in *ODNB*.

Russian tour until 1903. During August 1900, Penn-Lewis was invited to preach in Canada and later that year was a guest lecturer at the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.³⁹ In 1903, Penn-Lewis embarked upon a mission to India. There, her theological works were well received and a number of her publications, including *The Pathway to Life with God*, were translated into a variety of Indian languages.⁴⁰

In 1907, with the support of Evan Roberts, Penn-Lewis launched *The Overcomer*. This subscription based, monthly magazine, edited by Penn-Lewis, was intended to encourage and support Christian workers, equipping them to ‘fight faithfully against evil forces.’⁴¹ The magazine was published by *The Overcomer* Book Room, which was based in the Penn-Lewis home. No editions were published between 1914 and 1921, possibly owing to the First World War. In 1921, *The Overcomer* was relaunched as a free, quarterly publication, which Penn-Lewis edited until her death in 1927. The following year, *The Overcomer Literature Trust* was established, ensuring the future of the magazine, which was then edited by Penn-Lewis’s secretary, Mary Garrard, until her death in 1943.⁴² Today, *The Overcomer*, is still published by the Overcomer Trust which described itself as a ‘non-profit making [...] registered charity and is, in many ways, a small missionary enterprise,’ and is the lasting legacy of Jessie Penn-Lewis.⁴³

In 1924, William Penn-Lewis was diagnosed with a malignant tumour. His doctors advised him to relocate to a warmer part of the country and so the Penn-Lewises returned to Surrey.⁴⁴ Following William’s death in March 1925, Penn-Lewis

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, pp. 109 & 110.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁴² <http://www.overcomertrust.org.uk/aboutus.htm> [accessed 29 August 2017].

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 8, letter dated 8 April 1925, f. 1.

experienced financial difficulties, writing that ‘it is an extraordinary position to be in. I am practically cast on God.’⁴⁵ Penn-Lewis sold her home and relocated to a flat in Eccleston Hall, London, where she lectured at conferences for Christian workers.⁴⁶ She continued to address conventions and wrote for *The Overcomer* until her death from pneumonia, on 15 August 1927.⁴⁷ Mary Garrard received over one hundred letters of condolence from Penn-Lewis’s European friends and colleagues, and a variety of Christian publications printed obituaries of Penn-Lewis which referred to her far-reaching influence:

By the home call of Mrs Penn-Lewis, thousands of Christian throughout the world have lost a friend [...]. Hers was a truly wonderful life and no one can measure the blessing that has flowed from it.⁴⁸

The international scope of her evangelism, and the determination with which Penn-Lewis conducted her ministry were indicative of her resourcefulness and tenacity. Throughout her career she advocated for the rights of women to teach and minister within the church. Her *Magna Charta of Woman* will be examined later in this chapter, following an examination of the scholarly research that is currently available on Penn-Lewis’s life and work.

Penn-Lewis in current literature.

There are currently two books and one doctoral thesis which examine Penn-Lewis’s life and ministry.⁴⁹ The first, intended as her autobiography, was compiled from a

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, f. 2.

⁴⁶ <http://www.overcomertrust.org.uk/aboutus.htm>

⁴⁷ Hayward, ‘Lewis, Jessie Elizabeth Penn-Lewis (1869-1927)’ in *ODNB*.

⁴⁸ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 8, Christ Church parish newsletter, Leicester, No. 69, September 1927, f. 2.

⁴⁹ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir, Pierce Jones, The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis & Haddad*, ‘The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)’.

collection of her personal letters and journals chosen specifically to outline her life between 1890 and 1904 and 1920 and 1927.⁵⁰ Shortly after beginning this work, Penn-Lewis died and Mary Garrard, completed the text. Interestingly, Roberts is referred to only twice in Garrard's work. She included him in a brief summary of Penn-Lewis's involvement with the 1904-05 Revival, and the extent of Roberts's exhaustion when he retreated to the Penn-Lewis home in Leicestershire.⁵¹ As her earliest letters to Roberts were not written until January 1905, and their first meeting took place seven months later, her friendship with Roberts was omitted from her autobiography. This could be interpreted in one of three ways. Penn-Lewis may have seen her role in the Revival as inconsequential when compared to her other achievements or, more plausibly, Penn-Lewis actively avoided detailing her connection to Roberts. His removal to her home in Leicestershire had been so controversially reported by the newspapers that any elaboration on their relationship would have threatened to overshadow the autobiographical account of her ministry. Finally, although a speculation, Penn-Lewis may have intended to comment on her relationship with Roberts but Garrard edited this information. Their friendship was well documented in Penn-Lewis's diary accounts, including references to Roberts's health, visits to Wales and accounts of conferences and conventions that they attended together. It is probable that Garrard would have chosen to avoid commenting on Roberts and the post Revival years in a bid to avoid further scrutiny of Penn-Lewis's reputation.

The most detailed commentary on Penn-Lewis's life and work, Pierce Jones's aptly named *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, was based on an accumulation of her personal correspondence and diaries. Now at the National Library

⁵⁰ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 230.

of Wales, this collection provides an invaluable insight into the international scope of her ministry, and her professional and personal relationships. The Pierce Jones collection contains transcripts of Penn-Lewis's diaries dating from 1892–1920. However, as the original diaries have been lost, and the remaining transcripts are Pierce Jones's summary notes, these selected excerpts must be treated with caution.⁵² As outlined in chapter two, Pierce Jones's Revival works were written from a pro-Revival view and so it can be assumed that these notes reflected this position. Garrard and Pierce Jones's work have provided the biographical framework that most Revival scholars have drawn on to include what has become an almost obligatory discussion of Penn-Lewis's role in Roberts's spiritual downturn. It is remarkable that this has become the legacy of a woman who 'was better known in Northern Europe than in Britain [who prayed] with baronesses [...] and taught consecration [whilst] riding with Russian and Scandinavian aristocrats.'⁵³

Haddad's doctoral thesis focused on Penn-Lewis as a theological writer rather than her connection with the Revival, examining her as a forgotten mystic, stating that it was a:

Source of consternation that the evaluation of Jessie Penn-Lewis has been limited to two biographies. [It is] disturbing that neither Garrard nor Pierce Jones [attempted] an assessment of Penn-Lewis's theological work.⁵⁴

⁵² Penn-Lewis's original diaries have been lost. A series of letters, written between Pierce Jones and Charles E Vos, a Dutch publisher who wanted to translate *War of the Saints* into Dutch. The letter states that a number of Penn-Lewis's personal papers had been lost in a fire not long after Pierce Jones's work was published. In a letter dated 22 March 1995 and wrote: "Why were several boxes dispersed and burned? Did these boxes contain the original diaries by Jessie Penn-Lewis? [...] It is not clear to me if the diaries were or were not lost." National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 10, letter dated 5 February 1996, f. 1.

⁵³ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. xiv.

⁵⁴ Haddad, 'The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)', p. 11.

Haddad claimed that all aspects of Penn-Lewis's ministry were driven by her theological understanding, her experiences of the Holy Spirit and belief in her own, God-given mystical authority.⁵⁵ This was reflected in her letters and diary entries. She frequently referred to a personal relationship with Christ and spoke of visions and truths that she believed God had revealed to her. In a letter to her husband, dated April 1898, she wrote, 'this is a message that He gave to me Himself. It is a vision of Calvary from inside His heart.'⁵⁶ Penn-Lewis vividly described her encounters with the Divine and published accounts of these experiences in a variety of Christian magazines:

Then came the climax of the morning, I awoke [...]. I beheld before me a hand holding up in terrible light a handful of filthy rags, whilst a gentle voice said: *"This is the outcome of all your past service for God."* *"But, Lord, I have surrendered to Thee all these years. It was consecrated work!"* *"Yes my child, but all your work has been consecrated self; the outcome of your own energy; your own plans for winning souls; your own devotion."*⁵⁷

Like Roberts, Penn-Lewis's claims to have personally encountered God, added to her sense of spiritual mystique. She channelled this mystical understanding into her theological works, which sustained her international ministry.

Of particular importance is Haddad's analysis of Penn-Lewis's work *The Magna Charta of Woman*. This text exemplified Penn-Lewis's views on the rightful place of women within the Church and that it should mirror their position in wider society.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, letter dated 19 April 1898.

⁵⁷ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 4, printed article, J. Penn-Lewis, 'The Leading of the Lord,' in *The Christian*, 24 December 1903, pp. 17 - 18.

Penn-Lewis understood the *relationship* between God and mankind to have been fulfilled by the sacrifice of the crucifixion, enabling human souls to partake of ‘a mystical union with Christ [and become] joined organically to one body, with one head – Christ.’⁵⁸ Penn-Lewis believed that through Christ’s sacrifice, the individual’s sense of self was removed, as we all are one in the body of Christ. Through this mystical union, the conventional understanding of gender, race and social position were removed bringing about a spiritual oneness with God.⁵⁹ This view of the crucifixion facilitated her argument for the equality and empowerment of women within the church. Although Penn-Lewis’s writings are not the focus of this chapter, her approach to feminist theology and spiritual warfare are integral to understanding both her wider ministry and her involvement in the 1904-05 Revival.

Penn-Lewis: A feminist theologian and *The Magna Charta of Woman*.

At a time when female ordination was prohibited by most denominations in Britain, Penn-Lewis preached, led conventions and ‘advocated the right of women to minister.’⁶⁰ In *The Magna Charta of Woman*, she emphasised the importance of women’s ministry, and the place of women within the church.⁶¹ Penn-Lewis claimed that God had given her a message to proclaim, regarding the role of Christian women, but believed that her gender would prevent the acceptance of this message, and that it would have had greater impact if delivered by a man.⁶² She described this inner

⁵⁸ Haddad, *The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)*, p. 103.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 139.

⁶¹ J. Penn-Lewis, *The Magna Charta of Woman: According to Scripture*, (Leicestershire, The Overcomer Book Room, 1919).

⁶² Haddad, *The mystical theology of Jessie Penn-Lewis (1861-1927)*, pp. 103 & 267 & Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, p. 266.

conflict as that of a woman who understood the traditional interpretation of the Pauline message but also a woman who could not accept that this was what God had intended for her.⁶³ She later claimed that:

His message came to me that if only we knew the exact original meaning of those passages; they were bound to be *in harmony with the workings of the Holy Spirit in the nineteenth century*.⁶⁴

The Magna Charta of Woman was published in 1919, following the 1918 Representation of the People Act. This legislation enabled women in non-university constituencies, over the age of thirty, to vote, whilst those in university constituencies were able to vote if they were over twenty-one and had ‘been entered for and passed the final examination, and kept under the conditions required of women by the university [for] the period of residence.’⁶⁵ The timing of this publication, suggests that Penn-Lewis felt her advocacy for women’s ministry would be better received following a political move towards the equality of women. Pierce Jones wrote:

This book [*The Magna Charta of Woman*] appeared just when the British electorate had acknowledged the right of all women [...] to vote [...]. Perhaps she felt this was the right time to challenge the serried ranks of clergy who held the hoary tradition that Christian women had no separate status.⁶⁶

Penn-Lewis argued that if the Christian community failed to acknowledge the changing role of women in wider society, this would send a damning message to women about the nature of Christian life:

⁶³ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, p. 267.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ http://archive.org/stream/representationof00frasrich/representationof00frasrich_djvu.txt [accessed 14 January 2017].

⁶⁶ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 260.

The emancipation of women has burst upon the world as one of the epoch-making results of the Great War. [...] The noble work of the women of the country has, it is admitted, saved the British Empire. Many men who believed that women were “called” and “fitted” only for domestic life may be said to owe their lives to the womanhood of the nation. [...] The question now is whether the Christian women, in their witness for Christ, are to share in this emancipation or are they to be kept back while their confreres in the world have every door open to them. [...] It touches the authority and the infallibility of the word of God and its divine fitness to meet the needs of every generation. For if this be so, all the emancipated women of today are to be liberated for full share in the work of the world and at the same time have restrictions placed upon them in the work of God. For this to be so, all the emancipated women of the world must consent to retire to a narrower sphere of service when they become Christians, morally bound to conform their lives to the written word of God.⁶⁷

Although she had been asked to speak at women only meetings at the Keswick Conference, in 1896, Penn-Lewis was invited to address the whole Keswick in Wales Convention. In 1907, it was suggested that she should play a smaller role in regional conferences and the Keswick in Wales convention and was refused any opportunity to speak at the Scottish equivalent of the convention.⁶⁸ Believing that her ministry was being diminished because she was a woman, she argued that Keswick needed to provide ‘clear and open ground for women in the work of God.’⁶⁹ By 1911, she felt so restricted by the Keswick movement that she resigned, in favour of forming her own

⁶⁷ Penn-Lewis, *The Magna Charta of Woman: According to Scripture*, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 262.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

conferences and teaching at Eccleston Hall. It is possible that the clergy and conference organisers were wary of her, following her role in the Revival and Roberts's retreat from Wales. Although a speculation, the timing of these events suggests that they are connected. Roberts departed from Wales, to reside with the Penn-Lewis in August 1906. The following year, Penn-Lewis began claiming that her work was being rejected.

Penn-Lewis was influenced by the earlier work of Katherine Bushnell, who argued that the question of women's equality was not solely a domestic concern, but a spiritual one.⁷⁰ In 1906, Bushnell began publishing a series of pamphlets entitled *God's Word to Women*, which in 1921 were collated as a catechism for women.⁷¹ This literature examined specific biblical passages that Bushnell deemed responsible for the perception of women as an underclass within the church – namely the creation and the Fall in Genesis and St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.⁷²

Bushnell argued that it was incomprehensible to think that God would allow man to condemn woman for Eve's actions, writing that 'no teaching in Christendom could be

⁷⁰ Dr. Katherine Bushnell (1855-1946), born in Illinois, was a highly educated woman. Graduating from North Western University and later The Woman's Medical College, Chicago, Bushnell was concerned with improving the quality of life for working class women and the fight for women's rights. As a Methodist and a member of the Christian Woman's Temperance Union, Bushnell travelled to China to work as both a missionary and a doctor. Remaining in China for three years, Bushnell noted that the translation of the Bible from Greek to Chinese contained a range of mistranslations and misinterpretations. After comparing the English Bible with the original Greek, Bushnell claimed to have found many of the same misinterpretations in the English translations and concluded that these mistakes, the product of male biblical scholars, had led to the subjugation of women. Arguing that the 'mistranslation of the Bible even more than alcoholism, was the root cause of the abuse of women,' Bushnell aimed to re-educate Christian women about their true place in the Church and wider society. A. K. Stassan, <http://www.bu.edu/missiology/missionary-biography/a-c/bushnell-katharine-c-855%E2%80%93931946/> [accessed 13 March 2014].

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Penn-Lewis's references to Bushnell in *The Magna Charta of Woman* were taken from the original pamphlets as her work was published in 1919, two years prior to publication of the collated material. In her publication, Penn-Lewis advocated the sale of Bushnell's work, advising customers that copies could be obtained by writing directly to Penn-Lewis. This is further evidence of the importance Penn-Lewis placed on Bushnell's work. K. Bushnell, *God's Word to Women: 101 Questions answered. A woman's Catechism*, (Southport, Lowes Limited, 1921), p. 4.

more false, more preposterous' than the belief that Christ's sacrifice had not redeemed womankind.⁷³ Penn- Lewis expanded upon this view within *War on the Saints*, claiming that even though woman had allowed herself to be deceived by the devil, womankind was God's ultimate weapon:

The Serpent is cursed but, in effect, the deceived beguiled victim [woman] was blessed, for through her would come the "Seed" which would triumph over the Devil and his seed; And through her will arise a new race which will be antagonistic to the Serpent to the end of time.⁷⁴

Through Mary and the incarnation, Penn-Lewis believed that womankind absolved herself of disobedience in the garden of Eden and she was integral to God's victory over Satan. If women could play such a significant role in the ultimate spiritual battle, why should they be seen as secondary within the church? In 1896, during her first Scandinavian tour, Penn-Lewis was rebuked for openly speaking on her interpretation of the Pauline message and for advocating the empowerment of Christian women.⁷⁵ She claimed that the church needed to recognise that in Psalm 68 (10-11): 'The Lord announces the word, and the women who proclaim it are a mighty throng,' and 'that this was evidence of a 'divine commission for women to preach good tidings.'⁷⁶ *The Magna Charta of Woman* confirmed Penn-Lewis's view on the biblical interpretation of women. She quoted St Paul's 'let the women keep silence in the church,' (1 Corinthians 14: 34), and cited Bushnell's view that St Pauls was not delivering a divine

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, p. 5.

⁷⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 50.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 260.

command but was quoting from those who wished to reform the Corinthian church to Judaism.⁷⁷ Thus, Penn-Lewis concluded that:

Christian women have been robbed of their true status in the Church of Christ, because translators [...] have failed to perceive the true setting of the Apostle's words. But God is giving the true light on the subject, at a time when it is most needed for women's service in the world.⁷⁸

Penn-Lewis's international ministry was testament to her belief that women could evangelise independently of men. She sought to encourage other women to consider their role in the Christian community, and to be open to the possibility of leadership within the Church. However, Penn-Lewis's account of the 1904-05 Revival appears to have contradicted her desire to inspire and acknowledge female leadership within the church as she overlooked the role of women's ministry during this time.

Penn-Lewis and the Revival women.

Women's ministry was integral to the success and development of the Revival. Yet, as discussed in chapter six, the variety of women's work during this time has been omitted from the Revival's historiography. Scholars have focused on Roberts's Revival campaigns, depicting the Revival women as his female acolytes. In her Revival account, *The Awakening in Wales*, Penn-Lewis endorsed this view, failing to mention the involvement of any of the female revivalists. She described Roberts's spiritual experience during a meeting in New Quay, which has been recognised as

⁷⁷ Penn-Lewis, *The Magna Charta of Woman: According to Scripture*, p. 6.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 9.

marking the beginning of his Revival ministry but did not comment on the role of Florrie Evans. As demonstrated in chapters two and six, Florrie Evans was instrumental in the meetings, at New Quay and facilitated Roberts's spiritual awakening. Roberts later relied on her for spiritual advice. As with later Revival accounts, Penn-Lewis

recognised the contribution of the male revivalists, specifically referring to Sydney Evans and Dan Roberts, whilst neglecting to comment on the role of the female revivalists:

Many of the young people were thrust out by the Lord to share in the service: Mr. Sydney Evans, Mr. Dan Roberts, and many others lead Revival meetings with the manifest blessing of God.⁷⁹

Penn-Lewis's only known reference to the Revival women was in a letter, written in April 1906, claiming that the Lord had led her to Gorseinon to meet 'Dan Roberts and Sydney Evans and the lady singers who were all at home.'⁸⁰ The use of the term 'lady singers' aligns her work with the traditional, male view, that each of these women played a peripheral role in the Revival and were simply Roberts's supporters.

As a spokeswoman for female equality within the church, this omission was significant. It was unlikely that she disagreed with the social and spiritual freedoms that the Revival women experienced as she had been campaigning for women's

⁷⁹ Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904*, (originally published as *The Awakening in Wales and Some of the Hidden Springs*, New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1905 reprinted Fort Washington, CLC Publications, 2002), p. 72.

⁸⁰ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, pp. 157 - 158.

religious liberation. However, it is probable that, due to their lack of theological training, she believed that their involvement should be treated with caution. Throughout the Revival, Penn-Lewis was concerned by the lack of theological teaching provided for the newly converted. In 1903, Penn-Lewis became particularly interested in spiritual warfare, focusing on the way in which Satanic forces could deceive believers when they were unknowingly vulnerable to demonic influence. She argued that believers were more susceptible to Satanic attack during times of heightened emotions and religious enthusiasm. The Revival meetings were known for their emotional intensity, characterised by emotional outbursts by both the congregations and the revivalists. This was reflected in newspaper reports that:

One of the most striking features of the present Revival was the part which women, and particularly young girls play. [...] They go out to the villages and rural districts and even the towns, fanning the flames of religious enthusiasm.⁸¹

Penn-Lewis was wary of these emotional meetings and wrote a series of articles outlining her belief in the dangers of religious emotion and its connection to spiritual warfare. These articles culminated in the controversial publication of *War on the Saints*, which was written in collaboration with Roberts.

Penn-Lewis, Roberts and the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Garrard wrote that Penn-Lewis had been instrumental in establishing the Llandrindod Wells convention and that this ‘convention’ became ‘one of the channels for the

⁸¹ *The Manchester Guardian*, 21 January 1905.

“rivers” of life to Wales – an important factor in the outbreak’ of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.⁸² For those who are sympathetic to the Revival, the Llandrindod Wells convention was an important precursor to the Revival, as it provided a framework for intercessory prayer, petitioning God to send His Holy Spirit throughout Wales. Revival accounts demonstrate a united belief in a ‘mechanical relationship between those who prayed [for the Revival] and the awakening.’⁸³ In 1902, the Keswick convention instigated a series of prayer circles to aid the coming ‘world-wide revival.’ Penn-Lewis recalled that she prayed and asked God why prayer circles were required and that ‘He said, “the revival is an accomplished fact in my Kingdom. [...] I am ready but my children are not.”’⁸⁴ Penn-Lewis encouraged her European contacts to instigate their own prayer circles, stressing the importance of spiritual preparation for the coming revival. The greatest response to her message came from Wales.⁸⁵ Penn-Lewis was instrumental in forming the Llandrindod Conference, which was also referred to as ‘Keswick in Wales.’ She wrote to Albert Head and F. B. Meyer, asking for their support in developing an annual conference to pray for the spirituality and preparation of Wales as a land for God’s revival.⁸⁶ Her approach was interdenominational as she met with Anglican clerics and Nonconformist ministers. Very Revd David Howells, Dean of St David’s, promised his support and spoke of his belief that ‘Wales needed a channel of revival.’⁸⁷ The first Keswick in Wales Convention was held in August

⁸² Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, (London, The Overcomer Book Room, 1930), p. 221.

⁸³ Pope, ‘Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-1905’ in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 53, No. 3, (2006), p. 531.

⁸⁴ Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904*, (reprint 2002), p. 37.

⁸⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 129.

⁸⁶ Albert Head was the chairman for the Llandrindod Wells Convention. A prominent ship builder by trade, he was married to Caroline Hanbury, from a prominent Quaker family. Head attended to the practical arrangements of the convention and financed aspects of the Convention, including travel bursaries for the clergy. B. Pierce Jones, *The Spiritual History of Keswick in Wales: 1903-1983*, (Cwmbran, Christian Literature Press, 1989), pp. 7, 9 -10.

⁸⁷ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 145.

1903, and was seen as a sign that God was preparing Wales for a large revival and that Wales would become ‘the cradle of the evangelists and the conference an annual event on the Welsh evangelical circuit.’⁸⁸ For those who accepted belief in the mechanical relationship between this preparatory prayer and the Revival, Penn-Lewis’s role should be viewed as central to the origins of the phenomena. However, her involvement in these preparatory prayer movements has rarely been acknowledged by Revival scholars.

As seen in chapter two, the majority of accounts assert that the Revival began at the Moriah chapel, Loughor, on 31 October 1904, during the initial meetings led by Evan Roberts. There is speculation that Penn-Lewis attended one of these early meetings, specifically to witness Roberts’s revivalism, but it is unclear if this report was accurate.⁸⁹ Penn-Lewis travelled to Wales, to hear Roberts address a series of meetings in Neath during January 1905. She wrote to him, asking if they could meet, believing that the Lord had directed her to speak to him:

Will you seek the mind of the Spirit and let me know when you would be free to see me. I [...] have much on my heart from the Lord. I believe He means me to have time to speak to you on things of God. He will tell you this.⁹⁰

Penn-Lewis’s desire to meet with Roberts was seen as evidence of her ‘disturbing’ pursuit of Roberts.⁹¹ However, Penn-Lewis’s interest in Roberts was founded on her connection to the Keswick Convention and the Llandrindod Wells Conference.

⁸⁸ Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904*, (reprint 2002), p. 49.

⁸⁹ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 156.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 140.

Having played a central role within these organisations, and encouraging world-wide prayer for a revival within Wales, once the Revival had begun, Penn-Lewis was vigilant of those involved. Neither Roberts, nor his co-revivalists, had ministerial experience of theological training. She was concerned that they were not equipped to facilitate the Revival or to provide adequate spiritual instruction to the newly converted. Penn-Lewis addressed these apprehensions in a letter written to Albert Head, 20 February 1906. She wrote that she had recently returned from South Wales, where she had met with R. B. Jones who had confirmed her suspicions, informing her that ‘in many churches the pastors, without the personal experience of the Holy Ghost, are absolutely at a loss at how to meet this revolution within their churches.’⁹²

Penn-Lewis met with Roberts, shortly after his ‘week of silence’ (February 1905). Their meeting, 12 February 1905, confirmed her concerns for his health and spiritual well-being, writing that ‘Evan Roberts is in much need of prayer,’ and that he was ‘broken.’⁹³ Lowe purported that not only did Penn-Lewis make repeated attempts to contact Roberts but that she also pursued the other revivalists, believing that they were ‘behaving in unhelpful ways.’⁹⁴ In contrast, Pierce Jones argued that she visited the prominent revivalists because she believed that God wanted her to minister to them as they had all ‘suffered from stress in those tremendous months when they took part in more than forty meetings per week.’⁹⁵ The content of these meetings is unknown but it is probable that she believed the revivalists were in need of spiritual guidance. Whilst the revivalist’s response to the meeting is unknown, it was likely that they believed

⁹² Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 19, letter dated 20 February 1905, f. 1.

⁹³ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 157 & Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, letter dated 12 February 1906.

⁹⁴ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 140.

⁹⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 157.

Penn-Lewis was interfering in their work and that her help was not necessary. If Penn-Lewis did accuse them of unhelpful behaviour, this would have been in connection to their encouragement of the emotional enthusiasm of the meetings which Penn-Lewis believed was spiritually dangerous. A letter dated March 1905 shows that despite meetings with Roberts and his co-revivalists, Penn-Lewis still held misgivings over the nature of the Revival:

It takes the form of simply prayer and singing and testimony with no teaching of any kind. [...] The consequences is that the ministers and the workers are more or less taken by surprise with this movement. They have wondrously yielded to it and understand the results of the Spirit's work, but with the majority I do not think it can be said that they could teach intelligently about the [...] receiving of the Spirit.⁹⁶

Throughout the Revival, Penn-Lewis maintained her belief that the Revival was the work of God but remained convinced that Roberts was in need of support and that God had instructed

her to speak with him. From August 1905 until January 1906, she continued to write to Roberts, offering to meet him in Wales or for him to come to her home in Leicestershire.⁹⁷ Copies of some of these letters were given to the newspapers who insinuated that Penn-Lewis was pursuing Roberts for a sexual relationship.⁹⁸ These letters included directions on how to reach their home, where to book train tickets, and curiously, the suggestion that he could send them a telegram with a coded signature.

⁹⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 19. Letter written by J Penn- Lewis to Dr Pierson, 1 March 1905, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁷ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 158.

⁹⁸ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 140.

She wrote, ‘should you need to wire me or my husband, the initial R. or X. will be sufficient to let us know the sender.’⁹⁹ This was reported as an intricate mystery between Roberts and Penn-Lewis, increasing speculation regarding the nature of their relationship. However, Roberts was under almost constant scrutiny from the press and Revival followers. It is possible that she suggested he contacted her via a coded telegram to prevent anyone discovering his intention of travelling to England. Both Jessie and William Penn-Lewis frequently opened their home to those requiring a place of retreat. This offer, made by both husband and wife, was extended to Roberts, specifying that ‘if you have no light for future steps, OUR home is YOURS for as long as He wills it.’¹⁰⁰ In a letter, written in 1905, Roberts wrote:

I am very thankful for the cordial invitation extended to me by you, to visit you at Ammanford. I cannot promise anything definite at present, but if in future I shall see my way to visiting you, I will send you word again. Many thanks for your prayers on my behalf, in return I shall pray for you.¹⁰¹

This excerpt was transcribed and included in the Pierce Jones research collection. The full content of the letter is unknown and it may have been translated from Welsh into English. It is certainly possible, though a speculation, that this letter was written in response to one of the letters written by Penn-Lewis, who invited him to meet with her during her visits to Wales.

In August 1906, following the Llandrindod Wells Conference, Roberts left Wales and travelled to Leicester, where he remained with the Penn-Lewis until 1919. Initial

⁹⁹ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 158.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 11. Transcribed letter excerpt, written by Evan Roberts in 1905. Full date and recipient unknown.

reports of Roberts's ill health referred to him as being 'unfit for work' and acknowledged his need for recuperation.¹⁰² However, as time passed, many questioned why he had not returned to Wales. Reporters requested interviews with the Penn-Lewises to ascertain if Roberts would be returning home to rekindle his Revival ministry:

Mr. Evan Roberts, the Welsh revivalist, is still at Leicester, where he has been for nearly four years the guest of Mr. Penn-Lewis. [...In an interview] Mr. Penn-Lewis said that although his guest was well and strong physically, he had not recovered from the strain of the Revival.¹⁰³

Headlines asked: 'Where's Evan Roberts?' and reported that friends and family believed that earlier reports of his state of health had been 'considerably exaggerated.'¹⁰⁴ Many found Roberts's departure inexplicable and 'simply could not understand why their Revival hero had been whisked away.'¹⁰⁵ His continued absence led to speculation that Penn-Lewis had imprisoned Roberts, and monitored his correspondence.¹⁰⁶ Roberts was labelled as 'a deserter to England,' and later described as living with the Penn-Lewises in 'a strange, platonic ménage a trois.'¹⁰⁷ In 1913, Roberts responded to the persistent criticisms of himself and Penn-Lewis. Publishing an article in *The Overcomer*, he attempted to explain his continued absence from Wales:

¹⁰² *The Weekly News*, 30 November 1906, p. 9.

¹⁰³ *The Montgomeryshire Express and Radnor Times*, 15 March 1910, p. 2.

¹⁰⁴ *The Cambrian*, 25 October 1907, p. 2, *The Evening Express*, 5 October 1909, p. 3 & *The Evening Express*, 11 October 1909, p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 202.

¹⁰⁶ G. Davies, 'Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout,' in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster Press, 2009), p.114.

¹⁰⁷ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 167 & Wynn. Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University Press Wales, 2010), p. 339.

Nearly eight years ago I was invited to Leicester by Mrs. Penn-Lewis in conjunction with Mr. Penn-Lewis. [...] During the Revival, I, in my ignorance, did not ignore the enemy. [...] Then, seeing what I was not, understanding what had as yet not broken on my spiritual vision, Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote me very reasonable and spiritual letters inviting me to stay at her home Glen, Leicestershire. [...] I make no apology whatsoever for my conduct in these seven years. There is nothing to apologise for; there is no one to apologise to. God is my Master. What he bids, I do. Where He commands, there I shall stay. Should I deviate or abandon my course of life and work because man fails to understand me? I will not do so.¹⁰⁸

This did little to alleviate the concerns or criticisms of his audience. He provided no detailed explanation of why he had left Wales nor explicitly addressed why he had not returned. By continuing to live a secluded life in Leicestershire, and the joint authorship of *War on the Saints*, Roberts unwittingly fuelled the belief that Penn-Lewis had lured him to England and had exerted a controlling influence over the young, impressionable revivalist. Thus, Penn-Lewis's reputation was established as the woman who ended the 1904-05 Welsh Revival by removing its chief revivalist and encouraging him to reject his ministry.¹⁰⁹

However, as examined in chapter two, Roberts suffered a series of breakdowns throughout the Revival that left him in a state of collapse. In 1906, doctors confirmed that he was mentally exhausted, advising that, although he would recover, he would

¹⁰⁸ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 168.

¹⁰⁹ Prosser, 'Jessie Penn-Lewis', p. 122.

not be strong enough to participate in public ministry.¹¹⁰ Penn-Lewis described Roberts's health, when he arrived in Leicestershire, as follows:

Through the strain and suffering brought upon him during eight months of daily and continuous meetings in crowded, ill-ventilated chapels [... Roberts] completely broke down needing rest and recuperation. His recovery, however was slow and intermittent, lasting many months.¹¹¹

Despite his recovery, Roberts remained prone to periods of exhaustion and agitation. Penn- Lewis diarised these periods of illness: 'Evan was very 'impetuous.' 'Evan very overdone.' 'Evan very tired. All so peaceful until after the attack in the evening.' 'Evan broke out with John 17.'¹¹² Penn-Lewis referred to a range of small meetings that she attended with Roberts and noted that he sometimes felt able to address the gathering.¹¹³ However, these meetings were incomparable to the large-scale Revival meetings that he had conducted throughout Wales and it became clear that Roberts had neither the physical or emotional strength required for public ministry.

Claims that Penn-Lewis prevented Roberts's friends and family from contacting him were untrue. In December 1906, Dan Roberts travelled to Leicestershire to visit his brother. Penn- Lewis wrote: 'Dan here all day. Had real fellowship at close.'¹¹⁴ She travelled to Wales and assisted Roberts's mother to visit him on three occasions, including 6 October 1906, shortly after his departure from Wales.¹¹⁵ On 29 April 1919,

¹¹⁰ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 167.

¹¹¹ Garrard, *Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis: A memoir*, pp. 230 & 231.

¹¹² Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Revd B Pierce Jones, papers 2, diary entries dated, 25 May 1909, 28 June 1909, 3 July 1909 & 14 July 1909.

¹¹³ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B Pierce Jones, papers 2, diary entry dated 28 August 1908.

¹¹⁴ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B Pierce Jones, papers 2, diary entry dated 4 December 1906.

¹¹⁵ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 205 & National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 2, diary entry dated 23 October 1906.

Roberts travelled from London to Swansea in order to attend the wedding of his sister, Mary, to his friend and co-revivalist Sydney Evans.¹¹⁶ Roberts did return to Wales to see friends and family but was cautious of the expectations of both the press and the public. In 1913, 'Awstin', the *Western Mail* journalist, was invited to Leicestershire to interview Roberts. He reported that Roberts was in good health and well provided for. He stated that Roberts had his own rooms, his own key, visited friends and received visitors. He found no evidence to suggest that Roberts was a prisoner. This report was well received in Wales and helped to quell further conjecture regarding his relationship with Penn-Lewis. Pierce Jones wrote that the 'attacks on Jessie Penn-Lewis died out.'¹¹⁷ Yet that was not the case. The rumours and speculation that surrounded Penn-Lewis during Roberts's post-Revival years generated a mythology that has persisted. The belief that she enticed him from Wales, sought a love affair with him and destroyed the 1904-05 Revival has become the most significant part of her historiography. An examination of *War on the Saints* is required to understand fully some of the claims regarding Penn-Lewis's influence over Roberts.

Penn-Lewis, Roberts and the writing of *War on the Saints*.

War on the Saints, was intended as a 'manual of Christian warfare,' to equip readers to prayerfully recognise and withstand a Satanic attack.¹¹⁸ Penn Lewis and Roberts acknowledged that it would be inaccessible to readers who were not acquainted with knowledge of spiritual warfare, adding that 'to the natural man, who has but a mental

¹¹⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 2, diary entry 29 April 1919 & 30 April 1919.

¹¹⁷ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 204.

¹¹⁸ Pierce Jones, *An Instrument of Revival: The complete life of Evan Roberts 1878-1951*, p. 228.

grasp of spiritual things, the language used may be meaningless.’¹¹⁹ This work has been seen as evidence that Penn-Lewis had a controlling, detrimental influence over Roberts as it was believed that the content ‘attacked all that had happened in 1904 [...] as the work of an invading host of evil spirits.’¹²⁰ Although recognised as being the work of both Penn-Lewis and Roberts, it is unclear how they approached their joint authorship. The title page of the original publication read, ‘by Mrs. Penn-Lewis, in collaboration with Evan Roberts.’¹²¹ As Penn-Lewis was an experienced writer, it is likely that they discussed and researched the content, with Penn-Lewis completing the written text and Roberts giving approval, prior to its publication.

Due to the message of *War on the Saints*, some scholars and evangelical Christians have found it difficult to accept that Roberts contributed to the work; Peter Prosser claimed that the book was only ‘supposedly read and supported by Evan Roberts,’ referring to the work as ‘her book.’¹²² Yet, Roberts signed the title page of the book and later wrote that *War on the Saints* contained his ‘spiritual autobiography.’¹²³ Throughout the text, Penn-Lewis and Roberts included examples of demonic possession, false visions and deceiving spirits that they claimed to have personally witnessed. The book also contained accounts provided by Penn-Lewis’s international contacts. The content of *War on the Saints* was highly controversial. Pierce Jones suggested that this was partly because ‘psychologists noted that the writers were

¹¹⁹ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*.

¹²⁰ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh Revival 1904/05 their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 143.

¹²¹ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*.

¹²² Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’, pp. 120 & 121.

¹²³ Pierce Jones, *The Trials and Triumphs of Mrs Jessie Penn-Lewis*, p. 229.

blaming Satan and his demons for the kind of behaviour that springs out of [...] the subconscious.’¹²⁴

Through *War on the Saints*, Penn-Lewis and Roberts intended to explain why they believed revival movements failed. As will be discussed in chapter seven, the aftermath and legacy of the Revival has led to questions regarding the authenticity and nature of the Revival. Those involved in the movement were unable to understand why the Revival ended and why so many converts lost their new-found religious zeal. Penn-Lewis and Roberts suggested that the failures of the movement were not specific to the 1904-05 Revival but were applicable to all revivals. They intended their work to provide guidance for those facilitating future revivals, demonstrating the difficulties and dangers posed by spiritual warfare. From Penn-Lewis’s correspondence, it is clear that she believed that a larger revival was imminent, and that their work was fundamental to the success of that future awakening. Throughout the text, they referred to 1904-05 as a case-study, of what to avoid in later revival movements. It was not intended to denounce the 1904 Revival but to explain why Penn-Lewis and Roberts believed that it had ended. Wynn Thomas wrote that in 1906 Roberts ‘ended up baffled by his own Revival.’¹²⁵ By collaborating with Penn-Lewis, he was able to gain some perspective on his revivalist role and to assess the movement which had transformed his life. Wynn Thomas argued that, by writing *War on the Saints*:

Penn-Lewis seems to have acted as a psychotherapist, supplying Roberts with an acceptable (cosmic) religious language, and an acceptable (millenarian)

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

religious narrative for resolving his bewilderment,' which is corroborated by Roberts's own statement that he saw Penn-Lewis as his 'spiritual mother.'¹²⁶

Through *War on the Saints*, Roberts concluded that revival movements were a time of heightened spiritual activity and both leaders and converts were subjected to both Godly and Satanic forces. Revivals united the Holy Spirit with mankind but Satan infiltrated movements to try and prevent God's work:

The supernatural forces of Satan and the true causes of hindrance to revival. The power of God which broke forth in Wales, with all the marks of the days of Pentecost, has been checked and kept back from going to its fullest purpose.¹²⁷

In short, they claimed that the Revival had failed because those involved in the movement were not equipped to recognise the deceptive powers of demonic forces and were not aware of the dangerous nature of spiritual warfare. Roberts did not 'attack all that had happened in 1904' but sought to explain his experiences and why he believed that the Revival had failed. Despite the misgivings of scholars and evangelical Christians, *War on the Saints* was 'Roberts's disclosure of his anguished perturbations of mind throughout the dramatic period of his evangelical ministry and included his deep misgivings about the 'success' of the Revival.'¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 5 & Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 2, diary entry 6 December 1906.

¹²⁷ Penn-Lewis & E. Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, p. 5.

¹²⁸ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 5.

War on the Saints: A spiritual analysis of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

A successful analysis of *War on the Saints* must begin with an explanation of Penn-Lewis's understanding of being 'baptised in the Spirit.' Penn-Lewis developed these views prior to her collaboration with Roberts and published the article 'Satan's resistance to Revival' in *The Life of Faith* (1906).¹²⁹ She believed that for a Christian to have a full relationship with God, they would need to be baptised by the Holy Spirit. This was not a reference to the sacramental baptism of the established Churches but instead referred to an individual's experience of the divine, similar to her own 'spiritual awakening' on the railway carriage in 1892. Penn-Lewis argued that when a person was baptised by the Holy Spirit, they become awakened into the spiritual realm, which consists of both Godly and Satanic forces. Ignorance of these forces would leave a person susceptible to Satanic deception:

The Baptism of the Spirit, [...] is a time of the greatest peril for every believer. [...] The danger lies along the lines of supernatural "guidance," through not knowing the condition of co-operation with the Holy Spirit, and how to discern the will of God.¹³⁰

The reference to 'supernatural guidance' and the knowledge needed to 'discern the will of God' demonstrated Penn-Lewis's view that individuals require both biblical and theological teaching if they are to understand their spiritual awakening.

Two of the most significant, and controversial, claims within *War on the Saints*, were that no believer was safe from spiritual warfare and that all Christians, regardless of

¹²⁹ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 5, J. Penn-Lewis, *The Life of Faith*, 21 February 1906, p. 161.

¹³⁰ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits. among the Children of God*, pp. 52 & 53.

their experience or understanding, were likely to be possessed by an evil spirit during their lifetime. They argued that ‘the peril comes to every child of God, and no spiritual believer dare say he is exempt from it.’¹³¹ The extent to which Roberts accepted this view is difficult to say. Although he clearly endorsed the book, the belief that all those who had ‘received the Spirit’ were subjected to Satanic attack was clearly initiated by Penn-Lewis. In February 1908, she wrote a series of articles entitled, ‘An hour of peril,’ outlining her belief that many Christians were subjected to Satanic attack because they believed that they were immune from spiritual dangers. These articles were heavily criticised as many were outraged by the suggestion that they could become possessed without their knowledge:

Dear Sir, [...] Mrs Penn-Lewis’s article appearing in *The Christian* of February 20th needs comment. The belief that believers can “quite innocently” become possessed by an evil spirit is fraught with great danger. It would indeed be a terrible thing if it were possible that those earnestly seeking God should instead become possessed by the evil one. Thank God, we English have long been delivered in the belief of demonic possession.¹³²

One letter, called these articles to be discontinued as the content was both shocking and offensive:

Dear Sir, [...] I write to express my deepest regret that you should permit such a series of articles as those by Mrs Penn-Lewis under the heading “An hour of peril” to appear, [...] She states that, “when the deceiving spirit has touched a believer there is a strange film on the mind which makes it incapable of

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p. 16.

¹³² National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd Pierce Jones, research papers 6, typed letter, attached to a letter dated 3 March 1908, f. 2.

grasping (1) principles, (2) facts and (3) sound spiritual judgement,” Why not call it what it is? A form of hysteria [...]. I am utterly disgusted with the use you are making of her influence, and trust you will do the right thing, discontinue that series of articles, and get some level-headed Christian writer to contribute some healthy thoughts.’¹³³

Despite these criticisms, Penn-Lewis continued to write on the dangers of demonic possession. Letters sent from the editor of *The Life of Faith*, C. G. Moore, to Penn-Lewis indicate that she wished to continue publishing similar articles and suggest that she sent him early drafts of *War on the Saints*. She wrote to Moore, addressing his concerns regarding her joint work with Roberts and their views on the Revival:

Dear Mr Moore, I cannot agree to this again. Having begun I shall finish this work and finally explain what Mr Roberts, and what I mean. [...] What you say too of Mr Roberts shows you do not know him. How can I write freely on the Revival which is sure to come very much in connection with him, when you will think my references as “making him an oracle.”¹³⁴

This letter demonstrated her belief that a new revival was imminent and that Roberts was going to be instrumental in the movement. Her diaries and letters show that she believed that God had revealed to her that Roberts was going to lead a second, larger, revival and that her work on spiritual warfare was of central importance to the success of the movement. However, in the years that followed, she appeared to have no explanation why this second revival did not occur.

¹³³ *Ibid*, f. 3.

¹³⁴ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, papers 6, letter dated 17 December 1907, f. 2.

In an assessment of *War on the Saints*, Wynn Thomas suggested that the book provides a unique insight into ‘the peculiar cast of Roberts’s’ post-Revival mindset.¹³⁵ The references to the 1904 Revival clearly demonstrate his need to explain his experiences and to understand why he had been left with such poor health and why the movement had seemingly failed. Roberts and Penn-Lewis concluded that all those who were connected with the Revival had focused upon the wrong aspects of the movement and that this had allowed deceiving spirits to enter into the meetings and distract people from the will of God:

The mistake at the time of the Revival in Wales in 1904 was to become occupied with the effects of the Revival, and not to watch and pray in protecting and guarding the cause of the Revival.¹³⁶

Although they did not elaborate on what they considered were the ‘effects’ of the Revival, it can be assumed that they were commenting on the emotional intensity of the meetings, the focus on the number of newly converted members and the fascination with Roberts as the central Revival figure. It has been argued that through *War on the Saints*, Penn-Lewis ‘re- educated’ Roberts, leading him to believe that ‘there had been no revival, and that he had been a spiritual dupe, and perhaps even that he had been open to mediumistic spirits.’¹³⁷ However, throughout *War on the Saints*, Penn-Lewis and Roberts maintained that the Revival was the work of God. There was no specific reference to Roberts’s ministry and no claim that the Revival was entirely driven by

¹³⁵ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 4.

¹³⁶ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, p. 283.

¹³⁷ Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’, p. 122.

Satanic forces. Instead, they reiterated the claim they argued that demonic spirits had been able to deceive many of the new converts:

The aftermath of the Revival in Wales, which was a true work of God, revealed numbers of “honest souls” swept off their feet by evil supernatural powers, which they were not able to discern from the voice of God.¹³⁸

This view of the Revival was strikingly similar to the opinions expressed by Allen Raine, whose work is the focus of chapters four and five, who argued that, whilst the Revival was clearly the work of God, the emotional intensity of the meetings, exacerbated by both the press and the exuberance of the Welsh people, had led to a form of superficial revival which was distracting attention from the true Revival of God.

Penn-Lewis’s earlier work on the dangers of spiritual warfare demonstrate that she believed that the 1904 Revival had been a spiritual battle ground. The extent to which she ‘re-educated’ and ‘played on the susceptibility of Roberts’s nature’ remains inconclusive.¹³⁹ Yet, an examination of their work reveals that claims that through *War on the Saints* Penn-Lewis ‘battered on to Roberts and ‘his’ Revival like a succubus,’ are unfounded and naive.¹⁴⁰

Conclusion.

Jessie Penn-Lewis remains one of the most fascinating, yet misunderstood, women of the twentieth century. She was a progressive woman who believed she was furthering

¹³⁸ Penn-Lewis & Roberts, *War on the Saints: A text book for believers on the work of deceiving spirits among the Children of God*, p. 49.

¹³⁹ Prosser, ‘Jessie Penn-Lewis’, p. 123.

¹⁴⁰ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 5.

the work of God. Claims that she resented the Revival, and imprisoned Roberts in order to exert control over the Revival were based on ‘several ugly prejudices, some of which were sexist.’¹⁴¹ This chapter has demonstrated that the Penn-Lewises shared in a loving, supportive marriage and that claims that she perused Roberts to provide fulfilment from her unhappy marriage are unfounded. Whilst *War in the Saints* was based on Penn-Lewis’s pre-existing beliefs on spiritual warfare, collaborating to write this book enabled Roberts to analyse the Revival and to gain perspective of his eighteen-month ministry and subsequent breakdown. Throughout the text, Penn-Lewis and Roberts maintained their belief in the 1904 Revival as the work of God but that the Revival had been corrupted by Satanic influence, made permissible by the inexperience of the converts and leaders. This led to emotionally intense Revival meetings, which were lacking in theological substance and discernment. A similar view was published in a letter to the *Western Mail* newspaper in January 1905. It was written by the Welsh author, Allen Raine, whose analysis of the Revival, and wider work, will be examined in the following two chapters.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Chapter Four.

Allen Raine, Rebuilding the ‘Sand-Castle Dynasty.’

Introduction.

‘Wales has waited long for her novelist, [and] he seems to have arrived in the person of Mr Allen Raine.’¹ Thus read a review for Raine’s first novel, *A Welsh Singer*.² During the next thirteen years, Raine became one of the most popular authors of the early twentieth-century, writing eleven novels and a collection of short-stories, published by Hutchinson & Co.³ By 1911, Raine was regarded as one of four best-selling authors of the day, with cumulative sales figures of over two million copies.⁴ Described as ‘the favourite Welsh novelist,’ Raine became an international success with a second novel *Torn Sails*, published simultaneously in Britain and America.⁵

¹ J. Harris, ‘Queen of the Rushes: John Harris on Allen Raine and her public,’ in *Planet*, Vol. 7, (1993), p. 64.

² A. Raine, *A Welsh Singer*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1896).

³ Hutchinson published each of Raine’s novels as well as a Birthday Book which was designed by the publishing house staff in 1907. Hutchinson was considered to be ‘the largest publisher in the world’, producing a large range of cheap edition books. M. Ashley, *The Age of the Story Tellers: British Popular Fiction Magazines 1800- 1950*, (London, 2006), p. 91.

⁴ Harris, ‘Queen of the Rushes’, p. 64.

⁵ Carmarthenshire Archives, Beckinsale 61/17, f. 1, A. Raine, *Torn Sails: A Tale of a Welsh Village*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1897) & *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 3 March 1898.

With each novel centred in picturesque Cardiganshire, Wales had indeed found its long-awaited novelist, but in the person of Mrs Anne Adaliza Puddicombe. Claiming that the name ‘Allen Raine’ came to her in dream, the use and success of a male pseudonym demonstrates the struggle faced by previous generations of women who sought professional success.⁶ This struggle was clear from contemporary reviews. ‘Mr Allen Raine,’ was applauded for ‘his’ well-structured narrative and ability to tell a compelling story, whilst for ‘Allen Raine,’ ‘her’ novels were deemed unimaginative and poorly written.

In 1908, Hutchinson published *Queen of the Rushes*, Raine’s fictional account of the 1904 Welsh Revival.⁷ Although acknowledged as ‘culturally important,’ by some current scholars of Welsh writing in English, it has eluded the attention of Welsh ecclesiastical historians.⁸ *Queen of the Rushes* examined the nature of the Revival and its effects upon the Welsh people. The novel, analysed in the following chapter, offered a unique perspective of the Revival and its impact upon Welsh Nonconformist culture. However, it is important to first establish the nature of Raine’s work, her understanding of Welsh life, particularly her portrayal of women, and her interpretation of Welsh Nonconformity. When considering *Queen of the Rushes*, it is vital to ask - why has Raine’s work yet to be included in the Revival’s historiography? The most probable answer is that the novel was part of a forgotten canon of Welsh women’s literature, only revived in 1998 by Honno, the Welsh women’s press, with the aim of republishing the ‘autobiographical writing of Welsh women, putting on record their experiences of life in [a previous] century.’⁹ This forgotten literature

⁶ Carmarthenshire Archives, Beckinsale 61/17, f. 1.

⁷ A. Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (London, Hutchinson & Co 1908).

⁸ M. Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 61.

⁹ Honno, the Welsh women’s press, was established in 1986, exclusively publishing the work of Welsh women, or female writers living in Wales. J. Aaron, & K. Gramich, ‘Preface’ in A. Raine,

encompassed the work of women writing prior to the establishment of Welsh writing in English as a credible genre. Following a biographical view of Raine's life and career, this chapter will elucidate Raine's position within Anglo-Welsh literature, comparing her work with that of Caradoc Evans, who was seen as the founding-father of the genre. This chapter will then present an analysis of Raine's writing, her critical assessment of Welsh Nonconformity and her portrayal of Welsh women. This analysis will establish Raine as a significant interpreter of early twentieth-century Welsh life and a credible critic of the 1904 Welsh Revival.

Allen Raine: Author and Revival critic.

Allen Raine, the nom de plume of Anne Adaliza Puddicome, née Evans, was a novelist, writing in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Raine became a household name and was described by a contemporary as: 'The only writer of Welsh life and character who [could] be said to have worthily interpreted the romantic spirit of her country.'¹⁰ Born in Newcastle Emlyn, Carmarthenshire, on 6 October 1836, Raine was the daughter of Benjamin Evans, a solicitor who was the grandson of David Davies, a prominent figure in the Unitarian movement.¹¹ Raine's mother, Lettie Evans, was the granddaughter of Daniel Rowland, leader of the eighteenth-century Welsh evangelical movement.¹² Despite her Nonconformist upbringing, Raine became an

Queen of the Rushes, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1908 reprinted Cardiff, Honno Classics, 1998), p. i.

¹⁰ D. Hutchinson and R. Hutchinson, *Allen Raine: Birthday Book*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1907), p. 3.

¹¹ S. Jones, *Writers of Wales: Allen Raine*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1979), p. 2.

¹² Jones, *Writers of Wales: Allen Raine*, p. 2 & S. Jones, 'Puddicombe, Anne Adalisa (1836–1908), in *ODNB*.

Anglican, and in later life turned to Ouija boards for spiritual direction.¹³ Yet, in her novels she demonstrated her belief that Nonconformity was integral to the Welsh way of life, developing what Wynn Thomas described as ‘an outsider understanding of the Nonconformist nation and a considerable, if measured, respect for it.’¹⁴ This ‘outsider understanding’ of Welsh Nonconformity strengthens the claim that Raine’s account of the Revival is significant.

Between 1846 and 1849, Raine attended school in Carmarthen. Aged thirteen, she moved to Cheltenham to live with the influential Unitarian minister, Revd Henry Solly and his wife Rebecca.¹⁵ The Solly household provided an intellectual environment for Raine as well-known

authors, including Charles Dickens, George Eliot and G. H. Lewes, visited the family.¹⁶ It is possible that meeting George Eliot played a role in Raine’s decision to write under a male pseudonym. Although she always maintained that it came to her in a dream, claiming that she saw the name in large letters at her bedside, it was a choice that demonstrated an awareness that she was more likely to be published writing under a male pseudonym.¹⁷ In 1851, the Sollys, and Raine, moved to Southfields, near

¹³ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist*, p. 62, C. B. Jones, ‘Allen Raine: Interpreter of his country,’ in *Carmarthenshire Life*, February (2004), p. 31. Spiritualism featured in Raine’s novel *Where Billows Roll*. A. Raine, *Where Billows Roll: A tale of the Welsh coast*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1909), p. 297.

¹⁴ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 62.

¹⁵ Henry Solly, (1813-1903) began his ministry in 1842 and held parishes in Somerset, Cheltenham and London. Although he didn’t consider himself a socialist, he founded many charitable organisations, campaigned on suffrage and was the founder of the working men’s clubs. He was described by his biographer as ‘one of the most remarkable social innovators of his time.’ A. Ruston, ‘Solly, Henry (1813–1903)’, *ONDB* & S. Jones, ‘Puddicombe, Anne Adalisa (1836–1908),’ in *ODNB*.

¹⁶ G. H. Lewes (1817-1817) was a London-born writer who published articles and reviews of novels by Emily Bronte and Charles Dickens. Married in 1822, Lewes later became known for his relationship with George Eliot, the nom de plume of Marian Evans. Lewes encouraged Eliot to become an author, with Eliot dedicating her novel *Adam Bede* (1859) to ‘Dear husband, George Henry Lewes.’ R. Ashton, ‘Lewes, George Henry (1817–1878),’ in *ODNB* & Carmarthenshire Archives, Beckinsale 61 / 17, f. 2.

¹⁷ Jones, ‘Allen Raine “Interpreter of His Country”’, p. 31.

Wimbledon. In 1856, she returned to Newcastle Emlyn but little is known of this period in her life, except that she attended both Church and Chapel, and contributed to a local magazine, *Home Sunshine*.¹⁸ On 10 April 1872, Raine married Beynon Puddicombe, a London banker. They were married at St Michael's Church, Penbryn, also the parish church for Tresaith, a Cardiganshire coastal village, where the Evans family spent most summers and where the Puddicombes retired in 1900. Tresaith played an important role in Raine's development as a writer, as her novels were set in rural Welsh coastal villages.

Raine's first literary success, *Ynysoer*, was written in English and received joint first prize for the best serial story to be 'characteristic of Welsh life' at the 1894 National Eisteddfod.¹⁹ Printed by the North Wales Observer, this was her only work to be published as Anne Adaliza Puddicombe. She was a prolific writer, and *Queen of the Rushes* was the last novel to be published in her lifetime. Assisted by her nephew, Raine continued to write through the latter years of her life, with three of her works published posthumously following her death from breast cancer in 1908.²⁰ Ironically, her final book to be published was *Where Billows Blow*, the retitled *Ynysoer*. This time, it was a novel published as the work of the established author Allen Raine, rather than a serial competition entry written by the unknown Mrs. Puddicombe.

¹⁸ Jones, 'Puddicombe, Anne Adalisa (1836–1908)', in *ODNB*.

¹⁹ Jones, *Writers of Wales: Allen Raine*, pp 12, 13 & 22.

²⁰ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, L8986, f. 1 & S. Jones, *Writers of Wales: Allen Raine*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1979), p.79.

Welsh writing in English: The destruction of the ‘sand-castle dynasty.’

Despite objections from some current Welsh writing in English literary scholars, it is widely accepted that Anglo-Welsh literature, or ‘Welsh writing in English,’ was born in 1915 with the publication of Caradoc Evans’s *My People*.²¹ Evans was heralded as the ‘founding father of Anglo-Welsh literature.’²² Celebrated for rebelling against Welsh Nonconformity, Evans depicted his countrymen as a collection of uneducated peasants, ruled by tyrannical, Nonconformist, preachers. Caradoc Evans, the pen name of David Caradoc Evans (1878-1945), was born in Carmarthenshire. After leaving school at fourteen, he became an apprentice draper, working in South Wales and later London where he attended evening classes, studying to become a writer and journalist. In 1915, he published his first collection of short stories, *My People*.²³ Although Evans’s work was deeply offensive to the Welsh, with some book sellers and circulating libraries even banning the sale of his books, *My People* was critically acclaimed.²⁴ He went on to write novels and further collections of short stories, including *Capel Sion* and *My Neighbours*.²⁵ In 1957, G. Jones, the first critic and scholar of Welsh writing in English, wrote that:

²¹ Professors J. Aaron, M. Wynn Thomas and Dr. K. Gramich are authorities on the subject of Welsh writing in English and have published extensively in the field. Aaron was one of the founding members of Honno Press whilst Thomas currently holds the Emyr Humphreys Chair of Welsh Writing in English at Swansea University.

²² K. Gramich, ‘Allen Raine and the Anglo-Welsh’ in A. Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (Cardiff, Honno Classics, 1998), p. 7.

²³ J. Harris, ‘Evans, (David) Caradoc (1878–1945),’ in *ODNB* & C. Evans, *My People*, (London, Andrew Melrose, 1915).

²⁴ Llais Llafur, 11 December 1915, p. 8 & J. Harris, ‘Evans, (David) Caradoc (1878–1945),’ *ODNB*.

²⁵ C. Evans, *Capel Sion*, (London, Andrew Melrose, 1917), & C. Evans, *My Neighbours*, (London, Andrew Melrose, 1919).

With Caradoc Evans the war-horn was blown, the gauntlet thrown down.
[Evans had] thrown a bucket of dung through the Welsh parlour window,
[...and had] destroyed the sand-castle dynasty of Allen Raine.²⁶

With this, Jones established the academic reading and interpretation of Welsh writing in English, portraying Evans as a ‘masculine warrior hero destroying the flimsy literary edifices erected by females.’²⁷ However, recent studies into the origins and development of the genre have challenged this view. As new approaches to the study of English literature have allowed for a wider range of texts to be studied, the same approach has enabled disregarded works of Welsh writing in English to be rediscovered. In part, this has been made possible by the work of both Parthion and Honno, enabling a contemporary readership to rediscover forgotten Anglo-Welsh texts.²⁸

Although the precise origin of Welsh writing in English is under debate, it is clear that the genre was established long before the publication of *My People*. In 1785, Anna Maria Bennett’s anonymously published, *Anna: or Memories of a Welsh heiress*, was a highly successful novel, which by 1805 had been reprinted in four editions.²⁹ Like Raine, Bennett’s novel was a Welsh romance, written in English, examining the

²⁶ G. Jones, ‘The first forty years: Some notes on Anglo-Welsh literature,’ in *The W. D. Thomas Memorial Lecture*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1957), p. 9 & K. Gramich, ‘Introduction’ in *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English*, K. Gramich (ed), (Carmarthen, Parthian, Library of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 1-2.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 2.

²⁸ In conjunction with the National Library of Wales, Parathion publishing house, founded in 1993, has republished a range of Anglo-Welsh texts, including poetry, short stories and novels. In 2011, Parthion published Gramich’s *Mapping the Territory* in which she collated and edited a series of critical essays on twelve of the books that had been republished by the Parthion and library partnership. <https://www.parthianbooks.com/pages/about-us> [accessed 21 February 2017].

²⁹ Anna Maria Bennett, née Evans, (1750-1808), was born in Merthyr Tydfil Glamorganshire. Little is known about her life other than that she had a fleeting marriage. Bennett moved to London where she became housekeeper and mistress to Admiral Sir Thomas Pye. She wrote seven novels which were published by William Lane, Minerva Press, a London publishing house which specialised in romantic, gothic literature. J. Humphreys, ‘Bennett, Anna Maria (d. 1808)’, R. Mills, *ONDB*.

relationship between Welsh culture and Nonconformity. In 1828, Thomas Jeffery Llewellyn Pritchard published *The Adventures and Vagaries of Twm Shon Catti* which has been credited as ‘one of the very first ‘consciously’ Welsh novels in English.’³⁰ The aim here is not to establish the precise origins of Welsh writing in English but to demonstrate that there was a body of Welsh literature, written in English, prior to 1915 and that Raine’s work is an important example of this literature.

There were male authors writing Welsh literature in English prior to 1915, and so Gwyn Jones’s attack on Raine’s ‘sand-castle dynasty’ betrayed the misogyny of his views.³¹ In championing the throwing of a ‘bucket of dung [through the] parlour window,’ Jones celebrated the deliberate defecation of the female domain - the home. The far-reaching effects of the Blue Books reports dominated the perception of Welsh femininity. The home was the woman’s sphere and it was to be kept ‘just so’ as a symbol of her womanly abilities as wife and home-maker. For Jones, it was this feminine domain which was marred by ‘Caradoc’s honest, manly dung and – [...] Jones suggests – about time too!’³² The marginalisation of Welsh women’s literature occurred because their novels were predominantly romantic fiction. In an assessment of the ‘romantic’ writing of Wales, Jane Aaron argued that towards the end of the eighteenth century, Celtic, romantic, English fiction was so popular that you could imagine publishers:

³⁰ Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 61.

³¹ Gramich, ‘Introduction’ in *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English*, p. 2.

³² *Ibid.*

Issuing instructions much like today's Mills and Boon formulas to their would-be authors, advising them to produce picaresque, sentimental and mildly gothic novels, located in the so-called 'Celtic Fringe.'³³

The trappings of the popular romantic novel, which were evident in each of Raine's novels, included love triangles, picturesque scenery and emotional turmoil. Women were writing within a genre that was popular with the public and acceptable to their publishers. In a study of Welsh women's literature, Gramich wrote:

It is a truism that women's writing has often been marginalized. Until the last few decades of the twentieth century, the accepted literary canons of virtually all European countries were overwhelmingly male. Moreover, [...] women writers from small nations frequently suffer a double marginalization [... how true this is] of Wales, the smallest of the four nations within the British Isles [often...] amalgamated into the curious hybrid called 'England-and-Wales.'³⁴

This marginalisation would have been greater still for those women writing Welsh novels in English, as they were a minority group within Wales. By penning romantic fiction in order to be published, their work did not comply with literary standards of form and subject matter. It could be argued that it was their chosen genre, rather than their gender that led to their relegation. However, if in order to be published women were required to produce formulaic romantic novels, they were constrained by their gender from writing in a more noteworthy form.

³³ J. Aaron, *Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Nation, Gender and Identity*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 9.

³⁴ K. Gramich, *Twentieth-Century Women's Writing in Wales: Land, Gender and Belonging*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 1.

One volume, cheap, romantic novels were increasingly popular by 1900, with young working women wanting to read romantic escapism. Carol Dyhouse, in her analysis of the ‘heart throb’ in the development of women’s literature, noted that in the early 1900s, romantic fiction was seen as low-brow and sensationalist. Literary critics held little respect for the genre’s readership, namely typists, secretaries and housemaids. Despite the growing demand for romantic fiction, critics dismissed this genre, and their ‘sneers were based on snobbish, misogyny, and social unease.’³⁵ This was indicative of the way in which Raine’s work was received. Her first novel, *A Welsh Singer*, was rejected by a number of publishers. When she submitted it to Hutchinson, her husband provided the twenty-pound cheque that was required to ensure that the unsolicited manuscript was read. Beynon Puddicombe reportedly said to his nephew: “Well, we must humour the little lady,” and “I might as well just have thrown it [the twenty pounds] over the bridge in Newcastle Emlyn.”³⁶ However, *A Welsh Singer* was published and was an immediate success. Hutchinson’s pre-war records were destroyed in the Blitz, so it is impossible to know Raine’s precise sale figures. However, *The Bookman* recorded that Raine was one of the highest selling authors of her day and it can be argued that for ‘the book trade, Anglo-Welsh literature unquestionably began [...] with the publication of *A Welsh Singer*.’³⁷ Despite the popularity of her work, Raine’s subsequent reputation has suffered, as critics have disparaged her romantic fiction. One critic wrote that although Raine was ‘a born tale-teller, [...] she only told one tale. It was in effect a Welsh love story.’³⁸

³⁵ C. Dyhouse, *Heartthrobs: A History of Women and Desire*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 17 - 18.

³⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Minor Deposits, 1307B. & Harris, ‘Queen of the Rushes,’ p. 66.

³⁷ *The Bookman*, was a London publication which published book reviews and a catalogue of authors and their work. J. Sutherland, *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction*, (London, Routledge, 2013), p. 72 & Harris, ‘Queen of the Rushes’, p.64.

³⁸ *The Manchester Guardian*, 23 June 1908, p. 7.

Raine's lack of critical acclaim may have been due to a lack of literary skill. However, the response to her work varied depending on the reviewer's knowledge of her sex. Reviews were more favourable when critics reviewed the novels of 'Mr Allen Raine,' suggesting that response to her work was gender orientated.³⁹ *A Welsh Singer*, was well received and Mr Allen Raine was congratulated on his artful story telling:

In this, his latest novel, Allen Raine has been very successful. The story is told in a simple and pleasing manner. The original character romance itself is enough to make the book a success.⁴⁰

Likewise, a review printed in the *Pall Mall Gazette* stated that:

Mr Raine bids fair to have a right claim to Wales as his special preserve. A delightful and clever picture of Welsh village life. The result is excellent.⁴¹

By comparison, reviews which recognised Raine as a woman, were more disparaging:

Some significant new effects, gypsies and a colliery explosion, among them, are used to vary the more unusual tenor of Allen Raine's stories in her *Welsh Witch*. [...] Her treatment of the mining life and its sheer, dusty, everyday realities, or the great tragedy of the human mole, is not robust enough to provide any sufficient compensation. We cannot find much, either, to say in praise of her interspersed Welsh gypsies.⁴²

Two contradictory reviews of Raine's fourth novel *Garthowen*, demonstrate the discrepancy between those who realised she was writing under a pseudonym, and those who did not:

³⁹ *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 27 June 1900, p. 2.

⁴⁰ *The Dundee Courier and Argus*, 15 September, 1897, p. 6.

⁴¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 September 1897.

⁴² *The Manchester Guardian*, 9 April 1902, p. 3.

It is with pleasure that we take up another story of Welsh life from the pen of that promising author Mr Allen Raine. His intimate knowledge and able delineation of Welsh character would alone make his books interesting; but he adds to that the art of telling a capital story, in the simply homely – fashion best suited to a record of natural country life.⁴³

In contrast:

The Welsh writer who, under the pseudonym “Allen Raine,” has identified herself with all things Welsh has published yet another chronicle of quiet life in a Welsh homestead. *Garthowen* [...] is less ambitious than *A Welsh Singer* [...]. Moors, mountains and sea, lonely farmsteads in secluded valleys, form the background of all her tales [...]. But we would remind her that something more is needed to make a book live. “*Garthowen*” is pretty but not very interesting.⁴⁴

Reviews of Raine’s work may have grown more negative as she recycled the same literary devices and characters.⁴⁵ However, these reviews suggest that critical response was specific to the understanding of Raine’s gender. *Garthowen*, written by ‘Mr Allen Raine,’ was a pleasure to read whilst ‘Allen Raine’s’ *Garthowen* was poorly constructed and uninteresting. The disparity of these views, corroborate Gramich’s claim that Raine’s work was forgotten because ‘of a patriarchal bias against the supposedly inferior literary productions of women.’⁴⁶ Raine’s legacy has suffered from the view that as a female, writing Welsh romances, she was incapable of

⁴³ *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 27 June 1900, p. 2.

⁴⁴ *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 March 1900, p. 3.

⁴⁵ For example, most of Raine’s heroines all fitted the same description. Morva, *Garthowen: A Homestead*, Gwenifer, *Queen of the Rushes* and Catrin, *A Welsh Witch*, all had long, wild black hair, pale skin and all preferred being outdoors, running along cliff paths, shore lines and moorland.

⁴⁶ Gramich, ‘Introduction: Sandcastle Empire’, p. 1.

unearthing the rawness and difficulties of Welsh life. She was criticised for portraying Wales as a caricature of social, religious harmony and she was dismissed as a ‘trivial romantic novelist.’⁴⁷

In contrast, Caradoc Evans’s *My People* depicted Wales as a debauched land, where the ignorant population were ruled by the tyranny of Nonconformity and its corrupt, duplicitous preachers. His depictions of Wales were an attack on Welsh Nonconformity, which he saw as an oppressive and insincere institution. Evans stated ‘every chapel in Wales is a theatre and every preacher is an actor. [...] The actor-preacher is the pride of my country.’⁴⁸ His writing was highly controversial and he was considered ‘the best-hated man in Wales,’ ‘a hated and notorious figure,’ and a ‘blasphemer and mocker, a derider of’ Welsh Nonconformity.⁴⁹ Evans argued that the Welsh needed to be shown a true reflection of themselves and that until this reflection was both presented and accepted, they would remain under Nonconformist rule.⁵⁰ He believed that literature should be used as a tool to portray the ‘true Wales,’ but that previous Welsh writers had failed to recognise this, writing that:

In Allen Raine [...] you only have one side of Wales shown. No country can prosper on conditions of the kid yard. The dung heaps must be seen and the causes must be removed. I have been trying to do this.⁵¹

One of the most well-known characters in *My People* was ‘Nanni,’ an impoverished, elderly woman. Nanni was in awe of the chapel’s Nonconformist minister, Josiah, and ‘unconsciously she came to regard Josiah as greater than God: God was abstract:

⁴⁷ Gramich, *Twentieth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales: Land, Gender and Belonging*, p. 35.

⁴⁸ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, D. R. Davies 43, f. 35.

⁴⁹ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, G. Jones 67 / 1, f. 2 & G. Jones, ‘Three Prose Writers: Caradoc Evans’ in T. Brown (ed), *The Dragon has Two Tongues: Essays on Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 60.

⁵⁰ *Carmarthen Journal*, 23 April 1915, p. 6.

⁵¹ Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, D. R. Davies 43, f. 19.

Josiah was real.’⁵² Hearing that Josiah was to move to a wealthier chapel, Nanni purchased a Bible and asked for it to be inscribed as a gift to ‘the respected Josiah Bryn-Bevan,’ from ‘the least worthy of his flock.’⁵³ Nanni began developing sores on her face:

Nanni came to Capel Sion with an ugly sore at the side of her mouth; repulsive matter oozed slowly from it, forming into a head, and then coursing thickly down her chin and onto the shoulder of her black cape, where it glistened among the beads. On occasions her lips tightened, and she swished a hand angrily across her face.⁵⁴

She asked her neighbour to present the Bible on her behalf. Josiah said that the Bible was a treasure and presented it to the Sunday school teacher, in recognition of his commitment to the chapel. The following day, Josiah visited Nanni. He found her lying dead on the floor, holding a roasted rat. As he looked at her body, rats began eating Nanni’s face. Thus, illustrating Evans’s belief in the destructive power of Nonconformity, the insincerity of its callous ministers and the enslavement of the Welsh people. Nanni’s admiration and awe of Josiah had led to her consuming vermin and ultimately starving to death. This sacrifice was in vain as Josiah had little regard for the gift that Nanni had starved herself to pay for. Evans described the minister as fleeing ‘from the house of sacrifice.’⁵⁵ He did not pray for Nannie’s soul or grieve for a woman he had known since childhood. His disregard for Nanni’s gift and his cowardly retreat from her rat-infested body demonstrated Evans’s belief that

⁵² C. Evans, ‘Be this her Memorial’ in *My People*, C. Evans, *My People*, (London, Andrew Melrose, 1915, reprinted London, Dennis Dobson limited, 1953), p. 96.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 99.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 100.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 100 – 101.

Nonconformity had given Wales nothing but ‘sanctimonious hymn-singing and hypocrisy.’⁵⁶

Evans’s writings showed contempt and bitterness for the Welsh society in which he grew up. In interviews, he spoke of the abject poverty of his childhood and his belief that Welsh women had stood by, insipidly allowing Nonconformity to corrupt their culture whilst pretending that the depraved behaviour described in the Blue Books reports was a lie. Women who were in a position to outline the true state of Welsh life had a moral obligation to do so but had failed. He claimed that ‘she [the Welsh woman] has done nothing great. [...] She is a failure, in law, literature, art and science.’⁵⁷ Evans described what he saw as the true behaviour of the Welsh peasant women in his short story, ‘Redemption’, published in *Capel Sion*. Hannah Harelip, a farm hand, plotted to marry her master, Eevan Rhos. To cajole him into marriage, Hannah seduced Eevan, with him responding: “Come you, small wench, and I will fondle you.”⁵⁸ Evans used the narrative to express both the naivety and fecklessness of Welsh women. Once pregnant, Hannah believed that Eevan would marry her. Instead he arranged for her to fall into a well, leaving the reader to decide if Eevan had intended for Hannah to have a miscarriage or for both mother and unborn child to die. Hannah’s devious nature, and sexual impropriety, paralleled the debauched behaviour described in the Blue Books reports, reinforcing the belief that ‘the first breach of chastity with a [Welsh] woman in the lower class is almost always under the promise of marriage.’⁵⁹ Through his unforgiving depiction of the Welsh peasantry, Evans sought to highlight a Welsh

⁵⁶ J. Harris, ‘Caradoc Evans: My People Right or Wrong,’ in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, Vol. 2, (1996), p. 141.

⁵⁷ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, D. R. Davies, MS 43. A collection of newspaper cuttings, f. 33.

⁵⁸ C. Evans, ‘Redemption’ in *Capel Sion*, (London, Andrew Melrose, 1916 reprinted Bridgend, Seren, 2002), p. 24.

⁵⁹ *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, Volume One, (London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1847), p. 217.

naivety which he believed had allowed Nonconformist preachers to rule the Principality. He argued that this raw portrayal of Welsh life, was essential, as previous Welsh writers, including Raine, had failed in their portrayal of Wales.⁶⁰

However, despite Evans's criticisms and her romantic, picture postcard descriptions of the Welsh coast, Raine's representation of Welsh life has been misjudged. Certainly, she did not depict Wales as the same debauched, morally depraved land as Evans, but her novels did illustrate the struggles and darker aspects of Welsh life. In *Where Billows Roll* (1909), her description of Welsh poverty showed her understanding of the impoverished living conditions of the working classes:

You do not know yet what poverty and misery there is among the poor here. They never beg, seldom complain, but suffer silently from birth to death, and as they lose health, and youth, and friends as they sink into a state no better than that of an animal.⁶¹

She wrote about, child abuse, madness, religious hysteria, and the appalling living conditions of the Welsh peasantry. This chapter will now explore Raine's inclusion of these more menacing themes, demonstrating that her writing provides clear understanding of the difficulties of Welsh life at the turn of the twentieth-century.

Allen Raine: Reading beyond the sand-castles

Raine acknowledged that her novels were intended as light-hearted escapism. Her formula of entangled love-affairs, mistaken identities and happy endings were Raine's

⁶⁰ J. Harris, 'Introduction' in C. Evans, *Capel Sion*, (reprint 2002), p. viii.

⁶¹ A. Raine, *Where the Billows Roll*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1909), p. 138.

literary trademark and written for a female readership. Her writing style, and intended readers are aptly summarised as follows:

This writer's novels [were] piled high on the railway bookstalls of Paddington and Euston, and were bought and read by innumerable holiday-makers on their way to the Welsh seaside resorts. There they stood, the cheap editions of *A Welsh Singer* and *Torn Sails*, bright and gay in the summer sunshine, their coloured jackets bearing not only a vivid picture of a rocky coast but also four words printed, in brilliant scarlet, below the author's name – "The favourite Welsh novelist."⁶²

It is impossible to know if Raine wrote romantic novels for enjoyment or because they were lucrative. For her tenth novel, *Where Billows Roll*, Raine received more than £400 in royalties, the equivalent today of £47,700, and at the time of her death, Raine had £8,573 which today would be valued at just under one million pounds.⁶³ Raine's writing provided her with enough income to support a household and to pay for her husband's medical care which was a considerable achievement for a woman at this time.⁶⁴ Beynon Puddicombe took early retirement due to mental illness. He spent long periods of time at a private asylum in North Wales where he was attended by his own valet, paid for by Raine. In 1903, Beynon Puddicombe's illness worsened and he became prone to increasing periods of violence. Dr Griffiths, the medical superintendent of the asylum, refused to allow him to remain as a patient, despite Raine offering to raise the weekly fee to £4 per week, a sum of £446 in today's

⁶² Carmarthenshire Archives, Beckinsale 61 / 17, f. 1.

⁶³ These figures were calculated using the Bank of England historical inflation calculator and were calculated to the monetary value in 2016.

⁶⁴ Jones, *Allen Raine*, (Cardiff; University of Wales Press, 1979), p. 79.

money.⁶⁵ Clearly, Raine's writing provided her with a good income but she also had a financial necessity to produce novels that would secure Hutchinson's demand for further manuscripts.

Her fifth novel, *Garthowen*, was more complex and indicated that Raine had the capacity to move away from the romantic genre and write 'a social novel.'⁶⁶ Although it was still considered a best-seller, selling over 200,000 copies, it did not sell as well as her other work.⁶⁷ As a consequence, Raine, possibly persuaded by Hutchinson & Co, returned to the romantic genre.⁶⁸ Raine's efforts to move away from the simplicity of the romantic novel in *Garthowen*, and later *Queen of the Rushes*, demonstrated that she had more to say than the trappings of the romantic genre allowed. Yet, as *Garthowen* failed to reach the sales figures of her previous work, she retreated to the familiar ground of the Welsh love story.

Raine seldom spoke to the newspapers or publicised her work. In a rare interview she acknowledged that although some critics found her work 'too idealistic,' and that she was aware of the social and economic problems facing Wales. Yet, she stated that she did not consider it necessary 'to wade through the mud lying underneath the stream,' and preferred to comment on 'the flowers on the riverbank.'⁶⁹ Her admission that she deliberately avoided the less appealing aspects of Welsh life may have prompted Caradoc Evans's claim that Welsh women, including Raine, had done nothing to improve or expose the moral conditions of the Nonconformist stronghold. Raine and Caradoc Evans came from Cardiganshire. They grew up in the same community and

⁶⁵ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Minor Deposits, 1306B, f. 32 & National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Minor Deposits, 1307B, document 2, f. 22.

⁶⁶ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Minor Deposits, 1306B, f. 32.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ 'Authors and their work,' in *The Book Love: A Periodical of Current Literature*, Vol. 2, No. 15, (1899), pp. 1- 2.

wrote about the same locations. However, their descriptions of Cardiganshire life seemed so polarised that when *My People* was published, Raine's name was used as 'a rallying cry' by Evans's critics.⁷⁰ Of course, their social situations had been different. Raine was a well-educated solicitor's daughter with prestigious Welsh religious lineage. In contrast, Caradoc Evans grew up in poverty and claimed that his mother 'didn't realise the value of education. But when I became a young man I did – and it was from there the rankle festered and was never healed.'⁷¹ He expressed this anger through his work, intent on shocking his readers with repulsive images of Welsh poverty and religious hypocrisy. He claimed that no other Welsh writer had tried to convey the appalling deprivation suffered by the Welsh working classes. However, given the topics that Raine chose to address, she was clearly aware of the 'mud lying under the stream.' *A Welsh Singer* began with a child being beaten by his master, the farmer John Powys. Likewise, in *A Welsh Witch*, the heroine, Catrin, was frequently beaten by her father, who was 'so enslaved by drink that his manliness had departed.'⁷² Raine included the following, violent description:

He drew his long whip through his fingers, he stamped his foot, and in another moment the lash had descended on the girl's shoulders. [...] Again, another lash – the girl stands at bay, and in another moment springs like a cat at the uplifted arm, while scream after scream come clearly on the morning air. [...] She had nothing but her teeth and nails to defend herself, so she bit and scratched like a frightened cat. The angry man, [...] suddenly wretched himself

⁷⁰ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Minor Deposits, 1306B, f. 66.

⁷¹ G. Jones, 'Three Prose Writers: Caradoc Evans' in T. Brown (ed), *The Dragon has Two Tongues: Essays on Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 64.

⁷² A. Raine, *A Welsh Witch: A Romance of Rough Places*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1902 reprinted Cardiff, Cardiff, Honno Classics, 2013), p. 22.

away from her, and with great force flung her from him, as if she were a rat or a wild cat.⁷³

In the same novel, Raine became the first author of Welsh novels written in English to provide a realistic portrayal of a colliery explosion.⁷⁴ As discussed in chapter one, the Industrial Revolution brought both employment and suffering to South Wales. Many colliers, including boys as young as twelve, lost their lives in underground explosions and mine collapses.⁷⁵ Raine described a mine caving in around the group of colliers and the death of a young boy, Will, whose body was gnawed by rats. Raine described Goronwy, the protagonist, as being ‘horribly conscious of a scattering and crawling on the shelf upon which little Will lay.’⁷⁶ Whilst Caradoc Evans’s graphic account of the vermin devouring Nanni’s corpse was a metaphor for the all-consuming power of Welsh Nonconformity, Raine’s depiction of Will’s body, trapped in the darkness and gnawed at by rats, may have been a metaphor for the destructive nature of the collieries. Her striking depiction of the miners trapped in an underground tomb, for four days, was:

...hardly the wishy-washy romance writing which Raine is caricatured as producing; in fact, it is a good deal closer in its macabre naturalism to [...] the work of Caradoc Evans, though it pre-dates *My People* by thirteen years.⁷⁷

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 33.

⁷⁴ Jones, *Writers: Allen Raine*, p. 47 & Gramich, *Twentieth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales: Land, Gender, Belonging*, p. 35.

⁷⁵ It is likely that Raine’s descriptions of the mining explosion was based on the mining disasters at Tynewydd (1877) and Morfa Pit (1890). Following a flood in Cymmer Colliery, a large section of ground was left to form a barrier wall between this section of the mine and the Tynewydd workings. On 11 April 1877, the barrier wall collapsed and flooded the adjacent workings. Five men were drowned, including Roberts Rogers who was thirteen years old. This may have prompted Raine to include the death of twelve-year-old William in her novel.

<http://www.welshcoalmines.co.uk/GlamEast/Tynewydd.htm> [accessed 1 March 2017].

⁷⁶ Raine, *A Welsh Witch* (reprint 2013), p. 306.

⁷⁷ Gramich, *Twentieth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales: Land, Gender, Belonging*, p. 35.

Raine did not depict Wales in the same grotesque light as the work of Caradoc Evans, but her work did acknowledge the difficulties of Welsh life, particularly for the peasantry, which were exacerbated by the insincerity and tenacity of Welsh Nonconformity. Throughout her work she examined the role of women, reinforcing the need for female prudence and sexual purity. Although her romantic novels were dismissed by previous literary critics, her novels were widely read and she brought Wales, and its people, to the attention of the wider world.

Allen Raine and the hypocrisy of Welsh religiosity.

Raine's religious upbringing gave her an interesting perspective on the role of Christianity within Wales. Her later decision to worship as both an Anglican and Nonconformist enabled her to address the religious and social expectations of each of these denominations within her work. Ultimately, she presented both as insincere institutions, led by duplicitous clergymen, who were unable to combine the Biblical teachings of love and compassion with their moral stance. This was evident in both *Garthowen* and *By Berwen Banks*. In *Garthowen*, Raine's social novel, she alleged Welsh Nonconformity was rife with hypocrisy. Ebben Owens, deacon and farmer of *Garthowen*, hoped that his youngest son would be ordained in the Anglican church. Too proud to admit that he could not afford to pay for his son's theological training, Ebben stole from his son-in-law, framed his eldest son and actively encouraged the idea that his son was responsible. Finally, no longer able to cope with the guilt, he admitted to the chapel that he was a liar and a thief:

I have been your deacon for thirty years, and all that time I have deceived you. [...]. I have lied and cheated [...]. Your deacon, Ebben Owens of Garthowen, is a thief!⁷⁸

During Ebben's confession, another deacon, Jos Hughes, was concerned that Ebben was going to discuss his outstanding loan, which he had borrowed from Ebben. When the loan was not alluded to, Hughes regained 'his usual smug appearance of righteous peace and content.'⁷⁹ Ebben Owens's confession touched on a number of topics, including temperance, the necessity of prayer and moral virtue. Temperance was an integral feature of Welsh Nonconformity and a significant social consequence of the 1904 Revival. Raine's account of Ebben's drunkenness suggested that chapel members publicly claimed to be temperate and condemned drunkenness, whilst continuing to consume alcohol behind closed doors:

I have pretended to be a temperate man, but I have often drunk until my brain is dull, and my eyes are heavy, and have flung myself down on my bed in a drunken sleep, without thought and without prayer.⁸⁰

As a deacon, Ebben would have been held in high regard by the community and seen as setting an example of how to live a godly life. Raine's portrayal of this behaviour demonstrated her understanding of the failings of Welsh Nonconformity. Stephen Knight has argued that *Garthowen* was 'a serious story about moral blame, reaching in to the work of Nonconformist social ambition and hypocrisy, a world usually associated with Caradoc Evans rather than Allen Raine.'⁸¹

⁷⁸ A. Raine, *Garthowen*, (London, Hutchinson & Co. 1909), p. 288 - 290.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 295 – 296.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 289.

⁸¹ S. Knight, *A Hundred Years of Fiction: Writing Welsh in English*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004), p. 22.

In *By Berwen Banks*, Raine used a Romeo and Juliet approach to explore the rivalry of the Anglican Church and Welsh Nonconformist Chapels. Cardo, an Anglican vicar's son, and Valmai, orphaned niece of a Nonconformist minister, married in secret because of the long-standing religious feud of the rival clergymen. Unaware of his son's marriage, Cardo's father sent him to Australia and during his prolonged absence Valmai discovered that she was pregnant. Ignorant of her marriage, Valmai's uncle cast her out of the house. Her child died soon after birth and Valmai was forced to bury her baby in un-consecrated ground. Following Carado's return, the secret marriage was explained and both Anglican vicar and Nonconformist minister agree to set aside their differences. Wynn Thomas argued that this novel represented Raine's desire 'to see her Anglicanism reconciled with Nonconformity,' and that the 'union of Carado and Valmai is the union of Church and Chapel.'⁸² Yet, the most striking aspect of the narrative is the way in which both Anglican and Nonconformist leaders shunned Valmai because they believed she had been promiscuous. Her uncle's reaction to finding that his 'unmarried' niece was pregnant illustrated Raine's belief that Nonconformist ministers could be ruthless and unforgiving:

“Are you not ashamed of yourself?” thundered the old man. “Sitting at my table, sleeping under my roof, and attending my chapel – and all the time to be the vile thing that you are. [...] Do you think that I can bear you to be with me any longer? [...] Am I, a minister of religion, any longer to harbour in my house such a huzzy? [...] Out you go madam, not another night under my roof.”⁸³

⁸² Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, p. 69.

⁸³ A. Raine, *By Berwen Banks*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1899), p. 211.

Valmai's uncle displayed contempt and indignation for his niece, rather than Christian compassion. Raine emphasised this insincerity through Shoni, his servant's, reaction: "Man! You haven't learnt the A B C of religion, though you are a preacher! Christ never taught you that way of treating a fallen woman."⁸⁴ Although the minister was quick to judge immorality, he was unable to follow the most basic of Christ's teachings and for both Raine and Caradoc Evans, this lack of compassion was a central failing of Welsh religious life.

Evans echoed Raine's narrative in his short story 'The Way of the Earth'. Simon, Beca and their illegitimate daughter, Sara Jane, were 'without the gates of Capel Sion.'⁸⁵ Punished for their promiscuity, they would be buried in un-consecrated ground. Hard-working and thrifty, they hoped to buy their way into the chapel, suggesting that redemption, at least of the Nonconformist variety, was a commodity that could be bought for the right price. However, their unmarried daughter became pregnant. Anxious to ensure that Sara Jane could be welcome in Capel Sion, they gave their life savings to the father of the unborn child. He married the pregnant girl and used her dowry to pay off his debts before running away, leaving the family penniless. Although a more sinister tale with a bleaker ending than *By Berwen Banks*, these works demonstrated the social and religious price of being seen as sexually immoral in Nonconformist Wales. Whilst Evans's 'The Way of the Earth' gave more shocking account of Welsh society, *By Berwen Banks* certainly criticised the same attitudes and behaviours.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. 212.

⁸⁵ C. Evans, *My People*, (reprint 1953), p. 32.

Unlike Caradoc Evans, Raine clearly believed in the authenticity of Welsh religious faith. Her condemnation of the Wales's religious institutions were attacks on the male hierarchy that sought to rule the Welsh through fear of social expulsion and eternal damnation. She believed that the insincerity of these institutions, particularly Nonconformity, gave rise to comparable behaviour amongst the general population. In *Queen of the Rushes*, Raine focused on the public's response to the Revival. Throughout the novel, she depicted the community as fervently praying, calling for the Holy Spirit to work amongst them, yet beyond the chapel walls they were hostile to those who had not been converted and held them in contempt. As with Raine's depiction of Welsh clergy, in *Garthowen* and *By Berwen Banks*, the Revival participants were unable to demonstrate Christ's love and compassion and through their disingenuousness had, in essence, missed the point of the Revival.

Beyond the ritualistic practice of the churches and chapels, Raine believed that there was an authentic Welsh religious spirit, that existed separately to the hierarchical structures of man-made religion. This is best described through her portrayal of Catrin in *The Welsh Witch*. Catrin met with the Anglican vicar one evening, whilst walking along the cliffs. Their meeting showed a clear distinction between the belief that God was only attainable through an adherence to clerical teachings and Raine's belief that one could seek a personal relationship with God. Much to the vicar's astonishment, Catrin informed him that she listened to his sermons from outside the Church as nothing could tempt her to enter a building she found so 'gloomy and dark.'⁸⁶ Her questions on ideas of heaven and hell left the vicar uneasy and he reprimanded her, calling her an 'ignorant girl' and instructed her to attend Church so that she could learn all that was 'necessary' for her to know. Catrin dismissed the idea, asking how he

⁸⁶ Raine, *A Welsh Witch*, (reprint 2013), p. 75.

could help her when she clearly knew more about God than he did.⁸⁷ Catrin stated that she didn't need to go to the Church to feel close to God as she could feel His presence, out on the moors, and asked: "Can you feel him so near in the house, and in the dark Church, where I hear you speaking about Him?"⁸⁸ The vicar, 'disconcerted by her confidence in God's closeness to her,' went to walk home.⁸⁹ However, before he left, to his astonishment, Catrin prayed for him:

"Dear God! I ask you to bless this poor man, and to teach him as You teach me. He doesn't know much, and he wants to feel You near him in the close house and the dark church. Near as You are here on the hillside."⁹⁰

The distinction in these relationships with God provide a clear illustration of Raine's religious views. The vicar spoke 'about' God in the Church, whilst Catrin spoke 'to' God on the moors. This was also a comment on Welsh superstition as fifteen-year-old Catrin was branded a witch for her failure to comply with the social expectations of early womanhood. She was believed to have 'an evil eye' and was ridiculed by the villagers.⁹¹ As noted by Jane Aaron, this 'supernatural concept of female agency' was common amongst Welsh culture and literature, originating from Welsh paganism. However, rather than the villagers drawing on these traditional superstitions, they merely discriminated against Catrin because her mother had been a gypsy.⁹² As within *Queen of the Rushes*, the community desired to be seen as morally virtuous, condemning those who did not adhere to their religious and social standards. In doing so, they were blind to Catrin's true nature and her sincere religious convictions.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 77.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 75.

⁸⁹ B. Humphrey, 'Prelude to the Twentieth Century' in M. Wynn Thomas (ed), *Welsh Writing in English*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 38.

⁹⁰ Raine, *A Welsh Witch* (reprint 2013), p. 79.

⁹¹ Aaron, 'Introduction' Raine, *A Welsh Witch*, (reprint 2013), p. xi

⁹² *Ibid*, pp. xi – xii.

Unlike Caradoc Evans, Raine did not claim that Nonconformity was a root cause of Welsh poverty. Instead, she argued that it bred hypocrisy and insincerity within communities, leaving people in a state of blind prejudice from which they had no means of escape. The chapels and churches taught that God's salvation was for the righteous, and His condemnation was for the wicked. The righteous were those who complied with temperance, religious adherence and sexual morality, whilst the wicked were those who failed to fulfil these standards. However, as most, including the religious leaders, fell short of these moral absolutes; rather than admit their failures and seek forgiveness, they hid their failings whilst condemning those around them. For Raine, this was the true failing of Welsh religious life. When the 1904 Revival began, Raine hoped for a transformation in Welsh Christianity. She wrote to the *Western Mail*, stating that whilst Wales was a great nation, there were 'many faults' within the Welsh character of which people should be 'bitterly ashamed.'⁹³ She called for the leaders of the Revival to ensure that:

The full Pentecostal wave be turned upon our national sins, let us become a truthful, sober nation; let us lead cleaner, purer lives; then, indeed, the Revival will have proved to be the blessed uplifter of our land.⁹⁴

This clearly demonstrated that despite the Nonconformist claims that Wales had evolved from the debauched land of the Blue Books reports, into a righteous nation, Raine disagreed. Her call for the Welsh to become a 'truthful' nation, was a plea for people to be honest about their own moral failings and to move away from the insincerity of their religious practices. Her desire for her country men and women to lead 'purer lives' demonstrated her desire to see a people reach for the moral standards

⁹³ *Western Mail*, 31 January 1904, p. 4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

that they claimed to live by but often ignored. In particular, Raine's novels illustrated her belief in the importance of female sexual purity and the importance of being a virtuous woman.

Allen Raine and the righteous Welsh woman:

In an attempt to distance Wales from the findings of the Blue Books report, articles promoting the desired social and moral behaviour of women were printed in the Welsh language women's periodicals, *Y Gymraes* (the Welshwoman) and, later, *Y Frythones* (the female Briton).⁹⁵ These publications aimed to provide an aspirational form of womanhood, instructing Welsh women that certain behaviours were undesirable. Gossiping was to be avoided at all costs, as it was seen as 'the product of ignorance and, as such, was a root cause of the cultural and intellectual poverty which was allegedly rife among so many Welsh children.'⁹⁶ Raine addressed the subject of the gossiping woman through her portrayal of Neli Amos (*Queen of the Rushes*) and Peggi Doll (*On the Wings of the Wind*). Peggi, was 'the most ill-favoured, ill-tempered woman in the town,' gossiping about people's secrets and, if she felt they had wronged her she 'hurled them forth and covered her adversary in confusion and discomfiture.'⁹⁷

Crippled by rheumatism, Peggi:

...walked on all fours, her vein knotted hands clutching a little square stool [...
which enabled her to crawl] across the floor, using it as a kind of clog for her

⁹⁵ S. R. Williams, 'The True 'Cymraes': Images of Women in Women's Nineteenth Century Periodicals' in A.V. John (ed), *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 73 & 83.

⁹⁶ R. Jones, "'Separate Spheres?'" Women, language and respectability in Wales' in G. H. Jenkins (ed), *A Social History of the Welsh Language: The Welsh language and its social domains 1801-1911*, (University Press Wales, Cardiff, 2000), p. 194.

⁹⁷ A. Raine, *On the Wings of the Wind*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1903 reprinted London, The Leisure Library Company, 1936), p. 39.

hands, for, as the cripple used only the toes of her clutched-up feet in her peculiar progress, her hands took the place of an animal's fore feet.⁹⁸

Peggi was a grotesque, animal-like, creature; a ridiculous spectacle within the town. Raine depicted the gossiping Welsh woman as being both inwardly and outwardly vile, a person to be avoided and mocked. As with her depiction of female impropriety, the Welsh gossip was not to be emulated. Following the Revival, Neli Amos (*Queen of the Rushes*), was excommunicated from the Chapel, because of her gossiping and malicious behaviour. She was ostracised by the community, with the exception of Gildas, the protagonist whom Neli had wronged. He spoke to the deacons and asked them to accept Neli back into the Chapel, to show her compassion and forgiveness. They agreed, stating 'You, Gildas Rees, I must say, acted towards the old woman in a more Christian spirit than she has shown to you.'⁹⁹ Although Raine allowed for the redemption of the gossiping Welsh woman, this was not the same for her depictions of female immorality and sexual impropriety. Raine's writings on these topics reflected the harsh, unforgiving nature of Welsh society, following the example of its religious institutions.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jane Austen wrote that:

The loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable - that one false step involves in her endless ruin - that her reputation is no less brittle than it is beautiful - and that she cannot be too much guarded in her behaviour towards the undeserving of the opposite sex.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 40.

⁹⁹ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (reprint 1998), p. 300.

¹⁰⁰ J. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, (London, T. Egerton, 1813, reprinted by Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008) p. 238

At the start of the following century, Raine's novels illustrated that this view remained a relevant interpretation of the female reputation. Particularly given the controversy of the Blue Books reports, Raine's work demonstrated a continued belief in the need to encourage sexual restraint amongst young Welsh women as a means of preserving their morality and reputation. For Raine, sexual impropriety was deplorable and was to be punished. This was clear in *On the Wings of the Wind* (1903). Matti Lloyd eloped with her sister Gwen's fiancé, Silvan Vaughn. The relationship did not last and they did not marry. Matti returned home in disgrace and dedicated herself to caring for Gwen who had been driven mad by the betrayal of her sister and fiancé. Raine described Matti's life as a constant struggle for atonement:

[Matti's] life was one of continual self-denial and self-effacement. Immolation of "self" had almost a passion with her; nothing was too dear for her to give up, no hardship too great for her to take upon herself.¹⁰¹

This self-deprecation resulted in her early death. Later, Silvan Vaughn discovered that his eldest son had eloped with his cousin Betta, and he died from shock. The sexual impropriety of both Matti and Betta was paralleled by Caradoc Evans's portrayal of Hannah Harelip. These three female characters lost their virginity and reputations for the promise of marriage. Ultimately, both Hannah and Matti died as a consequence of their actions. Betta's elopement eventually ended in a happy marriage but only after she had been abandoned by her new husband and ostracised by the local community. Raine punished her characters for their indiscretions, a warning that their behaviour was not to be revered or replicated. Raine's severest critique of female depravity is in *Queen of the Rushes*, through the portrayal of Nance Rees. Nance's belief that during

¹⁰¹ Raine, *On the Wings of the Wind*, (reprint 1936), p. 15.

the Revival, God had commanded her to leave her husband for another man, resulted in hysterical madness and, ultimately, death. Likewise, Ann Powell (*Where Billows Blow*) was an unmarried mother, the child being the result of a long-standing love affair with a local land owner, Robert Powell. It was thought that they would marry but instead she became his mistress. Before their illegitimate child was born, Robert left and married an English woman. Cast out, Morbyd Ann lived in a ‘tumbled down cottage,’ with no means of supporting herself or her child.¹⁰² When the child was six months old, in a fit of anger, Ann presented the child to Roberts Powell as he rode past on his horse. He pushed her away and she fell. The horse reared up in fright and ‘came down with his hoof on the child’s head.’ Following her child’s death, Ann became hysterical and ‘her brain seemed to give way.’¹⁰³ She remained in the cottage, scarcely able to feed herself and lived in absolute poverty, until her death. The consequences of Ann’s immorality, were lifelong. She was despised by the local community and known as ‘Morbyd [morbid] Ann.’ For Raine there was no redemption for the unchaste woman. In *By Berwen Banks*, Valmai’s child was mistakenly believed to have been illegitimate. When proven wrong, the community, Church and Chapel, reconciled with Valmai and declared her to be a moral woman. For Ann, this was not the case and due to a lack of Christian compassion, Ann was neither forgiven nor accepted by the community and was branded a witch. She was left to mourn her child in poverty and loneliness. Shortly before her death she became a mad woman, ‘falling into paroxysms of madness, ending in complete prostration, in which state she was frequently found lying in her garden, or on the road.’¹⁰⁴ On her death bed, Hugh Gwythern, the novel’s

¹⁰² A. Raine, *Where Billows Roll*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1909), p. 140.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 315.

protagonist, took pity on her and spoke to her of God's mercy and eternal life. Ann's dying words were: "Perhaps God is as kind as he is."¹⁰⁵

Conclusion.

Claims that Raine failed to depict the rawness of Welsh life, or to address topics of social morality and religious hypocrisy are unfounded. Throughout her novels and short stories Raine demonstrated a clear understanding of the social inequality and immorality which were rife throughout Wales. Whilst she did not resort to the same graphic descriptions and metaphors as Caradoc Evans, she confronted her readership with the darker aspects of Welsh life. She was a woman, writing for a female readership, in a male-dominated society. Had she attempted to write in the vein of Caradoc Evans it is likely that her books would not have been published. Driven by a desire for a literary career, and both financial independence and financial necessity, Raine conformed to the lucrative, socially acceptable genre of romantic fiction. During her lifetime, Raine was a household name, an international best-selling author who was dismissed by literary critics. Likewise, her attempts to address what she believed were the insincere, emotionally destructive aspects of the 1904 Revival have been overlooked by Revival scholars. Her initial letter to the newspapers was not seditious enough to cause a response and her novel, *Queen of the Rushes*, was relegated to a canon of lost Welsh literature written in English. An analysis of Raine's Revival critique will be addressed in the following chapter, demonstrating that her work offers a unique perspective on this significant period in Welsh religious history.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 319.

Chapter Five.

'Queen of the Rushes,' Female madness and the 1904 Welsh Revival.

Introduction.

Studies of the 1904 Welsh Revival have yet to recognise the importance of Allen Raine's first-hand account, told through her novel *Queen of the Rushes*.¹ Set at the time of the Revival, Raine developed the narrative as a vehicle for voicing her observations and criticisms of this religious movement. The omission of *Queen of the Rushes* from current Revival studies is evidence of the need for research into the voices of the women during this time.² Raine's work is one of only three Revival accounts to be written by a woman, and the only one of these to criticise the phenomenon.³ In an examination of twentieth-century Welsh female authors, it was noted that 'for women writers, the desire to write [was] a demand to be heard, the desire to become a speaking subject.'⁴ *Queen of the Rushes* demonstrated Raine's desire to be heard. Her first critique of the Revival, a letter published in the *Western Mail*, received no known response. The letter outlined her concerns over the emotional intensity of the Revival and her belief that the public confession of sin was being mistaken for true conversion experiences.⁵ Whilst her letter, printed under her own name, went unheeded, her novel which illustrated her criticisms and was published under her male pseudonym was

¹ A. Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1906).

² Raine's work is absent from each of the historical Revival studies. See the literature review in chapter two for further detail.

³ Revival accounts were also written by Penn-Lewis and Mabel Bickerstaff. Bickerstaff's *Something Wonderful Happened* commissioned by the 1904 Revival memorial fund, was a children's book of the Revival. It included a forward by Sydney Evans and was published to commemorate the Revival's fiftieth anniversary. Penn-Lewis, *The Awakening in Wales: A first-hand account of the Welsh Revival of 1904* & M. Bickerstaff, *Something Wonderful Happened: A little book about Revivals for children*, (Liverpool, Hugh Evans and Sons, 1954).

⁴ J. Williams, 'Intertexts in European Text of the Nation: Welsh Women Writing in English' in *European Intertexts: Women's writing in English in a European Context*, P. Stoneman, A. Sanchez - Acre, A. M., & A. Leighton (ed), (Berlin, Peter Lang, 2005), p. 153.

⁵ *Western Mail*, 31 December 1904, p. 5.

widely read. *Queen of the Rushes* examined the nature of religious experience, and Raine's belief that the Revival prompted hysterical outbursts that were misinterpreted as authentic experiences of God. Through the novel, Raine argued that a true Revival would be driven by a quiet development of an individual's spirituality but that the natural exuberance and excitability of the Welsh temperament encouraged religious hysteria. As examined in the previous chapter, hysteria was a recurring theme in Raine's work, echoing her own life experiences.

This chapter will establish the importance of *Queen of the Rushes* as a unique account of the 1904 Revival, demonstrating that Raine was a noteworthy critic of the phenomenon. An analysis of the novel will establish that Raine's observations and criticisms were perceptive and preceded the work of the well-known Revival critic, Peter Price. As discussed in chapter two, Price has been understood as Roberts's fiercest critic and a probable cause of Roberts's breakdown. Although Raine's initial criticism of the Revival was published prior to Price's objections, with Price reiterating her views, to date there has been no comparison of their critiques. Given the importance of hysteria as a theme expressed in both *Queen of the Rushes* and Raine's personal life, this chapter will begin by examining the nineteenth-century understanding of hysteria, particularly its portrayal as a female condition. This will be followed by discussion on the relationship between Welsh religious life and hysteria, as Raine's depiction of the Revival illustrated her view that female hysteria was closely linked to Welsh superstition and religion. Finally, this chapter will provide a critical analysis of *Queen of the Rushes*, examining Raine's portrayal of the 1904 Welsh Revival and the dangers of hysterical religious behaviour.

Female hysteria in nineteenth-century Britain.

Raine's critique of the Revival centred on the behaviour of two characters, prone to hysteria:

Gwenifer, a mute caused by a childhood bereavement, and Nance who was driven mad by her participation in the Revival. These women exemplified the concerns that Raine raised in her letter to the *Western Mail*. Therefore, it is important to contextualise Raine's view of the female hysteric, which would have been familiar to her readership in 1906. Where possible, this discussion includes Welsh case studies, supported by a wider, contemporary reading of hysteria during the early twentieth-century.

The diagnosis and treatment of mental health in this period is a well-documented topic. Hysteria was traditionally understood to be a female disease, the causes of which ranged from sexual repression and frustration, the menstrual cycle, childbirth and the menopause. Invariably, the womb was understood as the underlying cause and catalyst for all types of hysteria, a term which encompassed any form of female mental illness. Indeed, 'for centuries, hysteria has served as a dramatic medical metaphor for everything that men found mysterious or unmanageable in the opposite sex.'⁶ Although the cause of hysteria was disputed - was it a disease, or a psychological disorder? - it was presumed that hysteria originated in the womb. Whilst men were considered both physically and mentally strong, women's bodies were thought of as weaker, 'looser textured [... and] more readily deranged, [with] the womb [being] the

⁶ M. S. Micale, 'Hysteria and its Historiography: A review of past and present writings' in *History of Science*, Vol. 27, No. 4, (1989), p. 320.

origin of all diseases.’⁷ The strain of menstruation and childbirth left women unable to cope, resulting in female lunacy and hysteria. In Raine’s novel *Torn Sails*, Gwen, a superstitious peasant girl who practiced witchcraft, was unable to cope with the death of her child. She became deranged and killed both herself and her employer, illustrating the nineteenth-century view of the female hysteric, and the belief that working-class women were more prone to periods of insanity.⁸

Understanding the scope of the illness is difficult. Andrew Scull, in his study of the history and development of the female hysteric, described the condition as being:

A disorder that even those who insist on its reality concede is a chameleon-like disease that can mimic the symptoms of any other, and one that somehow seems to mould itself to the culture in which it appears.⁹

The condition and its sufferers were given a range of names that were indicative of how hysterical women were perceived – ‘Victorian ladies illness,’ ‘English malady,’ ‘The female lunatic,’ ‘Old maid’s mania,’ ‘Nymphomania,’ and ‘The Victorian madwoman.’¹⁰ Those from the upper and middle classes suffered ‘Victorian ladies illness’ whilst the working classes were branded as lunatics. Though statistics for the second half of the nineteenth century suggest that the majority of hysterics were women, an earlier study (1845) reported that the largest number of hysterical patients were male.¹¹ The medical superintendent of the York Retreat, Mr. John Thurman, concluded that there were ‘no grounds for doubting that men are actually more liable

⁷ A. Scull, *Hysteria: The Disturbing History*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 6 – 7 & 13.

⁸ A. Raine, *Torn Sails*, (London, Hutchinson & Co, 1898).

⁹ Scull, *Hysteria: The Disturbing History*, p. 6.

¹⁰ E. Showalter, ‘Women and Insanity,’ in *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1980), pp. 162 & 173 & E. Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, madness and English culture 1839-1980*, (New York, Virago, 1987), p. 55.

¹¹ W. Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy*, (London, Routledge, 1972), pp. 49 - 50.

to disorders of the mind than women.’¹² However, in 1852 following a visit to St Luke’s Hospital for the Insane, London, Charles Dickens wrote:

Insanity is more prevalent among women than among men. Of the eighteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty-nine inmates St Luke’s hospital has received, [...] eleven thousand one hundred and sixty-two of them have been women.¹³

It is worth considering the discrepancy between these reports. Dickens’s observations only reflected the admissions at St Luke’s hospital, which may have received a disproportionate percentage of female patients in comparison to the national average.¹⁴ Furthermore, this report did not explain why these women had been deemed insane or hysterical. Case notes from the Pen-y-Fal Asylum, Abergavenny, show that many of its patients were admitted because they did not comply with the accepted model of femininity. At a time when women were expected to be submissive and softly spoken, those who did not comply were seen as a danger to themselves and others.¹⁵ Patient Mary J was deemed insane due to ‘repetitive hymn singing,’ whilst others were admitted for excessive talking and shouting. Some women were admitted to this asylum ‘on the grounds of refusing to answer questions or relapsing into silence for a

¹² Dr John Thurman was the residential medical officer of the Retreat, a Yorkshire mental institution. Thurman was appointed to the role in 1838 and remained there until he became the superintendent of a new Wiltshire asylum in 1849. C. Rosenberg, & C. Webster, *Madness, Morality and Medicine*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 107 - 108 & Parry-Jones, *The Trade in Lunacy*, pp. 49 - 50.

¹³ Showalter, ‘Women and Insanity’, p. 157.

¹⁴ St Luke’s Hospital for the Insane, London, was established in 1751. The hospital was opened because the workhouses, were deemed incapable of providing the level of care and facilities for those suffering with lunacy. B. Efacons, *Reasons for the Establishing and Further Encouragement of St. Luke’s Hospital for Lunatics; Together with the rules and orders for the government therefore, and a list of the governors and benefactors*, (London, H Tape, 1817).

¹⁵ K. Davies, “‘Sexing the Mind?’: Women, gender and madness in nineteenth century Welsh asylums,” in *Llafur: Journal of Welsh Labour History*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (1996), p. 36.

week or more.¹⁶ Raine illustrated the mute hysterical women with her portrayal of Gwenifer Owen, in *Queen of the Rushes*. After witnessing her mother's death, Gwenifer became a mute and members of the village wanted to commit her to the local work house.¹⁷ In contrast, Roberts's week of silence (February 1905) was not reported as a hysterical act, but of a man following an edict from God. Men were not admitted to asylums on the same subjective grounds as women and this could account for the Dickens's observations.

With the apparent rise in the recorded numbers of hysterical female patients, it was thought that there must be a wide range of catalysts to account for this increase. For pauper women, lunacy was seen as symptomatic of their poverty. Conditions such as 'lactation insanity,' were seen as evidence that poor diet, inadequate housing, lack of sanitation, and the mental anxiety of living in those conditions, were probable causes for female madness.¹⁸ This reflected Jean- Martin Charcot's understanding of the condition.¹⁹ He believed that hysteria was always the product of trauma, writing that 'hysteria does not grow all by itself like a mushroom.'²⁰ Raine's work illustrated this view, as each case of madness and hysteria within her novels were triggered by impoverished living conditions, exacerbated by a dramatic or tragic event.

It is likely that as the belief in hysteria as a disease of the female working class emerged, more women were diagnosed to fit within this understanding. At the

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 35.

¹⁷ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, (reprint by Cardiff, Honno, 1998), pp. 29 & 37.

¹⁸ Lactation insanity occurred when women breast fed for disproportionate amount of time as a means of contraception and economy. Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English culture, 1830-1980*, p. 54.

¹⁹ Jean-Martin Charcot was born on 29 November 1825 in Paris. Although from a working-class family, his father was a carriage maker; Charcot trained as a doctor, specialising in mental health and eventually became the lead practitioner at the Salpêtrière Hospital, Paris. His research into the development and treatment of hysteria made him world famous. On 16 August 1893, Charcot died from a heart condition. A. Hustvedt, *Medical Muses: Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, (London, Bloomsbury, 2011), pp. 8 - 27.

²⁰ J. Borossa, *Ideas in psychoanalysis: Hysteria*, (USA, Totem Books, 2001), p. 18.

Salpetriere Hospital, Paris, the majority of the patients were pauper women. Between 1841 and 1842 only one percent of these women were diagnosed as hysterical. Forty years later between 1882 and 1883, approximately twenty one percent of female patients received this diagnosis. Possibly, as the medical interest in hysteria grew, doctors approached female patients, particularly those of the working class, anticipating them to be hysterical.²¹ The general supposition that hysteria was more common in working class women explains why Raine chose to present the female protagonists in *Queen of the Rushes* as hysterical rather than either of the male characters. It also suggests that Raine's view of the Revival may have been influenced by class distinctions.

A second explanation for the gender discrepancies reported by Dickens and Thurman is that Thurman's report was published prior to the Lunatics Act of 1845.²² This legislation outlined the mandatory standards of accommodation and care for the mentally ill. Each county was required to provide a suitable asylum for its region, providing for both paupers and the affluent. The requirement for the provision of 'pauper lunatics,' saw a large influx of female patients into county asylums and privately licensed homes. Some asylums becoming so large that they were known as 'lunatic colonies.'²³ In Carmarthen, the Joint Counties Lunatic Asylum, opened in 1865, was intended to accommodate two hundred and twelve patients. This figure steadily increased until 1917 when there were 758 inmates.²⁴

²¹ R. J-Malloy, 'Charcot and the Theatre of Hysteria,' in *Journal of Popular Culture* (2004), pp. 134 - 136.

²² The Lunatics Act was the result of The Lunacy Inquiry Act, which was commissioned to investigate the standard of care and the medical treatment given to the mentally disturbed. P. Chambers, *Bedlam: London's hospital for the mad*, (Surrey, Ian Allan Publishing, 2009), p. 244.

²³ Showalter, 'Women and Insanity', p. 160.

²⁴ This asylum was known as 'The house of the mad.' This followed Caradoc Evans's description of the asylum in his short story 'A just man in Sodom,' published in *My People* (1915) D. Russell, 'Inside the "House of the Mad": The social context of mental illness, suicide and the pressures of rural

Previously, the mentally ill were committed to workhouses or public hospitals, for example Bedlam Hospital, London, where patients were subjected to a range of inhumane treatments and degrading living conditions.²⁵ At Bedlam, members of the public could pay to see the strange and unpredictable behaviour of the mentally ill.²⁶ Similar examples of this practice were seen in the Salpetriere Hospital, Paris.²⁷ As part of his teaching repertoire, Charcot held public exhibitions of his female patients, creating an ‘Hysterical Circus.’ These exhibitions became a talking point of both the medical community and Parisian society. Charcot’s lectures were known to display:

Scantly clad women disporting themselves in unmistakably erotic cataleptic poses, or writhing and moaning in ways that mimicked orgasms on a public stage, before a [...] rapt audience.²⁸

Through the public exhibition of patients, hysterical behaviour became a form of entertainment. Charcot’s lectures were so popular that a new five hundred-seat theatre was built.²⁹ During these lectures, Charcot would hypnotise each patient, allowing him

life in south west Wales c. 1860- 1920’ in *Llafur: The journal of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (1985), pp. 20 - 21.

²⁵ Bedlam is Britain’s oldest mental institution. Opened in 1247 as a general hospital, by 1403 the majority of patients were considered to be insane and so Bedlam became known as London’s home for the mad. An investigation at Bedlam in 1814, found that female patients were ‘chained by one arm or leg to the wall; the chain merely allowing them to stand by the wall [...] or sit down on it.’ This treatment was not restricted to the larger London asylums. In 1868 a matron at the Carmarthenshire asylum was fined ‘ten pounds for beating patients on their thighs with her keys,’ whilst in 1847, an attendant was fined for assaulting a lunatic. Chambers, *Bedlam: London’s hospital for the mad*, p. 181 & Russell, ‘Inside the “House of the Mad”’: The social context of mental illness, suicide and the pressures of rural life in south west Wales c. 1860 - 1920’, p. 24.

²⁶ Showalter, ‘Women and Insanity’, p. 158.

²⁷ The Salpetriere was opened as a women’s hospital in the seventeenth century. Those committed to the hospital suffered a range of conditions from madness, criminal insanity, unmarried mothers, prostitution and basic poverty. Women were expected to work inside the hospital, which was tantamount to a prison. The hospital was a means of removing unwanted women from the Parisian streets and into a facility that was believed to reflect their condition and status. Under Charcot, the Salpetriere gained notoriety as a teaching hospital for the study of hysteria and other forms of mental illness. A. Hustvedt, *Medical Muses: Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, (London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), pp. 10 - 11.

²⁸ Scull, *The Disturbing History of Hysteria*, p. 104.

²⁹ Although patients weren’t publicly displayed at the Carmarthenshire asylum, the asylum itself was a public spectacle within the town. Visitors to Carmarthen were known to stand outside its grounds to laugh, shout and wave at the patients. Russell, ‘Inside the “House of the Mad”’: The social context of

to control the hysterical behaviour, making symptoms easier to demonstrate and understand. These demonstrations were typically sexual with one account describing a group of doctors asking a hypnotised patient to undress, telling her that it was a very hot day. They reported that:

She did not seem very convinced; yet, she began to remove her blouse. However, when it came to taking off her corset, her entire body stiffened, and we barely had time to intervene in order to avoid an attack of hysteria.³⁰

Although the patient refused to undress fully, she stood before a group of men in her underwear. Even under hypnosis, this behaviour would have been seen as sexually deviant and immoral. Charcot's work demonstrated that a woman's lack of inhibition and sexual expression was seen as symptomatic of hysteria.

Raine drew on the belief that hysteria was a cause of sexual depravity to illustrate her view of the Revival. At a time when Welsh women were restoring their reputation, following their public condemnation in the 1847 Blue Books report, the suggestion that the Revival could induce a Welsh woman to have a sexually motivated, hysterical outbreak was highly critical of both the Revival and the morals of Welsh women. The portrayal of Revival hysteria, and female sexual impropriety, were articulated in Raine's depiction of Nance Rees and will be discussed later in this chapter. Prior to this discussion, it is important to consider the nineteenth-century belief in the relationship between emotional enthusiasm, religion and female madness.

mental illness, suicide and the pressures of rural life in south west Wales c. 1860-1920', p. 25 & R. J-Malloy, 'Charcot and the Theatre of Hysteria,' in *Journal of Popular Culture* (2004), p. 135.

³⁰ Hustvedt, *Medical Muses: Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, p. 80.

Religion, revival and hysteria.

Following the Ulster revival of 1859, J. Bushman published a pamphlet regarding the relationship between mental disease and religious revivals. He argued that revivals were beneficial when they reminded people of the higher moral good but were dangerous when ‘the aim of the conductors [...] is to excite the sensibilities of the audience.’³¹ In general, religious excitement was seen as a dangerous precursor to hysterical behaviour, particularly in women. In 1868, a coroner ruled that Mary Anne Baxendale had committed suicide as the result of religious excitement and an un-sound mind. Following a period of depression, she had become increasingly excited when discussing religion. After telling her husband that she could not be saved, Baxendale hanged herself. Although this occurred in the north of England, Welsh newspapers published accounts of Baxendale’s death and inquest.³² The case notes of Elizabeth P, patient at the Pen-y-Fal asylum, state that she experienced episodes of religious mania. She would ‘call upon Jesus Christ, slightly nymphomaniacally, calling for a sweetheart and begging for [one to be found] at once.’³³ Religious delusions accounted for more than twenty-seven percent of admissions to the Pen-y-Fal asylum, with numerous patients suffering from an extreme emotional response to ‘the nature of religion, faith and chapel life in nineteenth century South Wales.’³⁴ Medical records for the North Wales Counties Lunatic Asylum show that the admission of patients suffering from religious hysteria increased during the Revival. Dr Cox, superintendent of the asylum, reported that in 1905 ‘an exceptional number of patients were admitted

³¹ J. S. Bushman, *Religious Revivals in Relation to Nervous and Mental Diseases*, (Salisbury, Bennett Printer, 1860), p. 2.

³² *The Brecon County Times*, 25 April 1868, p. 6.

³³ Davies, “‘Sexing the Mind?: Women, gender and madness in nineteenth century Welsh asylums,’ p. 38.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 37.

suffering from “religious mania” attributed to religious fervour due to the revivalist movements.’³⁵

In 2016, a group of Welsh writers were commissioned to write a collection of short stories, constructed on the case notes of a selection of former patients at the Denbigh Mental Hospital, North Wales. The story ‘Believer: 1905’ was based on the story of Rowland Davies, who was admitted to the hospital on thirteen separate occasions. Davies was admitted in January 1905, due to religious excitement and remained in the hospital for ten months. Although the story is fictional, the case files selected for this project contained detailed notes of conversations regarding patient symptoms.³⁶ Davies was described as having ‘gotten in with the revivalists [...] and after the Revival meetings he’d stopped eating and going to work and had stayed in his room all the time praying and crying.’³⁷ Dr Cox, who was included in the story, discussed the increase in this type of patient:

We have been getting a lot of cases like this since Evan Roberts the preacher and his kind began their rampage across Wales. Some of them are violent, and I have seen family members worn down with fear and lack of sleep because it is dangerous to go in the house when they are praying.³⁸

Davies was diagnosed with religious hysteria. A doctor commented that the patient had attended too many Revival meetings, which had triggered his religious mania:

³⁵ P. Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales 1800-2000*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2003), p. 103.

³⁶ R. Mimpriss, ‘Introduction’ and ‘Case notes’ in R. Mimpriss (ed), *Dangerous Asylums: Stories told from Denbigh Mental Hospital, told by Welsh Writers*, (Bangor, North Wales Mental Health Project, 2016), pp. 7 - 10 & 102.

³⁷ R. Mimpriss, ‘The Believer’ in R. Mimpriss (ed), *Dangerous Asylums: Stories told from Denbigh Mental Hospital, told by Welsh Writers*, (Bangor, North Wales Mental Health Project, 2016), p. 91.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

He went to five of the damn things in a row. He was there until two or three every morning, and up again in a few hours for work. [...] I think we are going to see a lot more of these cases. They'll arrive in a state of nervous exhaustion.³⁹

A recent study, conducted by Bangor University and the North Wales Department of Psychological Medicine, examined the records of the North Wales asylum from 1902-1907.⁴⁰ Of the 584 patients admitted during this time, thirty-seven were directly connected to the Revival. Nineteen of these patients were believed to have suffered from a 'brief polymorphic psychosis' meaning that the effects of the hysteria were short lived and once treated did not re- occur. Other patients were diagnosed with schizophrenia or bi-polar disorder. Significantly, the study found that the number of men admitted in connection with the Revival was greater than the number of women. In particular, the Revival appeared to cause hysterical attacks in younger men. Prior to, and following, the Revival, no men aged fifteen to thirty-five were admitted to the hospital, compared with 1904-05, when 10.6% of the hospital's patients were young men. Whilst the number of female patients increased, the rise in male patients was larger.⁴¹ This study confirmed the earlier findings of Dr Cox, who claimed that during 1905 'eleven percent of male and four percent of female admissions were said to be attributable to religious mania.'⁴² This study shows a definite correlation between the Revival and a rise in religious hysteria. As this study cannot account for those who may have been suffering from religious hysteria, but were not admitted to the asylum, there may have been a higher level of correlation between the Revival and hysteria,

³⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 94 - 95.

⁴⁰ By examining patient case notes from 1902-1907, the study ensured that the Revival was not examined in isolation.

⁴¹ S. C. Linden, M. Harris, C. Whitaker & D. Healy, 'Religion and Psychosis: The effects of the Welsh religious Revival 1904-1905,' in *Psychological Medicine*, Vol. 40, (2010), pp. 1319 & 1322.

⁴² Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales 1800-2000*, p. 103.

than it is possible to prove.⁴³ Unfortunately, most of the mental health records for Monmouthshire, 1902-1907, were destroyed in a fire and so it is difficult to gain a comparison between the Southern and Northern county asylums.⁴⁴ However, available records show two cases of patients admitted due to ‘religious excitement,’ in 1905. Both patients were aged thirty-six, one male and one female. The female patient remained institutionalised longer than the male, and it was noted that his initial attack of religious hysteria lasted for five days, whilst the female patient’s attack lasted for seven.⁴⁵ Although the records do not refer to the Revival, both patients were registered as Nonconformists, one living in Tredegar and the other in New Tredegar, towns which held Revival meetings.

Raine was not the only author to warn against the dangers of religious enthusiasm. In her short story, ‘The Only Girl’ (1912), Bertha Thomas observed the relationship between Welsh women, hysteria and revivalism.⁴⁶ Catrin, the protagonist, was

⁴³ There are conflicting views regarding the admittance of patients to asylums in Wales. It has been argued that it is impossible to have an accurate figure for lunacy in nineteenth-century Wales as families and communities worked together to care for the mentally ill, rather than admitting them to an institution. In contrast, other studies have found that those living in rural communities were highly likely to send family members to their local asylum. Raine addressed both models. In *Torn Sails*, whilst the community wanted to send Gwen to the asylum or workhouse, her mother refused to allow her to be taken away and cared for her at home. In contrast, in the short story ‘Home Sweet Home’, John Vaughan sent his mother, Nancy, to the local workhouse, claiming that he could not afford to feed her. Nancy was not mentally ill and was driven to the workhouse on the pretence of being sent to live with her daughter. Whilst *Torn Sails* suggested that an institution was a last resort, ‘Home Sweet Home’ indicated that sending a relative to a workhouse was a normal occurrence. Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A history of women in twentieth century Wales*, p. 24, Michael, *Care and Treatment of the Mentally Ill in North Wales 1800-2000*, pp 8 - 9, Raine, *Torn Sails*, p.260 & Raine, ‘Home Sweet Home,’ in *All in a Month and Other Stories*, (reprinted 2012), pp. 193, 197 & 205.

⁴⁴ In some cases, records are currently closed as they have been collated with more recent medical records. Carmarthenshire records are currently in storage, following a mould infestation at the archive centre.

⁴⁵ Gwent County Archives, Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire Asylum Abergavenny Admissions Register, D3202/30/9.

⁴⁶ Thomas (1845-1918) was the daughter of an Anglican canon and granddaughter of John Summer Bird, Archbishop of Canterbury. Thomas, described as ‘a cultural hybrid,’ was the daughter of a Welsh father and an English mother. ‘The Only Girl’ was included in her collection of short stories Picture Tales from Welsh Hills which was her only work entirely set in Wales. K. Bohata, ‘Bertha Thomas: The New Woman of ‘Anglo-Welsh’ hybridity’ in *New Women Hybridities: Femininity, feminism and international consumer culture, 1880-1930*, ed. A. Heilmann & M. Beetlam, (London, Routledge, 2004) & K. Bohata, ‘Introduction,’ in *Stranger Within the Gates: A collection of short stories*, B. Thomas, Honno Classics: Wales (2008).

described as ‘a skinny bony creature [who was] feeble – minded, [suffered] from asthma and epileptic fits [and was] better off dead.’⁴⁷ After attending emotional chapel meetings, Catrin suffered an epileptic fit and died. Her death was recorded as being the direct result of ‘the emotional strain of the revivalist concourse.’⁴⁸ Unable to cope with the religious excitement, she had inevitably suffered from a hysterical attack and died. Ironically, without their weak and feeble daughter to conduct physically demanding tasks, Catrin’s elderly parents were unable to continue farming and were forced to move into a house in the local town.⁴⁹ Although Thomas did not refer to a specific revival, given that the story was published in 1912, it is probable that ‘The Only Girl’ was Thomas’s commentary on the 1904-05 Revival. As a consequence of Catrin’s involvement with the Revival she died, ruining the lives of her family and echoing Bushnan’s claim that ‘the excitement of physical effects in religious worship is a dangerous instrument.’⁵⁰

The belief that the Welsh were particularly susceptible to religious enthusiasm was claimed by a range of Revival critics, including Raine, V. J. Morgan, Peter Price and J. Rouges Frusac, a French psychologist. Frusac travelled to Wales during the Revival and analysed Roberts’s ministry. Following his observations of the Revival meetings, he claimed that the Welsh were emotionally prone to revivalism because of the strength of Nonconformity in Wales. He argued that the Nonconformist desire for revivalism developed a society where ‘the sub-conscious mind and collective sub-conscious was ready for the Revival.’⁵¹ A sociological study of eighteenth-century Christian denominations suggested that this emotional susceptibility was an historic

⁴⁷ Thomas, ‘The Only Girl’ in *Picture Tales from Welsh Hills*, p. 30.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 49.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 51.

⁵⁰ Bushnan, *Religious Revivals in Relation to Nervous and Mental Diseases*, p. 20.

⁵¹ A. Pamela, ‘The International Effects of the Welsh Revival 1904-05: The case of France,’ Aberystwyth MA thesis (2005), National Library of Wales, 1432127 2007/10534, ff. 38 - 39.

feature of Welsh religious practice. In 1785, in Newport, it was claimed that Nonconformists were ‘jumping’ as part of their worship and were being encouraged by the minister because John the Baptist had leapt in his mother’s womb at the news of the incarnation. It was reported that ‘about nine men and seven women, for some time, rocked to and fro, and then they jumped with a kind of frantic fury.’⁵² Perhaps the strangest example of Welsh religious hysteria, although not related to revivalism, was the case of Sarah Jacobs, also known as ‘The Welsh Fasting Girl.’⁵³ During 1869, Sarah Jacobs became a newspaper sensation. Initially reported in *The Welshman*, it was claimed that the girl had not eaten for sixteen months and had been refusing water but was alive and healthy.⁵⁴ Her parents said that she had consumed ‘bwyd yr angylion’ – the food of angels.⁵⁵ Sarah was not the first Welsh fasting Girl, in 1770 Mary Thomas of Barmouth was unable to eat following an extended period of illness. It was noted that she was ‘religious’ and ‘prayed fervently.’⁵⁶ In 1802 Mary Thomas, Merioneth, was also reported as a saintly fasting girl. Accounts of Mary’s fasting demonstrate that she was seen as a ‘sensational’ figure who was akin to a female medieval saint.⁵⁷ A study of fasting girls highlighted two interesting points. Firstly, that often friends, family members and the fasting girls themselves would claim that

⁵² J. Evans, *Evans’s Sketch of the Various Denominations of the Christian World: Corrected and enlarged by James Aikman*, (Edinburgh, Thomas Nelson, 1831), p. 258.

⁵³ Sarah Jacobs, born on 17 June 1857, was the daughter of Evan and Hannah Jacobs. The family rented a small farm in Llanfihangel-ar-Arth, Carmarthenshire. Sarah first became ill in February 1867, at the time her mother was pregnant with her seventh child. Sarah’s illness was characterised by hysterical fits, brought on whenever her parents tried to feed her. If she did manage to eat, Sarah vomited a combination of food and blood. Thinking that the illness was made worse by food Sarah’s parents respected her requests not to eat. They swore an oath on the Bible that they would not offer her food unless she asked. According to them, she never asked for food and did not eat for sixteen months until her death in 1869. S. Busby, *A Wonderful Little Girl: The true story of Sarah Jacobs the Welsh fasting girl*, (London, Short Books, 2003), pp. 23, 24, 54 & 56.

⁵⁴ S. Busby, *A Wonderful Little Girl: The true story of Sarah Jacobs the Welsh fasting girl*, (London, Short Books, 2003), p. 38.

⁵⁵ Davies, *People, Places and Passions: A Social History of Wales and the Welsh 1870–1945*, p. 2.

⁵⁶ W. M. Wilkinson, *The Case of the Welsh Fasting Girl and her Father: On the Possibility of Long - Continued Abstinence from Food*, (London, J. Burns, Holborn, 1870), pp. 33 - 34.

⁵⁷ S. Wade, *The Girl Who Lived on Air: The Mystery of Sarah Jacob the Welsh Fasting Girl*, (Bridgend, Wales, Seren, 2014), p. 119.

no food had been consumed but that ‘they did not consider that beef-tea, milk, or other liquid should be called food.’ Secondly, the supposed ability of fasting girls to survive without nourishment was seen as miraculous. People believed such ‘accounts as they were Gospel truth and heralded [these girls] as a return to the miraculous periods.’⁵⁸ In 1869, the story of Sarah Jacobs offered an antidote to the feeling of uncertainty and crisis within Wales. As the industrial revolution continued to change the landscape and culture of the country, and science began to question religious certainties, for some, the ability of a fasting girl to survive without food ‘became a way of sustaining [religious] belief itself.’⁵⁹

The story of Sarah Jacobs circulated throughout Wales, bringing hundreds of ‘pilgrims’ to visit her. Some were ‘permitted to clasp her tiny hand [...] while she read to them [...] from the Welsh Bible or recited her own religious poetry.’⁶⁰ Although there were no official requests for payment, it was common for visitors to leave donations as an offering for Sarah.⁶¹ The local economy benefited as there were increased visitors to the area. Some villagers acted as guides, collecting ‘pilgrims’ from the train station and taking them to the Jacobs’s farm. In December 1869, a medical committee was appointed to examine and monitor Sarah. Four nurses were selected from Guy’s Hospital, London, to observe her throughout the study, and no one was allowed to have physical contact with her. It was believed that this would end the controversy of whether this was a miracle, an elaborate hoax or a case of religious hysteria.⁶² This investigation was poorly received in Wales as the fasting girl’s

⁵⁸ J. J. Brumber, *Fasting Girls: The emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a modern disease*, (USA, Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 62.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Busby, *A Wonderful Little Girl: The true story of Sarah Jacobs the Welsh fasting girl*, p. 38.

⁶¹ *Cardiff Times*, 11 September 1869, p. 7.

⁶² R. V. Deth & W. Vanderycken, ‘Who was the first to diagnose anorexia nervosa: Gull or League?’ in *Psychological Medicine* (1989), Vol. 19, p. 834.

reputation was now ‘a matter of Welsh national honour.’⁶³ Sarah neither ate or drank during the investigation and died on 21 December 1869. Throughout the study, her parents were advised to hospitalise her but they refused, claiming that she was in God’s hands. Later, they were tried and found guilty of abusing Sarah, starving her for financial gain and her father was convicted of manslaughter. Although distinct from revivalism, it was this unquestioning, popular acceptance of religious hysteria that Raine sought to warn against. Clearly Sarah had been mentally ill. Studies of the nature and of origins of eating disorders have identified the case of the Welsh Fasting Girl as one of the earliest documented examples of anorexia nervosa. Her death was reported as a ‘deplorable’ act which might have been avoided if she had been treated as ‘a girl of unsound mind,’ rather than a religious spectacle.⁶⁴ The strange events surrounding Sarah’s life and death were aptly summarised as follows:

Her life [was] a victory for religious credulity and superstitious gullibility more fitting to the medieval world of miracles and marvels than the late nineteenth century. Sarah’s death [was] a triumph for rational, scientific, modern medicine.⁶⁵

The national pride in Sarah’s reputation as a miracle child was similar to the pride in Wales’s reputation as ‘the land of Revivals.’ Whilst Raine did not suggest that Welsh religious pride was misplaced or that revivalism did not occur, she sought to encourage people to distance themselves from religious hysteria and the emotional frenzy which was damaging to the national reputation and the mental well-being of the Welsh people.

⁶³ H. G. Morgan, ‘Fasting girls and our attitudes to them,’ in *British Medical Journal* (1977), Vol. 2, p. 1653.

⁶⁴ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth D. Roy Evans Collection, MSS. 10. F. 1.

⁶⁵ Davies, People, *Places and Passions: A Social History of Wales and the Welsh 1870–1945*, p. 2.

The Revival critiques of Raine and Price:

Raine's letter to the *Western Mail* affirmed her belief in Revival as the work of God, through an act of the Holy Spirit. However, she argued that many of the Revival meetings were over-emotional and were evidence of the exuberant Welsh temperament, and that this was preventing the true work of God. She wrote:

I approach the subject of the Welsh Revival in Wales with great hesitation, so unsatisfactory to me are its present manifestations. [...] I believe that the awakening an upheaval in spiritual life [...], is caused by a great influx of the Spirit of God. [...] But I think that a sudden conviction of sin is very frequently being mistaken for 'conversion' in the present Revival; hence the scenes of frenzied excitement which are calculated to bring ridicule upon a movement which, if guided by the proper channels, might be for the uplifting of the nation.⁶⁶

Raine's letter was published a month before the controversial letter of Revd Peter Price, who voiced the same concerns as Raine. As discussed in chapter two, Price became associated with the history of the Revival after he publicly condemned Roberts as a showman who inspired emotionally charged meetings that were contrary to the Revival of God. Price's letter, also printed in the *Western Mail*, was an open attack on Roberts's ministry, in contrast to Raine's letter which was one of restraint and caution. Raine's letter received no response but Price's letter evoked numerous replies and his condemnation of Roberts has become a prominent part of the Revival's

⁶⁶ *Western Mail*, 31 December 1904, p. 5.

historiography. Both Raine and Price stated their belief in the Revival as being the work of God, with Price writing that:

There is, then, a Revival which is of God – of God alone, yes, a most mighty, an almighty Revival [...] But there is another Revival in South Wales – a sham Revival, a mockery, a blasphemous travesty of the real thing.⁶⁷

Similarly, Raine reproached the Revival leaders and stated that they had a great responsibility to ensure that the Holy Spirit was allowed to flourish and converts were informed of the true meaning of the Revival:

How great will be our responsibility, more especially that of the ministers of religion, if this great spiritual awakening is allowed to pass away from our land without being followed by a reformation in our national character. Let the leaders of this great movement, therefore, impress upon their converts what a true diwygiad means.⁶⁸

Price's letter evoked passionate replies, most of which defended Roberts's ministry.

One reply, written to the *Western Mail* claimed that Price's letter was a:

Sorry attempt [...] to draw a metaphysical distinction between the real or Divine Revival and what he with un-Christian grace, stigmatises as the mock Revival engineered by Mr Evan Roberts will certainly meet with the contempt it deserves.⁶⁹

In comparison to Price, Raine's letter was a polite, business like, expression of her views. It was carefully constructed to guard against any suggestion of her opinions

⁶⁷ *The Revd Peter Price and Evan Roberts: Controversy on the Welsh Revival*, Western Mail: Cardiff (reprinted from the Western Mail), p. 2.

⁶⁸ *Western Mail*, 31 December 1904, p. 5.

⁶⁹ *The Revd Peter Price and Evan Roberts: Controversy on the Welsh Revival*, p. 7.

being that of a dangerous hysterical female. If Raine had been more provocative in her letter, she may have been accused of hysteria and her letter may not have been published. Raine's desire to be heard, her desire to be a 'speaking-subject' is evident throughout *Queen of the Rushes*. Through this novel Raine conveyed her belief in the dangers, and insincerity of the emotional Revival meetings. The narrative suggested that God's Revival was calm and spiritual with tangible, lasting results, whilst the emotionally indulgent meetings of Roberts led to both social and marital breakdown and female hysteria. If Raine's letter to the newspaper was written with caution and restraint, her novel was an inflammatory attack on what she perceived to be the hypocrisy of the emotionally charged Revival. The following section will demonstrate that *Queen of the Rushes* provides a thought-provoking critique of the Revival and that Raine's work should be included as an important part of the Revival's historiography.

Queen of the Rushes: A critical account of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Set in Tregildas, a fictional Welsh farming community based on Tresaith, *Queen of the Rushes* explored the community's response to the Revival. Particular importance was placed upon the villager's anticipation of attending a prayer meeting led by Evan Roberts. The novel explored the Revival from the perspective of four protagonists: Gildas Rees, a farmer and the largest employer in the district, Nance Rees, Gildas's wife, who was unhappy with her marriage, Captain Jack, a sailor who periodically visited Tregildas, and Gwenifer, a mute farm worker employed on Gildas's land. Gildas is arguably the most important character in the novel as it was through him that Raine expressed her Revival critique. Raine stated that there was 'scarcely one scene depicted in my books which I have not personally witnessed or at least known to have

occurred,' and her fictional account of the Revival demonstrated a clear understanding of the impact that Roberts's campaigns had upon the awaiting Welsh communities.⁷⁰ Although it is unknown if Raine attended any of the Revival meetings, her only related diary entry stated: 'Mr and Mrs Phillips Aberporth came to tea. We all talked about Evan Roberts,' Raine's descriptions of the Revival were consistent with other contemporary sources.⁷¹ If Raine did not attend a Revival meeting she was aware of their reputation, and referred to key features of the phenomenon, such as emotional hymn singing which frequently drowned out the revivalists:

As if with one impulse the whole congregation burst into a volume of song, drowning the prayers of the evangelist, who rose from his knees and joined his voice in the impassioned harmony, [...] of the soul stirring hymns which have so strong a hold on the emotions of the Welsh.⁷²

Raine's portrayal of the Revival singing was comparable to contemporary newspaper accounts, which reported that 'the congregations were vast, and the fervid manifestations of previous days were repeated. Old Welsh hymns were sung over and over again from morning till night.'⁷³ Raine's inclusion of Roberts's arrival in Tregildas was a reference to Roberts's week of silence and his refusal to conduct meetings in Cardiff, claiming that the spirit had forbidden him to evangelise there. Raine described a group of people gathering in the street, looking up at the window of the room in which Roberts was staying:

⁷⁰ 'Authors and their work,' in *The Book Love: A Periodical of Current Literature*, Vol. 2, No. 15, (1899), pp. 1 – 2.

⁷¹ Carmarthenshire Archives, Beckinsale 61/8, Allen Raine's diary entry, 18 May 1905.

⁷² Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 192.

⁷³ *The Manchester Guardian*, 22 November 1904.

A murmur of disappointment rose from them as the twilight darkened and the moon rose clear above the moor, and still the chapel doors were closed. “He can’t come; the Spirit forbids,” passed from mouth to mouth. [...] The evangelist himself, his face indistinctly visible in the dim twilight, through the rays of light of the moon rising shone full upon it. “Dear friends,” he said [...]. “Thank you, kind friends, for the warm welcome, but it is not for me, I hope, but for Him whose messenger I am. You have been expecting Him long, but He still forbids me to enter Brynzion [the chapel].”⁷⁴

Rather than questioning Roberts’s refusal to conduct a meeting that night, the crowd blamed Gildas for the Holy Spirit preventing Roberts from entering their chapel, because they believed that Gildas was opposed to the Revival. Throughout the novel Gildas condemned the public displays of emotion and confession of sin. Yet, when asked why he was against the Revival, Gildas replied:

I am not against it; may be tis wanted; but I am against these wild ways – people showing their hearts to the world and crying out that they are sinners! There’s no need to shout that, tis plain enough when you come to deal with them.⁷⁵

Gildas’s attitude reflected Raine’s own views, echoing her published letter. Interestingly, she chose to speak through a male protagonist, rather than any of the female characters. Perhaps this choice was to be expected, given that Raine wrote under a male pseudonym, coupled with the lack of interest shown in her letter to the *Western Mail*. However, Raine may have specifically chosen Gildas as the Revival’s critic because it would be unexpected. Reviews of the novel noted that it was difficult

⁷⁴ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 180.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 141.

to reconcile Gildas as: ‘The man who would not be revived!’ because Gildas would have been considered an example of the typical male convert.⁷⁶ In a bid to reconcile with his wife, Gildas attended a Revival meeting. Whilst listening to the frantic prayers of the congregation, he began to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. He was tempted to join in with the meeting and confess his sins but was dissuaded by his belief that public confession and emotional displays were not part of God’s work:

Yes, he felt the power of the Diwygaid [Revival]; but he held firm to his convictions that the fervour and excitement around him were unnecessary adjuncts to the simple communication between a man and his God.⁷⁷

A contemporary review of the novel stated that ‘there is something fine in this conception of the just man who would not cry with the crowd and change his step at the bidding of a new message,’ and that Raine’s depiction of Gildas reflected a sincere understanding of the Revival.⁷⁸

Raine’s response to the Revival is best understood when Gildas overheard Ben, a farm hand, praying. Prior to the Revival, Ben was depicted as a drunken, apathetic worker. During the Revival, Gildas noticed a change in Ben’s character. He became a temperate, conscientious worker. After hearing Ben pray, Gildas was described as having:

An instinctive feeling that told him that ‘Revival,’ or no ‘Revival,’ here was the real thing! The changing of a reckless youth into an earnest, thoughtful

⁷⁶ *The Manchester Guardian*, 6 June 1906, p. 3.

⁷⁷ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 150.

⁷⁸ *The Weekly News*, 22 June 1906, p. 2.

man. Could this be Ben – the roistering, drunken blackguard of the fairs and markets?⁷⁹

Clearly, for Raine, if the Revival was the work of God, its impact and effect were to be gauged from the spiritual difference it brought to people's lives, not from public displays of emotion. This view can also be found in Mark Wynn's recent study of religious experience and emotion. Wynn argued that when considering the authenticity of a religious experience, it is important to look for a recognisable, lasting change that has occurred in an individual's life. Experiences that reflect this type of change are more trustworthy than 'a passing state of emotional exaltation that makes no continuing difference to a person's concerns and commitments.'⁸⁰ A common criticism of the Revival was the speed at which the newly-converted lapsed from their new-found faith. The aftermath and legacy of the Revival, discussed in chapter seven, led to questions regarding the authenticity and nature of the movement. Why did the Revival end and why did so many converts return to their former lifestyles? For Raine, the answer was clear. Those who participated in the emotional aspects of the Revival did not truly engage with the Holy Spirit. In comparison, those who quietly, yet sincerely, demonstrated their faith had truly encountered the Divine.

⁷⁹ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 230.

⁸⁰ M. R. Wynn, *Emotional Experiences and Religious Understanding: Integrating perception, conception and feeling*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 180.

Queen of the Rushes and Revival hysteria.

Raine's belief that the frenzied excitement of the Revival was dangerous, was illustrated in her portrayal of Nance Rees. Described as standing up in front of the congregation, passionately pleading for Gildas to be converted:

Nance, carried away by the enthusiasm of the crowd, had embarked upon another wave of prayer: "And yet another petition of prayer I make to Thee; hear me, o Lord. [...]. My husband, Lord! O Lord, save him now, wherever he is. [...] Touch his heart now, and let him no longer oppose the Holy Spirit in this place. Bend his proud head, O Lord, and soften his hard heart."⁸¹

As Nance's involvement with the Revival intensified, she became convinced that God intended for her to leave her husband and to embark on a sexual relationship with Captain Jack. After leaving her marital home, and fleeing to Jack, she declared:

Tis me, Jack, I have come; I told you I would. I am coming to sail with you, to be with you, Jack – Oh! Say you are glad to see me. Why do you stand aside like that? Hasn't the Lord given us to each other? I prayed for you by night and day, and He has heard my prayers, and given you to me and me to you, to be together for ever and ever, in this world and the next.'⁸²

Jack rejected Nance and ordered her to return home to her husband. Nance lost all self-control, hysterically screaming and sobbing:

'Never, never, never!' She cried, and scream after scream rent the night air. Flinging her arms round [Jack's] neck, she clung to him with a mad tendency; he tried to loosen her frantic grasp, but she burst into a loud peal of laughter

⁸¹ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 149.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 214.

[...]. Suddenly her grasp relaxed, and she fell into a fit of hysterical sobbing, mingled with screams and laughter.’⁸³

Nance’s conduct would have been unacceptable in early twentieth-century Wales, displaying ‘all the characteristics of the independent, sensual women’ that were condemned by the Blue Books report.⁸⁴ Although Nance’s behaviour was extreme, and written to promote dramatic tension, her emotional conduct was comparable with newspaper accounts from both the revivals of 1859 and 1904 when women were described as sobbing and fainting from emotional fervour.⁸⁵ At a chapel in Ffosyffin (1859), the exuberant ‘praise of an old lady disconcerted the preacher.’ When asked to compose herself she screamed out ‘It’s His fault. It was He who loved first. We love Him, because He first loved us.’⁸⁶ In Tangroes (1859), a girl became so hysterical that the deacons were asked to remove her from the chapel.⁸⁷ Raine believed that these emotional outbursts were a feature of the Welsh temperament, rather than an act of the Holy Spirit. These outbursts of emotion were detrimental to the Revival’s converts and legacy so could not conceivably be the work of God.

Similar scenes were depicted in Rhys Davies’s fictional Revival novel, *The Withered Root*. Davies described a meeting conducted by his protagonist, the young revivalist Ruben Evans. After hearing Reuben speak on the subject of Christ’s suffering at Calvary, a young woman began writhing around on the floor, ‘uttering little screams of ecstasy.’ Davies described her as experiencing an ‘orgasm of pleasure.’⁸⁸ Interestingly, as with Price’s condemnation of the Revival, Davies’s portrayal of the

⁸³ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 216.

⁸⁴ Williams, ‘Intertexts in European Text of the Nation: Welsh Women Writing in English’, p. 160.

⁸⁵ *Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly*, 3 March 1906.

⁸⁶ J. J. Morgan, *The '59 Revival in Wales: Some incidents in the life and work of David Morgan, Ysbytty, Ballantyne*, (Edinburgh, Hanson and co, Ballantyne Press, 1909), p. 47.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ R. Davies, *The Withered Root*, (Carmarthen, Parthian, Library of Wales, 2007), p. 181.

Revival was more inflammatory than Raine's. Although they both noted the relationship between religious hysteria and female sexual expression, Raine's prose were less provocative than Davies's. This could simply be the difference in their style as writers, or it could be that Raine felt the need to comply with the rules of the romantic genre. In spite of her criticisms of the Revival, *Queen of the Rushes* was written for her readership, a particular demographic who may have been offended by a more explicit, confrontational style of writing.

Following Jack's rejection, Nance disappeared from Tregildas. Many of the villagers presumed that Gildas had murdered his wife because he did not accept the Revival. Others claimed that the excitement of the Revival had overpowered Nance, causing her to flee the village: "I think the Diwygiad [Revival], touched her heart so deep her mind was not strong enough to bear it."⁸⁹ Jack supported Gildas, stating that 'the tremendous truths that the Revival had pressed upon her conscience were too strong for her and unhinged her mind.'⁹⁰ Towards the end of the novel, Nance was discovered, wandering the moors, rambling incoherently. Realising Nance's mental state, the villagers accepted that Gildas had always understood that his wife was unable to survive the emotional strain of the Revival and that was why he had tried to dissuade her from attending the chapel: "Don't you see? Gildas Rees knew that he was about to keep her from the Diwygiad meetings. Didn't he see the excitement was too much for her."⁹¹ Raine's message was clear - the intensity of the emotional Revival meetings was not the work of God but an example of the over excitable Welsh personality, which could prove damaging to an individual's mental health. In his observations of the Ulster revival, Bushnan questioned if 'the emotion excited in these so-called

⁸⁹ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, p. 258.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 273.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 319.

religious revivals be not in reality a form of disease?’⁹² If the answer is yes, then can a revival truly be compatible with Christian belief in God? If Christ came to heal, would the Holy Spirit seek to cause mental breakdown and disorder? For Bushnan and Raine the answer was no.

During the Revival, the Tregildas community was unwilling to show Christian love towards Gildas, persecuting him for his lack of participation within the chapel. Once the Revival had subsided, the villagers accepted that Gildas had been right to caution against the emotion of the Revival. Raine vindicated herself through the community’s ultimate acceptance that Gildas had been right about the nature of the Revival:

There was scarcely one in the parish who did not regret the bitterness with which they had resented Gildas’s objection to the excitement of the Diwygiad, for already the feverish excitement was passing, and calmer and more reasonable sentiments were taking its place.⁹³

Although the public had not heeded her letter to the *Western Mail*, as interest in the Revival began to wane, it was apparent that many of those who had claimed conversion experiences left the chapels, which suggests that their belief in conversion was emotionally driven rather than an actual encounter with the Holy Spirit. Many of these experiences were an insincere, emotional, response rather than a spiritual, reflective acceptance of the Christian faith.

Raine wanted to highlight what she believed to be the inauthenticity of the Revival. Through her portrayal of Nelli Amos (*Queen of the Rushes*), Raine epitomised ‘the female gossip.’ It was thought that a gossiping woman was likely to discuss the

⁹² Bushnan, *Religious Revivals in Relation to Nervous and Mental Diseases*, p. 2.

⁹³ Raine, *Queen of the Rushes*, pp. 281 - 282.

intimacies of the marital home and put her social needs first. She was likely to be a feckless wife and mother and lead an un-Christian life.⁹⁴ Although Nelli participated in the Revival, attending all of the chapel meetings and claiming to have been converted, she criticised Gildas, shouting: “I am not [the one] opposing the Holy Spirit; I am not turning my back upon the chapel where my parents worshipped before me.”⁹⁵ Rather than retaliate and knowing that she had little to eat, Gildas put extra food into Nelli’s basket. Although Gildas had avoided the Revival meetings, he showed more kindness than the gossiping Revival convert.

Nelli encouraged the villagers to denounce Gildas. Ben, the farm hand, rejected this behaviour:

Tis wicked ways to hound down a good man as thou art doing Nelli Amos. I tell thee if every man was as upright as mishteer, there would be no need of being converted, and if thou hadst been truly converted thou wouldst know better what a good man is.⁹⁶

The villagers censured Ben, accusing him of rejecting his own conversion experience. Following Nelli’s example, Gildas’s tenants refused to help him bring in the harvest risking their homes and livelihoods ‘rather than help the man who had wilfully opposed and rejected the [...] Revival.’⁹⁷ This behaviour continued until the Revival meetings began to subside. Later, a deacon apologised to Gildas on behalf of the congregation: “You must forgive our zeal for religion. It made us over hasty.”⁹⁸ This was the only reference to a Nonconformist deacon within the novel and is another

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

example of where Raine's fictional account paralleled actual events. Throughout the Revival, many traditional Nonconformist ministers were unable to meet the demands and expectations of the congregations.

Despite Raine's objections to the emotionalism of the phenomenon, she believed that it was an act of God. Her description of the 'true' Revival is found throughout *Queen of the Rushes* and is presented as an antidote to the hysterical behaviour of Nance. Whilst Nance represented the sexually immoral, religious hysteric, Raine's belief in the authenticity of a deep, spiritual Revival was best portrayed through her description of Gwenifer Owen. Gwenifer was orphaned after her mother drowned.⁹⁹ The shock of her mother's death threw her into a hysterical fit, rendering her speechless. Although people were able to understand her gestures, she had remained a mute since the day of the accident. Gwenifer attended the Revival meetings, but her silence meant that she was a peripheral figure in the chapel and did not participate in the emotional frenzy. Gwenifer, aware of Nance's intention to run away with Jack, followed Nance to the beach in an attempt to dissuade her from her leaving Gildas. As Nance began to row out to Jack's ship, Gwenifer tried to pray for Nance to return to her home and avoid scandal. As a result of the prayer, Gwenifer was healed and able to speak:

Kneeling there upon the rocks [Gwenifer] raised her clasped hands to the starry sky, the tears streaming down her cheeks [...]. Suddenly, while she prayed, her memory awoke more clearly, the blood rushed to her heart, and flooded to her face as a new and eager thought arose in her mind. [...] With her hands clasped and her eyes still fixed upon the glittering stars, she breathed softly the words that came most naturally to her lips. "Oh dear God." Yes! She heard her own

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 26.

voice! Again more loudly, and again she repeated the same words, and realised that mysteriously, as it had left so many years ago, her speech had returned.¹⁰⁰

Gwenifer was not healed in the chapel, in the midst of a Revival meeting. It was not a public display of religiosity and emotionalism. Her healing was private and tranquil, reiterating Raine's belief that God's Revival was based on the peaceful, yet powerful, working of the Holy Spirit. If Gwenifer had been publicly healed, the emotional response of the congregation would have been intense and exaggerated. Raine's decision to describe Gwenifer's healing, which is the most noteworthy event in the novel, as a personal encounter with God, is the clearest indication of Raine's belief in the true nature of both God's work and the Revival. It is also interesting to note the comparison of the Revival's effect upon the female protagonists. The religious enthusiasm of the Revival transformed Nance into a religious hysteric whilst the quiet, reflective nature of the 'true' Revival healed Gwenifer's pre-existing hysterical condition.

Queen of the Rushes was well received, with some critics claiming that this was Raine's best work.¹⁰¹ *Good Words* serialisation of the novel was widely publicised with advertisements printed in a range of newspapers.¹⁰² The advert described Allen Raine as: 'The great Welsh writer,' and stated in bold print: 'Evan Roberts is one of

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 210.

¹⁰¹ *The Manchester Guardian*, June 6, 1906, p. 3.

¹⁰² *Good Words* was a Nonconformist and Evangelical periodical, published between 1866 and 1906. T. Scott, *Good Words: At the Back of the North Wind and the Periodical Press*, http://www.snc.edu/northwind/documents/By_genre_or_topic/Literary_Structure/Good_Words=_At_the_Back_of_the_North_Wind_and_the_Periodical_Press_-_Tania_Scott.pdf [accessed 10 September 2014].

the heroes.’¹⁰³ Included was an illustration of Roberts, looking through a window, addressing a large crowd, an artist’s impression of Roberts’s arrival in Tregildas.

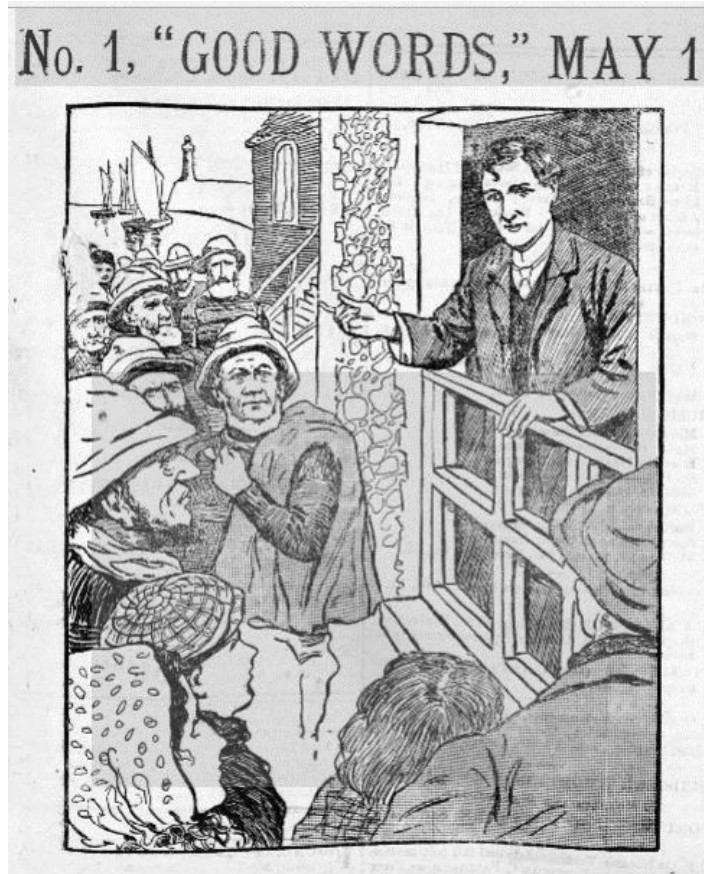


Figure XIV.

Evan Roberts’s arrival in Tregildas.

Good Words advertisement.

These advertisements offended both Roberts and Raine. In a letter, circulated to a variety of newspapers, Raine stated that:

¹⁰³ *Cardiff Times*, 28 April 1906.

I do not usually correct any misstatements that may appear in newspapers concerning me or my work, but, [...] in justice to Mr. Evan Roberts, I must trouble you to give publicity to the fact that he is in no way responsible for his name being associated with the serial publication of my story, "*Queen of the Rushes*," in "*Good Words*." Having sold the serial rights to [...] that magazine, their method of advertisement was entirely out of my hand and it was with great surprise and no little annoyance that I heard of the "posters" which announced the first appearance of my story in their pages, and I would be glad if you will make this fact known to the public. It is scarcely necessary to say that Mr. Evan Roberts received no ration, to my knowledge, for the advertisement. With regard to the introduction his name in my novel [...] I have only mentioned him incidentally, and do not consider it an allusion to him (although he objects to it). [...] I do not know Mr. Evan Roberts personally, I have too great a respect for him and for his work to do anything intentionally that would be likely to annoy him. This statement is not written at Mr. Evan Roberts's request, but is entirely voluntary. [...] Allen Raine.¹⁰⁴

Critics congratulated Raine's ability to present faithfully a view of the Revival whilst pointing out the difficulties of religious emotionalism. One review commented on Raine's ability to demonstrate a critical understanding of the Revival whilst also showing herself to be 'religious [...] and sincere in this story.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ *The Weekly Mail*, 7 July 1906.

¹⁰⁵ *The Weekly News*, 22 June 1906, p. 2.

Conclusion.

In writing *Queen of the Rushes* Raine provided a contemporary analysis of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. Through this novel, Raine reached a wider audience than any other Revival commentator as the work was an international success. Her warning that the emotional enthusiasm of the Revival meetings could lead to outbreaks of female religious hysteria, reflected the wider societal concern for the reputation of Welsh women. Studies of asylum records for this period, though limited, demonstrate that Raine was justified in suggesting that the Revival could lead to episodes of religious mania, as some people were admitted to mental health institutions as a direct result of the phenomenon. Although her initial criticism of the Revival was ignored, her novel clearly articulated her Revival views. Following her death in 1908, Anne Adaliza Puddicombe was buried, alongside her husband, in the grave yard at Tresaith. She requested that her headstone simply read 'Allen Raine,' indicating that she wished to be remembered as a successful Welsh novelist, rather than the woman who had to fight to be heard. The following chapter will address the case of the Revival women whose impact upon the success of the movement has been misrepresented in current research. Like Raine, many of these women are absent from the Revival's historiography as many of their names and wider identities were overlooked by newspaper reports and eye witness accounts. Those women who have been included in Revival accounts, have been remembered as Roberts's supporters and followers rather than revivalists in their own right.

Chapter Six.

'Colourful Girls,' and 'Religious Groupies.' The hidden women of the 1904-05

Welsh Revival.

Introduction.

Women's ministry was central to the success and development of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. Women sang, preached, encouraged converts and supported the male revivalists as they evangelised throughout Wales. Although contemporary and later accounts acknowledged that women played a role in shaping the Revival, little is known of how the phenomenon enabled women to move beyond the home and participate in public ministry. Previous research has placed Roberts at the epicentre of the Revival, an approach which has led to comparatively little research of other revivalists who evangelised at this time. Consequently, 'Revival historians down to our day have yet to identify other figures. They have gone along with [Roberts] as a figure head [and instigator],' a belief which is only true in 'the popular mind.'¹ As a result, 'the gendered aspects [of the Revival] have not yet been subject to any sustained research.'²

The absence of women from Revival research is not solely explained by the status of Roberts as a figure head. The Welsh chapels were patriarchal organisations where revivals were considered both a religious and social normality. Whilst male revivalists and 'celebrity' preachers were a known feature of Welsh Nonconformity, the female

¹ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound Archive RD1071, BBC, Wales on Fire, 1 September 2004 & R. Pope, 'The Welsh Religious Revival' in *Merthyr Historian*, Vol. 17, (2004), p. 42.

² P. J. Walker, 'With fear and Trembling: Women, preaching and spiritual authority' in S. Morgan and J. Devries (ed), *Women, Gender and Religious Cultures in Britain, 1800-1940*, (Oxford, Routledge, 2010), p. 106.

revivalists were a new, controversial, phenomenon.³ These women abandoned the constraints of separate spheres and,

for the duration of the Revival, revolutionised the place of women within the chapel. Indeed, ‘women, silenced by nineteenth-century Welsh Nonconformist religion, [...] suddenly found their tongues in the legendary 1904-05 Revival.’⁴ This chapter will examine the role and identity of the Revival women, analysing how they were portrayed by the contemporary press and subsequent literature. It will question why these women have been ‘lost’ from the Revival’s historiography and how their relationship with Roberts may have impacted upon their legacy. Although a range of women will feature in this analysis, Florrie Evans, May John, Annie Davies and Mary Roberts will be of particular importance as they each played a distinctly different role in the development of the Revival and Roberts’s ministry.

The Revival’s historiography has depicted the revivalist women as an interchangeable group of Revival ‘singers’ and ‘supporters,’ and has failed to identify them as individuals. However, it would be just as inaccurate to champion all of the women who participated in the Revival as leading evangelists. Some women sang and gave testimonies, others participated in the Revival as members of the congregations. There were women who chose not to attend a Revival meeting, or to associate with it. Yet, the revivalist women of 1904 were a distinct group that undertook a leadership role during the Revival and are the focus of this chapter, questioning how the Revival enabled these women to establish themselves as revivalists within the public sphere.

³ K. Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, (Llanelli, Sheadhead Productions, 2004), p. 39.

⁴ M. Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 3.

The Revival women in current literature.

In 2004, Karen Lowe, senior worship leader at the Antioch Church, Llanelli, published the only examination of the role and identities of the Revival women.⁵ Lowe intended to address the gender gap in Revival studies, writing that:

...the radical women who had been forerunners of the Revival were forgotten figures, and that the involvement of the women in the Revival was now a forgotten history. [Yet], Their story is fundamental to an understanding of the significance of the Revival then, and to an understanding of its significance now.⁶

Lowe's work provides the most detailed information on the female revivalists currently available, yet she failed to address the fundamental question of who these women were and their post Revival lives. Perhaps this failure to engage with these women stemmed from her own socio-religious views. Working in a Welsh evangelical church, Lowe would have been well acquainted with the view that Roberts was the driving force of the Revival, and it is the case that 'most of the evangelical histories of the [Revival] are content simply to [...] structure their accounts around Evan Roberts.'⁷

It is important to consider the absence of these women from current literature, and to ascertain if this was symptomatic of an area of research dominated by male historians. Although Lowe has been the only woman to publish work on the Revival, she

⁵ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷ R. Hayward, *Resisting History*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 108.

acknowledged that the majority of the research was provided by Kevin Adams, a Revival historian.⁸ Despite Lowe's aim of examining the 'radical [...] role given to women,' during the Revival, she supported the view frequented by earlier, male, scholars. Conceivably her reliance on Adams's research is the reason for the limitations of her work. Adams's own work, adopted a Roberts-centric view of the Revival, and perpetuated the view that the Revival women were simply singers and helpers. For Lowe to have successfully established who these women were and how they contributed to the Revival's development, she needed to go beyond the accepted view and analyse new material. Regrettably, Lowe's work simply reinforced the traditional view of the role of women during the Revival.

Jennifer Lloyd's analysis of women in the development of British Methodism, included a chapter on the work of female revivalists. Despite her research spanning 1807-1907, Lloyd made no reference to the 1904-05 Revival, or the women who evangelised during this time.⁹ Neither Lloyd or Lowe acknowledged the significance of the 1904-05 revivalist women or addressed the question of why their history has been forgotten and misrepresented. These questions are key, if historians are to understand fully the impact and legacy of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

⁸ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 3.

⁹ J. Lloyd, *Women and the Shaping of British Methodism: Persistent Preachers, 1807–1907*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2013).

Rediscovering women's history.

History has typically been portrayed in terms of monarchs, wars and politics, fields which traditionally excluded women.¹⁰ The need to gain a comprehensive understanding of the lives of women was highlighted by Judy Chicago, a leading member of the feminist art movement. Her most famous work, an installation entitled *The Dinner Party* (1979), was heralded by some critics as 'the most monumental work of the 1970s feminist art movement.'¹¹ *The Dinner Party* highlighted that the development and understanding of women's history was 'coming of age,' as it recognised 1,038 women whom Chicago believed were historically significant but had been forgotten.¹² At the centre of the work were three tables, set to host a celebratory meal for thirty-nine women, arranged to form a triangle, indicating that there was no head of the table, creating an open space, a forum, for these historically important women to converse on equal terms. Each of the thirty-nine women were represented by a place setting, formed of embroidered table runners, and hand painted ceramics, celebrating those crafts which were seen as the 'traditional accomplishments' of female domesticity.¹³ Set upon a tiled ceramic floor, with the names of 999 other significant women written upon them, *The Dinner Party* was intended 'to convey the long struggle for identity and freedom and justice that women have waged since the advent of male dominant societies.'¹⁴ Chicago represented the struggle for women's

¹⁰ B. Labrum, *Women's History: A short guide to writing women's history in New Zealand*, (Wellington, New Zealand, Bridget Williams Books, 1993), p. 3.

¹¹ J. F. Gerhard, *The Dinner Party: Judy Chicago and the power of popular feminism*, (USA, University of Georgia Press, 2013), pp. 1 & 6 - 7.

¹² <http://www.judychicago.com/about/career-history.php> [accessed 13 April 2014], https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party [accessed 13 April 2014 & A. Chapman, 'Women's History' in *Social Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1, (1983), p. 29.

¹³ http://cdn2.brooklynmuseum.org/education/docs/Dinner_Party_Edu_resources.pdf [accessed 26 June 2017].

¹⁴ H. Molesworth, 'Cleaning up the 1970s: The work of Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly and Mierle Lademan Ukeles' in *Rewriting Conceptual Art in J. Bird and M. Newman* (ed), (London, Reaktion

recognition by placing a ceramic vulva at the centre of each place setting, highlighting the crux of the historical repression of women. As seen in chapter five, the female reproductive system was understood as the underlying cause of female madness. Child-birth and the menstrual cycle were seen as indicative of women's natural weakness in comparison to men's innate strength. This belief was, at least in part, responsible for the view that women were inferior to men, and so were their contributions to literature, art and history. Chicago's celebration of the female form proposed that women's achievements should not be viewed in spite of their gender but simply as women making a contribution on equal terms with men. The scale of the work gave it 'a quasi-religious air, referring as it does to the Last Supper.'¹⁵ Chicago called for an end to 'the on-going cycle of omission in which [...] women's hard-earned achievements are repeatedly written out of the historic record.'¹⁶ *The Dinner Party* served as a visual reminder of the need for further research into the lives and experiences of women but also of the complexities facing feminist historical research. Historians have grappled with 'the theoretical problem of [...] how to write women into history.'¹⁷ One approach has been to examine the lives of successful women who had brought about a marked change, such as Florence Nightingale and Emily Pankhurst. Yet, the examination of these 'notable women' or 'women worthies,' neglected the range of women's lives and experiences.¹⁸ The difficulty with this form of 'contribution history' is that women's actions have only been analysed when

Books, 1999), p. 108 & J. Chicago, *The Dinner Party: A commemorative volume celebrating a major monument of twentieth-century art*, (New York, Penguin Books, 1996), p. 3.

¹⁵ Molesworth, 'Cleaning up the 1970s: The work of Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly and Mierle Lademan Ukeles' in *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, p. 109.

¹⁶ Chicago, *The Dinner Party: A commemorative volume celebrating a major monument of twentieth-century art*, p. 3.

¹⁷ E. S. Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins*, (New York, Cross Road, 1983), p. 84.

¹⁸ G. Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges' in *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 1, (1975), p. 5.

impacting upon ‘male history,’ thereby defining women’s achievements as secondary.¹⁹ This could account for the marginalisation of the revivalist women. By only examining the Revival in terms of Roberts’s ministry, a significant proportion of the Revival’s history has been lost. More than fifty women were known to have actively led and participated in Revival meetings but a significant number of these women were left un-named by the press, and so remain unknown today.²⁰ Although Welsh Nonconformity didn’t allow female ordination until it was sanctioned by the Methodist church in 1974, the Revival women were instrumental in laying the foundations for these later developments and ‘there can be little doubt that their contribution helped to change the attitude towards the public role to be fulfilled by women.’²¹ It is, therefore, important to establish a greater understanding of who these women were and consider why so little is known of them today.

The marginalisation of the 1904-05 Revival women.

There is evidence of women working as independent evangelists prior to 1904. Jennifer Lloyd, noted that in 1862, Mary O’Brien evangelised in Wales ‘attracting more than one-thousand people to a large Welsh chapel.’²² Yet, historically, women were not seen as leading figures within Welsh Nonconformity. They were restricted to roles as Sunday School teachers and organising refreshments for social activities.

¹⁹ J. Lewis, ‘Women Lost and Found: The impact of feminism on history’ in D. Spender (ed), *Men’s Studies Modified: The impact of feminist on the academic disciplines*, (Oxford, Pergaman Press, 1981), p. 60.

²⁰ D. James, ‘Revelry and redemption studies in respectability and gender in Pontypridd, c.1870-1914,’ (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glamorgan, 2004), chapter two. Unfortunately, James’s original thesis was lost by Glamorgan University. Dr Andy Croll kindly supplied me with the relevant chapter from the thesis but the pages are unpaginated.

²¹ R. Pope, ‘Demythologising the Evan Roberts Revival, 1904-1905’ in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, No. 3, (2006), p. 533.

²² Lloyd, *Women and the Shaping of British Methodism: Persistent Preachers, 1807–1907*, p. 167.

In essence, ‘Welsh religiosity, having shackled women in its narrow confines [...] did at least offer them a [limited role] and social space.’²³ In contrast, for the duration of the Revival, women enjoyed greater social and religious freedoms, enabling them ‘the opportunity to take an active role in public ministry, it was remarkable to actually see a woman standing in the pulpit preaching.’²⁴ Contemporary sources failed to acknowledge the significance of their role and this has been perpetuated by later studies. This was exemplified by a 1954 BBC television documentary, recorded for the Revival’s half centenary. Annie Davies, the most well-known of the female revivalists, was the only woman to be included in the programme, and the interview focused on how she met Roberts and participated in his Revival campaigns. She was asked to sing the Revival hymn ‘Dyma Gariad Fel y Mororedd’ ‘Here is Love Vast as the Ocean’, which she sang during the Revival. This interview was an important opportunity to question Annie Davies about her wider contribution to the Revival, to explore the role of women during this time and to discover what roles these women occupied once the Revival ended. Instead, it focused on how she became involved in the Revival which had been well documented in 1904. Fifty years later her ministry was still defined by her relationship to Roberts.²⁵ Pierce Jones referred to this interview but failed to acknowledge the limitations of the questions asked, he reported that:

Fifty years later, sitting in her Bridgend cottage, she told ‘the man from the BBC’ [...] about the letter from her sister which persuaded her to queue up for

²³ D. Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales*, (Cardiff, University Press Wales, 2000), p. 12.

²⁴ James, ‘Revelry and redemption studies in respectability and gender in Pontypridd, c.1870-1914.’

²⁵ For a copy of the interview, see appendix two.

that meeting in Bethel Chapel, Pontycymer, and about the moment at the meeting when she first sang ‘Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean.’²⁶

By referring to her Revival testimony as a ‘simple story of an important call,’ Pierce Jones illustrated the patriarchal bias of Revival research.²⁷ Annie Davies was a primary witness to Roberts’s ministry and the only person Roberts permitted to see him during his ‘week of silence.’ She was privy to unique information and experiences. To summarise her experiences as ‘a simple story’ was indicative of the way that women’s Revival ministry has been dismissed by androcentric scholarship.

Roberts’s ministry ended in August 1906, yet Annie Davies, her sister Maggie Davies and Miss S. A. John, continued to conduct Revival meetings.²⁸ It was reported that ‘Bargoed was religiously stormed,’ in a meeting led by Annie Davies in November 1906, and that the three women took part in services ‘for the deepening of spiritual life in the churches.’²⁹ The fact that some of the Revival women continued to evangelise after August 1906 has yet to be considered by Revival historians. With the exception of the aforementioned interview with the BBC, there are no detailed records of what happened to Annie Davies after the Revival. The 1911 census showed that she was living at the family home in Pontycymner and, according to their brother D. R. Davies, both Annie and Maggie Davies became nurses, but he did not specify when this happened or where they were living.³⁰ It is interesting to note that although these women broke with social convention during the Revival, they were eventually

²⁶ B. Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, (Bridgend, Evangelical Press of Wales, 1995), p. 56.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ The women were reportedly involved in a tram accident whilst on their way to conduct a Revival meeting. *The Glamorgan Gazette*, 9 November 1906, p. 5.

²⁹ *The Weekly Mail*, 3 November 1906, p.10 & *The Pembroke County Guardian*, 9 November 1906.

³⁰ D. R. Davies, *In Search of Myself: The autobiography of D. R. Davies*, (London, Geoffrey Bless, 1961), p. 49.

employed in a more traditional, feminine role. It is possible that they began nursing as a result of the First World War, although this is a speculation. Presumably these women married and returned to the domestic sphere as wives and mothers. The fact that nothing is known about their post-Revival lives demonstrates that once their involvement with Roberts ended, so too did the interest of the press and general public. With the exception of Lowe, Pierce Jones published the most detailed account of the Revival women. He reiterated previous depictions of them as being ‘these young ladies,’ ‘colourful girls’ and ‘the singers.’³¹ He described these revivalists in relation to Roberts’s ministry, their father’s occupations and highlighted their feminine qualities. Annie May Rees, was the daughter of the ‘phrenologist Professor Rees,’ an accomplished woman ‘trained in elocution and poetry reading,’ whilst Mary Davies was ‘a mason’s daughter.’³² This approach is typical of how women were described at the turn of the twentieth century. They were defined by their male relations and were ‘subsumed’ by their husband or father’s title or occupation, for example ‘the Reverend Mrs Griffiths,’ or ‘Mrs Doctor Price.’³³ Women were seen as an extension of their menfolk and devoid of their own identities, ‘rendering the women [and their achievements] invisible.’³⁴ Annie May Rees may have been trained in ‘elocution and poetry reading’ but the emphasis of the report is skewed. This information should have been given in addition to facts regarding her identity, how she became a revivalist, and her post Revival life. Unlike Annie Davies, there is no evidence to suggest that she continued to evangelise after the Revival but she did continue to sing at chapel events

³¹ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, pp. 52, 53 & 55.

³² *Ibid*, p. 52 & Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 50.

³³ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in the Twentieth-Century*, p. 11.

³⁴ *Ibid*.

and was remembered as a ‘well-known evangelist.’³⁵ By emphasising their femininity and failing to question why more detail isn’t known of their wider identities, historians have reinforced the idea that they were of secondary importance to their male counterparts and that their achievements were limited by their gender.

Florrie Evans and the origins of the Revival.

An analysis of Florrie Evans provides unique insight to the historical perception of the Revival women. Her story offers a primary example of a significant woman whose history has been limited due to the Roberts-centric view of the Revival. Like Annie Davies, she has been remembered for her involvement in Roberts’s ministry but this only accounted for a small portion of her work. She was instrumental in both the development of Roberts’s ministry and the initial development of the Revival. In December 1903, aged fifteen, Florrie Evans attended a series of local church conventions in New Quay, Cardiganshire. These meetings were later seen as preludes to the Revival.³⁶ In February 1904, she claimed to be deeply moved during a meeting led by Revd Joseph Jenkins. The following week she professed her love for Christ and her public declaration had a significant impact upon the congregation which led to similar meetings being conducted throughout the town.³⁷ Thus, Florrie Evans has been credited as beginning the religious awakening in New Quay.³⁸ She assisted Jenkins

³⁵ *The Cambrian*, 5 October 1906, p. 6 & *The Haverfordwest and Milford Haven Telegraph*, 29 August 1917, p. 6.

³⁶ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, pp. 13 – 14.

³⁷ H. Elvet Lewis, ‘With Christ Among the Miners,’ in R. O. Roberts (ed), *Glory Filled the Land: A Trilogy of the Welsh Revival (1904-1905)*, (Wheaton, Illinois, International Awakening Press (1989). p. 28 - 29.

³⁸ D. M. Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The Great Revivalist and his Work*, (London, Marshall Brothers, 1906), p. 113.

and encouraged other young women, particularly Maude Davies, to join the Revival. These women led prayers and hymn-singing and were described as spontaneously taking part in the services, demonstrating that Roberts was not the champion of women's liberation as Roberts had yet to become involved in the movement.³⁹ The awakening spread across the county, culminating in the Blaenannerch conferences, led by Seth Joshua in September 1904. It was during these meetings, also attended by Florrie Evans and Maude Davies, that Roberts and Sydney Evans claimed to have been called to work as revivalists. On 31 October 1904, Roberts left Newcastle Emlyn to begin conducting Revival services in Loughor. He wrote to Florrie Evans, asking her to pray for the success of these meetings and for the people of Loughor to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit as he had done at Blaenannerch.⁴⁰

During the Revival, Florrie Evans and Maude Davies worked together assisting ministers throughout Wales and joined a north Wales tour, led by Joseph Jenkins.⁴¹ Their later work had little connection to Roberts's campaigns and received considerably less publicity. Yet Florrie Evans was acknowledged as a woman who was 'prominently associated with the Revival,' and was referred to as its 'instigator.'⁴² During August 1906, Florrie Evans and Maude Davies assisted in a Revival conference held in the Wilton Square Church, London.⁴³ However, neither Florrie Evans nor Maude Davies were included in the *Western Mail*'s postcard series and they did not appear in any of the group photographs. This suggests that their work was seen as having little impact upon the Revival. Their photographs were included in some

³⁹ N. Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar: A history and evaluation of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival*, (Wales, Bryntirion Press, 2005), p. 28.

⁴⁰ D. M. Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The Great Revivalist and his Work*, p. 166.

⁴¹ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 103 & *The Llangollen Advertiser*, 31 March 1905, p. 5.

⁴² *Aberystwyth Observer*, 6 April 1905, p. 4, *The Cambrian*, 15 December 1905, p. 2, *Cambrian & Denbigh Herald*, 24 February 1905, p. 5 & *The Rhyl Recorder & Advertiser*, 25 February 1905, p. 5.

⁴³ *London Welshman*, 12 August 1905, p. 5.

newspaper articles, though these have not been referred to by later work. They were photographed wearing white, emphasising their innocence and the purity of their ministry.

Following the Revival, Florrie Evans attended Doric Lodge and trained as an overseas missionary.⁴⁴ After a year of training she travelled to India where she taught English and evangelised.⁴⁵



Figure XV.

Maude Davies and Florrie Evans.

Y Goleuad, 13 January 1905, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Doric Lodge, opened in 1884, was specifically built to train female missionaries. Doric Lodge formed part of the Regions Beyond Missionary Centre which was based in London and founded by Harry Guinness, nephew of the famous Irish brewer Arthur Guinness, in 1873. H. Guinness, *Not Unto Us: A record of twenty-one years missionary service*, (London, Regions Beyond Missionary Union, 1908), pp. 11 - 13.

⁴⁵ N. Gibbard, *On the Wings of the Dove: The International effects of the 1904-05 Revival*, (Wales, Bryntirion Press, 2002), pp. 216 - 217.

Due to the silence of Revival historians, and the contemporary press, the significance of Florrie Evans's initial contribution to Roberts's ministry and, indeed, the Revival, have been obscured. However, she was arguably one of the most important people associated with the movement. The freedom with which Florrie Evans was able to evangelise during the awakening at New Quay, and later at Blaenannerch, demonstrates the importance and changing role of women during this time. She facilitated the religious experiences that Roberts claimed began his Revival ministry. Florrie Evans could, therefore, be seen as the emancipator of Roberts's ministry, rather than as a woman set free by Roberts's revivalism. Despite playing such an integral role in the development of the Revival, little is known of Florrie Evans's wider life and identity. It is interesting to note the way in which her history has been recorded, in comparison to Jessie Penn-Lewis. Florrie Evans enabled Roberts to begin his ministry but her role in the Revival has been dismissed and made incidental. In contrast, Penn-Lewis, who was accused of ending Roberts's ministry, has been of central interest to Revival scholars. Of course, more is known of Penn-Lewis's wider life because she was an established evangelist prior to the Revival but it is interesting to note the difference in how Revival scholarship has presented these two women. Florrie Evans has all but been written out of the historical record, whilst Penn-Lewis's relationship with Roberts, and the Revival, has been distorted and exaggerated. This demonstrates the importance of developing ways in which to look beyond the current positioning of women with the Revival's historiography and reconsider the roles of these Revival women.

Writing women into the Revival's historiography.

By considering the role of the revivalist women in relation to Roberts, historians have made the mistake of 'simply adding women to the pictures of the past like painting additional figures into the spaces of an already completed canvas.'⁴⁶ Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, in her approach to theological women's studies, wrote:

Both Christian feminist theology and biblical interpretation are in the process of rediscovering that the Christian Gospel cannot be proclaimed if the women disciples and what they have done are not remembered.⁴⁷

The same is true of the Revival. Current research must move away from the limited, Roberts-centric view of the Revival and examine the variety of roles played by women during this time. Amy Oden observed that the voices of early Christian women have been lost and that to gain a deeper understanding of the development of Christianity, we must ask: 'Where were the women? What did they say? How did they shape the life and thought of the church?'⁴⁸ These questions must be asked when examining the scope of women's participation in the Revival. Fiorenza argued that:

Rather than understanding [biblical] text as an adequate reflection of the reality about which it speaks, we must search for clues and allusions that indicate the reality about which the text is silent. [...] Rather than take androcentric texts as informative 'data' or accurate 'reports', we must read their silences.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ L. Gordan, 'U. S Women's History,' in *Historic Preservations and the Civic Rights Movement*, Vol. 19 No. 2 (1996), pp. 26 – 28 cited by P. A. Mayers, *Preserving Women's History: An introductory guide to preserving the records of women's lives*, Canada: Priory Printing (2002), p. 11.

⁴⁷ Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins*, p. xiv.

⁴⁸ A. Oden, *In Her Words: Women's Writing in the History of Christian Thought*, (London, SPCK, 1995), p. 11.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 41.

At a glance, the revivalist women appear to have been well represented by the contemporary press, and later scholarship. Those with a working knowledge of the Revival know that Roberts travelled with women who sang during the meetings and, at times, supported his ministry. Yet, when applying Fiorenza's method and considering points 'on which the text is silent,' the history of these women is sparse. Many of those women who participated were not named in either journalist reports or eyewitness accounts. The content of their preaching was not reported on and, unlike Roberts, there is no detailed record of their travel or meeting dates. The points on which the Revival accounts are 'silent' are indicative of the androcentric perspective with which the phenomenon has been understood.

Women such as Annie Davies, May John and Florrie Evans acted as revivalists in their own right and supported the work of Nonconformist ministers throughout Wales. For example, Annie Davies and Mary Davies conducted a Revival meeting at the Calvary Baptist Chapel Treforest, in which the minister, Revd E. Lewis 'took part.'⁵⁰ Presumably Lewis supported the involvement of the Revival women, inviting them to address his congregation. Of course, ministers may have felt obliged to allow these women to lead meetings as public opinion was so strongly in favour of the Revival that to have refused may have been seen as contrary to the work of God. This was evident from the public response to Peter Price's letter to the *Western Mail*.⁵¹ As well as criticising Roberts's ministry, Price disapproved of the involvement of the Revival women, writing that Roberts and his 'girl-companions should withdraw to their respective homes, [...] and learn a little more about the meaning of Christianity.'⁵²

⁵⁰ *The Weekly Mail*, 11 Feb 1905, p. 7.

⁵¹ See chapters two and five for a detailed analysis of Price's letter to the *Western Mail*.

⁵² *The Revd Peter Price and Evan Roberts: Controversy on the Welsh Revival, Western Mail: Cardiff* (reprinted from the *Western Mail*), p. 2.

Letters printed in response criticised Price and compared his denial of Roberts's revivalism with Simon-Peter's denial of Christ.⁵³ However, Revd J. V. Morgan supported Price's view:

What Mr Price says regarding Roberts's followers, imitators, hangers-on, young girls in their teens, who pretend to show the way of life to experienced Christians, [...] I with thousands more agree with every word Mr Peter Price has written.⁵⁴

Morgan's claim is interesting. If 'thousands more' agreed with Price, they either did this through word of mouth, or editors censored the printed accounts as there is no known evidence to corroborate this view. News reports were largely in favour of the Revival and those that were critical did not refer to the role of women. Perhaps this is another example of how women were written out of the Revival's history. If there was strong public opinion that women should not have been evangelising, then this has been forgotten.

As previously discussed, Allen Raine's *Queen of the Rushes* criticised the Revival's effect upon women. However, Raine made no reference to the female revivalists but examined the impact of Roberts's Revival meetings upon the Welsh peasantry. In general, Raine's novels promoted the view that women should be encouraged to be active and successful, whilst respecting social and religious boundaries. It is likely that Raine would have disagreed with the development of women's Revival ministry but as she did not address the topic in her writing it is difficult to evidence. The absence of these women from *Queen of the Rushes* is a further example of where they were written out of the Revival's historiography, this time, by a woman. Raine's fictional

⁵³ *Ibid*, pp. 10 & 14.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 16-17.

account of Roberts arriving in Tregildas is significant as Raine described Roberts arriving alone. In reality, he always travelled with a team and even in his earliest meetings, he was accompanied by female revivalists.⁵⁵ Raine may have disagreed with women moving beyond their normal sphere, or it may have purely been a literary decision. She was writing for a largely non-Welsh audience, who would have associated the Revival with the name 'Evan Roberts.' Although there is no definitive answer as to why Raine did not comment on the Revival women, their absence from her work is notable.

Revival women in the popular press.

Current research has largely focused on the Revival women as singers, and Pierce Jones considered their involvement in a chapter entitled 'singers of the dawn.'⁵⁶ This view stemmed from the contemporary press who reported on 'the singing sisters,' a term used to describe the five women who initially worked alongside Roberts, Annie May Rees, Mary Davies, Lavinia Looker, Mary Davies,⁵⁷ and Priscilla Watkins.⁵⁸ As the Revival spread, and female participation grew, 'the singing sisters' became a general description for all of the revivalist women, replacing their names in newspaper accounts. For example, 'an exquisitely rendered hymn was sung by three of the singing sisters,' and 'Revd Evan Lloyd Jones and two singing sisters will render their services at the [...] Tabernacle Welsh Wesleyan.'⁵⁹ The individual identities of these women

⁵⁵ D. Matthews, *I saw the Welsh Revival*, (reprint 2004), p. 29.

⁵⁶ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales's year of blessing*, p. 52.

⁵⁷ Two of the 'singing sisters' were called Mary Davies, both were from Gorsenion. 'Awstin' *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904, Pamphlet One*, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), p. 3.

⁵⁸ Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The great revivalist and his work*, p. 304, 'Awstin' *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904, Pamphlet One*, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), p. 3, Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales's year of blessing*, pp. 52 - 53 & Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 50.

⁵⁹ *The Cambrian*, 23 December 1904, p. 7 & *The Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 3 February 1905, p. 2.

became less important as they were reduced to an interchangeable, homogeneous group. Through this style of reporting, the newspapers undermined the importance of these women, reducing them to ‘non-beings.’⁶⁰ Despite the copious volume of newspaper reports, little or no information was given to explain either their role or their identities, rendering it difficult to build a clear picture of who they were.

Descriptions of their singing portrayed them as sensitive, feminine ladies:

The young women converts sing [...] simple appealing hymns that suggest the happiness of Christianity. [...Audiences become] caught in the spell of the fresh young voices’ sweetness and [the] tenderness of the songs sentiment and the evident feeling of the young singers who were using the best means that they had to add their message.⁶¹

These examples betrayed the gender bias of the Revival reports. Whilst these nameless women sang with ‘sweetness’ and ‘tenderness,’ in other articles, Sam Jenkins ‘the singing evangelist,’ was commended for his Revival tour of Monmouthshire and, in particular, his successful meetings at Tredegar.⁶² Newspaper articles were often titled with the names of the male revivalists, such as: ‘Mr. Sydney Evans at Cardiff,’ ‘Sydney Evans and Sam Jenkins at Talgarth,’ and ‘Mr. Dan Roberts.’⁶³ In contrast, articles which focused on women’s ministry were often given opaque titles, such as ‘Lady Revivalists at Pontypool,’ and this has added to the difficulties in researching the role and identities of these women.⁶⁴ An article entitled ‘Lady evangelist,’ described a Revival meeting led by Annie May Rees, during which she sang, addressed

⁶⁰ Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A feminist theological reconstruction of Christian origins*, p. xviii.

⁶¹ A. Goodrich, *The Story of the Welsh Revival as Told by Eyewitnesses: Together with a sketch of Evan Roberts and his message to the World*, (London, Fleming H Revell Company, 1905), p. 22.

⁶² *Weekly Mail*, 25 February 1905, p. 7, *Weekly Mail*, 3 June 1905, p. 8, *The Cardiff Times*, 11 February 1905, p. 10.

⁶³ *Evening Express*, 16 December 1904, p. 2.

⁶⁴ *Evening Express*, 23 January 1905, p. 3.

the congregation and encouraged people to confess and repent: ‘She suddenly cried out, “Where are the sinners? Bring them in; my heart is bleeding for the sinners.”’⁶⁵ Annie May Rees was not assisting a male revivalist but was conducting the meeting in her own right. There are significantly fewer published reports which focused solely on the work of women during the Revival and these reports have yet to be analysed in a Revival study. It is possible that this is because the dual role of women as both singers and independent evangelists has been misunderstood or, more likely, because a detailed study of the lives and roles of these women has yet to be written.

The gender bias of Revival reporting was evident in the article ‘What a “giddy” girl can do,’ which outlined the conversion experience of Miss S. A. Jones.⁶⁶ Despite describing her as ‘the most fervent, torrential, striking speaker practical and pithy in address and powerful in prayer,’ the article described her as a member of ‘the little band of girls who are supporting Mr. Evan Roberts, Mr. Dan Roberts and Mr. Sydney Evans in this great work.’⁶⁷ Whilst each of the male revivalists were named, the subject of the article, Miss S. A. Jones, was relegated to the role of Revival supporter and her full name remains unknown. Along with the sisters Maggie and Annie Davies, Miss S. A. Jones was included in the *Western Mail* postcard series. Her photograph was also included in a collage of eight Revival women, positioned around the central image of Roberts, entitled ‘The Revivalist and some of the young lady evangelists.’⁶⁸ Little else is known of her involvement or identity.

⁶⁵ *Evening Express*, 16 December 1904, p. 2.

⁶⁶ *Evening Express*, 23 January 1905, p. 3.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet One, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), p. 3

Due to the lack of information currently available, it is difficult to assess fully the extent of women's ministry during this time. As many of the women were not named by contemporary sources, this raises questions of how best to establish the way in which women contributed to the success and development of the Revival. One approach is to consider the way in which the more well-known revivalist women have been presented and to establish a more accurate reading of their history. The following three cases studies of Annie Davies, May John and Mary Roberts will present a more thorough assessment of their roles within the Revival and question how their relationship to Roberts impacted upon the way in which they were understood at the time, and the impact that this had upon later scholarship.

Annie Davies.

Annie Davies was the best known of the Revival women. She was eighteen at the start of the Revival and has been remembered as a singing evangelist, who supported Roberts's Revival campaigns. Following her conversion experience, during a meeting led by Roberts at Pontycymmer, 17 November 1904, she and her sister Maggie Davies joined Roberts's Revival team.⁶⁹ Having received vocal training from Madame Pierra Davies, Ivor Novello's mother, Annie Davies was recognised as an excellent soprano who overshadowed the other Revival singers.⁷⁰ 'Awstin' described her hymn singing as 'the most artless and yet most effective feature of the gathering,' and claimed that her voice had 'thrilled thousands of her hearers.'⁷¹ One report said that 'it is evident

⁶⁹ Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The Great Revivalist and his work*, pp. 265 – 267.

⁷⁰ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales's year of blessing*, pp. 52, 53 & 54.

⁷¹ 'Awstin' *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet One, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), p. 16.

that she herself can have had no conception of the thrilling power she has now taken up.⁷² Annie Davies travelled with Roberts for the majority of the Revival and was described as his ‘well-known lady helper.’⁷³ Arguably, Annie Davies’s legacy as a key supporter of Roberts has endured because she regularly took part in meetings that were led by him and was, therefore, included in a greater number of press reports. She was photographed for the Revival postcards series, featuring in two portraits, and a group photograph with her sister, Maggie Davies, and Miss S. A. Jones.



Figure XVI.
Annie Davies.

Postcard No. 198 of the *Western Mail* ‘Great Welsh Revival’ series.

⁷² *The Weekly Mail*, 3 December 1904, p. 7.

⁷³ Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The Great Revivalist and his work*, p. 268. & *Cardiff Times*, 3 June 1905, p. 7.



Figure XVII.
Annie Davies, Miss. S. A. Jones, Maggie Davies.

Postcard No. 189 of the *Western Mail* 'Great Welsh Revival' series.



Figure XVIII.
Annie Davies.

Carte de Viste

During the Liverpool campaign, April 1905, Annie Davies posed for a carte de viste. There is a striking difference between this and the photographs taken by the *Western Mail* in December 1904. The unassuming, plainly dressed girl featured in the postcards emerged as a poised, elegantly dressed young woman.⁷⁴ The transformation in her clothing and pose is significant. Her plain, sombre dress and the simple cross around her neck were replaced with a more fashionable outfit and expensive locket. It is interesting to examine the differences between the image of Annie Davies, displayed on the ‘public’ postcard and the ‘private’ image that she chose to commission for her carte de viste. Although she was ‘styled’ for the photograph, it is clear that she had grown in confidence which was, perhaps, indicative of her new-found fame and relationship with the press. In this image, she looks more self-assured, suggesting that through her Revival ministry, she grew in confidence and maturity.

May John.

May John was another of the Revival women who evangelised throughout 1904-05, yet there are very few accounts of her work. She has been remembered as one of the Revival singers but of whom ‘frustratingly little has been said.’⁷⁵ Arguably this was because she rarely attended meetings with Roberts but conducted her own Revival meetings, working alongside other revivalists. She was included in the *Western Mail* postcard series, No. 195 and the image is strikingly different from the photographs of other revivalist women, particularly Annie Davies. She was photographed in a white dress and her demeanour can be interpreted as an expression of her innocence, whilst

⁷⁴ James, ‘Revelry and redemption studies in respectability and gender in Pontypridd, c.1870-1914.’

⁷⁵ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 53.

her upwards glance demonstrated that her focus was on God. This was the only image of May John to be printed during the Revival and was the only postcard to feature a circular photograph, framed by a white background. This photograph was not originally intended to be part of the ‘*Great Welsh Revival*’ series. Instead, it was taken for a much earlier, unrelated, article announcing May John’s success as a celebrated singer.⁷⁶



Figure XVI.

May John

Postcard No. 195 of the *Western Mail* ‘Great Welsh Revival’ Revival series.

⁷⁶ The same photograph of May John was published in Awstin’s second Revival pamphlet. The image was included on both the cover and within the pamphlet, although her name is not mentioned in any of the columns. The photograph was also reprinted in the *Pontypridd Chronicle* (see appendix 1.1) ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet Two, (Cardiff, *The Western Mail*, 1904), pp. I & 25.

May John, whose full name was Mary Hannah John, has been remembered as a Revival singer, yet no Revival account reported her accomplishments as a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, London. Entering the Academy in 1894, aged twenty, she was a well-known Welsh soprano, having won Eisteddfod competitions and was awarded first place in the Chicago World Fair (1893).⁷⁷ Graduating in 1896, May John returned to Pentre, South Wales, where she advertised herself as ‘a double medallist of the Royal Academy of Music,’ who was available for performances.⁷⁸ May John was ‘a household word,’ and had ‘reached a high rung on the ladder of Welsh musical fame.’⁷⁹ Even if her Revival work had been restricted to hymn singing, her contribution as a professionally-trained soprano warranted greater recognition than to be known as a ‘singing sister’ or a ‘Revival nightingale.’⁸⁰ During the Revival, May John continued to perform professionally, seeing her work as a means of evangelism. At one concert, December 1904, she:

Struck up “Throw out the life-line,” and the whole congregation joined in. [...]
Thus there was a concert and a Revival meeting combined. Miss John was [...]
urged to stay for a week to conduct Revival meetings, but [was unable to
comply] having promised to go elsewhere to assist in the movement.⁸¹

For a woman to have been invited to lead a series of religious meetings was indicative of the high regard in which she was held but has been overlooked by Revival historians. May John’s Revival ministry is evidence of the change in women’s roles that occurred during this exceptional time. She encouraged women to participate in

⁷⁷ Thank you to the Royal Academy of Music, London, who provided me with this information & *Evening Express*, 5 May 1894, p. 1.

⁷⁸ *Pontypridd Chronicle*, 11 September 1986, p. 8.

⁷⁹ J. Davies, *Miss May John, Soprano, Double Medallist, R. A.M.: Press Notices*, (Ystrad Mynach, Wales, Bremmer Printing Works), p. 2.

⁸⁰ James, ‘Revelry and redemption studies in respectability and gender in Pontypridd, c.1870-1914.’

⁸¹ *The Weekly Mail*, 24 December 1904, p. 8.

worship and led Revival meetings throughout Wales.⁸² In April 1905, accompanied by Sam Jenkins and Sydney Evans, she conducted a series of meetings in Gwynedd. She sang and preached, appealing to sinners and new converts.⁸³ She also led a two-day mission in Nantymoel, and, along with Revd Llewellyn Lloyd, conducted Revival meetings throughout the Rhondda Valley. These missions were successful, and many were turned away as the chapels were full.⁸⁴

In March 1905, she formed part of a Revival team in Pearl Street Cardiff. Other revivalists included Mattie Miles, Gwennie John and Nelly Sutton. The event was described as enthusiastic and well attended. At the same time as these women ministered in Cardiff, Roberts attended meetings across Cardiganshire, before returning to Loughor. Although Mattie Miles was known as a Revival ‘nightingale’ and a photograph of her and Gwennie John was included in ‘Awstin’s’ fifth Revival pamphlet, little else is known about their contribution to the Revival.⁸⁵ These meetings took place after Roberts’s ‘week of silence’ which resulted in his refusal to conduct meetings in Cardiff. It is interesting that these women chose to evangelise in the city where Roberts claimed the Holy Spirit had forbidden him to minister and is indicative of the religious licence that they obtained.

May John was unique amongst both the male and female evangelists. Certainly, she was one of the most successful Revival women and it is likely that her achievements and independence resulted from her prior experience of public life. Unlike the other

⁸² Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 87.

⁸³ Gwynedd County Archives, Caernarfon, XM/3329/3.

⁸⁴ *Carmarthen Weekly Reporter*, 19 May 1905, p. 3, *Rhondda Leader*, 22 April 1905, p. 6 & Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, p.78 & *Rhondda Leader*, 22 April 1905, p. 6.

⁸⁵ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, p.78 & ‘Awstin’ *The Religious Revival in Wales 1904*, Pamphlet Five, (Cardiff, The Western Mail, 1904), pp. 20 - 24.

revivalists, May John had lived outside Wales and travelled internationally to pursue her singing career. Before training at the Royal Academy of Music, she was a popular singer and was invited to perform throughout Wales. She was exhausted by both the travel and performances and so was advised to enter the academy to better equip herself for a career and to prevent illness.⁸⁶ Roberts's lack of formal training left him unable to cope with the pressures and demands of public life. It is interesting to note the contrast between these two revivalists. May John's independence and life experience, although not akin to the freedoms experienced by either Penn-Lewis or Raine, set her apart from the other revivalists, including Roberts. Perhaps, if Roberts had completed his theological training, or had had a wider range of life experiences, he too may have been better equipped to manage the pressure of public life and the volume of engagements that he undertook.

Mary Roberts.

Mary Roberts, Evan Roberts's younger sister, accompanied her brother during the Revival and was described by *The Porcupine*, a Liverpool publication, as being well-dressed, wearing a fashionable hat and having 'fair hair which hangs down her back.'⁸⁷ Prior to the Revival, Mary Roberts was a teacher at the National School, Loughor but resigned her post when Roberts invited her to join his Revival campaign.⁸⁸ Although newspaper reports did not label Mary Roberts as a 'singing sister' or a 'lady evangelist,' they referred to her as Roberts's sister. For example, 'Miss Mary Roberts,

⁸⁶ *Evening Express*, 5 May 1895, p. 1.

⁸⁷ *The Porcupine*, cited by: Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 91.

⁸⁸ *South Wales Daily News*, 15 December 1905, p. 5.

sister of Mr Evan Roberts,' and 'his sister.'⁸⁹ In May 1919, Mary Roberts married Sydney Evans at a Presbyterian Church in Llanelli. Newspapers reported the wedding as that of Sydney Evans and Evan Roberts's younger sister. One article, entitled 'Welsh revivalist: Evan Roberts at his sister's wedding,' gave a brief overview of the Revival and then described how Roberts had given his sister away and attended the wedding breakfast.⁹⁰ Even on her wedding day, Mary Roberts was chiefly seen as the younger sister of 'Evan Roberts the Welsh revivalist.' The fact that Roberts attended his sister's wedding, in Llanelli, furthers the claim made in chapter three that Roberts did travel to Wales whilst living with Jessie and William Penn-Lewis. Following the Revival, Mary Roberts worked as a missionary in Africa and, following their marriage, both Mary and Sydney Evans travelled to India.⁹¹ Again, both of these revivalists continued to evangelise after Roberts's ministry had ended. Dan Roberts, Evan Roberts's brother, and his wife, Lilly Roberts, also travelled to India as revivalists. It is unknown if Lilly was one of the revivalist women, but it is interesting that three, possibly four, of the 1904 Revivalists developed international ministries, following the Revivals end in 1906.

Both Annie Davies and Mary Roberts were invited to participate in the Revival by Evan Roberts. This suggests that they were able to evangelise publicly because they were given permission by the leading male revivalist. They accompanied Roberts throughout the Revival which, again, suggests that they were able to travel and minister to others because they were overseen by a male figure. However, this explanation is too simplistic and does not explain how women such as May John were able to freely evangelise throughout the Revival, or why Annie and Maggie Davies

⁸⁹ *Cardiff Times*, 25 February 1905, p. 10 & *The Cambrian*, 9 June 1905, p. 8.

⁹⁰ *The Cambrian Daily Leader*, 1 May 1919, p. 5.

⁹¹ R. Ellis, *Living Echoes of the Welsh Revival 1904-05*, (London, The Delyn Press, 1951), p. 21.

were able to continue their Revival work once Robert had departed for England. It is, therefore, important to consider how, and why, the Revival enabled women to move beyond the ‘private sphere’ of the home and participate in public ministry.

How did the Revival allow women to participate in the ‘public sphere’?

Pierce Jones claimed that women were able to participate in the Revival because Roberts was ‘the first champion of the spiritual liberty of women,’ encouraging them to participate in the Revival, Roberts gave women religious and social freedom.⁹² He argued that Roberts, as a celebrated revivalist, provided the Revival women with a respectability which may not have been otherwise afforded to them. By working with Roberts and assisting his ministry, women’s evangelism was acceptable because, ultimately, a man had authority over their involvement. For this reading of the Revival to be accurate, Roberts would have needed to have undertaken a managerial role throughout the Revival, controlling the meetings and their content. As many of the Revival women preached, sang and inspired conversion independently of Roberts, this interpretation of the Revival is unsubstantiated. Yet it is this, mistaken, view of Roberts’s involvement in the Revival that offers the most likely explanation for the way in which the Revival women were understood in 1904. Due to the public interest and fascination with Roberts, he was widely supposed to be the architect of the Revival with ministerial authority over its development. In 1904, it is likely that people thought that if women were evangelising within Wales, it was because Roberts had sanctioned their actions. However, as demonstrated in chapter two, this view of ‘Evan Roberts

⁹² National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound and Archive, CM7939, recording of a public lecture given by B. Pierce Jones at Pysgah Chapel South Wales, (Circa 1995).

Revival' was a mythology created by the daily press. Roberts did not have authority over the Revival as a whole, nor was he the instigator. Women were involved in the Revival prior to Roberts and many of the Revival women participated in teams that were not sanctioned by Roberts or had any connection to his ministry. Ultimately, understanding Roberts as the champion of women's spiritual liberty fails to explain the social and religious licence that these women experienced but added to the perpetuating mythology of the Revival. May John, Mattie Miles, Nelly Sutton and Gwennie John led Revival meetings in Cardiff. These women were evangelists in their own right, not as Roberts's Revival singers but as part of the 1904-05 Revival, and this is how their history should be understood. The belief that Roberts was central to the religious emancipation of these women explains why they have been overlooked but has led to an inaccurate interpretation of the Revival's development. Roberts was seen at the figure-head of the Revival, those women who worked independently of Roberts received less publicity than those, like Annie Davies, who worked alongside him. Therefore, less is known of these independent revivalist women today. Pierce Jones acknowledged that the press showed no interest in the Cardiff Revival meetings, led by May John and her team 'because Evan Roberts refused to visit it since he had "no leading of the Holy Spirit." Sydney Evans and the singers also stayed away from the city.'⁹³ This suggests that those who worked alongside Roberts were more likely to have been included in contemporary accounts of the phenomenon.

Annie May Rees broke away from Roberts's team ministry shortly after the Revival began. She led meetings in Cardiff where she preached, sang and prayed with converts. When returning to her home chapel in Gorseinon, she was reported to have thanked

⁹³ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales's year of blessing*, p. 76.

Revd Charles Davies, minister of a Cardiff chapel, for ‘giving her great assistance.’⁹⁴ There are no reports of Annie May Rees and May John working together, but they both ministered in areas that Roberts did not travel to. Pierce Jones suggested that ‘Annie May Rees and her like were allowed to take the lead because so many ministers did not know what to do.’⁹⁵ Again, this was indicative of a male-centric view of the Revival. Rather than acknowledging that Annie May Rees was capable of leadership, he implied that women were permitted into the public roles because that traditional patriarchy was ill-equipped. Annie May Rees, and other independent female revivalists were an acceptable auxiliary to traditional Welsh Nonconformity. This was representative of the involvement of many other Revival women whose names may or may not have been recorded in newspaper accounts and eyewitness testimonies.

Roberts and the women of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Photographs of Roberts and the female revivalists always positioned him in the centre of the group, surrounded by the women, which furthered the view that these women were Roberts’s female apostles or ‘besotted religious groupies.’⁹⁶ In the introduction to his work on Anglo- Welsh literature and Nonconformity, Wynn Thomas wrote about his grandmother’s involvement in the Revival, as one of Roberts’s early supporters. She was one of the two women called Mary Davies, that formed the initial group of five women who began travelling with Roberts during November 1904. Mary Davies appeared in two official group photographs and her image was included in the

⁹⁴ *Llanelli Mercury*, 29 December 1904.

⁹⁵ Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, p. 79.

⁹⁶ Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A history of women in twentieth century Wales*, p. 11.

collage printed in the first Revival pamphlet. Thomas wrote that in these photographs, the women, including his grandmother ‘clustered supportively – or possessively – around Roberts.’⁹⁷ It is difficult to trace accurate reports of Mary Davies’s participation in the Revival. In part because reports failed to distinguish between the two women who shared the same name. According to Wynn Thomas, his grandmother ‘stepped off the Gospel train, sensing [...] that followers were turning into groupies and the Revival itself was turning into a media event.’⁹⁸



Figure XX.

Evan Roberts and a group Lady Revivalists.

This photograph was reproduced in M. Wynn Thomas’s *In the Shadow of the Pulpit*.

Thomas’s grandmother is the woman on the right-hand side, in the back row.

⁹⁷ M. Wynn, *Thomas, In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 4.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*



Mr. EVAN ROBERTS AND THE REVIVALISTS FROM LOUGHOR.

Figure XXI.

Evan Roberts and a group Lady Revivalists.

Postcard No. 188 of the *Western Mail* 'Great Welsh Revival' series.

Misses Pricilla Watkins, Mary Davies, Lavinia Hooker and Annie M. Rees.

These are the same women who appeared in the previous image.

M. Wynn Thomas's grandmother is directly behind Roberts in this image.

The women included these photographs, figures XVII and XVIII, are the same. Presumably these photographs were taken on the same day as Roberts and the women are dressed the same in both images. In the photograph taken for the Welsh Revival postcard series, the women were wearing hats. This was seen as a mark of female propriety and respectability within this era. Their lack of hats in the photograph published by Wynn Thomas, and the fact that this image has not been included in any other source, suggests that this was a private image, taken for the benefit of the people in the photograph, rather the commercial photograph.

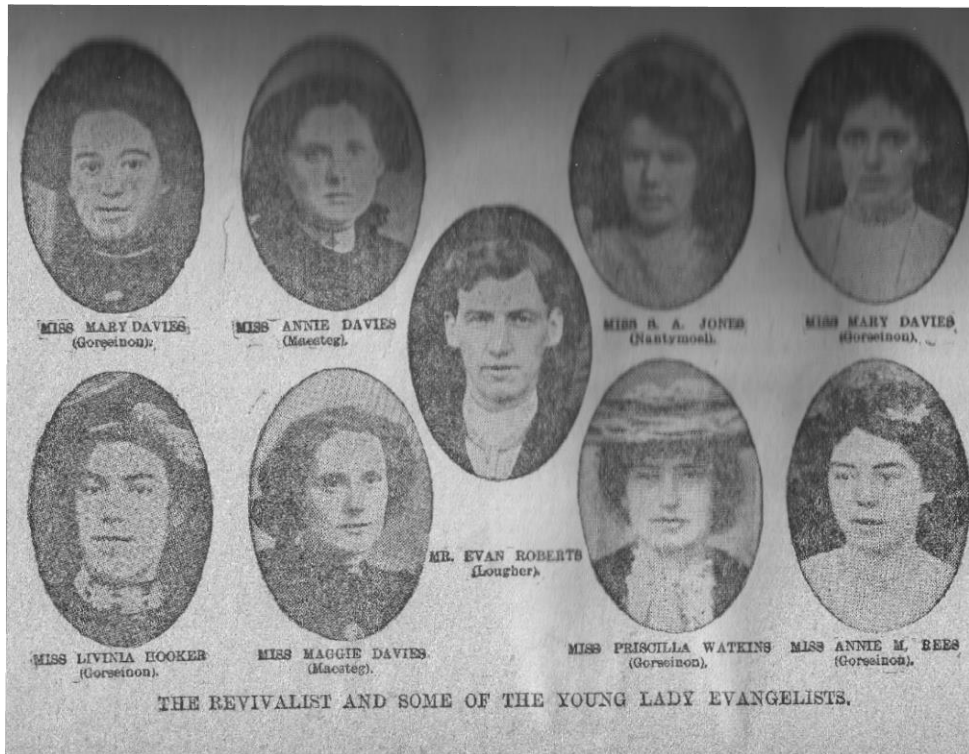


Figure XXII.

Evan Roberts and a group Lady Revivalists.

‘Awstin’

The Religious Revival in Wales 1904, Pamphlet One, (Cardiff, *The Western Mail*, 1904), p. 3.

The view that women were sexually attracted to Roberts’s charisma and became increasingly emotional during the Revival was reflected in Jack Jones’s fictional account of the Revival, in the novel *Some Trust in Chariots* (1948). He suggested that female members of the congregation and revivalists alike, were so captivated by Roberts’s charm and good looks that they were inspired to ‘confess some of their sins before sinking down on their knees,’ a description which was based on historical accounts.⁹⁹ Throughout the Anglesey Revival campaign, ‘Roberts was seen as the star

⁹⁹ J. Jones, *Some Trust in Chariots*, (New York: William Sloane Associates, 1948) p. 199.

attraction.’¹⁰⁰ During one meeting, a woman fainted in front of Roberts and later, at an open-air meeting near the Menai bridge, it was reported that ‘at least twelve girls fainted with excitement,’ as Roberts appeared on the platform.¹⁰¹ It is likely that Roberts was conscious of the way in which he was being portrayed as a sexual enigma by the press and he was aware of the way in which his relationship with the Revival women could have been misconstrued. To maintain the integrity of his Revival campaigns, it was essential that sexual decorum was maintained and that there could be no question of immoral behaviour between the male and female revivalists who evangelised throughout Wales together. One un-named woman, described as having ‘a beautiful voice and an earnest manner,’ was asked to return home as her father did not believe her involvement with the Revival was respectable.¹⁰² To preserve both the reputations of the revivalists, and the credibility of the Revival, the women were lodged separately from the male revivalists, staying with local Nonconformist families. An account of this was given by Peggy Morgan, a minister’s daughter who was eight at the time of the Revival:

He [Evan Roberts] gathered these women from the tail end of the Rhondda and here and there. I knew them. They came to preach in father’s chapel and then came to our place for tea. They stayed and they shocked my mother. [...] They titivated about. They had to go upstairs to change their frocks and boots. They were really showing off and mother didn’t approve at all.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ D. B. Rees, *Mr Evan Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, (Llanged Wales, Ty Rhys Chapel, 2005), p. 51.

¹⁰¹ *The Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, 30 June 1905, p. 6 & Rees, *Mr Evan Roberts: Y Diwygiwr yn Sir Fon 1905. The Revivalist in Anglesey 1905*, pp. 52 – 53.

¹⁰² Pierce Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival 1904-1905: An anthology of testimonies, reports, and eyewitness statements from Wales’s year of blessing*, p. 53.

¹⁰³ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound Archive, AM34A7, ‘Revival Revisited’ HTV Heart and Soul, presented by John Holdsworth, broadcast 13 October 1996.

This is an interesting example of a women's perspective of the female revivalists. Although she acknowledged that they came to the chapel in order to preach she did not refer to the Revival. She made no reference to the role of female agency or the fact that they were undertaking public roles that had previously been denied to women. Instead, she focused on their change of clothes and their 'titivating' behaviour. Her response did not offer a religious perspective on the role of women within the chapel but instead focused on the social expectations of feminine decorum.

Despite Roberts's attempts to avoid speculation and impropriety, his relationship with the Revival women was a topic of public interest. It was seen as scandalous that Roberts allowed one of the women to darn his socks, and the *Aberdare Leader* alleged that Roberts hypnotised the female revivalists.¹⁰⁴ Mary Roberts accompanied her brother throughout the majority of his Revival campaigns, acting as a chaperone for him and the female revivalists who travelled with him.¹⁰⁵ In October 1904, Roberts wrote to his sister explaining that he and Sidney Evans had been rumoured to have had an ulterior motive for meeting Florrie Evans and Maude Davies, writing that 'some say we go to see the young girls, and not for the cause.'¹⁰⁶ Given Roberts's rising popularity, it was important that his involvement with the Revival women was beyond reproach. By accompanying him, Mary Roberts provided a level of respectability in an attempt to avoid further scandalous remarks regarding her brother. Although there is no evidence that Roberts was romantically involved with any of the Revival women, there was speculation in the press. The close friendship between Roberts and Annie Davies throughout the Revival generated rumours of their engagement. No doubt, the

¹⁰⁴ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound Archive, '1904 Revival Lecture' given by B. Pierce Jones, Pisgah Chapel, Circa 1995.

¹⁰⁵ Lowe, *Carriers of the Fire: The women of the Welsh revival 1904/05, their impact then, their challenge now*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁶ Phillips, *Evan Roberts: The great revivalist and his work*, p. 153.

fact that Roberts had refused to have contact with anyone, other than Annie Davies throughout his ‘week of silence’ added to the conjecture surrounding their relationship. Roberts denied these reports, and both Mary Roberts and Annie Davies denied the engagement. Annie Davies stated:

There is not an atom of truth in it. [...] If people only knew how near to God Mr Evan Roberts lives, they would not think of spreading such a report abroad. I am perfectly aware of what people are saying, about Mr Roberts and myself, but there is no truth whatever in any of these rumours.¹⁰⁷

Later reports speculated upon the nature of his relationship with Penn-Lewis. In reality, there is no evidence that suggest that Roberts engaged in any form of romantic relationship during his life. Pierce Jones claimed that Roberts remained ‘virginal’ throughout his life, emphasising the purity of his vocation and spiritual connection with Christ.¹⁰⁸ Although there is no means of validating this claim, it is interesting to consider the different interpretations of Roberts’s relationships with women and how this may have impacted upon the portrayal of the female revivalists.

Conclusion.

Women’s ministry was an important feature of the 1904 Welsh Revival. Women conducted a wide range of Revival meetings throughout Wales, enabling the movement to spread and develop. Working as individuals, female teams, supporting other male revivalists and Nonconformist ministers, their form of evangelism was a

¹⁰⁷ *Llandudno Advertiser*, 3 June 1905, p. 5, *The Cheshire Observer*, 3 June 1905, p. 7 & *Cardiff Times*, 3 June 1905, p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, National Sound Archive, ‘1904 Revival Lecture’ given by B. Pierce Jones, Pisgah Chapel, Circa 1995.

unique element of the Revival which has been forgotten and misunderstood by Revival studies. As seen in chapter two, Roberts's name became synonymous with the Revival and this focus has masked the importance of women's ministry at this time. This chapter has demonstrated that greater work is needed to fully assess the impact of women's ministry at this time, and that a fuller understanding of their identities is required. It is possible that detailed searches of birth, marriage and death records may yield further information regarding the wider lives of the named revivalist women. Likewise, a study of Welsh biographies, written around the time of the Revival may provide further information on those women who were known to have participated in the Revival, as was the case with Annie and Maggie Davies and the biography written by their brother, or reveal the names of some of the women who have been entirely forgotten. The importance of the role of women during the Revival was underestimated at the time and so it is possible that information on the Revival women is hidden in plain sight, included in diaries, memoirs of others who did not realise the important work that these women undertook.

The following chapter will consider the legacy and aftermath of the Revival, questioning the impact of the phenomenon upon the role of women within Welsh Nonconformity and wider society. It will also further question how women's ministry became acceptable at this time and if this was still true following the end of the Revival. Like Raine and Penn-Lewis, the female revivalists moved beyond the accepted roles of feminine domesticity and propriety. It is interesting that history has remembered them in such different ways. Both Raine and the Revival women have been eclipsed by male contemporaries, Caradoc Evans and Roberts, whilst Penn-Lewis has been demonised as a 'spiritual Jezebel.' This suggests that the patriarchal bias of history was not class dependant but merely the product of androcentric scholarship.

Chapter Seven.

The afterlife and legacy of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Introduction.

Following the Revival, a clergyman from the Rhondda Valley said to his congregation: ‘Well, brothers and sisters, we have had a high-time; but I am sorry we have but little to distribute in the way of a dividend.’¹⁰⁹ This was a reference to the decline in chapel attendance, following the end of the Revival. Despite a significant rise in new converts, once the Revival had ended and the emotionally enthusiastic meetings were replaced with traditional Nonconformist services, chapel attendance began to dwindle. The question of what became of the revivalists and the ‘Plant y Diwygiad’ or ‘the children of the Revival,’ is central to understanding, and evaluating, the legacy of the movement. Although the decline in Welsh religiosity has been cited as evidence that the Revival failed, there were individuals who witnessed the Revival and used their testimonies and experiences to inspire similar movements in other parts of the world. Likewise, there are claims that the Pentecostal movement was strengthened by the Revival, which suggests that the movement had a significant impact upon world-wide Christianity.¹¹⁰

Undeniably, Roberts achieved a lasting place in early-twentieth century Welsh history. Whilst contemporary and later accounts have examined his role in the Revival, studies have yet to consider why the mythology surrounding Roberts ministry remains

¹⁰⁹ J. V. Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, (Oswestry, Quinta Press, 2004), p. 215.

¹¹⁰ W. Reinhardt, ‘A Year of Rejoicing: The Welsh Revival 1904-05 and its International Challenges in *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 31, No. 4. (2007), p. 100.

prevalent today.¹¹¹ Likewise, with the exception of Lowe's work on the role of the revivalist women, no consideration has been given to the implications and legacy of the women who championed its cause or criticised its development. This chapter will reflect on the legacy of the Revival in

Wales and the claim that it impacted upon the development of Pentecostalism. As stated by Tudur Jones: 'It would take a very thick volume indeed to analyse the consequences of the 1904-05 Revival in their entirety throughout the world,' but it is worth considering that the Revival did have a lasting influence and there are further avenues of research that future studies should pursue.¹¹² This will be followed by an analysis of Roberts's Revival legacy, and the significance of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor, as an historic centre and place of pilgrimage. This will include an evaluation of the portrayal of women in Mal Pope's musical account of the Revival, *Amazing Grace*.

The impact of the 1904-05 Wales Revival upon Wales.

Throughout Wales, looming chapels are a reminder of Wales's Nonconformist past. The 1904- 05 Welsh Revival 'breathed new life' into Welsh Nonconformity and new chapels were built to accommodate the 'excited congregations and inflating membership.'¹¹³ As discussed in chapter one, it was expected that following a Revival, a significant number of new converts would leave the chapels, returning to their former lives, only to be brought back into membership by the next local or national

¹¹¹ For a list of contemporary accounts, and later scholarly analysis, of Roberts's ministry, see chapter two.

¹¹² R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2004), p. 369.

¹¹³ A. Jones, *Welsh Chapels*, (Stroud, Alan Sutton publishing, 1996), p. 120.

awakening. However, the First World War had a significant impact upon Welsh Nonconformity. Those soldiers who survived the trenches ‘had no appetite for raising new Bethels.’¹¹⁴ The legacy of the Revival within Wales elicits varied responses. Many converts quickly returned to their pre-Revival lives. Indeed, ‘an astonishing number [of them] were anxious to forget some of their confessions and vows made in the heat of an all-night prayer session.’¹¹⁵ Wynn Thomas argued that the Revival was ‘the chapels fightback, a fightback that now, in the rear-view mirror of our today may perhaps be viewed again as the rear-guard action of the doomed Nonconformist nation.’¹¹⁶ In contrast, Tudur Jones claimed that ‘although Wales would soon turn its back on God who gave it such a thrilling opportunity in 1904-05, the historian must note that the Revival was [...] a hugely significant event.’¹¹⁷ An analysis of Welsh Nonconformity, conducted shortly after the Revival, found that following the ‘hightide’ of the movement, January 1905, there was ‘a distinct gain’ in chapel membership, and in 1912, Nonconformist attendance was twelve percent higher than it had been in 1902.¹¹⁸ Given the intensity of the Revival, the continual prayer meetings and waves of emotional hysteria, the enthusiasm generated by the Revival was unsustainable. Perhaps, if these revivals had not inspired such emotional intensity these movements may have had greater longevity. However, as noted by V. J. Morgan:

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ B. Pierce Jones, ‘A Biographical Study of the Rev. R. B. Jones (1869-1933): First Principle of the South Wales Bible Institute with a Critical Survey of Welsh Fundamentalism in the Post-Revival Era’, (Unpublished doctoral thesis, no named university, 1966), National Library of Wales, ex. 900, p. 109.

¹¹⁶ M. Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2016), p. 219.

¹¹⁷ Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, p. 369.

¹¹⁸ V. Cambrensis, *The Rise and Decline of Welsh Nonconformity: An Impartial Investigation*, (London, Pitman & Sons, 1912), p. 46. & Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, p. 362

It is well that there should be long intervals between one revival and another. Life would be intolerable if they came often and came in the same forms. Human nature, as at present constituted, could not stand it.¹¹⁹

Many of the newly converted were attracted to the Revival by the prevalence of singing and congregational participation over traditional preaching. Following the Revival, as Nonconformity returned to its traditional ways, a significant number felt disillusioned with the Chapel and returned to their pre-Revival lives.¹²⁰ Yet, for some, the Revival had a lasting impact. When asked why she thought the Revival had died out, Jessie Davies, a Revival convert, replied: ‘Died Out? The flame that began in my heart in 1906 is there today and it will never move.’¹²¹ Whilst a significant number of converts left the chapels, some of the ‘Plant y Diwygiad’ remained faithful to their new-found faith and provided the churches with the ‘energy’ required to sustain Welsh Christianity through the difficulties of the Great War.¹²² Following the Revival, women were not permitted to undertake leadership roles. However, Tudur Jones noted that, within the church, women were seen as a ‘new category of workers.’¹²³ Women supported the work of the churches and chapels throughout the First World War, and the economic depression which followed.

¹¹⁹ Morgan, *The Welsh Religious Revival: A Retrospect and a Criticism*, p. 205

¹²⁰ It is not possible to know the precise numbers of lapsed converts. Although both Gibbard (*Fire on the Altar*) and Morgan (*The Revival, a Retrospect and Criticism*), attempted this, different denominations used different terms to describe converts and a significant number of these converts were already existing members of the chapels who claimed to become spiritually awakened during the Revival.

¹²¹ National Sound Archive, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, RD 010818/02, BBC Radio Wales, *Wales on Fire*, part three, (15 September 2004).

¹²² W. Reinhardt, ‘A Year of Rejoicing: The Welsh Revival 1904-05 and its International Challenges’ in *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 31, No. 4. (2007), p. 119.

¹²³ Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914*, p. 362

The afterlife and international impact of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Today, it is difficult to find a lasting impression of the Revival within Wales. Yet, the movement has been cited as having an influential effect upon other revival movements which took place during the early-twentieth century. The international impact of the Revival is extensive and requires a wider analysis than is possible within the parameters of this work. However, it is important to note that Penn-Lewis was seen as having contributed to the international spread of the phenomenon. The Revival attracted participants from the United States of America, continental Europe and Asia. Noel Gibbard's *On the Wings of the Dove* (2002), provides the most detailed assessment of the international effects of the phenomenon. Gibbard claimed that Revival pilgrims came from France, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Russia and that these pilgrims were inspired to facilitate the spiritual awakenings in their own countries. Gibbard noted Penn-Lewis's contribution to the international development of the Revival. She informed her international contacts that a Revival was taking place and encouraged them to travel to Wales and witness it for themselves.¹²⁴

In 1904, Howard Agnew Johnston travelled from Seoul, South Korea, to witness the Revival. He interviewed Roberts, asking him 'about the secrets of the Revival.'¹²⁵ Johnson visited the Kasia region of India which experienced a revival movement and had been largely 'influenced by the Revival in Wales.'¹²⁶ In 1906, he addressed a Presbyterian meeting in the South Korean capital, Seoul. There he met a group of missionaries who had begun praying for a revival amongst the Korean Nonconformist

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 40 - 41 & 60.

¹²⁵ B. Bay, 'The Pyongyang Great Revival in Korea and Spirit Baptism' in *Evangelical Review of Theology*, Vol. 31, No. 1, (2007), p. 5.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*.

denominations, namely Presbyterian and Calvinistic Methodism. These missionaries included Kil Sun Ju who became a lead figure in the 1907 Pyongyang revival. On 2 January 1907, in Pyongyang, now the capital of North Korea, a men's Bible conference began. Ten days later, revival meetings took place. Like the 1904-05 Welsh Revival, these meetings were highly emotional and the congregations focused upon the confession of sins and obedience to the Holy Spirit. During the first meeting, 'many testified a new realisation of what sin was. A number confessed with sorrow a lack of love for others.'¹²⁷ At a meeting on 14 January 1907, it was reported that: 'Man after man would rise, confess his sins, break down and weep, and then throw himself on the floor with his fists in perfect agony of conviction.'¹²⁸ The revival was short lived, lasting approximately twelve weeks. During that time, it was estimated that 26,000 converts were accepted into membership of the Presbyterian and Methodist Korean chapels during 1907.¹²⁹

The 1904-05 Welsh Revival was part of a series of religious movements which contributed to the 'rising' of Pentecostalism.¹³⁰ In 1905, Joseph Smale, a Baptist Pastor from Los Angeles, travelled to Wales to witness the Revival. He met Roberts and then returned to California to discuss his Revival experiences and encourage his congregation to pray for a similar outpouring of the Holy Spirit to begin in Los Angeles.¹³¹ It was in this city, in 1906, that a revival began on Azusa Street, later known as the 'Azusa Street revival.' The precise origins of Pentecostalism are currently under debate and is an area which requires greater scholarly attention. It is important to note that at the beginning of the twentieth century, spiritual awakenings

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 5, 10 & 11.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 10.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*.

¹³⁰ Reinhardt, 'A Year of Rejoicing: The Welsh Revival 1904-05 and its International Challenges', p. 122.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p. 122.

and emotional religious movements were an international occurrence. In each case, prayer circles were initiated in advance of the events, each movement was highly emotional and emphasised the need for the confession of sins. To date, research has explored the roles undertaken by male revivalists with little or no investigation into the roles undertaken by women. It may be the case that women were not instrumental in other, early twentieth-century revival movements and that the women of the 1904-05 Revival was an isolated example, or it is possible that women were equally instrumental in furthering the development of these movements. In either case, a detailed analysis of the role of women during these revival movements would further advance current understanding of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

The Legacy of Evan Roberts.

Roberts's obituary, published in *The Overcomer*, in February 1951, stated: 'We have to announce the Home Call of Mr. Evan Roberts, whose name will always be coupled with the Welsh Revival of 1904.'¹³² Over one hundred years after the Revival, Roberts's name has become emblematic of the last Welsh Revival to occur during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Yet, his involvement in this religious phenomenon only amounted to a small portion of his life. As discussed in chapter two, Roberts was twenty-eight when he left Wales, withdrawing to the Penn-Lewis's home in Leicestershire. Once he had physically recovered from the strain of the Revival, Roberts remained in relative seclusion, and 'concentrated on a ministry of intercession.'¹³³ It is debatable if he ever truly recovered from the physical exhaustion

¹³² National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Revd B. Pierce Jones, research papers 2. J. C. Metcalfe, Obituary of Evan Roberts, *The Overcomer*, February 1951.

¹³³ N. Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar: A History and Evaluation of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival*, (Bridgend, Bryntirion Press, 2005), p. 196.

and mental anxiety of his Revival ministry. Throughout the remainder of his life, Roberts experienced periods of depression and, at times, isolated himself, withdrawing into his own secluded world. The first public example of this, ‘the week of silence’ occurred during the Revival but it is possible that he may have experienced periods of solitude earlier in his life. By early 1905, Roberts’s mental health concerned some of his closest followers and during the Liverpool campaign, he underwent a psychological review which concluded that he was ‘sane.’¹³⁴ Wynn Thomas argued that despite this assessment, Roberts may have suffered from a mental health condition. He argued that although it was unlikely that he was a ‘manic depressive’ it was possible that he suffered from ‘border line personality disorder.’¹³⁵ However, ‘manic depression,’ or ‘bi-polar disorder’ as it is known by modern psychiatry, is a condition exemplified by a ‘pathological disturbance in mood [...] ranging from extreme elation or mania to severe depression.’¹³⁶ A formal diagnosis requires the sufferer to experience ‘one or more’ episodes of mania.¹³⁷ Roberts experienced significant mood changes throughout the Revival. At times he behaved manically, at other times he was dismissive and depressive. Newspaper accounts acknowledged that Roberts suffered from a ‘hyper-manic disposition,’ lapsing to ‘periods of profound despondency followed immediately by periods of exaltation.’¹³⁸ Penn-Lewis’s diaries demonstrate that Roberts’s mood swings and depression continued throughout his recuperation. The question of Roberts’s mental health is more a question for

¹³⁴ M. Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales 1890-1914*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2016), p. 229.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 230.

¹³⁶ N. Craddock & I. Jones, ‘Genetics of Bipolar Disorder’ in *Journal of Medical Genetics*, Vol. 36, (1999), p. 585 & G. Goodwin & G. Sachs, *Fast Facts: Bipolar Disorder*, (Oxford, Health Press, 2004), pp. 11 - 21.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 585.

¹³⁸ National Sound and Archive, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, RD 10675, recording of the radio programme *Wales on Fire*, presented by Derek Llewellyd Morgan and broadcast in three episodes. Episode two 9 September 1904. For examples of Penn-Lewis’s record of Roberts’s mental health, see chapter three.

psychology and psychiatry than an historical study, but it does suggest an avenue of research that could develop current understanding of the Revival. In 2004, the psychiatrist Gaius Davies concluded that Roberts had suffered from a ‘mood disorder’ but did not offer a detailed explanation of what this disorder may have been.¹³⁹ Yet, following a brief overview of Penn-Lewis’s life, Davies concluded that ‘any doctor’ would conclude that she had been ‘manic depressive.’¹⁴⁰ Certainly, Penn-Lewis experienced episodes of depression and times of spiritual elation. Yet, her depression coincided with those periods when she suffered from recurrent episodes of pneumonia, and other, unspecified, respiratory complaints. It is interesting that Gaius suggested that Roberts suffered from a ‘mood disorder’ whilst retrospectively diagnosing Penn-Lewis as a ‘manic depressive.’ This is a further example of how Penn-Lewis’s life has been distorted to further the view that she was an unstable, spiritually dangerous woman. As seen in chapter five, psychologists have already begun to consider the impacts of the Revival upon patients who received psychiatric treatment as a result of their participation in the movement. The understanding and diagnosis of psychiatric conditions is a rapidly expanding field, with a more sophisticated understanding of mental disorders than was available at the time of Roberts’s medical review in 1905. Perhaps an analysis of Roberts’s behaviour, and a comparison with others who displayed similar symptoms during this time, would generate a greater understanding of Roberts’s mental health and the impact that this may have had upon his Revival meetings.

¹³⁹ G. Davies, ‘Evan Roberts: Blessings and Burnout’ in D. W. Roberts (ed), *Studies in Evangelical History and Thought: Revival, Renewal and the Holy Spirit*, (Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2009), p. 114.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 115.

It is impossible to know if the 1904-05 Revival was the last of its kind to occur within Wales, but it did mark the end of a tradition of immediate expectancy. Clearly local revivals are not a frequent part of twenty-first century Welsh life and national revivals are no longer regularly anticipated events. As suggested in chapter two, this may account for the continued interest in the ‘Evan Roberts Revival,’ as it marked the end of a religious pattern which had formed the basis of Welsh religious life since the seventeenth century. The school room at the Moriah chapel, Loughor, has played a significant role in the afterlife of the Revival. Roberts’s funeral was conducted at the chapel and he was buried in the chapel grounds, in the Roberts family plot. Sydney Evans and Mary Evans, née Roberts, were also buried in the family plot, which is the only known burial site of one of the female revivalists. It may be possible to discover the burial locations of other Revival women, through local county and church burial records, and this could be an area of interest for future study. Unlike Roberts’s post-Revival life, his funeral was a large, public event. Wynn Thomas stated that following the Great War, as Welsh Nonconformity began its interminable decline, Roberts began to ‘fade from public memory’ and that by the time of his death, he was ‘virtually unknown, unrecognised and little mourned, except by the elderly veterans of his remarkable Revival.’¹⁴¹ However, those ‘veterans,’ or ‘Plant y Diwygiad’ who attended Roberts’s funeral, reportedly filled the chapel and its grounds. Some photographed the event, capturing a final image of the revivalist at the chapel where his reputation as a great revivalist had begun.

¹⁴¹ Wynn Thomas, *The Nations of Wales 1890-1914*, p. 256.



Figure XXIII.

Evan Roberts coffin being carried to his grave.

Photograph courtesy of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor.



Figure XXIV.

The Roberts family grave.

Graveyard at the Moriah Chapel, Loughor.

Photographed by S. Prendergast & S. Harrison, July 2012.

A significant number of these Revival ‘veterans’ were also present in 1954, when a monument was erected in the grounds of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor, commemorating the half-centenary of the Revival. This memorial contained an image of Roberts as the young revivalist, an inscription outlining his involvement in the movement and the importance of the school room as the place where Roberts first conducted his Revival meetings. Mary Bickerstaff, in her children’s book of the history of the Revival, wrote that: ‘The name Evan Roberts is engraved on the hearts of many who are still alive,’ and that a memorial was erected to his Revival legacy so that: ‘In years to come [people will read] Evan Roberts’s name and something of what he did for his day and generation.’¹⁴² The 1954 BBC television Revival documentary, filmed shortly after the monument was erected, showed crowds congregating in the chapel grounds. Whilst Roberts’s funeral and the events organised to celebrate the Revival’s half centenary did not attract the same level of attention as Roberts’s Revival meetings, they were well attended. Roberts may have lived in relative seclusion during

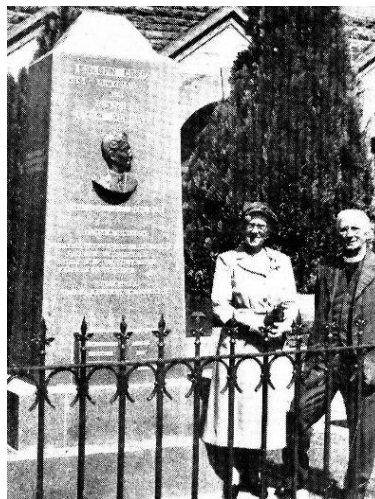


Figure XXV.

**Sydney and Mary Evans at the Revival memorial,
Loughor.**

Bickerstaff, *Something Wonderful Happened* (1954).

¹⁴² M. Bickerstaff, *Something Wonderful Happened: A little book about Revivals for children*, (Liverpool, Hugh Evans and Sons, 1954), pp. 60 & 77.

the latter years of his life, but it would be a mistake to think that Roberts and the Revival had vanished from public thought.



Figure XXVI.

The Revival memorial, Loughor.

Photographed by S. Prendergast & S. Harrison, July 2012.

The Moriah Chapel, Loughor, is the only building in Wales which is seen as directly connected to the history of the Revival. In 2004, with the support of Swansea Museum, a small exhibition was opened at the school room, documenting Roberts's Revival ministry alongside a display of books and Revival memorabilia.



Figure XXVII.
An Exhibit of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.
The Schoolroom at the Moriah Chapel, Loughor.
 Photographed by S. Prendergast & S. Harrison, July 2012.

Whilst a small congregation still worships at the Moriah Chapel, remarks recorded in the exhibit’s visitors book highlight the dual identity of the school room. Comments written in 2012 included: ‘Thank you for honouring and preserving this history.’ ‘What a beautiful chapel, with wonderful history, thank you!’ ‘Absolutely inspiring. Love the history in this place.’ ‘God guided me here, thank you Lord.’ ‘Please bend me and our Church in Korea.’ ‘Please send us your Spirit.’ ‘This land needs hope Lord. Send a revival, bring hope to this nation.’¹⁴³ The school room at Loughor functions as

¹⁴³ These comments were recorded in the visitor’s book at the school room of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor, and were written on the following dates: 12 February 2012, 29 March 2012, 28 April 2012,

both a museum, dedicated to the 1904-05 Welsh Revival, and as a place of pilgrimage for Christians with an interest in revivalism. The sustained interest in the Moriah Chapel may help to explain the continued curiosity which surrounds Roberts and the lack of attention given to other male and female revivalists who evangelised at this time. Those with an academic interest in the Revival have consulted historical records, government statistics and contemporary sources. They have considered the social circumstances which gave rise to the movement and have examined the Revival within the context of Welsh history. In contrast, those who with a faith-based interest in the Revival have seen the school room as tangible evidence of the origins of the movement and Roberts's ministry. It is a place where the Revival was known to have occurred and a place which has remained accessible. Through this chapel, evangelical Christians have been able to connect directly to a place of revivalist spirituality. The absence of historical sites and information dedicated to other revivalists, including women, has perpetuated the belief that Roberts was the driving force of the movement and the only revivalist of historical note.

Mal Pope's 2004 musical production, *Amazing Grace*, was performed in a number of places in Wales. Based on W. T. Stead's Revival account, it examined the 'Evan Roberts Revival,' focusing on key events in Roberts's ministry, including his initial calling to the Revival and spiritual encounter at New Quay, his early Revival meetings, 'the week of silence,' and Roberts's eventual departure from Wales. The story included a small group of revivalist women, the 'singers of the dawn' but focused on the role of Annie Davies as Robert's close friend. The song: 'See me as a Woman,' sung by Annie Davies, suggested that she was secretly in love with Roberts. A review

7 April 2012, 2 April 2012, 4 October 2012 & 31 March 2012. This visitors book is available at the school room was is accessible through an organised visit.

of the production stated that the audience was left in no doubt that she had fallen ‘seriously in love with him.’¹⁴⁴ The narrative insinuated that during Roberts’s ‘week of silence’ Roberts’s sister, Mary Roberts became jealous of the relationship between Annie Davies and her brother, because Annie Davies was the only person he permitted to see him during the this time.¹⁴⁵ The inclusion of these views suggests that the belief that Roberts and Annie Davies were romantically involved has remained part of the Revival’s legacy. This could explain why Annie Davies is the most well-known of the Revival women. Not only was she included in a larger number of press reports because of her close proximity to Roberts during the Revival, but a belief in their romantic involvement, a Revival love story, has persisted. If correct, Annie Davies’s Revival ministry has been systematically undermined by the belief in her sexual attraction to Roberts. If the limited reports of her ministry have survived because her involvement in the Revival this provides an additional, sexual dimension to Roberts’s personal life, then Annie Davies’s ministry and reputation have been as misunderstood as Penn-Lewis’s. Both of these women were believed to have had a sexual connection to Roberts and this suggests that both of these women fell victim to their gender.

Conclusion.

In 2006, *Amazing Grace* was reprised, with performances in Cardiff, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Llandudno, suggesting that the history of the Revival still resonates with people within Wales and that the mythology surrounding Roberts’s ministry remains central to the way in which this religious phenomenon is understood.¹⁴⁶ An

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.malpope.com/grace/synopsis.html> & <http://www.malpope.com/grace/reviews.html> [accessed 19 February 2018].

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.malpope.com/grace/synopsis.html> [accessed 19 February 2018].

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.malpope.com/grace/dates.html> [accessed 19 February 2019].

examination of the Moriah Chapel, Loughor, demonstrates that this historical centre, and place of Revival pilgrimage remains central to the Revival's legacy. However, when analysing the afterlife of the Revival, with the exception of Mal Pope's portrayal of Annie Davies, there is no trace of the revivalist women. The legacy of the Revival has, to date, proven to be extremely gender-biased and this needs to be addressed in order to further understanding of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival.

Conclusion.

Rediscovering the Revivalist Women.

In an introduction to writing female history, Patricia Mayers stated that ‘when history is not recognised in the present it will never exist in the past.’¹ If something is not understood as historically significant when it occurs, future research will inevitably be limited by contemporary interpretation. This accounts for why so little is known of the revivalist women. The importance of their contribution to the Revival was not understood at the time and subsequently, no concerted effort was made to record and examine their involvement. In contrast, as an international best-selling author, Raine’s family recognised the importance of her work. Following her death, they preserved her diaries, letters and drafts of her novels, donating them to the National Library of Wales and the Carmarthenshire Archives. Although Raine’s criticisms of the Revival have not been included in any previous Revival study, a record of her views has been available. Similarly, Mary Garrard completed Penn-Lewis’s biography and conserved her letters and articles as a form of archive for *The Overcomer*. Whilst some of this original material has been lost, Pierce Jones’s transcripts of her diaries and his collection of her personal correspondence, also donated to the National Library of Wales, conserved a record of Penn-Lewis’s life and work. Although this material has been overlooked by most Revival scholars, the material has been obtainable. Following their deaths, both Raine and Penn-Lewis were recognised, by their families and colleagues, as women whose lives held historical value. In contrast, the Revival women who were seen as Roberts’s followers and supporters were not seen as having

¹ P. A. Mayers, *Preserving Women’s History: An introductory guide to preserving the records of women’s lives*, (Alberta, Priory Printing, 2002), p. 6.

made a significant contribution to Welsh history, and so their stories have been forgotten. This was clear from R. D. Davies's autobiography. Rather than expanding upon the Revival ministries of Annie and Maggie Davies, he merely outlined their initial connection to Roberts. He referred to the fact that they both became nurses because their employment impacted on his life, as he was expected to care for their father, rather than because he believed their roles to be of value. He wrote that he: 'Resented it like hell.'² He referred to their post-Revival lives because he believed that his sisters had failed in their domestic roles, which delayed his ambition of becoming ordained.³ Without a wider understanding of the lives of women who participated in and experienced the Revival, the historical record will remain incomplete as 'a history ignoring half of humankind is less than half of history, for without women, a history would not do justice to men either, and vice versa.'⁴

Manon James, in her examination of the identity of Welsh women, noted that literature has been a 'highly influential' source in the development of feminist theology. She stated that 'literature [...] has given Welsh women a voice to talk about their identity and religion [...]. It could be argued that literature is where Welsh women have done their theology.'⁵ This was certainly true of Raine for whom literature was a vehicle for expressing her views on the Revival. This thesis has demonstrated that Raine's revival novel *Queen of the Rushes* is a valuable source for Revival scholarship and is worthy of further analysis. Throughout the novel Raine clearly expressed her understanding of the phenomenon and her belief in the dangers of the emotional Revival meetings,

² D. R. Davies, *In Search of Myself: The Autobiography of D. R. Davies*, (London, Geoffrey Bless, 1961), p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ G. Bock, *Women in European History*, (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2002), p. x.

⁵ M. C. James, *Women, Identity and Religion in Wales: Theology, Poetry, Story*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2018), p. 75.

combined with the excitable Welsh temperament. Through Gildas, Raine illustrated that the ‘un-converted’ who disagreed with the Revival were sympathetic to the true work of the Holy Spirit and were able to distinguish between the insincerity of emotionalism and the true work of God. Gildas’s treatment of his wife, Nance and the gossiping convert, Neli Amos, demonstrated Raine’s belief that the true meaning of Christianity was evident through an individual’s consideration and behaviour towards others, rather than through display of religious fervour. Raine’s portrayal of Ben, the farm hand, quietly praying on his own, and Gildas’s realisation that Ben was a true Revival convert, reflected Biblical teaching:

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. (Matthew 6: 5-7).

For Raine, many of the Revival converts were religious hypocrites, boasting of their new-found salvation, whilst failing to demonstrate core Christian values. Raine portrayed Nance Rees and Neli Amos as excitable religious converts who wholeheartedly participated in the emotional frenzy of the phenomenon – yet both of these women were unable to understand the true meaning of the Revival, and this was reflected in their behaviour. These ‘converted’ women were incapable of understanding that their actions were contrary to Christian teaching. It was through these women that Raine demonstrated her belief in the insincerity of the ‘Evan Roberts Revival.’

Like Raine, Jessie Penn-Lewis was concerned by the emotionalism of the Revival and the lack of Biblical teaching provided for the newly-converted. She was concerned

that without scriptural teaching, converts would fail to grasp the true meaning of the Christian faith and would, inadvertently, fall victim to spiritual attack. Penn-Lewis's diaries and papers, her international evangelism and published theology demonstrate that she was a remarkable woman who defied convention and refused to be defined by societies view of womanhood. This thesis has contributed a new understanding of Penn-Lewis's life and ministry. Rather than a woman trying to escape a childless marriage by embroiling herself in the 1904-05 Revival and destroying Roberts's ministry, Penn-Lewis was proud of her relationship with her husband. In spite of the fact that they were unable to have children, they supported each other with mutual love, understanding and respect. Penn-Lewis's involvement in the Revival was an attempt to support Roberts, to offer guidance on how best to nurture the Revival converts. Penn-Lewis was a prolific writer and a wider understanding of her theology could be an avenue for future study.

Like Raine, the Revival women have been neglected by Revival scholarship. It would be tempting to try and provide a single explanation that could account for women's involvement in the Revival and explain why so little is known of their post-Revival lives. In her assessment of the Revival women, Deborah James cited Bakhtin's theory of Carnival. She suggested that women were able to participate in public ministry because the Revival inspired a 'carnavalesque' atmosphere. Through this, the Revival enabled 'the weak and powerless [to] become the leaders and the powerful and influential are made objects of ridicule or relegated to the margins of spheres of influence.'⁶ Bakhtin's theory of carnival, told through his work *Rabelais and his World*, was a 'coded attack' on 1930s Russian politics and Stalin's communist regime.⁷ He

⁶ D. James, 'Revelry and redemption studies in respectability and gender in Pontypridd, c.1870-1914', (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glamorgan, 2004), chapter two.

⁷ S. Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader*, (New York, Routledge, 1995), p. 71.

argued that there are points in history when the downtrodden rise up, displacing the social order, 'seeking to mobilise [...] against the humourless seriousness of official culture.'⁸ James cited this theory to explain how women seized upon the 'carnavalesque' atmosphere of the Revival to rise against the patriarchal authority of Nonconformity, thus positioning themselves as leaders and defying social conventions. However, this explanation is too simplistic and compounds the existing problem. The Revival women were not seen as individuals, and rather than exploring the role of female agency at this time, later research has further portrayed the female revivalists to one homogenous group. To claim that each of these women exploited the carnival like atmosphere of the Revival, further reduces them to one group, one view, one voice.

To quote Simone De Beauvoir, 'the whole of feminine history has been man made' and that 'exceptional circumstances are required' in order for a woman to 'assert' herself from the 'restraints' of androcentric history.⁹ The 1904-05 Welsh Revival generated 'exceptional circumstances' and the revivalist women 'asserted' themselves to the forefront of Welsh life. Interestingly, the revivalist women, (with the exception of Florrie Evans and Maud Davies), each began their Revival careers as singers. Annie Davies, Maggie Davies, May John, Nellie Gwen, Mary Davies, Mary Davies and Lavinia Hooker were all noted as gifted singers who inspired congregations to participate in the movement. Singing, which was traditionally seen as a female accomplishment, provided these women with a platform from which to launch themselves as preachers and Revival leaders.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁹ S. De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, translated by H. M. Parshley (ed), (London, New English Library, 1960), pp. 159 – 161.

James failed to recognise that there is no single explanation which can account for how and why some women were able to rise to prominence throughout the Revival. Whilst the belief that Roberts was responsible for their actions and oversaw their work could account for the Revival work of Annie Davies and Mary Roberts, it cannot explain the work of women such as May John who had little or no connection with Roberts's Revival campaigns. It is possible that women filled the void left by traditional clerics who were unable to fulfil the expectations of the congregations, but this fails to account for the range of social freedoms that these women experienced. This view also fails to acknowledge that some women did support the male revivalists and did not undertake a leadership role. An accurate reading of this history needs to adopt the position that women approached the Revival in a range of ways and were inspired to do so by a range of social, economic, religious and personal factors. James sought to explain how the Revival enabled women to participate in the movement. Yet, the more appropriate question is how and why women responded to the Revival in different ways. Amy Oden noted that early Christian women did 'not all speak in one voice, and, given the opportunity to gather together [...], would probably find themselves in serious disagreement about many things.'¹⁰ The same would be true of the women who participated in, witnessed and criticised the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. For some working-class women, it was an opportunity to take a more public role within Welsh society. Women who participated in the meetings, as members of the congregations, were able to confess publicly not just their own sins but reveal the difficulties that they experienced in their daily lives. For other women, the Revival provided a form of respectability and acceptance. In 1904, it was reported that some

¹⁰ A. Oden, *In Her Words: Women's Writings in the History of Christian Thought*, (London, SPCK, 1995), p. 12.

of the female revivalists held meetings with gypsy women, offering these ostracised women the respectability required to enter into the chapel. Through the confessional element of the Revival, debauched women were given the opportunity to redeem themselves, and their reputations. In a collection of women's accounts of early twentieth century Welsh life, a woman by the name of 'Olive' claimed that her grandmother had become 'saved and turned into a tea totaler by the [1904] Revival that swept through the valleys.'¹¹ Not all Welsh women attended Revival meetings. It is likely that some women, like Raine, saw the movement as insincere or believed it to be having a detrimental effect upon the country. Others, like Penn- Lewis, may have been concerned by the importance placed upon emotional enthusiasm rather than theological teaching. Even less is known of these women. Contemporary sources focused on the increasing number of converts, rather than questioning why some did not engage with the movement.

For Raine, the Revival was a period of frustration. Although the Revival liberated some women, enabling them to participate freely in the movement, the Revival reinforced the fact that for Raine's voice to be heard, she needed to assume a male identity, and present her views through a male protagonist. Through the public confession of sins and emotional displays of enthusiasm, women broke with the social conventions and expectations of Welsh propriety. These boundaries had been developed to preserve and protect the reputation and moral standing of Welsh women, to guard against a reprise of the accusations levied at them by the Blue Books report. Although Raine had discovered her own means of expression and independence, it is clear that she valued the patriarchal constraints placed upon working-class women.

¹¹ E. Morgan 'Olive' in C. White and S. R. Williams (ed), *Struggle of Starve: Women's lives in the south Wales valleys between the two world wars*, (Cardiff, Honno, 1998), p. 4.

Her novels show that Raine, like Caradoc Evans, recognised the difficulties of Welsh working life, but had little compassion for the women living in those circumstances. She valued social order and, as discussed in chapter four, her novels promoted the importance of virtuous behaviour. Women had a duty to improve their lives and situations, but this was to be done whilst conforming to existing social structures and protecting their reputation. Her disdain for the emotional enthusiasm of the Revival and its impact upon Welsh working-class women demonstrated that for Raine the Revival was a damaging episode in Welsh history, which encouraged women to place themselves in morally dangerous situations.

Jessie Penn-Lewis dedicated a great deal of her ministry to praying for a national Welsh revival and saw herself as instrumental in preparing Wales for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Yet, when the Revival began, Penn-Lewis was not involved. She was concerned by the prominence placed upon experience and emotion, and urged Roberts and his team of revivalists to consider her theological views and place greater importance upon biblical instruction. Her efforts to promote and support the Revival have been maligned and despite the urgency with which she attempted to encourage a Welsh revival, the movement which she waited, and prayed for, damaged her reputation and reduced her legacy to that of a spiritually dangerous woman. In comparison, the Revival had little, if any, impact upon Rosina Davies's ministry. Like Penn-Lewis, Rosina Davies broke with the social convention and expectations of womanhood and travelled internationally as an evangelist. She never married, yet this seems to have had little effect upon the way in which her ministry was received. In her autobiography, she recalled:

During 1904, I held 256 services and according to my diary 250 surrendered to the Lord. I spent a great part of the year in north Wales, I was filled with joy

to hear when I returned at intervals of the Revival in south Wales, and having so many Missions and Services myself, I had but few opportunities to attend meetings where Mr Evan Roberts took part.¹²

The Revival meetings which she conducted in North Wales received little press attention, demonstrating that even the ministries of well-known women were seen as less newsworthy than Roberts's Revival campaigns. Rosina Davies wrote that in early 1905, she was 'compelled' to leave the Revival as 'people were demonstrative, and sermons were put aside.'¹³ Her views on the Revival were similar to Penn-Lewis's. She was concerned by the emotional emphasis of the movement and the lack of biblical knowledge and teaching. She observed that:

Many Souls were saved by the Revival from the depths of sin and corruption; many have gone rejoicing to their eternal home; many have remained to be stalwart workers in the Churches today. [...] As we look back we cannot but regret the opportunities lost. The joy was real; but it was allowed to dwindle in effervescence, and this was mostly for want of Bible knowledge.¹⁴

The most significant difference between these two women was that whilst Rosina Davies had little contact with Roberts and ended her involvement in the Revival, Penn-Lewis tried to intervene, to instruct Roberts and his fellow revivalists. She provided Roberts with a means of escape and recuperation. Through these actions she, arguably, became the most notorious woman in Welsh religious history.

Oden acknowledged that any modern analysis of the writings of early Christian women is limited 'to what women who wrote had to say about Christianity,' but that

¹² R. Davies, *The Story of My Life*, (Llandysul, Gomerian Press, 1942), p. 187.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 188.

there were presumably ‘many women who did write [but] whose writings were not preserved’ and that if these writings were discoverable their work may ‘substantially alter this landscape’ of Christian thought.¹⁵ The same may be true of the Revival. Wales is now considered to be in a ‘post- Nonconformist era.’¹⁶ However, it must be remembered that the South Wales valleys are still coming to terms with post-industrialism. Many communities which experienced such rapid expansion in the 1800s, now have high unemployment and increasing social difficulties. At the centre of these communities is a void, left by the decline in the two pillars which had previously supported Welsh life and culture in these industrial centres - Nonconformity and heavy industry. The implications of this post-industrial era were examined in the 2015 BBC Wales, television documentary: *How Green is my Valley? A future for the valleys*.¹⁷ The experiences of Welsh women in twenty-first century Wales are radically different from the lives of the industrial women who lived in the early-twentieth century. It is important to remember that the views of feminist historians may differ widely from the views and expectations of the women who experienced the Revival. Penn-Lewis may have believed her actions were for the greater good, as she certainly appears to have believed that a future Revival was imminent and the Roberts would play a leading role. Raine may have thought that through *Queen of the Rushes*, she had made a lasting impact upon the legacy of the Revival with her novels continuing to play a significant role in the development of Welsh women’s writing. The revivalist women may have believed that they were merely playing a minor role in the development of a Revival movement which was to change Welsh life and prepare Wales for the next great Revival. Roberts’s

¹⁵ Oden, *In Her Words: Women’s Writings in the History of Christian Thought*, p. 12.

¹⁶ M. Wynn Thomas, *In the Shadow of the Pulpit: Literature and Nonconformist Wales*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2010), p. 332.

¹⁷ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05gndqz> [accessed 20 March 2015].

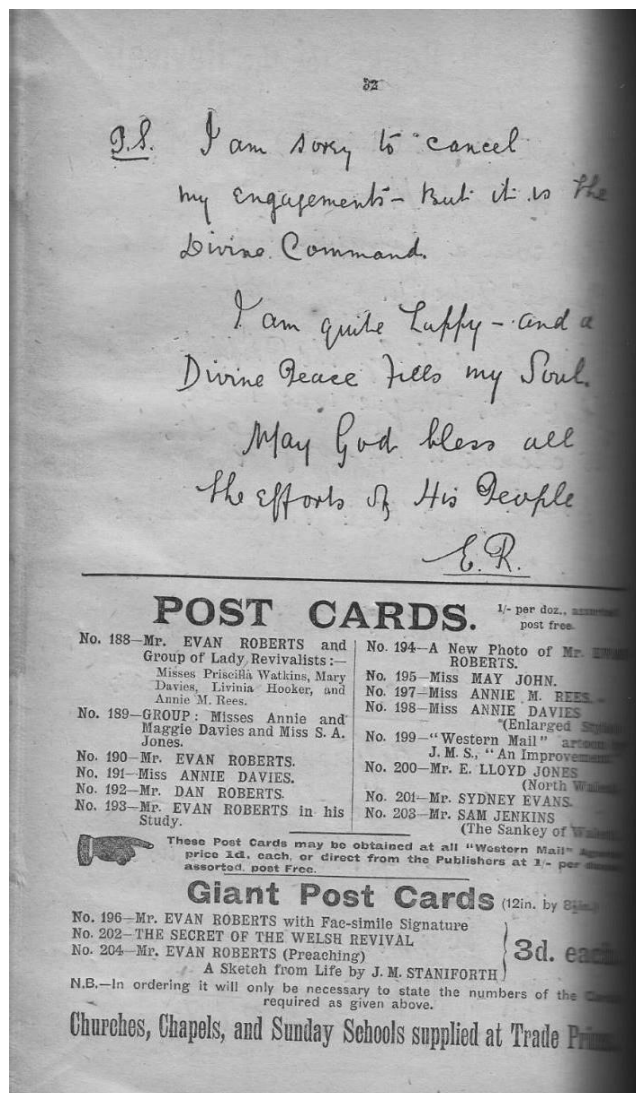
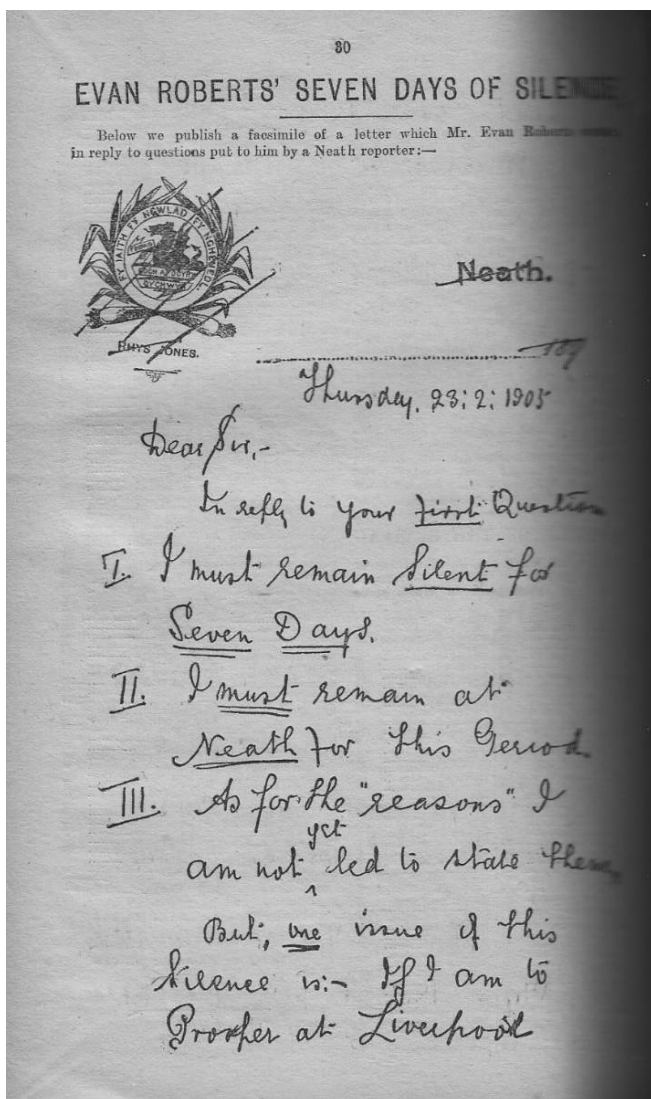
involvement in the movement has been central to contemporary and later studies into the nature and development of the 1904-05 Welsh Revival. However, with the benefit of historical distance, it is clear that women made a significant contribution to the success and development of the movement. The 'Evan Roberts Revival' has been well documented.

If Revival historians wish to further develop the historical understanding of this remarkable religious phenomenon, future studies must now seek out the lives and experiences of women who experienced, participated in, criticised and observed the movement. Rather than continuing to mute the lives and experiences of women, scholars need to explore new avenues of research to expand our knowledge and understanding of those women whose stories have yet to be heard. Historically, Wales was known as 'the Land of Revivals' but more commonly it is known as 'Land of my Fathers.'¹⁸ Both the Welsh people, and their historians, need to reconsider this view. If we are truly to understand the history which shaped Welsh life and cultural identity, future studies must aim to discover the history of the Welsh people, both male and female.

¹⁸ 'Land of my Fathers' is taken from the opening line of the Welsh National anthem, Mae hen wlad fy nhadau.

Appendix one.

Evan Roberts's letter to the *Western Mail*, outlining his 'Week of Silence.'



Appendix two:

Annie Davies Interview with the BBC.

Introduction.

Amongst the other singers were Maggie Davies and Annie Davies. Annie Davies was fifteen years old when she went down to Pontycymer that day, on the 15 November 1904 and here she is.

Interviewer: Why did you go down to Pontycymer?

Annie Davies: My sister told me there was something odd happening down in Pontycymer and she wanted me to go down with her to see the wonders.

Interviewer: You then when down to Pontycymer that day. What happened when you arrived at Pontycymer?

Annie Davies: Yes, I went down there and something extraordinary was happening in Pontycymer that day. The road was black with people that day, from the station to the chapel and it was a great effort to get into the chapel at all.

Interviewer: You managed to get in?

Annie Davies: Yes, I managed to get in eventually but it took me two hours to get to the chapel.

Interviewer: How was the chapel?

Annie Davies: The atmosphere was very heated everyone singing and praying.

Interviewer: Did anything happen to you that day?

Annie Davies: After that, yes. In the silence I felt I had to sing the hymn ‘Dyma Gariad Fel y Mororedd.’

Interviewer: You were learning to sing at the time?

Annie Davies: Yes. First my tutor was Madame Pierra Davies, Ivor Novello’s mother and then Harry Evans, Dowlais.

Interviewer: After singing ‘Dyma Gariad Fel y Mororedd’ what happened before the end of the meeting?

Annie Davies: Before the end of the meeting, Evan Roberts came up to me and said I must go with him on a mission. I left everything and went with him, without going home.

Interviewer: I am sure that the viewers would be glad to hear you sing ‘Dyma Gariad Fel y Mororedd.’

****The interview fades out with Annie Davies singing ‘Dyma Gariad Fel y Mororedd.’****

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