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LANDSCAPE AND NATIONHOOD:
TRADITION AND MODERNITY IN RURAL WALES, 1900-1950

by

ROLANT PYRS GRUFFUDD

A Doctoral Thesis Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of the Loughborough University of Technology

September, 1989

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A NOTE ON SPELLING

In quotations, place-names appear as in the original. I have not given each Anglicised spelling its own (sic)! In my own text, however, I spell place-names in the un-Anglicised Welsh - e.g. Caernarfon rather than Caernarvon, and Llŷn rather than Lleyn. Where, however, there are recognised English names for the places concerned - e.g. Swansea for Abertawe - these have been used.
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines different understandings of 'landscape' in Wales between 1900 and 1950, and the implications of these 'ways of seeing' for questions of nationhood and national identity. The bridge between these conceptual and political realms is the practice of rural planning as developed and applied in Wales. The Introduction sets the thesis in the context of work on national identity and the idea of landscape, and discusses the notion of modernity. It closes by outlining the understandings of landscape which run through the body of this thesis - landscape as 'scenery', 'environment' and 'territory'.

Section One examines the evolution of planning in Wales. Chapter One identifies four individuals who represent themes of sustained importance in the development of this modernist discipline. All four were involved in the founding of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales (C.P.R.W.) in 1928. The C.P.R.W. is the focus of Chapter Two in which planning ideals and notions of scenic order are seen applied to the Welsh countryside. Consistent themes in the C.P.R.W.'s approach are identified, and their success is evaluated. Section Two addresses the work of others active in the study and planning of rural Wales, but from a perspective less concerned with the visual construct of landscape. Chapter Three examines the work of geographers and other academics, primarily in University College Aberystwyth, who constructed in their work a picture of rural Wales as a repository of both ancient artefacts and contemporary civilising values. Welsh history and society had, they argued, been shaped by its geography and environment. These academics' attempts to plan rural society according to their ideals is considered. Academic work informed the campaigns of the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, which is discussed in Chapter Four. The nationalists echoed this reverence for rural Wales, seeing it as the fount of national character. The evolution of a political philosophy around this sociological and territorial concern is examined in detail. Section Three examines conflicts between these groups and their philosophies of landscape in response to large-scale State planning. Chapter Five discusses wartime land requisitioning and its perceived challenges to the scenic, social and political integrity of rural Wales. Nationalist concern for the sovereignty of Welsh land emerges as the profoundest issue. Chapter Six considers the role of Wales in post-war reconstruction, with particular reference to debates on the subject of tourism and the holiday trades. Conflicting views as to the use Wales should make of its rural resources become evident. In the Conclusion, the emergence of the main themes surrounding landscape in rural Wales are summarised, and it is argued that the three ways of seeing have merged to some extent. The implications of a greater concern for environment and territory in planning are analysed, and some suggestions offered as to the role the discipline of geography might play in the process of shaping new landscapes and environments.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have come to the conclusion that doing research is not a solitary exercise! I have been dependent on the good will, friendship and advice of many people over the last four years, and without them this work would have been a lot harder. I should acknowledge a research training award, albeit in an earlier incarnation, given to me by the E.S.R.C. The Department of Geography in Loughborough University has provided me with a friendly and conducive atmosphere in which to work, and I would like to thank all its members for their enthusiasm and good humour. Friends in The Department of Geography at Nottingham University have also helped maintain a lively working environment, and more recently Stephen Daniels and Peter Bishop have been understanding colleagues. I must thank the staff at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth for endlessly retrieving dusty files from their archives, and the C.P.R.W. for allowing me to use their archival collection. I am also grateful to all those who have, at various stages, read drafts of this material, and particularly grateful to Mike Heffeman for his enthusiastic and critical comments and for his advice and friendship over the past few years. Being part of a lively, diverse and growing group of postgraduates has made this research both easier and far more enjoyable than it might have been. I would like to thank them all, past and present, and especially my peers - Jenny Elliot, Susan Ford, Sam Quested and George Revill. I am deeply grateful to my parents for their support and encouragement throughout the period of this research and for putting up with me during long bouts of archival work. Denis Cosgrove has, through often difficult periods, remained a faithful and inspiring supervisor. I hope that through this work I have in some small way rewarded his commitment and efforts on my behalf. Finally, I would like to thank Susan Ford for her love, support and tireless friendship. She kept me going when it would have been easy to stop, and told me to stop when she could tell I needed to.

Diolch o galon i chi oll. Heartfelt thanks to you all.
INTRODUCTION

Wales is a process, a process of continuous and dialectical historical development, in which human mind and human will interact with objective reality. Wales is an artefact which the Welsh produce; the Welsh make and remake Wales day by day and year after year. If they want to based on the work of Gwyn A. Williams.

These words capture the essence of the question of Welsh national identity. Identity is not a given; it is manufactured and modified according to both external and internal constraints. Welshness is malleable, thus Gwyn A. Williams asks When was Wales? The syntax jars, for it mixes temporality with geography in a way which those familiar with the rigidities of the political map will find uncomfortable. It suggests that identity has little to do with political boundaries, but is rather a question of psychology, of collectively making nations. The making of national identity is a fluid process, and geography a resource in its manufacture.

This thesis addresses the making and remaking of the Welsh landscape, and ideas of it, in the first half of this century and the relationship between that remaking and views of Welsh society and nationhood in the future. Landscape has acted as a mirror of Welsh national identity and as a symbol to be fought over. But it is seen, or conceptualised, in different ways, constituted and reconstituted by different groups subscribing to different ideologies. Landscape will be seen in this thesis to be a complex term extending far beyond (although containing at its core) the idea of an external, visual reality. Likewise 'geography' has two roles in this: firstly, as the physical land of Wales - one of the "real elements" that Prys Morgan suggests are imperative in the construction of any effective mythology; And secondly, as the discipline of Geography which made a significant contemporary contribution to the remaking of Welshness. In this introduction, I set the historical context for this study of the re-making of Wales by both Welsh and English, and draw upon some ideas primarily from history and geography on the study of national identity and landscape.

BRITISH WALES

The Welsh have made and remade their identity within a British context. In the twelfth century for instance, Giraldus Cambrensis gave Welsh nationality eloquent expression in an attempt to repel the Norman centralization of the Welsh church. But the subjugation of the last independent Welsh princedoms by Edward I in 1283, and the Act of Union of 1536 absorbed Wales into a
British nation-state. The political invisibility of Wales, profounder than that of Scotland and Ireland, was thus forged and entrenched in legislation, and the seeds of an attitude sown allowing the Encyclopaedia Britannica notoriously to suggest "For Wales - see England".

But this study gives Welsh history and politics their meaning as elements in a discourse on Welsh landscape. In this sense, arguably, the political acquisition of Welsh territory was reinforced and legitimised by the symbolic appropriation of its landscapes. Wales's historical experience of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was partly that of all European mountain countries. As the taste for mountain scenery grew during the Romantic revival, so hitherto feared regions became desirable travellers' haunts. Highland Scotland was popularised from mid-Century and from the 1770s a torrent of travellers visited Wales, and estates, like Hafod in the hills of mid-Wales, were landscaped in Romantic fashion. Thomas Pennant's Tours helped to shape popular opinion of the now favoured rugged mountains, as did Romantic literature and popular writing. Artists played a crucial role in the creation of this new sensibility. One Vale of Neath waterfall was painted more often between 1810-20 than any other provincial subject, except Windsor Castle. But Richard Wilson's paintings of Wales, for instance, owed more to the influence of Poussin and Claude than to any domestic sense of landscape, and Turner's paintings presented a sublime Wales drenched in the aesthetic sensibilities of his age. Through the application of stylistic convention to its landscape, Wales was topographically depicted as part of British territory.

If the Romantic age passed, then the Romantic way of seeing did not. Pennant's tours were succeeded by a series of others written for middle class English consumption. George Borrow's journey around Wild Wales (1862) added the people to the picture as a sturdy but backward folk. In 1905, Edward Thomas found Wales a land of cultured, God-fearing peasants, its wild hills imbued with mythology. But Thomas discerned a lack of 'authenticity' in his contemporaries' attachment to Wales and the Welsh: "I should be inclined to call the lovers of the Celt a class of 'decadents'.. and of aesthetes.. They are sophisticated, neurotic.. preferring creme de menthe and opal hush to methylin (sic) or stout, and Kensington to Eryri and Connemara; and perplexed in the extreme by the Demetian with his taste in wall-papers quite untrained". His was a more intuitive, educated and above all sympathetic pleasure in the living of Welsh life.

A later traveller, A.G. Bradley, failed to appreciate native tastes or sensibilities. His In Praise of North Wales was rather more a celebration of his aestheticism and distaste for both natives (including 'unenlightened' monoglot souls) and for tourists (like the "primitive, materialistic, ill-equipped souls from the Black Country" he encountered in Devil's Bridge). His was as selective
a reading of Wales as the Romantics'. In *The Romance of Wales*, Bradley skilfully avoided industry on his way through the south. H.V. Morton, however, took a bolder route to reveal human beauty amidst the ugliness of industrial depression in the 1930s. He, like Hollywood filmmakers, found a nobility in the peoples of the mining valleys and a fascination in their blighted landscape. Morton went *In Search of Wales* in 1932, aware that his quarry might prove elusive, for a mythology had evolved around Wales:

> I wonder, as I find my way out of London, what any man in the street would reply if I asked him: "What does the word 'Wales' convey to you?"
> He might possibly reply "The Prince of Wales, Lloyd George, the Eisteddfod, Snowdon, Welsh Rarebit..." There he might stick. Perhaps a more literate member of the public might add: "St. David, Fluellen, Parson Evans in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, leeks, pictures of Caernarvon Castle in railway carriages, mine disasters, and Cardiff." 14

Morton's tours were views of the peripheries from the core. He went "In Search of" a sense of authenticity in both people and landscapes. He was in search of national origins, as were Neo-Romantic artists who artistically re-discovered the remote corners of Wales. Amongst these was John Piper, who recycled the artistic appropriation of Welsh landscape, bringing Neo-Romanticism to the Romantic haunt of Hafod. 15

**WELSH WALES**

But if Wales was continually reinterpreted from without, so it was from within. The revival of Welsh history was itself a feature of Romanticism. The eisteddfod, a cultural festival, had been re-born in 1701 although the high-point of this revival came in the 1790s under the patronage of the London Welsh. As Prys Morgan argues "It was the London Welsh throughout the eighteenth century who gave the lead in things Welsh, and it was they, the exiles long separated from the reality of things at home in Wales, who most readily turned to an invented Wales, a Wales of the imagination which they then gave to their native land" 17. It was in London that the greatest inventor of the Welsh past in this period, Edward Williams (known as Iolo Morganwg), a stonemason from the Vale of Glamorgan, launched in 1792 his 'Gorsedd of the Bards of the Isles of Brittain', evoking an ancient British bardic tradition. The Gorsedd would be, as Morgan puts it, "a permanent supporters' club" for Welsh history and language and a pressure group for radical political causes. The 1790s were the highpoint of the Romantic imagination and Gwyn A.
Williams has shown the role of imagination and myth in the Welsh response to the American Revolution and the crisis of modernisation and of British/English hegemony at home. The legend of the Welsh discovery of America was revived in the late eighteenth century as a radical stimulus to the founding of Welsh homelands in the New World. A series of cultural revivals and reinventions by "patriot propagandists" were aimed at making the Welsh common people - the gwerin - think of themselves as a nation. The re-presentation of individual heroes like the rebel prince Owain Glyndŵr was a potent weapon in this awakening, but landscape also had a role to play in this transformation of mass sensibility, by revealing to the people its Welsh national meaning and mythologies. Thus Cardigan Bay was publicised as the drowned landscape of Cantre'r Gwaelod, and Beddgelert in Snowdonia located in a myth surrounding Llywelyn I. Although they were slow to learn, Prys Morgan suggests that the native Welsh eventually came to appreciate the charms of their own country. The Romantic shift towards appreciating wild mountain scenery affected mountain peoples like the Welsh. They gradually came to see their hills not as a punishment from the Almighty who had driven them from the lush lowlands of England, but as a fastness or fortress for the nation. Gwlad y Bryniau (Mountain land) soon became a Welsh cliche, even for those living in lowland Wales. The image had become fixed even when in reality the road improvements of Telford and the like had penetrated wildest Snowdonia, when tourists like William Wordsworth could scale the top of Snowdon without too much discomfort, and the native population was flowing away from the moors and hills to the valleys and industrial areas. As the Welsh became more and more industrialized, so they came to cherish the image of the Welshman as a sturdy tough hillman, free as mountain air.

Welsh patriots adopted the English tourists' admiration of the wild landscape, but saw the mountains as fastnesses, the home of liberty. Radical patriots believed mountain air was the air of freedom. For them, it was providential that in Wales the great developments of the Industrial Revolution occurred in the mountainous parts, opening up the remotest areas to modern change. In all these ways, Welsh national claims were made on territory, and landscape perceived anew.

This sense of the rural areas and of their folk as the bastion of national strength and morality permeated the rather more egalitarian mythologising and new ideals of the nineteenth and early
twentieth centuries. The ideal of the gwerin was erected; the mass of the common people - landowners, craftsmen, even capitalists, united in a Welsh self-consciousness as expressed in the life of the chapel. The gwerin were the true heirs of Welshness, having a moral right to the soil of Wales "because they had worked longest on it (or under it, in the case of miners)".21 By the 1880s, after a century of dramatic industrial growth, a sense of Welsh nationality and of national distinctiveness within the wider framework of the United Kingdom was "a living element in the daily experience of the Welsh people"22 and a herald of the nation's rebirth. But despite national modernisation this renaissance still had a profound folk consciousness, often evoking the simple life of the Welsh peasantry. Poetry in particular communicated traditional rural themes in the context of a new cultural movement. Mass-education disseminated these ideals. This was the mission of the ex-Oxford history scholar and later educationalist Owen M. Edwards who founded a series of periodicals which exerted a tremendous influence on the literary and artistic sensibilities of Welsh youth. They also celebrated the peasant values of Welsh rural communities and gave encouragement to obscure 'rustic' authors. But this rural hegemony was not to persist unchallenged. Caradoc Evans's short stories, including My People (1915) and My Neighbours (1919), were savage, satirical pictures of Welsh rural life: "His account of peasant vice, dishonesty, and avarice shocked a generation used to pious, almost uncritical celebration of the God-given purity and naturalness of the werin in the rural areas from which so many of the leaders of modern Wales had sprung"23.

So there is a history of both an internal and an external re-presentation of Wales. The meanings of its land, landscapes and folk have provided a flexible resource for various idealists. The Welsh, like so other nations, turned to fantasy and myth as motives or legitimators of action in times of crisis: "In [a] crisis of modernisation or crisis of identity, the Welsh.. turned to their past, and where it was wanting, had effectively adorned or invented a Wales of the imagination"24. Landscape and territory reflected the national past and were material resources to be contested in that light. A sense of 'rurality' was particularly potent. This summary brings us to the beginning of the inter-war period, and that period and its aftermath provides the focus for this thesis. I aim to show how the changes this period brought shaped new interpretations of Wales's landscapes and rural areas.

GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, IDENTITY

In its concern with national mythologies, this thesis is located in a growing and varied body of work. But my intention is to challenge the apparent dominance of the British/English hegemony
in most of these studies. Although J.H. Grainger's *Patriotisms* is subtitled *Britain 1900-39*, the book is concerned with "specific articulations of English/British patriotism". The psychological and ideological coincidence of the English nation with the British state does not pass unnoticed, but Grainger is unwilling to examine, amongst his other competing patriotisms, those of the nations of Britain. Neither in effect is a comprehensive History Workshop study which suggests that its concern is the making and remaking of British national identity. This seems a curious claim, for Britain is a state rather than a nation and therefore rarely able to absorb its competing ethnicities and political outlooks into a hegemonic identity. The degree to which it is able to do this, however, is a subject of increasing concern, in which the interpretation and control of history and geography is of fundamental importance. Patrick Wright's influential *On Living in an Old Country* and Donald Horne's *The Great Museum* highlight the extent to which history has been manipulated and invoked by a series of ideologies. Current debates surrounding 'heritage' also criticise the selective and often sanitised views of the past offered by exploiters of nostalgia. Robert Hewison, in a virulent attack on the genre, claims that 'heritage' presents a closed, nostalgic culture opposed to the critical culture of 'history' and must, as such, be rejected.

Hewison argues that nostalgia hinders development, as does Martin Wiener who claims that the industrial bourgeoisie's assumption of an older, Tory set of rural values promoted a failure to address culturally the bases of English material prosperity. This, he claims, explains this century's relative economic decline. Certainly rural values have had a profound role in the manufacturing of English identity, an identity "which has had to be made and re-made in and through history" as the volume *Englishness* notes. Robert Coils writes of an English political culture which, its imperial power challenged, turned to insularity and to the revival of 'folk' studies, while Alun Howkins studies the apparently contradictory re-discovery of rural England at the end of a century of dramatic industrial growth. Welshness too, as we have already seen, was partly a rural phenomenon, and it is my intention, in challenging the historical silence of Wales within Britain, to subject Welshness to the same kind of critical inquiry as Englishness.

**Landscepes**

Geography's contribution to the study of national identity has centered on the symbolic and ideological role of landscape and this thesis seeks to add to this body of work. As such, it draws theoretically on a reconstituted meaning of 'landscape' in recent, or the 'new', cultural geography. Its original meaning was a view of natural inland scenery, an aesthetic composition calculated to excite a psychological response. Modern geographical concern with landscape as an aesthetic construct originates with Francis Younghusband's Presidential address to the Royal Geographical...
Society in 1920\textsuperscript{34}. The geographer Vaughan Cornish was influenced by this clarion call to study natural beauty and devoted his later life to the subject - in 1925, for instance, he applied the techniques of pictorial composition to the natural scene to determine its effects on the senses\textsuperscript{35}. His own Presidential address to the Geographical Association in 1928 celebrated the charm and dynamism of the British landscape\textsuperscript{36}. This merging of landscape and scenery has subsequently been challenged. Lowenthal and Prince claimed in the 1960s that English landscape tastes have been created by the attitudes of an active minority, thus making landscape a rather more problematic concept\textsuperscript{37}. This recognition of the ideological foundations of landscape was subsequently strengthened by Marxist critique in geography, recognising the implication of social formations in symbolic, as well as everyday, landscapes\textsuperscript{38}. John Punter notes the role of cultural hegemony in formulating dominant landscape tastes and argues the need to place landscape more directly in its political context\textsuperscript{39}.

There is also, within cultural geography, a different tradition with a number of strands linking it to anthropology and to historical geography; it is one which sees landscape as the impress of (folk) culture on the physical environment, and is a tradition generally inspired by the German study of \textit{Landschaft}\textsuperscript{40}. While this thesis touches upon that tradition, it does not form a significant part of my conceptual approach\textsuperscript{41}. Some of its main characteristics are, however, outlined by a paper on the Welsh landscape by Frank Emery. Emery has restated the need to draw a distinction between landscape and scenery. Landscape, he argues, "possesses much more than the superficial and passive qualities of scenery"\textsuperscript{42}. He suggests rather that landscape is "the imprint of past communities as they went about their business of using the land and its resources"\textsuperscript{43}. In establishing an archaeological notion of landscape, suggesting that it be read as an historical document, Emery does draw on the German \textit{Landschaft} tradition and its concern with the 'authentic', that is the expression of a peasant's unmediated and pre-modern relationship with the land. Whilst Emery is surely correct to argue that landscape, as a concept, possesses more 'depth' than scenery, in recent cultural geography notions of authenticity have been strongly challenged. The genre has been criticised for failing to examine the broader, structural contexts of the morphology it constructs, for being antiquarian, anti-urban and empiricist\textsuperscript{44}.

The stability of meaning, sought for example in such studies of cultural landscape, has arguably been deeply challenged by post-modern epistemology, and today landscapes become "images, further glosses upon an already deeply layered text"\textsuperscript{45}. In this way, landscape "represents a historically specific way of experiencing the world developed by, and meaningful to, certain social groups"\textsuperscript{46}. By implication, a landscape is meaningful to a variety of social groups in a variety of
ways which challenges notions equally of landscape as 'neutral' scenery and as 'authentic' land. It has, however, retained some aspects of both these senses. This thesis seeks to amplify the idea of multiple and simultaneous conceptions of landscape. It is not, as Emery quotes Hoskins as suggesting, the landscape which asks questions here, but the idea of landscape; and the various ideas of landscape under consideration are outlined later in this chapter. The complexity of the discourses between these ideas, as I will show, supports Daniels's assertion that "We should beware of attempts to define landscape, to resolve its contradictions; rather we should abide in its duplicity". Landscape is duplicitous in that, within England for instance, it has provided social legitimation for various conflicting groups. Daniels, for instance, outlines the creation of a conscious political iconography around woodland showing how "in later Georgian England woodland imagery was deployed to symbolize, and so 'naturalize', varying and conflicting views of what social order was or ought to have been". However, not only are landscapes contested, but so are representations of them. The political iconography of Constable's The Hay Wain for instance has been harnessed for causes both radical and conservative. The landscape then is a focus for conflicts of ethnicity and belonging, conflicts which are often over the very meaning of 'landscape'.

The notion of conflicting meanings is particularly apt to a consideration of one of the small nations of Europe, where shifts in political culture are more pronounced and challenges of interpretations of identity often echo challenges to power. In his study of Denmark - a country often noted for its parallels with Wales - Kenneth Olwig charts the shift of nature's meaning from a process of development which lay at the core of social values to a positive conception of a landscape type. Under the former, the marginal heathlands of Jutland (and its folk) were seen as cultural reservoirs of ancient civilizations, a perception strengthened by the Ossianic myth. Thus nineteenth-century Denmark - suffering military defeat, territorial loss and financial collapse - saw a revival of utopian rustic imagery, folk festivals and popular gatherings. Agricultural intensification and heath cultivation were promoted to compensate for the loss of land. Land improvement mirrored ideas for the restoration of former social conditions in which the commons played an enhanced role in the social and economic life of the country. Following the loss of Slesvig Holstein to Germany in 1864, heath reclamation again provided a means by which the nation could regain its collective identity. The Danish Heath Society, formed in 1866, succeeded in making reclamation a patriotic cause, aligning 'nature' with 'the nation'. But by the turn of the century, nature came to symbolise less a process than a type of landscape. The land thus came to be viewed as a pastoral paradise threatened by the Heath Society. Many preferred to see the remaining heaths preserved as a reminder of the past, a wish fulfilled in the codification of Danish
preservation laws and reflecting a new patriotic role for nature. Olwig notes, however, that the identification of natural values with landscape objectifies those values and masks their social origins. In this sense, the representations can re-make 'reality' and meaning or authenticity becomes a highly contentious concept.

Attempts to align 'naturalness' with a particular political order are amongst Trevor Pringle's concerns in his work on Queen Victoria and the Scottish Highland myth: "For the specifics of historical events to be veiled successfully by a constructed past which celebrates sectional interests, the specifics of location, place and environment wherein these events occurred must similarly be veiled by the construction of a mythical geography. Both history and geography are re-presented in the myth". Pringle ascribes the artist Edwin Landseer a central, if unconscious, role in the propagation of the myth through his paintings of Victoria in the Highlands, paintings which masked social tensions implicit in the English rule of Scotland. But as Charles Withers shows in a study of Gaelic Scotland, the creation of a mythology can prepare the ground for a region's ideological transformation. Gaelic Scotland was delineated as a 'culture region' by eighteenth century travellers, tourists and artists as well as by the Ossianic myth. It was perceived as an underdeveloped and culturally backward region, a perception which gave moral and ideological justification for English cultural hegemony. The transformation was founded not only on material acts like the annexation of estates, but also on the symbolic like the banning of Highland dress. Of particular interest were the contests in the cultural arena, including the promotion of anglicisation by church schools and the consequential assertion of linguistic rights and the rise of the Evangelical movement - a pairing equally potent in Wales. The present study adds to the literature on the ideology of landscape and particularly of the 'Celtic Fringe'. It is located in the first part of the twentieth century, a period when the appeal of cultural difference was challenged by a number of forces which threatened to eliminate small nations' distinctiveness.

MODERNISM AND MODERNITY

This thesis addresses a period of rapid technological advance which undermined old patterns, certainties and landscapes. The maelstrom of modern life was fed from a number of sources - physical, economic, social, cultural and political - gathered together conveniently under the title 'modernism' and reaching a peak in the first half of this century. David Ley argues that "the spirit of the modern movement... substantially removed the intangible, the metaphysical, even (or so it seemed) culture itself in favour of an objective and functional logic, the spirit of progress, a spirit of 'sincerity and purity' in its relations to the modern era". Modernism's creed was honesty to
the spirit of the age, professing neither historical nor regional references. The aesthetic uniformity of the machine-age and the ideology of industrial production penetrated all realms of culture. In architecture, for instance, Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus saw the utopian opportunities of mass housing with the house as 'a machine for living in'.

Stephen Kern writes however of the ways in which "a series of changes in technology and culture created distinctive and new modes of thinking about and experiencing time and space"56. Ranging from the X-Ray and telephone, through World Standard Time to the stream of consciousness novel and Cubism, Kern analogically groups these changes as signifying the spirit of the Modern Age. Geography too expressed changing conceptions of space and distance. Geopolitics, in particular, "provided a new language of discourse about the sense of distance"57. It also provided a new language about the size and expansion of states with power being equated with largeness; Ratzel saw the state as an organism which must grow or die. As Kern puts it "it is impossible to exaggerate the pervasive influence of evolutionary theory in this period and the appeal of the biological metaphor"58. But perhaps the most pervasive geographical influence of these transformations was the undermining of geography itself. Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1873), showed how the world was shrinking: "The novel projected a new sense of world unity that became ever sharper in the decades that followed as the railroad, telephone, bicycle, automobile, airplane, and cinema revolutionized the sense of distance"59. The sanctuaries of remoteness were lost. Changes in the conceptualisation of space had clear implications for landscape. Artistic movements like Cubism and Perspectivism60 challenged the notion of absolute space, and a fluidity of meaning was established, undercutting traditional, single perspective ways of conceptualising like that of *Landschaft*.

Planning and modernism

This thesis studies rural planning, and its role as a social and spatial science in the 'engine room' (to use an apt mechanical metaphor) of the modernist programme. Planning reflected a belief in the possibility of building a rational, more efficient world and was thus an impulse central to the modern spirit. But although modernity penetrated into the lives of the majority through technology, it would be wrong to interpret it as a mass movement. This new rational attitude had to be cultivated, "it required its professional translators to make the new order transparent to a mass public; in the arts this was the self-appointed mandate of the avant-garde; in the city it was the task of a new group of social engineers, including the planner, the social worker, the traffic engineer, and the city manager, to inculcate the spirit of rationality and professional disinterest. This rational disposition provided a source of theoretical knowledge perceived to be superior."61. Cliff
Hague sees the ascendancy of the professional planners - middle class and vaguely radical - as one illustration of a great phenomenon: "As state activity increased, and universal suffrage became widespread, problems were shifted into the area of bureaucratic decision. The proclamations by the professionals of the expert nature of the planning activity thoroughly complemented the bourgeois ideal of civil privatism". The planning spirit was initially located in the urban world, but as planning evolved to address rural problems, the need for mass re-education also became clear there.

Wales, landscape and modernity
Modernity is characterised as primarily an urban experience; the urban spectacle absorbs writers like Marshall Berman and David Harvey, and Kern's picture of the age is also one of cosmopolitan urbanity. Places like Wales would appear to be backwaters. But this proves to be their fascination, for as the ripples of modernity spread outwards from their urban sources in Europe and Britain they broke on the more traditional shores of the rural areas. The optimism and possibilities of modernism were experienced there in slightly less idealistic form, and there was certainly a tension between the appeal of modernism and that of tradition. Some of the Welsh, and many others, saw the Celtic West as a fount of inspiration scenically, historically and psychologically. Its past and traditions were valued. Geography had provided Wales with a sanctuary, but the motor car and charabanc gradually penetrated the wildest of hills, and the wireless superseded the constraints of mountain geography altogether. Material evidence of the modern world became visibly apparent, and a radio in each Welsh kitchen extended experience beyond traditional horizons and brought the English language into the home. Little surprise then that one young Welshman should apparently coin the term 'pirate radio' in recognising both the dangers and possibilities of this technology. He sought to establish Welsh language broadcasting, transmitted from boats moored off-shore, to subvert the brooding influence of the B.B.C.'s towering transmitters in England. It is the implications of these changes for the idea of 'landscape' in Wales, and for the programme of aesthetic planning in rural Wales, that is the topic of this thesis.

LANDSCAPE AND NATIONHOOD

The State's overwhelming desire in the modern age has been to absorb difference, to create rational uniformity in planning, marketing, social and political life. Whilst there was resistance to the modern impulse in Wales and a belief in the 'naturalness' of the nation and its traditions, the potentialities of modernism were also embraced. These are some of the themes discussed in this
thesis, in an attempt to 'deconstruct' often conflicting ideas of landscape and of the rural in Wales during the 'modern' era. But it is argued that we are in a 'post-modern' era, and that we, as geographers, might see post-modernism as a critique of the modernist 'Enlightenment project'. Our temporal and philosophical detachment should offer new perspectives on State planning and expansive modernism. Such a critique should also be set apart from the philosophical stance of modernism and of modern geography hitherto. It should be eclectic in method, rejecting 'deep structures' and stressing difference. There should be an emphasis on the diversity of meanings in a text, a work of art or architecture, or indeed landscapes, with new reading or interpretations challenging the conventional ones. Both history and geography have, as we have seen, continually been read in diverse ways. This thesis offers new readings of landscape in rural Wales between the wars, and in so doing addresses not only the specifics of Welsh historical experience, but also the broader (and pertinent) issue of modernist planning.

In its concern to place the historical experience of rural Wales into broader debates, my approach has its parallels with the increasing interest in ethnography and forms of 'local knowledge'. I have attempted, through the use of primary material - much of it personal (and therefore revealing) correspondence, to understand rural Wales as seen by those concerned with it, to allow their ideas full expression. But there is also an attempt to write an historical geography sensitive at once to a multiplicity of perspectives and layers of meaning. According to Geertz, the ethnographer is faced with "a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit". Through 'thick description' we should attempt to explain what is seen not only in terms of its direct social relevance and symbolism, but also in terms of a broader social and cultural context. More geographically, we should explain how "the day-to-day lives of particular people in particular places are in part shaped through their involvement in larger systems which stretch beyond the immediacies of the 'here and now'..". As George Sturt, in his recollections of village life, put it in 1923:

*In the slow transition from village.. industry to city.. industry, one sees a change.. unnoticed, yet.. irresistible and cumulatively intense.. Village life was dying out, intelligent interest in the country-side was being lost; the class-war was disturbing erstwhile quiet communities;.. What we saw was some apparently trivial thing, such as the incoming of tin pails instead of wooden buckets.*
Sturt's work is at once a recollection of direct experience of village life, but also an outsider's break-down of those processes affecting it and a recognition of its wider context. In juxtaposing diverse individuals and groups - both native and alien - and their respective ideals, I have attempted to convey my reading of the issues facing rural Wales between the wars, and of the various perceptions of their origins and nature.

In Section One, I discuss the emergence of planning philosophy in Wales, and the educational and managerial initiatives of one of Ley's 'professional translators', the planner. This section is organised around the work of key individuals in the evolution of planning in Wales, and their subsequent roles in the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales (C.P.R.W.), formed in 1928. The C.P.R.W. was an environmental pressure group, studied here for its role in the forefront of debates surrounding scenic change in the Welsh landscape at the time. The C.P.R.W.'s idea of landscape was overwhelmingly visual, and in this case landscape and scenery come to mean the same thing; they both refer to structured ways of seeing the physical environment as an assemblage of forms, shapes and colours. The Council was also representative of a particular 'educating' zeal. In its efforts to control visual change in the landscape, the tense relationship between the modernist desire for order and function and the conservative attachment to tradition became clear. Although several of its members were Welsh, the C.P.R.W. extended the scenic re-invention of Wales from the outside begun by the Romantics. In understanding landscape solely as scenery, the C.P.R.W. failed to appreciate the ideological power of this seemingly neutral stance, given that "for the insider the external world is unmediated by aesthetic conditions"69. The C.P.R.W.'s archival collection forms the main source for the first section, and the narratives in Section Three are in part constructed from these materials. Geertz likens ethnography to "trying to read (in the sense of 'construct a reading of') a manuscript - foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries..."70. Personal letters, official papers, and pamphlets all contribute to my construction of a narrative expressing these individuals' ideals through their own words, yet placing them in a series of broader debates and themes characterising the question of rural Wales in this period.

One such debate provides the theme for Section Two, in which the C.P.R.W.'s predominantly visual interpretation of landscape is challenged - as it was at the time - by a series of profound cultural and sociological concerns which become of sustained importance. For the academics and politicians considered in this section, the aesthetic construct of landscape had little relevance and a series of native re-inventions is outlined which align landscape more firmly with traditional notions of a society's relationship with the land. Landscape here comes to mean environment or
habitat. Furthermore, the ethnicity of landscape gave it political currency expressed through an extension of the landscape idea to subsume a sense of territoriality. Native concern in Wales focussed on traditional values of culture and community, but the modern age was threatening these values in their rural sanctuaries. Geography, as Stephen Kern argues, had been transcended. However, it was the discipline of Geography in Wales and particularly as practised in University College Aberystwyth, discussed in Chapter Three, that addressed these issues most firmly. Their modernist utilisation of survey, measurement and mapping were all deployed to reveal Welshness and its historical roots. The sense of history, and a broader spiritual attachment to the rural areas and the gwernin, helped sustain an idealisation of Welsh rural society. Geographical studies contributed to a reconstruction of Welsh nationhood and political identity by the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, discussed in Chapter Four. A sense of heritage and of the authentic was harnessed by Welsh nationalists as a model for national re-construction. Geography's role in this was as provider of both a territorial logic to the national cause, and of the iconographic resonances of landscape as environment. Scenic ideas of landscape also played a part in a complex understanding of the environment of rural Wales. Though modernity was seen as a threat, its opportunities for the planning of nationhood were also embraced in a reworking of traditional forms and values.

Section Three brings together these varying perceptions of and responses to changes in the Welsh rural environment. The broader societal and political context is represented by schemes of large-scale planning which impinged on rural Wales. Contrasting ideas of landscape collide in response to the dangers and opportunities of these schemes. Chapter Five considers the State's mobilization for war and its physical impacts, raising a series of questions pertaining to rural culture and to the politics of territory. Chapter Six places Wales in the context of State recreational planning and reconstruction after the Second World War. This chapter focuses on contrasting views of the rural areas' future role, including planners' visions of aesthetically-ordered landscapes, and debates as to the rural foundations of modern nationhood.

Throughout the inter-war period, the landscape of rural Wales was understood in several ways - as scenery, environment, and territory respectively - and the term landscape is used in each of these senses in turn. It is the interplay of these 'ways of seeing' that forms the core of this thesis. In the first section, I consider the landscape of Wales as understood aesthetically by the C.P.R.W.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

7. Thomas Love Peacock, for instance, set several of his novels in North Wales, and in *Headlong Hall* he satirised the landscape improvers and their destruction, as he saw it, of the morality of wild nature. Lionel Madden "Headlong Hall" in L. Sage (ed) (1976) *Peacock - The Satirical Novels* London: Macmillan, pp.193-9. Wales also appeared in every issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in the 1780s and 90s (Jane Zaring "Romantic Face of Wales")
8. Ibid. See also Peter Howard (1985) "Painters' Preferred Places" *Journal of Historical Geography* Vol.11 No.2 pp.138-54
13. Peter Stead (1986) "Wales in the Movies" in *Wales the Imagined Nation* pp.159-79

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17. Prys Morgan "Keeping the Legends Alive"


19. Prys Morgan "Keeping the Legends Alive" p.33

20. Prys Morgan "From a Death to a View" pp.88-9

21. Prys Morgan "Keeping the Legends Alive" p.36


23. Ibid. p.201

24. Prys Morgan "Keeping the Legends Alive" p.33


32. Robert Coils "Englishness and the Political Culture" in Ibid, pp.29-61


34. Quoted in E.W. Gilbert (1972) "Vaughan Cornish (1862-1948) and the Beauty of Scenery" in British Pioneers in Geography Newton Abbot: David & Charles
35. Vaughan Cornish (1925) "Apparent Magnitude in Natural Scenery and its Determining Causes" Geographical Journal Vol.64 pp.427-33


41. More work is needed to understand the strands of influence linking the various continental and British schools of geography and their conceptions of landscape


43. Ibid, p.57

44. Denis Cosgrove (1983) "Towards a Radical Cultural Geography" Antipode Vol.15 No.1, pp.1-11

45. Stephen Daniels and Denis Cosgrove (1988) "Introduction: Iconography and Landscape" in Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (eds) The Iconography of Landscape Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.1-10; p.8

46. Cosgrove Social Formation p.15


49. Stephen Daniels Constable's 'The Hay Wain': the Making of a Cultural Icon Mimeo
50. Much cultural geography is directed towards study of these conflicts in the urban environment, for instance Peter Jackson (1988) "Street Life: the Politics of Carnival" Environment and Planning 'D': Society and Space Vol.6 No.2, pp.213-27; p.213
57. Ibid, p.223
58. Ibid, p.225
59. Ibid, p.213
61. David Ley "Modernism, Post-Modernism..." p.51
63. E.G. Bowen (1932) "Remarkable Broadcasting Scheme - A 'Pirate' Transmitter for Wales?" Welsh Nationalist Vol.1 No.8, pp.1&6 (This is not the geographer E.G. Bowen!)
67. Derek Gregory "Areal Differentiation", p.89
69. Cosgrove *Social Formation* p.19

70. *Interpretation of Cultures* p.10. Indeed, archival work is, he suggests, a neglected facet of anthropology
SECTION ONE

THE PRESERVATION OF RURAL WALES
CHAPTER ONE
PLANNERS AND THEIR IDEAS
IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY WALES

In this section I analyse the evolution of the planning spirit in Wales, that facet of the modernist programme highlighted by David Ley. It will be seen that there was considerable activity in Wales - as part of a broader British concern - on the question of rural planning and landscape preservation, and in this first chapter I outline the number of diverse sources from which this planning spirit arose to find expression in the formation (in 1928) and the work of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales (C.P.R.W.). The four individuals considered here are Alfred T. Davies, its first Chairman; Patrick Abercrombie, one of its prime movers; Alwyn Lloyd, an executive committee member and Chairman from 1947; and Clough Williams-Ellis, Chairman from 1928 to 1947. The four exhibit varying degrees of influence and prominence in the movement's subsequent history, but they may be seen as loosely representing themes of sustained importance in the C.P.R.W.'s patchwork of philosophies and values.

EDUCATION - ALFRED T. DAVIES

Alfred Davies, the C.P.R.W.'s first Chairman, was born in Liverpool in 1861. He trained as a solicitor and after a career in the Civil Service he became, in 1907, the first Permanent Secretary of the Welsh department of the Board of Education, a post he held until 1925. Between 1920 and 1925 he was the Chief Inspector of Education for Wales. His predecessor, O.M. Edwards, perceived his mission as mitigating the formalism and pedantry of the old schools' regime, and as educating and civilizing the gwerin, the common people, of Wales. He proved to have a profound influence on Alfred Davies, Davies stressing the importance of stimulating a child's individuality through the process of schooling. Robert Owen (1771-1858) was another whose ideas on education and social reform shaped Davies's philosophy, and particularly his direct appeal to the interests and aptitudes of the child. Davies believed that all sights and sounds had an influence on the human temper, that the soul was moulded by its environment. He felt, however, that this subtle process of personality development was being ignored in the Welsh school system. As a philosophy, it should begin with the design and location of the school buildings themselves. In Wales however
when it comes to planting a school, almost any consideration will outweigh the one that a child’s outlook on life may - nay, must - be sensibly affected for the rest of its days by what it sees and by the subtle influences with which it becomes surrounded when it is within the precincts of the place in which its education is carried on. The extent to which, in these matters, men - and good, well-meaning men - not merely neglect but commit outrages upon Nature and are at pains to shut out the Beautiful from the vision of the child is sad in the extreme.\(^4\)

Such ugliness, claimed Davies, was symptomatic of the materialism that drove contemporary society. But a school could be easily beautified. French Government regulations for Primary and Elementary schools required that school courts contain a garden for children and should be planted with trees. Foliage, shelter and shade would bring the benefits of physical recuperation but also awaken the aesthetic and spiritual faculties. The rituals of school life were also deadening to the spirit. Davies suggested that St. David’s Day might be celebrated along the lines of Arbor Day in the United States. Were trees to be planted in commemoration, the Patron Saint of Wales would become associated with efforts to stimulate a love of the beautiful. An address on "Scenery, and why all good citizens should protect it" would also be appropriate for the day’s events.\(^5\) Pageantry might also inculcate citizenship and an awareness of the history of village life.

To Davies, Nature was the best educator and Nature-study one of the main planks of his approach. The model school playground might be more than an object of delight and inspiration. It could itself become a classroom, providing scope for gardening, woodwork and Nature study lessons.\(^6\) A rustic rose-covered pergola, especially if constructed in the woodwork classes, would rouse interest in flowers and the sight of Nature could improve on any coloured chart. Robert Owen made considerable use of the outdoors and of nature-study in his educational schemes.\(^7\) Again, there were French precedents for such activities. Elisée Reclus’s *L’Homme et la terre* included an engraving (Fig.1) depicting the inspiration of Nature-study. The children are naked, symbolising true communion with Nature. Joy and inspiration is evident; one child draws but appears charmed by the warmth of the sun. Another runs to the adults, perhaps with some new discovery. Others peer inquisitively at some minute detail. The scene is suffused with vibrancy and contentment. Significantly, on the far right horizon we see the chimneys of industry belching smoke, a reminder of the deadening effects of material life. In America the ‘geography of the school yard’ was a popular fad and the Danish Folk High Schools, which influenced many Welsh thinkers at this time, also stressed the virtues of the countryside.\(^8\) In Britain, Patrick Geddes, the pioneer...
Figure 1. "Education" from Elisée Reclus's *L'Homme et la Terre*.

A MODERN BUILDING IN LOCAL MATERIALS.

Figure 2. Ceiriog Memorial Hall, Glynceiriog
(from C.P.R.W. *Annual Report 1933*)
sociologist and planner resurrected nature-study, from his Edinburgh institute the Outlook Tower, to the point where it was accepted in the Scottish school curriculum in 1899 and in England in 1900. Alfred Davies was instrumental in accelerating Welsh moves in this direction through his Scheme for the Collection of Rural Lore in Wales, established by the Board of Education in 1919. The scheme was introduced as an educational experiment, funded voluntarily by individuals like the geographer H.J. Fleure, and the Honourable Society of Cymrodiarion, a London Welsh society founded in 1751. The scheme's intention was the compilation of a Welsh Domesday book consisting of local lore - "which is in no small danger at the present time of becoming lost" - collected by pupils and their teachers. Welsh place names were particularly important elements of the survey but the complete list included details of rural industries, pronunciations and dialects, craft implements, local 'characters', and the homes of war heroes. Whilst providing invaluable material for historians and folklorists, the scheme would be of immense educational benefit in offsetting the stultifying effect of text books. They bore no relation to locality and there is a special danger of such books taking no account of the traditions and environment of a Welsh country child. Instruction based on such materials fails to kindle that spirit of intellectual curiosity which lies at the root of all true education, as well as of right mental development, and does not foster in the child that many-sided interest in his own district which is one of the surest foundations of useful citizenship.

The scheme was felt to be beneficial for the teaching of history and geography, a point recognised also by Geddes who saw natural history and an appreciation of environment as a preparation for geography. In the apparently disorganised freedom the educative process, as Figure 1 suggests, was going on:

For what more can naturalist or geographer claim to possess than the habit of observing and thinking for himself and at his best, without books or helps, in presence of the facts, and in the open air? Our ideal of training is thus like the appreciative musician's - in full mid-stream of impressions to concentrate and isolate any one sequence or co-existence, yet without losing touch with the whole. Nature is thus the ultimate teacher and examiner no less than examinee.
The quest for knowledge was to be enjoyable and inspirational, and it evidently proved so, 479 schools joining the scheme in the first year15. In Cardiganshire, 90 schools out of 114 had joined and even Barry, "undaunted by the urban character of the district with its docks and streets", had their work commended by the National Eisteddfod16. Thus were opened to children "paths that are full of charm and inexhaustible pleasure to all who choose to walk therein"17. By 1924, 542 schools were engaged in the scheme which attracted great interest in England and which Davies believed brought the school "into an immediate living contact with its environment and with all, past and present, which environment involves. Thus is formed a new bond to couple the restricted life of the school with the richer, fuller life outside"18.

The scheme had the broader function of inculcating citizenship, and Davies also asserted that the awakening thus of the imaginative, creative and reasoning faculties of country folk was a national asset of great worth. The commercial progress of Danish rural inhabitants, for instance, could be attributed to their native cultural education19. But study of the environment would enable a child to see him or herself as part of a broader scheme of things devised by previous generations. That child would, as a result, conceive of an appropriate role in industry, business or the functions of citizenship, in the same way as Geddes's child could see nature as a whole through studying a microcosm of it. More specifically Wales might benefit from an enhanced and enlightened sense of patriotism for the scheme, as well as having educational benefits, was calculated to foster the Welsh language and national sentiment. Indeed the scheme was conceived as "a patriotic pleasure":

As they collect the names, the teacher and children come to feel that the life of Wales is richer and more interesting. He begins to open his eyes to the beauty he previously never saw. He begins to hear the heartbeat of Wales, his country, beating. And that is true education. He will not forget this education whilst he lives. He will come to see, to listen and to seek; and the land around him becomes more alive and dear to him as time goes on20.

Davies's was an unproblematic notion of patriotism, with Wales firmly part of the British Empire21. But he was a firm exponent of stimulating local patriotism, as he demonstrated in Glynceryrog in North East Wales. He had long stressed the need for localities to be aware of their famous sons and daughters and to commemorate them22 and it was precisely this that he achieved with the founding in 1909 of a model village institute in Glynceryrog (Fig.2), opened in 1911 and extended in 1929 to a design by South Wales architect T. Alwyn Lloyd. The Institute was founded
in commemoration of the poet Ceiriog, providing all the functions of a village hall, but also an object lesson for the rest of Wales as to how love of country and service to the community might be fostered by recalling some of the achievements of those commemorated within its walls. As such it continued a tradition of drawing inspiration from a particular reading of the Welsh past. The Institute contained memorials, paintings, sculptures and books, commemorating, amongst others, Robert Owen, Thomas Jefferson (reputedly of Welsh ancestry), and Sir Thomas Picton, second in command at Waterloo. The Institute's iconography located the area at once in the rural and traditional, and in the Empire - "the discovery, colonisation, government or evangelisation of distant parts of the World".

History also provided Davies with resonances for landscape preservation. The rich history of the Ceiriog Valley was evoked in his 1922 campaign opposing plans to drown parts of the valley for two reservoirs serving Warrington. Published by the Cymmrodorion society (supporters of the Rural Lore scheme), and with a foreword from their Honorary Secretary Sir Vincent Evans, a pamphlet entitled Evicting a Community compiled by Davies recalled the area's past contributions to Welsh and British life. It argued that the simple valley community embodied all that was lacking in modern civilisation, its spirituality and level of education unmatched anywhere in the British Empire. Reprinting literary extracts (including George Borrow and A.G. Bradley) alongside economic arguments, the pamphlet made a strong case for the scheme's abandonment. It raised fears of alien elements encroaching upon this culturally and agriculturally rich district. Reservoir workers, for instance, might demand liquor on the Sabbath and, if refused, riot and overwhelm the police! The campaign drew on widespread moral and financial support and evidently benefitted from Alfred Davies's guidance and experience as an administrator. It was also ultimately successful.

This was not Davies's sole activity in the field of rural amenity and planning. In 1903, he had won the first prize offered by the soap magnate W.H. Lever at the Birkenhead Eisteddfod for a study of housing reform in Wales. He served on the executive committee of the Welsh Housing Association (W.H.A.), an educational group formed in 1909 to combat the unsanitary housing conditions then widespread in Wales. Five Welsh counties suffered the highest British death rates from Tuberculosis in the early twentieth century, with squalid and overcrowded housing conditions felt to be at the root of the problem. Davies also served on the Central committee of the propagandist Welsh Housing and Development Association (W.H.D.A.), formed in 1916 out of the amalgamation of the W.H.A. and the South Wales Garden Cities and Town Planning Association. Avowedly non-commercial, unsectarian and non-partisan, the W.H.D.A.'s pluralist
interests encompassed civic design, rural and regional planning, scenic preservation, and the betterment of rural labour, health and education. Its first President, David Davies, was a coalowner who financed a number of benevolent schemes. In his initial address David Davies stressed the importance of rural reform through improved housing and labour conditions, and the importance of developing a 'community sense':

*The re-peopling of the countryside is perhaps Britain's most urgent social need. Now is the time to prepare schemes for the establishment of small-holdings, the reclamation of waste lands, the planting of forests and similar works of national importance and the development of small rural industries in which may be employed the thousands of soldiers who have acquired a taste for an open-air life.*

Another member, the social reformer J.A. Lovat-Fraser spoke of creating "a public opinion that will completely re-organise the life of the peasantry... ending their dreary hapless existence...". The Chairman, Daniel Lleufer Thomas - a lawyer whose pioneering work on government commissions revealed the grave conditions of Welsh rural and industrial life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - likewise called for the regeneration of rural Wales.

These groups' activities reflected Alfred Davies's belief in education as a force for change in the life of the countryside, and hence his later role in the work of the C.P.R.W.. He lamented the fact that life, corrupted by a greedy commercialism, became uglier each day:

*The disfiguring signs of it are visible on every hand; in the vandalism which undermines and quarries an ancient castle or a venerable ruin; in the creation and toleration of the ugly tip-heap; in the scenery-spoiling advertisements which disfigure our choicest beauty spots; and, worse than all, in what accompanies all these things - the neglect to provide decent dwellings for the men and women who toil at the industrial machine which grinds out the dividends.*

Attacking the use of Pendine sands for motorcycle races in 1927, Davies spoke of the refreshment from the harrassments of modern life an individual gained in the beauties of Nature: "In them his spiritual nature (unless it has become so atrophied by neglect or materialised by money-getting and money-spending that these things cease to speak to him or to have other than a commercial value)"
is re-invigorated; by means of them he becomes once again a child of Nature, not the creature of an artificial existence lived ever within the sound of a raucous motor-horn, or the ceaseless din of a big town\textsuperscript{32}. These pleasures were being destroyed by commercialism but he hoped that an enlightened public opinion, expressing itself through patriotic, archaeological and antiquarian societies would ensure - as a symbolic first step - that the Advertisement Regulation Act was enforced in Wales. In The Times later that year, Davies drew specific attention to disfiguring advertisements and proposed a code of professional conduct for agents to avoid offending public taste\textsuperscript{33}.

THE PLANNING SPIRIT - PATRICK ABERCROMBIE

Arguably the most influential figure in early twentieth century British planning was Patrick Abercrombie (Fig.3) whom Gerald Dix has called "the World's foremost prophet and practitioner of town and country planning"\textsuperscript{34}. As such he is representative of the emergence of the professional planner. He was also a central figure in the C.P.R.W.'s formation. Trained as an architect, Abercrombie lectured in planning at the Liverpool School of Architecture, moving to the new Department of Civic Design endowed by W.H. Lever in 1909. Abercrombie was appointed to the Department's prestigious chair in 1925.

Abercrombie developed a modest design practice, but it was his success in the Dublin Town Planning Competition in 1914 that marked his entry into the leading ranks of the nascent planning profession. With planning experience in South Wales behind him, Abercrombie (with Henry Johnson) was commissioned in 1920 to prepare a regional plan for the Doncaster area which was the first of its kind produced in Britain and set the standard for all other planners. The regional planner, Abercrombie claimed, should "proffer a guiding hand to the trend of natural evolution as a result of a careful study of the place itself, and its external relationships. The result is to be more than a piece of skilful engineering or satisfactory hygiene or successful economics: it should be a social organism and a work of art\textsuperscript{35}.

This concept of the region as a natural organism was derived from Patrick Geddes's Regional Survey movement of which Abercrombie was a member. Geddes's early training in the natural sciences helped him to see the city as an organism and the region as its habitat\textsuperscript{36}. His Cities in Evolution (1915) was one of the first humanistic applications of Darwin's ideas to social phenomena, utilising the evolutionary metaphor whose prominence Stephen Kern noted\textsuperscript{37}. Geddes proposed the 'valley section' as an empirical generalization for regional integration, but this
Figure 3. Patrick Abercrombie
(from Myles Wright Lord Leverhulme's Unknown Venture)

Figure 4. Geological drawing by Patrick Abercrombie
(from Abercrombie's Town and Country Planning)
sense of intimate relation was conceptually strengthened by his use of the French social scientist Le Play's sociological formula 'Place, Work, Folk'. The evolutionary social reconstruction of Geddes's work, his concept of 'civics as applied sociology', had a strong conceptual framework, allowing for moral intervention in the condition of a region.

Abercrombie made 'Place, Work, Folk' the fundamental of his teaching. He also derived sensitivity to place from study of the Chinese philosophy of Feng Shui or Wind-Water. This was a belief that the mountains and valleys had been modelled by the twin forces of wind and water, and that humans should adapt their additions "so as to co-operate and harmonise with the local currents of the cosmic breath". Humankind, being a temporary feature on the Earth's surface, should venerate natural scenery and especially lofty mountains. In his drawings (e.g. Fig.4), Abercrombie significantly revealed an artistic sense of geology and structure.

Abercrombie's sensitivity to place was manifested also in a historical awareness and consideration of local folklore and tradition. How, he asked, "can anyone plan for the future without understanding how the background has been built up in historical stages?" without understanding how the region evolved to its present stage. The geographer, he argued, could hardly avoid being a historian. Abercrombie, who had known North Wales since his boyhood, was aware of the country's distinctiveness. An address in 1923 to the Cymmerdoron's Mold National Eisteddfod meeting highlighted the particular aesthetic qualities of the Welsh countryside, and revealed his profound awareness of the nation's ancient and more recent history. History suggested to him that there was a national indifference to external appearances. Wales did not, for instance, possess picturesque clustered villages bar in those areas, like Glamorgan, where the English influence had been greatest. But he counterposed this historical failing with the warmth and spirituality of the gwerin. The modern age, however, was bringing new threats to Wales in the form of poor architectural standards, uncontrolled advertisement signs and industry in rural areas. He prescribed a more harmonious evolution between the Welsh and their land, and called for a national school of town planning and architecture, and a National Plan for Wales preceded by regional and civic surveys - "the knowledge of one's place which everyone should possess".

In 1918, Abercrombie delivered a lecture at Llangefni under the auspices of the W.H.D.A., a lecture reflecting the Associations' social concerns. Surveys revealed "a very grave state of decrepitude" in the county's housing stock, a situation which prompted fears of T.B. Whilst old cottages might be quaint "would it be an exaggeration to call some of them whitened sepulchres", he asked, "with their mud floors, cramped rooms: 'grog loft', where children sleep on in darkness,
and while the summer sun is up: lack of comfort and privacy: no larder: damp rising in walls: insufficient water supply. Is it necessary to go with the list?" 45. Housing conditions had to be improved rapidly; poor old shells had to be destroyed, good ones remodelled internally and new dwellings built. The first priority was the provision of minimum standards of health and hygiene. A W.H.D.A. competition at the Neath National Eisteddfod in 1918 had defined these minimum requirements, including floorspace, aspect, number of rooms, hot water and a ventilated larder. Abercrombie was amongst those judging the two main objects of the designs:

First, that a high standard as regards accommodation and sanitation shall be established for all new houses. Secondly, it is sought to ensure that all cottages erected among the hills and valleys of Wales shall preserve the special features of simplicity and suitability to their surroundings, characteristic of her ancient architecture, to the exclusion of the English villa and urban type which has already gained so unfortunate a foothold in districts famous for their beautiful scenery.

House interiors were also to reflect traditional values, and a committee of women had been established by the W.H.D.A. to consider this matter. Abercrombie also considered the maintenance of traditional craft and design values to be important. English dealers were already scouring Wales for cheap traditional furnishings, and so their export, claimed Abercrombie, should be prohibited. The Welsh should also resist the penetration of mass-produced furniture, and should not accept "The offscourings of industrial England as the last word in artistic Decoration for rural Wales". In replanning all had to be true to local tradition and custom, for the historical memories of antique Mona, as Abercrombie put it, were glorious. The landscape should evolve to a newer form. Anglesey's new cottages, for instance, were to emulate the old in demonstrating a suitability of shape and a fitness of materials, fitting quietly and almost inevitably into the landscape.

Abercrombie was wary of grouping cottages for that was not as much a part of Welsh tradition. Nonetheless he saw the sociological benefits of the effectively planned village. With schools and social centres they could form the basis of a revived rural life, one of the W.H.D.A.'s primary aims: "Cheerful houses in a cheerful setting, with a cheerful Club, would go far to re-create that communal spirit of our villages which has almost vanished; and nothing else could be more valuable for our National Reconstruction than an active and eager Village life, which would make itself felt as a real force in the country." The reconciliation of tradition and the plan might also
be applied across the island, considered as a geographical unit. Other co-operative ventures, such as a joint housing committee under the chairmanship of local landowner Lord Boston, a county electrification scheme drawing on Hydro-electric developments in Snowdonia, and agricultural experimentation, would ensure the intellect and prosperity of Anglesey, and inspire the whole of Wales.

Planning for preservation
Rural modernisation was but a part of Abercrombie's philosophy. He had long been aware of threats to the amenities of the countryside, and of the need to protect them whilst welcoming further evolution and change in a landscape modified by new social conditions. In 1926 he called for the control of development by means of rural planning in a paper which led directly to the formation of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (C.P.R.E.)\(^50\). Listing new developments such as greater accessibility, a trade revival and the spread of the electricity network, Abercrombie sought to accommodate them into the 'traditional' pattern of the countryside, to further allow the countryside to evolve. Parts of the country might benefit from the absence of trees and hedges, for instance. Electricity would eliminate smoke and new roads need not defile the landscape. Even weekend bungalows and shacks represented a natural though unthinking desire on the part of townsfolk for the delights of rural life. With planning controls new beauty could be created and unforgivable despoliations, such as advertisements and litter, banished. There should be, claimed Abercrombie, "a light hand in compulsion but a heavy hand on outrage"\(^51\). The C.P.R.E. was, in fact, modelled on the W.H.D.A., as a loosely federated organisation with education as its prime aim\(^52\). As we shall see, Abercrombie was also central in the formation of the C.P.R.W.

THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE - T. ALWYN LLOYD

Thomas Alwyn Lloyd (Fig.5) was born in 1881 and educated at Liverpool University. Trained as an architect he was assistant to Raymond Unwin at Hampstead Garden Suburb until 1912 and later established an architectural practice at Cardiff, becoming a figure of central importance in several planning and housing campaigns in Wales. He was a member of the C.P.R.W.'s executive committee and became its Chairman in 1947. Lloyd's work represents the strong idealism of contemporary rural planning, manifested both in his choice of commissions and in his architectural style itself. Like Alfred Davies, he served on the W.H.A.'s executive and on the W.H.D.A.'s central council, becoming its honorary treasurer in 1923. He was architect to the Welsh Town Planning and Housing Trust Ltd. formed in 1913 as a Public Utility Company by David Davies of
Figure 5. T. Alwyn Lloyd
(from *Y Ford Gron* Vol.5 No.9)

Figure 6. View of the Barry Garden Suburb
(from W.T.P.H.T. *Annual Report 1918-19*)
Llandinam and his two sisters. The Trust aimed to provide high standard housing in industrial and rural areas by arranging the acquisition, lay out and development of suitable sites; by establishing Housing Societies to build and manage garden villages and suburbs; and by placing their experience in town planning and housing at the disposal of local authorities, landowners and industrial companies. Its work for companies and large public concerns continues a tradition of industrial philanthropy in housing. A Wartime explosives factory at Burry Port, for instance, was facilitated by the building of 104 houses, and by 1932 the Trust had built 1,325 houses for the Great Western Railway53. The Trust had also been engaged to provide housing for the employees of Lord Davies's Ocean Coal Company at several of its South Wales collieries54 and an estate of 250 houses at Wrexham was built for miners from nearby collieries. But most of the Trust's work was organised on behalf of local authorities with small garden suburbs - a suitably utopian built form - established throughout mid Wales55. Though small, the suburbs were of significant educative importance, setting new aesthetic standards both internally and externally, and signalling hope for a new artistic confidence amongst the rural population56. Alwyn Lloyd believed that "The houses of the people should have just as much care and skill expended on their design as the houses of the wealthier classes"57. This social concern was reflected in the suburbs' careful layout and the visual creation of community. The consistent use of tastefully simple designs for houses, each set back from tree-lined roadways, promoted a sense of unity sustained by low fences and hedges and communal open space (Fig.6).

Community was also stimulated by the formation of co-operative housing trusts on most of the estates. A growing social life was reported with institutes established and childrens' facilities provided. Contemporary promotional photographs frequently show people. Perhaps most revealing of the suburbs' co-operative philosophy and role in social regeneration was the establishment in Wrexham of a horticultural training centre for disabled soldiers and sailors58. Market gardens were set up on nearby land and ways explored of establishing the men after training in co-operative market garden holdings.

Lloyd, a pacifist, took up reconstruction work with the Friends' War Victim Relief Committee. The war left him weary and disheartened, but convinced of the co-operative cause. He wrote to the peace campaigner and W.H.D.A. member G.M.L. Davies:

*Blockades, more war + its horrors in Russia, hatred of the foreigner + unreasoning French + British imperialism - its all appallingly tragic. There are big, heartening movements going on all around us did we but realise it*
+ trust the spirit of good to its logical conclusion. Nothing but that can save us - I am more convinced than ever of this. It is the only practical politics. All these so called practical, slick-running "business" men + their methods are merely deluding themselves by adopting compromises + palliatives based on the present, love-denying system.

G.M.L.I. Davies was imprisoned for his beliefs during the Great War, but elected Member of Parliament for the University of Wales seat in 1923-4 as a Christian Pacifist. Lloyd's association with this man of "fearless honesty and sincerity of purpose" tied him into a set of spiritual and political values aimed at changing society. He worked for the Quakers, designing a South Wales community house and advising on their coalfields distress relief work.

Lloyd was also architect to the Welsh Land Settlement Society Ltd., established in 1936 under the auspices of the Commissioner for the Special Areas to settle on the land families from the depressed mining valleys. The W.H.D.A. had long encouraged the establishment of agricultural settlements and Lloyd clearly associated himself with the moral stance of such 'Back to the land' movements. But it was in response to industrial crisis that the scheme was finally initiated and by 1938, 6 settlements were established containing 273 houses and covering 2700 acres. Instead of the English model of smallholdings, four settlements were run as co-operative farms in which settlers worked as one community, receiving a weekly wage and a share of the profits. This was believed to be desirable for people from mining communities having a strong sense of group existence. This collective organisation of work allowed also for the grouping of simple, colour-washed houses around a green, and Lloyd's idealism is suggested in his architecture. His belief that a simpler life lived according to humanitarian and co-operative principles was attainable through such housing schemes became clear. Built, of course, with economy in mind the houses nevertheless suggested in their well-proportioned simplicity and reliance on traditional materials the continuation of what might be seen as a simpler and saper pre-industrial way of life. It was this aesthetic and sociological concern for Welsh community life that Alwyn Lloyd brought to the C.P.R.W.

**THE PROPAGANDIST - CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS**

Nowhere, perhaps, is the role of the planner as a member of the 'avant garde' more clearly seen than in the life and work of Clough Williams-Ellis (Fig..7), C.P.R.W. Chairman from 1928 to 1947. To peer into his world is to look upon the gaiety of the Edwardian autumn, and the fringes
of the twentieth century British artistic world. Dissuaded by the formality of Architectural Association teaching, a childhood's fascination with building and with landscape nonetheless bore fruit in a fashionable if eccentric architectural practice. In 1905 he designed sham ruins on an islet off Holyhead and in the same year won a contest sponsored by The Spectator magazine aimed at solving the rural housing problem. His post-war commissions were more in keeping with an architect of a growing, if modest, reputation. Bishop's Stortford College Memorial Hall (1921), for instance, was the first building in England by a living architect to be scheduled for preservation. He was eminently happy in the Neo-Classical style, yet at Cornwell Manor in Oxfordshire (1934) he rehabilitated the estate village in classic picturesque style, utilising steeply pitched roofs of slate and thatch above rugged stone walls and latticed windows (Fig.8). The commission, as Christopher Hussey, author of an influential treatise on The Picturesque, wrote made various demands on Williams-Ellis's skill. But the result was "a convincing testimony to the variety and vitality of his talents. There is largeness of conception and a breadth of handling, but throughout a sense of scale has been preserved.. Similarly, a proper care for the antiquarian aspect, and for such accidental features as old trees or unrelated outbuildings, has not lapsed into niggliness but has been taken in his stride". Williams-Ellis's architectural enthusiasm was equally apparent in his building of a thatched cottage in Oare, Wiltshire and in his exuberant adoption of the modern International Style for a stilted restaurant in Cobham, Kent.

Many of Williams-Ellis's commissions arose from his membership of fashionable and gentrified social circles. Whilst he would have preferred the attentions of the avant garde, the gentry's
Figure 8. Clough Williams-Ellis's renovations at Cornwell Manor, Oxfordshire
(from Architect Errant)
patronage was necessary: "Artists, writers and actors or Bohemians of any sort might indeed be more interesting and often much more fun than the country families and city magnates with elegant town houses in Mayfair or Belgravia, but it was the latter and never the former who had jobs to hand out"66. Williams-Ellis's marriage signalled his true entry into 'society'. Having met her at The Spectator architectural contest, Williams-Ellis subsequently married Amabel, daughter of the magazine's proprietor St. Loe Strachey. Through marriage in 1915 he became brother in law to a true 'child of the sun', John Strachey67 and thus reached the fringes of the more fashionable artistic circles to which he was to make his own inimitable contribution in the shape of Portmeirion. But both his wife and his brother in law, and his wartime experiences were to alter the course of Williams-Ellis's professional career.

Planning a Better World
War made Williams-Ellis convinced of the importance of planning: "Anyone who cares for England must be interested in national planning, the provision of a comprehensive co-ordinated and compulsory development and conservation scheme for the country as a whole, urban and rural, public and private"68. This call for efficiency was, of course, of strategic wartime importance69. But wartime destruction brought into sharp focus threats to the beauty of life in general: "In the course of [the war] I realize that what I really cared about was not just defending my country but having a country really worth defending. I saw a fabulous destruction of life, wealth and beauty continued for years. It was all hateful to me and the monstrous waste and cruelty of those years still frightens me in retrospect"70. The war, and his family, also influenced his political opinions. His brother in law, John Strachey, became a Labour M.P. and cabinet minister, and his wife Amabel reacted against her father's conservatism whilst working alongside him at The Spectator. Both Amabel and Strachey were members of the group which founded the Left Review in 193471, and in that year, Amabel was the sole British delegate at the Soviet Writers' Congress. It was at Amabel's instigation that Clough joined the Independent Labour Party in the 1920s and lectured to their summer school on town and country planning. Whilst still working on the country houses of Tory grandees, Clough Williams-Ellis developed a socialist critique of planning and architecture. No revolutionary, he was rather lodged in the Fabian tradition of genteel protest. Nevertheless he visited the Soviet Union in the late 1920s, a time (after the General Strike) when it held great appeal for intellectuals of the Left. He was in fact offered the task of co-ordinating the Soviets' New Towns policy, an offer he turned down, although following a subsequent visit he wrote in praise of Soviet Architecture in the Left Review 72.
A spate of writings in 1929 confirmed him as a socialist of sorts. In the *Socialist Review* he argued that "the Englishman who cares for beauty but who happens to be poor is likely to be perpetually affronted and to have a very thin time of it indeed". All, he claimed, had a common right to beauty, a right that was being violated by "big business". He would rather, he claimed, be a roadmender in a beautiful Britain than a "Rolls-Royce in the slatternly country that is ours today". He also claimed that he would prefer a land without architectural masterpieces were the general standard to be higher, and this became his view of life in general: "a desire for a higher average rather than for exceptional and dazzling altitudes... As things are, the deep and ominous shadows of the valleys depress and haunt me. I am frightened at the mad disparities of society, at civilisation... being so accidentally, so unfairly, and so dangerously limited. If I am a socialist... it is due chiefly to this feeling".

To achieve an ordered Britain, the private ownership of land had to carry public obligations, an opinion, by no means at odds with paternal Toryism and thus outlined in *The Spectator*. In it he claimed that the choice lay between the end of *laissez faire* and the end of rural England. The people were petitioning to be governed for freedom too often led to waste, inefficiency and chaos: "we have turned envious eyes on other countries where the idea of individual liberty is better tempered by common-sense and a greater regard for joint and common liberties than private greed or folly may by no means disregard". Though perhaps alluding here to the Soviet Union, change did not necessitate a shift to communism (or even to Fascism). His choice of metaphor perhaps revealed his tastes; in his opinion there was no good reason Britain should not be as well administered and as prudently conserved as a well-managed private estate. It simply necessitated a set of intelligent rules by which all might operate for "If the Government does not regard responsibility in this matter with due seriousness, can we wonder if the governed treat England as a gold-rush territory for here-to-day and gone-to-morrow exploitation with no respect for the past or thought for the future?".

Williams-Ellis was a member of the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals, a group which sought to unite the strands of leftist thought under one powerful banner. The group's *Manifesto* helps us to understand better the ideological importance attributed to landscape preservation and planning. It stood alongside a comprehensive social programme including peace and socialism, sex law and prison reform, the abolition of capital punishment, the secularization of education and the protection of civil liberties. Williams-Ellis's contribution was a vigorous argument for planners of vision who might improve the spirit of society, and for town and regional planning and national parks. *Britain and the Beast* (1937), compiled and edited by
Clough Williams-Ellis, is likewise more explicitly political. Whilst the contributors came from across the political spectrum one of the book's central themes was the call for land nationalisation.

Politically radicalised, Williams-Ellis professionally aligned himself after the Great War with those combatting urban squalor and environmental despoliation. A visit to Patrick Geddes's Outlook Tower in 1905 had alerted Williams-Ellis to the squalor of industrial towns, and he developed a trenchant literary style bringing the need for planning into the minds of an apathetic public. When Patrick Abercrombie founded the C.P.R.E. in 1926 Williams-Ellis became an active member and later its Honorary Secretary. He became President of the Design and Industries Association (D.I.A.) in 1929 and produced a series of Cautionary Guides, being spoof guides to actual towns in which their lack of civic pride was ruthlessly exposed. Under his leadership the D.I.A. also produced its influential compilation of photographs The Face of the Land which charted the onward march of despoliation through all spheres of British life. Williams-Ellis found his vocation as a propagandist and I now briefly consider two of his most famous pieces of propaganda.

**England and the Octopus**

Published in 1928, *England and the Octopus* reflected both Williams-Ellis's growing polemical style and the increasing concern many citizens felt about the damaging of their environment. Its intention, like that of *Britain and the Beast*, was to shock a still complacent public into awareness and action. The English (whom Williams-Ellis took to mean the British!) had, he claimed, fallen from grace. They had lost the long-established general sense of order and beauty and the awareness that beauty had a profound, if subconscious, effect on daily life. Thus the heritage of scenery was being utterly destroyed by "self-inflicted wounds and sores... [which] will leave indelible scars upon this physical world of ours that will outlast humanity itself." One of the most strident manifestations of this new scourge was the spate of mean building that was eating up the countryside, "mean and perky little houses that surely none but mean and perky little souls should inhabit with satisfaction." Surely, Williams-Ellis suggested, their owners would prove to be ashamed of their pink asbestos homes, and their builders "vindictive monsters" with a grudge against humanity. That they were not suggested to Williams-Ellis that the English had entirely lost their system of values. Whilst the amenity-minded were dismissed as cranks, detached from the driving shaft of the modern world, the exploiters became prominent and respected citizens, individuals to emulate and adore - at the cost of the landscape. Thus Britain was averaged out with the distinction between town and country lost. A country for which thousands had fought
threatened to become something not worth its further preservation, as the book's frontispiece made plain (Fig.9).

Williams-Ellis blamed nineteenth century industrial *laissez faire* for the legacy of ugliness. The people had turned their backs on the land and were packed into mean streets around the thundering machines of greedy industrialists. Williams-Ellis's was not a bucolic Morrisian vision though. He could marvel in machines. The Futurist Marinetti was not alone, he claimed,

> *in believing that factory chimneys, towering gantries, wharves and sheds and slag-heaps, pit-head winding gear, cranes and steel scaffolding, steamers and grain elevators, are all magnificent in their positive, truculent, modern way. It is good to see the human scale occasionally and valiantly transcended. It is good, in a soft town civilisation, to see fierce, uncouth monsters which can bring something of the grandeur of rock scenery into a tame landscape*88.

But at issue was the question of planning; the imposition of order onto pyrotechnical chaos. If the people were forced to live in unplanned squalour and in the smoke of industry then it was little surprise that they should now be rushing to escape into the countryside. It was, Williams-Ellis claimed, as much a race for biological survival as anything else, a position also adopted by contemporary eugenists as we shall see. But as the town drove the people out into the country so the country itself became defiled by the activities of the uninitiated. But Williams-Ellis was sensitive to their dilemma: "To do nothing but revile those who thus spoil the country with their nauseous little buildings, or merely to laugh darkly at their pathetic failure to achieve an imagined rusticity, is beautifully easy. But it is unjust, cynical and lazy - as though you were to curse a stricken family because in flying from its burning home it trespassed over your lawns and flower-beds"89. The towns had to be made fit places to live in. The New Town, and he used Welwyn Garden City as his example, was the perfect common-sense way to conduct urban and co-operative life90.

The concept of citizenship attained through education lay at the core of *England and the Octopus*. The English were motivated only by the balance sheet and needed mass psycho analysis: "We know the morbid symptoms - false standards and values, blindnesses and callousnesses and such-like. We need to discover the root causes of these disastrous abnormalities, and having discovered them, we may hope to prescribe for a cure. False values and insensitiveness - particularly to
1914. Mr. William Smith answers the call to preserve his native soil inviolate.

1919. Mr. William Smith comes back again to see how well he has done it.

Figure 9. "Mr. William Smith..." from England and the Octopus
beauty - these are probably at the root of the trouble. The problem was ensuring that the coming generations would not condone the depravities of the arch-fiend, the speculative builder, and education was Williams-Ellis's answer. Schools, above all, might educate the social and aesthetic conscience and offer the hope that a new world might be built. He suggested a new school prayer for the making and guarding of beauty and suggested, like Alfred Davies, that this new concern for beauty be first applied to the schools themselves where presently "in buildings of unnerving ugliness, plaster casts, daffodils and nudes bound the aesthetic horizons of their votaries." Political parties were beyond redemption and so the only way to ensure the end of a society which encouraged the rich to hide away from ugliness in their private paradises - thus condemning the poor to a life of ugliness - was to educate the rising generation that beauty was the property of all. A rising generation of 'beneficent busybodies' might then be assured, one that would appreciate the finer points of architecture and planning and would ensure the prosecution of offenders - as much the industrialists as the "Cockney picknickers or.. tramps". Those who did not care, whom Williams-Ellis called the "unburied dead", were defective in their social consciences and should be legally restrained.

In an epilogue Patrick Abercrombie proclaimed himself less pessimistic than Williams-Ellis, but the book won immediate and widespread praise. D.H. Lawrence proclaimed it an "excellent, sincere, honest and even passionate, the well-written humorous book of a man who knows what he's writing about. Everybody ought to read it because in a question like this, of the utter and hopeless disfigurement of the English countryside by modern industrial encroachment.. the point is that we should all become acutely conscious of what is happening and of what has happened.. People who live in mean, despicable surroundings become mean and despicable. The chief thing is to become properly conscious of our environment." G.K. Chesterton claimed that no more valuable warning had been given than England and the Octopus, and the geographer Vaughan Cornish, himself active in the C.P.R.E., compared Williams-Ellis's prose to Wordsworth's complaints about Lake District despoliation. Lewis Mumford later hailed England and the Octopus as the opening gun of the environmental battle of the inter-war years. England and the Octopus confirmed Williams-Ellis's role as amenity educator and propagandist. He nonetheless believed that he could convince more eloquently through building than through writing, and thus was born the idea of Portmeirion.
Portmeirion

The village of Portmeirion sits on a wooded headland between two North Wales estuaries, some five miles from Williams-Ellis's family home of Plas Brondanw. It is an architecture fantasy come to life where red tiled roofs, chimneys, a dome and campanile rise from the rock and dense wood (Fig.10). It is a placeless and timeless amalgam of trees, stucco, slate, ironwork and sculpture. Italy, the Cotswolds, Wales and, above all, the imagination of its creator, combine in vividly theatrical architecture. Portmeirion was inspired by the Italian village of Portofino, and its harmony between site and buildings. Williams-Ellis, in the fashion of the eccentric wealthy, decided to emulate Portofino in an educational experiment in beauty. It was to awaken in visitors the sense of pleasure in architecture; to show that, given sufficient skill and care, a very beautiful natural site could actually be enhanced by building on it; and to show that architectural good manners could also mean good business, that functionalism need not be the sole by-word for profit.

The village was built up from architectural elements salvaged from demolition work throughout Britain and given sanctuary in Williams-Ellis's imagination. Some buildings were designed from new and an old house sitting on a balustraded seaside terrace was converted into a hotel and opened in Easter 1926, funding the village's development. The village's core, the Citadel, was completed in 1930. A campanile dominates the village from its clifftop vantage point; other buildings amble along the edge and steps tumble to the shore through a series of pavilions and loggias. Buildings were added as acquired in an apparently random yet harmonious layout, and a compact one, occupying but a fraction of the headland's acreage. No plans were drawn for the site, but the picturesque appearance belies a profound sense of order in the landscape. Williams-Ellis consistently applied general principles: "a clustering here, a dominant feature there, a connecting line, an axial vista, an interlude of gardens, lawn or woodland, the emphasizing of natural height, the opening of a sea or mountain view, the enclosing of a space". In the tradition of Feng Shui, which he acknowledged in England and the Octopus, the headland's topography guided the buildings' locations. Each one was placed in the location it would most enhance and itself be enhanced by. The curving walls and soaring pinnacles of Portmeirion give human emphasis to the more dramatic natural rhythm of the headland's landscape. The village seems to have grown out of the rock, and plant-covered walls further blur the distinction. The spirit of the design is clear also in its wilful pleasantries - eyetraps and axes, the use of forced perspective to exaggerate the height of buildings, and fake windows painted to ensure proportion. All add to the sense of pleasure in planning.
Figure 10. View of Portmeirion from across the estuary
(from Architect Errant)
In 1930, Christopher Hussey proclaimed Portmeirion to be "a fantastic acropolis, an architect's dream fulfilled - a glorious medley of Italy, Wales, a pirate's lair, Cornwall, baroque reason and romance". Modernists found it enchanting: Frank Lloyd Wright greatly admired Williams-Ellis's use of the site and Maxwell Fry, one time pupil of Walter Gropius, saw the village as a cure for the individualism run wild of the coast, an idea of ordered charm inhabiting a place of wild beauty: "In so many ways is Portmeirion an unbelievable and enchanted place, and in nothing are you reminded of a vulgar world outside. There are no advertisements of anything, no notices direct you to the obvious woods; nothing that detracts from the natural beauty of the scene".

These pleasures clearly held a particular appeal to the circles in which, as we have seen, Clough and Amabel Williams-Ellis moved, and the village soon became a favourite haunt of society and the avant garde. Its opening party was graced by invited members of political, literary, artistic and professional circles. Noel Coward wrote the whimsical *Blithe Spirit* in the equally whimsical clifftop watch-house in one week. Bertrand Russell was a long term resident. Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, Daphne du Maurier, A.P. Herbert, Rose Macaulay and John Steinbeck all visited the village. A production of *Hamlet* was planned for June 1926 and though it never took place the projected cast of Charles Hawtrey, Nigel Playfair, Ivor Novello, Gerald du Maurier and Gladys Cooper underlines the attraction the place had for actors and actresses at the time. Musicians, including Sir Arthur Bliss, William Walton and Benjamin Britten, were drawn there and Kenneth Clark was a resident during the Second World War. The whole region in fact became a haunt of the avant garde comparable to Bloomsbury. It must, mused a friend, "be something to do with the 'ambience' of Clough and Amabel Williams-Ellis themselves, which attracts interesting people. Bertie [Russell] said all one had to do - as in the case of the Place de l'Opera in Paris - was to sit in Portmeirion or the Croesor Valley and eventually everybody would pass by".

The C.P.R.W.

This study of the existing groups and individuals campaigning on the Welsh landscape reveals a somewhat incoherent mosaic of opinions and approaches ranging from the studied professionalism of Patrick Abercrombie to the playful amateurness of Clough Williams-Ellis. The housing associations were essentially concerned with only a narrow range of issues and the W.H.D.A., whilst providing, as Abercrombie claimed, the model for the C.P.R.E. had restricted itself unduly to South Wales and its particular problems arising out of industrial despoliation and depression. It was considered too remote for the purposes of securing effective rural preservation.
Since its formation, a C.P.R.E. committee had dealt with Welsh affairs, but this additional burden on their resources and the glimmerings of 'national' sentiment amongst Welsh preservationists, made the question of forming a Welsh Council a pertinent one. Early in 1927 Patrick Abercrombie attempted to recruit the apparent enthusiasm in North and South Wales for a separate Council. He was in touch with Alwyn Lloyd and Daniel Lleufer Thomas in the South, and with Lord Boston (a landowner whom we have encountered as an Anglesey housing campaigner), Clough Williams-Ellis (himself a landowner) and other known enthusiasts including members of the C.P.R.E. living in North Wales. Most of these approaches were made through a network of informal and society contacts, and this pattern of influence inevitably shaped the Council's eventual composition.

Though financially he favoured a C.P.R.W. as part of the C.P.R.E., Abercrombie was nevertheless the person who instigated the movement. He recruited the influential support of the Cymrrodorion Society, recalling the interest they had shown in planning affairs at their National Eisteddfod discussion meetings. Abercrombie, as we have seen, addressed one such meeting in 1923 as did Clough Williams-Ellis and Alwyn Lloyd later on. The Cymrrodorion also supported Alfred Davies's campaign for the preservation of Glynceiriog. Abercrombie therefore suggested that the Cymrrodorion meeting at the Holyhead Eisteddfod in the summer of 1927 might be an appropriate place to launch the C.P.R.W. In seeking to organise a meeting at the Eisteddfod, the nascent C.P.R.W. was in part merely capitalising on the convenience of a large and influential gathering of the Welsh. But it was also, I suggest, locating the preservationist cause in the annual celebration of Welsh culture represented by the Eisteddfod. The Eisteddfod itself arose from a reinvention of tradition, and whilst scenic preservation had not evidently been part of Welsh culture to this point the C.P.R.W. no doubt hoped that Welsh tradition might be sufficiently reinvented to embrace it.

At the Holyhead Eisteddfod meeting, Abercrombie's was the voice of authority and experience which lamented the virtual absence of regional planning from the Welsh scene and the consequent lack of order in the landscape. As we have seen, Abercrombie was aware of the distinctive problems of the Welsh landscape, in particular the distinct village configurations and the greater importance of mountain scenery. A diverse body of Welsh public opinion therefore needed organising for "while it is essential that nothing shall interfere with the legitimate development of the resources of Wales, the wanton destruction of beauty, which is invariably unnecessary, must be stopped". He thus proposed a League for the Preservation of Wales, to highlight public...
opinion and press for a series of Regional Plans to cover all Wales. As in England, the League or Council should be a federated structure with the aim of organising concerted action to defend amenities; of acting as a clearing house for advice; and of educating and rousing public opinion.

It was this final point that Mrs. Laurence Brodrick, chairing the meeting, chose to amplify. Unlike Abercrombie she was ambivalent about the desirability of 'progress'; indeed her concern was that they had 'allowed the wedge of innovation to cut so deeply into our midst that we cannot now avert its evil effects'. Tourism, entrepreneurship, and apathetic councils were all to blame, but the problem, she believed, lay firmly in the 'tasteless mass of the population'. Mrs Brodrick claimed that the Celtic spirit had an instinctive craving for and love of Nature's beauties, but at this time, she claimed, the spirit of beauty was losing itself in an age of transition which "imposes upon those of us who have had the advantages of a more extended education - I refer to what may be termed Hereditary Education - to try and guide others through their transition, and unceasingly to teach and preach the Holiness of Beauty." Here was an early indication of the educational zeal with which the C.P.R.W. would operate. But this statement also reveals a stridently paternal attitude, and Brodrick implied that knowledge and understanding of Beauty was intuitive. It is unclear whether Brodrick saw an extended education as a function of social class, though with the allusion to inheritance there is a hint of that. It is also a religious knowledge (for it is 'Holy') and the C.P.R.W. its preachers.

It fell to Lord Boston, the Cymmrodorion Society's Vice-President, to move the proposed formation of the C.P.R.W., bringing it to the attention of the entire Welsh nation through the offices of the prominent and influential people present at the meeting. Theirs was a missionary campaign "to safeguard those scenic, artistic and historical features of our country, which constitute not only a national asset, but a priceless heritage." From this small meeting should fan out an influence, a judicious sense of order, to permeate the entire population. The amenity lobbyists clearly saw themselves as a vanguard, or even spiritual leaders in a campaign of "judicious regulation". Wales had already suffered from ignorance, incapacity or apathy and the burden of protection fell on the educated. As Williams-Ellis put it in 1958 "We do know more than most, just because we care more and have thought, read, discussed, seen and understood more which is the answer to those neutrals who shrug off any responsibility for what happens.. The elect must accept that responsibility.. it is a test of our intelligence and subtlety to see that our own pressure-potential is so applied that Public Taste responds in the way we would wish."
In the following months, this pattern continued. Abercrombie suggested an initial meeting in London in January 1928 restricted to a few enthusiasts, for "a few keen individuals are very often more important than a lot of formally nominated representatives of Societies". Amongst the names Abercrombie suggested were Clough Williams-Ellis, Lord Boston and the archaeologist Willoughby Gardner. It would also, Abercrombie felt, be judicious and diplomatic to invite a few large landowners, given that their co-operation was of immense value at a time when formal planning controls were few.

The appeal for participants met with mixed results. Cyril Fox, the archaeologist and Director of the National Museum of Wales, wrote that "nothing is more worth doing today by men and women who like myself hold that the community is more important than the individual, than the preservation of the beauty of the countryside + the control of urban development. Anything I can do to assist your Committee, I will do". Others were less enthusiastic about the prospect and had profound disagreements as to the priorities facing Wales. As Lord Kylsant put it "I cannot help feeling that at the present time what is really important in Wales is to develop Industry and thus find employment for the large number of people unemployed". This attitude, which saw industrial development and amenity as incompatible dogged the Council in years to come.

Abercrombie was also particularly anxious to secure finances, but initially restricted the C.P.R.W.'s appeal to personal contacts: "If some half a dozen of the very wealthy Welshmen were approached in the proper spirit I am sure some money would be forthcoming". It was argued that Alwyn Lloyd would be a suitable person to approach the benevolent David Davies, given their work together in the housing societies. Thomas Jones, the former Deputy Cabinet Secretary also enlisted to the cause, was also considered able "to get either Mr. David Davies M.P. and/or Mrs Davies and/or Miss Davies to give us a good sum". In the event David Davies did not contribute though we can only assume, in the light of his previous generosity, either a philosophical or a political rejection of the C.P.R.W.'s aims, particularly so if the Council was seen as eclipsing his own W.H.D.A. One of his sisters, Gwendoline Davies, nevertheless contributed £20 and was eventually to become a committee member. In the event, the most notable contributions to the C.P.R.W., of £63, £52 and £45, came from Lords Melchet, Howard de Walden and Boston respectively.

The C.P.R.W.'s financial fortunes stood in stark contrast to those of the W.H.D.A.. Whilst the former depended on a network of contacts for fund-raising and received a disproportionate amount of their initial funds from peers and the landed aristocracy, the latter was far more of a coalition of
supporters and interests. Whilst many individuals were motivating forces behind both movements, the W.H.D.A. enjoyed a broader range of members' interests. The geographer and anthropologist H.J. Fleure, for instance, sat on its South Wales Branch committee alongside numerous Trade Union representatives. Industrial and quarrying concerns throughout Wales also supported the Association. By contrast, the C.P.R.W.'s committee confirmed at the inaugural meeting held at the Royal Society of Arts in London in May 1928, was a model of middle class learning and decorum. Lord Boston was President with T.E. Morris (an archaeologist, barrister and Cymroddorion member) and Sir Vincent Evans as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The Cymroddorion Society, therefore, held a firm grip on the Council's offices, locating it in London Welsh circles. Alfred Davies was elected Chairman, a post he held until absence and then illness forced his resignation later in the year. He re-appeared as representative of the Ancient Monuments Board for Wales. Archaeological and antiquarian interests were well represented on the committee with both Willoughby Gardner and T.E. Morris being members of the Cambrian Archaeological Society, Wilfred Hemp of the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments, and Cyril Fox of the National Museum of Wales. In 1930, perhaps the most eminent archaeologist of the time, Mortimer Wheeler, became a member of the Executive Committee. Whilst reflecting the subject's undoubted contemporary popularity, this nevertheless brought to the Council's affairs a particularly learned perspective which in some measure stressed the preservationist side of planning. Alwyn Lloyd and Clough Williams-Ellis represented architectural concerns along with Charles Thomas of the South Wales Institute of Architects, whilst civil servants Bryner Jones and Percy Watkins represented agricultural and educational interests respectively. Watkins, who "occupied a variety of niches in Welsh public service, every one of them highly influential," became a powerful voice in advancing the Council's educational role and in smoothing their path into the schools.

The C.P.R.W.'s inaugural meeting considered it desirable to establish a form of regional organisation. Geography was to be a persistent worry for the C.P.R.W. for in locating in London they had distanced themselves both from the issues and from many potential supporters. Whilst there was a tradition of London-Welsh leadership in cultural campaigns, the South Wales Daily Post, for instance, in welcoming the Council cynically noted that

"Its domicile is in Great Marlborough-street, Regent-street, London, hardly the most suitable locality for a vigilant and energetic defensive campaign. Though one does not wonder that London Celts, with the smell of baked asphalt and bus exhaust fumes in nostrils already stuffy with the close..."
odours of rolls of cloth, turn with greater yearning than most to a thought of larch-clad heights, shady rivulets - with hints of trout in them - and whitewashed cottages, than the wiser folk who stopped at home. It was resolved that conveners be selected for each Welsh county and each one asked "to select, and submit to the Council, the names of some five or six representative ladies and gentlemen, whom he considered suitable" to act as a County or District Committee. The conveners were almost exclusively committee members, and so the C.P.R.W.'s structure drew even further on the network of contacts and acquaintances of common interest. Whilst individually the conveners might have commanded local respect, as a group they were still of restricted outlook.

The C.P.R.W. then sought to attract public support. Their first pamphlet, *Three Questions and an Answer*, highlighted that which they considered worthy of preservation. Buildings, historical sites and landscapes were of aesthetic importance, but they also stressed "the value to the nation of the structures and sites which illustrate its chequered history, and of the dwelling-places of its notable sons and daughters." Legislation was a palliative, but the C.P.R.W. considered most damage the result of thoughtlessness and ignorance and that "the best thing to do is to educate the people as to what is seemly and what is unseemly. No legislation which is in advance of public opinion can succeed, and if the majority of our people see nothing unpleasing in pink-roofed ill-designed bungalows or in a littered mountain top, nothing worth preserving in our white-walled cottages and farmsteads, Parliamentary action cannot greatly help us." Schools were therefore the most important agency, but public support - financial and moral - was vital.

In September 1928 a leaflet appealed for financial support for the C.P.R.W. But of 1008 leaflets sent out to Cymmrodorion members and the Cambrian Archaeological Association, only six responses had been received by mid-October, and of 750 circulated by Willoughby Gardner at his own expense only 13 were returned. The total income gained was £68.11.6. The first Annual Report however announced that 140 individuals and societies had been attracted to join the Council.

CONCLUSION

The C.P.R.W., therefore, represented a number of currents in contemporary Welsh and British life. Their concerns for education and social reform drew on Welsh radicalism and the political values of the likes of Alwyn Lloyd. This was allied to a reverence for traditional patterns of rural life,
reflected equally in Alfred Davies's sense of local heritage and in Lloyd's architecture. On the other hand, the Council bore the imprint of a more cosmopolitan and modernist outlook here represented by Abercrombie and Williams-Ellis. Their sense of 'the plan' was alive to contemporary aesthetic possibilities and to the 'scientific' techniques evolving around the profession. By locating in London, the C.P.R.W. arguably aligned themselves more with these currents and their potential for bringing order to the landscape. It was, however, an uneasy relationship which often sought solace in tradition. In the next chapter I amplify these themes by considering the C.P.R.W.'s campaigns, and then evaluate their success.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

4. Cult of the Beautiful pp.7-8
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
10. Welsh department, Board of Education (1919) Scheme for the Collection of Rural Lore in Wales London: H.M.S.O.
12. Collection of Rural Lore p.7
To Davies, Wales was part of the British Empire peopled by 'our' flesh and blood and sharing an inheritance of freedom, language, institutions, and traditions. The Union flag was the symbol of unity. This should, of course, be read in the context of the Great War, but there is nonetheless a different sense of patriotism here from O.M. Edwards's.

22. Alfred Davies *Cult of the Beautiful; Neglected Treasures*

23. Alfred T. Davies (1933) *Ceiriog Memorial Institute, Glain y Glyn - a Descriptive Handbook* Glyn Ceiriog: Neuadd Goffa Ceiriog. The Principal of the Royal College of Art declared it to be the finest such institution in Britain.

24. Ibid, p.51


26. The industrial areas' problems were well known but Cardiganshire's death rate was double the average for England and Wales. In rural North Wales conditions "of equal gravity have been found to exist cheek-by-jowl with its health resorts - its babbling brooks, and towering peaks... are only decoys to lead us away from the evidences of dread national humiliation". Welsh Housing Association (1911) *Llyfr Coch Cymru - the Red Book of Wales* London: W.H.A., p.16

27. David Davies, a Liberal M.P. (and one of David Lloyd George's 'mafia' of Welsh advisers known, suitably in Davies's case, as the 'garden suburb') founded in 1910 with a donation of £125,000 the Welsh National Memorial to King Edward VII which aimed to eradicate Tuberculosis from Wales. He gave financial support to both the W.H.A. and the South
Wales Garden Cities group. His Ocean Coal Co. was also the first in South Wales to experiment with pithead baths.


30. Daniel Lleufer Thomas (1917) "The Regeneration of Rural Wales" Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook 1917 pp.32-4

31. Cult of the Beautiful p.18


33. Alfred T. Davies (1927) "Advertising on the Countryside - a Rule for the Profession" Letter in The Times, 16/7/27


35. Patrick Abercrombie (1945) Town and Country Planning Oxford University Press, p.27


39. Patrick Abercrombie (1926) The Preservation of Rural England Liverpool University Press/ London: Hodder & Stoughton, p.51. We cannot, he claimed, learn about rural planning from urban Europe. He suggested that the North Wales village of Dolgarrog had been drowned as a dam, built in the hills above, had disturbed the balance between nature's elements.

40. Patrick Abercrombie (1938) "Geography; The Basis of Planning" Geography No.119, Vol.23 part 1, pp.1-8; p.4
41. Patrick Abercrombie (1924) "Wales: A Study in the Contrast of Country and Town" 
42. Ibid. p.191
43. Patrick Abercrombie (1918) Mona Nova: The Future Development of Anglesey 
   Cardiff: W.H.D.A.
44. Ibid. p.5
45. Ibid. p.7
46. W.H.D.A. (1922) Plans of Cottages and 'Living In' Quarters for Agricultural Labourers in 
   Wales Cardiff: W.H.D.A.; p.10. These are Daniel Lleufer Thomas's words. One of the 
   judges was Lady Boston, authoress of (1917) The Agricultural Labourers of Wales and the 
   Forthcoming Housing Legislation Cardiff: W.H.D.A.
47. Mona Nova p.9.
48. Ibid. p.11
49. Ibid. p.17
50. Preservation of Rural England
51. Ibid. p.43
53. C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1932
   request, contained just 10 houses, the Machynlleth suburb 19, and Welshpool and Newtown 
   32 apiece. The Barry Garden Suburb, however, contained over 200 houses and the Trust 
   assumed responsibility for managing and further adding to the larger Rhiwbeina Garden 
   Suburb on the outskirts of Cardiff. Alwyn Lloyd was also retained as architect for 
   municipal housing schemes in several parts of England.
56. H.M. Vaughan, for instance, hoped for "a healthy iconoclastic breeze of education that will 
   blow away all [the] false domestic idols of the parlour", (1919) The New Home Beautiful 
57. T. Alwyn Lloyd (1917) "The Planning of Cottages" Welsh Housing and Development 
   Yearbook 1917 pp.98-102; p.102
   Kenneth Morgan calls Davies "the spiritual leader of the Welsh pacifist movement, a man 
   of immense personal charisma and courage" (1981) "Peace Movements in Wales, 1899- 
   1945" Welsh History Review Vol.10 No.3, pp.398-430; p.408
60. T. Alwyn Lloyd - George M.LI. Davies 17/12/28. George M.LI. Davies Papers 1457a, N.L.W. He also spoke of an evening with Ramsay MacDonald whom he found "so simple and cynesol [warming], not given to cheap exultation, that he won all our hearts. We spent the evening mostly singing folk songs + Welsh hymns".

61. Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects (1939) "Land Settlement Schemes in Wales" Vol.46 No.14, pp.719-24


63. Christopher Hussey (1927) The Picturesque London: Putnam's Sons

64. Christopher Hussey (1941) "Cornwell Manor, Oxfordshire II" Country Life 24/5/41, pp.454-7; p.547

65. Architect Errant His memories of the gentry and the artistic abound. See especially Chapter 6 "Edwardian Glitter".

66. Ibid. p.85


68. Architect Errant p.124

69. Given planning's concern for 'efficiency', it is interesting that Stephen Kern should interpret the Great War as a modernist event in The Culture of Time and Space (see Chapter 10 "Temporality of the July Crisis" and Chapter 11 "The Cubist War") and that Williams-Ellis suggests that his wartime experiences were formative in this respect.

70. Architect Errant p.133


73. Clough Williams-Ellis (1929) "The Ruin of the Countryside" Socialist Review March ed., pp.24-9; p.25

74. Ibid. p.26


76. Clough Williams-Ellis (1929) "England's Beauty Limited" The Spectator 16/11/29

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. The President was the philosopher and broadcaster Cyril Joad, of whom we shall hear more later, and the Vice-Presidents included Aldous Huxley, Bertrand Russell and H.G. Wells.


84. Clough Williams-Ellis (1928) England and the Octopus London: Geoffrey Bles

85. Ibid, p.14

86. Ibid, p.15

87. This was a point most stridently made at the time by the planner Thomas Sharp in, for instance, (1932) Town and Countryside Oxford: Oxford University Press

88. England and the Octopus p.35

89. Ibid, p.40

90. In Architect Errant he recalls his optimistic delight at being offered the chance to direct development at Stevenage New Town

91. England and the Octopus p.22

92. Ibid, p.71

93. Ibid, p.97


98. Portmeirion: Place and Meaning p.26

100. Maxwell Fry (1928) "Port Meirion" Architect's Journal Vol.67, 20/6/28, pp.871-84; p.875
102. Portmeirion: Place and Meaning pp.66-7
103. Architect Errant pp.212-3
106. "Lord Boston is an extremely sound man and has the confidence of all classes of people in Wales" Patrick Abercrombie - Earl of Crawford and Balcarres 26/3/28, C.P.R.E. B IX 132
108. Williams-Ellis, Alwyn Lloyd and Daniel Lleufer Thomas were amongst those addressing the Cymmermodion at the 1924 Pontypool Eisteddfod: (1925) "The Teaching of Art and Architecture in Wales" Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmermodion Session 1923-4, pp.61-115. Williams-Ellis also addressed the 1937 Machynlleth Eisteddfod on the subject of "The Face of Wales" (1938) Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmermodion Session 1937, pp.251-6
111. Ibid, p.156
112. Ibid, p.161
113. Ibid, p.163
114. Ibid, p.169
115. Clough Williams-Ellis, Text of C.P.R.E. Address 1958 Clough Williams-Ellis Collection, 1978 Deposit Box 1, N.L.W.
116. Patrick Abercrombie - Sir Vincent Evans 15/9/27, C.P.R.W. 13/3
117. Cyril Fox - T.E. Morris 21/12/27, C.P.R.W. 41
118. Lord Kylsant - T.E. Morris 30/4/28, C.P.R.W. 41
121. C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1928
122. See for instance W.H.D.A. Annual Report 1916
124. K.O. Morgan Rebirth of a Nation p.131
125. In one case, for instance, he advised against an attempt to include, as Alfred Davies had suggested, amenity issues in St. David's Day celebrations: Percy Watkins, Memo dated 23/12/31, C.P.R.W. 65i. Watkins also suggested "that a member of the council might be invited to enlighten school inspectors and the teaching profession generally on a suitable occasion. [He] also suggested that it was very desirable that addresses should be given to the Welsh Universities so that each student should have the opportunity of hearing, at least once during his three-year course, an explanation of the objects of the Council and of his duties as a citizen": General Committee Minutes 5/12/30, C.P.R.W. X1
126. South Wales Daily Post 27/7/28. Untitled cutting in C.P.R.W. 19/5i
128. Sub-Committee Minutes 11/1/29, C.P.R.W. 13/6i. The convenors were Anglesey, Lord Boston; Cardigan, David Thomas; Caernarfon, Harold Hughes; Denbigh, Willoughby Gardner; Flint, Rt. Hon Sir John Eldon Bankes; Glamorgan, T. Alwyn Lloyd; Meirionydd, Clough Williams-Ellis. The post of Cardigan convenor was initially offered to the geographer H.J. Fleure though he declined to accept due to pressure of work.
129. C.P.R.W. (1928) Three Questions and an Answer Letchworth: Garden City Press
130. Ibid. p.4. This was, of course, something which Alfred Davies particularly stressed. It was repeated in yet another Cymmrodorion meeting by T. Alwyn Lloyd (1931) "County Histories and National Memorials" Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (Session 1929-30) pp.147-54
131. Ibid. p.6
132. Sub-Committee Minutes 19/10/28, C.P.R.W. 13/6i
133. C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1928
CHAPTER TWO
PRESERVING RURAL WALES: THE C.P.R.W. AND ITS WORK

In this chapter I discuss the C.P.R.W.'s early responses to visual change in the Welsh countryside. I do so by concentrating on the nature of the perceived threats to North Wales, and particularly the Snowdonia area; fittingly so as this was the area in which the Council concentrated its efforts. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the C.P.R.W. saw itself as an educational if not missionary movement, instigating changes in the perception of scenic landscape which would then diffuse through the populace. Here I adopt a geographical metaphor for this process, which also highlights the relative scales of conservation concerns. I begin at the summit of Snowdon, then consider the diffusion outwards along the roads to finally extend across the whole of the Snowdonia area. At each stage, some broader points are made about C.P.R.W. policy and practice, as the themes introduced in the previous chapter are analysed and evaluated.

BUILDING ON THE PAST: THE C.P.R.W. AND ARCHITECTURE

The C.P.R.W., initially concerned to project a bold and active image, encountered the perfect opportunity in complaints about the "disgraceful conditions obtaining on the summit of Snowdon."¹ The summit had been a touristic destination since the early nineteenth century and by the 1830s primitive 'hotels' were established in wooden huts crowding the summit. Those were extended when the mountain railway was opened in 1896². By the 1930s, however, they were dilapidated and the summit had become a littered affront to lovers of wild scenery like H.V. Morton who visited it on his journey around Wales³. But whilst Morton loathed the presence and habits of day-trippers, Patrick Abercrombie found the derelict buildings more offensive:

> two ramshackle huts that.. would [be] condemn[ed] as insanitary dwellings if.. anyone [slept] in them in a town. But there you have the problem posed and poised upon the highest jut of ground in Wales or England. The Paradox - woodhuts upon Snowdon - purest nature and most profaning humanity - why, you ask, should there be this profanation? To put wild nature to human use can't it be done more decently⁴.

Like Abercrombie R.O.F. Wynne, a C.P.R.W. member, argued that nature's magnificence was being ridiculed by shanties "dwarfing the magnificence of the great rock cone + giving it an almost
ludicrous appearance!! The matter was, he suggested, a fine opportunity to expose the tourist trade's exploitation and vulgarisation of the countryside. But the Archdeacon of Bangor Cathedral, who had commented on the matter from the pulpit, hit the nail on the head, suggesting that action would call attention to the C.P.R.W. and its aims: "The summit of Snowdon would be an ideal exemplar to the whole of the country. I find that generally speaking ideals flow from the top - ideals follow the laws of gravitation rather than of capillary attraction!! Council President Lord Boston echoed the role of the few in demonstrating enlightened opinion. He was convinced "that if we could move in this particular matter, it would be a good 'scoop' for the Council, + a fine advertisement!! The symbolic resonance of the act of cleaning up the summit of Wales's highest mountain was fully appreciated.

The summit land was divided between three landowners, and it was suggested that one of these - the young squire of the Vaynol Estate, Sir Michael Duff Assheton-Smith - might come under the paternal influence of Lord Boston, himself a North Wales landowner. W.J. Hemp cast the net of influence still further and asked Lord Anglesey to approach Sir Michael, who had just come of age, asking if he would renounce his claim to the summit as a celebratory gesture. Though unsuccessful this time, the presumed bonds between landowners were to assume considerable importance in the C.P.R.W.'s work. The question of ownership was also raised in the archaeologist Willoughby Gardner's report on the condition of the Snowdon summit. He hoped that the summit might be vested in the National Trust, the peak of Wales's highest mountain evidently being of too much symbolic importance to remain in private hands. He also hoped that the derelict buildings might be cleared, and a better hotel-restaurant built slightly below the summit in accordance with the best traditions of Swiss and other mountain railways. To this end the hotels' owners, the Snowdon Mountain Railway, were offered the skills of C.P.R.W. members: "the Council includes among its members a number of gentlemen of eminence in the architectural world, besides others possessed of wide experience in the methods employed on the Continent to preserve the natural amenities of mountain peak resorts, whilst adding to their attractiveness from the tourist's point of view".

When in 1931 the railway's owners accepted the offer of Clough Williams-Ellis's services. J.D.K. Lloyd, the C.P.R.W.'s new secretary, reassured the Company of their wisdom for the tourist industry "must inevitably depend for its prosperity to a very large extent on a due care for the amenities both of the countryside and of its buildings. Williams-Ellis intended to make the new hotel blend with its surroundings. An early drawing, however, reveals ambitious proposals. He suggested a three-storey modernist building slightly below the summit (Fig.11) providing a
terminus building for the railway and a vast ground floor restaurant with a small terrace. A larger tea terrace on the first floor was to give panoramic views to the north and west. Whilst Williams-Ellis generally adhered to neo-classical or the picturesque, his few buildings for leisure purposes were in modernist style. A striking design for a restaurant above the Conway Falls proposed a graceful yet functional modern building clinging to a rocky promontory with steps leading down onto a terrace overlooking the river gorge. Williams-Ellis's 'Laughing Water' restaurant in Cobham, Kent was a graceful semi-wooden structure, its long horizontal lines delicately perched above water on stilts. The modernist or 'International' style was widely seen as the most appropriate for the new mass-leisure age. The fitness of purpose of the buildings' lean proportions reflected the virtues of human fitness, cleanliness and health. It was no coincidence that many developments in both modern architecture and recreation occurred in Continental Europe. Germany, for instance, from where emerged so many modern architects, also fostered the youth hostels and the 'strength through joy' movement.

This aspect of the modern age was now being introduced to even the remotest areas of Britain. Thomas Sharp urged that buildings in the country should exhibit no preservationist sentimentality. We should, he argued, demand modern buildings expressing honesty of purpose but also
modesty. Williams-Ellis's eventual design for Snowdon fulfilled these criteria. It was a single storey building housing a large restaurant, its vast windows offering dramatic views. A small terrace was located at one end with a larger roof terrace above. Whilst the old shacks had crowded the summit and disfigured its grandeur the new hotel, whilst "unquestionably intruding on nature" did so "not so much apologetically as with its own reasoned human dignity". Patrick Abercrombie saw in it human use and wild nature harmonised not through imitation or sham rockwork, but through honesty. It was a modern hotel, "fit symbol of this age of materialist ease."

Building for Wales

Abercrombie suggested that Williams-Ellis's Snowdonia hotel was, in its honesty of design, authentic. This search for authenticity characterised the C.P.R.W.'s stance on architecture in general, one generally opposed to modern design. Their pamphlet addressed To Those Who Build in Wales (1937) claimed that the beauty of the countryside, was was often marred by thoughtless siting of buildings and by poor designs and materials. Wales was, it claimed, particularly vulnerable to alien and unsuitable buildings. The implication was that there existed a native architectural style which had evolved with its surroundings but which was now being threatened by the machine age of pressed tiles and asbestos. According to the C.P.R.W.'s argument, humility to both geography and tradition was the key. Buildings should fit comfortably and humbly within the contours of the landscape and, like the Snowdon hotel, not dominate the skyline.

1. Simplicity

A concern for tradition, and ambiguous response to modern design, characterised the C.P.R.W.'s stress on simple design. They argued that "The simplicity and dignity, the quiet colouring and the absence of all pretentious fuss is what gives the old buildings and the best new ones their dignity and charm," as an illustration in Britain and the Beast (Fig.12) also implied. Certain materials, discussed below, were especially unsuitable for Wales and should be avoided. The then fashionable half-timbering was particularly objectionable for it was generally sham, shoddy and cheap. Some 'common vulgarities' included front doors with 'fancy' shaped lights, 'fancy' variegated shrubs and trees, different quality of treatment of the facade and the rest of the house (a house should be honestly good all round) and, perhaps most interestingly, the use of un-Welsh and therefore meaningless names for new houses - what they called the 'Balmoral' and 'Chatsworth' fetish.

There was an attempt here to define authenticity of style, to emulate the vernacular and to reduce it to a formula for mass education and consumption. Whilst this suggested that there should be an
Old and new in North Wales. The old condemned by the local authority; the new officially approved.

Figure 12. "Old and New in North Wales" from Britain and the Beast
emulation of Welsh tradition it did not necessarily imply nostalgia. These arbiters of taste were
equally scathing of the "olde Worlde" house: "thick beams, often hollow, rush across his dining
room ceiling supporting nothing at all, whilst sham silken bell-ropes dangle gracefully over the
electric bell-push. The only genuine thing in this fake house is its master who surprisingly
enough does not take the air, as surely he should do, in a ruff and trunk-hose" 19. The C.P.R.W.
also gave profound support to the modernising work of the housing associations mentioned earlier.

ii. Materials

Authenticity extended also to the use of materials. Ornamental ridge tiles, & 'fancy' cast-iron
railings or gates were minor evils; pressed brick and concrete amongst the major ones. That most
visible element, the roof, should exhibit sympathy to Wales's traditional use of slate: "Red
machine-made tiles and pink asbestos are the very worst offenders; glaring, smooth and mechanical
looking when first laid, they never 'weather' or mellow to their surroundings, and always look
crude and 'suburban'20. The use of language is significant: "offenders" implies that a code of
conduct has been broken, though "crude" implies that respect for it comes only with breeding and
taste. Indeed there were no contemporary regulations on the look of a building21 and so an
'educated' awareness of the traditional values of craftsmanship, rather than of the "machine-made" or
"mechanical" products in which only "suburban" folk might see virtues, was all the more
important. The critique of suburbia did not, however, extend to Alwyn Lloyd's designs.

iii. Colour

Lloyd's suburbs were noted for their use of delicate shades of colour wash. This was universally
recommended as a means of brightening Welsh villages. Alwyn Lloyd's pamphlet Brighter Welsh
Villages and How we can Obtain Them 22 lamented dullness and disorder. Even the most prosaic
building could be improved by periodical 'spring cleaning'. Some blamed a heritage of Welsh
Puritanism for the dullness23; the peace campaigner G.M.L1. Davies for instance noted that "our
people, so sensitive to harmony in sound and in words (in the shape of music, poetry and oratory)
are almost completely Philistine to [the] harmony of colour and setting in cottages"24. But Lloyd
also blamed materialism and saw the profounder consequences of this lack of in the mining towns
and industrial villages of South Wales:

Row upon row, street after street, town after town, from one end of an
industrial valley to the other, the lack of lightness and colour has a
depressing effect on the district and undoubtedly on its population as well.
When this is coupled with such bad economic conditions as have been
experienced in these mining valleys during the last few years, it adds greatly to the prevailing squalor and depression of spirit, which re-act inevitably on a whole community25.

G.M.LI. Davies saw inspiration in Portmeirion and in the brightness and simplicity of Lloyd's garden suburbs which in their aesthetics also reflected a fairer social order. But such examples threw "into deeper shadow and more appalling contrast the disorder, drabness, and disgusting ugliness of so much of the older housing and village planning of South Wales. The psychological effect of architectural discord upon the unfortunate inhabitants of this appalling wilderness is not the least that they have to bear. To emerge from the Rhondda into the pleasant open greeness below Trefforest gives almost a new outlook on life"26. It was this new outlook that voluntary agencies - including the Quakers and the Service Civile Internationale - attempted to inculcate in the mining village of Brynmawr through schemes of park creation, and the painting and colour-washing of groups of old houses (Fig.13)27.

That aesthetics were but a part of a progressive community spirit is clear. Survey work was carried out in Brynmawr by the LePlay society and the University of Wales, and a civic week was planned to include folk dancing and eisteddfodau 28. Allotments and small-holdings were allocated and a craft community was established, revealing the perceived moral superiority of a rural existence29. But similar experiments were afoot away from the industrial valleys. In Ponterwyd, near Aberystwyth, a Village Development Committee had been formed by J.H. Edwards, an Englishman with a holiday home in the village30. He had installed a generating plant, and sold cheap electricity to the villagers. But their payments funded environmental improvements. Paint and lime, for instance, was bought in bulk and sold at a reduced rate. A prize was offered annually for the best kept cottage, and Clough Williams-Ellis's and Alwyn Lloyd's architectural advice was sought. Indeed the villagers sought to "[make] our little Village a model Welsh Village"29. Such activities were, for the C.P.R.W., a welcome reconstruction of the notion of community; one that too often, in their opinion, neglected the aesthetics of life. The villagers of Ponterwyd, like the Quakers in Brynmawr, combined the spirit and the sight. In this way, the C.P.R.W. argued that the face of Wales could be cleaner and brighter, and the spirit more alive.

Teaching Taste
Educational initiatives and propaganda - such as Portmeirion - were important in communicating architectural ideas to the people. A Cymmrodorion meeting at the Pontypool National Eisteddfod in 1924 debated the teaching of art and architecture in Wales32. In it Clough Williams-Ellis
stressed the importance of propaganda for thriving art, whilst Alwyn Lloyd urged the University of Wales to teach architecture grounded in Welsh tradition and craftsmanship.

There were, however, more direct methods of intervention employed. Architectural panels were established offering free advice to the untutored, but the C.P.R.W. also intervened more aggressively. One Evan Evans - whom Williams-Ellis labelled "a builder and a quite uneducated person" - intended to erect bungalows near St. Davids in Pembrokeshire and was persistently offered advice "as may ensure such development being orderly and acceptable". Evans, however, saw only the prejudices of holidaymakers "who enjoy the place themselves, but strongly object to others coming, and making the place 'too popular'. His reply reflected both resistance to 'outsiders', and the view that architectural discretion was seen to be a middle class luxury.

We might also interpret the C.P.R.W.'s intervention on commercial bungalow designs in this light. For their owners, the bungalows' vivid colours and cheap and cheerful designs represented an escape from that very urban drabness the C.P.R.W. themselves attacked. But an advert reproduced in England and the Octopus (Fig. 14) expressed the threat to local architectural styles. The 'Cottabunga' - a self-assembly bungalow - could be delivered to the customer's door in a choice of set styles. In Alwyn Lloyd's opinion "it is these abominations which have been responsible for so much of the damage to countryside and coast. People buy their shacks and wooden buildings from catalogues and these are of course in the worst taste with unnecessary 'decoration' and fripperies". Alwyn Lloyd urged that these buildings "should be in harmony with their surroundings and have some relation to local building traditions". The companies' attention was particularly drawn to the use of vivid materials and to superfluous ornament. Public authorities' designs were also criticised. Alwyn Lloyd asked that the Ministry of Health's standard designs for rural houses give more attention to "local character and.. Welsh traditions". Similarly when the Ministry of Labour proposed the establishment of one of their training camps for the unemployed in Snowdonia, Patrick Abercrombie urged the amelioration of an 'institutional' appearance.

Architectural policy, therefore, drew on an arts and crafts tradition of honest, vernacular design most clearly brought to the C.P.R.W. through Alwyn Lloyd's work. It stressed the maintenance of regional order, opposing the incursions of styles and materials representing a vulgar world outside. But it did not, however, lapse into antiquarianism, seeing rather the design opportunities of modernism.
The "COTTABUNGA" (Regd.)

Erect, for £245:10 nett. "COTTABUNGA" buildings may be seen dotted all over the Countryside, North—South—East—West, and are giving universal satisfaction. No better value at the price is possible, and if you would enjoy the comforts and luxury of this artistic residence this coming summer place your order NOW.

Our illustrated Catalogue, No. 103, containing full particulars and a full range of other Bungalows, Pavilions, Motor Houses, Chalets, etc., post free to any address.

BROWNE & LILLY, LTD.
THAMES SIDE, READING

Figure 13. Park creation in Brynmawr, South Wales coalfield (from Thomas Sharp's Town and Countryside)

Figure 14. The "Cottabunga", from England and the Octopus
SIGNS OF THE TIMES - ADVERTISING ON THE ROADSIDE

Few subjects aroused the wrath of the amenity organisations between the wars as the prevalence of the advertising sign. Garishly painted, they plied their wares from roadsides and the walls of buildings. The roadsides were seen as

*a comparatively new field for advertisers to exploit. Millions of people are continually on the move - by road. The week-end habit has become firmly established. No scheme of advertising which aims at attracting visitors, or business from outside sources can now be considered complete without it attempts to reach this rapidly moving throng.*

Despite its remoteness from the main commercial and population centres, the signs' encroachment into rural Wales signified the advance of commercial values and products and the morality of an urban world.

In June 1928, the C.P.R.W. complained about a hoarding erected by the Raleigh Cycle Company (Fig.15) near the village of Glynceiriog in Clwyd. Alfred Davies had expressed concern about the disfigurement by commerce of the village whose amenities he had fought to preserve, and whose spiritual heritage he had illuminated. A letter to the Raleigh Co. noted that the area was "associated with some of the most stirring episodes in the history of Wales and... [seems] with associations which have caused the district to be deemed a precious possession by the Welsh people". No little distress was caused by seeing the countryside used for advertising "in a way alien to its natural beauty and romantic associations". The Council hoped that the company, like Shell, would respond in a public-spirited way to the friendly representations made. Shell had removed its advertising signs in what the D.I.A. called "an act of penitence" (Fig.16), and instead developed an advertising policy recalling a tradition of artistic patronage appealing to many in the C.P.R.W.'s ranks.

But the reply from Raleigh's agents was aggressively materialistic. The signs, they claimed, were invaluable to the small local trader, a stance copied by the Vigzol Oil Company who argued that "We are at all times anxious to preserve the countryside scenery, but we must draw a line when it directly interferes with the business of our clients and we feel certain that your society will appreciate this point of view". According to Raleigh - demonstrating the reversal of values lamented by Williams-Ellis in *England and the Octopus* - their sign was "certainly not spoiling the
"Shell" performing an act of penitence: removing a road sign. Their good example has had a few followers, but only a few.
scenery in any shape or form", was perched on a hill and thus could not obstruct any view, and the sole complainant was a lady doctor described locally as "a bit of a crank"50. Alfred Davies persisted, branding Raleigh's sign "obtrusive, ugly and entirely out of harmony with its surroundings. That is a fact which must be self evident to anyone who gives the least attention to the subject"51. He also rejected the suggestion that the financial interests of any individual trader were to be deemed superior to the aesthetic rights of the community as a whole.

Faced with such intransigence, the amenity campaigners had a limited range of weapons. Propaganda, however, was a particularly potent one. Constant pressure from journals like the Architectural Review forced concessions from the likes of Raleigh whose Managing Director notified Clough Williams-Ellis early in 1929 of their decision not to renew dilapidated signs. But to force further concessions a typically strident article of Williams-Ellis's appeared in the Architectural Review later that year haranguing Raleigh for their inactivity and picturing one of their signs on a Snowdonian hillside52. Whilst Raleigh spent £50,000 on advertising - thus ruining the country their customers rode out to see - the C.P.R.E. struggled to raise a £20,000 fighting fund. He saw this as characteristic of an English slave mentality

characterized by a tame submission to infringements of rights and liberties, to insults and bullyings, such as we present-day Britons suffer at the hands of our more brutal advertisers. Are we going to put up with the present state of things indefinitely or is there hope of a revolt? I think there is. Messrs. Lyons and Wills, and their like, have chastized us with whips this long time, but with the Raleigh Cycle Company have come the blue and yellow scorpions that should drive us to mutiny against the insolence of Big Business - if anything will53.

Faced with such hostility, and increasing advocacy of commercial boycotts, Raleigh had little option but to change the signs' colours from blue and yellow to black and white on a green background; to submit all proposed new sites to the S.C.A.P.A. Society54 for approval; and to welcome all reasonable suggestions for alterations to the position of existing signs.

This tactic of moral coercion and persuasion was adopted by Williams-Ellis who, observing adverts in the village of Garreg on his own Brondanw Estate, posted a notice stating that he "had hoped that the inhabitants' own pride in the appearance of (the) village would have protected them against the vulgarity of Commercial Advertising, but even if they do not share his feelings that such
things are a dis-figurement, he would remind them that so far as the Brondanw Estate is concerned, the display of proprietary trade advertisements is not permitted under any circumstances.\textsuperscript{55} Williams-Ellis further suggested sending a copy of the notice to Welsh newspapers so that other Welsh landowners might frame their own bye-laws.

Of course, Williams-Ellis would have had recourse to law on his own estate, and legal support was soon afforded to the movement as a whole. In May 1929, amidst unusual public interest, a Barmouth court witnessed the first Welsh prosecution for "exhibiting advertisement signs so as to disfigure or injuriously affect the view of rural scenery"\textsuperscript{56}. The defendants were charged a token fine, but the\textit{Daily Mirror}, which was campaigning against hoardings, argued that "The principle is thus established... that it is an offence to erect a sign or hoarding which either disfigures a beautiful view or cuts it off from the eyes of the passer-by. The practice of erecting hoardings on agricultural land beside roads leading to towns has gone too far.\textsuperscript{57} There was widespread public disapproval of advertising, much of it grossly insensitive. One C.P.R.W. member reported that local caterers had cut the word \textit{TEAS} into the turf of the hillside near his home: "This eyesore is visible a mile off & quite spoils the remote charm of the scenery. If any action is possible beyond moral persuasion I will see that it is taken.\textsuperscript{58} At a meeting of the Meirionydd Police Committee a local constable was praised for his 'war' on hoardings.\textsuperscript{59}

One advertiser, Chapman's Circus, evidently felt that it was the war's favourite enemy. In the Aberdyfi area, the circus was fined after dozens of posters were found on the roadsides, one even affixed to the judge's garden gate! At the Llandudno petty sessions the circus manager was fined one guinea on each of five charges and ordered to remove all posters. One constable had counted 69 Chapman's posters in the Conway Valley and another found ".on returning home from his tour of inspection, that in his absence a poster had been posted on his own back garden door.\textsuperscript{60} In reply to the C.P.R.W.'s admonitions, Chapman's Circus argued that

\textit{the whole thing boils down to this. Which is the more important (1) that a few bills should be put on a few walls and hoardings which cannot possibly disfigure anything that can reasonably be called scenery or (2) in these days of financial depression and unemployment some 100/150 men should be kept in work or thrown out of employment.. when it comes to a state where a few rocks are of greater importance than bread and butter for a family, then the sooner England..with its governments and societies, ceases to function as a civilised community and returns to barbarism, the better.}\textsuperscript{61}
J.D.K. Lloyd retorted that the C.P.R.W.'s aims were in no way opposed to the need for increased employment, but rested rather on the belief that future prosperity lay in wise and ordered developments; such as that not represented by Chapman's hoardings! They did not see the disjunction "between sentimental visionaries and 'realists'"62.

New Lives - New Landscapes
Roadside issues highlighted a broader unease in the C.P.R.W. about modern developments and their acceptance into the natural scene. As the modern age made economic demands on the rural areas, so did it make scenic ones, creating an aesthetic tension between tradition and modernity. In advertising hoardings and garish bungalows, the influence of the modern age could be seen advancing slowly westwards into rural Wales. It often took the form of innovations calculated to improve the quality of life; standardized cottages were often unsympathetic to the local vernacular but nonetheless helped eradicate Tuberculosis. As we have seen, however, Abercrombie felt that modern concerns could be accommodated into an awareness of tradition.

A greater problem for the C.P.R.W. was accommodating into the landscape new and unprecedented forms. This was not an unease shared by the archaeologist Cyril Fox. Disaffected by the attitudes of some within the C.P.R.W., he stressed in 1930 that whilst "we must preserve as much of the ordered beauty of the past as we reasonably can... it is even more important to guide the surging tide of human activity of the present and future into the right channels"63. This use of a natural, as opposed to a mechanistic, metaphor perhaps reflected Fox's optimism about the modern age. He was not alone in his admiration. The Face of the Land noted the grace of the railway engine and rail bridge, and Vaughan Cornish similarly saw natural forms in industrial design64. Fox drew a distinction between nobly planned and worthily executed developments characteristic of the age and disorderly, vulgar activities. The former produced a reaction, for the viewer of sensibility, between the grandeur of nature and the works of homo sapiens. The two worthiest developments he highlighted were the arterial road and electricity lines.

"A great and well-engineered road", claimed Fox, "is a noble monument of our civilization; flanked by natural beauty unimpaired as it might and ought over long stretches to be, such a road is as worthy of national pride as the Menai Bridges, flanked by the woodland of the Menai Straits. Let us fight to keep our arterial roads clean and beautiful"65. The Face of the Land mirrored this reverence for the road as well as Fox's repugnance for those despoliations which marred its modern beauty. As we have seen, the Council was through its campaigns against advertisements - as well
as those for attractive petrol stations and roadside tea huts - actively working towards clean roadsides to ensure that roads would remain noble monuments rather than commercial battlefields.

Electricity distribution - vital, popular and progressive - was rather more difficult to absorb. Cyril Fox saw a sublime beauty in well conceived hydro electricity schemes, but more problematic was the distribution of electricity on poles and pylons. Stanley Baldwin's Tory Party benefited by "appropriating a potent symbol of modernity and progress" through its introduction of the 1926 Act which established the National Grid. The Grid's expansion marked in dramatically visual form the spread of the state across the face of the land. The process was widely seen as one not be hampered. Planners accommodated this in various ways. In the *Architects' Journal*, S. Rowland Pierce scathingly dealt with conservationist concern, asking rather that the aesthetic challenge be met:

> We are moderns living in modern times. Unless we admit to deliberate hypocrisy, it is impossible to find in the picturesque lumber of the past solutions of the new and urgent problems of the present and future; ... it may be possible to design a transmission tower [like]... imitation trees...; or to evolve a tower constructed of half-timber and brick-nogging, with a special treillage for ivy; but what hoots of mirth and shouts of outraged propriety would ascend if such were the officially approved method for facing and solving this problem in a direct and beautiful manner?

A correct and modern consideration of engineering efficiency produced, he argued, structures of airy lightness, and recent British pylons reflected a true fitness for purpose - a particularly modern criterion. Cyril Fox saw in the pylons ancient and noble references: "the lattices of the towers are lovely in their simplicity and fitness for purpose; and... the successions of such in perspective is as noble as that of the arches of an aqueduct on the Campagna." His perception again echoes the subject's treatment in *The Face of the Land* (Fig.17).

But the exalted talk of electricity planning concealed a reality which was often messier. Figure 18 accompanied Figure 17 in *The Face of the Land* and pointed out this disjunction, but it did so particularly pertinently for it was taken above the Llanberis Pass in the heart of Snowdonia.

Amidst the architects' rhetoric of clean and functional lines, the reality of distribution was often a tangle of tawdry poles and cables, ill-placed and utterly disfiguring. In the Llanberis Pass, for instance, the appearance of new transmission lines in 1928, and similarly disfiguring telephone lines, caused many to feel that the beauty of the pass had been "impaired beyond expression."
Figure 17. Simplicity and fitness for purpose: electricity pylons
(from The Face of the Land)

Figure 18. 'Tawdry' and tangled electricity poles above the Llanberis Pass
(from The Face of the Land)
The C.P.R.W. were dismayed at the lack of "regard to the possibility of combining industrial development with the conservation of rural amenities". Of particular concern was the refusal, on economic grounds, to bury electricity or telephone cables. Government was concerned to accelerate electricity supply, particularly given the low levels of rural electrification. In 1929-30 only 4% of the potential rural customers were connected to the grid and within the electricity industry there was a feeling that their progressive scheme was being thwarted by traditionalists, whilst the possibilities of reconciling tradition and modernity through electricity had been recognised elsewhere. 'Electro-Farming' gave a new lease of life to traditional industries and in Germany, France and Italy the electricity industry played a prominent role in 'back to the land' movements, advancing what has been called 'techno-arcadianism'. Given the poor state of electricity distribution in Wales, and popular support for extension of the grid, the C.P.R.W. cautiously aligned themselves with the modernists in refusing "to offer any criticism of a captious or unreasonable nature". In negotiations with power companies, the C.P.R.W.'s secretary noted "that great care would be taken on our part to appoint representatives of a progressive outlook".

Whilst the modern age therefore presented new aesthetic challenges, the solution could be found in a concern for visual order and at the hand of the architect and planner of taste. Tradition and modernity could thus be visually reconciled.

PARKS FOR THE NATION

The same tension between tradition and modernity was expressed in the campaign to establish national parks in Wales. National parks had existed for some time in the United States, Canada and South Africa, but in Britain progress had been stifled as the debate was linked with the vexed question of access to the countryside. Debate began in earnest with the formation of a Departmental Committee in 1929 to consider the establishment of parks, inviting representations from groups like the C.P.R.W.

There was considerable confusion as to what a National Park should constitute. For purists the word "park" conjured visions of sophisticated pleasures, and of iron railings. A friend asked Abercrombie "if we intended to let loose Elephants, Kangaroos and Chamois into the recesses of Snowdonia - he visualised a national park as a sort of glorified Whipsnade surrounded by a ring fence". To avoid confusion, it was suggested that "those who are interested in this very important subject in Wales should make up their minds as to what their idea of a National Park actually is". At the British level there were few disagreements. The Times hoped for parks dedicated "to characteristic physical recreations of the countryside and to the intellectual recreation
of nature study, and not to organized amusements. Cyril Joad, the philosopher and strident campaigner for access to the countryside, saw an additional contemplative role for the parks: "Those who have studied the peculiar kinds of neurosis which psycho-analysts and others seek to cure are agreed that they are in almost every case due to the strain and complexity of modern life. Modern men and women are like taut strings for ever braced. The parks could provide a respite from the strain of modern living. Abercrombie too saw the parks as correctives to the mechanisation of human existence; and when the Standing Committee on National Parks was formed in 1936 to press for government action, they stressed that the parks were for spiritual as well as physical exercise: "without the sight of the beauty of nature the spiritual power of the British people will be atrophied." The debate in Wales on park selection revealed opinions as to what else the parks should be.

i. Scenery

Scenic preservation was clearly one of the parks' most important roles. Debates, therefore, centered on what constituted an essentially Welsh scene. Prevailing opinion favoured upland areas; Lord Boston, for instance, suggesting Snowdonia, the Cader Idris massif, the Devil's Bridge/Pumlumon area, and the Brecon Beacons. Alwyn Lloyd, however, felt that quieter scenery should also be preserved; the Gower Peninsula, for instance, had "a wonderful coastline and much inland village charm" and was also in danger of spoliation. But the C.P.R.W. highlighted only three areas in its report to the Government Committee: Snowdonia, the Pembrokeshire coast and the Brecon Beacons.

The geographer Vaughan Cornish stressed that Snowdonia should be "in the first selection of inland areas on account of its pre-eminent natural beauty, of the historic interest of the great castles which guard the entrances, of the economic advantages consequent upon the comparatively small sporting value of the mountain pastures, and on account of its geographical relation to urban areas." Cornish's criteria were primarily aesthetic. Snowdonia, seen from the west, provided the spectacle, unequalled elsewhere in Britain, of a true range of mountain peaks. Within its area were soaring peaks of rugged volcanic rock, mountain tarns and waterfalls, rushing streams and overhanging woods. Cornish applied scientific method in determining beauty, and he suggested that an aesthetic study of Snowdonia be carried out. But there was also a spirituality in this; an eclipse over Snowdon revealed a new power in Nature for Cornish, its geography making Snowdonia both a Welsh Valhalla, and a shrine for the English pilgrim of scenery.
Cornish was a devotee of coastal scenery and he gave full vent to his poetic impressions of Pembrokeshire's natural scene: "The vast expanse and distant horizon of the sea viewed from the lofty headland is unsurpassed in elemental grandeur, in the sheltered cove where waves break on a beach unspoilt by artificial structures, the scenery is more purely natural than on mountain pastures. On the wild cliffs of this western promontory could divine Nature be revealed, and could be preserved for all time that untouched elemental outlook on the ocean which is the heritage and birthright of an island people. To preserve that outlook, the C.P.R.W. recommended placing the building line one mile inland in Pembrokeshire with careful planning for another mile in order to secure an uninterrupted vista and access to the coast. Thus would be established a park 50 miles long but one to two miles in breadth; an unusual proposal but one which, Cornish claimed, could not be questioned "by any person of taste who has observed the rapid sophistication and even vulgarisation of our shores."

Breconshire benefited from its proximity to South Wales's mining towns, for "in respect to accessibility it should be observed that the mining population of South Wales stands in special need of country recreation on account of the utter disregard of scenic amenity which was shown in the planning, or want of planning of their towns. In this way the spiritual importance of scenic amenity and recreation could complement other efforts afoot to combat industrial squalor in South Wales.

The parks' sociological function as "sanctuaries of scenery for the preservation of the sense of communion with Nature" was evident. But by preserving valued landscapes representing particular types of scenic order, they also served to heighten the aesthetic faculty of the populace. Cornish believed that this faculty was latent in all and that it merely required educating by the leaders of thought.

ii. Science

The contemplation of nature also facilitated scientific study. Cyril Fox argued that certain areas, especially of Snowdonia, should be set aside as sanctuaries for flora and fauna, from which the public might be permanently excluded. In his opinion, the demands of public access were in direct conflict with the aim of scientific preservation in such areas of unique importance, and access could not be allowed to corrupt knowledge. The Pembrokeshire coast park also had advantages for the study of geology, but rapid implementation of legislation was needed for "the places where outcrops can be most easily studied, i.e. the flanks of coves, are precisely the areas where geological characters are most readily obscured by bungalows and by development generally."
The C.P.R.W.'s concern about sporadic building therefore had wider implications. Fox argued that park governing bodies should include at least one geologist, botanist, zoologist and archaeologist to ensure that accredited scientific workers be given free access to the areas to be controlled nationally. He saw the parks more explicitly than Comish as educators, as areas revealing a truth about Nature. In this he reflected the increased concern for field observation and nature study apparent in many of the natural sciences, including geography, and in school education more generally. But scientists had themselves corrupted the record of natural plant migration by introducing alien alpine species onto Snowdon. Authenticity had thus been compromised and "The responsibility of this generation to posterity demands that nothing of the kind shall be allowed if and when the area comes under national control"100. In Fox's opinion National Parks were to reflect an authentic record of nature, a national heritage. It may be no coincidence that the plant ecologist A.G. Tansley, who coined the phrase 'ecosystem', campaigned for national parks, for in Fox's scheme the park was similarly to record a sense of scientific order. But there was also a sense of political order and national identity in Fox's concern for native species. Nature was to symbolise the nation as a 'natural' political unit. Scientific study could therefore record national identity and through these parks the British, and the Welsh, might come to know their land and their past.

iii. Antiquity
Historical knowledge was also more directly communicated by the national park. Vaughan Cornish suggested that Snowdonia's romantic history enhanced the appeal of its natural features101 and Cyril Fox also claimed that Snowdonia was of exceptional interest from the point of view of the history of people in Wales. Within it were many Iron Age and Bronze Age sites and on its borders, significantly, stood Roman forts and Edwardian castles, testimony to the area's inaccessibility and subsequent role as a stronghold of freedom. No area in Wales, he argued, "better illustrated the continuity of history, and the power of a countryside with pronounced natural features to cause from age to age similar phenomena of human action and reaction"102. This was a central theme, as we shall see, in Fox's archaeological work. Pembrokeshire was likewise of great importance for the study of prehistory for into its harbours and coves came the first seafarers in the third or fourth millenium before Christ. Evidence of all subsequent civilizations was to be found in the zone. The cliff scenery which so moved Cornish illustrated, for Fox, a particular type of fortification which utilized inaccessible terrain. In Fox's opinion "Nothing but good, from the point of view of historical studies, can come from the creation of a National Park in the area"103.
Tradition and Modernity

As we have seen, Fox was concerned that the landscape should express developments worthy of all civilizations. As such, he stressed that National Parks should illustrate human activities, given care for the scientific record. Fox knew that Snowdonia was favourable for water works "but the formation of a big modern water scheme or schemes within the area need not be viewed with any apprehension from the National Park point of view. Every modern water scheme in Wales has greatly improved the amenities of, and access to, the areas involved." In their sincerity and assertiveness could the modernizing programme be communicated to future generations as testimony to contemporary civilization. Likewise, archaeological preservation could be woven into the demands of the modern age, given the concern for visual order expressed above. When the Roman site of Caerleon was threatened by indiscriminate building, Fox pleaded "for an enlightened habit of mind, a broader outlook in dealing with these problems.. The new road.. could take a wider sweep; the new villas could overlook a stretch of green-sward, its level expanse broken by the straight lines of the barrack buildings, and the Roman defences, ditch and bank and wall; the City of the Legions risen anew from its ashes. Is such a vision impossible of achievement?" Abercrombie agreed with Fox that "we aim at no mummified specimen exhibited in a day museum." But neither had foreseen the role that the agricultural scientist George Stapledon, then at University College Aberystwyth, outlined for a mid Wales park in The Land Now and Tomorrow. He suggested areas of high accessibility with provision of recreational facilities - including 'primitive' golf courses - and accommodation, as well as intensive agriculture and schemes of land reclamation. These were more humanised pleasures than other commentators proposed, but nonetheless he conceived fully the parks' educational role, with agriculture providing a spectacle and an understanding for the town dweller of the workings of the countryside. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, many were wary of Stapledon's ideas; evidence that the tension between preservation and modernity had not been fully resolved.

Preserving Snowdonia's Status Quo

But if the national park reflected a concern for scenic order and for natural or scientific order, then it also revealed the C.P.R.W.'s concern for social order. Stapledon's plans cut across the prevailing sense of both aesthetic and social order, raising the spectre of hordes of townspeople in search of the wrong kind of 'park'. The provision of 'facilities' threatened to undermine the educational value of recreation which should, claimed Cyril Joad, be spartan. Parks should be unspoilt and offer a hearty contact with nature. Within their confines could the vulgar be made sensitive, and the untutored become tutored. Those who did not abide by the rules of conduct might, it was
suggested, be apprehended by Park Wardens - country enthusiasts policing the parks in C.P.R.W. armbands seeking out those dropping litter, picking wild flowers or behaving inappropriately. The C.P.R.W. fully addressed this concern for 'appropriate' social order.

Clough Williams-Ellis listed one of the national parks' aims as being the preservation of the status quo. But to him, the park was not to be seen either as scenic order or as an ecosystem. The park was, rather, an estate and he was concerned with the question of landownership. Williams-Ellis, somewhat paradoxically given his socialist beliefs and Britain and the Beast's call for land nationalization, felt that private landownership by established families was the best (albeit a threatened) means of achieving controlled and ordered landscapes: "The time is apparently coming when we can no longer look to unaided private piety for the upkeep and safeguarding of what are or should be our national heirlooms. The changes and chances of these unstable and swift-moving times are unfavourable to the ancien regime and the great memorials of that order." It was often argued by conservationists that it was the break up of the great estates that caused despoliation as land was bought by speculators. He therefore suggested that Snowdonia's landowners might form a statutory company, contributing their property in return for shares. Snowdonia could thus be saved at no cost. Dividends would replace estates' and individuals' incomes and in their shares landowners would have an immediately realisable gilt-edged security.

Williams-Ellis was himself a Snowdonian landowner, and he attempted to influence his neighbours. One such neighbour, Sir Michael Assheton-Smith, had already been approached regarding Snowdon's summit, and in June of 1935, Clough Williams-Ellis elicited his support for the national park cause. He was confident that Sir Michael, like himself, subscribed to a set of enlightened values and deplored the new-rich "depradations (sic) of the catch-penny parasites as much as any of us". He asked him to set a pioneering example of enlightened voluntary control of his estate by declaring some areas as 'changeless' with others reserved for controlled development. Another landowner, Lord Penrhyn, had allowed the erection of a tea hut on his estate lands in the heart of the proposed park, and had ignored all attempts - by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres and Lord Howard de Walden - to enlist his support. In a spirit of genteel competition, Williams-Ellis suggested that the younger Sir Michael might take the lead in promoting a mutual covenant between the chief landowners. Williams-Ellis's own inheritance was "a mere thousand acres or so in extent", and Sir Michael was "a thousand times more important territorially" but the campaigner spoke with the confidence of a fellow landowner, versed in the correct codes of conduct, and with the experience of a voluntary preservation scheme on the North Downs (with other landowners) which made fifteen miles immune from building. This was not
entirely philanthropic though for "The hard-headed agents and trustees of old settled estates would not presumably have accepted such a scheme if it were not ultimately good business". This theme of enlightened self-interest was one he constantly returned to, referring, for instance, to commercial success at Portmeirion.

Other individuals in the C.P.R.W. proposed different solutions. Lord Boston advocated state purchase of all national park lands partly for administrative reasons but also due to the possibility of co-ordinating welfare schemes and projects for the unemployed. But the philosophy of Williams-Ellis's scheme, in allowing for the paternal benevolence of landowners to continue, proved popular. Calls followed for the financial burden upon landowners to be eased by the State; a C.P.R.W. pamphlet, for instance, pointed out tax concessions available for landowners under the National Trust Act of 1937. These moves proved welcome to many in the landowning classes who had come to fear that "national" parks implied nationalized land. Willoughby Gardner's suggestion that all death duties be removed from conserved land was welcomed by Country Life, and by the Estates Gazette, the former arguing that "The simplest means of assuring to the nation the safeguards that it requires of a National Park is to give the existing landowners every facility for maintaining it in its present state".

The network of societal contacts was utilised fully. Sir Michael Assheton-Smith presided over Patrick Abercrombie's address to the Caernarfon Chamber of Commerce early in February 1935 in which the planner painted an inspiring picture of the national parks. Abercrombie subsequently hoped to arrange a dinner meeting between Sir Michael, Lord Penrhyn and their respective agents to discuss their estates in relation to his planning scheme for Caemarfonshire published two years earlier. Sir Michael's support was even seen as more valuable than that already pledged by David Lloyd George. As J.D.K. Lloyd parochially suggested, "if Sir M. gives us a good sum, the local quarrymen etc. will come in with their pennies, and the other owners are more likely to help; whereas there is no cash likely to follow Ll.G." Money and land ownership were therefore seen as the keys to Snowdonia.

But immense public interest threatened to tip the delicate balance of these lordly discussions. The C.P.R.W. had decided to tap this interest through the formation of the 'Friends of Snowdonia' as a campaigning and fundraising group. But problems arose when the Liverpool branch of the Ramblers' Association announced its intention of forming a rival society were it not given sufficient voice in the 'Friends'. The C.P.R.W. felt that giving official status to a body from England by appointing Andrew Blair (the Ramblers' secretary) to the committee, would prejudice
the movement in Wales; this despite J.D.K. Lloyd's belief that "though there may be much enthusiasm in Wales, most of the money will come from England!"125. Potentially more dangerous was the Ramblers' Association's ideological stance on access to the countryside, a stance given energetic support by Cyril Joad in a series of trenchant publications126. A series of attempts to scale the legislative mountain had been repelled by Conservative gamekeepers on the foothills, but the mass trespass campaign which reached its zenith on Kinder Scout in 1932, was a symbolic possession of both a physical and moral summit which culminated in the eventual formation of national parks. The trespass was organised by the Communist-backed British Workers Sports Federation, and chants of "Down with the landlords and the ruling class" and copies of the Communist Review found on the persons' of those arrested created a myth of revolution127. Little surprise then that the C.P.R.W. shied away from the Ramblers' intervention. The former's vision of paternal educationalism, albeit frustrated by genteel bureaucracy, was a world away from the latter's drive for proletarian liberation thwarted by the landed gentry's hostility! Not only, wrote J.D.K. Lloyd to Williams-Ellis, was Blair of the Ramblers sinisterly out to control the 'Friends', he was also "apt to blow off steam about wicked landlords, which, whether it is true or not won't help us at all"128. Some of the ramblers, wrote J.D.K. Lloyd to Alwyn Lloyd, were "quite between ourselves, not at all personae gratae either with the authorities or with the landowners"129. The inclusion in the campaign of such undesirables would undermine the delicate balance of social class and power that the C.P.R.W. sought to get working in their favour. In the meantime, Thomas Jones, utilising his old political contacts, asked Lord Macmillan "to arrange a dinner party to which he might invite Lord Penrhyn and some of the other more prominent landowners in North Wales"130.

On Trust for the Nation

It was scarcely surprising, given the pace of negotiations and of legislative advance, that thoughts should turn to more direct action. The preferred method - reflecting the concern for ownership of land - was utilised by Clough Williams-Ellis who noticed part of a Snowdonian valley, the Gwynant, advertised for auction as "a splendid opportunity for speculators"131. In keeping with his philosophy on benevolent landownership, he actually purchased the 600 acres and vested it in the National Trust as part of a future National Park132. The importance of this method of propaganda, and its inherent links both pragmatically and ideologically with land ownership, cannot be overstated. The National Trust, formed in 1895, provided a body which could give land 'inalienable' protection. But although the Trust's first acquisition was in Wales - four and a half acres of cliffland near Barmouth - by 1935 the Trust owned a mere 15 acres of Welsh land. But from this time on there was a steady trickle of land into the Trust's control, a significant amount
coming from individuals associated with the C.P.R.W.133. Alfred Davies had negotiated with Lord Merthyr in the early 1920s for the purchase of the Sugar Loaf Mountain near Abergafenni, the 2130 acres eventually being given to the Trust in 1936. The Pilgrim Trust, of which C.P.R.W. executive member Thomas Jones was Secretary, assisted in the purchase of 15 miles of Pembrokeshire coastline in 1939. The founder of the Ponterwyd Village Development Committee gave 234 acres of land near Ponterwyd in 1947, the same year that J.D.K. Lloyd gave two Welsh mountain farms in memory of the men of Bomber Command.

When land near Harlech known as Shell Island was threatened with development, Clough Williams-Ellis's campaigning on the issue attracted the interest of the economist John Maynard Keynes134. Keynes attempted to persuade King's College to purchase the land and even offered to buy it himself. Though the land was ultimately saved, in Britain and the Beast the following year Keynes criticised the Conservative government's soulless utilitarianism135. Non-economic expenditure such as amenity too often, he argued, relied on charity and the actions of individuals. One such individual, Williams-Ellis, with his customary eye for publicity, wrote to David Lloyd George offering his newly-purchased land in the Gwynant Valley as the nucleus for the first British National Park - "a sort of Christmas present from Caernarvonshire to the rest of Wales, and to the world at large"136. In thanking Williams-Ellis for his "patriotic action"137, Lloyd George's choice of words revealed the perceived importance of landscape preservation, and particularly of those landscapes like Snowdonia revealing natural order. In his methods of campaigning, Williams-Ellis had also revealed the importance of maintaining social order in the countryside.

AESTHETICS, APATHY AND THE STATUS QUO

Progress towards the formation of national parks was slow, as the Friends of Snowdonia failed to materialise, the landowners remained aloof, and impetus from government was also lacking. As Clough Williams-Ellis noted in 1936:

First it was because of the depression, which did not justify the expenditure, then it was because of tension in international affairs, which did not justify the time that the matter would take, now it is the necessity for re-arming, which justifies neither the time nor the expense. God knows what it will be next time! and we all feel rather bitter about the whole thing138.
But the C.P.R.W.'s lack of inter-war success in this matter - the Snowdonia park was not established until 1951 - was something of a metaphor for the frustration experienced in all their campaigning. Indeed Williams-Ellis's bitterness might be taken to represent his attitude to Welsh amenity issues as a whole.

It is, perhaps, crude to measure a campaigning group's success by its statistics. The C.P.R.W. had an influence far beyond its size and was successful in bringing amenity issues before the public's attention. But the level of membership and financial support surely tells us something about perception of the Council's aims and methods. In the first seven months of its existence the C.P.R.W. attracted 130 members (at 10s 6d or ten guineas for life membership) and an initial sum of £508. But the financial gifts of the gentry were sorely missed by the end of 1929 when, despite an increase in the membership to nearly 200, income plummeted. The financial problems were mitigated by gifts of £2,500 and £10,000 by American businessman Boies Penrose and the Carnegie Trustees respectively, but precarious finances characterised virtually the whole of the inter-war period, with the Council in perpetual crisis (Fig.19). Whilst Sir Malcolm Campbell's 1936 B.B.C. talk netted £650 for the C.P.R.E., the prominent Liberal and C.P.R.W. Honorary Treasurer Clement Davies's appeal was rewarded with less than ten pounds; a result which J.D.K. Lloyd considered "too awful to contemplate." The increase in members was but gradual, reaching 400 only in 1938, though with well over 200 Associate Members paying a reduced rate. The Associates scheme was introduced in a paternal flourish. Wales, the C.P.R.W. claimed, was not a rich country and many could not afford the minimum subscription. But some Welsh commentators chose to interpret this differently; one pointed out that "the appeals of such bodies as the C.P.R.W. and C.P.R.E. for financial support are primarily to the more or less leisured and well-to-do middle classes, and those classes are much stronger in England than they are in Wales." So there was a clear perception that the Council was aligned with particular interests and social groups, and this, along with lack of support, prompted a re-assessment by the C.P.R.W. of themselves, the Welsh and their landscapes.

Class and Conservation

The response to the C.P.R.W.'s appeal quoted above was not a solitary perception of the Council's social origins. As we have seen, the establishment of the C.P.R.W.'s headquarters in London was met with some cynicism, as was their failure to convene major meetings in Wales. Sustained criticism on this point fuelled a constant debate as to whether or not the C.P.R.W. should move its headquarters to Wales, trading proximity to the C.P.R.E. and closeness to Whitehall for a potential improvement in membership figures. The Council, however, denied that funds were
Figure 19. Cartoon from the Western Mail
(appeared on 15/6/37)

"HELP!"
National apathy has once again placed the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales in serious danger of dissolution.
withheld as a result of their London base and argued that they could not 'go it alone' until finances improved. By way of compromise, though perhaps admitting that their location was a hindrance to effective campaigning in Wales, the C.P.R.W. appointed in 1930 a Welsh-speaking Organizer. He performed an immense amount of work but funding failed to improve, necessitating termination of this post less than two years later. The C.P.R.W. continued to use the Eisteddfod as a form of cultural and geographical anchor, their annual meetings there giving the gloss of Welshness to an Anglicized society. Welsh speakers were asked to appear and amongst those consenting was Saunders Lewis, President of the Welsh Nationalist Party, a contribution Alwyn Lloyd saw as particularly valuable144.

The use of the Welsh language was also seen as being a means of winning support. The Council barely used Welsh initially, but there was an attempt to recruit Welsh speakers for the Executive committee, and some propaganda appeared in Welsh, most notably a series of articles in the youth magazine Y Capten. A few of the C.P.R.W.'s own pamphlets appeared with Welsh translations including Alwyn Lloyd's Brighter Welsh Villages. In 1930, the C.P.R.W. changed its Welsh title from "Y Cynghor" (The Council) to "Cymdeithas" (Society) for the Protection of the Beauty of Wales, on Alwyn Lloyd's advice145. This was intended to suggest a friendlier and more accessible movement but was a response to native perception of their values. The combination of an apparent formality, inherent in the word "Council", and a London address was felt to be a disincentive for the Welsh. The implication of a closed group or caste carried by the word "Society" did not, however, occur to them. Mistrust might however have been justified, for as we have seen the council largely operated within a particular social circle, and even regional groups were derivations of this process. The change in title did not signify either a change in methods or a more democratic or popular approach to campaigning.

The C.P.R.W. were aware that the use of language was of symbolic importance, and this awareness was also paralleled in Wales; but it signalled a broader unease about the Council's attitude to Welsh landscape and society. There were concerns about the proposed formation of a national park in Snowdonia, and a widespread feeling that local opinion was being excluded. Complaints about the use of the word 'Snowdonia' rather than the Welsh 'Eryri' symbolised fears about the suppression of local and national opinion in the pursuit of touristic gain or aestheticism146. In a period of economic depression, employment was evidently one important issue.
During the 1920s and 30s the C.P.R.W. was wary of advancing radical conservationist ideas for fear of prejudicing employment and economic activity in rural areas struggling through depression. At all times they sought the co-operation of potential employers for fear of engendering the kind of response given them by Chapman's Circus. Cyril Fox felt that quarrying demanded the modification of the Snowdonia park's proposed boundaries to allow Caernarfonshire's valuable industry to continue. Likewise on Yr Eifl (The Rivals) mountains on the Llŷn Peninsula 300 local men were involved in extensive, and disfiguring, granite quarrying (Fig.20). The C.P.R.W.

![Figure 20: Yr Eifl (The Rivals) Mountain, Llŷn Peninsula.](from C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1947-48)

decided not to protest, Clough Williams-Ellis arguing that "As a whole district depends entirely on these quarries we can clearly do nothing so foolhardy as to try & interfere with development tho' we might possibly suggest mitigations"147. The archaeologist W.J. Hemp, however, took a firmer line:

> *it is not enough to say 'it is no good opposing industrial development which means employment of labour' and leaving it at that. After all, even if some hundreds of families were to be starved out, literally or metaphorically, it would be much less important in the long run than to destroy for ever one of the most beautiful pieces of scenery.. I think the Council ought to have the courage of its opinions*148.
Such outbursts could only have reinforced the perception that the Council represented a branch of society with a leisured outlook on the world. Theirs was, apparently, a membership remote from the struggles of rural life with a voyeuristic attitude to landscape. Hemp's attitude, and the more widespread concern about Stapledon's national park proposals, served to exclude the possibility of accommodating working landscapes into the conservationist movement. Despite the support of those who saw a modern beauty in, for instance, the geometrical shapes of quarries, such working scenes were not (as Raymond Williams has argued) generally as easily accommodated into the aesthetic construct of landscape. The press perhaps represented the more dominant view of aesthetics, claiming that "we can't afford to sacrifice work and wealth to idle sentiment". But the Council sought reconciliation of economic activity and beauty through tourism. In Williams-Ellis words, the goose which obligingly laid the golden egg each summer had to be protected.

**Welshness and Landscape**

Criticisms of the class or social constitution of the Council signified a mistrust of their way of seeing the landscape, and the perception of their remoteness from Welsh life. These criticisms questioned the significance of landscape itself as an aesthetic construct. But throughout their self-analysis some C.P.R.W. members remained convinced that the Welsh were quite simply un-aesthetic. This was not an attitude held only by the Anglo-Welsh. Despite some evidence of native concern, many Welsh commentators themselves noted a discrepancy between the reverence for beauty in Welsh literature and their uninspiring art and architecture. G.M.L.I. Davies was quoted earlier as lamenting Welsh philistinism in matters visual and W.J. Gruffydd, writing in support of the C.P.R.W.'s activities, satirised the architectural tastes of his fellow Welsh. The new Welsh-speaking middle class had forgotten its native aesthetic sense, as a glance at their jerry-built North Wales homes and at their chapels confirmed. T. Gwynn Jones, a revered poet and journalist, mourned his people's acceptance of ugly houses and ugly furniture, something we have already heard Patrick Abercrombie lament. Abercrombie also noted the lack of regard for architecture in Wales as did another non-Welsh commentator, the geographer H.J. Fleure, who suggested that Britain's quality of architecture varied in inverse proportion to rainfall! The people's opportunities had been rather in the fields of oratory, poetry, song and drama.

Much of the artistic ascendancy in Wales between the wars was the product of the Anglo-Welsh and in architecture one of the leading figures was, of course, Clough Williams-Ellis. His were, perhaps, the most acidic criticisms of the Welsh. As a people they were, he claimed, backward non-believers in the religion of beauty, fitness and efficiency. They failed to support missionaries like the W.H.D.A. and the C.P.R.W., except by providing object lessons in the need for
In 1930, the C.P.R.W. published the pamphlet *Land of my Fathers (and of my children): Why only sing about it?*, implying that not only were the Welsh negligent enough to fail to see the despoliation in the hills and valleys of which they sang so melodiously, but that their sense of inheritance was weak - something a landowner like Williams-Ellis held very dear. In the pamphlet he introduced the Welsh Octopus, fabulous like the Welsh Dragon but like the English octopus the perpetrator of acts of despoliation. It was the Octopus who erected advertising signs, corrupted industrialists, and was active all over Wales, "our unhappy country". Worst of all, the Octopus was able to blind people

> so that they don't recognise either him or his trail of ugliness, and we shall never catch and kill him until people have got back their eyes and have learned to use them. To those who can see, the sight of what has happened.. is.. painful.. Not merely as an architect, but as a Welshman with a Welsh home, I feel the shame of it bitterly. What right have we to sing "Land of my Fathers" so sanctimoniously, when we respect that land so little in what we do or suffer to be done?"

The Welsh, he suggested, were motivated more by the history, folk-lore or legend attached to a place, than by the beauty of the place itself: "After the green hillock named in honour of some fabled princess has been crowned with a cafe, [the Welshman] will sing about the lady's exploits just as melodiously and movingly as before such an outrage occurred". One of the implications of all this ineffectual sentimentality, as Williams-Ellis saw it, was a lack of business sense, and of an awareness of amenity's economic potential.

But Williams-Ellis also made a more damaging criticism, namely that this defect in the national eye-sight pointed to a lack of patriotism, as he constructed it. It was this construction, however that angered many of the C.P.R.W.'s critics. The English were also subjected to an attack on their national sensibility (in *England and the Octopus* for instance), but in Wales the C.P.R.W., criticised for its Anglicisation, mocked and attempted to redefine Welsh values. A pride in Welsh tradition and history was, for Williams-Ellis, a naive and unseeing sort of pride when it did not include a concern for the look of that which was loved. By implication, therefore, his patriotism was superior and more refined. He could, by virtue of an aesthetic sense, see Welshness destroyed where others were blind.
The C.P.R.W.'s J.D.K. Lloyd also questioned the patriotism of the Welsh. They were, he suggested, traditionally weak in the visual arts and this was the root cause of their apathy towards their land's appearance. The Welsh were more vocal in their patriotism than the English but what, he asked, was true patriotism?

*it should consist, of seeing our faults and spending our time trying to make our country more worthy of what it could and ought to be. The desecration of a coast, the building of a vulgar or shoddy home, or the turning of a valley into a mere place to advertise sausages or bicycles ought to be a matter for shame just as much as the winning of an Eisteddfod competition or a football match is a matter for pride. The appearance of our villages, the preservation of the best of the past and the proper development of the future, ought to be as important as the preservation of our language and our place names.*

The Welsh, he implied, gave too much attention to language at the expense of landscape and were thus deficient in their patriotism.

As their financial crisis deepened, so the C.P.R.W.'s criticisms became increasingly acrimonious and universal. Critics of the Welsh, themselves included, were "wont to assert that the great national defect is lack of staying power. No one, they say excels the Celt in enthusiasm, but at the first check interest vanishes and can never be recaptured." The poor response to Clement Davies's radio appeal in 1936 was a sure sign of this apathy. In 1936 Yr Urdd (The Welsh League of Youth) organised a competition for photographs on amenity topics such as the design of petrol stations, but not one entry was received! A C.P.R.W. competition in the Wrexham National Eisteddfod met with equally poor results, as did an essay competition the following year which merited an embarrassing mention in the *Daily Express* under the heading "Competition no one entered." The failure of these competitions, as far as the C.P.R.W. were concerned, lent colour to their theory "that Welshmen have not yet developed their visual sense to the same extent as their aural and vocal senses." This somewhat patronising attitude to the Welsh - suggesting that they were not fully 'developed' as human beings - made the C.P.R.W.'s missionary and educational work all the more important in their eyes.
CONCLUSION

Writing from his R.A.F. base in 1945, J.D.K. Lloyd argued that the C.P.R.W. should take more note of Welsh conditions and become a truly Welsh society with headquarters in Cardiff. Given the importance of education in Welsh life, the subject of the next chapter, he argued significantly that they should organise around the universities rather than, as in England, around leisured society or business. A younger and more professional committee should be established (excluding the "revered" elderly figures) and a young and energetic Welsh secretary enlisted. Local committees also needed overhauling: "We don't want a Committee of 'local gents' as some of our earlier ones were. They don't cut much ice and are.. only concerned with their own 'view' and 'pleasances".167.

This was evidently an admission that the Council had failed to appreciate Welsh regard for the rural environment. Alwyn Lloyd, always in closer touch with Welsh opinion, was inclined to feel that the C.P.R.W. had failed to appreciate sincere differences in the Welsh conception of landscape and rurality. The C.P.R.W., representing a plethora of movements, had largely succeeded in reconciling the visual tensions between the demands of the modern age and the desire for preservation. They had also shown themselves sensitive to Welsh tradition in, for instance, architecture. But theirs was a regard for aesthetics and for the look of things alone, and this proved to be a failure to appreciate the whole argument relating to the modernization of rural Wales.

Their experience of the employment issue suggested that there were broader questions of community at stake. In the following section I discuss the contemporary work of others studying rural Wales and active in its preservation and consider their priorities and philosophies, as well as their understanding of landscape.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Lord Boston - H.G. Griffin 24/5/28, C.P.R.W. 9/1
2. The information on the summit and its hotels comes from Snowdonia National Park Authority (1988) Copa'r Wyddfa
3. H.V. Morton (1938, originally 1932) In Search of Wales London: Methuen
4. North Wales Observer "Snowdonia as a National Park" 7/2/35
5. R.O.F. Wynne - H.G. Griffin 8/6/28, C.P.R.W. 9/1
6. A. Owen Evans - Lord Boston 25/5/28, C.P.R.W. 9/1
7. Lord Boston - H.G. Griffin 30/5/28, C.P.R.W. 9/1
8. See Willoughby Gardner - Alfred T. Davies 14/7/28, C.P.R.W. 9/1
10. Willoughby Gardner’s Report on Snowdon Summit and Buildings July 1928, C.P.R.W. 9/1. Gardner was, however, the source of a misunderstanding when over-zealous journalists interpreted summit negotiations as signalling the purchase of the whole of Snowdonia. See for instance Daily Dispatch "Snowdon as a 'Park' - Negotiations in Progress" 15/7/29
12. Though not before the Daily Mail added to the scandal by highlighting the litter problem in a campaign secretly orchestrated by the C.P.R.W. The need for discrimination was made clear when Clough Williams-Ellis articles on disfiguring adverts in The Star magazine lost the publication £2,000 worth of advertising revenue (Discussed in C.P.R.W. 9/4)
13. J.D.K. Lloyd - Evan Davies 10/12/31, C.P.R.W. 9/1
15. Manchester Guardian "An Hotel on Snowdon" 23/2/34
18. Ibid. p.3
Osbert Lancaster's cartoons also mercilessly lampooned the fad of antiquarian decoration.
20. To Those Who Build p.2 Clough Williams-Ellis's sister in law even wrote to the Natural History Museum for advice on how to induce lichen growth on new slate roofs: the answer was cow dung! C.P.R.W. 73/2
22. T. Alwyn Lloyd (1931) Brighter Welsh Villages and How we Can Obtain Them London: C.P.R.W.
23. T. Alwyn Lloyd - J.D.K. Lloyd 27/7/31, C.P.R.W. 85. He was delighted that some of the "sober-clad Chapel or Church goers" might be taken aback by the use of colour.
25. Brighter Welsh Villages p.7
26. "Colour in the Coalfield" p.190. Vaughan Cornish also interpreted the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into Industrial Unrest in South Wales as pointing to the dismal physical environment within the cramped, narrow, mining valleys as the prime cause of social disorder (1928) "The Science of Scenery" Nature Vol.121 pp.309-11

27. It was G.M.L.I. Davies's request for advice that prompted Alwyn Lloyd to prepare the pamphlet on colour-washing.

28. See C.P.R.W. 85 on the relation between the C.P.R.W. and the Brynmawr relief work.


30. See C.P.R.W. 101

31. Ponterwyd Village Development Committee April 1929 Circular Letter C.P.R.W. 101


33. The panels were jointly established by the C.P.R.E. and the Royal Institute of British Architects. Alwyn Lloyd chaired the South Wales panel and Williams-Ellis served in North Wales.

34. Clough Williams-Ellis - H.G. Griffin 24/1/29, C.P.R.W. 1/3

35. Clough Williams-Ellis - Evan Evans 22/1/29, C.P.R.W. 1/3

36. Evan Evans - J.D.K. Lloyd 18/12/36, C.P.R.W. 1/3

37. This is much the theme of Dennis Hardy and Colin Ward (1984) Arcadia for All: The Legacy of a Makeshift Landscape London: Mansell


40. Some companies submitted plans which were subsequently toned down by Williams-Ellis

41. T. Alwyn Lloyd - Ministry of Health 1/7/32, C.P.R.W. 106

42. See C.P.R.W. 9/18

43. Pamphlet Motorists' Arrival Ad-Signs. Publicity in the Right Place C.P.R.W. 16

44. H.G. Griffin - Sec. Raleigh Cycle Co. 12/6/28, C.P.R.W. 16/2

45. Ibid.


47. See for instance Kenneth Clark (1934) "Painters Turn to Posters" Commercial Art August pp.65-72


50. Copy of the Raleigh's 'On the Ground' Report, undated, C.P.R.W. 16/2
51. Alfred T. Davies - R.T. Lang 19/7/28, C.P.R.W. 16/2
52. Clough Williams-Ellis (1929) "How Long..? or the Tin-Tout Tyranny" Architectural
    Review October, p.190
53. Ibid.
54. S.C.A.P.A. stood for the Society for the Control of Abuses of Public Advertising, formed
    in 1893.
55. Copy of notice in C.P.R.W. 16
56. Barmouth Advertiser and District Weekly News 22/5/29 "Disfiguring Rural Scenery"
57. Daily Mirror 24/6/29 "Unsightly Hoardings"
58. R.O.F. Wynne - C.P.R.W. 30/7/30, C.P.R.W. 16
59. Daily Mirror 2/8/29 "War on Ugliness. Praise for Police Campaign"
60. Llandudno Advertiser 18/8/32 "Disfiguring Beauty Spots"
61. G.B. Chapman Ltd. - Secretary, C.P.R.W. 26/9/32, C.P.R.W. 16/8
62. The Caernarfon Herald suggested a different reconciliation of the problem; it argued that the
    erection of 'artistic pagodas' would inform the traveller of the availability of refreshments
    whilst announcing "to all and sundry that Wales is not losing her artistic traditions";
    22/5/31 "The Welsh Countryside"
63. Cyril Fox Memorandum on Policy c.November 1930, C.P.R.W. 95
64. Vaughan Cornish (1946) The Beauties of Scenery London: Frederick Muller, p.109
65. Fox Memorandum
    Development London: Routledge, p.122
67. S. Rowland Pierce (1928) "Electricity in the Landscape" Architects' Journal August 15th,
    pp.214-6; p.215
68. Fox Memorandum
69. Lawrence Chubb - H.G. Griffin 30/11/28, C.P.R.W. 9/4
70. C.P.R.W. - Central Electricity Board etc. 24/9/28, C.P.R.W. 9/4
71. H.H. Ballin (1946) The Organisation of Electricity Supply in Great Britain London:
    Electrical Press Ltd.
72. Wayleaves were hard to negotiate and heavy compensation was payable. However New
    Zealand, France, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Russia all had well developed
    electricity networks. E.W. Golding (1937) The Electrification of Agriculture and Rural
    Districts London: English Universities' Press Ltd.

74. C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1932 p.18

75. J.D.K. Lloyd - Managing Director, Llanelli Power Company 29/8/32, C.P.R.W. 66/6


77. North Wales Observer "Snowdonia as a National Park" 7/2/35. Abercrombie suggested that the word 'domaine' might better express his idea of a park as an area large enough to include even small towns.

78. H.G. Griffin - T.Alwyn Lloyd 15/10/29, C.P.R.W. 83i

79. The Times "Snowdonia Park" (Leading article) 22/1/35

80. C.E.M. Joad (1938) "The People's Claim" in Clough Williams-Ellis (ed) (1937) Britain and the Beast London: Dent, pp.64-85; p.82


83. T. Alwyn Lloyd - H.G. Griffin 22/10/29, C.P.R.W. 83i

84. Vaughan Cornish (December 1929) The Proposals of the C.P.R.W. on the Formation of National Parks, C.P.R.W. 83i


87. Vaughan Cornish - Herbert Griffin 7/1/30 C.P.R.W. 83i

88. Vaughan Cornish The Beauties of Scenery; and "Scenic Amenity"

89. Consider, for instance, this passage: "Between the sheltering headlands, beaches of sand and shingle lie banked against the cliff in smooth concavity of curve to which landscape elsewhere has no rival. Upon these barriers the waves of ocean curl and break with infinite variety of cusp and scroll, and ever-loudening beat as the tide advances from the shelving
sand to the steep pile of the last shingle ridge". (1930) "National Parks: The Claim of the Coast" Geography No.87, Vol.15 Part 5, pp.384-7; p.385

90. The Proposals of the C.P.R.W.
91. He also suggested (1934) the formation of "A National Park at the Land's End" Geography Vol.19 No.4, pp.288-91
92. "National Parks, Claim of the Coast" p.387
94. The Proposals of the C.P.R.W.
95. Ibid.
96. Vaughan Cornish (1930) National Parks and the Heritage of Scenery London: Sifton Praed; p.8
97. That this was a subtle process was apparent given the way in which another proposal aimed at the industrial areas was rejected. The Special Area's Commissioner, Malcolm Stewart had proposed that a national park be established in the Vale of Neath bringing an increase in tourist traffic and perhaps scope for the building of a luxury hotel and holiday camp. "Instructed opinion", however, decided against the "actively recreational character" of the park. Standing Committee on National Parks, Preparatory Sub-Committee Memo Containing Information to Hand 5/2/37, C.P.R.W. 83ii
98. Cyril Fox - J.D.K Lloyd 7/1/30, C.P.R.W. 83i
99. Cyril Fox - H.G. Griffin 23/1/30 including copy of Cyril Fox's Evidence to the Committee, C.P.R.W. 83i
100. Ibid.
101. "National Park in Snowdonia"
102. Cyril Fox Evidence
103. Ibid.
104. Cyril Fox Evidence
105. Draft of Land of my Fathers pamphlet, C.P.R.W. 19/7
106. North Wales Observer "Snowdonia as a National Park"
107. R. George Stapledon (1944, originally 1935) The Land Now and Tomorrow London: Faber and Faber, Chapter 23. See also (1937) "Economics and the National Park" in Britain and the Beast pp.113-21. Stapledon also suggested - (1943) The Way of the Land London: Faber and Faber, p.90 - that "Agriculture, like any other industry, if it is to survive must be modernized, and consequently the agricultural and rural scene must necessarily lose some of its old-time picturesqueness".
108. Standing Committee on National Parks, Preparatory Sub-Committee Minutes 22/2/37, C.P.R.W. 83ii. Stapledon's ideas were associated philosophically with Malcolm Stewart's for the Vale of Neath.

109. On country wardens see Minutes of Sub (Executive) Committee 15/4/32, and 20/4/34 C.P.R.W. X1


111. England and the Octopus p.83

112. Evidence Welsh National Parks

113. Clough Williams-Ellis - Sir Michael Duff Assheton-Smith 4/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b

114. They were then Presidents of the C.P.R.E and C.P.R.W. respectively. The new Caernarfonshire C.P.R.W. convenor saw the tea-hut as the thin end of the wedge: "It may mean bringing a rowdy set into the neighbourhood which would be most regrettable. Possibly sheds or garages for cars might follow and it would be disastrous if petrol pumps were put up at this spot. Of course it may give rise to other people building bungalows in the neighbourhood"; Harold Hughes - J.D.K. Lloyd 27/12/34, C.P.R.W. 9/1b

115. Clough Williams-Ellis - Sir Michael Duff Assheton-Smith 4/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b

116. Lord Boston, Memo National Parks or Nature Reserves Undated, C.P.R.W. 83i


118. Country Life "National Parks" 8/2/30;


120. Reported in North Wales Observer "Snowdonia as a National Park"

121. Patrick Abercrombie and Sydney Kelly (1933) North Wales Regional Planning Scheme - Draft Report

122. Lloyd George had welcomed Abercrombie's "laudable efforts" and had accepted the planner's invitation to appeal for the preservation of rural Wales in a speech to 10,000 at the Caernarfon National Eisteddfod.

123. J.D.K. Lloyd - Clough Williams-Ellis 3/2/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b

124. W.S. Tysoe - Patrick Abercrombie 10/4/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b

125. J.D.K. Lloyd - D.M. Matheson 13/4/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b


128. J.D.K. Lloyd - Clough Williams-Ellis 6/4/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b. There is an irony in this letter for Williams-Ellis had himself labelled landowners who shut off grouse moors the "bloodthirsty affluent" not twelve months previously! Clough Williams-Ellis (1934) "Our Physical Environment" in C.E.M. Joad (ed) *Manifesto* pp.215-47; p.230

129. J.D.K. Lloyd - Alwyn Lloyd 17/5/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b
130. D.M. Matheson - J.D.K. Lloyd 10/4/35, C.P.R.W. 9/1b
131. Clough Williams-Ellis - Editor, *Manchester Guardian* 17/12/34, C.P.R.W. 9/1b
132. Some fears were expressed locally that he intended to build "an Italian hotel" J.D.K. Lloyd - Patrick Abercrombie 28/12/34, C.P.R.W. 9/1b. These fears were repeated early the next year when he bought the islands of Tudwal and Mercroff off the Llyn Peninsula as favoured haunts of Portmeirion guests: *Daily Mirror* "Bought Isles to Keep Them Lovely" 19/1/35

133. Details of these acquisitions are taken from (1978) *Properties of the National Trust* London: National Trust. Williams-Ellis was closely involved in the work of the Trust at this time. After the Second World War he compiled a two volume book on the Trust’s properties entitled (1947 & 9) *On Trust For the Nation* London: Paul Elek

134. C.P.R.W. 8/15
135. J.M. Keynes (1938) "Art and the State" in *Britain and the Beast* pp.1-7
136. Clough Williams-Ellis - David Lloyd George 12/12/34, C.P.R.W. 9/1b
137. David Lloyd George - Clough Williams-Ellis 27/12/34, C.P.R.W. 9/1b. There was close contact between the two on planning matters. Williams-Ellis drafted some speeches for Lloyd George and was commissioned to renovate his home and to design his grave in Llanystumdwy. Vaughan Cornish also claimed - in a St. David's Day address to the C.P.R.E.(!) - that the establishment of a park in Snowdonia "would be an achievement worthy of the Welsh nation, ever responsive to the poetry of Patriotism..." Quoted in *C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1928*, p.11

138. *Western Mail* "Will Snowdonia be Made a National Park?" 12/10/36
139. This and subsequent figures are from the C.P.R.W.'s Annual Reports.

140. The Carnegie Trustees, failing to see the rationale for a separate Welsh body despite "the natural patriotic feelings of the Welsh people", suggested that the Councils merged. The C.P.R.W. rejected this, arguing that the "existence of national sentiment and the prevalence of a different language were both factors which strongly mitigated against the suggestion" (See C.P.R.W. 13/6i)

141. J.D.K. Lloyd - Clement Davies 5/8/36, C.P.R.W. 19/7/1

142. C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1931

143. H.M., Liverpool - Liverpool Post 27/5/37

144. See C.P.R.W. 94i

145. This was following discussions with the Welsh poet W.J. Gruffydd: C.P.R.W. 30

146. Caernarfon Herald 22/3/35 "Snowdonia' - Why Not 'Eryri'?

147. Marginal note on draft of letter H.G. Griffin - Kennedy Orton 21/5/29, C.P.R.W. 9/6

148. W.J. Hemp - J.D.K. Lloyd 10/6/36, C.P.R.W. 9/6


150. Answers "Work or Scenery" 2/10/29, Cutting in C.P.R.W. 9/6

151. North Wales Observer 30/5/35 "Snowdonia's Beauty - National Park Project" (Report of the C.P.R.W.'s Annual General Meeting). See also C.P.R.W. 22/10 for Clough Williams-Ellis's comments to the North Wales Holiday Resorts Association

152. "Colour in the Coalfield"

153. W.J. Gruffydd (1939) Y Tro Olaf ac Ysgrifau Eraill Aberystwyth: Clwb Llyfrau Cymraeg

154. T. Gwynn Jones (1930) "Bywyd Gwlad ac Ysbryd Crefft" Cambria No.2, pp.56-60


158. Clough Williams-Ellis (1928) "The Preservation of Rural Wales" Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook 1928 pp.101-2; and (1932) "Wales Proves Herself Generous in Object Lessons" Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook 1932 p.65

160. Ibid. p.3


162. J.D.K. Lloyd (1938) *Land of My Children* (Text of B.B.C. address) 3/10/38, C.P.R.W. 19/7

163. Ibid.

164. C.P.R.W. *Annual Report 1935* p.6

165. *Daily Express* "Competition No One Entered" 17/5/37

166. C.P.R.W. *Annual Report 1936* p.23

167. J.D.K. Lloyd - Herbert Griffin 9/7/45, C.P.R.W. 47/12i. A tamer version appears as a Memo to the Executive Committee 1/1/46, C.P.R.W. 13/6ii
SECTION TWO

REMAKING WALES: GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICS
CHAPTER THREE
ANTHROPOLOGY AND AGRICULTURE: THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RURAL WALES

"A wit has remarked that as one travels from England to rural Wales the talk in a railway compartment changes from betting to chapels, or from horse-racing to the eisteddfod. It is this simple peasant heritage that is even now struggling to escape destruction"

(H.J. Fleure)

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Welsh countryside, as the previous chapters have shown, was undergoing marked economic and social change, and its integration into British life threatened to break down old patterns of life, culture and environment. Many were involved in battles to preserve the physical environment, but this chapter will be concerned with academics and intellectuals who, in their work on rural Wales, chose rather to stress the values of culture and community. Amongst these were several geographers in the University College at Aberystwyth.

Wales and its university

Education, and the educational institution, has played a potent role in Welsh life. The "legends of the Welsh farm boy made good"1 - farm boys like O.M. Edwards - sustained their respected places. Having considered the role of schools in fostering a new national culture in previous chapters, this chapter studies the contribution of the University to the revival of Welsh rural life. The movement for a Welsh national university began in the 1860s, primarily amongst the London-Welsh2. The College at Aberystwyth was founded in 1872 with those at Bangor and Cardiff following in 1883-4. The three combined to form the University of Wales in 1893. Of these colleges, Aberystwyth played the most direct part in the new currents of Welsh life. Whilst Kenneth Morgan suggests that the "pennies of the poor" legends surrounding the College's formation were somewhat inflated nonetheless "The inspiration that Aberystwyth evoked among countless miners, quarrymen, and farm labourers cannot be cynically disregarded"3. There were over 100,000 contributions of under half a crown to the College's funds from poor working people, and the chapels also played a significant part. The Aberystwyth College, became a powerful symbol of popular achievement and of national status. It also developed links back into the community, not only by enrolling students from Wales, but through extra-mural teaching and programmes of research geared to Welsh themes.
The geographer H.J. Fleure (Fig. 21) came to Aberystwyth in 1897 to study the natural sciences, returning there after doctoral research in zoology in Zurich to a lectureship in zoology and geology. Fleure was born in Guernsey in 1877, and this background made him sensitive to the Welsh cultural tradition. It was in the interpretation of this tradition that he became most influential. By 1908, he was lecturing in geography, an area of deepening interest to him, and in 1917 he was appointed to the Gregynog Chair of Geography and Anthropology at Aberystwyth, newly endowed by the Misses Davies of Llandinam, the philanthropist Lord Davies's sisters. Fleure insisted that the Chair bore the title of 'Anthropology' for he had been strongly influenced by Darwin and Huxley's evolutionary theories - introduced into geography by Ratzel - and sought to apply them to human society, in the belief that humans and their environment had to be considered together if they were to be understood. He modified A.J. Herbertson's 'Natural Regions' to 'Human Regions' recognising the importance of human will and "the continuous interaction and interpenetration of man and environment and the cumulative alteration of man and the earth with the unfolding of history". To Fleure, "the idea of filling the human story into a physical frame seemed open to criticism", and he thus counterposed the excesses of environmental determinists, and those who used the political map as an universal thesis. Vidal de la Blache's treatment of the vexed question of nature and nurture also impressed Fleure, as did his poetic regional descriptions of France.

Fleure was also much influenced by Patrick Geddes, for whom Herbertson had been an assistant. It was Geddes's interest in the social implications of the Darwinian thesis that probably attracted Fleure, and themes in Geddes's sociology find later expression in Fleure's ideas. The two collaborated often, Fleure's first book for instance being published in Geddes's and Victor Branford's "The Making of the Future" series. Fleure was active in the Le Play Society and also supported Geddes's Regional Survey movement, embracing the 'Place-Work-Folk' triad. Fleure's support for the Regional Survey movement was based on sociological concern but was also part of a drive to improve the standing of the humanities in education through a concern for observation.

This, combined with his interest in evolution and anthropology, shaped his geography. Livingstone and Campbell suggest that it is Neo-Lamarckianism which underpins much post-Darwinian geography. It is clear in Geddes's and Herbertson's work "and undoubtedly, [Fleure's] friendship with Geddes and his circle, served to increase his propensity for this version of evolutionary theory, as various aspects of his geography clearly reveal." Placing observation at
Figure 21. H.J. Fleure
(from Geography Vol.54 No.4)
the heart of the humanities, Fleure undertook a survey of Welsh physical types\textsuperscript{12} drawing on his biological training and geographically delimiting the location of discernible groups. 2,300 individuals were surveyed in Wales between 1905 and 1916, each one mapped only if all four grandparents came from within a 12-15 mile radius. In this way people might be seen as "concentrated essences of that locality"\textsuperscript{13}. A total of 19 physical characteristics were subsequently recorded, including skin, eye and hair colour, shape of head and length of limbs. Mapping (see Fig.22) demonstrated that Wales was characterised by marked regional differentiation, claimed to be the result of interplay between heredity and environment. The latter had protected local distinction, Wales experiencing only limited effects of modern population movements. Thus the simple folk of Wales represented types of humankind whose distinctions dated from a remote past; the more leisured classes, as Fleure put it, were nearly everywhere of mixed descent.

Welsh racial origins, Fleure claimed, were lodged in Prehistory when North West Europe after the Ice Age was in the hands of a remnant population. These people were strongly built with dark hair and eyes, a dark tinge in the skin and prominent facial characteristics. "It is of interest", claimed Fleure in 1926, "that such people survive on the Plynlymon moorlands and in the Black Mountain country of Carmarthenshire"\textsuperscript{14}, their physique best explained as an inheritance from Paleolithic types. Thus upland Wales was viewed as a repository of ancient physical characters through which Fleure could rebuild past human geographies. Other physical types identified included the predominant 'Little Dark People', and on the coastal lands of Wales was found a type which, according to Fleure, was also seen in the Hebrides, Ireland, Cornwall and Western Europe, proving Welsh links with seafaring European nations (Fig.23). Influences within Britain were also traced. Nordic or Nordic-Alpine types were found in locations, such as the Bala cleft, which suggested that they had diffused westward from the rest of Britain. Through such concern for measurement and evaluation, Fleure could identify people at sight as coming from a particular district\textsuperscript{15}. Even within Cardiganshire there were distinctions between the Pumlumon "survivals", the dark long heads of Llandysul, the fairer coastal type, and a cluster of red haired men around Tregaron\textsuperscript{16}.

Anthropological research was methodologically reinforced in various ways. E.G. Bowen, who worked with Fleure on racial matters until the 1930s, later studied the influence of the western seaways on the historical geography of Wales, echoing Fleure's determination of 'racial' influence\textsuperscript{17}. In his study of artefactual remains, like megaliths and settlement patterns, Bowen tied into a morphological tradition extending from Ratzel and Vidal to Carl Sauer. Bowen's comprehensive and integrated view eventually fostered the concept of a Welsh pays\textsuperscript{18}. This work was complemented by Estyn Evans's, who graduated from Aberystwyth in 1925 but concentrated
Figure 22. The distribution of racial types in Wales
(from A.G. Ogilvie (ed) Great Britain)
Figure 23. Some Welsh physical types; the upper is the 'Pumlumon' type, and the lower the 'coastal' type
(from *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* Vol.16)
on Irish geography and archaeology after moving to Belfast\textsuperscript{19}. Fleure also utilised Welsh cultural artefacts like folk tales in the re-creation of past geographies\textsuperscript{20}.

**Geography and continuity**

These tales' persistence in folk tradition confirmed Fleure's belief that rural Wales was "a refuge of old ways and old types" where remarkable continuity and persistence were revealed by archaeology and anthropology\textsuperscript{21}. Geography was a fundamental cause of this continuity: "The physical features of the country, the framework of mountain-moorland that separates the Wye and Severn region from the valleys that radiate out to the sea, have broken the face of many waves of change ere they have reached the quiet western cwms"\textsuperscript{22}. In the remote western areas could be found racial remnants and a persisting folk way of life, a localism distilled by undisturbed centuries. This centrality of geography in Wales's cultural history was also the theme of Cyril Fox's *The Personality of Britain*\textsuperscript{23}, published in 1932. In it a range of archaeological evidence amplified his twofold division (derived from Mackinder) of Brittain into highland and lowland. The latter, being more easily accessible, provided a habitat for Iron Age and Bronze Age settlers in turn. It was in the east that could be found, for instance, the beakers of the early Bronze Age. In the west, by contrast, were found ancient structures of the Neolithic Age such as megalithic tombs and long barrows (Fig.24). In Wales, these occupied the western peninsulas of Llyn and Pembrokeshire, and the island of Anglesey. The Roman civilization epitomised the contrast between Highland and Lowland; its military area coinciding with the former, and effective civil 'Romanization' was confined to the latter. Whilst the west had a higher degree of civilization when the western seaways were open, in general the Lowlands nourished richer cultures\textsuperscript{24}. They were, however, susceptible to rapid cultural change whereas the Highlands had a more positive character in which new cultures were absorbed and fused, resulting in a greater cultural continuity: "There is a wide range of evidence of this", claimed Fox, "such as the survival of the Celtic language, the persistence in the west of very old racial stocks, and the persistence of tribal custom, the importance of kinship and clan"\textsuperscript{25}. Fox, however, felt that Offa's Dyke provided the strongest evidence of the effectiveness of the Highland zone as a physical barrier. The similarity between the line of the Dyke and the modern political boundary was due, he claimed, "to natural causes to which politics have proven unconsciously subservient"\textsuperscript{26}.

**THE FOUNT OF INSPIRATION**

Wales then was a typical Highland region, marked by cultural elasticity. Whilst geography - the upland of central Wales, dissected by rivers running westward - had prevented Wales, unlike
Figure 24. The distribution of megalithic monuments, from The Personality of Britain
Scotland, from developing a centre of political expression, an universally recognised 'capital', it had promoted the survival of the Welsh language and ways of life. Mountains came to symbolise security in Wales, a point which Vaughan Comish had noted in his National Parks evidence. Indeed throughout Europe, the hill country kept alive inheritances from the past, and Fleure saw the western ends of Europe, the Celtic fringe, as "the ultimate refuge in the far west, wherein persist, among valleys that look towards the sunset, old thoughts and visions that else had been lost to the world."

In this sense, Fleure and his colleagues' work was representative of central intellectual concerns in Europe as a whole, linking into a conceptual tradition of 'Habitat, Economy and Society'. There was a persistent conception of the German countryside for instance "as a reservoir of traditionalism, and of the peasantry as an arsenal of pre-modern characteristics", and this formed the basis of the Nazis' 'Blood and Soil' philosophy. In Denmark, frequently highlighted as an enlightened and modern peasant society, the study of agrarian history and the roots of folk life was perceived to be of great contemporary importance. In France too there was a growth in rural sociology and rapid developments in ethnology after the Great War. Fleure and his colleagues' studies contributed to the perceived spiritual importance of the remote rural areas, seen as having much to contribute to civilisation. Fleure came to consider what Campbell calls 'bio-social psychology': biological in that he tentatively attempted to link psychological with racial types; and sociological in the sense that Fleure always asserted the primacy of the social group. The geography that allowed for the discovery of "survivals" on Pumlumon allowed also for the recovery of a storehouse of values protected by social continuity. The survival type, for instance, often occupied a very humble position in life but those who had ventured from home contributed ably and prominently to society. The Little Dark People, the fundamental type, contributed large numbers to the ministers of churches, for the moorland people's idealism "usually expresses itself in music, poetry, literature and religion rather than in architecture, painting and plastic arts generally. They rarely have a sufficiency of material resources for the latter activities". The Nordic and coastal types favoured commerce and organisational activities and from this group also came the majority of Welsh M.P.s. Zones of conflict between physical types, such as the boundary between North and South Pembrokeshire, often produced individuals of marked ability.

Fleure upheld the peasant ideal, convinced that the peasantry cherished universal and abiding values. The persistence of folk customs, for instance, revealed this. Fleure recalled how in Wales and Scotland houses were still rented in accordance with transhumance patterns, rent being payable in May and November. One could also see farmhands waiting to be hired at November fairs.
Peasant life also retained a diversity that Fleure (and Geddes) saw as vital. He feared over specialisation, Campbell suggesting that this arose from his background in biology. To urban businessmen and self-consciously modern suburbanites it might, Fleure admitted, seem mere fond sentimentalism to admit to an interest in old countryside traditions. Times, they would stress, had changed, but Fleure argued that “some of us doubt whether change is always progress and whether change, as it affects us, is not often a specialisation in certain directions that cuts off possibilities in others”\textsuperscript{37}. In this sense, modernization was seen as having a detrimental effect on personality, by contrast with the rich diversity of peasant life’s varied tasks. The latter’s life-long sequence, whilst perhaps limiting initiatives, preserved people from becoming mere flotsam and jetsam as they inevitably would in both slum and suburb\textsuperscript{38}. In the rural west, the personality was developed to a greater degree. Even simple folk of the humblest occupations would be eager to discuss the depths of philosophy. A farm bookcase might contain some of the old masterpieces of religious literature and farmers could, claimed Fleure, tell Bible stories with a dramatic form that might shock modern English sensibilities!

The peasantry were of importance in combating the materialism of unbridled laissez-faire. Fleure argued in 1921 that civilisation’s one hope of avoiding collapse was to have a stream of supply from the remote corners where the treasures of ancient thought and inspiration survived, imparting faculties of discernment and judgement\textsuperscript{39}. In this way Wales was “a fount whence may well up streams of inspiration refreshing to the jaded and overstrained business life of our perplexed modern England”\textsuperscript{40}. He later wrote that

\begin{quote}
our common British life has gained vastly from lads of the Celtic west who have sought adventures and fortune in the army, the law, the churches and affairs of state. It has been that spring of an ancient cultural tradition with its vision and its dreams that has given its men a quality we need to keep us fresh. The Celtic west exports men and women and it is well when they continue to keep in touch with their origins. The miners of South Wales have been preserved from some of the worst evils of industrialism by these contacts and few who have known them well would dispute the statement that they are a specially valuable element in our British population\textsuperscript{41}.
\end{quote}

\textbf{Neo-Romantics}

In this sense, the work of Fleure and his colleagues anticipates the artistic movement of Neo-Romanticism which emerged in the 1930s. As the geographers and archaeologists found
ancientness reflected in the folk of the west and on the face of the land there, so artists sought inspiration in the country. They, like Fleure, saw the peasantry's virtues; the St. Ives school of painters, for instance, lauded the primitive, child-like paintings of retired fisherman Alfred Wallis for their unmediated and experiential view of the natural scene. Graham Sutherland, on his first visit to Pembrokeshire - where he was to produce some of his most influential work - in 1934, remarked that the inhabitants' life was "almost biblical in its sober dignity." But neo-Romanticism was essentially a new British representation of landscape, a Modernist re-working of the traditions of topography and pastoralism. It was "a projected past which found its myth of origins in the land of Britain itself. This narrative in British art seems coiled and involuted, with King Arthur and William Blake twined close to Picasso and Andre Masson as points of cultural reference. Here was an organic myth of rocks, hills and Arcadia; a myth of origins to be drawn out by artists such as Graham Sutherland and John Craxton." Both of these found neo-Romanticism's sense of place on the western fringes of Britain. Sutherland was struck by the strangeness of Pembrokeshire's landscape, the fields studded with cairns and standing stones as if anchoring the scanty soil onto the earth's foundations. He also saw the elemental in the landscape, in the shape, for instance, of a bleached horse's skull, tree roots or a half-buried wreck. In moments of illumination natural forms took on a presence, life or personality. This recalls Fleure's preoccupation with human form, but also relates to geographical and anthropological work in its sense of Welshness. A concern with megaliths revealed awareness of the origins of the people, for as Fleure had noted "among the population near the great stone monuments there is a distinctive element of dark, broad-headed, usually strong-shouldered men.. and.. this is true of several parts of Europe as well as of.. Wales." This feeling for origins is seen also in Alan Sorrell's reconstructions of archaeological sites (Fig.25) commissioned by Cyril Fox for the National Museum of Wales. The sites which gave such meaning to Welsh geography once again bustled with life, recalling a vigorous and expanding civilization in an age when, as the shadows of war lengthened, civilization itself seemed threatened. As Ian Jeffrey puts it "The Neo-Romantics were seers, prophesying and recalling ancient truths in a secular age. But they often spoke despairingly, as though only memories survived." A mythology of Celtic heroism, for instance, informs David Jones's paintings on Arthurian themes and, whilst echoing the sober dignity which Sutherland saw in rural Welsh life, John Piper's 1937 series of Welsh Nonconformist chapel paintings, and his studies of Hafod mansion in mountainous mid Wales, evoked a sense of 'decrepit glory'. His 1940s watercolours of Snowdonia, however, are imbued with a Ruskinian vision of the power of Nature.
GEORGE STAPLEDON AND THE SPIRIT OF THE LAND

This sense of force in nature informed the work of another at Aberystwyth who saw the profound importance of the countryside and its folk and who, like Fleure, saw human interrelationship with environment as the central issue in scientific study. George Stapledon (Fig. 26), a Devonian, joined the Agricultural Department at the University in 1912. In 1919 he became the first Director of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station, a post through which he exerted immense influence on agricultural practices, becoming "in many respects the most illustrious [name] ever associated with the College." Stapledon's applied work is considered later but it is instructive to outline the philosophy from which his practices arose. Due, he claims, to his mother's influence he was drawn to the mystical aspects of nature, arguing that science should not be seen as cause and effect. There was, rather, a diversity of extraneous influences at play which made, as Robert Waller suggests, the Jungian conception of synchronicity a more appropriate basis of knowledge. His method posited observation, speculation and inspiration combined with the faculty of intellect as the path to an understanding of nature. He argued that Science and the Spirit should be united, and like Fleure that study should not be compartmentalised.

Stapledon had read Henri Bergson "and was deeply imbued with the feeling that an evolving Spirit of Life was immanent in Nature: that it was only by reference to this all-embracing and unifying Spirit that the details of Nature could ultimately be explained." In his essay "The Search for Ultimate Truth" he argued that strife was a necessity of life:

the spirit of life itself requires the continual operation of opposing forces, in order to stimulate its motive forces to that pitch of intensity which must be maintained in order to guarantee the forward march of evolution. Strife is an ever present natural phenomenon, and like gravitation it is a force not to be denied. As I write these lines I hear the thundering waters of the falls at Devil's Bridge. I am sharply reminded of the ceaseless battles almost everywhere raging between water and rocks, wind and dust, oxidation and precipitation, and of all the warring forces, with their stupendous release of energy.

This life stream, the evolutionary 'spirit', was unifying, and was a constant theme in Stapledon's philosophy.
Figure 26. R. George Stapledon
(from Robert Waller *Prophet of the New Age*)
Stapledon nonetheless saw a denial of this unification in modern life. The spiritual, or non-material, needs - "the vital, living and essentially indissoluble part of each and every man"\textsuperscript{56} - were being neglected in a drive for material standards and cheap pleasures. Life itself was becoming second hand and 'mentally domesticated'. Humans were, argued Stapledon, too embroiled with machines and machinery to react to their whole experience. City life - and here becomes apparent the significance of rurality - was one sided in its appeal to the mental as opposed to the pre-mental aspect of character. It was alienating for "The rhythm for which we yearn, unknown to the masses of us perhaps and which alone can satisfy it, is not the intellect-made din and screeching of modern streets and factories, not the hum even of a moderately placid machine, but the sounds of nature, the sea on the shore, the babbling brook, the wind in the willows"\textsuperscript{57}. The Jungian collective unconscious yearned for pre-mental satisfaction, for harmony with the pattern of universal life. This was the product of innate wisdom and as such something that could only be approached through meditation. Stapledon's contemplation (Fig.27) whilst working on the Welsh hills, was expanded by the vast horizons of the landscape. This natural harmony was

\begin{quote}
Something that can be dimly felt through the contemplation of natural phenomena and natural beauty unspoiled by man and in places remote from cohorts and battalions of mankind. Man to be himself, to understand himself, must sometimes escape from man and mingle humbly, freely, gladly with other living things and with the universe - without thought, without inquiry, and in the total absence of any jarring note and far removed from anything that is in bad taste\textsuperscript{58}.
\end{quote}

This passage - mirroring Cornish's vision of the national parks - also suggests the values which Stapledon saw embodied in the rural population. British life as a whole, had lost its high 'coefficient of ruralicity' and had suffered accordingly. The rural population, however, retained its innate wisdom - a product of environment. Stapledon claimed that townsfolk regarded the country personality, its apparent slowness and lack of enterprise, with arrogance. But in his opinion, this showed the urban population's failure to appreciate the intuitive qualities of shrewdness and caution. Rural wisdom arose from experience and contemplation, and not the classroom. It was a sturdy individualism "based primarily on the solid rock of deeply felt personal experiences"\textsuperscript{59}, a trust in the self that would eventually prove receptive to new ideas. In his opinion townsfolk were in no way qualified to pass judgement on countryfolk.
Contemplation

Figure 27. "Contemplation" from *The Land: Now and Tomorrow*
Stapledon likewise attacked the notion that the country population was stagnant, the more enterprising having been drawn to the urban areas. He argued that rural depopulation had, rather, concentrated the merits of the rural population "and that love of the country has been the dominant factor in retaining those who remained loyal to the country and to country pursuits. If all this is so, then our diminished country stock is a much-to-be-treasured asset to the nation, of immense value... to current citizenship." Like Fleure, Stapledon shared the notion of the countryside as a storehouse of vitality and civilising values, but somewhat differently saw its contribution in sustaining laissez faire: "the most urgent need for a vigorous and ample rural population is as a prop to the great cities, as a recruiting ground for the trades and professions, and, most important of all, as a means of sustaining the nation in a condition of vigour and sanity." Fleure saw humanity rather than vigour in the export of values to the towns.

The idea of the racial planning of the nation informs much of Stapledon's work, and as such links him to the eugenics movement. It was no grammatical co-incidence that he described the values of the rural population as 'sanity' and 'vigour'. He believed that the 'country stock' had a physical as well as psychological superiority over the town dwellers (significantly not described as a 'stock'). It was sounder, he claimed, because more inbred (the 'village idiot' syndrome being but one over-publicised defect) and was, therefore a pure foundation stock be it Welsh, Scottish or English. It was a honeycomb of genetic purities constituting an essential reservoir upon which to draw - in clear parallel to his own work in plant breeding - in the improvement and development of a race. The countryside of Britain "in short carries in its population the genes, unsullied and uncontaminated, that maintain and perpetuate our national vigour and national characteristics." The country was, furthermore, a magnet drawing to itself the national stock. Any 'back to the land' movement would attract each nation's folk of pure national ancestry, mystically drawn back to the land from whence they originally came.

There were obvious dangers in Stapledon's thinking, particularly in his notion of pure racial characteristics. On the one hand he argued that the country stock was a *honeycomb* of genetic purities, approaching Fleure's concept that nations were composed of "mosaics of inheritances and that a 'race-type' exists mainly in our own minds and should not be used without great reserve in scientific discussion." Stapledon appears, as such, not to have erected any notion of a 'national type' such as the Nazis' Nordic Myth. But he did echo that myth's romanticism in establishing the notion of rural genetic purity; counterposing the pure stock found in the countryside of each nation (and here he erects a 'national' type) with the implied genetic, as well as moral, corruption of city
life. In this sense, he reflects and extends late Victorian and Edwardian debates on the genetic effects of urbanism, debates which gave rise to the eugenics movement.

**RACE AND SOCIETY**

Fleure rejected the notion of racial 'purity' and recognised the dangers of such a simplistic view, increasingly apparent in continental Europe. He was a fierce critic of the Nordic myth and was active in anti-racist activities particularly after his move to Manchester University in 1930. Whilst Fleure was convinced of the spiritual importance of the rural population, he nonetheless resisted making any claims for them on genetic grounds. He was, however, concerned to challenge certain prejudices relating to sections of the urban and rural population, and the claims of extreme eugenists that these were essentially deficient. He challenged the reductionism of such prejudices by arguing that "a wise national policy would be one that sought to maintain in health and opportunity a great variety of human stock, in order to obtain richness of constructive opportunities, as well as of mutually critical tendencies; questions relating to distribution and changes of distribution of race-types would thus very probably be of great public importance, could they be examined in sufficient detail." As we have seen, Fleure examined distribution in considerable detail, and informing the health debate, E.G. Bowen developed a study of the socio-biological attributes of physical types. The aim was to fulfil the need in health planning for knowledge relating to the susceptibilities of various types to disease. From the late 1920s, Bowen studied the incidence of phthisis in relation to racial type and social environment in South and West Wales, drawing on Fleure's racial studies and on data collected by David Davies's Welsh National Memorial Association. A study of the Cardiganshire lead mining area - considering geography, geology and anthropology - concluded that whilst mining was in progress the 'little dark people' of the Rheidol catchment survived pulmonary T.B. for longer than the generally Nordic types of the Ystwyth catchment. The pattern was, however, reversed as mining waned, Bowen arguing that the cause lay in the adaptation of different physical groups to changing social conditions. The Rheidol people, in a wetter upland area, were forced to fall back on sheep farming with its attendant poverty whereas the lowland Ystwyth people utilised their drier lands for crop raising. The fair-haired Nordic type was also, he claimed, better adapted than the darker type for vigorous work. In essence whilst weak in poor upland feeding conditions the Rheidol type could survive and work well in the crowded and squalid industrial areas so long as adequate food was available. The Ystwyth type, however, needed open air, sunshine and movement, with nutrition being less important. Bowen was convinced of the work's importance for the clinical study of preventive and industrial medicine. Regional surveys could focus attention on the evolutionary
adaptation of racial and social groups to changing environment, thus deepening understanding of the disease. Bowen was convinced that "Any complete scheme for dealing with matters of public health... must of necessity take the geographical and racial factors into consideration"69.

Bowen worked in a climate in which eugenists had argued that the short dark longheads (Fleure's Little Dark People) were inferior, as they formed an increasing proportion of the less fit marginal population of the industrial areas. But fitness, Fleure argued, was relative to the kind of society under consideration70. It was the materialism and cultural imperialism of *laissez faire* that caused these peoples' relative weakness. The short dark longheads had left the poor rural areas and their attendant illness for the plentiful food of the urban areas. Despite the dirt and squalor of the slums they had, as Bowen showed, developed an ability to survive thus forming a large proportion of the marginal population created by the industrial system. This system enforced specialisation and a diversion of energies into social protest thus making the breed's decline inevitable. Slum life furthermore gave children an incomplete physical, mental and social inheritance. In Fleure's opinion "It is the social system that is aggravating the weakness of humanity... the balance sheets of our mining, industrial and transport concerns are false, for they do not set off amounts either against the using up of stored capital of the earth, or against social and personal deterioration produced by their activities"71. The talents of oratory and poetry amongst these elements of the rural and industrial population - ignored by the eugenists - proved that they were in no sense inferior, and that a racial mosaic brought richness. The Eugenics Society, rather than agitating for a programme of birth control amongst the 'inferior' types should, so Fleure argued, press rather for the modification of social organization to secure reasonable conditions of maturation for the various breeds, and a social system within which they could operate. The aim should be a population of generally improved quality and diversity. The relating of biological conditions to social organization and the capitalist system reflected the commitment to social reform in Fleure's thinking. Living and working in a Welsh community he saw that whilst Wales had long provided a store of civilising values that store was threatened and in decline. He perceived a need, therefore, for study of the social organization of rural areas.

**THE STOREHOUSE THREATENED**

Wales's geography had long provided a strong cultural barrier but one which was "likely to count for less and less in these days of powerful charabancs, listening-in, and universal education"72. Slowly Wales, like other rural areas, was being assimilated geographically and culturally by tourism, B.B.C. broadcasts and the school curriculum. Many recognised the causes of the decline...
but few perceived its implications as fully as Fleure. For him, this assimilation meant the drying up of the well of inspiration, and a dangerous loss of diversity.

How then to check this threat? Fleure was adamant that society should not create organisations for defence as this carried the risk of narrowing horizons and, inevitably, lowering standards. The biological metaphor of atrophy and his fears of political nationalism informed this opinion. He believed the pursuit of real excellence to be a healthier aim, for the group that attained real excellence on an international scale was unlikely to lose its identity. Neither should rural Wales be stifled by external organisation. Writing during the economic crisis of the 1920s, Fleure argued that industrialism was not providing the answers to society’s problems, and the cry was for a new vision: "That new vision is not likely to come from those who are obsessed by the present system. Might it not come more fruitfully from those who retain their rural roots?" 73. There were ample opportunities for experimentation by local voluntary groups in educational, cultural and economic spheres 74. Housing in particular, as we have seen, was a fruitful area of cooperation. Private institutions could also help foster interaction between town and country. City churches helped mountain churches and industrial magnates were helping the people's effort to equip the youth who went out into the world, as well as to maintain the genius loci. Fleure’s chair in Geography and Anthropology was endowed by the Misses Davies whose brother the following year endowed a chair in International Politics at Aberystwyth bringing the eminent political scientist Alfred Zimmern to rural Wales 75. Davies was, of course, an active planning campaigner and Fleure was himself a member of the W.H.D.A.’s Central Council and a keen supporter of the distress relief work undertaken by the Quakers and other voluntary groups in South Wales. He supported the Quakers' adult education centre on the South Wales coast (where unemployed miners were involved in intellectual debate on subjects including economic geography) and Coleg Harlech - an adult residential school opened in 1927.

So education was again seen as being of vital importance in the life of Wales. Both Fleure and Bowen were committed to adult education and supported local societies like the Cardiganshire Antiquarians 76. Regional Survey also had an important educational function in social renewal, by firstly inculcating citizenship - as Alfred Davies had noted - and making people aware of their heritage. This would facilitate a re-birth founded on tradition 77. The study of the organic region would also foster a co-operative outlook giving rise to the opportunities mentioned above. The region's development could also be seen as a mirror of the evolution of civilization as a whole; and to guide the future evolution of society the university should play a central role in the survey 78.
Fleure argued for broader intellectual training in schools and universities along the French model. Both he and Patrick Geddes believed that Britain's national well being depended on the return of vitality to provincial life and that the universities might be instrumental in this renewal if their function was conceived afresh. Fleure saw the University of Wales's prime task as "ensuring a continuous and intimate relation and response between the country's life and the university so that the university and its college may be enabled to utilize to the full their great opportunity of expressing and developing all that Wales can contribute to the common stock of civilization." The Welsh tradition could be studied and preserved, fostered and broadened. The University might also undertake scientific surveys of economic and other problems bearing on the quality of Welsh social life. One such study was made by Fleure and his associates, under the auspices of the W.H.D.A., on the reorganisation of inshore and river fisheries in Cardigan Bay. In his report Fleure blamed laissez faire for the decay of the traditional industry and noted some of the consequences, most notably the increasing role of tourism in the coastal villages. A population which came to depend entirely on the city tourist was socially degenerate and Fleure suggested that the W.H.D.A. investigate the needs of tourist resorts in the off-season, needs "that are at least as great for moral and civic reasons as for more directly financial ones." Dependance also extended the power of urban Britain westward.

Awakening the spirit of place
One of the Aberystwyth College's greatest contributions to the revival of rural and provincial life was the work of the Welsh Plant Breeding Station. Its development of new breeds of grasses and crops, for instance, allowed cultivation and pasture in upland areas. Through the Empire Marketing Board the Station gained a worldwide reputation, and its philosophy of raising the
general level of cultivation was also attributed a crucial role in the war effort. But the Station also played a crucial role in its locality. Stapledon employed local farmers' sons for their intuitive wisdom and rural-mindedness, and short courses diffused the advances into the rural areas.

But Stapledon also fostered more revolutionary ideas for the rural areas; ideas conceived to counter a grave crisis. Although Wales was not specifically addressed, his solutions would have arisen from his experiences of Welsh rural life. Britain's 'coefficient of ruralicity' was dropping rapidly and everywhere the rural areas came under the influence of the towns through the growing availability of the motor car. Whole counties were losing their rural psychology - their traditional outlook - as the Spirit of Place was violated by land-grabbing and the inappropriate and inharmonious uses of the countryside. And all this in addition to the plague of housing "that is flowing in another great stream over the land and which also like wind-borne germs finds happy hunting grounds in the most surprising and isolated of places." At his most apocalyptic, Stapledon claimed that, at current rates of loss, there would be no farmland left in four centuries.

The rural population thus came to feel that both they and agriculture were inferior. The land was merely something with which the townsfolk gambled. Their environment was uglified and they inevitably sought to adjust themselves to the standards and outlook of the city, factory and suburb. For Stapledon, the implications of this were profound. Not only was agriculture threatened, and the medical benefits of fresh foodstuffs jeopardised, but the very spirit of the nation was endangered. The towns needed the psychology and, in his opinion, the genetic support of the rural population: "Let rural Britain die completely and the whole superstructure will totter to ruin. It is just and only just not too late to stop the rot, but only heroic endeavours will suffice." But unless the rural areas were revived the driving force behind the national character would be lost.

Stapledon's prescriptions for this malaise were indeed heroic, calling for an entirely new orientation between town and country. In common with many landscape commentators he deplored the 'mulish hybrid' of the suburbs and even argued for the reintroduction of city walls - a forerunner perhaps of the Green Belt. Those who believed in ordered evolutionary processes had no alternative, he argued, but to regard it as their sacred duty to plan for posterity. In modernist fashion, he argued that the plan, preceded by survey, would lead to an ordered programme of reconditioning. There should, he argued, be established a Ministry of Lands and a programme of owner-occupation, State credit, and nationalism (or self-sufficiency) in food production. These programmes should be administered regionally for Stapledon, like Geddes and Abercrombie, saw the region as a homogeneous and essentially organic unit, defined psychologically and not
bureaucratically. But this planning was to be a creative process calculated to restore rural psychology as the dominant force in national life, for "deep in the inner recesses of man's subconscious mind lies the indelible impression of the land - a heritage which by greatly dreaming and greatly imagining, could be galvanised into a mighty power". The love of nature was latent in all.

Vital in the process of raising awareness was education, an activity which, as Alfred Davies had noted, seemed geared for standardization. Modern education, Stapledon claimed, had lost touch with the country and its heritage of wisdom and sturdy individualism. Its curricula were geared to town dwellers' needs thus making rural children ashamed of their inheritance, and the bussing of children into the towns brought them into contact with corrupting influences. A more appropriate system would abolish examinations and classrooms, whilst providing lessons in the art of contemplation and nature contact. Schools and universities could regularly take small groups into the country. To read a map in the country, for instance, was to begin to read nature and hone the skills of observation. It was the type of experiential education that would speed the child's passage into a self-reliant and purposeful adult: "Creation is action, and any system that does not lead towards action cannot be in harmony with the needs of life, which at every turn and every day demand wise and creative endeavour". There are parallels here with Alfred Davies's notion of patriotism stimulated by nature study as well as with Fleure's belief that "Whatever other qualities are needed to make a good citizen, a loving familiarity with and at the same time an objective understanding of the home region are essential".

Leisure was also conceived as having an explicitly educational function, hence Stapledon's desire to see agricultural activities intensified in national parks so as to bring urban workers in touch with creative enterprise on the land. The natural scene, in his opinion, included human works. He further supported - within the context of proposed modified working hours and public holidays - the hostelling, cycling and rambling movements, and even considered fishing a cure for the overwrought! With ease of access and spartan accommodation, these represented contemplative recreation transforming the urban population's psychological outlook. The corollary was recreation in which facilities were provided. Outside the city walls 'primitive' golf courses might be established for solitary recreation in beautiful scenery away from the mass-psychology of town life. Great business concerns might establish Trade Guild (Holiday) Estates as centres for the revitalisation of their workers; and through Weekend Allotment Associations, town dwellers might reap the benefits of growing and selling their own food.
Thus would begin a great pilgrimage to the country, a new age in which rural psychology was ascendant and the nation again vigorous. But the pilgrimage, the New Age, brought its own requirements, primarily that the Spirit of Place should not be violated and that all developments should be worthy of it:

_We want a great architect to arise, himself a great countryman, a man imbued with the urge blindly struggling for self-expression that is the driving force behind the great pilgrimage, to design thoroughly appropriate and rural shacks, modern, but rural cottages; to consider the colour schemes appropriate to Dutch barns and farm buildings; to ponder and advise relative to the lay-out of allotments; to harmonize the poultry house and chicken pen with its surroundings - to be THE ARCHITECT born of THE NEW AGE_100.

Stapledon held no brief for preservation which he saw as inimical to progress101. He argued for harmony in the landscape and for a conception of nature which saw humans as a dignified part of a greater scheme. This depended on 'rural psychology' - "A strong and instinctive feeling for appropriateness between utility.. and surroundings and also a strong subconscious feeling that a task well, nay neatly and artistically, performed carries its own and very satisfying mental reward over and above any monetary gain that may accrue.. In a word then, I think true rural psychology epitomizes in itself the Spirit of Place"102. Thus would the aesthetics and the integrity of a modern countryside be secured.

The appeal for an architect of the age embodied the visionary spirit of Stapledon's work, and the contemporary lure of the charismatic leader. The leader would be a product of the age, a person of intuitive wisdom and strength. Little surprise then that Stapledon should look to Fascist Italy and to Mussolini for inspiration. Fascism embodied elements of his blend of modernism and rural conservatism. He also admired Mussolini's land reclamation schemes, seeing them as creative acts having "a stimulating influence not only on all who are directly concerned, but also upon the nation as a whole. To turn land incapable of maintaining man or beast.. into productive and smiling acres is a creative act that stands to the credit of the nation with the heart to initiate such work not merely for decades but for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years"103. The visionary monumentalism of Fascism contrasted starkly with the pragmatism of British planning and Stapledon argued for long term views, including the reclamation of The Wash, as a stimulant to
the national spirit. Indeed he equated the expansion of acreage with the expansion of the human spirit.

Stapledon also admired Mussolini's corporatist planning policies, and he advocated the wholesale redevelopment of upland Britain. Like many others he saw the importance of rural housing in the resuscitation of the countryside. Many farmhouses were dilapidated, without water supply, cramped and ill-placed in relation to aspect and to each other. He dramatically proposed that isolated farmhouses be re-grouped into hamlets. The road and the motor then gave a particular opportunity for invigorating the uplands. Simple, well-designed roads and the extension and joining up of dead-ends could make land accessible for both farmer and holidaymaker. Every hamlet should be reachable by motorcycle, and every farm by motor car. A village club and cinema should also be provided to serve the uplands thus making the well-planned village a self-sufficient centre of social intercourse and amusement. All these proposals were aimed at stemming the depopulation which undermined, for Stapledon, national character. In his opinion, "there must be no such thing as inaccessibility... if we desire to maintain and increase a vigorous rural population in hill districts and in remote parishes".

All this called for vigorous and visionary action on the part of the State. Stapledon, however, recognised deep-seated causes that operated against purposeful action, and so it is unsurprising that Mussolini's political virility appealed to him and that he, in common with Fascist thinking, found the solution in the engineer. "I have always felt that what we need in all the great problems of the day are the methods and attitude of mind of the real engineer. The engineer is before everything a man of action; he does things and he creates things... he is not for ever bothering with ultimates, he is concerned with problems that have been predefined with a view to achieving a definite purpose and a definite human purpose." In its concern for ultimates, science was not a means to action. The engineer's fundamentalism, Stapledon claimed, evoked an unreflective spirituality drawing on that pre-mental side of human character attuned to nature. The German Right likewise symbolically appropriated technology alongside blood, will and soil in a merging of modernism and conservatism. The engineer was personified as Stapledon's awakener of national ruralicity.

The debate as to 'action' calls into question the exercise of political power. Stapledon believed in a New Age brought in by the will of the people. Despite the attractions of Mussolini, he stressed the dangers of dictatorship, believing rather in a plutocracy of landownership, and thus in the same kind of enlightened self-interest as Williams-Ellis. But landowners, Stapledon argued, had been corrupted by the germ of industrialization, and neither did the State show any regard for vigorous
planning. Its ad hoc authorities reflected the soulless compartmentalization he despised, and he was pessimistic in calling for State aid to agriculture.

Fleure was also pessimistic about the actions of central government, though for different reasons. Whilst applauding private and institutional concern and effort, he could not foresee improved state funding of the remote corners. But this pessimism was but part of an opposition to the whole concept of the nation state as it had emerged, all too often suppressing ecological, linguistic and cultural diversities. Most states had, he claimed, arisen on the inadequate justification that a political group usually had only one official language. But in reality nation states had a diversity of languages; such as the Basque, Catalan and Galician in Spain, and the old Celtic languages in Britain. This illustrated the diversity of biological units and ancient inheritances, but these units were threatened by the rise of the nation state. Military efficiency and governmental discipline further encouraged the reduction of diversity. State psychology, thus defined, was a dangerous phenomenon as the Great War had clearly demonstrated.

But Fleure argued that

*The ideal of government is to allow scope for the expression of the social heritage of ethnic units, and it has become evident that the European system must be progressively modified to lessen the influences that inhibit that expression, as well as to promote toleration and understanding between diverse forms of that expression. We must therefore study biological social units to discover those which have special importance, as well as to emphasise the contributions they can make under improved conditions to the common stock of civilisation.*

In his opinion, it was unrestricted state sovereignty and the consequent armaments fear and 'scramble for markets' that gave rise to ethnic suppression. In a paper entitled "The World as one Brotherhood" he welcomed the formation of the League of Nations and expressed hope that it might promote international understanding. At a global scale, the First World should study the resource-rich tropical lands and their societies "carefully and without prejudice. For it is now abundantly clear how inappropriate it is for us to use these lands and peoples for our own uses, transplanting into their midst our ways of life and European society." There should be an exchange of ideas between nations based on mutual respect.
But there was also a clear need for mutual respect within nations. Fleure had shown the qualities brought to British life by the various 'biological units' of the remote corners. It was in an attempt to strike a balance between the absence of common memory in the nation state, and the stagnation of the small and isolated unit that Fleure proposed the study of biological units as a means of promoting unity in diversity. One of those who came under Fleure's influence in this way was Iorwerth Peate.

IORWERTH PEATE: A WELSH HERITAGE

Iorwerth Peate (Fig.28), a carpenter's son from Llanbrynmair in the heart of Central Wales, was an early student of Geography and Anthropology at Aberystwyth. He shared Fleure's concern about cultural insensitivity and particularly the contemporary tendency to centralise in all directions, creating systems that expelled tradition and the living spirit of localities. Peate was to become, in his efforts to counter this trend, one of the strongest advocates of Welsh social heritage.

As an undergraduate he published, at Fleure's instigation, a book on Welsh prehistory which revealed his perception of the centrality of geography in Welsh history. The point was perhaps most clearly articulated in Cymru a’i Phobl (Wales and Her People), a conscious attempt to write the kind of 'new' Human Geography developed by Fleure. He sought to illuminate human life and the way it was influenced by inheritances and environments, and particularly the way in which humans had mastered their surroundings. Peate shared Fleure's multi-disciplinary approach, but argued that geography due to its sensitivity to interaction was the discipline best suited to providing an historical understanding of society's evolution.

Welsh history was, for Peate, the history of interaction between a society and its environment. A land of mountains and high moorland on the extreme west of the European lowlands, it formed a sanctuary for the old traditions. Sheltering behind its mountains, Wales was the ultimate refuge from the waves of new cultures advancing from the east. In the west could be found old ways and visions lost in the outside world - "folk songs, superstitions, crafts, the gentle bearing of the poor, and a host of other things which are as pieces of old dreams lost in the uproar of the juggernaut of Industry". Publication of his Aberystwyth colleague Trevor Lewis's study of the Welsh language in the 1921 census (Fig.29) further illuminated this sense of geographical shelter from the east: "One can state that ancient Gwynedd, the north west corner, remains the fortress of the old language. Outside of this region the language is in decline". The mountains had therefore become foremost in the Welsh mind, a source of identity and of inspiration.
Figure 28. Iorwerth Peate setting off on a day's fieldwork
(from Peate's *Rhwng Dau Fyd*)
That geography was of central importance in sustaining an inheritance could be determined through anthropology. In 1923 Peate began postgraduate research, as part of Fleure's wider national survey, on physical anthropology and dialect distribution in the Dyfi Basin. Figure 28 shows him embarking on his fieldwork, an experience which made him profoundly aware of the richness of folk life. Peate's survey of 180 males and 66 females identified a broad North-South divide within the basin. The north and south exhibit clear 'racial' and phonological differences, and whilst he did not claim a causal link "there is a definite correlation between physical anthropology and dialect distribution in the district". But the area revealed further interesting tendencies of Welsh life. The Dyfi Basin could be sub-divided into areas of relative English influence. To the south Pumlumon was "a nest of old types and old things" whereas to the east, past Peate's home town of Llanbrynmair, the Talerddig divide formed "the watershed between Dyfi and Severn, the boundary between things Welsh and things English, the great barrier to invasion from the Saxon east". Llanbrynmair's position made it the eastern hill-fortress of the Welsh tradition and language, for its proximity to a zone of English influence brought awareness of threat and an early awakening to the need to defend Welsh tradition.

Peate elevated this point into a geographical theory expounded in a paper on the role of the frontier in the development of Welsh nonconformism. The most creative people lived, he claimed, on the frontier of each civilization with an uncreative 'no-man's-land' between frontiers. In Wales, this void was the Severn Valley and the south east. The creative were the leaders of the nonconformist revival in Wrexham, Llanbrynmair and Llanfaches, industrial centres alive with new threats and new ideas. West Wales remained wedded to tradition and from there, for instance, arose the Methodist revival of the eighteenth century, a revival based on old ideas. The concept of the frontier held considerable currency in geography at the time, exhibited in Vaughan Cornish's historical geography and his notion of the cultural march. He argued that every growing culture had an active frontier on which the people's energies became massed, where power, wealth and invention were most highly developed. But as Carl Sauer noted, the thesis did not depend on expansion: "The energies of a culture once localized on such a border may continue to manifest themselves by leadership in many ways long after expansion has ceased. Historically, therefore, it is not in the central parts of a culture area that the great developments take place, but on what was both the most exposed and the most alluring border." 

Crafts and community
This frontier thesis fed into what became Peate's primary interest, namely the study of folk culture.
Figure 29. Distribution of the monoglot Welsh according to the 1921 census (ranging from white = 0% / black = 100%) (from Annales de Géographie Vol.35)
When Welsh, the frontier lands had produced a number of literary figures and spiritual leaders. With the advance of Anglicizing influences however the zone became one of "half things" which had lost touch with tradition by losing the language\textsuperscript{125}. One way in which this lack of spirit manifested itself was through the decline of the crafts\textsuperscript{126}. Peate had an intrinsic reverence for folk wisdom and for skilled rural craftsmanship\textsuperscript{127}. He worked in the National Museum of Wales, then under the Directorship of Cyril Fox, where he concentrated on folk culture and particularly the crafts, establishing a sub-Department of Folk Culture and Industries in 1932. The crafts had, he argued, played a historic role in Welsh life; the laws of the Welsh Princes, for instance, gave pre-eminence to the Clerk, Poet and Blacksmith. As with other peasant cultures, the craftsman was the pillar of Welsh rural society. To discuss religion, literature or politics one went naturally either to the carpenter, shoemaker, truly Welsh miner or blacksmith\textsuperscript{128}. The crafts were generally a complement to a life of farming or quarrying and as such possessed a rich diversity. This richness was often expressed in the craftsman's skill in the manipulation of words, the strict metrical rules of Welsh poetry calling for mental dexterity: "The Welsh poet... dovetails his consonants as the carpenter dovetails his pieces of wood"\textsuperscript{129}.

There still remained, in Peate's opinion, a large tract of the Welsh countryside reasonably unaffected by modern industrial developments, and in these areas the old tradition of craftsmanship lingered. It was still a land of untold interest to the student of folk tradition and anthropology. The material evidence of folk culture had not disappeared and the National Museum had gathered a vast collection of exhibits. Despite his belief in the creativity of the frontier, Peate was concerned, in a period of cultural threat, to delimit the traditional 'heartland' of Welsh folk culture. He utilised anthropological method, searching for 'survivals' and tracing the patterns of influence. When he edited H.J. Fleure's \textit{Festschrift Studies in Regional Consciousness and Environment} in 1930, he contributed a discussion of Welsh wood turners and their trade in which he outlined the geography of production and selling and traced prehistoric influences on style, influences again locating Wales in the mainstream of European civilization\textsuperscript{130}. But new influences were increasingly evident. The number of turners had fallen to some half a dozen by 1933\textsuperscript{131}, located in the wooded valleys of west Wales, and traditional fairs were in decline. The market for craft products was constricting for "it is obvious that competition with firms which produce machine-made wooden spoons of poorer quality but at a far cheaper rate is impossible, and the introduction of German-made spoons into Pembrokeshire, and of Woolworth spoons into the larger towns is slowly destroying the remnants of the turner's trade"\textsuperscript{132}. The new manners which had ousted the crafts from most of rural England were working their way into isolated Welsh communities threatening the death of the turner's domestic trade in a generation or two.
The process was firmly in evidence in Peate's *The Welsh House: a Study in Folk Culture*, published in 1940 and dedicated to the memory of Daniel Lleufer Thomas of the W.H.D.A. The Welsh house was, claimed Peate, a humble peasant dwelling in which fashion played little part. It varied according to local climatic and geographical conditions and according to the economic status of the occupant, and was as such richly expressive of a tradition of localism. Utility came first and beauty followed, resulting naturally from the constructive elements and the colour and texture of the materials. As with Welsh people, distinct types of Welsh dwelling could be identified, and most notably perhaps the Long House, surveys of which were carried out by the pupils of a rural Cardiganshire school. Likewise (and in Sauerian fashion) English influences could be traced, diffusing into Wales along the same routes as the Normans, Romans and even the nineteenth-century railway - the more accessible valley lands of the borders and the South Wales coastal plain. Peate noted, for instance, the black and white, half-timbered houses of the Severn Valley, and the 'English' quaintness of villages in the Vale of Glamorgan, an untypically beautiful area as Abercrombie had noted.

This external influence was growing and the student of folk culture was faced by declining native evidence. Some little renovation was offset by the introduction after the Great War of 'council houses'. In Peate's opinion the new standardized houses were to be criticised for their indiscriminate ignorance of local conditions, for they "replaced old cottages which were native to their environment however much the internal accommodation could be criticized". Abercrombie's call for sensitivity to Welsh cultural tradition in replanning had evidently been ignored. Building materials too revealed external and apparently vulgar influence. Road and rail transport had made the local builder independent of local materials; bricks outpriced locally-quarried stone, corrugated iron ousted timber, and asbestos replaced the native slate or tile. Tradition was dealt a death blow as old techniques and designs were forgotten. In their place there arose "the widespread bad taste in modern building - to be seen in the use of materials unsuitable for the areas concerned (e.g. pressed brick of a violent colour in grey-stone countrysides remarkable for their half-tones) and in the absence of the craftsman's skill in building and the craftsman's restraint in design".

These were all, of course, evils noted by the C.P.R.W. and ones which Peate helped them oppose. They even shared the same vocabulary, with Peate lamenting the "bungaloid growth" of the seaside. Peate may have become active in the Council initially as a result of his friendship with Alwyn Lloyd, both living in the Rhiwbeina Garden Suburb. Lloyd arranged that Peate would translate into Welsh his pamphlet on brighter Welsh villages, and the geographer subsequently had
some influence in the Council on Welsh matters. However, what the C.P.R.W. saw merely as the intrusion of vulgar materialism, and evidence of bad taste - a process equally at work in the rest of Britain and which might be combatted by aesthetic education - Peate saw as part of a broader erosion of Welshness. The implication of the changes was far more than aesthetic. Likewise, Peate's studies of folk culture had a deeper significance than the collection of 'bygones', as Cyril Fox had suggested. Shifts in cultural and economic patterns were revealed by material change in folk artefacts or housing, as the English observer of rural life George Sturt had noted. At the time of The Welsh House, Peate felt that country life was changing more rapidly than in any other age. The development of transport had put the most inaccessible moorland village within the reach of populous 'civilized' areas and radio broadcasts colonised Welsh homes bringing the English language and culture into rural areas "like a multicoloured film of oil over the still waters of the old civilization". Industrialism and the mechanization of agriculture made traditional methods redundant, and the centralization of authority - in agriculture, banking and education - had resulted in a phenomenal change in the social economy of the countryside. Ironically, in the nineteenth century, the University of Wales had also corrupted, bringing a Spencerian idea of the 'survival of the fittest' into rural politics, and replacing a sense of education as the development of character and personality: "Degrees, diplomas and certificates became ends in themselves, and the craftsmen - with the best of intentions - sent their sons into the educational machine to make teachers and preachers of them. Honour left the house of the craftsmen".

For Peate the decay of craftsmanship signified the decline of Wales's spiritual life. But it was the decline of the language that he feared most, for it was the cornerstone of Welsh culture and tradition. The peasants of all great nations - harbingers of tradition - were, he claimed, monoglot. Anglicised areas traditionally failed to support Welsh craft industries and the spread of these areas' influence threatened national tradition and creativity. Quoting an essay on William Morris, Peate argued, in the W.H.D.A. Yearbook, that living art could only arise out of a surrounding body of living crafts. The crafts, in turn, arose out of a living tradition which was dependant on a living language: "Tradition and language in Wales are as weft and warp; without either the final pattern of our society is ruined". Rural Wales was therefore represented as an organic polity. But in the modern world inter-relatedness was easily corrupted into a vicious circle: "no living language, no living tradition, no living craft, no living art. And, one could add, no high regard for health conditions, no high standard of morality; as we should say, no bywyd crwn (rounded life)."
The inter-relatedness of Welsh rural life was of great sociological importance, as Peate demonstrated in an article on the social organization of rural industries, again in the W.H.D.A. Yearbook. Modern mass production and the unification of industries in large combines with the concomitant mechanisation of human labour had, Peate claimed, resulted in the destruction of many local Welsh industries and the societies which grew around them: "The shoddy furniture of the cities and the short-lived manufactures of the mass-production firms have found their way into the countryside, and the result is not only a deterioration of the common necessities of life, but a disintegration also of rural society". As Leavis and Thompson noted, the 'organic community' was being lost. Peate was convinced that the spiritual basis of Welsh rural life depended on economic revival and the preservation of rural industrial organization. He gave the example of a small rural factory in north Cardiganshire producing woollen yarn until its closure in 1927. Farmers of a district centering on the village supplied the wool which was spun by the factory workers; workers who enjoyed a better livelihood than the urban proletariat. The wool was then woven into flannel by four or five weavers who spent most of their time at the loom but had enough left to tend small holdings - providing basic foodstuffs and the spiritual benefits of an alternative occupation - as did the fuller who then washed, trimmed and dyed the material. The final product would then be sold in the community, including the original farms. Similarly tight knit yet diverse social organizations centred on other crafts.

The village was a self-sufficient community "where work and leisure, individual enterprise and co-operation were combined to produce a rural polity which seems to be far nearer perfection than the unhealthy striving of those communities where poverty is extreme and wealth out of all proportion to the needs of those who enjoy it". The rural worker was not alienated from the final product, and so the society was characterised by a deep-rooted love of artistry, particularly in words. This social order affected the mental and spiritual outlook of the people, moulding the definitive Welsh culture. It "postulated a natural courtesy and a willing kindness, engendered and fostered through the social organisation of rural life in the direction of co-operation and the combination of labour and leisure for the benefit of rural society".

Peate claimed that the Welsh peasant industrial organization held the secret of true communal life, an organization which Robert Owen, founder of New Lanark, had described as ideal and which, ironically, Henry Ford - the father of modern production-line manufacturing - argued was "the only salvation of our present economic troubles". Fleure had similarly argued for co-operation in the 'regions of difficulty'. However, there seemed little hope of preserving local industries nor did Peate, never lapsing into mere antiquarianism, consider it desirable to do so. But it should, he
argued, be possible to develop rural Wales in a manner enriching the social background. The industrial organization of both rural and industrial Wales should, he stated, be treated as a specifically Welsh problem, and detached theoretically from broader, trans-national studies. Peate rarely offered explicit solutions. But one prescription of his came in response to the Scott Report on Land Utilization in Rural Areas, published in 1942, which he argued was one such trans-national study. The future of the rural areas was, Peate argued, given only superficial treatment in the Report. He particularly disagreed with its division between town and country, revealing the tendency to consider the latter as a leisure area for residents of the former, with the concomitant need for scenic preservation. This was a sentimental and fundamentally immoral division, Peate claimed, founded on error and having no application in Wales. Certainly the C.P.R.W. had experienced difficulties in advocating such a separation between work and leisure. The Scott Report similarly advocated the development of 'appropriate' rural industries and especially crafts; but as we have seen, Peate - certainly aware of the Quakers' efforts at Brynmawr - believed crafts were themselves the product of a vigorous society: "The crafts are an ornament on rural society not a foundation to it, and it is vain attempting to found a society on what belongs to its horizons rather than its core." In his opinion, rural Wales's agriculture and industry should both be expanded as the key to stemming depopulation. This would merely re-establish an old partnership for in the rural society's most prosperous period it had this dual foundation - farm and woollen mill, farm and quarry, farm and mine. No-one, given care, need fear the destruction of beauty by industrialization. And Peate reaffirmed that which Fox had earlier suggested. Industry, he claimed, could indeed beautify: "We must face these facts rather than live in a sentimental mist and be content with the persistent feebleness of the countryside. There are dynamic foundations to true beauty." Peate, like Fleure, called for the development, in accordance with Welsh scenic traditions, of hydro-electric power and forestry and argued for the introduction into rural Wales of new 'mobile' industries like plastics. Small-scale factories could breathe new life into declining districts. Once the tide of depopulation was stemmed so would grow the demand for agricultural products and, consequently, greater demand for craft-based items. Thus would be re-established the old morally virtuous social organization that had once evolved around the crafts. The rural areas needed a flow of new blood through their veins to ensure vitality. Peate was certain that preservation would be tantamount to death.

But the re-establishment of this social organization required that Wales be treated as a national unit (the Scott Report's failure to do this being, as we shall see, a source of discontent in Wales) and that external exploitation be resisted. And it was vital that the Welsh language be given immediate
primacy in education and public life so that awareness of tradition could ensure the rich diversity of rural life. Anything less would be national suicide. There could be no revival until the peasantry became monoglot and "the tradition of the past is acknowledged in the solution of its present problems". Peate saw himself as an interpreter of folk life and tradition, with a mission to communicate the wealth of Welsh rural life to others.

The museum and national life

The only solution to the desecration of rural Wales was, in Peate's opinion, education in the value of tradition and its development for present social needs. He recognised his task as awakening in the folk's conscience an appreciation of its own culture, thus providing fertile ground for a sense of identity. Peate had long argued the need for a Welsh Folk Museum where "the culture of the Welsh nation in its varied aspects can be given adequate representation". He looked enviously to other nations where folk culture had attained credible status. As in other aspects of social life, Scandinavia had a profound influence. During his postgraduate research Peate met a Norwegian scholar of Celtic then studying Welsh dialect in the Llanbrynmair region who introduced him to developments in Scandinavian folk studies. The Swedes had established the first open-air museum in 1891, rebuilding traditional buildings and illustrating the old way of life. Norway followed suit in 1894 and Denmark in 1909. Peate nurtured Scandinavian links, and despite having earlier dismissed Peate's work as the mere study of 'bygones', Cyril Fox was himself sufficiently inspired by a visit to Scandinavia in 1930 to recommend in principle the foundation of a Welsh Folk Museum.

The 1930s saw impressive foreign developments in folk culture and significantly so in Nazi Germany. German intervention in agriculture in part merely mirrored the centralizing tendency throughout Western Europe which Peate had noted. But Nazi political philosophy was founded on organic and mystic concepts. Expansionism was justified in terms of 'Blood, Soil and Home' (Heimat), being the nation's right to living space, or Lebensraum. This organic concept was derived from the zoological works of Friedrich Ratzel, author of Politische Geographie. Another aspect of the 'Blood and Soil' culture was a new concern with peasant studies. The Nazis proclaimed a mystic attachment to the peasantry or Volk and their rural virtues, in opposition to the corrupt urban existence of their spiritual enemies. The Nordic Myth, attacked by Fleure, claimed that the German spirit, and pure heredity, resided in the peasantry. As such, they were subject to programmes of eugenic 'reform' aimed at keeping this wellspring of character unsullied. There was sociological concern too, with a Reich official, Erwin Metzner, given responsibility for rural customs. He attacked the encroachment of mass-produced urban goods upon the rural areas,
commissioning in 1935 a suitable peasant dress as part of a return to traditional values. A Harvest Festival was instituted in 1933 at which some 700,000 peasants heard speeches by Hitler and Goebbels. There was a concerted, though only partly sincere, attempt to awaken an appreciation for the peasants' way of life.

Part of this campaign was the opening, in 1935, of the German National Museum of Folk Culture to demonstrate what the Minister of Finance's opening speech called "the wide stream of art-feeling and art-consciousness found in the work of the German peasant." Invitations were extended to various European institutions by the German government but Iorwerth Peate was the only British delegate in attendance. Reporting his impressions in the *Museums Journal*, he complimented the museum's organisation and innovative exhibit designs. However, amongst the folk designs and motifs illustrated in black on white was the Swastika (Fig.30). The study of folk culture had clearly been attributed a political function.

![Figure 30: Exhibit at the German National Museum of Folk Culture, 1935](from Museums Journal Vol.35)

Peate believed that a folk museum would make the Welsh aware of their cultural heritage. Though cultural tradition had been betrayed the betrayal was an unconscious one "and education in the value of the old tradition and in the methods of developing it to suit present social needs will provide the only solution for the present 'desecration of the countryside' which many deplore but which some only criticize unintelligently." Addressing the Powysland Club Peate argued for the establishment of a chain of local museums throughout Wales which, as well as fostering localism,
might help raise the standards of aesthetic taste. Referring to a recently discovered half-timber
house, he noted that "nearby had been built a horrible affair of coloured asbestos and pressed brick.
No one there seemed to see the incongruity of it". The juxtaposition of old and new, of
worthy and vulgar, implied that there was a betrayal of the national past. A survey of local
traditional building styles would record this past, and would rescue for the future an inspirational
heritage of localism in design.

But the museum was also to be a focus of revived social life, and ultimately a catalyst for a
renewal of national identity. In this sense, folk studies were to have a role in political education.
In Peate's open air museum the Welsh might walk through centuries of their culture: "Such a
museum would focus cultural achievements and cultural aspirations in a unique way. By this
means, a national museum does indeed become the living heart of a nation, where people can
forgather not only for instruction and inspiration but for festivals and conferences too". The
museum would be the wellspring of a new 'folk', reunited with their heritage but building on its
foundation a new, modern Wales. The University might help build this modern Wales by
establishing local museums in each county as foci for social life. The main building, ideally a
converted traditional farm, would contain a library, local museum and meeting place for cultural
societies and educational groups, whilst the university could disseminate its survey knowledge and
the latest agricultural advice. Far from stifling innovation and change in a welter of nostalgia, folk
museums could be agencies for the re-interpretation of native tradition, and nuclei from which
might spread an invigoration of rural life. The cornerstone of this invigoration was the
establishment of a national folk museum on the Scandinavian model. But not until 1946 were
steps taken towards this aim when the Earl of Plymouth offered the castle and over 80 acres of
ground at St. Fagan's near Cardiff for the purpose. Forwerth Peate, the first curator of what was
once called the "finest living museum in the world", saw this as the start of a new cultural
awakening.

CONCLUSION

Rural Wales and its problems was, therefore, the subject of much Welsh academic work at the
time. But whilst forming a general tradition of 'Habitat, Economy, Society', there were profound
differences between the approaches and ideals of all those concerned. I have already noted some of
the divergences between, for instance, Fleure's and Stapledon's conceptions of the rural population.
Stapledon's desire to see an accessible countryside also confronted in some measure the role that
the geographers saw Wales's topography playing in cultural maintenance. Similarly, Fleure's
vision of the export of men and women as civilizing influences in the industrial areas was not shared by Peate. He, rather, argued for the Welsh rural tradition for its own sake; a self-sustaining way of life.

In the work of all, however, we perceive a characteristic ambivalence towards modernism and modernisation. On the one hand, the modern age was seen as a polluting and destructive phenomenon, flowing into the old fastnesses and swamping traditional environments and ways of life. It is however noteworthy that, especially amongst the geographers, there is only incidental concern with the face of the land. Changes in its appearance were noted and mourned, but were generally read as signifying broader cultural transfigurations. Here, the synthetic understanding of landscape - partly derived from Landschaft - is represented, in dialogue if not conflict with the notion of landscape as scenery. Hence there was only token involvement in the work of amenity groups like the C.P.R.W. The process was one to be resisted rather than an appeal to values of community and culture. On the other hand, the technical advances of modernism were seized upon, and particularly the scientific techniques of planning and the technological advances in, for instance, electricity generation. On these foundations the old patterns of society might be re-established, a theme equally prominent in Fleure's, Peate's and Stapledon's work.

In the following chapter, however, I consider the implications for Welsh political life of this awakened and modern concern for a 'Welshness' defined by such academic studies. When Peate spoke of the folk museum's role in national revival, he did so as one who had been prominent in the early work of the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, founded in 1925. His work, and that of his academic colleagues, informed this political movement, contributing to both a philosophical basis for separatism, and a methodological resistance to external threats.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. Ibid. Chapter 4
3. Ibid. p.108. By far the greatest contribution came from David Davies of Llandinam, father of the housing philanthropist Lord Davies
4. "To me it was not strange to hear a language other than English spoken by British citizens. The Channel Islands have their old patois which, of course, I would not for a moment
compare with a literary language like Welsh, but it gave an idea of alternative tongues and ways of thought so that I. could not but appreciate the Welsh tradition". H.J. Fleure (1955) "U.C.W. Aberystwyth: an Old Student Looks at the College" Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion 1955 Session, pp.57-63; p.60


8. Campbell Some Sources


10. See H.J. Fleure (1919) "Regional Surveys I & II" Sociological Review Vol.11 No.1 pp.28-34. Fleure here argued that regional surveys should be concerned with the spiritual aspects of life, with the enrichment of human experience as their aim. He, however, suggested that there was little new in Le Play's triad, but that it did introduce the concept of interplay between humans and environment: H.J. Fleure (1953) "Patrick Geddes (1854-1932)" Sociological Review New Series Vol.1 No.2, pp.5-13. See also B.T. Robson (1981) "Geography and Social Science: the Role of Patrick Geddes" in D.R. Stoddart (ed) Geography, Ideology and Social Concern Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp.186-207


15. "Geographical Distribution"


19. As such Estyn Evans is discussed less than he deserves in this thesis


22. Fleure Wales and Her People p.1


24. It is interesting to note Fleure's use of the analogy between organic atrophy and cultural regression as a means of explaining relative cultural vigour; Livingstone "History of Science and Geography"

25. Personality of Britain p.32


27. A point elaborated by E.G. Bowen in (1964) Daearyddiaeth Cymru fel Cefndir i'w Hanes London: B.B.C.

28. Wales and Her People p.1


32. Dr Noelle Davies (1930) "The Danish Folk High Schools - Their Origins and History" *Cambria* - a journal of adult education and social service in Wales No.2 pp.22-3


34. *Wales and Her People*

35. Fleure and James "Geographical Distribution" p.119


37. H.J.Fleure (1940) "The Celtic West" *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* Vol.88 No.4, pp.882-4; p.883


41. "The Celtic West", p.884

42. Though Fleure may have been thinking of Wallis and the like when he gently mocked those who "idealise the untutored art, the picturesque gaieties, the ritual devotion of a peasantry"; "Peasants in Europe", p.55


46. Fleure *Wales (The Blue Guides)* p.xxi


50. For the clearest illustration of this see R. George Stapledon (1964) *Human Ecology* London: Faber & Faber. The relationship was, for Stapledon, more organic analogy than sociology. H.J. Fleure also argued that human geography was essentially human ecology


52. Clough Williams-Ellis, for instance, also attributed his love of nature to his mother's teaching


54. Ibid, p.74. He prefaced an essay on crop rotation with quotes from Bergson to signify the release of natural energy stimulated by the technique


57. Ibid, p.111

58. Ibid, p.109


60. Ibid, p.231

61. Ibid, p.232

62. Fleure, however, argued that inbreeding caused specialisation and the ultimate weakening of the type

63. Ibid, p.231


Fleure and James "Geographical Distribution" p.151


"Some Aspects of Race Study"

Ibid. p.99

Fleure Wales and Her People, p.2.

Ibid. p.19

Ibid.

76. Fleure's "courtesy to all seekers after knowledge led him to make friendships with ordinary men and women outside our schools and universities, and in particular with the quarrymen, miners and railwaymen of Wales" (E.G. Bowen (1957) "For Herbert John Fleure, FRS" Geography 42, pp.137-40; p.140.); and Bowen continued the tradition lecturing "to large audiences in great lecture theatres and to gatherings of a few in remote village school rooms or church halls" (H. Carter and W.K.D. Davies (1976) "Emeritus Professor E.G. Bowen" Introduction to Geography, Culture and Habitat; Selected Essays (1925-1975) of E.G. Bowen Llandysul: Gomer Press, pp.xxv-xxxiii; p.xxv.)

77. H.J. Fleure (1915) Regional Surveys in Relation to Geography Orford: The Holywell Press Ltd.

78. H.J. Fleure (1916) Geography and Citizenship Lecture by H.J. Fleure to N.U.T. Caernarfon County Association. Fleure was thinking, essentially, of surveys in the natural sciences. But after the war, the Aberystwyth tradition evolved into a more sociological approach, pioneered from 1930 onwards by Fleure's successor in the Gregynog chair, Darryl Forde. A number of community studies were carried out, most notably Alwyn D. Rees's (1950) Life in a Welsh Countryside: A Social Study of Llanfihangel yng Ngwynfa Cardiff: University of Wales Press. The survey, however, retained Fleure's philosophy on rural life: "The failure of the urban world to give its inhabitants status and significance in a functioning society, and their consequent disintegration into formless masses of rootless nonentities, should make us humble in planning a new life for the countryside. The completeness of the traditional rural society... [is a phenomenon] that might well be pondered by all who seek a better social order." p.170. For a brief analysis of Alwyn Rees's work see Tony Bianchi (1986) "R.S. Thomas and His Readers" in Tony Curtis (ed) Wales the Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, pp.69-95


80. Campbell Some Sources. Geddes founded a college within the University of Montpellier on whose Honorary Committee Fleure sat, and to which he strove to send some of his students.

82. H.J. Fleure (1917) "Inshore Fisheries and their Development" Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook 1917, Cardiff: W.H.D.A., pp.60-5

83. "The tourist industry leads to weakening of the population, and a corrective, such as a high-grade industry that can be made seasonal, is much needed. We must plan a watering place so that it may have healthy minded citizens" H.J. Fleure (1918) "Regional Survey Preparatory to Town Planning" Journal of the Town Planning Institute Vol.4 No.3, pp. 31-43

84. Fleure "Inshore Fisheries" p.60


86. Fleure "Regional Survey Preparatory to Town Planning"

87. Fleure "Inshore Fisheries" p.63

88. For a precis of this work see R. George Stapledon (1933) "Climate and the Improvement of Hill-Land" Geography Vol.18 No.1, pp.17-25

89. E.L. Ellis U.C.W. Aberystwyth

90. Way of the Land p.88

91. Land Now and Tomorrow Chapter 5

92. Way of the Land p.94

93. This theme was humorously expounded in G.K. Chesterton's The Napoleon of Notting Hill, published in 1904. Chesterton was, of course, an enthusiastic reviewer of England and the Octopus

94. On nationalism see L.D. Stamp (1937) "Nationalism and Land Utilization in Britain" Geographical Review Vol.27 No.1, pp.1-18

95. Land Now and Tomorrow p.312

96. Ibid. Chapter 25

97. Hill Lands of Britain p.92


99. Land Now and Tomorrow Chapter 23 "My National Park"

100. Ibid. p.276

101. Way of the Land

102. Stapledon Way of the Land p.87. The chapter is a reprint of an address to a C.P.R.E. conference

103. Land Now and Tomorrow p.181
"The bus, the motor car, and the lorry are something absolutely tremendous - and incidentally these have made hilly villages, cottages and hamlets accessible. But we have not done with the internal combustion engine yet, for we have also the tractor, the engine which must inevitably revolutionize the pastoral no less than the agricultural practices of every corner of the world." R.G. Stapledon "Climate and Improvement of Hill Land" p.18

Hill Lands of Britain p.105


Although in Britain and the Beast he agreed with the theme of land nationalization, if necessary.

Fleure "Countries as Personalities"

H.J. Fleure (1927) "Y Byd yn Un Frawdoliaeth" Yr Efrydydd Vol.3 No.12, pp.327-9; p.327

Iorwerth Peate (1923) Gyda'r Wawr: Braslun o Hanes Cymru'r Oesoedd Cyntefig Wrexham: Hughes a'i Fab

Iorwerth Peate (1931) Cymru a'i Pobl Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru

Iorwerth Peate (1931) "Daearyddiaeth - a'r Haneswyr" Y Llenor Vol.10 No.3, pp.161-8

Peate Cymru a'i Pobl p.2


One of Peate's distant relatives from the locality, for instance, was the Radical reformer Samuel Roberts.

Iorwerth Peate (1929) "Lle'r Ffiniau yn Natblygiad Annibyniaeth yng Nghymru" Y Cofiadur Vol.7, pp.3-21

Carl Sauer (1941) "Foreword to Historical Geography" in John Lehigh (ed) (1965) Land and Life University of California Press, pp.351-79

Ibid, p.220

Ibid. p.105

Ibid. p.220
125. The linguistic geography of Wales is considered in greater detail in the following chapter.

126. Iorwerth Peate (1933) "The Crafts and a National Language" Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook 1933 Cardiff: W.H.D.A., pp.75-7


As Fleure put it "large numbers of Welsh people in the humbler ranks of society have contrived to keep a certain cultural tradition and enthusiasm of their own which is rarely found among similarly situated people in England"; H.J. Fleure (1953, originally published 1928) "Wales" in A.G. Ogilvie (ed) Great Britain: Essays in Regional Geography Cambridge: University Press, pp.237-63; p.256

129. Iorwerth Peate (1933) "Welsh Folk Industries" Folk-lore Vol.44, pp.176-88; p.177.

130. Iorwerth Peate (1930) "Some Welsh Wood Turners and Their Trade" Studies in Regional Consciousness pp.174-88

131. Peate "Welsh Folk Industries"

132. Peate "Some Welsh Wood Turners" p.183


134. Ibid. p.2

135. Ibid. p.12

136. Peate Cymru a'i Phobl

137. "In the slow transition from village or provincial industry to cosmopolitan industry, one sees a change comparable to the geologic changes that are still altering the face of the earth; a change like them unnoticed, yet like them irresistible and cumulatively immense. What we saw was some apparently trivial thing, such as the incoming of tin pails instead of wooden buckets". George Sturt (1943, originally published 1923) The Wheelwright's Shop Cambridge: University Press, pp.153-4

138. Iorwerth Peate (1942) Diwylliant Gwerin Cymru Liverpool: Hugh Evans a'i Feibion/Gwasg y Brython, p.125

139. Peate "Crafts and a National Language" p.75

140. Ibid.

141. Ibid. p.77
142. Ibid, p.76
144. Ibid, p.103
145. F.R. Leavis and Denys Thompson (1964) Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness London: Chatto & Windus (Originally 1933)
146. "Social Organization" p.104
147. Ibid, p.104
148. Peate "Welsh Folk Culture" p.295; See also "Welsh Folk Industries"
149. This, interestingly, is a point made more recently in relation to the sociology of Wales by Graham Day (1979) "The Sociology of Wales: Issues and Prospects" Sociological Review Vol.27 No.3, pp.447-74
150. Iorwerth Peate (1943) "Yr Ardalwedd Gymdeithas a'u Dyfodol" Y Llenor Vol. 22 Nos.1&2, pp.10-8
151. Ibid, p.13
152. Ibid, p.14
153. "Social Organization" p.105
154. Stevens Iorwerth Peate
155. "Welsh Folk Culture" p.296
158. The Welsh House
159. The Club had J.D.K. Lloyd as Joint Secretary and both Gwendoline Davies and H.J. Fleure as Council members.
160. Iorwerth Peate (1944) "Museums and the Community" The Montgomeryshire Collections Vol.48 No.2, pp.124-30; p.126
161. Ibid, p.128
163. Quoted in Stevens Iorwerth Peate p.1
165. Fleure sat on a C.P.R.E. committee investigating the question of scenic beauty, and is attributed by Cornish as having coined the term 'ribbon development' (Cornish may have been referring to Fleure's 'rail ribbons' in "Regional Survey Preparatory to Town Planning"). E.G. Bowen was Cardiganshire C.P.R.W. chairman after the war.

166. I would like to thank John Langton for his comprehensive and helpful comments on a paper which contributed to this chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR
NATIONALISM, TERRITORY AND LANDSCAPE

In the previous chapter we saw how academic studies defined an essential rural peasant character which was gradually distilled into a typology of Welsh inheritances and attributes. In Iorwerth Peate's studies we find an attempt to outline Welsh rural identity as a model for national revival. A sense of landscape as an expression of a people's intimate and evolving relationship with their land also emerges. In this chapter, I consider how these intellectual concerns were paralleled by, and in part informed, a resurgence of nationalism in Wales. Central in this resurgence was the formation of a political party devoted to the protection of Welsh identity from the tides of modernism and anglicisation, and to the protection of the geographical basis of Welshness. One aspect of this national revival was the development of a complex and in some measure contradictory understanding of landscape, challenging that put forward by government and Anglicised society.

THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

According to Blaut\(^1\), there are as many definitions of nationalism as there are theories of it. I will not outline these theories in detail, but introduce them to help locate nationalist philosophy and political practice in Wales between the wars. It is first pertinent to clarify a terminological difficulty. The term 'nationalism' has come to represent both state activity and that of sub-groups within the state. In the former, nationalism is an unifying and homogenizing force; one rooting out regional differences in the pursuit of bureaucratic, economic and military efficiency. The original state nationalisms - of Britain and of France for instance - where the boundaries emerged well before the sense of nationhood, were driven by a centralizing philosophy conflicting with demands for regional autonomy. These demands, in turn, form the activities of nations or sub-groups within states where nationalism may perhaps be better represented by the term 'separatism'. It is the process by which a group sharing a common sense of identity, be it regional or ethnic, different from that of the state, seeks to attain self-determination. These regions will generally be typified by linguistic and cultural differences from the core, new political leaders challenging the \textit{status quo}, and long standing economic inequality. In establishing a group identity elements of the former nationalism will operate at a smaller scale in the latter.

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But it is the latter which forms the core of this study, and in the case of Wales a form of separatism which drew profoundly on a sense of ethnic identity. As Colin Williams puts it "separatism is one form of challenging the inevitability of ethnic assimilation. It is a powerful expression of group identity and of social regeneration among culturally distinct peripheral collectivities. Moreover, it is also an instrumental political programme, capable of providing new opportunities and a path for political advancement for members of a strata often hitherto excluded from political power and privilege."2

Ethnicity and culture enjoy varying treatment in the more widely recognised theories of nationalism. The 'internal colonialism' theory that capitalist exploitation follows ethnic cleavages to the disadvantage of minority groups was applied to Britain by Michael Hechter who argues that in Britain capitalism has advanced by exploiting the Celtic fringe3. The emerging core-periphery relations highlight cultural stratification, and the failure of the peripheries to attain decent standards of economic development will lead to demands for secession. William Sloan, however, argues that Hechter's theory is deficient in its reliance on notions of ethnic inequality and that it should incorporate theories of imperialism, including the role of peripheral elites in facilitating core control4. Hechter should, he continues, have focussed on complex English imperialism and examined the course of ethnic-related secession movements in terms of weaknesses in imperial structure. Hechter has reasserted the importance of ethnicity together with economy as keys to understanding separatism. He argues that "In all but the rarest of cases, separatism is built upon a region's assertion of ethnic distinctiveness"5, though he concedes that the timing of separatism is more dependent on the structure of international relations. The theory of 'uneven development' also places economy at the heart of debate in that it sees nationalism as cultural resurgence in the face of relative economic disadvantage. Tom Nairn pinpoints the uneven diffusion of industrial capitalism as the prime factor, with less advanced regions fettered by aggressive capitalist states6. The advance of capitalism engenders social fragmentation into competing ethnic units, and ethnic nationalism arises as a romantic and populist ideology in response to poverty.

A number of theories modify these materialist interpretations and argue against the diffusionist position, shared by both Hechter and Nairn, that economic advance will inevitably eradicate peripheral cultures. These theories offer a dynamic understanding of relations between core and periphery, and also give a stronger role to culture. Gourevitch suggests that peripheral ethnic nationalism is related to questions of political leadership and economic growth7. When the cores of both political leadership and economic dynamism occur in the same region, peripheral nationalism is quiescent. But where one of the above cores exists in a region which, like Wales,
has 'ethnic potential', that region is likely to develop strong, politically relevant nationalism. Where ethnicity is strong, economic grievance need not be intense to produce nationalism. Peripheries will demand autonomy when, as in post-1964 Britain, the core is universally seen as weak and the native intelligentsia see their fortunes tied to the periphery rather than to the declining core. Anthony Smith concurs on the role of elites, noting that Hechter and Nairn are economicistic and deficient in their neglect of political and cultural factors "which converge in the pivotal role of the intelligentsia".

Cultural factors are central in Roldcan and Urwin's argument for a three-fold understanding of the dialogues or transactions - economic, cultural and political - which exist between centre and periphery. The three are not, as diffusion theories suggest, in consistent relationship: "A conquered periphery may have been able to escape economic dependence on the political centre. Alternatively, cultural standardization may not be an inevitable consequence of military-industrial penetration". Accordingly, 'periphery' is a complex term. In outlining the survival of peripheral identity, Rokkan and Urwin give priority to cultural sources of distinctiveness; they suggest that no territorial identity in Europe can be defined solely in terms of a distinctive economy or class. Crucially in Wales's case, they further suggest that language is the focal point of cultural identity.

Ernest Gellner's work too, though set in the context of the diffusion of modernization, argues for the central role of education and of language. Nations are defined on the basis of unifying cultural characteristics like language, and intelligentsia-led separatist movements define their group according to such cultural or ethnic badges. These movements communicate through culture, a point extended by Benedict Anderson who argues that it was the secularization of knowledge, the development of vernacular languages, and most importantly the rise of print technology which facilitated cultural communication and the consequent creation of nations, or 'imagined communities'. As Michael Hechter notes "cultural maintenance in the periphery can be regarded as a weapon in that it provides the possibility of socialization, as well as political mobilization, contrary to state ends". Andrew Orridge likewise sees the persistence of language as a social foundation for nationalism which may be 'triggered' by state actions.

Orridge's sense of the political significance of ethnicity is echoed both by Gourevitch, and by Rokkan and Urwin. The latter argue that the flowering of political protest in the 1960s and 70s has increased awareness of the fact that modern states do not wholly eradicate ethnicity. Michael Keating extends this argument by claiming that "the regionalism and nationalism of the periphery
are not atavistic throwbacks but rational responses to the growth of the modern state and can only be understood as such.\textsuperscript{15} We have to recognise that "identity is constantly being made and remade" and that this re-making signifies an effort on the part of the peripheral elite to map out a different path to modernity and development, a different notion of the future.\textsuperscript{16} Keating also argues, however, that regionalism, playing on a sense of territorial identity, is also a strategy used by the centre to cope with policy problems and to absorb peripheral challenges.\textsuperscript{17}

Anthony Smith shifts the debate still further from materialism in centering arguments more firmly on ethnicity - recovered by the newly-risen scientific bureaucracy and intelligentsia - as the origin of national movements.\textsuperscript{18} Nations are not, he argues, wholly modern products of capitalism and rationalism. The moulding of a new national consciousness depends not only on objective factors such as population, economy and bureaucracy, but also on the more permanent cultural attributes of memory, value, myth and symbolism. Smith retraces expressions of national ties and sentiments well beyond what is commonly seen as the starting point of nationalism - the late-eighteenth century. But he is careful to reject the 'primordial' stance which argues that nations are simply updated and larger versions of persistent cultural ties and sentiments found in antiquity. He proposes consideration of modern nations in their ethnic contexts, giving prominence to cultural attributes like myth.

There is disagreement on the extent to which it is possible to build a general theory of nationalism. Although Williams and Agnew suggest that it is impossible to generalise and that contextual knowledge is crucial, the dangers of a retreat into empiricism are noted elsewhere.\textsuperscript{19} However, even within a theory suggesting 'preconditions' and 'triggering factors' for nationalism, Orridge stresses that "No single factor is universally applicable and it is realistic to allow a variety of them, not all operating in the same period."\textsuperscript{20} In proposing a theory of nationalism, Blaut can only explain nationalism simply yet broadly as one kind of political struggle for state power, as a political process which functions as a neutral tool or implement.\textsuperscript{21}

**NATIONALISM AND TERRITORY**

Geographers, however, have recently recognised the conceptual importance of territory in the study of nationalism. Nations are not simply located in space; they "explicitly claim particular territories and derive distinctness from them"\textsuperscript{22} and, as such, nationalism is geographically contextual. However the fact that all nationalisms have a territorial foundation, and that the state uses territoriality for bureaucratic legitimation, perhaps provides an opportunity to establish a
framework of explanation. Nationalism can be seen as a territorial ideology encompassing notions of statehood and democratic ideals, having a 'two-faced' nature with regard to time and space (nostalgic yet utopian; internally homogenizing yet externally heterogenizing), incorporating the furtherance of class interests and having a basis in spatial aspects of economy and culture.

It is the struggle to define a Welsh national territory and attitudes with regard to it that forms the basis of this chapter, and the implications of this struggle for a new understanding of landscape. Territory is politicized by its treatment as a distinctive and historic land. Nationalism looks back in order to look ahead: "Associations with the past are central to nationalism's territoriality, for territory is the receptacle of the past in the present. The nation's unique history is embodied in the nation's unique piece of territory - its 'homeland', the primeval land of its ancestors, older than any state, the same land which saw its greatest moments, perhaps its mythical origins. The time has passed but the space is still there". The control of the national past is of crucial importance in furthering group interests - "It is a means by which consciousness is structured and experiences are colonised" - and is the contested ground which Patrick Wright has identified in British society. History is central to many of the eight major dimensions of national territory which Smith and Williams isolate both in nationalist ideologies and in popular sentiment about relations with environment:

1. Habitat: A *Volkisch* attachment to nature in which society is seen to thrive best in given habitats. This has become a romantic reaction against urbanism.
2. Folk Culture: Communities seen as shaped by their environment. The prizing of peasant virtues in opposition to urban corruption.
3. Scale: Traditionally important in discussions of the state but less so now.
4. Location: Emphasizes a community's relations with others as well as its distinctive environment.
5. Boundary: The quest for a nation's true frontier seen as an integral part of its quest for self-realization.
6. Autarchy: Self-sufficiency - the economic counterpart of autonomy and the basis for it.
7. Homeland: A nation is seen as a distinctive, unique territory: "the identity of a territory is bound up with memory and this memory is rooted in a homeland. Its mountains are sacred, its rivers are full of memories, its lakes recall distant oaths and battles, all of which have been commemorated in national epics and ballads, and attracted countless
legends. History has nationalized a strip of land, and endowed its most ordinary features with mythical content and hallowed sentiments”.

8. Nation-building: The central role of land in transforming utopia into reality through practical works of construction. This acts to implant a sense of national consciousness.

Some of these dimensions will become apparent in my consideration of Welsh nationalism as it emerged between the wars. Territory is frequently reified in studies of nationalism (particularly, for instance, in core-periphery models), but an approach which views territorial ideologies as expressions of ethnic identity and as practical politics should avoid this, particularly combined with consideration of landscape as an iconographic symbol of group identity and a politically contested resource.

WALES AND NATIONALISM

Welsh nationalism is a political and cultural movement which has thus far won only limited victories. The battle for separatism is still widely considered as marginal. Colin Williams has, however, argued for minority nationalist historiography. Geography has always, he claims, told the victor's story; it has avoided dangerous, if not subversive, pastures. But there is a tendency to allow so much generalization about the core doctrine that we lose sight of the dynamism and conflict inherent in the developing movement itself. This reflects an acceptance of the assumptions of the core, thus prejudicing studies of the doctrines of minority groups. There follows a marginalisation of the subordinate group and an over-concentration on electoral success or otherwise. We should, therefore, be careful to treat Welshness as a positive and evolving spirit in its own right.

Kenneth Morgan suggests that a sense of nationality is present in the earliest Welsh literature, and remains throughout the centuries despite Wales's formal incorporation into the English political system under the Act of Union. There was, however, no institutional focus to this Welshness and the 'Welsh question' did not re-emerge until the early nineteenth century when the trend towards complete integration with England was challenged. Morgan suggests that the effects of industrialization, along with the rise of nonconformity, provided the basis for this resurgence. Industrialization, of course, forms the basis of both Hechter and Nain's theories. But rather than inciting peripheral, disadvantaged groups, Morgan argues that in eighteenth century Wales,
industrialization allowed labour migration within the country thus stemming population loss. Indeed he suggests that the outstanding cradle of the Welsh national revival was "not in the agrarian hinterland, so beloved of many apostles of 'peasant culture', but amidst the blast furnaces and winding-shafts of the working-class metropolis of Merthyr Tydfil" 29, an apotheosis to contemporary rural imagery though absorbed in a broadly defined gwerin ideal.

Welsh Disestablishment was a dominant issue and 'Radical nonconformity' came to typify the Welsh national movement and its drive for social and religious equality with England. It found organisational expression in Cymru Fydd which, after 1886, pressed for Disestablishment and for home rule along lines adopted by the Irish. As Colin Williams points out, Cymru Fydd was founded, "like many other Welsh cultural groups at this time, by exiles living in London and Liverpool" 30, by a new cosmopolitan intelligentsia. Cymru Fydd collapsed towards the turn of the century with the Liberal hegemony firmly established in Wales after 1868 election victories. There were considerable political achievements in the period to 1914, but the Liberal hegemony, though having a Welsh national identity, had little thirst for Home Rule, and the national movement lost momentum. Another drain on momentum was the rise of Socialism, which after the First World War displaced Liberalism. Economic depression fostered an internationalist political identity in Wales that did not seem to draw on a traditional Welshness. There was a growing cleavage between capital and labour with class coming to replace community.

It was in response to this dimunition of Welsh identity that the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, was formed in a meeting in Pwllheli in 1925 31. The six founder members included Lewis Valentine, a nonconformist minister; Saunders Lewis, a university lecturer; D.J. Williams, a schoolteacher; and Moses Griffith, an agricultural expert who later worked with George Stapledon. Despite this intellectual core, there was also a strong working class membership, especially so amongst quarry workers. It was a party which sought to replace class with cultural divisions, drawing on a notion of an inter-related Welsh community highlighted by Iorwerth Peate, who himself became a member serving on the working party.

Saunders Lewis was elected President and came to exert a profound influence on the Party's thinking. His nationalism was not based on an economic grievance, but was rather a response to the threat to Welsh cultural identity. D.H. Davies argues that "at the heart of the Nationalist Party was not just a desire to transform the configuration of the party political system, nor even a deeper quest for social justice, but the very question of nationhood. The formation of the Welsh Nationalist Party was an explicit challenge to the growing idea of British nationality, and an
attempt to resist and reverse all those trends that were assimilating Wales into England\textsuperscript{32}.

During its first twenty years, he argues, Plaid Cymru was not a political party at all but a cultural and educational movement, seeking to elicit a sense of common ethnic identity as a necessary precondition for sovereignty.

This somewhat sweeping analysis of Plaid Cymru's priorities nonetheless reveals the profound cultural changes that had to be fought. After 1911 the number of Welsh speakers actually began to decline, manifested in a retreat of the Welsh-speaking areas to the western heartland behind the Cambrian Mountains (See Fig.29). The chapels were losing their role as social focus to the trades unions\textsuperscript{33}, and the education system, as Alfred Davies argued, was not geared to the background of either Welsh or rural life; indeed the Education Act of 1870 had outlawed the use of Welsh in schools. Traditional Welsh industries, as Peate noted, lost ground to mass-producers, and social pressures also increased with the spread of English newspapers, radio and films "none of which reflected the values and mores of Welsh society or gave any signs of regarding Welsh identity as more than a folklorist oddity"\textsuperscript{34}. The films even reinforced this perception of Welshness, reflecting back onto a watching population the stereotypes they had apparently presented to the writers and directors\textsuperscript{35}. The stars of Hollywood now had a greater pull than the powerful drama of the pulpit. Like ripples on a pond, the waves of modernity reached Wales.

WALE AND WELSHNESS

One of the principal themes dominating Plaid Cymru's early philosophy was the intimate relationship between a people and its land. Academic studies had given Wales its geographical place in cultural history, thus giving its topography a prominent role. History had decreed that a Welsh culture would arise in the mountainous lands of western Britain, sheltered from the swift currents of the east. Geography, the nursery of the Welsh tradition, came to exert a profound symbolic importance. The mountains - invested "with a special ethnic purity"\textsuperscript{36} - provided the inspiration for Plaid Cymru's symbol the 'Triban', unveiled in 1933 (Fig.31). J.E. Jones, Party secretary from 1930-62, recalled its announcement: "The mountains! The perpetual witnesses of our history, and the unchanging background of our language: we can express it in symbolic form - therefore our sign., the TRIBAN"\textsuperscript{37}. As O.M. Edwards had written, the mountains had fought with the Princes of Wales against the English, had kept Wales a land apart giving her union and independence.
Britishness

Geography, or territory, had, according to academic studies, protected Welsh inheritances and primarily the language. This link between language and territory—reminiscent of Ratzel’s writings—and a fundamental issue in nineteenth-century European nationalist ideology—was, according to Colin Williams, prominent in Plaid Cymru’s philosophy. It is also the main theme of J.R. Jones’s book Prydeindod (Britishness). In it he draws a distinction between a people and a nation. The former is characterized by the interpenetration of land and language; the latter by land, language, and state sovereignty. The Welsh are clearly, he argues, of the former. In Britain only the English are a nation, and it was a sense of British identity as defined by the English that the Welsh had to resist.

Interpenetration had two bonds: an external, spatial one—the territory in which the people co-habited over the centuries; and an internal shaper of their spiritual unity, “the language: not so much as a means of communication.. but as tradition, an inheritance enriched by the passing of the centuries.” A language bonds through a thousand hidden ties by working on human spirit, a theme Jones draws from the work of German philosopher Fichte. But Jones is anxious to reject the Fascist position in which this bond, corrupted into a bond between territory and blood, is subjugated as the core of nationhood. Territory bonds through the human need to be located and anchored in space. The space of which people feel an organic part is their own land, to which they are (again) bound by a thousand mysterious cords. The bond is too profound for objective words, belonging rather to the language of poetry. Time strengthens these bonds, but interpenetration is not a magical process; it is created in society as a continuous and experiential process of re-making ethnic identity. This is manifested, Jones suggests, in the naming of mountains and vales, rivers and villages—the endowing of land with nationality, history, and mythology. The people take hold of their land and assimilate it into the texture of their lives through the medium of their language;
"They would, as it were, see and handle and love their land through the mirror of their language."

But contemporary (1960s) Wales was for Jones a scene of retreating Welshness and advancing Britishness. All that remained in some areas were the relics of place names. But if the people lost sight of the fact that these names were evidence of the dynamic creation of identity, the consequences for Wales would be profound. These areas were the footholds of Welshness which, if lost, would eradicate from the people's collective memory the knowledge of how to be a people.

Parts of Wales had already been lost, but these represented not only lost fields and diminished acreages but parts of the very being of the Welsh people. The people were annihilated by having their foothold sucked into a wider space as part of another nation. Jones quoted Tillich: "Being means having space... This is the reason for the tremendous importance of geographical space and the fight for its possession by power groups. The struggle is not simply the attempt to remove another group from a given space. The real purpose is to draw this space into a larger power field."

The struggle for national space was crucial between the wars, but the decline of the Welsh language posed theoretical problems for nationalists; how to explain territory which had lost its Welshness? In general, those who addressed this problem utilised the same potent mixture of geography and history that had characterised the 'Aberystwyth school'. Trevor Lewis's study of the 1921 census was the first study of the Welsh language by a professional geographer, and I have already noted his relating of the monoglot population to geography and archaeology. In 1937 D.T. Williams produced a map of Welsh based on the 1931 census which noted still "the influence of relief and geology upon the maintenance, or disappearance, of the Welsh language in different parts of the country." But Williams is important for his introduction of the concept of the 'linguistic divide' into regional studies, focussing attention - as it crucially did - on the zone of conflict between Welsh and English. The border of the English tongue was, of course, foremost in many minds at this time as it extended westwards into Welsh territory. Williams noted the pervasive influence of the modern age, and attempts to resist its power: "Modern expansion, new cultural influences made possible by rapid transport, the cinema, the wireless, and the powerful influence of the teachers in the elementary schools since 1870 all enter into the linguistic changes that are taking place in. Wales to-day. What influence such purely Welsh movements as Nationalism, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the use of Welsh in the elementary schools may exert in the opposite direction it is difficult to say at present."
The objective bases of Welsh nationality - land and language - did not, therefore, correspond. Attempts to maintain the historical link between language and geography therefore formed a substantial, indeed dominant, part of Plaid Cymru's agenda: "Language was at the heart of Saunders Lewis's.. emphasis on the 'value of tradition in life' and, in the Welsh context, the life of the Welsh language was central to the task of sustaining civilisation". This involved campaigning for the use of Welsh within the politically defined national territory, in an attempt to 'harden' national space. But already there was something of a psychological retreat to the heartland, the Pays de Galles, and I now consider the symbolism of that retreat and its relationship to the rural environment.

THE LAND OF WALES

In the first issue of Y Ddraig Goch (The Red Dragon), Plaid Cymru's monthly newspaper inaugurated in June 1926, Iorwerth Peate - a member of the editorial board - argued that holiness resided in neither king, state nor nation, but rather in individuals. The state however made demands on individuals which frequently violated personal morality, and it was their duty, therefore, to resist the state's corruption. It was the British/English state, Peate claimed, which made damaging demands on Wales. Thus Peate established a moral basis for treating the Welsh as a separate people; and in expanding on the relations between Wales and England, he gave to his theory a geographical basis, revealing the political relevance of his studies. Due to its geographical position, all the refugee and traditional elements lost in the world outside had collected in Wales. Wales was "an immortal nucleus containing.. the finest heart of the Western World's traditions. There has grown in Wales a society which possessed an inheritance of incomparable tradition, and.. a culture almost as old as the world itself". The inhabitants of the land were psychologically tied together despite the geographical disadvantages of mountainous country. And having been born into such a perfect society, the Welsh had a responsibility to their nation, a duty to ensure its perpetuation. This meant resisting English cultural encroachment. This concept of common citizenship drew on the mythology of common descent vital in forging an ethnic identity. Appreciation of this geographic and historic place in the World could refuel the sense of Welsh nationhood.

This was further emphasised by Saunders Lewis's definition of Wales not as a region of Britain but as one of the nations of Europe. He argued that the European Latin tradition was represented in Britain only by the Welsh. In this light, he chose to regard them, like Fleure, "not as a people driven headlong to the West and the mountains before a swift and irreversible Anglo-Saxon
onslaught, but as that section of the Britanni who, during and after the Roman withdrawal, opted to identify themselves with the cultural and spiritual ideal of Romanitas, which by then included the Christian religion. The justification for Celtic cultural continuity on the western fringes was a rebuttal of Anglo-Saxon culture and politics. The Welsh were the only nation in Britain, claimed Lewis, having the blood of the West in their veins.

Given a choice between the Empire and the League of Nations, the Welsh, claimed Lewis, would of their nature opt for the League and for a quasi-federal Europe of small nations. So the claims of Welsh nationhood were to be considered in the context of European history with the Middle ages - before the rise of the modern state - as the ideal. No country was then free and utterly independent. Each one recognised the supra-national authority of the church, and this moral authority provided security to the culture of each diverse small nation and community, in stark contrast to the destruction of moral unity brought about by Luther, Machiavelli and the Tudors. Under those, nationalism - rather than Christianity - became the supreme principle, and with power as the basis of authority uniformity within states became essential. Lewis therefore warned against 'nationalist materialism' and argued for a return to the principle of the Middle Ages - for unity in diversity and for the primacy of Christianity. He proposed working in local government to build a 'Welsh Wales', and to then ask the English government for Dominion Status (giving more powers than devolution), incorporating international status and membership of the League of Nations.

Thus Saunders Lewis tied Wales firmly into the currents of European civilization, though its geographical location both on the western ends of Europe and, perhaps more significantly, next to England had cut it off from the source of its inspiration. This historicism seemed to be supported by the anthropological and archaeological work of Fleure, Bowen, Fox and Peate, all of whom confirmed the cultural links now given political currency. Through these discoveries according to modern, scientific canons of knowledge an idea was translated into tactile reality. As Smith claims, philology, archaeology, anthropology, sociology and history are the necessary tools of modern social solidarity and citizenship "for they enable us to 'make sense' of our collective location in space and time, the limited space and calendrical time of the new era of nationhood. Without such 'science', there can, in a very literal sense, be no nations." Despite the gulf between the essentially romantic concept of the nation and the increasingly rationalized nature of these modern, scientific disciplines it was precisely such techniques - based on observation, analysis and classification - that allowed the building of a picture of a national past. The recovery of material objects lent substance to the mythology of nationhood.
This view of Wales in an 'Europe of the Nations' was part of a broader attachment to the continent shared by Saunders Lewis and others in the party. Lewis had a passion for travel and for social and political developments in Europe, and Y Ddraig Goch contained European and World political analysis. Whilst one of the main sources of inspiration was, of course, Ireland and W.B. Yeats, Lewis drew inspiration from European politics and was influenced by Maurice Barres, a French radical conservative politician who argued the need for people to be aware of their land's past. Lewis attempted to apply this doctrine to Wales. He was also accepted into the Catholic Church in 1932, an act which prompted hostility from many members seeing this continued attraction to Europe both as a departure from liberal nonconformity and as evidence of a flirtation with Fascism. Plaid Cymru's leadership rejected the deification of state power represented by both Marxism and Fascism, but some party members did flirt with quasi-Fascist groups. Ambrose Bebb was influenced by Charles Maurras, the extreme-right mentor of Action Francaise who "propogated nationalism as a substitute religion culminating in a mystical cult of the earth and the dead that made absolute demands of the individual". Like Stapledon, Bebb had also succumbed to the cult of strong leadership, if not of dictatorship, urging the Welsh to "Aim accurately; strike clearly. Above all, be strong, be powerful. Strength and power are the only things that count in the myriad troubles and battles of this iron age. The age of Lenin! The age of Mussolini! Indeed it is a Mussolini that Wales needs. Just as he had to strike fearlessly to save Italy, so will Wales's Mussolini when he comes. And coming he is." J.E. Daniel, a theological Professor and Party Vice-President from 1931, supported the Fascists in the Spanish Civil War. Thus Lewis was "very far from being alone in failing to recognise the evil that was now being let loose in Germany". But we should be careful not to read this as necessarily providing a coherent place for rightist doctrine in inter-war Welsh nationalism - for this was very much resisted. It may, rather, have been the product of the attraction of a blend of purposeful action and appeal to a misty, mythologised tradition that seduced many at the time.

Amongst the currents of political and social thought strong in contemporary Europe was, as we have seen, an idealisation of the gwerin and of the rural areas as sustaining 'national' characteristics. The Right were particularly adept at harnessing historical idealism in conjunction with the promises of an ordered, scientific twentieth-century, producing "a strange contrast that reflected some of the tensions between modern and anti-modern themes that was common in.. fascist movements". But rural idealism had far broader political appeal, and was often aligned with socialist and distributist movements. Such an idealism was apparent in Welsh academic work at the time, and this work was certainly influential in shaping Plaid Cymru's doctrines. The party translated these studies into a strong anti-industrialism, indeed a feeling that urbanisation and
industry were actually anathema to Welshness. It was argued that Plaid Cymru was a party of the soil. According to Bebb, it was the only party belonging to the peasantry and arising from Welsh rural life; not strictly true, of course, given the party's intellectual origins. But certainly, many party members contributed to the remaking of Welshness in a rural frame. The nature-mysticism of R. Williams Parry's poetry, Kate Roberts's stories of a country childhood, and D.J. Williams's tales of the 'square mile' in Storiau'r Tir (Stories of the Land) all contributed to the location of the national character.

This moralism found pragmatic expression in a 'back to the land' policy similar to those proposed, as Lewis's biographer notes, by Mussolini, Hitler, the Norwegian Knut Hamssun, and the English Fascist Henry Williamson. We might also make parallels with the socialist 'arts and crafts' experimenters and the 'garden city' idealists. Plaid Cymru's policy had an economic rationale as a response to the distress of unemployment, and was a response also proposed, as we have seen, by the Special Areas Commissioner and the Quakers. Saunders Lewis argued for a Welsh National Development Council to guide the de-industrialization then under way in the depression years for the benefit of Wales. Former industrial workers should be settled in farming colonies, he argued, with this policy operating alongside slum clearance in the industrial areas.

But in the light of the presumed effects of industrialization on Welsh sociology, we can read this as more than a policy of economic logic. It was also an attempt to place community, rather than class, back at the heart of Welsh life. As this cartoon (Fig.32) shows, it had a logic of economic independence. The image, of a peasant and a capitalist, juxtaposes two ways of life. The peasant farmer has an elemental beauty in contrast to the awkward ugliness of the capitalist, uncomfortably echoing depictions of Aryan and Jew respectively in Nazi art of the time. The peasant ploughs quiet fields with his horse whilst the capitalist stands in front of his domaine of polluting, industrial squalor. The caption reads "For profits' sake.. don't produce your own goods!". Not only then does this cartoon make a point about the nobility of pastoral life, it argues that it is the route to Welsh economic independence, to autarchy. Furthermore, this economic self-sufficiency was to give a base for political sovereignty. To leave the currents of industrial capitalism was to leave English influence. For nationalists the land was not only a contested material asset but "a basis for maintaining a unique way of life free from external interference and claiming a more equitable distribution of resources for all the members of the community, preferably through self-sufficiency". Nationalist analysis, drawing heavily on the work of George Stapledon, showed that Wales could afford self-government with its land and its natural resources as the basis of prosperity and of a new and different path to modernity.
Cylafalyydd: "Er — mwyn — masnach rydd, — peidiwch cynhyrchu eich anghenion eich hun."

Figure 32. "Back to the Land", from Y Ddraig Goch. The caption reads: "Capitalist: "For - the free market's sake - don't produce your own goods'"
(appeared in Vol.10 No.8)
These policies had strong foundations in conceptions of citizenship. Like Stapledon, Lewis believed that land should be divided amongst the greatest possible number of small proprietors, for such a pattern of ownership would stimulate creativity and national spirit. But this reveals a more spiritual sense of the land and the rural areas. In his Ten Points of Policy of 1933 Lewis argued that agriculture should be the primary industry of Wales "and the foundation of its civilization"64. Furthermore "For the moral health of Wales, and for the moral and physical benefit of its population, South Wales must be de-industrialized. The natural resources of Wales are a wealth to be treated prudently for the benefit of the Welsh nation and for the assistance of its neighbours in other parts of the World"65. 'Back to the land' then was not merely a cry of economic logic in industrial depression. The rural areas were also seen as civilizing storehouses of morality and of Welsh cultural identity. Ambrose Bebb believed, in 1924, that "One of Wales's greatest needs today is not only to keep her sons on the land, but to bring back from the city to the land the masses who flowed from there during recent years"66. The party's chief agricultural spokesman, Moses Griffith, argued that "Placing the people back on the land is not only appropriate, but is essential if the Welsh nation is to live. The Welsh nation is a nation with its roots in the country and the soil"67. Of course, such romantic nationalism - expressed the intelligentsia's yearning for the presumed spiritual wholeness of the countryside - is common68.

Whilst this policy revealed a greater concern for 'culture' than for 'structure'69, it nonetheless provided a focus for the education of a Welsh national sensibility. Concern about the manner in which an Anglicised educational system had eroded traditional Welsh rural values was conceived in Country-City terms. Ambrose Bebb's impressions of the folk of Cardiganshire in Y Ddraig Goch in 1927 mourned a lost age of rural prosperity and vitality70. Depopulation had ravaged the land - 450,000 left Wales between 1921 and 1939 - leaving a sad and demoralised gwerin. Bebb blamed this firmly on the educational system:

How sad it is to contemplate the glory that was, and to see arising generation after generation of boys and girls, who swarm together to the schools of the plains, there to drink from a poison which visibly weakens them and makes them unable to perceive the majesty of the high pastures and the shepherd's life, the romance of farming the land, and of passionately smelling the healthy soil; but who rather set off in cowardly fashion, without valour or heroism for the lary, inert abodes of the towns and cities71.
Education might enable the *gwerin*, and the proletariat returned to their roots on the land, to be once again aware of their heritage. It would reinforce a vision of a collective past and collective destiny. The language was fundamental in this. Iorwerth Peate and Ambrose Bebb were forceful in their arguments for compulsory education in Welsh, and Saunders Lewis saw the language as the only way of passing on to the next generation of children the spiritual and moral wealth of the nation's civilization. But for adults, socialised into an Anglicised community, the medium was less linguistic. The Pantybeiliau Folk School, established in 1933 on the Danish model by Drs D.J. and Noelle Davies, stressed sports and crafts alongside studies of Welsh economic, social and cultural life and strove to impart these values to a generation of industrial South Wales's unemployed. It received support from H.J. Fleure, as did the Quakers' similar venture on the South Wales coast. Similar ideals were also being communicated through Welsh branches of the Workers' Educational Association. In the second issue of the Association's magazine *Cambria* the Drs Davies drew one of a string of comparisons between Denmark and Wales, arguing that the Welsh national being might receive fuller expression were its culture disseminated on the Danish model. Later issues discussed rural life, the spirit of craftsmanship, and the role of rural culture in shaping Welsh national consciousness. One of the boldest moves in this shaping of the national popular consciousness was the founding of Coleg Harlech in 1927, largely through the efforts of ex-Deputy Cabinet Secretary Thomas Jones. He was "deeply concerned at the rootlessness and cultural deprivation of the coalfield in the twenties" and seemed to share in Plaid Cymru's attempt to replace class with community. The role of environment in this was clear for as H.J. Fleure put it, the College's attention "is specially focussed on the problems of the miners, but it is characteristically situated.. in the beautiful country between the mountains and the sea".

*Y Ddraig Goch* also played its part in the education of Plaid Cymru members. It argued that civilization was developing along 'mass production' lines and that the system contained the seeds that would destroy beauty and culture. The crafts' legacy in Welsh life was declining and the rural areas suffering as a result. Plaid Cymru stood for the reorganization of rural life on the old pattern thus reviving craft industries. A series of articles by Iorwerth Peate further highlighted the crafts' role. In the first he argued that one of the greatest curses of Welsh history was the deterioration of the small-holding system and the consequent destruction of the old rural polities. In all replanning, he argued, the Welsh nation should look to its own traditions. He advocated the use of agriculture and market gardening in the revival of South Wales, but as complements to mining and industry. Hydro-electric power and large-scale forestry could also form the basis of a
new form of Welsh culture: "We cry for the old methods in vain: we attempt to revive the dead in vain, but on the grave of the old methods, we can build new factories and keep, in the sound of this age's machines, the spirit of the rich culture given us as an inheritance by the old craftsmen of Wales." Less prone than party colleagues to dismiss industrialism, Peate's 'techno-arcadianism' - in which the old order was revived on the foundation of new, modern industries - ensured that his nationalism was simultaneously nostalgic and utopian.

THE FACE OF WALES

But the education of a new national sensibility extended not only to the cultural life of the territory but to the setting of that life, the face of the territory itself. Landscape had an important role to play in the development of a national awareness by inculcating a sense of place in the World. The sense of landscape advanced here drew on ideas of landscape as scenery, in that aesthetic qualities were to be the initial stimuli for contemplation; but that contemplation, as we shall see, was to be revelatory of a nation's relationship with its own piece of land, thereby drawing on an environmental or anthropological sense of landscape. Together, these might be merged into a patriotic territorial politics. Alfred Davies had outlined the importance of the observation of place in awakening local patriotism, as had Stapledon, and Plaid Cymru too saw aesthetics and environmental order as prerequisites to the shaping of a national sensibility.

This was partly an appeal for society to manifest pride in its surroundings. The housing societies recognised that the squalor of Welsh dwellings was a barrier to effective citizenship. Likewise, Plaid Cymru saw rural and urban slum housing - markedly worse, they claimed, than those elsewhere in Britain - as detrimental to the national consciousness: "Every slum breeds anti-nationalists, children who have no reason to love their country for they are raised in dirt and discomfort." A sense of order and of hygiene might re-instill pride, and so each branch of the Party was compelled to survey local housing needs and to then apply for renovation grants on behalf of householders.

But there was also an appeal for an improvement in Welsh architectural standards. G.M.L. Davies renewed his attack on Welsh visual apathy and C.H. Reilly, a Liverpool architecture Professor, was quoted as lamenting the tastelessness of Welsh building, particularly the ignorant use of materials, and the chapel's dull sobriety. The nationalists claimed that Welsh design standards were the product of ignorance, apathy and poverty, and that most local councils were composed of farmers and merchants, generally devoid of taste. As such, Plaid Cymru members (apparently
versed in questions of aesthetic taste) should assume responsibility and lead trips to suitable design examples like Port Sunlight. The Party also urged the University of Wales to instigate a series of public lectures on architecture and planning: "That would raise the standards of taste in the country, and the despoliation which is all too familiar would not then be tolerated." Schoolmasters should also become versed in architectural matters so that the coming generation might be influenced for good. The people had become remote from their heritage - remote, as Peate argued in *The Welsh House*, from the traditions of their localities - and this was manifested clearly in material artefacts like buildings. Education might bring the people back in touch with their past and their sense of environment, fostering a renewed national spirit. Alfred Davies's schemes of observation were one example of national aesthetic education; another precedent was O.M. Edwards's *Yn y Wlad* (In the Country), a travel book on Wales dedicated to its *gwerin* and children who might, through appreciating their nation's beauty, "become a better Welshman and a better man". Unsurprisingly, then, the nationalists sought to extend this tradition and were sensitive to the activities of those groups concerned with scenic landscape and planning.

**Bridging a divide**

Plaid Cymru praised the W.H.D.A.'s educational efforts, but the Association - in their failure to address Welsh cultural matters - nonetheless highlighted what the nationalists saw as a chasm dividing national life and one which hinged on different notions of landscape. One Welsh camp stressed literature and the language above all else, concerns which Plaid Cymru, of course, shared but a stance weakened by its incompleteness: "It is tragically apathetic about all that belongs to the beauty of nature and the beauty of art". It relied on texts and words rather than on visual imagery, and thus failed to satisfy a sense of nationalist aesthetics. One of the most beautiful countries in Europe was, under the eyes of the nation, turning into a den of ugliness. Indeed where the Welsh language was strongest - where the land's praises were sung in Welsh - there were committed the worst crimes.

By contrast, another group of Welsh folk - like the W.H.D.A. and the C.P.R.W. - attempted to prevent these crimes, and battled to save the beauty of the land. These people, Plaid Cymru stressed, loved Wales and served her well. Many were cultured, wealthy and generous members of the upper class. But again, their philosophy was incomplete: "They love Wales but in their very essence betray it. They are not English: they are merely Anglicised. They do not possess that which the *gwerin* have, namely the Welsh literary culture, but they in turn have something the *gwerin* have not - the civic culture. The result is that they too are ineffective in their every effort". Perversely, then, Welsh councils blindly striving to save the culture and language could
fmd themselves aligned with the orange-peel spreading English visitors to Llandudno! The only hope for Wales was a marriage of the two cultures - the 'Welsh literary' and 'noble civic' and a reconciliation of the two forms of social organisation. Plaid Cymru argued that the marriage of cultures could be achieved through self-government and a new sense of nationhood

_and it is primarily for that reason that we are members of the National Party. Without that marriage as its object, self-government itself would be merely the fruits of the Red Sea's dust. The noble, civic culture must speak to the gwerin of Wales in the Welsh language, perfecting their nobility by making it more Welsh. We must also imbue the culture of the gwerin with far higher ideals than it today possesses. Can all this be achieved? That is the problem of the National Party._

Plaid Cymru, therefore, recognised the shortcomings of an overly literate culture; even shared the C.P.R.W.'s concern that the Welsh might stop seeing their country and appreciating their heritage of beauty. The nationalists argued for a fusion of cultural values and used landscape to illustrate their case. Educating the people in aesthetic awareness represented for them a fusion of ideals into a modern sense of nationhood.

**Nationalism and amenity**

In the 1927 nationalist Summer School held in Llangollen there were discussions of rural planning and architecture. Their 1929 Summer School visited Portmeirion, and at Brynmawr three years later Alwyn Lloyd spoke on the particular problems of planning the industrial valleys. Little surprise then, given this sustained interest in planning, that the C.P.R.W.'s formation was welcomed wholeheartedly. Nothing but good, the Party felt, could come from the C.P.R.W.'s work; work which ostensibly contributed to the nationalists' efforts in the protection of rural and civic beauty, and which was psychologically associated with their drive for national self-respect.

This confluence, however, was short lived as Plaid Cymru realised that the C.P.R.W. harboured the civic culture alone. They argued that "If the Council is to effectively influence Welsh public opinion it must work through the medium of the Welsh language. Does Lord Boston and his supporters realise this?" Language, they were claiming, was essential to Welsh public life, and particularly so, perhaps, for a group specifically concerned with Welsh territory. An article in 1930 by Saunders Lewis, who was amongst the C.P.R.W.'s first members, further compounded this critique. It seemed to him that the C.P.R.W. was philosophically but a part of the
C.P.R.E., sharing the same blanketig aesthetic values and failing to reflect a Welsh sense of landscape. Its work would be in vain, he argued, unless it could be convinced that the majority of Wales's countryfolk were Welsh-speakers, and that the fate of the rural areas lay in their hands. The Council's reports, however, contained "not one sign... that they have attempted to get nearer to Welsh life. There is not one appeal to Welsh patriotism or nationality". Rather, it seemed that they were content to rely on "the enthusiasm of the English of the 'Barmouth Civic Society' and the 'Portmeirion Hotel'".

This begged the question of what type of beauty and therefore what understanding of landscape it was that the Council sought to preserve, and in Lewis's opinion it was a genteel, superficial beauty with neither Welsh character nor Welsh form. It was defined aesthetically in terms of order and picturesqueness, in a way which did not dwell on the particular culture which had given rise to the visual scene. In response, Lewis defined his anthropological conception of scenic preservation and of landscape, arguing that "Before the beauty of... the land of Wales, may be preserved or increased, one must love Wales, must love and know her history and her past, one must understand the people who built the houses on her land, must understand their language and their literature, must partake in their experiences". As an expression of sympathy with Welsh culture and tradition, the Council might, Lewis suggested, produce a pamphlet on improving the appearance of chapels. He nonetheless defended a role for the Council and their valuable educational work, stressing that "one must learn how to recognise beauty and ugliness".

But by 1932, the C.P.R.W. was in severe financial difficulties. Plaid Cymru sympathised but placed the blame firmly on the Council's failure to rouse national self-respect through appeals to patriotism and the use of the language. This was a barrier to effective scenic preservation. A land, the nationalists argued,

inevitably becomes ugly, negligent and prey to the selfish spirit of profiteering when national spirit and pride in tradition ebbs. If this Council appealed to something profounder and more powerful than artistic diletantism, if it raised its voice clearly in favour of education rooted in the history and literature of Wales, then its appeal to and message for Wales would be of greater influence. Everything fine and good, and all noble ideals are disappearing from Wales today because the national spirit is dying. Wales cannot be beautiful until she wishes to be truly Welsh.
Death is rotten and ugly, and loathsome insects thrive on slaughter; this is what we see in Wales today\(^9^2\).

Aesthetic education was, for Plaid Cymru, a superficial concern; the roots of scenic destruction lay deep in questions of culture and politics. Landscape could not, in their opinion, be understood as mere scenery for it was a concept too detached from Wales's cultural and political experience. It is, therefore, worthwhile considering in what ways landscape was related to this experience in that part of Welsh culture represented by Plaid Cymru.

**Landscape and Welshness**

Clearly it is unwise to attempt to determine a 'national' attitude to landscape - what 'the people' thought - but it may be pertinent to dwell briefly on what the Welshness of landscape was as far as Plaid Cymru were concerned and why, therefore, it assumed such importance. In the first place, we should be wary of reading their attitudes as somehow 'authentic'. Plaid Cymru was a grouping led by the intelligentsia which in part shared middle class values and tastes. This was very much the case where landscape was concerned. It is apparent that an aesthetic distaste, such as expressed by Clough Williams-Ellis, characterised also their attitudes to landscape despoliation. They too found advertising hoardings and tangled electricity poles visually displeasing. They also expressed an aesthetic pleasure in scenery, a pleasure which their Summer School sought on their visit to Portmeirion, and as such they extended a strand of landscape appreciation seen throughout Welsh prose and poetry. So landscape as scenery had importance in and for itself. This is clear in their concern that the Welsh literary culture, by contrast to the civic culture represented by the C.P.R.W. and W.H.D.A., did not have a sense of aesthetic preservation, and ever clearer in their attempts to reconcile the two cultures. We should not, however, read this aestheticism as somehow signifying alienation from the land by estranged cosmopolitan observers. Few of these political leaders lived outside small-town Wales; some remained close to agriculture and to the working countryside. They did, however, partake in the considerable degree of romanticism evident in attitudes to rural life throughout Britain, and particularly to the gwerin in Wales. The sculpted features of the peasant working his horse-drawn plough in Fig.32, and the rhetoric that surrounded the 'back to the land' tendency revealed a poetic ideal of rural life. Plaid Cymru's attempts to make rural values the basis of a new sense of nationhood sustained the gwerin's representation as a rural people, effectively masking the industrial gwerin, and their apparent anti-industrialism bolstered this idealisation still further, recharging the political potency of the rural in Welsh national culture\(^9^3\). This ideal was shared by many in Wales. It tended towards the comical in the solicitor-poet Eifion Wyn's musings on the life of a shepherd in *Mab y Mynydd*, (Son of the Mountain),

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where he and his faithful dog Mot shun the fanciful towns for a life on the hills. And Eifion Wyn's Cwm Pennant, again a celebration of the shepherd's unity with the Welsh hills, closes with the prayer "Why, Lord, did you make Cwm Pennant so fair, and the life of an old shepherd so short?"-94. That Eifion Wyn was an extremely popular poet merely illustrates the extent to which this ideal of rural life was shared.

But before we reject this attitude as a romanticised notion of landscape infused with aestheticism and nostalgia, we might qualify the idea of an authentic pre-modern peasant or gwerin response to the land in Wales at this time. Given that the common people of Wales were universally regarded as being sensitive to the literary arts and to the spiritual in life - an attitude reflected in Fleure, Peate and Stapledon's recollections of country characters and their favoured reading - we might therefore expect them to be influenced by the romanticism of the writers they respected and admired. Peasant poets like the farmer Alun Cilie (1897-1975) received their poetic education on the hearth, yet the romanticism of the supposedly 'alienated' middle classes permeates his writing. In Sgrap (Scrap), Medi (September) and Fy Ngwedd Geffylau Olaf (My Last Team Horses) he laments the coming of a new age in agriculture with a romantic nostalgia or hiraeth charged not only with a sense of social change but also of a change in the rural scene. In fact, Welsh folk poetry is characterised by a romantic energy that, as Emyr Humphreys has argued, "belongs to a version of Arcadia or even the Garden of Eden"-95. However, we must be wary of generalising about the gwerin too. Whilst it is clear that a number possessed, or had been educated into, a degree of aesthetic sensitivity, the evident frustration of both C.P.R.W. and nationalists suggests that this sensibility did not necessarily extend into a practical regard for maintaining scenic qualities in landscape. As Cosgrove suggests "The visible forms and their harmonious integration to the eye may indeed be a constituent part of people's relationship with the surroundings of their daily lives, but such considerations are subservient to other aspects of a working life with family and community"-96. It was this lack of regard for landscape as scenery amongst the bulk of the gwerin that made both the C.P.R.W. and Plaid Cymru consider their educational projects so necessary.

I am not suggesting that Plaid Cymru failed to argue for or draw on an indigenous sense of landscape. They clearly argued that there was depth to peasant experience of the environment, manifested in a number of ways. Plaid Cymru attempted to fuse this to their existing conception of scenic landscape. Welshness, in some measure, had its characteristic aesthetic. Predominantly a land of high moors with partly cultivated valleys, Wales did not lend itself to traditional ideas of the picturesque. Those areas that did - the Borders, the Vale of Glamorgan and south
Pembrokeshire - were precisely those areas most easily colonised by the English. Abercrombie noted how villages in the Vale of Glamorgan had a quaintness about them not characteristic of 'Welsh Wales'. The latter, due to its history of small landowners, had none of the nucleated villages which became icons of the English scene. But aesthetics were understood precisely in this historicised way. Thus mountain and moorland were important for their part in defending Welsh culture from the currents of the east, and the scattered landscape of hafod and hendre revealed a society at one with its environment. This sense of rootedness was widely expressed in contemporary Welsh culture, though primarily through text. I have already noted how several authors contributed to Plaid Cymru's 'back to the land' philosophy through their prose. Although delighting in the aesthetic, the poet T.H. Parry-Williams celebrated Snowdonian landscapes which were bleak and harsh to the eyes of the tourist; some have on them the stains of industrialization, all are imbued with memory and experience. The Anglo-Welsh poet R.S. Thomas's early work bitterly rejected the romantic conventions yet still propagandised on behalf of Welsh country life and its fragile culture. His landscapes were bleak and the inhabitants hardened, yet both had their beauty and dignity. So landscape possesses a deep ambivalence. It may be harsh and unattractive but it is nonetheless charged with meaning and with passion; the appeal is to the spirit rather than to the 'superficial' eye.

This emotion for landscape in an ethnic sense charged Plaid Cymru's anger at the desecration of the Welsh countryside. For them, the landscape of Wales was important not only as an aesthetic experience, but primarily for its reflection of a society's spiritual and material relationship to the land. Rural Wales, they argued, "is not a nice block of mountains and heather for the benefit of trippers. It is a living community in imminent danger of destruction, and Mr. [Clough] Williams-Ellis should be concerned with the men who live in Wales, their crafts and their houses, not merely with the look of the country at a convenient distance" 97. Through their conception of landscape as scenery, the C.P.R.W. represented a detached way of seeing which placed them firmly in the role of cultural outsiders. In opposition to this way of seeing, Plaid Cymru drew on the anthropological tradition of landscape represented by the work of the Aberystwyth geographers, and particularly Iorwerth Peate. Landscapes were Welsh in that they provided evidence of a national past. The romanticism and sense of independence that surrounded peasant life was supported by the sight of humble vernacular dwellings in the hills. It was shattered by the visual intrusion of a ready-built bungalow. Likewise, Iorwerth Peate's studies had detailed a tradition of small-scale production for community or local consumption, but advertising hoardings reflected the fact that those polities had been destroyed by industrialism and that Wales had been drawn into a wider economic spectrum. Landscape, then, was important for Plaid Cymru in that it offered a realm of
discourse through which people might be educated into a new political framework. This cultural or environmental understanding of landscape informed a sense of territorial politics; one which deployed this sense of the nationality of landscape. The fact of exploitation was visible and awareness of that was to foster a jealousy for Welsh land that could become the foundation for the kind of territorial politics which Plaid Cymru sought to establish. Landscape planning, therefore, came to offer not only possibilities of aesthetic control - with its implications for national pride - but a way in which Welshness and landscape could have pragmatic political currency.

Landscape and Englishness
A prominent theme in Plaid Cymru's campaigning was the English exploitation of Wales. Material exploitation was expressed by scenic change, and so landscape could not be read as simply scenery for visual changes had political and cultural symbolic resonance. Iorwerth Peate had revealed how the diffusion of architectural styles could reflect the diffusion of ideas and ways of life and Plaid Cymru exploited the theme. It outlined how wealthy English merchants moved to Wales and undermined the social organization of Welsh villages. They destroyed agricultural land, unconcerned for the loss of quiet beauty or that the countryside became "a horrendous 'suburbia'" in their wake.98 The fear of suburbia was evidently a potent and all-encompassing one in rural Wales, though not so much its built form as its mores and tastes. For one writer 'suburbia' expressed the decline of small Welsh towns, and the encroachment of foreign influences. Commercial products and their attendant adverts begged the attention of the shopper, and multiple shops and cheap tailors had replaced the small shopkeeper, whilst the proceeds filled bulging English pockets. The tiniest hamlet had been visited by Commerce's "zealous missionaries", exploiting rural communities and undermining their self-sufficiency. The social economy of the village was in decline as products flooded in from outside: "by now it is twenty times easier to obtain a Lyons Swiss Roll in the heart of the country than a loaf of bara gwenith. Yet people accept this as part of the New Order, and those who say that these things can be made in Wales for the people living in Wales are looked upon as cranks and, worse than that, as being narrow".101

The built form reflected the emergence of new and powerful cultural influences (See Fig.12). But landscape despoliation also revealed, in Plaid Cymru's opinion, the lack of Welsh control over their own territory and the flouting of local democracy. Welsh land and landscape became potent symbols of political grievance. The land of Wales had, for centuries, been a source of pride to its inhabitants and a source of cultural inspiration. But "Today in all directions we see the destruction of the beauty of the face of Wales by the building of untidy and plan-less houses. Not only that but, for the sake of the motorists of Lancashire and Birmingham who wish to speed through the
delicate vales, roads are widened suddenly and the cleanest valleys of the country are despoiled for the sake of visitors' charabancs"\textsuperscript{102}. The spirit of protection was alive and well in England but the conscience of Wales had hardly woken. This was, according to Plaid Cymru, the result of a vigorous national spirit in England which protected the beauty of her land. But amongst Wales's local authorities, such a national pride which fought for Wales's prime treasure - the land itself - was yet to be raised. The Welsh had after centuries of English control lost the initiative, the resourcefulness and self-confidence of a free people. These aspects of the national character were made manifest in the ever-spreading suburbia.

The call for planning powers to control building and exploitation was, therefore, of symbolic importance in advancing the nation's control over its own territory. Government unwillingness to bury the power lines strung throughout the Llanberis Pass - to which the C.P.R.W. had objected - seemed to indicate that the reduction of electricity prices for English consumers was more important than the maintenance of Wales's beauty\textsuperscript{103}. The scale of electricity generation plans subsequently prepared for Snowdonia, plans aimed at generation for the National Grid rather than at establishing a distribution system for under-supplied rural Wales, were further evidence of oppression. Welsh landscapes were to be despoiled for the sake of a British system which, as we have seen, was a potent image in Parliament. For Plaid Cymru, pylons were less noble icons than symbols of powerlessness. Not only was Welsh water harnessed for electricity production, it was also in demand for English consumption. The proposed eviction of Welsh farmers from their homes and lands, so that the English government might flood Welsh valleys, was read as a direct threat to the concept of control of national territory. Alfred Davies's defeat of the Ceiriog Valley plans was a hollow victory, claimed the nationalists, for Welsh sovereignty over its own territory had not been conceded, and even then other plans were being formulated. Welsh territory was threatened with being quite literally submerged by Britishness, the ideological expression of English cultural and material values.

North Wales's local authorities proposed to fight the schemes but Plaid Cymru was mistrustful of initiatives carried out within the bounds of government: "In the English Parliament Wales is seen as but a part of England, and no one can understand why Meirionydd should not be sold to the towns of Lancashire as is proposed, perhaps drowning Llanuwchllyn and Sir O.M. Edwards's home for the sake of Runcorn and St. Helens"\textsuperscript{104}. Neither were Plaid Cymru enamoured of the C.P.R.W.'s attempts to employ the mechanics of the planning system, seen as part of the state's machinery. Their embodiment of planning's reliance on 'zoning' and the whole concept of 'amenity' were problematic as well as their inordinately visual sense of conservation and of
landscape. Such were the attitudes which saw amenity as representing a particular form of external control and a particular idea as to what landscape should be. Rumours in 1929 about the transfer of Snowdonian land to the C.P.R.W. as part of a national park raised ideological objections from Plaid Cymru. They saw in such zoning a tacit admission that the whole country could not be subject to such stringent and comprehensive controls; that some areas would, effectively, have to be sacrificed to the despoilers. They were unwilling to accept the canons of Anglicised aesthetic taste, or to address the problem of despoliation in such a defeatist spirit.

Plaid Cymru realised that the scheduling of the whole of Wales was an ideal, but one which, they felt, a healthy and free nation might realise. Self-government was the only way to achieve adequate scenic protection for the Welsh landscape, and to repel the threat which English exploitation posed to the landscape as defined anthropologically:

*Under a Welsh government the towns of England will not steal Welsh water with neither payment nor profit to Wales. Under a Welsh government, Welsh rivers will become electricity and wealth to the small villages of the countryside. Under a Welsh government, the Welsh shall not be punished for using the power of their own stream.. A Welsh government will order the tourist industry for the benefit of Wales. Wales is the most beautiful land in Britain, but the World knows not this. Why? Because no one secures justice for Wales. A Welsh government would beautify the towns and villages of Wales, and clear away its slums, building for its workers clean and beautiful houses.*

Not all were in agreement with this vision of Welsh territoriality. Clough Williams-Ellis criticised those who spoke romantically and unrealistically about self-government, and charged them with negligence in their relation to the landscape. These were they who merely sang their land's praises. This prompted a ferocious riposte in *Y Ddraig Goch*, highlighting the party's campaigns for planning and their profound belief that a country could not be protected without a government drawn from its own people.

Welsh local authorities had been persistently criticised for their failure to argue the Welsh position, but Plaid Cymru argued that, through their offices, united action around the symbol of Welsh territory could form a basis for nationhood. There was, therefore, a concerted drive, launched in February 1928, to gain nationalist representatives on all county councils. Nationalists would,
it was hoped, imbue local government with a new sense of Welshness and pride. At the same time Plaid Cymru's secretary, H.R. Jones, called on all local authorities to embark on town planning and the prevention of rural suburbanization for the benefit of Wales as a whole\textsuperscript{110}. Some matters, like roads and electricity, were of wider than local interest and might be dealt with by county committees. It was further suggested that a national planning tier be established, composed of county representatives. These steps towards locally representative management of Welsh landscapes were metaphors of nationhood, and symbolically of great importance, especially as it was argued that each county's plans should cover a century's development. These plans were to be based on expert advice - such as that disseminated by the University of Wales - ensuring the most efficient land use and drawing the skills of a nationalist intelligentsia into the management of national territory. Modification of the idea of landscape had now given way to the modification through planning of landscapes themselves in the quest for national self-expression.

REGION OR NATION?

In Plaid Cymru's opinion, the state continued, however, to treat Wales as a peripheral, resource-rich region of Britain, resisting calls for greater autonomy. This was reflected in a number of ways; in the official treatment of the language for instance. But planning and the management of territory seemed to play a role in keeping Wales firmly in a broader British space. Dissatisfaction with Wales's role in relation to England was explicit, as we have seen, in Peate's critique of the \textit{Scott Report}. Plaid Cymru wholeheartedly supported many of its policies, for instance the revival of village life, improved services, higher architectural standards, and prevention of disfiguring advertisements\textsuperscript{111}. But they also criticised the committee's fundamental stance on Wales. The Report suggested that Wales and England should form one unit for the purposes of planning and cited existing links as evidence of their argument's logic. South Wales looked to the South of England and this link was to be strengthened by a proposed Severn crossing; North Wales was oriented towards Merseyside with Liverpudlians enjoying Snowdonia's beauty in turn. Whilst not denying these links Plaid Cymru felt that the Report gave an Anglicised view of Wales. The primary fact about Wales, in their opinion, was that it was a nation, having its own geographical and economic logic. Wales was a complete and organic society forming a natural unit of humanity "and at no time should geographical and economic links between areas of Wales and areas of England be allowed to endanger the wholeness, unity and personality of that Welsh society. That would be a sin against civilization"\textsuperscript{112}. This was perhaps the fullest expression of the territorial basis of Welsh nationalism.
Similar protests greeted Alwyn Lloyd's *South Wales Outline Plan* in the late 1940s. It was seen as an imaginative and courageous approach to South Wales's problems, but as one which sadly failed to address the issue that "planning or the lack of it is very closely linked with the political and cultural survival of our nation". The plan did, however, unwittingly expose the shortcomings of the political status quo. It could make no economic recommendations, for such policies were controlled from London, and was also politically and culturally defective in failing to address the role of industrialism in Welsh life. Plaid Cymru, sustaining their location of Welshness in the countryside, argued (contrary to Kenneth Morgan) that the industrial revolution, and the concomitant boom in leisure, had shattered the Welsh national community once knit together by culture and traditions, replacing it with a denationalised proletariat. The plan's critic argued that "If it is part of the planners job to replace the dark, satanic mills of last century by industrial towns fit to live in, it is in Wales also his task to counteract, as far as it lies in his field, the tide of anglicisation and the shattering of community life which resulted from the chaotic industrial exploitation of the past". There was no hint of this in the plan, the authors failing to place it in a broader, Welsh context. Thus Wales continued to be viewed in direct relationship to England, with its fortunes also tied to its neighbour's.

Wales, Plaid Cymru argued, needed a national plan; one calculated to revive the depopulated areas. But at present, Wales received little leadership from her qualified planners. The Tennessee Valley Authority was, by contrast, much admired as a model of the way in which planners could give a lead and convert vague campaigns into healthy and practical ones. Its comprehensive approach to the revival of economic and social life was an attractive model of state-sponsored self-determination. Julian Huxley claimed it had "definitely established the validity of over-all, democratic planning: and this is an achievement of first-class importance in the evolution of human society". It had brought modernity to the countryside without alienation or vulgarity. Peate had suggested, for Wales, the establishment of light industries and new towns, serviced by large scale electricity generation schemes. But all such items of reconstruction policy should, Plaid Cymru argued, protect the unity of Wales and bring all its regions together. Geography was fundamental to this. A territorial integrity was sought to dispel that which the reports had seemed to suggest, namely that Wales was but a region of England. Thus the holding of the Bath and West Show in Neath in 1936 was resisted as a psychological invasion of Wales's land - there were several such piecemeal campaigns - but one policy, often advocated, was calculated to shift Wales's geographical orientation away from England, and to physically re-unite a divided people.
THE WAY TO UNITE WALES

Wales's roads, like its rivers, largely radiated to the east and west. But in December 1936, an article in Plaid Cymru's *Y Ddraig Goch* gave new impetus to an old idea of a road running from North to South through Wales. The author, Oswald Rowlands, argued that hitherto the chief function of Wales's roads had been to tie her economically more closely to England. The Act of Union had failed to diminish the Welsh sense of tradition and identity, and so economic self-interest had proven necessary as a weapon. Welsh farmers and weavers were therefore made dependent on the fairs and markets of England, a policy extracting economic power and the potential for autarchy from the Welsh. Eighteenth-Century roads turned Wales into "an incomparable playground for all types of speculative business and unprincipled exploitation," tearing through the national culture and economic life of Wales. Wales, Rowlands argued, had the poorest economic condition of any nation in Western Europe. Its small industries had been sacrificed to English Imperialism, and it suffered markedly more from the depression than England, further driving Welsh workers away from their homes. In the meantime, the efforts of the Special Areas' Commissioner were thwarted, or turned to England's benefit. Transportation links had played their part in the 'ruin of Wales.'

But Rowlands claimed that Welsh awareness of injustice was growing and that more calls for autarchy and for planning on a national basis would follow. Wales, he believed, should become an economic unit with concomitant transport provision. The North-South road was to be a central plank of this modernization; a process of nation-building by road-building. The road would promote a 'hardening' of Welsh space by shifting the focus of its life away from the accessible peripheries. The uplands of mid Wales - "the source and sanctuary of the Welsh life" - should be opened up by a boldly engineered road, taking its inspiration from continental Europe. It would follow a route from Cardiff to Holyhead crossing the uplands of Central Wales, including the Pumlumon range, and passing through Iorwerth Peate's home village of Llanbrynmair. The surmounting of these immense geographical difficulties would provide an inspirational and symbolic opportunity for young Welsh engineers - emulating their continental counterparts' successes - and productive work for unemployed South Wales miners.

There were many economic virtues to the scheme, according to Plaid Cymru. In addition to the benefits of a major public work new life would be breathed into the quarrying and lead mining areas, and a new impetus given to agriculture and the woollen industry. New tracts of agricultural land could be made available. On these, Welsh families might, as Stapledon had argued, be settled.
in their own country. The country had two complementary regions which, united, could form a strong and 'natural' basis for nationhood. By linking industrial and rural Wales, the increased agricultural produce of the latter could be exchanged for the goods of the former, thus creating a territorially integrated economy and the foundations of autarchy. Their surplus agricultural produce could furthermore form a national export trade via new links to the docks of South Wales. Intercourse thus promoted between districts would provide not only economic but psychological bases to calls for nationhood.

Rowlands was not alone in his economic optimism. At the Machynlleth National Eisteddfod in 1937, Sir Robert Webber - director of the Western Mail and a South Wales industrialist - argued for a new road joined at its two ends to the Mersey Tunnel and the proposed Severn Crossing respectively (Fig. 33)121. Its logic was economic, its role being the provision of work for thousands of the unemployed, thus protecting the workforce's 'fibre'. The road would also revive the Welsh agricultural industry, and open Wales to an immense volume of tourist traffic - the same duality for which Stapledon had argued. Webber's Western Mail embarked on a series of enthusiastic articles on the matter. The time had passed, it argued, when progressive people questioned the value of a good road through virgin and remote territories122. Throughout the World, the road was synonymous with civilisation and commercial and industrial progress. Mid Wales might, it suggested, particularly benefit from improved transportation. Rural depopulation might be stemmed and several local industries revived if road networks did not lead directly to England. Flannel mills might re-open and new and existing lead deposits be recovered by mining. All this would ensure a new market for locally-produced foodstuffs123.

Economic activity was, however, but one aspect of the road's revival. Popular mobilization for road-building might make the proletariat again aware of its place as part of a Welsh nation. The role of a national unity achieved by large scale public works should not be underestimated. Smith and Williams argue that through the act of rebuilding the land, the people themselves could be changed and their outlook revolutionized. The actual construction of a national territory is "an instrument for implanting a sense of national solidarity and consciousness, and of homogenizing and levelling heterogeneous and stratified populations. In this respect, work on 'the land', on creating the infrastructure of the nation, helps to form an homogeneous people out of an unrelated conglomerate or medley of individuals"124. Stapledon, we have seen, admired Mussolini's land reclamation schemes as much for their effect on the national spirit as on agricultural production. In Germany too, labour beneficial to the common good - such as that provided for 400,000 in the building of the autobahnen - was seen as an important means of incorporating workers into the
Welsh Arterial Road Problems For Engineers

Route Must Be Free From Weather Extremes

Scaling Altitude of 1,800 Feet On Berwyn Range

Figure 33. The Western Mail's proposed North-South road route (appeared on 22/9/37)

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new German national consciousness\textsuperscript{125}. For Plaid Cymru, workers from the industrial South might regain their sense of Welsh nationality, of community rather than class.

In its very geography, the road was to symbolise a new Wales, as had the \textit{autobahnen} been "both the harbingers and the forgers of a restored German unity and greatness. Politically and socially the superhighways strengthened national unity by drawing the country closer together in both the geographical and psychological senses"\textsuperscript{126}. The Welsh road, similarly, was to sponsor a national rather than localised or regionalised regeneration, transcending local interests and jealousies. Its building was to be an act of common will, of common utilisation of territory. Towns protesting against various routes were criticised by the \textit{Western Mail}: Cardigan's failure to support the project, for instance, was "a regrettable example of parochial mindedness and lack of due sense of the fact that Wales should be a geographical unit. Can Cardigan not see national and, eventually, local benefits of this scheme?"\textsuperscript{127}. A similar decision in Pembrokeshire was for Lord Merthyr, symbolic of "a myopic nation"\textsuperscript{128}. Continuing, he argued that the road would unite the country more than any conceivable political concession. This was a fundamentally different vision of a revived Wales from that of the nationalists. Lord Merthyr and the \textit{Western Mail} neither foresaw nor desired to see a new self-governing Wales arising out of the project. Theirs was not, like Plaid Cymru's, a plan to provide the bases for separatism. Robert Webber's road arguably tied Wales even more firmly into English economic currents. Thus the appeal to national identity was somewhat more superficial than in the nationalists' case where the road provided the physical and economic basis for a re-orientation in national consciousness. Often, however, the distinction was lost in rhetoric. One correspondent typically claimed that the proposal came at the very time

\begin{quote}
\textit{when the national consciousness seems to be non-existent. Such a road would break down the differences existing between North and South. It would hasten the recognition of national entity of the Welsh people and their place as a nation in the affairs which concern them, and would safeguard Wales's culture, and its beautiful countryside from vandalism which has been allowed to go on without a national protest. It might well mean a renaissance in the life of Wales when we are now groping our way.}\textsuperscript{129}
\end{quote}

\textbf{The road and national pride}

It is significant that the sense of aesthetics was strong throughout the debate, with the disorderly
sprawl of the roadsides seen as anathema to the scheme's spirit of national vigour and revival. In this respect the plan drew inspiration from the work of amenity campaigners like Williams-Ellis and Abercrombie. We recall the contrasting roads presented in The Face of The Land and the C.P.R.W.'s vigorous attempts to remove roadside advertisements as part of a thorough campaign pertaining to the road\textsuperscript{130}. Again - apart from the parkways of North America - the aesthetic inspiration came from the continent, source of the most significant achievements in road construction. Siegfried Giedion saw effortless beauty in Swiss engineer Robert Maillart's modern Alpine road bridges, which "spring out of the shapeless crags with the serene inevitability of Greek temples"\textsuperscript{131}. In his inaugural lecture on appointment to University College London in 1936, Abercrombie called for the building of 'motorways' in Britain on the model of Italian and other Continental \textit{autostrada} \textsuperscript{132}. Their bold planning and design seemed to contrast sharply with the planless sprawl of British roads. The German \textit{autobahnen} in particular achieved technical and aesthetic heights. Planners formed a \textit{Landschaftsanwalt} - a council for the landscape - ensuring the minimum of environmental damage\textsuperscript{133}. Route alignments were determined on aesthetic grounds and the use of indigenous materials, such as hand carved local stone for bridges, further helped set the new human structures into their natural surroundings.

In Wales too the aesthetic benefits of the scheme were lauded. One \textit{Western Mail} article saw the road's immense picturesque potential\textsuperscript{134}. A broad carriageway might sweep majestically across the contours of the mid Wales uplands with design solutions - for instance the splitting of carriageways to avoid obstacles - for each geographical problem. But as in Germany, the roads were to harmonize, to fit organically into their setting whilst retaining a modern boldness. Small lanes might be left in all their rural charm, though performing a new function either as single carriageways or as feeder roads. Old bridges should also be preserved. In Figure 34 a curving road sweeps over a graceful viaduct leaving the picturesque bridge and sylvan stream far below but, crucially, in full view of the traveller. Thus might the road act as a provider of scenes of Welsh heritage and geography. In much the same way as the English landscape has been typified as the view glimpsed from the railway carriage, so this new Welsh road was to educate the speeding motorist. South Wales people, argued the \textit{Western Mail}, might share the beauties of mountain scenery with the people of North and Mid Wales; and made aware of the beauty of their land, hitherto denied them, would prove themselves just as patriotic as those from the North... if not Nationalists!\textsuperscript{135}. Nationalism was, however, less on the agenda than a sense of pride in Wales as one of the more attractive parts of the Empire.
How a North to South Wales arterial road would cross the mountain barriers.
—Sketch by Roy Saunders.

SECOND ARTICLE

Retaining Rural Charm on Arterial Road Route

Figure 34. "Retaining Rural Charm...": a viaduct on the proposed North-South road (from Western Mail 23/9/37)

Figure 35. National Pride?: a Welsh roadside (from C.P.R.W. Annual Report 1947-48)
But for the nationalists, aesthetics and environment were also important. Plaid Cymru consistently supported the C.P.R.W.'s campaigns against roadside advertisements and other disfigurements, though for the nationalists these were perhaps seen more as symbols of material exploitation than as eyesores in themselves\textsuperscript{136}. Nonetheless, they also represented a lack of national pride (Fig. 35). If the road is seen as an explicitly national symbol, then its appearance takes on greater significance, and noble intentions must be rewarded with noble vistas. These aims could be symbolised by the plan, by the principle of design rather than of growth in road creation.

The plan, furthermore, took the road into the Welsh heartland - that area defined as a source of national character. By raising their awareness of Wales's geography, the urban population might thus be reintegrated into nationhood. Their roots in the soil and a sense of their territory's historicity would be revealed to them. Again, this formed part of the logic of the \textit{autobahnen} which opened up to Germans "the natural beauties and historical sites of their nation. Increased popular contact with German nature and German history would heighten racial consciousness. In this way, the new highways would justify themselves, not as mere tools of convenience and private pleasure, but as serving the edification and inspiration of the masses"\textsuperscript{137}.

But such inspiration first depended on firmly placing preservation as the engineer-constructor's priority. The \textit{Western Mail}, however, was in no doubt that the landscape would itself educate the engineer, that the 'Spirit of Place' would communicate its message: "Whoever will be honoured with such a task I can imagine him tramping through these dear and wonderful valleys of ours and over our cherished mountains, and wherever he was born, surely his spirit would respond to the potency of the grandeur of the Creation around him"\textsuperscript{138}. The 'Heads of the Valleys' road had been planned in just such an experiential fashion, locals recalling the engineer tramping the hills in all weathers: "What romance there must have been behind the choosing of these easy, graceful curves!"\textsuperscript{139}. Likewise, in Germany, it was the engineer who reconciled the symbols of modernist progress that the roads represented, with the Nazis' presumed role as the epitome of Germany's restored traditions\textsuperscript{140}. The painstaking incorporation of the roads into the landscape tamed modernity and came to symbolise a new German spirit. In Wales, the surmounting of geographical difficulties with sincerity and respect could be read as an allegory of the struggle of a small nation to achieve full expression.

\textbf{Against accessibility}

But there was a tension between the modern vision of an accessible, unified Wales, and the environmental conception of Welsh tradition in which geography had played a central role. Rural
and upland Wales were seen as repositories of ancient virtue of immense value to civilisation. As Fleure had pointed out, geographical characteristics had for centuries prevented Welsh unity from being a potent political force, but had nonetheless promoted cultural survival. The proposed road threw into sharp focus the polarity of Fleure's statement, and in this sense, the conquest of Wales's geography was viewed more ambivalently.

The Western Mail argued that people in mid and north Wales - those areas delineated as the heartland - "question the value of the road". It is notable that the paper aligned opposition with geography, for the road scheme was challenged with the geographical sense of Wales's character providing the basis for opposition. The most eloquent opponent was Iorwerth Peate who saw the road as a profound threat. His opposition to the scheme rested largely on his understanding of Wales's geography. The river valleys of Wales generally radiated from east to west, and the roads inevitably followed. The effect of this was to bring aliens to the midst of the Welsh people, to stimulate rural depopulation in Wales, and to somewhat perversely make Shrewsbury the meeting place for committees and thus the focus for Welsh institutional life. But these were, Peate argued, the natural products of Wales's geography, and it was merely unfortunate that in leaving Wales the roads led to England! A North-South road, therefore, counteracted this tendency to look towards England and Peate welcomed the principle. However, he restated his belief that before schemes of modernization could take place, Welsh tradition had to be placed on a firm foundation. Wales had first to attain self-determination so that the Welsh language and tradition be safe throughout the land. Peate did not lament modernization. Whilst he mourned the potential effects of the coming of the bus and motor car and their transcending of old boundaries, he nonetheless saw them as marvels of the age, as symbols of a new confidence. They could, moreover, be controlled; and control would be vital in the case of the proposed road, for it would shatter the pattern of Wales's geography. It would open the heart of the uplands to the influences which had caused much concern in the lowlands:

Were Wales a state, ruling itself, planning its life and transport along national lines; had it the state's ability to place the Welsh language on a strong foundation in every school throughout Wales; were Welsh education a nursery of the national tradition, then certainly there would be nothing finer than this road from the beaches of the Severn to the shores of the Menai Straits to create union, good neighbourliness and trade between the counties of Wales.
This was much the same argument employed in his critique of the Scott Report. But as Peate insinuated, Welshness was not in the vanguard and was fighting for its very existence. Indeed the Welsh language, increasingly mapped in its heartland of the north and west, was the final barrier against the Anglicising forces of the outside world. Decline had set in to other aspects of Welsh life, into craftsmanship for instance, but there were areas, like Mawddwy and his home village of Llanbrynmair, which still formed the backbone of Welsh life. Here remained

the language and all that depends on it as part of the day-to-day life of the people. If the 'road to unite Wales' is built before the Welsh have the right to organise their own life Llanbrynmair, Mawddwy and all places like them will become petrol stations on a racing track from the Severn to the little Manchesters of the North Wales beaches. The influences which drowned Welshness in the Vale of Glamorgan, the Severn Valley and Colwyn Bay will flow like the red floods of August over the plains of Pumlumon, and to the feet of the Aran145.

To build such a road at that time was, in Peate's opinion, to invite suicide by overwhelming the stability that geography had given to Wales.

Welsh unity, Peate argued, could only be attained by probing realms far deeper than the surface of a road. A road would be a natural development of unity and a symbol of it, but could not, he argued, be its generating force: "The unity we seek is a spiritual one, but it cannot be guaranteed by the building of highways"146. Some English, he pointed out, were themselves mourning the arterial roads. An essential Englishness existed, many claimed, out of their reach and away from bus routes, an Englishness sought by the travel writers of the time. Likewise, Wales was found in its glory of language and tradition only in the remote places. And the science of anthropology had defined the geography of that tradition. "Are we ready", Peate asked, "to kill it in its last sanctuary?"147.

CONCLUSION

No wholly conceived new road was built, but the debate was revealing of the ways in which Wales's geography was conceived. The work of Fleure, Fox, Bowen and Peate provided an intellectual climate in which Welsh heritage and distinctiveness was an active force. Wales's rural areas were seen as repositories of value both to civilization as a whole and to a growing sense of
Welsh identity. The Welsh people were claimed to have become rooted in their land over the centuries, and the landscape represented this ethnicity. These themes were incorporated into Plaid Cymru's political programme. 'Back to the land' was not only a quest for romanticism or for economic survival, but a return to seek inspiration for a new form of national identity. It implied also a return to a different sense of landscape to that advanced by the C.P.R.W., and a modification or politicization of that proposed by the academics. Whilst landscape as scenery had its place, the face of Wales - its hills, valleys and even roadsides - came primarily to symbolise the people's 'authentic' relationship with their territory, and the nation's place in the world. The control of that territory was at the heart of national aspiration, and planning offered a means to achieve this control. As we have seen, however, there were disagreements about the efficacy of 'progress'.

The following chapters unfold a series of challenges to the visions of Wales hitherto outlined - by the C.P.R.W., the academics and the nationalists. Landscape in all its forms comes under threat. In the wake of these challenges, the three ideas of landscape are in dynamic relationship as they conflict with and inform each other. These ideas, and their relationship to the planning process, are also seen as central to ideas of Welsh nationhood.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

5. Michael Hechter (1979) "On Separatism and Ethnicity: A Response to Sloan's "Ethnicity or Imperialism" Ibid. pp.126-9; p.127

10. Ibid, p.16


13. *Internal Colonialism* p.37


16. Ibid, p.16. Keating suggests that the *gwerin* movement in Wales, for instance, can be read as a progressive move to democracy, opposed to the archaic social order of the centre

17. Jim Bulpitt argues further that the centre/periphery duality might better be seen as a court/country one in which the London elite retains power in matters of 'high' politics (defence, foreign affairs etc.) in return for peripheral or 'country' autonomy in matters of 'low' politics; (1983) *Territory and Power in the United Kingdom: an Interpretation* Manchester: Manchester University Press


20. "Separatist and Autonomous Nationalisms" p.65


22. "Nationalist Ideology and Territory" p.18

23. Ibid, p.24


192


29. Ibid. p.156


31. As in the case of the C.P.R.W. two years later "The date and location of the meeting had been dictated, as was normally the case with Welsh cultural groups of various kinds, by the fact that the National Eisteddfod was being held in the town that week." D. Hywel Davies (1983) The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945: A Call to Nationhood Cardiff: University of Wales Press; p.61

32. Ibid. p.vii

33. Even if, as David Gilbert has suggested, the former provided the model and even the personnel of the latter; (1988) "Tradition and Community: Mining Communities in South Wales and Nottinghamshire" in Mike Heffernan and Pyrs Gruffudd (eds) A Land Fit for Heroes: Essays in the Human Geography of Inter-War Britain Loughborough University, Department of Geography, Occasional Paper No.14, pp.37-56

34. D. Hywel Davies Welsh Nationalist Party p.55


36. Anthony D. Smith Ethnic Origins p.185


38. "Separatism and Mobilization"


40. Prydeindod p.10

41. Ibid. p.14

42. Ibid. p.15. The quotation comes from Tillich's Love, Power and Justice

"Approaches to the Linguistic Geography of Northeast Wales, 1750-1846" National Library of Wales Journal Vol.17 No.4, pp.343-63

44. D. Trevor Williams (1937) "A Linguistic Map of Wales According to the 1931 Census, With Some Observations on its Historical and Geographical Setting" Geographical Journal Vol.89 No.2, pp.146-51; p.147

45. See his (1934) "Gower: a Study in Linguistic Movements and Historical Geography" Archaeologia Cambrensis No.89, pp.302-27; (1935) "Linguistic Divides in South Wales: A Historico-Geographical Study" Archaeologia Cambrensis No.90, pp.239-66; and (1936) "Linguistic Divides in North Wales: a Study in Historical Geography" Archaeologia Cambrensis No.91, pp.194-209. Though many have disagreed with the concept of a 'divide', many have retained the sense of conflict in their analysis of zones, e.g. G.J. Lewis (1979) "The Geography of Cultural Transition: The Welsh Borderland 1750-1850" National Library of Wales Journal Vol.21 No.2, pp.131-44

46. "Gower: a Study in Linguistic Movements" p.325

47. D. Hywel Davies Welsh Nationalist Party p.74


49. Iorwerth Peate (1926) "Y Genedl ac Awdurdod" Dd.G, Vol.1 No.2, p.4

50. Dafydd Glyn Jones (1973) "His Politics" in Alun R. Jones and Gwyn Thomas (eds) Presenting Saunders Lewis Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp.23-78; p.33

51. Colin Williams "Minority Nationalist Historiography" pp.210-1

52. D. Hywel Davies Welsh Nationalist Party

53. Anthony D. Smith Ethnic Origins p.172

54. D. Hywel Davies Welsh Nationalist Party


56. D. Hywel Davies Welsh Nationalist Party p.97

57. Ibid. p.127


59. Kate Roberts lived for a while on Alwyn Lloyd's Rhiwbeina estate in Cardiff


65. Ibid.

66. D. Hywel Davies, *Welsh Nationalist Party* p.91

67. Ibid, p.92

68. Anthony Smith claims in *Ethnic Origins* (Chapter 8) that it explains Millet, Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, Wordsworth, and the appeal of folk museums such as the one for which Peate was then striving.

69. Gellner, in *Thought and Change*, however argues that the peasantry become prized at the very moment their relevance is actually becoming marginal. J.R. Jones too argues that this conferral of new meanings on the land is symptomatic of an attachment to the functioning rather than the formation of society

70. W. Ambrose Bebb (1927) "Bywyd Gwledig Cymru Heddiw" Dd.G. Vol.1 No.12, p.4

71. Ibid, Daniel Lleufer Thomas, discussing rural depopulation, noted that "Even those who remain in the country fall under the glamour of the town type of civilization, with the result that they too undergo a process of 'townification' in their habits, their dress, their system of education and their ideals generally." He blamed this partly on education itself, run exclusively on 'town' lines, which should have "due regard for the needs and ideals of country life.. [so] there can be laid down the firm foundations of a strong enduring type of rural civilization in harmony with the best social traditions of Wales"; (1917) "The Regeneration of Rural Wales" *Welsh Housing and Development Yearbook, 1917* pp.32-4; p.33

72. D. Hywel Davies, *Welsh Nationalist Party*
73. Dr. Noelle Davies (1930) "The Danish Folk High Schools - Their Origins and History" Cambria - a journal of adult education and social service in Wales No.2, pp.22-3
76. "Y Crefftau Gwledig" (1927) Dd.G. Vol.2 No.4, p.2
77. Iorwerth Peate (1929) "Y Crefftwr yng Nghymru" Dd.G. Vol.4 No.1, pp.4&8
78. Ibid. p.8
79. Dd.G. (1926) Vol.1 No.4, p.1
80. G.M.L.L. Davies (1932) "Brynmauwr: Hanes yr Anturiaeth" Dd.G. Vol.6 No.8, p.5
81. Ellis Roberts (1929) "Pensaerniaeth yng Nghymru" Dd.G. Vol.3 No.10, pp.6&8
82. Dd.G. (1926) Vol.1 No.4, p.2
83. O.M. Edwards (1927) Yn y Wlad Wrecsam: Hughes a'i Fab; Rhagair (foreword)
85. Ibid. p.1
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid. pp.1-2
88. "Y Crefftau Gwledig" Dd.G. (1927) Vol.2 No.4, p.2
89. Dd.G. (1928) Vol.3 No.6, p.2
90. Saunders Lewis (1930) "Cadw Harddwch Cymru" Dd.G. Vol.5 No.1, p.5. All following quotations are from this article
91. The chapel had, Lewis argued, continued to bear a close relationship to the Welsh language and culture and to the tradition of the hearth, unlike the church. As such, chapels should reflect native, domestic architecture in their simplicity and fitness for purpose
92. Dd.G. (1930) Vol.6 No.6, p.1
97. The Welsh Nationalist (1937) Vol.6 No.2, p.6
98. Dd.G. (1926) Vol.1 No.4, p.2
99. The suburb and ribbon development was less apparent in Wales - apart from the outskirts of Cardiff and Swansea - than in England.

100. Gwladwen Huws (1938) "Suburbia in Rural Wales" The Welsh Nationalist Vol.7 No.5, pp.1-2

101. Ibid, p.2

102. Dd.G. (1928) Vol.2 No.9, p.1


104. Dd.G. (1928) Vol.2 No.8, p.1

105. Dd.G. (1929) Vol.4 No.6, p.1. Plaid Cymru mistakenly foresaw the actual purchase of Snowdonia, and argued that such monies would be better spent on slum clearance and the re-planning of rural and industrial areas.

106. "Ymreolaeth i Gymru - Paham?" Dd.G. (1929) Vol.3 No.11, p.3

107. Yr Eiconoclast (1931) "Llythyr Agored at Mr. Clough Williams-Ellis" Dd.G. Vol.5 No.2, p.4. The article continued, claiming that it was "on those people who speak and debate clearly, reasonably and fairly for Welsh self-government that [the C.P.R.W.] shall have to rely for its success, and I ask your society therefore.. not to commit suicide"


110. Ibid.

111. "Adroddiad Pwyllgor Scott" (1942) Dd.G. Vol.16 No.9, pp.1&3

112. Ibid, p.1

113. The Welsh Nation (originally The Welsh Nationalist) - the Party's English language monthly introduced in 1931 - argued for a national plan for Wales, stating that Lloyd was best qualified to prepare it

114. Roy A. Lewis (1949) "This is Not What we Want" The Welsh Nation Vol.18 No.8, pp.1&8

115. Ibid, p.8


117. Oswald Rowlands (1936) "Ffordd Ganol Gwir Gymreig" Dd.G. Vol.10 No.12, pp.7&9

118. Ibid. p.7

119. Can Wales Afford Self-Government

120. Ibid, p.9

121. The Times "New Welsh Trunk Road - Revival of an Old Scheme" 20/8/37. Webber's Western Mail ignored Plaid Cymru's proposals, predictably trumpeting their proprietor's scheme as the authentic revival!
122. Report of Western Mail leading article in The Chronicle 27/8/37 Cutting in C.P.R.W. 82/14
123. Western Mail "How Trunk Road would Benefit Mid Wales" 10/9/37
126. Shand "The Reichsautobahn" p.193
127. Western Mail "Cardigan and the Arterial Road" (editorial) 16/9/37
128. Western Mail Editorial comment, 6/10/37
129. T. Charles Morris - Western Mail, under title "Reviving National Consciousness" 31/8/37
130. C.P.R.W. Memorandum on Roads and Bridges 9/11/29 C.P.R.W. 82
133. Shand "The Reichsautobahn"
134. B. Price Davies (1937) "Retaining Rural Charm on Arterial Road Route" Western Mail 23/9/37
135. The Chronicle 27/8/37, C.P.R.W. 82/14
136. There is an ironic similarity between the campaigns of the inter-war years to remove advertising signs as symbols of commerce and English exploitation, and the more recent campaigns by nationalists against English-language road direction signs. Clearly the roadside is an important symbolic space
137. Shand "The Reichsautobahn" p.195
138. B. Price Davies "Retaining Rural Charm"
139. Roy Saunders "Road Building Feats in South Wales" Western Mail 23/10/37
141. H.J. Fleure (1926) Wales and Her People Wrexham: Hughes & Son
142. The Chronicle 27/8/37, C.P.R.W. 82/14
143. Iorwerth Peate (1937) "Ffordd i 'Uno Cymru'" Heddiw Vol.3 No.4, pp.126-9
144. Ibid, p.128
145. Ibid.

147. *Ibid.* Peate's concern about the effects of modernism without sovereignty was predictably labelled "More Nationalist Fanaticism" by a Welsh Marches paper, but was supported by others fearing the effects on Welsh culture of "such a road and its concomitant horrors"
SECTION THREE

PLANNING AND NATIONHOOD
CHAPTER FIVE
WALES AND THE WAR OFFICE: THE CONSCRIPTION OF THE CELTIC FRINGE

INTRODUCTION

The previous section has discussed the relations between geography, cultural change and political power. In this section, I consider conflicts over the land of Wales between the groups representing different 'ways of seeing' the landscape. In this chapter, these conflicts took place in a period of heightened tension, the Second World War. The State, mobilized for warfare, demanded homogeneity over its spatial extent in the interests of military efficiency. This, as Fleure noted, involved the suppression of potentially damaging ethnic separatisms. As Smith and Williams further suggest, inter-State tension hardens national space, eliminating all twilight zones so as to present to other comparable units a fully mobilized and 'nationally' conscious population.

The North-South road project was seen as the utilisation of large-scale public works to foster national unity. But with the rise in international tension in the 1930s, government interest in the improvement of Welsh roads was suspected by nationalists as being part of the State's strategic war mobilization, harnessing Welsh land to the patriotic cause. Such public works, they argued, should be opposed. But military involvement in Welsh territory nevertheless came to assume great importance in the geography and political life of Wales. It was, however, seen as subversive, for the requisitioning of Welsh land was viewed as a threat to national culture and aspirations of sovereignty. In this chapter I consider the intellectual and political defence of rural Wales and some of the C.P.R.W.'s responses to the new military threat to the landscape.

THE LANDSCAPE AT WAR

Landscapes have consistently assumed great resonance in periods of tension, and particularly so in wartime. Not only did landscape serve a propaganda function during the Great War but, as Ian Jeffrey argues, retrospective fears about foreign wartime threats implanted pastoral images in the British psyche which persisted during the 1920s and 1930s. But this relationship was given an ironic twist in Wales as the English military were seen as the threat to cherished Welsh landscapes and rural areas.
The first World war left a legacy of despoliation and earned the services a poor reputation amongst amenity campaigners. "Next to poultry", claimed Cyril Joad, "soldiers create more uglification than any other form of living organism". The army defiled, polluted and uglified all that it touched. An intellectual leader of the rambling movement as well as a committed pacifist Joad was doubly enraged to find tracts of his favourite land, particularly at Dartmoor and Trawsfynydd, sealed off. Under military control, the country, he argued, "is stiff with fences and bristles with barbed wire". In *England and the Octopus* Clough Williams-Ellis wrote that "the Army and Air Force... are like blow-flies - where they settle, there you will find corruption and all unpleasantness... Peace and beauty dissolve away at their uncreating touch, their buildings insolently howl down whatever quiet loveliness may lie within their range". His fledgling C.P.R.W. had in fact tackled the War Office in 1928 as part of its campaign against enamel roadside advertisements. But despite widespread despoliation, the C.P.R.W. retained a deferential view of State power.

**Strategic geography**

Following the collapse of the Geneva disarmament talks in 1934, the Air Council's designation of 'Danger' and 'Unsafe' zones fundamentally altered the industrial-military geography of Britain. Conceived to mitigate the threat of aerial bombardment of strategic industries and installations, the Air Council produced a map of planned rationality cutting swathes through the localities, regions and nations of Britain (Fig.36). Only Wales, the North West of England and Scotland were considered safe from aerial attack, and so much existing strategic manufacturing capacity found itself in areas of perceived danger. With the need to secure military production in a period of rising international tension, industrial location was significantly influenced and the safe zones, including Wales, received disproportionate benefit from rearmament. The British government allocated £1.2 billion to military expenditure between 1933 and 1938 and amongst the effects of this in South Wales, where unemployment averaged over 40%, was a series of Royal Ordnance factories. The Bridgend works was built in 1936 at a cost of £4.5 million to facilitate a move from the Woolwich Arsenal in London. By 1941, 37,000 were employed and a building boom was reported to have taken place locally. At Pontypool, 1,700 acres of land were scheduled for acquisition with up to 2,500 to be employed filling shells. A further 1,500 acres were requisitioned near Caerwent for chemical works. In general, local authorities and the press welcomed these providers of employment and stimuli to local economies. The military recognised this. Responding to C.P.R.W. queries about a proposed sea mines depot in Pembrokeshire the Admiralty noted that "From the point of view of ameliorating unemployment the proposed new establishment is viewed locally with general satisfaction". But many, including the Left, considered it morally
Figure 36. Air vulnerability zones, from Stephen Ward's *The Geography of Inter-War Britain*
distasteful that salvation should come to the depressed industrial areas in the form of defence works. Planners and the C.P.R.W. were also concerned as most of the factories occupied huge greenfield sites outside any existing town planning schemes. Despite the apparent aim of ameliorating unemployment, the proposed sites were away from the South Wales Special Area and Alwyn Lloyd argued that the military "seem to have deliberately coldshouldered the industrial and distressed areas and gone right into the open country". An absurdly secretive process, the choice of sites seemed to Lloyd to undermine the very foundations of sane, rational, State planning: "I wish I could feel that these Departments are really following some sort of national plan in regard to siting and industrial planning, but one is afraid the facts are that these decisions are taken rather at haphazard in the expectation that somehow or other they will fit into some scheme some time".

Not only were the needs of the distressed areas being ignored but the principles of zoning were undermined, engendering a clash of policies on scenic amenity. Two of the armaments factories posed direct threats to archaeological sites in Monmouthshire. The Roman town of Caerwent was bordered by one, and only intervention by Cyril Fox prevented a hill fort from being excavated for a reservoir. Other government agencies too seemed to be suffering. The Caerwent factory had threatened a Welsh Land Settlement Association village and Alwyn Lloyd was particularly aggrieved that an aerodrome proposed for St. Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan was to take much of the best agricultural land locally, including some belonging to the Association's village at Boverton. Unwilling to oppose these schemes, as we shall see, on grounds other than amenity, the C.P.R.W. had to be content with commenting on design and layout. Clough Williams-Ellis and Patrick Abercrombie, for instance, viewed the designs for the Bridgend factory and Alwyn Lloyd prepared a lengthy report on the St. Athan's aerodrome. Lloyd, however, implicitly argued that impacts on the landscape were dependent on the ethos of the government: "The pity is that instead of the creation of re-armament centres, we cannot substitute some planned extension of intensive agricultural development in that locality!".

But the most serious clash of policy, from the C.P.R.W.'s point of view, took place from 1937 onwards when, following a spate of requisitionings along the south and west Wales coasts, the military acquired lands in an area of Pembrokeshire. The somewhat complacent attitude to a string of proposals elsewhere was immediately replaced by vigorous activity in the light of the threat to this pearl of the British landscape. Aesthetically, Pembrokeshire had been destined for the most stringent protection, and selected by the C.P.R.W. as a proposed national park. Apart from aerodromes, the gravest threat came from the requisitioning of 6,000 acres of clifftop land on Lord
Cawdor’s estate at Castell Martin in the south of the county for a tank practice range. Fellow peer Lord Merthyr argued that “all the resources of the C.P.R.W. should be mobilised to initiate the strongest possible agitation against this proposal” which threatened miles of coastline, noted beauty spots and bird breeding grounds. Alwyn Lloyd lamented that “It makes you weep to realise the folly and impudence of these Service Departments! We have such a strong case here that with hard slogging and publicity we ought to scotch the vandals”. Lloyd, notwithstanding the land’s agricultural importance, listed the area’s amenity value as the main rationale for protest.

The Council embarked on a campaign of opposition in the press and in Parliament, primarily on aesthetic and planning grounds. Expert opinion, including that of Julian Huxley of the Royal Zoological Society, was enlisted in a protest characterised by gentility. This arguably arose from the C.P.R.W.’s deference to the establishment within which they sought to operate and whose consensus methods they took on board. They argued for logic and for planning in a spirit of compromise, though one easily exploited by zealous mandarins! But sustained pressure from within the establishment lasting well into 1939 and against a backdrop of rising international tension, eventually brought its reward, and the range’s proposed area was reduced by one-third.

The C.P.R.W.’s protest in Pembrokeshire, including their very decision to protest, was notable. Previously, they had been unwilling to offer opposition. But others had objected to, for instance, the St. Athan aerodrome. Saunders Lewis, President of Plaid Cymru, saw the loss of 400 acres of the Vale of Glamorgan’s rich agricultural land as a threat to that which might sustain Welsh economic self-sufficiency. Having abandoned the industrial areas to mass unemployment, he claimed that the government now turned its rapacious attention to Wales’s finest agricultural land, undermining the Welsh national interest. But the Vale was, claimed Lewis, "not only agriculturally capital wealth for Wales, it is also part of our heritage of beauty. It is now to be desecrated. I ask: Has the devil himself taken possession of these Government departments that... they should be destroying the little we as a Welsh nation possess of beautiful rural civilisation and should at the same time leave our derelict areas steadily worsening and unheeded?" Lewis was not alone in seeing diabolic influences at work. Iorwerth Peate noted, in verse, the Vale of Glamorgan’s beauties but now saw "the gentle land from Barri to Porthcawl, Raw flesched under the Devil's gaping machines".

This sense of Wales’s relations with England, and of its geographical role in the British State, as well as the role of rurality in Welsh politics, shaped a particular form of opposition to War Office plans. It was one which, whilst drawing on autarchic arguments, focussed on perceived threats to
Wales's cultural heritage and distinctiveness. It was a form of protest which sat uneasily with the more material arguments of the conservationists. But the rumblings of discontent in the Vale of Glamorgan were as nothing compared to the storm which had broken out on the Llŷn Peninsula in 1935. Not only did Wales's 'safe' zonal classification attract defence establishments, but within Wales most of these gravitated to the west, furthest from the densely populated areas and the hostile aircraft of Europe. In so doing, however, the military alighted on the regions of most pronounced Welsh cultural character and distinctiveness.

THE BOMBING SCHOOL

In May 1935 Philip Sassoon, the Under-Secretary of State for Air, announced that the Air Ministry proposed to establish an aerodrome and camp at Porth Neigwl (known in English as Hell's Mouth) on the Llŷn Peninsula. Porth Neigwl was a wide, sweeping bay flanked by two headlands, and with a broad hinterland of farms and scattered hamlets. The nearest sizeable town was Pwllheli, some eight miles east. The bay had a particular scenic charm and several tracts were later purchased for the National Trust. The proposal, probably the most infamous military incursion into Wales, shocked Iorwerth Peate who attempted to galvanise potential opponents, including the C.P.R.W., into action. In a letter to Clough Williams-Ellis, Peate argued that the Peninsula, one of the few unspoilt parts of rural Wales, should be preserved as a National Park of the type for which the C.P.R.W. was then actively campaigning. More important than these aesthetic concerns though, in Peate's opinion, was the fact that - as geographical research had shown - the people of Llŷn "are almost entirely monoglot and life there is an excellent example of that of an unsophisticated peasant community. It seems to me to be a heinous sin to introduce any kind of camp into that area. I hope that the [C.P.R.W.] may be able to look upon this development as one which they can legitimately oppose".

Peate initially won support. Williams-Ellis, characteristically, wrote to Sassoon (apparently an ex-client) directly on this "grave" and "calamitous" subject. J.D.K. Lloyd protested to the Air Ministry, and Alwyn Lloyd also expressed his concern at the proposed despoliation. Peate's campaigning secured the support of Geoffrey Crawshay - the South Wales Special Area's Commissioner - in calling for the camp to be relocated in a depressed area where the economic benefits might be more fully utilised. Plaid Cymru protested immediately: "The National Party opposes another nation's seizure of our lands for any purpose, and especially its seizure for filthy work. An alien nation turned our valleys into heaps of rubble in the past; if they try to make
them into caves of death, they will have to face the opposition of patriotic Welshmen.\textsuperscript{28}
Notably, their opposition rested on territorial and moral grounds.

The Air Ministry's reply to the C.P.R.W. quashed hopes of removal elsewhere.\textsuperscript{29} It stressed the difficulty the Ministry had experienced in finding suitable sites. A comprehensive survey of Britain had revealed only four: Porth Neigwl, Abbotsbury in Dorset, Holy Island in Northumberland, and Luce Bay near Stranraer. The Ministry, claiming that they had thoroughly consulted the local population, argued that the camp would not damage the area's amenities, but that it would "undoubtedly bring an increase of prosperity to the district through the spending capacity of the service population.\textsuperscript{30} Again, they hoped that economic arguments would prevail.

But Peate rejected claims of consultation, and claimed that the inhabitants objected strongly to the scheme.\textsuperscript{31} On humanitarian grounds, any increased trade should, Peate felt, go to the distressed areas. Certainly, humanitarianism permeated Peate's objections. He was a pacifist - invited by G.M.L1 Davies to write the first pamphlet in a series on the subject - and a conscientious objector in World War Two.\textsuperscript{32} To a pacifist, North Wales represented a particular political outlook. A 1935 peace ballot revealed that 90% of those voting in the region were in favour of the abolition of aerial warfare and five Welsh counties headed the list of the British counties in favour.\textsuperscript{33} Similarly, Welsh counties filled the first dozen places of British supporters of the League of Nations.\textsuperscript{34} The Llŷn Peninsula therefore signified a great deal to Peate. In his opinion "it would be a service to humanity and to culture to preserve Llŷn as a monoglot Welsh area where Welsh peasant life may be found in its purity. The proposed camp will destroy such a condition at one blow and this in itself is, I think, a strong enough argument against it, even though it does not interfere with the amenities of the peninsula.\textsuperscript{35} Peate recognised that these concerns had not, hitherto, formed part of the C.P.R.W.'s philosophy, but argued that this case presented an opportunity for enriching their attitude to Welsh culture:

\emph{I believe that your Council does not find as much support as it would wish amongst the Welsh-speaking population of Wales, but I feel sure that if it perseveres in its opposition to this proposal of the Air Ministry by assuming, as it should in my opinion, that to preserve rural Wales you have also to preserve its rural culture which includes its language, it would not only do a great service for Wales but would also win the warm support of a great number of those of us who have not had, up to now, such a close connexion with it.}\textsuperscript{37}
Peate submitted a report to the C.P.R.W. entitled The Lleyn Peninsula: Some Cultural Considerations 38 - a title perhaps appealing for a change of approach on the Council's part. In it, he claimed that Lleyn was the largest tract of unspoilt country in Wales, "virgin ground almost completely unaffected by modern building and the effects of tourist and English influences"39. As such it had become, like other western peninsulas, a storehouse of the Celtic tradition identified in the the work of the Aberystwyth geographers. Peate felt it was "imperative that the peninsula should maintain the unsophisticated purity of its native tradition"40.

The area was replete with historical resonances. Being adjacent to Bardsey Island, where the bones of 20,000 saints were reputed to be buried, every acre was hallowed by association with medieval pilgrimages. The roads tramped by pilgrims retained their character still, and other material artefacts reflected cultural vigour. House types and farm layouts were unaltered by modern developments, old agricultural implements were still in use and old crops still sown. Indeed the area seemed untouched by nineteenth and twentieth century industrialism, retaining as did no other part of Wales a pre-nineteenth century atmosphere. To the student of sociology, ethnography and social anthropology, the peninsula offered a field of research of overwhelming importance.

The peninsula's folk too reflected the flowering of Welsh culture. Sensing Lloyd's apathy towards the area's linguistic importance, Peate maintained that the monoglot culture, far from revealing mental or cultural backwardness, signified a cultural virility of the healthiest kind41. Lleyn, as geographical research had shown, was monoglot to a degree unknown elsewhere in Wales (Fig.37). Consequently, it exhibited a pure linguistic tradition of the greatest importance to the language scholar, with comprehensive agricultural and craft vocabularies unadulterated by borrowing from English. To introduce any extraneous or exotic element into this homogeneous society by developing any part of the peninsula on modern lines would, Peate concluded, "destroy evidence in all the directions indicated which would be a loss to international scholarship and culture"42.

But despite these concerns, the C.P.R.W.'s policy was being shaped in altogether different realms. Clough Williams-Ellis corresponded with Phillip Sassoon on the sole issue of aesthetics. Past experience had proven bitter, a camp at Trawsfynydd described as "flaming pink iron and asbestos... dropped down in the heart of our grey mountains"43. But Williams-Ellis refused to challenge policy and argued only for assurances as to the air base's architecture which he hoped would be suitably "modern" and "functionalist". Sassoon in turn confirmed that the buildings - markers' shelters, hutments and a hangar - would be designed with all due care for amenity.
Figure 37. The Welsh language in Llyn, 1931
(from Archacologia Cambrensis No.91)
The Council’s policy evolved around these aesthetic assurances, with J.D.K. Lloyd admitting that he would be sorry to see them involved in any kind of opposition to government air policy. An R.A.F. squadron leader in the Second World War, it may be unsurprising that Lloyd should disassociate the Council from what seemed to him potentially "unreasonable or fractious opposition." Furthermore Lloyd was sceptical of Peate's motivation. Writing to Patrick Abercrombie he noted that "Peate, of course, approaches the question from the "anthropological" point of view - disturbance of old culture etc. = I should be more disposed to go the whole hog with him if I thought that the existing monoglot civilization at the end of Lleyn would in any case survive very long - which I don't." With the teaching of English in schools and English language broadcasts on the wireless, apart from any contact with the outside world, he felt that there seemed to be no chance of survival "whether desirable or not." At best, Lloyd seemed to accept the inevitability of the decline of Welsh rural culture. Unlike Peate, and indeed at odds with the general intellectual climate in Wales at the time, he did not see rural culture as fundamental to the look of the land and therefore as something they should seek to defend.

The C.P.R.W.'s readiness to accept the base and to enter into negotiations on aesthetics, suggests that their aims were identified with and submerged in the interests of those of the British State, in this case 'national' defence. Their aesthetic concerns were also more easily accommodated into a rational and centralised plan than into the dynamics of rural culture. Such priorities necessitated distancing the Council from minority, if not subversive, cultural and anthropological arguments. The Council clearly felt that it had neither mandate nor desire to comment on matters other than aesthetics, despite their recognition of the fact that the Welsh sense of landscape and environment was different to that of England.

Despite Peate's plea, and growing local and national concern in Wales, the C.P.R.W. refused to add its voice to the protest, citing the C.P.R.E.'s experience of ministerial intransigence in England where protests had been on 'scientific' lines, mainly concerning bird breeding grounds. The C.P.R.W. concentrated on ameliorating the camp's visual impact, although in replying to Peate, Lloyd quoted the opinion of Clement Davies - C.P.R.W. treasurer, the Liberal leader and MP for Meirionydd - that, based on his experience of an existing camp at Trawsfynydd, the danger to cultural life was over-rated.

Peate was dismayed at this collapse of C.P.R.W. opposition. He felt "that if the C.P.R.W. confines itself to caring only for the lay-out and design of buildings in Wales and gives up so easily the fight for the preservation of Welsh rural culture, it will be maintaining merely an empty
husk. Although Peate had revealed himself aware of the importance of natural beauty, he had consistently shown distaste for preservation for its own sake. Material culture, including landscape, was for him a reflection of society's development and, ideally, of an evolving tradition. Amenity's failure to address this issue signalled a shallowness, ultimately out touch with the dynamics of rural life. Furthermore, Peate dismissed Clement Davies's opinion, the Trawsfynydd camp having, to Peate's mind, caused untold harm to the local rural culture. The farms which formed the backbone of the Independent cause in the area had been destroyed by the military, and the district ravaged by foreign influences. There would, in Llyn as in Trawsfynydd, develop in one of the most purely Welsh districts an English colony representing alien characteristics and values.

The air and modernity
Clearly there were considerable fears for Welsh language and culture. But in the case of the Porth Neigwl aerodrome it is worth briefly considering some of the broader changes represented by this particular development. It is apt, if not significant, that the military establishment eliciting such objections should be an air-base. The aeroplane was widely seen as symbolic of the most modern impulses of inter-war society. The writer Edmund Vale, speaking at a conference with Alwyn Lloyd in 1939, claimed that in fifty years' time there would probably be very few private cars on the roads, if any at all. The roads would go back to grass and the traffic would be in the air. One writer cheerfully foresaw rural Cardiganshire as a mecca for air tourists in an age of mass holiday provision. The planning implications of this were subjects of open debate. But these prospects frightened some. Conservationists saw adverts despoil the skies as sky shouting (messages broadcast from loudspeakers mounted on aircraft) and sky signs (slogans projected onto clouds) made their first brash appearances. So the aeroplane and 'the air' came to represent modernity at its most forceful and vulgar.

But the aeroplane also represented ethical and political change. Its development was largely part of military strategy, but as we have seen there was widespread opposition in Wales to the principle of aerial warfare. Through the building of the Porth Neigwl aerodrome, a role in its development was, nevertheless, to be imposed by the State. Fears of totalitarian power were mirrored in objectors' use of apocalyptic language, and of Porth Neigwl's English name Hell's Mouth. The proposal became imbued with a sense of sinister malevolence. Sinister also was the subject's role in Rex Warner's allegorical novel The Aerodrome, published in 1941, where the stark, aggressive functionalism of an air force base contrasts fiercely with the bumbling, inefficient quaintness of the archetypal English village it at first adjoins but eventually crushes. The novel was an attempt
to understand the appeal of Fascism and its utopian sense of New Order, represented by the air
base. Its chosen metaphor was no coincidence. Whilst the Left had its heroes of the air, the
Right's infatuation with speed, power and the machine embraced the aeroplane more firmly. Hitler
was the first politician to make widespread use of this exciting new mode of transport, the shadow
of the Fuhrer's plane cast over German cities providing a fertile propaganda image in *Triumph of
the Will*. The British Union of Fascists established flying clubs in 1934 with Oswald Moseley
promising air training for 'every suitable boy'. Moseley's paper *Action* linked Fascist policies
and countries with the building of bigger and better aeroplanes, and the magazine *The Aeroplane*
often spilled over with pro-German and anti-Semitic rantings. In 1938 an article complained about
the prevalence of the "barbaric" Welsh language in the vicinity of the Porth Neigwl base. Its
author claimed that the language's only apparent function was to enable two natives to conspire to
fleece an English visitor! The architecture of the aeroplane also represented Continental influence,
with the municipal airports and flying clubs of England - many designed to look like aircraft - in
the modernist vanguard. If this is what Williams-Ellis was advocating for Porth Neigwl then,
whilst certainly expressing a progressive architectural ideal he was hardly aligned with the
C.P.R.W.'s more benign policy of promoting vernacular styles and materials. The aerodrome's
design would be as alien to its rural setting as the civilization it represented.

In the light of these broader considerations it may be easier to understand fears that an area might
be "ravaged by foreign influences". The air and the aeroplane represented ideals distant from
tradition, antiquity and the soil, as understood by Peate and his colleagues. Welshness had hitherto
been protected by geography, but the aeroplane represented the transcending of geography itself,
challenging the balance of Welsh rural life even in the fastnesses of Llŷn. But the C.P.R.W.
seized on the possibilities of modernism, arguing that "the presence of the Air Ministry there is far
preferable to the creation of a desirable holiday resort". The regimented order of a military
establishment represented more pleasing aesthetic, if not social, values for the conservationists. In
a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, Clough Williams-Ellis argued that the aerodrome exemplified
ordered, straightforward planning but that the clean logic of modern design was not well received
by locals accustomed to ornamentation. So the base would educate native aesthetic awareness, for
in Williams-Ellis's opinion

*we Welsh are even less civilised than the English. For that reason - and
that only - I find myself actually welcoming the exploding bombs in Hell's
Mouth Bay, because nothing less drastic would have long preserved that
noble sweep of coast from the impertinent little bungalows that now so*
sadly disfigure both Abersoch and Aberdaron on either side of it, as alien and 'un-Welsh' as any bombing school, yet are they not merely accepted without protest, but eagerly run up by the natives themselves for anyone who will pay for them?60

The C.P.R.W.'s concern for amenity had been satisfied by the opportunities of modernism and they dismissed fears for tradition as "a lot of unnecessary protest"61.

NATIONAL THREAT AND NATIONAL PROTEST

1936, however, saw a dramatic rise in the tide of protest. This was, in part, the result of news that proposed aerodrome plans at Abbotsbury and Holy Island had either been modified or abandoned completely. The Porth Neigwl plan remained inviolate despite numerous protests to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. Baldwin's complacency, however, incriminated the C.P.R.W.; his standard reply referred to their decision not to oppose the proposal as a model of responsible, rational judgement in the interests of the British State.

For the protestors, however, this signified the continued exploitation of Wales. In The Listener Saunders Lewis seized on a rare chance to present the nationalist case62. He reiterated his belief in Wales's links to the Roman tradition, a tradition which, exactly four centuries after the Act of Union, still remained: "this nation of Wales stands to day on the very territory it occupied - the only territory it occupied - when Wales was part of the Roman Empire"63. Despite this cultural vigour, however, England still attacked Welsh nationhood. In England aerodrome protests centered on natural beauty, bird life and historical associations, as well as the mysticism of people like G.M. Trevelyan. These English 'men of letters' had their arguments voiced nationally, and accepted by their government. Beautiful countryside was also threatened in the Porth Neigwl area, but far graver than that "it will be an English garrison set up in an area where the Welsh language has ever since the fifth century been established and undisturbed, where Welsh speech has moulded a countryside rich in intelligence, noble in the purity of its idiom, and with its native culture harmoniously developed through fifteen centuries of unbroken tradition"64. Speaking to a domestic audience in Y Ddraig Goch he expanded on this expression of Llŷn's sanctity to the Welsh nation65. It was, he argued, an area as holy to the Welsh as Holy Island was to the English. The Pilgrims' Way ran through it to Bardsey Island, burial ground of a thousand saints. Ever since it had been won from the Irish in the fifth century, this land had been inviolate: "the rural life of Llŷn, and the area's pure Welshness and rich literary tradition has been a part of the
solidity of Gwynedd and of the Welsh language. There at least we could until very recently assume
that the purity of the Welsh language could be maintained despite all alien educational regimes.
Whilst Llŷn was Welsh we did not need fear for the Welsh nation. But into this land of religious and cultural resonance it was proposed to introduce not only a monoglot English garrison - "familiarising all the children of Llŷn with the polite and unmistakably English accent of the Army" - but the technology of mass annihilation which Lewis emotively attacked. It was a technology aimed at the innocent rather than at the military. Its proponents "will be trained in cold blood; soon their craft will become a habit; and when they come back to earth having destroyed civilization and completed the greatest villainy in the history of God's creation, if one were then asked: 'Where were you trained?' the answer will be 'In Porth Neigwl in Llŷn next to Bardsey Island, the Pilgrims' Way and Wales's Saints". The Peace Ballot had revealed Wales's revulsion of aerial warfare but the mechanics of war ground on relentlessly, driven, Lewis claimed, by money lenders and arms manufacturers - "the children of Moloch and Beelzebub, men possessed by the Devil".

This immorality was being imposed on Wales, and Lewis saw this as further evidence both of the English State's domination of the Welsh nation. Wales, however, had to reject the State power's ascension to the throne and re-assert God's moral law: "The Porth Neigwl camp plan threatens to kill the Welsh nation and to destroy or kill European Christian civilization. In the name of God's moral law, in the name of Christianity, in the name of Wales, I call upon you to oppose with all your energy and by all means and ways this damnable institution, and if it be not prevented, then to destroy it". This call, as we shall see, proved prophetic.

This sense of Wales as a guardian of European civilization is related, of course, to knowledge revealed by archaeologists and anthropologists. And furthermore, awareness of the critical role of Llŷn reveals a heightened 'geopolitical' sense. The loss of Holy Island and Abbotsbury posed no threat to English national survival, but for the Welsh the loss of Llŷn was seen as immeasurably more significant. As Saunders Lewis put it "This threat by the Air Force aims straight and true at the heart and life of our language and literature and culture and existence as a nation". But he was not alone in sensing the relationship between geography and cultural survival. A group - including G.M.Ll. Davies, nationalist and theologian J.E. Daniel, and novelist W.J. Gruffydd - claimed in a letter to the press, redolent with the language of military threat and action, that
the advance of Anglicising influences along the seaboard, powerful and disturbing though they were, could still be regarded with a certain qualified equanimity, so long as the mountains of Snowdonia offered a barrier behind which, in the profoundly Welsh peninsula of Lleyn, the forces of defence, and ultimately of counter-attack could safely rally. The value of Llyn... is absolutely irreplaceable in our national life, and any blow to the security of Welsh culture here is a mortal blow. The establishment of the bombing school here will do for modern Welsh culture what the occupation of Anglesey by Edward I in the thirteenth century did for Welsh political independence - destroy it by cutting its communications and vital supplies.72

In this one scheme, therefore, the process of diffusion by which Wales had been Anglicised for centuries was replaced by a form of internal colonisation. The mountains - protectors of Welsh independence and symbols of nationhood - were increasingly irrelevant, leap-frogged by Anglicising influences like the wireless. In this case, physical incursion into the Welsh heartland was also proposed. Wales's geography threatened to become the nation's prison rather than its fortress: "If the plan is persevered with the future holds for Welsh life and culture a bleak outlook indeed. Taken in front and rear by the forces of Anglicisation, its total destruction can only be a matter of years."73

Bitterness at the government's proposals grew in Wales, and conspiracy seemed widespread. The Times, for instance, which had supported Trevelyan's protests at Holy Island, refused to print letters on Porth Neigwl. By June 1936, when the work of levelling the 200 acre aerodrome site was well advanced, two thousand Welsh churches and lay bodies representing half a million people had passed resolutions of protest, and 5,000 local residents had signed a petition.74 Protest meetings were held locally, but opinion was not entirely unanimous and the employment question, which had secured the factories' acceptance in the south, played some part. One protest meeting in Pwllheli, attended by seven or eight thousand objectors, was broken up by fifty of the local unemployed amidst violent scenes (Fig.38). Emerging from the turmoil, however, was a sense of resistance, and Alwyn Lloyd judged that the C.P.R.W. "ought to keep in touch somehow with the protestors, in order that the idea may not get about that we are lukewarm or even, as some people suggest, too ready to accept the official 'English' view of the situation."75
FREE FIGHT AT WELSH AIR BASE PROTEST MEETING

NATIONALIST PARTY LEADERS CLASH WITH UNEMPLOYED

Professors and Pastors in Bare Fist Fights

"THERE WILL BE NO BOMBING SCHOOL"

By OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

AOUTH 7,000 people who met here yesterday to listen to speeches denouncing the Government's proposal to build an air base and bombing school at Porth Nefyn, here, were treated instead to the spectacle of distinguished Welsh professors, schoolmasters and ministers of the Gospel fighting barefisted with merely notions of the word, cutting each other out, only to return to the "ring" after "one man's" own.

The Welsh Nationalist Party had expected a demonstration and had "shopped up" their banners throughout Wales, London, Monmouthshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the Midlands. Owing to pressure from Cadwth, Llwybr and Dyfed, one of those attending being Mr. Lewis William, Barry, who is aged 81.

Punditism broke loose immediately the speakers took their places on the platform, encircling a readable portion of Porthkerry's second line. Two shots were cheered at the speakers, and the first sentence of Professor Lan's speech was met by the singing of "God Save the King" and "Rule Britannia."

But the present argument is as nothing compared with the one now in progress. The armada of political speakers,处理器 the muscular, barefisted from Cadwth, Llwybr and Dyfed, and residents in various parts of Wales, have gathered to argue this question:

Is there to be a bombing school at Porthkerry?

The Resolution

Extracts from the resolution:

"We, the undersigned, representing a large body of Welshmen, do hereby denounce the Government's proposal to build an air base and bombing school at Porthkerry, and we demand that no such works be undertaken until the Welsh Nationalist Party has had an opportunity to examine the plans and discuss their implications with the public."

Figure 38. The Western Mail's report of an anti-air base meeting
The betrayal of rural Wales

A series of events, however, prompted intense discussion of the C.P.R.W.'s philosophical foundation. Stanley Baldwin's refusal to meet a deputation headed by Saunders Lewis - citing as one reason the C.P.R.W.'s opinion - coupled with the C.P.R.W.'s own view of the situation in their annual report, prompted conflict. The C.P.R.W. argued that "the establishment of a small military centre may do less damage than the inevitable development, in the interests of the English tourists, of such resorts as Nevin and Pwllheli, and that the Welsh language, if it is to survive, must depend on a positive rather than a negative attitude". Their policy was shaped by distaste of commercialism and the criteria of aestheticism. In the context of impassioned debate on the demise of European civilization and Christianity, and the consequential threat to Welsh culture, such supercilious admonition from a body charged with Anglicisation seemed provocative.

In May 1936, Saunders Lewis cancelled his subscription to the C.P.R.W. "I have been a member since the formation of the Council," he wrote, "but the outrageous two pages on the Bombing Range at Porth Neigwl in this year's annual report makes me think that your title should be Council for the Betrayal of Rural Wales". The Council had, he claimed, acted completely at variance with its professed aims, an opinion not mollified by J.D.K. Lloyd repeating that it was preferable to sacrifice Liýn to the needs of national defence than to the speculators and developers. Lewis characterised the Council's approach as "the very dilettante discussion of the old fogeys", blaming this for their failure to address the profounder issues. In his opinion the Council had shelved its opposition through faint-heartedness and not from an assured conscience.

Clement Davies was scathing about Lewis's departure but Alwyn Lloyd was less hostile, regretting the loss of one who had shared a platform with him and who had invited his participation in the Nationalists' summer school. Lloyd saw the incident as symptomatic of the C.P.R.W.'s failure to make contact with the Welsh-speaking gwerin bobol of Wales. He also saw broader issues at stake and reasserted his pacifist stance on rearmament and military training. Walter Dowding of the Brynmawr Community Council - a Quaker associated with both G.M.L1 Davies and Alwyn Lloyd - also stressed the pacifist creed in his ferocious letter of resignation from the C.P.R.W. To him "it matters profoundly that, from one of the centres of our ancient Christian civilisation, will go out the filthy engines of death of this so-called 'national' government; so-called because it treats Wales and Scotland and England as one nation and refuses our right to live our separate, adult lives. You may go on co-operating with the devil - that is what your decision about Porth Neigwl means. But he also saw the decision as reflecting the C.P.R.W.'s philosophical stance on landscape, a stance inherent in their Anglicised origins: "Your
location is in London and there is nothing to suggest that you are other than a group of English 'gentry' with Welsh associations..." anxious, crucially, "to preserve the (external) beauty that is Wales."83. Whilst the Brynmawr projects stressed the relationship between a community and its environment, the C.P.R.W.'s concern for scenic order aligned them with the social order emanating from London. This placed Wales in a dominated position. The C.P.R.W., claimed Dowding, "care nothing for the body and soul of Wales, merely for the beauty that is but a part of her."84.

In reply, J.D.K. Lloyd argued that the Council had always stressed the importance of Welsh tradition: "It is the C.P.R.W. and not its critics who have denounced the jerry-built 'Brummagem' houses, the appalling examples of suburban snobbery originating in England which infest our coasts and hillsides."85. This rare recognition of the influence of cultural domination and incursion on the landscape was not, however, accompanied by Peate's sense of the social framework necessary to sustain Welsh rural life. Peate also felt that in the light of Porth Neigwl the C.P.R.W. had to reassess its position. He failed to see how even the aesthetics of rural Wales were preserved "by having its loveliest areas built up with sheds for bombing and other purposes, granting too that the sheds are not unsightly?"86. But more importantly their failure to address cultural matters was "disgusting": "As I have pointed out before, I do not feel that there is any justification for the C.P.R.W. unless it concerns itself with the preservation of rural culture. At the moment it is concerned with the preservation of a painted sepulchre. This opinion is...[that] of one who sees whole tracts of our countryside of the greatest cultural importance socially and historically destroyed at one blow."87. It is notable that this was the time at which the C.P.R.W. experienced its gravest financial difficulties. Debates as to their degree of commitment to a Welsh view of things were clearly heightened and inflamed in the light of the Porth Neigwl issue.

**FIRE IN LLYN**

The building of the aerodrome had begun in mid-June 1936, involving the purchase of 600 acres and the demolition of the six centuries' old Penyberth Farmhouse. On September 4th the *Manchester Guardian* reported its demolition noting its close association with Welsh Prince Owain Glyndŵr.88 Peate later referred to this act in *The Welsh House* as "wanton and unintelligent destruction"89, only a few timbers being rescued for the National Museum by a neighbouring farmer. This act became symbolically charged with a sense of national outrage, the burnt timbers representing English contempt for Welsh tradition. But the sense of outrage, measured also in resolutions of protest, was avenged when, on the night of September 7th, three prominent Nationalists (Fig.39) - Lewis Valentine (a minister from Llandudno), D.J. Williams (author of
Figure 39. *Y Tri* (The Three) - the nationalist arsonists (from left to right - Valentine, Lewis, Williams)
(from *Bro a Bywyd: Saunders Lewis 1893-1985*
Cardiff: Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru)
Stories of the Land and a teacher from Fishguard) and Saunders Lewis - set fire to some of the aerodrome's buildings, later presenting themselves for arrest at the local police station. This act was the first in modern times on behalf of a Welsh cause, and marked a turning point in the political history of modern Wales. Their aim was to force the government to bring a case against them, thus directing attention to what they claimed was the immoral violation of Wales's natural rights. When the case came before court in Caernarfon in October a crowd of some 2,000 supporters gathered outside. Those inside heard Valentine denounce militarism and refer to the virtual unanimity of parts of Llŷn in the Peace Ballot. It was sacrilege, he believed, to use the holy land of Llŷn for such obscene work, particularly so as "in the wake of this evil would come all polluted things which follow a military camp." He, by his actions, had merely answered the call of laws higher than those of England.

In his address to the Court, Saunders Lewis spoke again of the spiritual and cultural heritage of Llŷn:

*It is the plain historical fact that from the fifth century on, Lleyn has been Welsh of the Welsh, and that so long as Lleyn remained unanglicised, Welsh life and culture were secure. If once the forces of anglicisation are securely established behind as well as in front of the mountains of Snowdonia, the day when Welsh language and culture will be crushed between the iron jaws of these pincers cannot be long delayed. For Wales, the preservation of the Lleyn Peninsula from this anglicisation is a matter of life and death.*

But Anglicisation, as the ruins of Penyberth showed, had reached Llŷn, and this despite Welsh protests. Lewis contrasted the hearing granted the case with that given to the like of G.M. Trevelyan writing in defence of Holy Island. "Will you try to understand our feelings", said Lewis when we saw the foremost scholars and literary men of England talking of the sacredness of duck and swans, and succeeding on that argument in compelling the Air Ministry to withdraw its bombing range, while here in Wales, at the very same time, we were organising nation-wide protest on behalf of the truly sacred things in Creation - a nation, its language, its literature, its separate traditions and immemorial ways of Christian life - and
we could not even get the Government to receive a deputation to discuss the matter with us? The irony of the contrast is the irony of blasphemy.  

Threatened with the loss of language and rural civilisation, no path remained for the opposition but to challenge the power of the government which, like others, asserted that it was above the moral law of God, that it recognised no other power but the power of the State: "These governments... deny that they can be challenged by any code of morals, and they demand the absolute obedience of men." Christianity was threatened by State power, as were the lives of small nations: "these bureaucrats in the Air Ministry to whom Wales is a region on the map... know nothing at all of the culture and language they are seeking to destroy." Lewis asked the jury to assert that God's law was higher than all other laws, to deny the absolute power of the State-God, and to find him and the other defendants not guilty. After brief deliberation, the jury recognised that it could not agree on a verdict and the crowd outside the court cheered and sang its approval of this apparent moral victory.

Their joy was short lived however as the case was called into the Central Criminal Court in London, itself an act causing great resentment. A fighting fund of nearly one thousand pounds was raised but in the trial the three refused to recognise the Court's sovereignty, spoke only in Welsh, and were promptly found guilty and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. On their release they were greeted by a crowd packed into a Caernarfon hall estimated at between twelve and seventeen thousand.

The aerodrome was opened on Empire Day in May 1938, as England's empire reached Liŷn. Nationalists staged a protest as part of which posters were affixed to trees and fence posts. Seven protestors were later fined for 'disfiguring the landscape!' "It was difficult", said their lawyer of this final victory for amenity over politics, "to see how any countryside upon which had been inflicted the unnatural spectacle of a training school for the dealing of indiscriminate death could be disfigured by such small, sensible posters."

THE EVE OF WAR

Porth Neigwl was but one of a series of cases of land requisitioning opposed by nationalist opinion. As 1939 approached, a string of military camps were established on the west Wales coast, irrespective of protests. None came, however, from the C.P.R.W. which maintained its acquiescent stance in virtually all cases. The only exception was that of anglicised south
Pembrokeshire when, in the light of a threat to a designated amenity area, the Council shelved its alignment with State policy and used their hitherto subservient line - and their public humiliation in the Porth Neigwl affair - as a bargaining counter with the military. As we have seen, they gained some reward.

The National Museum of Wales too emerged from Porth Neigwl with some benefit. After the destruction of Penyberth House the Museum had been given permission to survey any sites earmarked for future military clearance. This hindered Fox in adding his voice to any protest for "The privilege which we have extracted from the Defence Departments is really of immense value to us"98. One examination of peasant crofts was carried out on a site at Trecwn in North Pembrokeshire destined to become the World's largest sea-mines depot. Although Fox noted the destruction of an area representing "the peasant culture... so significant for Welsh culture"99, and saw that this case was but one example of the advance of industrial and material values into rural life, he nonetheless seemed to believe that cultural heritage, somehow embodied in knowledge, was recoverable and that its permanence might be guarded by a museum.

Peate disagreed with this archaeological view of Welsh culture. He - like the arsonist D.J. Williams who noted Trecwn's anglicising effect on the locality - saw its dynamic foundation threatened by contemporary developments. The War Office's concession was "little solace to a nation whose rural amenities and traditional culture are ruthlessly assailed by such 'developments'"100. One survey he conducted for the Museum produced a report of markedly different tone101. The occasion was the War Office's requisitioning of the Epynt Mountain in mid Wales. This tract was but one of many taken over once war broke out. In May 1940 it was claimed that since 1938 the War Office had requisitioned 35,000 acres in Scotland, 56,000 acres in England, and 75,000 acres in Wales. But few cases roused such emotions as the requisitioning of 40,000 acres of Epynt, gentle and fertile agricultural land though over 1,000 feet high. On it there lived 80 families rooted in the area and in the Welsh cultural tradition. The dozen chapels, eight schools and the eisteddfod were vigorous institutions locally102, and agriculture was prosperous. Indeed, George Stapledon was moved to intervene on the farmers' behalf, testifying as to the quality of the land103. Nonetheless, the community was forcibly evicted from the hills and valley lands, grazing rights were lost for 280 farms, and over 58,000 sheep were sold so that the army might, as one officer was alleged to have said, "blast the place into a wilderness"104.

Plaid Cymru urged the residents to pursue their territorial claim and to stand their ground. Many, it was claimed, were willing to do so. Nevertheless it was a community resigned to its fate which
Iorwerth Peate visited in the last week of June 1940 with firing due to begin on July 1st. Although Peate found many determined to stay in their homes until the last possible moment, the area was eerily silent apart from the trundling carts, laden with possessions, which reminded him of Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. In one house, an old woman of 82 sat crying as she gazed out onto the hills that had been her family's home for generations.

Not only was the eviction of a rural community distressing, but the poignancy was heightened for Peate by an appreciation of the area's Welshness. During his travels of some 400 miles over the hills he met only 2 or 3 people who spoke no Welsh. By dispersing the population of Epynt, one of Breconshire's last strongholds of Welsh culture was destroyed and the cultural geography of Wales was altered. In retrospect, Plaid Cymru said of the range that

*Culturally, it anglicised and impoverished the valleys which ran into the mountain, and the upper Vale of Usk where its camp, a monument of ugliness, was built at Sennybridge. Linguistically, it has driven the border of Welsh-speaking Wales back ten miles towards Llanwryd, where the position is more than precarious, and whence another huge training area reaches out towards the Cardigan coast. When the War Office went to Epynt a part of Wales died* 105.

Welshness was in retreat as geographers had shown, but even were the area to be re-populated it would "take centuries again for them to root in the earth as had the society murdered in 1940"106. The eviction of a community anywhere would be painful enough, Peate felt, but in England a community might move and still live in an English society speaking their own language. In Wales, however, uprooting threatened Welsh language and culture. Each military incursion was "a deadly blow to a large part of Wales's Welshness"107, killing a part that could not be recreated. It is in this context that the post War situation should be considered.

**Wales at war**

Firstly, however, I wish to make brief mention of Wales's experience of War itself. Whilst the patriotic appeal to British nationalism received overwhelming support, wartime brought further challenges to Wales and elicited further dissent. The 'Wales Neutral' declaration of October 1938 noted "That the government's contempt for Wales's national rights, for the needs of the Welsh nation and her traditions and the safety and continuation of her life, make it impossible for any patriotic Welshman to co-operate with the government in war preparations without corrupting his
conscience. The sense of nationhood was seen to be endangered by the State's overwhelming conscription of resources - be it land, materials or people - for the struggle. Above all, military conscription was opposed, taking Welsh men, as the nationalists saw it, to fight in another nation's war. Even within the military, most men were dispersed amongst regiments in a dilution of group identity, and some undoubtedly experienced prejudice. The strong pacifist strain within Plaid Cymru was often expressed in military tribunals judging conscientious objections to war service. Many nationalists refused to fight on religious and political grounds. Whilst North Wales tribunals were considered lenient on the former ground, the latter received scant sympathy.

A campaign was also fought against the transference of women to work in munitions factories in England, but the influx of thousands of English evacuees into rural Wales was seen as the greatest threat. Saunders Lewis had noted the dangers in 1938 with 20,000 forced billets already allocated in Caernarfonshire alone. Plaid Cymru opposed the danger this represented to Welsh rural culture, particularly in view of the fact that South Wales - bombed during the war - was designated a neutral, that is 'safe', zone. Welsh children should, Plaid Cymru argued, have the first right to billets within Wales, with no English children being sent to 70% Welsh-speaking areas. Scurrilous comments made by English parents about the language, religion, education and mentality of the area in which they found their children only added to a growing sense of outrage. The Fabian Society noted the difficulties. English had, it reported, substituted Welsh in a number of rural schools and religious strains were apparent, particularly where Catholic Merseysiders were billeted in Nonconformist homes. The report noted the blind ignorance of Welsh cultural distinctness revealed in general designations and argued that "As matters now stand... irreversible mischief has been done" though no permanent damage to Welsh culture was likely.

WARTIME'S LEGACY

Post-war grievances, however, focussed on land, the territorial foundation of Welsh nationhood. The war ended with an estimated half a million acres, almost 10% of Wales's land, in military hands in holdings scattered throughout rural Wales (Fig.40). Many smaller areas were not included in that figure including some of the total of 27 military establishments occupying one-sixth of Meirionydd's area. The figures for England and Scotland were 3.8% and 3.5% respectively. Many accepted the need for requisitioning in time of war, but the military had decided that modern warfare demanded increased peacetime training. Also, the cost of purchase
500,940 ACRES

The land held by Service Departments, including that over which training rights only are exercised, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WALES</td>
<td>500,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>1,247,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTLAND</td>
<td>681,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. IRELAND</td>
<td>54,890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

—Mr. CLEMENT ATTLEE, Prime Minister, Labour Government, December 16th, 1946.

Figure 40. Plaid Cymru's map of requisitioned land
(from Havoc in Wales)
would in many cases be less than the cost of rehabilitating scarred acres. As a result, the increasingly secretive military announced its intention to retain permanently much of the requisitioned land, and it was at this time that resentment grew most fiercely in Wales.

Landscape, and by implication national pride, was one concern as Plaid Cymru made clear:

*One of the most evil consequences of permanent military conscription is the proposed desecration of the land of Wales on a scale which sickens the imagination of all who care for her. Not a county is to be immune. If the War Office has its way, the whole country will be afflicted with its cankerous growths. It proposes to ravage district upon district of the loveliest and most historic areas by weapons which many consider... obsolete, since the atomic bomb.*

Recreational land was also threatened. The loss of land near the Anglicised industrial valleys would have profound impacts: "The whole of industrial South Wales.. will be affected by the expulsion of the public from mountains which have so long contributed to their physical and spiritual health." Plaid Cymru also noted that 22,000 acres of Snowdonia were held but "One good reason for confidence that opposition to its retention will succeed is that it is much frequented by visitors from the English side of Offa's Dyke." But Plaid Cymru's cynicism was, perhaps, justified. Despite the C.P.R.W.'s new national awareness - "Not for many centuries has Wales shown herself so united in a common purpose", they claimed, as when details of the War Office's plans became known - it was Snowdonia's release for which they most actively campaigning.

J.D.K. Lloyd notified the War Office that "Apart from the inconvenience and loss to the farming community, it is strongly felt that the Snowdon area, which is probably the most popular area in Wales for visitors and tourists, should as soon as possible be released from all forms of restriction as to access". Prolonged bouts of firing and shell-infested hillsides severely restricted public access to the proposed national park (Fig.41). But it is clear that despite a much firmer line emerging on the rights of Wales - arising, perhaps, from Alwyn Lloyd's becoming Chairman in 1947, and the replacement of J.D.K. Lloyd as Secretary - the C.P.R.W. were wary of opposing the retention of land elsewhere for fear that Snowdonia's acreage subsequently became vital.

But there were profounder issues at stake. The military's vast land holdings were widely seen as the most serious threat to face modern Wales. The new threat confronted the very land on which Welsh society lived. Many of the anthropological and geographical themes again became apparent
The mountains West of the River Conway and those around Snowdon and Capel Curig have been taken over by the Army for the purpose of firing with live ammunition. Parts of this area are in use each day.

Roads and tracks leading to them are marked with Danger Notices, but fatal accidents have occurred to people entering the Danger Area when firing is taking place.

You should avoid walking in the Mountains as far as possible, but if you wish to do so, ask at the nearest Police Station where firing is taking place that day.

NEVER PICK UP OR DISTURB UNUSUAL OBJECTS LYING ON THE GROUND, but remember where they are and tell the Police.
in resistance to military demands. The territorial foundation to claims of Welsh nationhood was vigorously defended. Y Faner, a Welsh weekly paper, spoke of the despoliation of the land's sanctity and of the need to stress that "the land of our country is the land of the Welsh nation"\(^{121}\), part of the nation's capital and the foundation of its existence. Not only was the sheer scale of holdings a threat, but their geopolitical location. Plaid Cymru's criticism of the Epynt range makes clear their sense of its strategic position in Wales's cultural geography. A vast tract demanded in Central Wales not only threatened, as Iorwerth Peate noted, an area of great cultural vigour, but might also divide Wales into North and South denying the latter its tentative links with rural Wales and its heritage\(^{122}\) - links which the North-South road should have strengthened. The fear was of national extermination by the British State: "the London juggernaut proceeds its way undeflected, crushing out the life that remains in the Welsh nation"\(^{123}\). After a war ostensibly for the rights of small nations, it was ironic to see a post-war socialist government now threaten the life of one such small nation (Fig.42).

**SOCIALIST SURGERY**

"But what a BIG Knife, Mr. Shinwell!" "It's a sword, little woman: my second name is Damocles!"

Figure 42: A small nation's post-war fate (from Welsh Nationalist Vol.17 No.2)

Plaid Cymru's political response was clear. They saw no difficulty in the matter of land requisitioning; no need pragmatically to juggle various proposals as did the C.P.R.W. and the Welsh Parliamentary Party. The English government, Plaid Cymru argued, did not have the right
to use one acre of Welsh land for military ends. To the Welsh patriot, each group of hills was as sacred as the other: "Wales free, every inch of her, - that is the policy of Plaid Cymru." The appropriation of Welsh land by Whitehall bureaucrats had to be resisted and Welsh sovereignty over its own territory reaffirmed. This applied equally to the division of Wales by new railway regions enforced on nationalization, and to the lack of a Welsh National Parks Authority to control her finest lands.

The Preseli

This territorial sense characterised protests against the proposed requisitioning for a tank range of 16,000 acres of the Preseli Hills in North Pembrokeshire. Of the 204 farms on and around the mountain 105 were to be totally requisitioned whilst the other 99 were to lose part of their land. Half the village of Mynachlog Ddu, including the shop and primary school, would be within the range, as would 38 sites of archaeological interest. The historic Landsker line already divided Pembrokeshire into Welsh North and Anglicised South. The range threatened to compound the division and to institutionalize the divide. Invasion was a predominant theme. For nearly 2,000 years, argued one local councillor, the Saxons, Normans and Flemings had tried to conquer Preseli. They failed, but the proposed range would complete the conquest and the Twentieth Century would witness the intruders' final triumph.

But invasion, with its implications of alien incursion, threatened not only the territorial integrity of Wales and the basis of future autarchy, but also endangered the symbolic wellsprings of Welsh identity:

_The mountains and uplands which the War Office wishes to occupy permanently, were for centuries the inner fortress of Wales, the source of her spiritual and political strength. To this wild hinterland her people withdrew when attacked, until they were strong enough to recover their lost territory. What is now threatened is geographically the very heart of Wales, and to do violence to it endangers not her welfare only, but her very existence._

The hills and mountains were imbued with a special significance and conceived as part of the nation's birthright. The Preseli hills were particularly significant to the sense of national past. Fleure, Bowen and Fox had all highlighted the area's importance in the Neolithic age and its central role in Wales's history. On the Preseli's very lands were found relics of that history: "With its many cairns and tumuli, and its superb cromlech at Pentre Ifan, it is the epitome of social
continuity. It has associations with the Mabinogi, and to the Elizabethan seafarer, as to those of the Neolithic Age, it was a beacon and a symbol. From Preseli arose the initiators of the Rebecca toll-gates movement. The area was replete with historical significance for the Welsh nation, a testimony to its attachment to the Welsh ethnic identity.

Whilst the land had historic value, the continuity of this cultural wealth was also apparent in the ethnie itself, the very people of the hills as pictured in Plaid Cymru’s anti-military pamphlet Havoc in Wales (Fig.43). In the finest Welsh tradition, the Preseli had produced several professors, theological college principals, preachers and scholars. By the nineteenth century, the people of Preseli had come as near to the ideal of the gwerin as any Welsh community. In the mid twentieth century too they were pictured as an ideal community. As late as 1930, 80% of Mynachlog Ddu’s population attended chapel and 99% were Welsh-speaking. One writer, in the same vein as Stapledon and the geographers, juxtaposed the sophisticated cynics of the plains with the worldly and intuitive wisdom of those born and bred on the hills. The inhabitants of Preseli adhered to the things which the modern world did not recognise. A religious and devout people, the hill-folk had faith in the power of prayer, witnessed equally in the stone circles of the Ancient Britons (painted by the likes of Sutherland), as in the mass exodus over the hills to chapel on Sunday. The continuing importance of this peasantry to civilization in general, and to Welsh national character in particular, was evident. The Reverend E.T. Lewis, seeing Preseli as a treasure house not only of Wales’s but of Britain’s past, saw the gwerin’s struggle as one against “spoon-fed city populations and soap-box methods which have for their aim the extermination of all lovers of the countryside.” Every competent historian, he argued, would warn against allowing the peasantry to decay so that the State might search pursue material wealth. The Reverend Simon Jones added his vision of the hill folk’s contribution “We, as Welsh people, must learn what the mountain means to us. To us, the mountain is the bread of life, and is a holy sacrament. Our lives are woven into its essence. If we lose the mountains nothing will remain but ‘snobbery’ and ‘chip' shops.”

But this ‘gentle community’ of mountain folk, and consequently their value to civilization, was in danger. The gwerin of Preseli, like that of Epynt, might soon see their homes reduced to rubble. Y Cymro pictured one of Epynt’s folk under the heading “There’s No Place Like Home”, standing next to what was once his and his ancestors’ home (Fig.44). The heap of stones is surrounded by a belt of trees, planted for shelter by the man pictured, and a testament to the length of occupancy now brough to violent end. Sharing the front page are pictures of the gwerin of Preseli soon,
Figure 43. A peasant couple, from Plaid Cymru's *Havoc in Wales*
Does unman yn debyg i gartref...
perhaps, to share the same fate. Plaid Cymru, however, was convinced of their moral strength in resisting the War Office:

The last battles of this campaign will not be fought on the floor of the House of Commons but on the hearths of Prescelley, Clwyd and Mynydd Wysg.. The yeomen of Wales still have the power to defeat the militarists who would desecrate and destroy their homes. Though they have none of the mechanism of slaughter with which to defend their birthright, they have justice on their side. Their right is their might. Let the shell-pounded ruins of Epynt speak. The rubble of scores of farmsteads in its desolated valleys cry out 'Never Again'. We will not have the mark of this beast on more of our Welsh heritage. If those who farm the hills and valleys of Pembroke, Brecon and Denbigh, act with heroism when the challenge comes, they will find that they have not only repelled their aggressors, but that their courage has lit a light in Wales that will never be put out.136

Such evocative photographs (Fig.45) in Y Ddraig Goch were both laments, and a national call to arms.

The moral strength for opposition was drawn, in Preseli, not only from the people's will but from the history of their land and the mythologies of ethnic descent. Elsewhere in Wales too historical associations were mobilized in defence of territory. 28,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Tregaron in Central Wales was particularly evocative. Daniel Rowland fired the Methodist Revival from here, and on the square of Tregaron stood a statue to the memory of Henry Richard, a Welsh-speaking Nonconformist and pillar of the Peace Society who won the Merthyr Tydfil by-election of 1868. "Would it not", mourned Preseli defender the Reverend Titus Lewis, "be repugnant to see soldiers passing by Henry Richards's statue in Tregaron Square?"137 (Fig.46). Also within the range was Strata Florida abbey; the reputed burial place of Dafydd ap Gwilym, Wales's most famous medieval poet, "and the heart of a district rich in poetry and culture to this day"138. The Black Mountains range was imbued with Welsh mythology, and a Radnorshire range included a hill where the Welsh Prince Owain Glyndwr defeated the English in 1401. More recent resonances were also struck in Trawsfynydd where the existing 10,000 acre range was to be extended to 17,000. There the memory of the poet Hedd Wyn, killed in the first world war, was recalled and pressed into action. A protest meeting at Trawsfynydd witnessed remarkable agreement amongst the political parties on a day when the hillsides bore the slogan "Shinwell shall not have our land".
Figure 45. "The Smallholder", from Y Ddraig Goch
(appeared in Vol.22 No.8)
This symbolism - the particular traditions and individuals selectively appropriated from the national past - appealed to higher values; to a sense of spirituality, democracy and citizenship. In a remarkable piece of iconography, the Preseli hills were portrayed as the source of the stones of that romanticised symbol of permanence, Stonehenge; as the area from which came the Tudor monarch and his army; and as the source of the slates which roofed Westminster itself, the Mother of Parliaments. This was one of Fleure's 'founts of civilization' now in danger of being obliterated by a totalitarian State. As one protestor argued: "After Prescelly, let the mandarins select Stonehenge as their next project, to be immediately followed by a demolition squad at St. Paul's." Translated into personal experience, the strength of cultural independence infused the poet Waldo Williams's Preseli, written in 1946. The hills had fostered his independence of mind, and this spirit made Wales "brotherhood's womb". The wellspring was threatened though, and Williams urged "To the wall! We must keep our well clear of this beast's dirt".

It is not surprising, therefore, that the protest should be shaped by these higher and spiritual concerns and, indeed, that the campaign should be led by religious figures. The Preseli Defence Committee was chaired by the Reverend Matthias Davies with strong contributions from Reverends R. Parri Roberts and Joseph James. As Janet Davies argues, "The clerical nature of the leadership went far to determine the character of the campaign." In particular, the campaign became one against - in a characteristically Biblical reference - the Ahab of militarism itself: "At root, our battle is one against war, and we should connect all the proposed military camps with the question of Disarmament." Gwynfor Evans, Plaid Cymru's new President, believed it was significant that so soon after a war to end militarism and with enemies underfoot, Wales should now feel the effects of militarism more than ever. R. Parri Roberts did not see the camps as the product of England's hatred of Wales but rather as the wishes of those whom Saunders Lewis had identified as the government's masters - the money-lenders and arms manufacturers. The land of religion was, according to Roberts, being used to prepare for another war.

Throughout 1946-7, the New Wales Union promoted a series of regional conferences, and Plaid Cymru staged symbolic protest meetings at sites of national mythology. A national conference in Llandrindod focussed on the undoubted arrogance and secrecy of the military in its dealings with Wales. Others saw the international political scene as the context of the War Office's actions. Some in Plaid Cymru, including the novelist Kate Roberts, saw requisitioning as a desperate policy to maintain imperial prestige; what was lost without might be regained within. The veteran Communist T.E. Nicholas, however, felt that the military preparadness signalled Labour's emnity to the Communist world.
"Apostle of peace! We'll give 'em "peace," eh, General?"

Gyda dioch i'r "Welsh Nationalist"

Figure 46. "Tregaron 1947", from Y Ddraig Goch
(appeared in Vol.21 No.11)
Despite reductions in the total acreage demanded to approximately 150,000 acres, Wales still sacrificed a greater proportion of her lands than England and Scotland; 3.2 and 0.5 percent respectively. By the end of the year, that percentage had dropped again but the War Office was still demanding 100,000 acres. After a vigorous campaign, the Preseli mountains were reprieved in November 1947. But this merely transferred military eyes to Tregaron and Trawsfynydd where acreages were increased. This partly had the effect of pitting one area against another, with Tregaron in particular - apparently part of the "vast desolate bogland of Mid Wales" - most vulnerable. One defender of Preseli - in a remarkable, if brutal, evocation of the way in which Welshness was located in the hills and rural areas - even urged the War Office to look to the South Wales valleys and the coalfields "which were so full of aliens and so dead"148.

CONCLUSION

But on the whole, national unity survived this infighting, with calls from Plaid Cymru that the expulsion of the military should signal the founding of a new Welsh civilization and a sound reorganisation of economic, social and cultural life149. The attainment of effective sovereignty over Welsh land was central to this call. The Tregaron proposal was abandoned late in 1948 after a campaign in which E.G. Bowen (in his capacity as Cardiganshire C.P.R.W. Chairman) had been involved150, and in August 1949, the proposed increase for Trawsfynydd was halved. The campaigns revealed the resonance of landscapes in Welsh political symbolism, and the sense of the remoter rural areas - with their idealised gwerin working the soil - as wellsprings of national identity. Nevertheless, the War Office had still retained some 90,000 acres of Welsh land and a score of smaller camps and aerodromes. Both Iorwerth Peate's Epynt and the C.P.R.W.'s Castell Martin remained in military hands. One military establishment, however, had been abandoned shortly after its opening. Persistent sea mists proved to be an unsurmountable problem causing the closure of the Porth Neigwl aerodrome!

NOTES AND REFERENCES

5. C.E.M. Joad (1939) *The Book of Joad* London: Faber and Faber, p.222
6. Ibid.
8. See C.P.R.W. 16/4 War Office Recruiting
11. Ibid, and *Western Mail* "Arms Factories in S. Wales to Cost £8,000,000" 4/3/38
13. J.S. Barnes, Admiralty - Secretary, C.P.R.W. 20/1/37, C.P.R.W. 4/12
15. T. Alwyn Lloyd - J.D.K. Lloyd 17/7/36, C.P.R.W. 4/12
16. "It is this part particularly which seems to us to be the negation of town and country planning" T. Alwyn Lloyd - H.G. Griffin 5/11/36, C.P.R.E. BIX 347
18. See C.P.R.W. 4/14i and 4/14ii Defence Ministries and the Pembroke Coast
19. Lord Merthyr - J.D.K. Lloyd 7/2/38, C.P.R.W. 4/14i
20. T. Alwyn Lloyd - J.D.K. Lloyd 8/2/38, C.P.R.W. 4/14i
21. The military, for instance, reassured naturalists that their experience of bombing ranges suggested that birds found them relative sanctuaries, given the absence of humans:
   "Experience at other ranges... shows that birds rapidly become accustomed to the noise of practice and, owing to the exclusion of the public, the danger-areas often become increasingly frequented by wild birds" P.J. Oldfield, Private Secretary, Air Ministry - Secretary, C.P.R.W. 19/11/36, C.P.R.W. 4/12
23. Ibid.
24. Iorwerth Peate (1957) "Awyrblandy Sain Tathan" *Canu Chwarter Canrif* Denbigh: Gwasg Gee, p.67
25. Iorwerth Peate - Clough Williams-Ellis 31/5/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
26. Ibid.
27. Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 6/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
28. **Y Ddraig Goch** "Gwneud Cymru yn Ffatri Arfau, ar gyfer rhyfeloedd Lloegr" Vol.9 No.7, 1935, p.1
29. V.L. Gresford - Secretary, C.P.R.W. 18/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
30. Ibid.
31. Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 20/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
32. Iorwerth Peate (1941) **Y Traddodiad Heddwch yng Nghymru Denbigh**: Gwasg Gee
33. Peate was expelled from the National Museum during World War Two for his pacifist beliefs after being victimised by Lord Plymouth, one of the governors. He was re-instated after a vigorous intervention on his behalf by Aneurin Bevan.
34. Dafydd Jenkins (1937) *Tân yn Llŷn* Aberystwyth: Gwasg Aberystwyth
35. D.J. Williams (1936) "The Bombing School - Fishguard and Goodwick Council's Attitude" Western Telegraph 21/5/36
36. Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 20/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
37. Ibid.
38. Enclosed with Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 27/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
39. Ibid. p.1
40. Ibid.
41. Fleure had recently been to Llŷn on holiday and wrote to Peate "Llŷn is delightful + we stayed with a man + wife who illustrated in their persons the fine flower of the peasant culture of rural Wales. Mr Jones is a joiner (DOLFOR, ABERDARON) and one gathers a good deal of a craftsman. he might quite probably be of use to your museum in getting things". H.J. Fleure - Iorwerth Peate 15/4/31, I.C. Peate Collection Llythrau H.J. Fleure, N.L.W.
42. Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 27/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19. p.3
43. Clough Williams-Ellis - Philip Sassoon 6/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
44. J.D.K. Lloyd - Eleanor Yale 11/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
45. Secretary, C.P.R.W. - Private Secretary, Secretary of State for Air 21/6/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
46. J.D.K. Lloyd - Patrick Abercrombie 11/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
47. J.D.K. Lloyd - Eleanor Yale 11/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
48. J.D.K. Lloyd - Iorwerth Peate 31/7/35, C.P.R.W. 9/19
50. Iorwerth Peate later in part blamed Clement Davies's disastrous C.P.R.W. radio appeal on this expression of his insensitivity to Welsh culture
51. D. Trevor Williams suggested that the 10% decrease in the Welsh language in Meirionydd between 1931-51 was partly due to the services' training areas at Trawsfynydd and

52. Liverpool Daily Post "Traffic in the Air" 24/6/39

53. Dr. G. Arbour Stephens (1930) "Rhaid i Gymru gael Aeroplens" Y Ford Gron Vol.1 No.1, p.5

54. Patrick Abercrombie, for instance, considered the question of city centre helicopter sites; (1945, originally published 1933) Town and Country Planning Oxford: Oxford University Press

55. See C.P.R.W. 104 Sky Signs


57. Ibid.

58. Y Ddraig Goch Vol.12 No.10, 1938

59. J.D.K. Lloyd - Patrick Abercrombie 20/3/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19. Abercrombie was appointed architectural consultant to the Air Ministry in 1937.

60. Clough Williams-Ellis (1937) "The Welsh Bombing School - An Architect's Point of View" Manchester Guardian 3/2/37. See also Birmingham Post 26/5/37 "The Pwllheli Bombing School Praised - 'Clean, Straightforward Planning'", a report of Williams-Ellis's address to the C.P.R.W. AGM at Llandudno: "The school is an object lesson in clean, straightforward planning, and I wish the speculative builders of Kinmel Bay would have a look at it instead of peppered their horrors all over". Incidentally, the Llŷn Rural District Council complained in 1937 that the aerodrome buildings were unsightly!

61. J.D.K. Lloyd - Deputy Director of Works and Buildings 20/3/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19


63. Ibid. p.915

64. Ibid.

65. Saunders Lewis (1936) "Paham y Gwrthwynebwn yr Ysgol Fomio?" Y Ddraig Goch Vol.10 No.3, pp.6-7

66. Ibid. p.6

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid. pp.6-7

69. Ibid. p.7

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid. p.6
72. The letter appears in the *Western Mail* 24/3/36 under the headings "Hellsmouth Bombing School - Opposition Falsely Based - Pilgrims' Way Untouched".

73. Ibid.

74. Dafydd Jenkins *Tan yn Llyn*

75. T. Alwyn Lloyd - J.D.K. Lloyd 1/4/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

76. C.P.R.W. *Annual Report* 1935 p.22

77. Saunders Lewis - J.D.K. Lloyd 17/5/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

78. Saunders Lewis - J.D.K. Lloyd 24/5/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

79. Davies said "People like this lead a very miserable existence; they do not seem to have a moment's happiness as they are always nursing imaginary grievances. They always attribute the worst motives to their fellow men..." Clement Davies - J.D.K. Lloyd 22/5/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

80. T. Alwyn Lloyd - J.D.K. Lloyd 24/6/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

81. Walter Dowding - Hon. Secretary, C.P.R.W. 26/5/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. J.D.K. Lloyd - Walter Dowding 28/5/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

86. Iorwerth Peate - J.D.K. Lloyd 19/6/36, C.P.R.W. 9/19

87. Ibid.

88. *Manchester Guardian* 4/9/36 "Lleyn Bombing School - Old Farmhouse Demolished"

89. Iorwerth Peate (1944) *The Welsh House: A Study in Folk Culture* Liverpool: Hugh Evans & Son/Brython Press; p.6

90. Bedwyr Lewis Jones (1972) *R. Williams Parry* Cardiff: University of Wales Press

91. Dafydd Jenkins *Tan yn Llyn* p.122

92. Ibid, p.130

93. Ibid, p.135

94. Ibid, pp.139-40

95. Ibid, p.139


97. Writing for details of a proposed anti-aircraft camp at Aberporth in Cardiganshire, for instance, J.D.K. Lloyd stressed that "the War Office may rest assured, in view of our attitude on other questions concerned with Wales, that this Council in no way desires to be obstructive" J.D.K. Lloyd - Secretary, War Office 21/4/39, C.P.R.W. 3/4
98. Cyril Fox - J.D.K. Lloyd 4/5/37, C.P.R.W. 4/14i
100. Iorwerth Peate The Welsh House p.7
101. Iorwerth Peate (1941) "Mynydd Epynt" Y Llenor Vol.20 No.4, pp.183-8
102. Testimony to the sense of community and permanence is a booklet produced in later years by local historian Ronald Davies (1971) entitled Epynt Without People
104. J.E. Jones (1940) "Y Frwydr dros Fynydd Epynt" Y Ddraig Goch Vol.14 No.5, pp.1&2; p.1
105. Welsh Nationalist Party (1947) Havoc in Wales: The War Office Demands Cardiff: Priory Press (the pamphlet was written by Gwynfor Evans)
106. Peate "Mynydd Epynt" p.185
107. Ibid. p.188
109. Caroline Moorhead (1987) Troublesome People: Enemies of War 1916-1986 London: Hamish Hamilton. Leniency, as J.E. Jones argues, depended as much on individual judges and their sympathies or prejudices, as on their legal interpretations. Post-war nationalist President Gwynfor Evans, and Plaid Cymru's principal cartoonist the young architect Dewi Prys Thomas were both made exempt on religious grounds.
110. Y Ddraig Goch Vol.12 No.10
112. Ibid. p.234
113. Welsh Nationalist Party Havoc in Wales
115. Y Ddraig Goch Vol.21 No.1, 1947
116. Welsh Nationalist Party Havoc in Wales p.3
117. Ibid. p.11
118. Ibid. p.5
119. C.P.R.W. (1947) News and Report - June 1947 London: C.P.R.W.; p.7. The Report listed acreages held and noted that "These fantastically high amounts are not stretches of desolate country where people seldom go: they are in the main great tracts of Wales of unparalleled beauty, redolent of the very essence of Welsh rural life and wild nature, and the happy
hunting grounds of archaeologist, geologist, naturalist, and seeker of quiet recreation alike* p.8. The Report also attempted to slam the proverbial stable door shut after the horse had well and truly bolted by protesting vigorously about the loss of cliff-top land to the Aberporth anti-aircraft camp (see note 93).

120. J.D.K. Lloyd - Chief Land Agent, War Office 19/1/46, C.P.R.W. 9/25b
121. Baner ac Amserau Cymru (Y Faner) 18/12/46 “Gwerth Cymru”; and “Llygaid y Swyddfa Ryfel ar Breselau - Bro'r Mabinogion a Seintwar Hen Dduwiau”

122. Welsh Nationalist Party Havoc in Wales
123. Welsh Nationalist “Welsh Land Struggle” Vol.16 No.7, 1947, pp.1&2; p.1
124. Y Ddraig Goch Vol.21 No.5, 1947, p.2
125. West Wales Guardian 7/2/47 “Finest Scenery in the World”
126. Western Telegraph 28/11/46 “Would Become Barrack Town”
127. Welsh Nationalist Party Havoc in Wales pp.3-4
128. Janet Davies “Fight for Preseli” p.3
129. Cardigan and Tivy Side Advertiser 6/12/46 “Precelly Hills as Firing Range”. This report noted the support of Lord Merthyr who, as we have see, also vigorously opposed the Castell Martin range. His letter to J.D.K. Lloyd (note 19) however argued that “...the best line of defence would be to suggest an alternative... The alternative which I suggest in this particular case is Precelly Mountains”

130. Janet Davies “Fight for Preseli”
131. Ibid.
132. “They Believe in Prayer (By Un o Foel Cwm Cerwyn)” Unattributed and undated cutting in Minutes, Accounts, Press Cuttings 1946-51, Preseli Defence Fund N.L.W. MS20,052E
133. Narbeth News 12/12/46 “O Ben Preseli” (Y Crwydryn)
134. E.T. Lewis “Open Letter to Would-be Sellers of the Precellies” Western Telegraph 26/12/46
135. Baner ac Amserau Cymru 5/2/47 “Gwrthsefyll Cynlluniau Estron”
137. Baner ac Amserau Cymru 3/12/47 “Y Swyddfa Ryfel am 105,000 o Aceri o’n Tir”
138. Welsh Nationalist Vol.17 No.1, 1948
139. Cardigan and Tivy Side Advertiser 6/12/46 “Precelly Hills as Firing Range”
140. E.T. Lewis “Westminster of the Early Ages” 22/11/46 Unattributed cutting in Preseli Defence Fund N.L.W. MS20,052E
141. This is the poet’s own translation of Preseli from James Nicholas (1975) Waldo Williams Cardiff: University of Wales Press:
Wall of my boyhood, Moel Drigarn, Carn Gyfrwy, Tal Mynydd,
In my mind's independence ever at my back;
And my floor, from Witwg to Wern and to the smithy
Where from an essence older than iron, the sparks were struck.

And on the farmyards, on the hearths of the people
Wedded to wind and rain and mist and heathery livrocky land,
They wrestle with the earth and the sky, and they beat them,
And they toss the sun to their children as still they bend.

For me a memory and a symbol - that slope with reaping party
With their neighbours' oats falling four-swathed to their blades.
The act they took for fun at a run, and straightening their bodies,
Flung one four-voiced giant laugh to the sun.

So my Wales shall be brotherhood's womb, her destiny she will dare it.
The sick world's balm shall be brotherhood alone.
It is the pearl pledged by time to eternity
To be the pilgrim's hope in this little crooked lane.

And this was my window - these harvestings and sheep shearings.
I glimpsed the order of a kingly court.
Hark! A roar and a ravage through a windowless forest.
To the wall! We must keep the well clear of this beast's dirt.

142. See Preseli Defence Fund N.L.W. MS20,052E. The group collected a thousand pounds
over 20 months, and briefed a barrister - Moelwyn Hughes K.C. - to appear on their behalf
at any public inquiry.
143. Janet Davies "Fight for Preseli"
144. R. Parri Roberts "Daear Gysegredig Cymru - Sodom a Gomora Rhyfel?" Baner ac Amserau
Cymru Undated cutting in Preseli Defence Fund N.L.W. MS20,052E
145. Western Telegraph 30/1/47 "Military Would Bring Alien Civilisation"
146. R. Parri Roberts "Cymru - Gwersyll Milwrol Lloegr" Baner ac Amserau Cymru 25/12/46
147. Janet Davies "Fight for Preseli". One correspondent named Mab y Bryniau (Son of the Hills) in the Western Telegraph 12/12/46 wanted to "Ask Russians to Take Welsh Case to U.N.O."

148. Western Telegraph 30/1/47 "Military Would Bring Alien Civilisation"

149. Welsh Nationalist "War Office Land Seizure" Vol.17 No.4, 1948, pp.1&4

150. See C.P.R.W. 47/10 Cardiganshire Committee
CHAPTER SIX
THE BATTLE OF BUTLINS:
NATIONALISM AND THE NORTH WALES HOLIDAY INDUSTRY

This chapter considers aspects of Wales's role in the holiday trades. For amenity groups, the growth in recreation brought new threats, whilst the holiday trades were seen as a challenge to tradition by many in the Welsh community. The themes of landscape, of tradition, and of nationhood again collide. The conflict was intensified in 1938 with the extension of holidays with pay to 30 rather than 15 million of the working population. Perceptions of this influx, and attempts to regulate it, form the subject of this chapter. Our perspective on the debate is provided by the tale of a proposed holiday camp on the Llyn Peninsula, originally built for military use but transferred to the entrepreneur Billy Butlin for post-war mass leisure. Whilst the retention of military land was controversial elsewhere in Wales, ironically it was the disposal of a military building which here caused controversy.

CHAOS AT THE COAST

The question of recreation is closely tied to that of coastal planning, for the popularisation of the holiday habit after the Great War instigated many changes in the landscape. The peopling of the countryside brought its own challenges as we have seen, but the coastline changed perhaps more dramatically as the democratisation of holiday opportunities posed new challenges to the scenic and social status quo. The North Wales coast was under particular pressure by virtue of its proximity to the industrial conurbations of North West England. In 1937, for instance, one North Wales resident claimed in a letter to the Ministry of Health that "In recent years 'squatter' camps of huge dimensions have sprung up along this Coast until.. there are at least fifty thousand men, women and children 'squatting' along the main road within a coast line of two miles." The correspondent, an established camp proprietor, objected to "these odiferous and insanitary encampments next to our premises.. Their total sanitary arrangements appear to be holes in the ground or buckets and no provision for the disposal of slops." The pattern was repeated as many enterprising individuals saw the pressures on the coast as a business opportunity. In 1938, a resident of Abersoch complained to Clough Williams-Ellis about a once-quiet beach now bustling after a farmer opened a field to campers the previous summer. But Williams-Ellis's response revealed a socialist concern to understand the popular appeal of recreation: "The site is an admirable one for camping and granted proper sanitation and control, I am personally well on the side of the campers."
concern for control is pertinent, for his own Portmeirion was intended to show how control could indeed render leisure and the countryside more compatible.

Legislative control was so slow in coming that some local authorities promoted private Bills to achieve amenity protection. When a census in August 1934 had listed 2340 'casual' tents and caravans in the district, the Rhyl Urban District Council promoted a Bill allowing them to prohibit the use of land for camping unless controlled by recognised bodies. Moral approbation was strong, with the unruly campers' behaviour under scrutiny. But fears that the Bill merely drove the problem elsewhere prompted the Public Health Act of 1936, granting similar powers to all local authorities. As we have seen, however, the laws were insufficient and widely flouted.

Whilst seasonal campers increased in numbers, many others built for themselves shelters and shacks. The curious, makeshift world of 'plotland' development was, in part, a response to the rigours of the Great War and a subsequent general dissatisfaction with the quiet of suburban or the rage of urban living. But for the most part the plotlands were an individualistic and working-class response to the open-air habit. Makeshift dwellings, based on converted railway carriages, tramcars and the like, offered a form of cheap, independent accommodation. But independence for some signified visual and social disorder for others. In several ways, the plotlands "epitomized brashness and disorder, in sharp contrast to established standards of integration and order". Wesley Dougill, writing in 1935, foresaw continuous sprawl and urbanisation occurring in certain coastal areas with North Wales under particular threat. By the 1940s, the geographer J.A. Steers - conducted his survey of the British coast for the Ministry of Town and Country Planning - noted, "the ugly and misplaced huts and shacks that sprang up between the two world wars.. In North Wales travellers along the Holyhead railway will be familiar with the extensive and unsightly spread of shacks..".

What little order that arose out of this chaos did so from land speculation. The Kinmel Bay area near Rhyl was developed as a 'garden city', appealing to the disaffected urban dweller. It offered self-sufficiency on adjacent smallholdings but its 'hard sell' could not hide the reality of sporadic development (Fig.47). There was no sense of planning, and so there developed a 'pepper pot' scattering of buildings over vast acreages of flat, coastal land. Neither architecture nor layouts bore relation to tradition or site.

These developments questioned the very survival of the Welsh coastline in any kind of 'natural' state. By 1939, the C.P.R.W. were sufficiently concerned to initiate a survey of coastal holiday
THE MARVELLOUS GROWTH OF KINMEL BAY
THE GARDEN CITY OF THE WELSH RIVIERA

IF YOU VISITED KINMEL BAY LAST YEAR, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS?
COME AND LIVE BY THE SEA

WHY NOT JOIN THIS HAPPY & CONTENTED COMMUNITY?
LEAVE THE GRIMY CITY AND LIVE BY THE SEA

WHEN YOU ARE TIRED OF SEEKING YOUR IDEAL HOME ELSEWHERE, COME TO KINMEL BAY. YOU WILL FIND IT

THERE ARE MORE PLACES OF INTEREST WITHIN AN HOUR'S DRIVE OF KINMEL BAY THAN ANYWHERE IN BRITAIN

DO YOU KNOW A MAN AND HIS FAMILY CAN EARN A COMFORTABLE LIVING OF AT LEAST £500 A YEAR ON OUR LITTLE ONE ACRE FARMS ON THE AGRICULTURAL SECTION OF KINMEL BAY?
See our special booklet on One Acre Farms

NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS. KINMEL BAY IS SUCCEEDING. COME AND SWELL THE WONDERFUL GROWTH AND REAP THE BENEFIT OF YOUR ENTERPRISE

See our special booklet on One Acre Farms

Figure 47. Kinmel Bay promotional poster
(from 'Kinmel Bay Land Co.' National Library of Wales (main catalogue))
uses 14 which provided the first thorough picture of despoliation. Anglesey was reportedly in danger of being ruined, and the Meirionydd coast was "being gradually disfigured by haphazardly planned bungalows."15. The Llyn Peninsula suffered "Masses of people in tents and caravans all the summer.. Whole coast-line of Lleyn in danger from sporadic bungalow development: bungalows dotted all over the place, e.g. in the sand dunes at Nevin etc."16. The survey revealed a number of established holiday camps, many of them unsightly and ill-regulated. Significantly, however, those organised by philanthropic and voluntary groups were viewed in a better light than commercial ones. Both customers and aesthetics achieved better standards of order. In recognising this, the survey carried the germ of a solution to the mounting pressures on the coast.

**Holiday camps**

Legislative control developed slowly in the 1930s, but architecture and design offered a solution. This was facilitated by the evolution of the purpose-built holiday camp, a grouping of permanent structures subject to central control and management17. Its origin lay in the tented villages and chalet camps of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many run by families or by organisations like trades unions. But the mass leisure age of the 1930s saw the rise of the large-scale commercial holiday camp. A growing professional interest in the design and layout of these camps was reflected in articles and debates in professional journals18.

On investigating rumours in 1938 about a large, commercial holiday camp to be built at Prestatyn, the C.P.R.W. - claiming to be "the last body in the world to wish to curtail any facilities for holidays for poor people in our large cities"19 - welcomed its high standard of design and lay-out20. The camp was to be a model of its type, and a clean concrete reflection of that functionalist architecture that was fittingly adorning the coasts of England. Its architect claimed that the entire conception, ranging from layout to curtains, had been subject to stringent artistic control. In his opinion "There is abundant evidence that people of all classes in this country react to artistic surroundings, and therefore as much consideration and care have been devoted to the design of the Prestatyn Holiday Camp as have been applied to some.. costly and important buildings"21. The camp, once built, provided a level of facilities and an innovative modern design largely unseen in North Wales (Fig.48). The gleaming white concrete of modernist dance halls, observation towers and swimming pools spoke of an optimistic age of mass leisure and health.

**Butlins**

The foremost name in the British holiday camps industry, however, was Butlins22. Billy Butlin...
Figure 48. Opening ceremonies at the Prestatyn Holiday Camp, 1939
(from Liverpool Daily Post (Welsh edition) 24/6/39)
opened his first camp of 200 chalets at Skegness in Easter 1936 and his brand of organised
tertainment was an immediate success. Clacton hesitantly welcomed Butlin, with murmurings
of moral disapproval and fears about landscape despoliation. But Butlin proved himself an adept
publicist and politician, his promises of prosperity defusing opposition and ensuring his meteoric
success. But war intervened in his plans as his camps were requisitioned. Butlin himself became
involved in building camps for military use, and was asked by the Admiralty to build a camp on
the south coast of England. This plan was abandoned when the French coast fell to the Germans
and fear of invasion was at its highest. Safer military sites had be found away from the south of
England.

BUTLIN COMES TO WALES

Butlin had, in fact, been negotiating for a site in North Wales in 1938. It was on the southern
cost of the Llŷn Peninsula, some four miles east of Pwllheli and 14 miles from the Penyberth
aerodrome site. The proposed site was composed of level agricultural land, fronting a shingle
beach in the lee of the Penychain headland. It was adjacent to the railway lines from both mid and
north Wales, and it had in fact been earmarked in the C.P.R.W.'s survey as a potential site for an
organised camp.

Butlin's hopes of developing the site seemed doomed when war broke out, but it was this site, and
one in Ayr, that he brought to the Admiralty's attention as possible replacements for the south
cost camp. He negotiated a buy-back policy which would allow him to regain the camps at a
proportion of the original cost of building, thus ensuring him a post-war head start on
competitors. As Butlin's biographer succinctly put it "Bill Butlin wanted to help the country, and
it so happened that the assistance he gave in camp-building eventually rebounded in his own
favour"23.

Under wartime regulations, the Admiralty needed no planning permission to build 'H.M.S.
Glendower' and work began immediately after only minimal talks with the Rural District Council.
Such secrecy characterised most military requisitionings, but in wartime the demands of security
were intense. Initial building work was completed by January 1941, establishing a built area
challenging Pwllheli in terms of scale (Fig.49), and only then - with assurances of support by
eager local councils - did Butlin reveal his plans and ask formal permission for the buildings' future
use.
Figure 49. Butlin's Penychain holiday camp
(from Ward & Hardy Goodnight Campers)
The planning response

Whilst the Llŷn R.D.C. welcomed the application, the County Council’s Joint Planning Committee took a more strategic view of the affair. Both the county’s eminent planning consultant Patrick Abercrombie, and his assistant Clough Williams-Ellis were indignant. Abercrombie had completed his Regional Plan for North Wales in 1936 in which he deemed that the relevant stretch of coast should be part of a coastal reserve. The whole of the Llŷn Peninsula should in fact, he argued, be designated a special landscape zone for it was "one of the choicest scenic areas in the British Isles". But the rational processes of zoning and of town and country planning had been undermined by Butlin and a government department acting in concert. The agreement between the two parties - something Iorwerth Peate cynically labelled "a new development in 'democratic' government" - was to feature prominently in the subsequent debate, with questions asked in the House of Commons. One C.P.R.W. official claimed that the camp’s history "reflects little credit on those concerned with the custody and management of public monies."

In July 1941, the discovery that the camp was being doubled in size to meet fresh requirements prompted a caustic letter from Abercrombie to the Admiralty:

You will I am sure... feel the surprise which we felt when we found, on visiting the site, that again Mr. Butlin has been guilty of embarking on a... scheme of building without consulting the planning authorities concerned. He professed the utmost regret for having done this in the first instance, but we now find that he has already begun the duplicate camp on the sea side of the railway, again without consulting the planning authority. Presumably he will ask for a permit.

Professional pride had been offended, and the 'scientific' procedures of planning neglected.

The argument as to whether Butlin would be allowed to take control of the camp centered on whether he could legally be granted a retrospective building permit or whether the buildings would, on transfer, be deemed illegal and subject to demolition. The legal position was, however, confused and Abercrombie informally consulted both George Pepler of the Ministry of Health, and Lord Justice Scott, an appeal judge later responsible for the Report on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas. The advice was that permission could not, as Butlin claimed, be deemed to have been granted by default, but there were precedents of permits having been retrospectively granted.
Butlin was also, as H.G. Griffin noted, working for the Ministry of Supply "and is obviously getting himself well in with all the important Departments"\textsuperscript{30}. Abercrombie decided to press for a voluntary agreement with Butlin - a decision reflecting both the legal uncertainty, and the uneasy state of British planning. As he told Clough Williams-Ellis "I don't see the point of scoring off [Butlin] at the moment and yet running the risk of losing everything ourselves at a later date"\textsuperscript{31}. It was in this spirit that Clough Williams-Ellis met Butlin in October 1941, armed with an 11 point memorandum demanding concessions conceived to ameliorate the camp's aesthetic impact\textsuperscript{32}. Butlin gladly accepted these conditions.

**Strategic planning**

It is important to understand the context within which this agreement, tacitly approving the camp's existence, took place. 1930s debates had focussed on the design advantages of holiday camps. Reconstruction studies during the Second World War sustained this debate, with the camps' role in reconciling mass holiday provision with scenic preservation assuming great importance. A Nuffield College report foresaw a post-war holiday boom and called for the conversion of wartime camps like Penychain\textsuperscript{33}. The Scott Report - its preparation used by Abercrombie and Williams-Ellis to delay deciding the camp's fate - eventually viewed "with favour... the further provision of... commercial holiday camps"\textsuperscript{34}. Similarly, Steers's coastal survey, then in preparation, placed Penychain in a British context, arguing that the coast be regarded as an unit for the purposes of nationally planning its proper use:

\begin{quote}
Clearly there must be improved accommodation for visitors, and often in places where at present there is little or none... But what body, other than a national body can advise judiciously on the location of these buildings both as to situation and site? Only such an organization can visualize the whole...\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

Whilst arguing that the State would not wish to ride roughshod over local interests, Steers nonetheless felt that it should have 'effective powers' to take 'decisive action'. Herbert Morrisson, the Minister of Town and Country Planning, called for a partnership between local and national authorities. But he stressed the need to plan effectively: "We must show the green light as well as the red to the pent-up demand for holiday accommodation and facilities"\textsuperscript{36}.

Steers's survey revealed that Wales enjoyed a higher proportion of unspoilt coastline than England, with significant parts of exceptional quality (Fig.50). This made the issue of guiding development
Figure 50. Steers's survey of the Welsh coastline (other than in the south east, the darker the coast, the higher the scenic quality)
(from Geographical Journal Vol.104)
all the more important. The role of the holiday camp in this was clear. The architect William Holford argued that well-designed and landscaped holiday camps should be allowed in certain areas, and Patrick Abercrombie's preface to Steers's The Coastline of England and Wales noted that the planner had "no fear whatever of increased building on the coast, provided it makes use of the knowledge accumulated in this book and displays a proper sense of landscape design and compact siting. There is an opening for several new seaside towns and many coastal villages and holiday camps." In Portmeirion, he added, Clough Williams-Ellis had shown how to produce a coastal town of imaginative beauty and colour.

Given these considerations, John Dower - an influential member of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning - found few difficulties with the Penychain camp, barring its proposed accommodation of 5,000 campers, which would "inevitably bring far-reaching dislocation to a sparsely populated rural area." But nonetheless he told H.G. Griffin that "In view of 'Holidays with Pay' we shall have to find accommodation for millions of extra sea-side holiday-makers (almost double the pre-war numbers), + this seems... to be a quite suitable place for a useful contribution in holiday camp form. The buildings are inconspicuously sited + well back from the coast-line." Dower's own report on national parks, published in 1945, listed the Llŷn coast only as an amenity area; in the 'third division' of areas worthy of designation.

In strategic terms, and according to the tenets of scientific planning, both Abercrombie and Williams-Ellis were disposed to accept the camp. They had lessened its visual impact, and saw that it offered a valuable post-war resource for the State's policy effort. As Williams-Ellis put it "Wales will quite properly be expected to provide its quota of [holiday camps] - certainly not less than other regions." The Penychain camp might thus be most fruitfully used for the purpose for which it was originally designed. Abercrombie agreed, noting that Butlin's camps were a natural and suitable form of concentration. But crucially, he had also learnt that "Steers who has been surveying the whole coast agrees that Penychain would be about the right position for an increased sea-coast development in order to keep it down on the Lleyn Peninsular (sic)." In terms of a national (British) plan, this somewhat unremarkable stretch of beach was considered best sacrificed in order to preserve finer scenery elsewhere in Britain. The Llŷn Rural District Council had already granted permission for the camp by 20 votes to 4, and in February 1944 the County Council gave its blessing by the narrower margin of 30 votes to 25.

The County consultants' decision to promote the strategic argument at the expense of local concern was deeply unpopular in several quarters, including the C.P.R.W.. Williams-Ellis's sister in law,
Chair of the Caernarfonshire C.P.R.W., felt that Council members and "all who are amenity minded will I think be both uneasy & disheartened to read of the Chairman of the C.P.R.W. picking up Butlin as a sort of Humpty Dumpty (who has fallen off a wall of planning in his want of vision) & setting him up on it again"\(^45\). A clear conflict was emerging between those advocating planning in a national, strategic spirit, and those adhering to the values of scenic and social order which the C.P.R.W. had earlier represented. In part, this reflected an assertion of localism in the Council's affairs.

AMENITY OPPOSITION

When news of the proposed holiday camp filtered into the public domain it was met with immediate hostility from many quarters, especially in amenity circles. The C.P.R.W. foresaw damage to coastal amenity and to fertile agricultural land, and Council member W.J. Hemp claimed that "every body is very disgusted"\(^46\). He argued that the camp offended scenic order; it was "a hideous collection of buildings and no schemes of colouring or planting can make it anything but a violation of the natural beauty of its site"\(^47\). He maintained, somewhat carelessly that "Destruction should of course be the first aim of the C.P.R.W."\(^48\). Social order was also threatened by this 'popular' move to the coast, 'conservation' here being aligned with 'class'. Rights of way campaigner Humphrey Baker supposed "that Butlin's are entitled to some lebensraum, since so many people seem to like that sort of holiday, but it would be absurd to throw away the best of our coastal scenery on people of that kind"\(^49\). The Caernarfonshire C.P.R.W. also feared "the introduction of an overwhelming and incongruous community, destructive to the agricultural character of the district", but a community it also, surprisingly, saw as "alien to Welsh culture and tradition"\(^50\).

By contrast to its national leadership, the local C.P.R.W. concentrated on concerns other than aesthetic, partly sharing in the way such developments were viewed by the Welsh community. Caernarfonshire had been the most vigorous of local branches, and by December 1943 the national committee was also arguing "that due attention must be paid to other considerations than those of amenity"\(^51\). One such consideration was ownership. The council noted its "grave and increasing concern"\(^52\) as to the establishment of a commercial speculation in Llŷn, perhaps recalling materialism's despoliation elsewhere. Even W.J. Hemp acquiesced: "if [the camp] is to continue in use the Admiralty might well find better uses for it than commercial exploitation. 'Butlin's Camps' is a public company and not a philanthropical institution"\(^53\). The C.P.R.W. argued that
it might welcome services', health, education or youth society use of the camp - uses befitting to unspoilt rural surroundings:\footnote{54}: \\

\textit{This Conference, having in mind the highest interests of Wales, is very strongly of opinion that the Penychain Camp.. should not be handed over. to private ownership for personal exploitation, but should be retained by the State for public use, and having regard to the specific needs of Wales urges. one of the following [uses]:} \\
i. a Rehabilitation Centre; 
ii. a Village Health Settlement on the Papworth pattern; 
iii. a National Youth Centre in Wales for the use of the Statutory and Voluntary Youth Organisations\footnote{55}.

The "highest interests of Wales" were now represented by opposing the commercial rather than aesthetic exploitation of Llŷn. The anti-commercialism which characterised much amenity lobbying returned to the fore, as it had in the C.P.R.W.'s pre-war survey of holiday camps.

\textbf{Multitude and solitude} \\
Amenity and the preservation of quiet coast was not, however, ignored. Thomas Jones, former Cabinet Secretary and member of the C.P.R.W.'s executive, addressed these issues in his article 'Multitude and Solitude' which appeared in \textit{The Observer} early in 1944\footnote{56}. Jones saw the geographical division between crowds and solitudes as the fundamental issue in this case\footnote{57}. The pleasures offered by Butlin were, he claimed, fine in their place but

\textit{Snowdonia is certainly not the place for Mr. Butlin. It is not his spiritual home. Skegness may be just right for 'dungeon bars' and Clacton-on-Sea for 'gay Viennese Nights'. But to bring relays of 4,000 campers.. to enjoy these luxuries at this quiet coast will destroy its peculiar qualities for everybody. [Wales's] pools of silence are few and small and it ought to be beyond the pale of possibility to make these hills resound with jazz. The land of eagles.. is not 'the common muck of the world'\footnote{58}.}

Former Liverpool Architecture Professor C.H. Reilly agreed with Jones that the camp should not be allowed on "a remote Welsh coast, the main character of which is its austerity and its unconcern with the haunts of men or their pursuits"\footnote{59}. Jones claimed that each space had its appropriate
density of population and when that was exceeded "deity disappears. Nature denies her enchantment
to the many gathered by cheap facilities. If the divisor is small the share of each is great; if large,
it is nil." Whether elitist or not, this outlook - echoing Cornish's concern for 'spartan'
recreation - was nonetheless anti-populist in practice. Using an appropriate wartime metaphor he
stressed the need to 'ration' fine natural scenery for fear that the supply be 'looted' by the mob.
Beauty and solitude should be protected for those craving them.

This issue was pertinent to all, but there was also a specific threat to Wales in Butlin's plans.
Were Butlin, said Jones, to go to Rhyl or Prestatyn, 4,000 invaders would hardly be noticed and
the natives would not insist that the bartenders serving American cocktails should be Welsh-
speaking! He implied that parts of Wales had already sacrificed their ancient innocence to the God
of commercialism, and on this point most planners were in agreement. But in opening a camp in
Llŷn, Butlin threatened to implant Anglicised and commercial values in an area identified as part of
Wales's cultural heartland.

In reply, Butlin seized on apparent elitism, asking whether "the enjoyment of beauty [should] be
accepted as the prerogative of any one type or class of citizen? Or should nature's treasure chest be
accessible to us all?". In an appeal to wartime populism, he stressed that beauty also belonged
to "those brave, patient, kindly men and women who answered Mr Churchill's call for toil and
sweat and blood... those unsung heroes of the blitz... who made Wales safe for Dr. Jones.". In
Butlin's opinion, his camp would bring beauty to the lives of the common people. Its design had
been approved, he claimed, by an eminent architect (thus co-opting Williams-Ellis to the cause!) and
would be an asset to the district. Furthermore there was a sociological agenda to this beauty
(Fig.51) for Butlin wished

*to play a part in the social renaissance of this country, to bring beauty and
healthy enjoyment within the reach of those who 'cannot' command, but at
least, deserve it; to open new avenues of interest and inspire an entirely new
conception of holidays for thousands to whom holidays at one time
connoted an unchanging and unchangeable locale and programme year after
year*.

Butlin was not alone in setting this sociological agenda, and he gained at least one powerful ally -
Cyril Joad. Joad painted a picture of Butlin's glittering world of entertainment and extravaganza.
The jocularity and 'mateyness' might not appeal to all - it certainly did not appeal to him - but "I
HERE'S THE HOLIDAY YOU NEED!
GOOD FOOD • GOOD ACCOMMODATION • EVERY OUTDOOR & INDOOR
ATTRACTION ARE INCLUDED IN AN ALL-IN-TARIFF

There's everything you've ever dreamed of in a holiday at Butlin's. For accommodation you have a well-appointed private chalet within a stone's throw of the sea and with maid to make the beds and keep it tidy. The food is of the best, well-cooked and served at your own table in the dining hall. At your front door is the beach, a stretch of safe golden sand, and all around you are glorious walks, tennis courts, swimming pool, bowling greens, playing fields, ballrooms, theatres, club rooms, quiet lounges, licensed bars, billiards and table tennis rooms. For the children there are special playgrounds, paddling pools and playrooms, with experienced staff constantly in attendance, and every single thing is included in the All-in-Tariff—there are no compulsory extras.

Just think what all this means. Comfort—freedom from work—freedom from queues—freedom to do exactly as you please and every possible facility for enjoyment at your hand. It means a full day's pleasure every day for every member of the family, for at Butlin's there is amusement to plenty for people of all ages and all tastes.

Make certain NOW of having the holiday of your life this year. Reserve your accommodation at one of the Butlin luxury Holiday Camps—there are three to choose from

FILEY BAY (near Scarborough) OPENS IN APRIL
CLACTON-ON-SEA SKEGNESS OPENS IN APRIL OPENS IN JUNE

Figure 51: A Butlins pre-war promotional brochure (from Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers B41)
don't see why one should erect one's personal likes and dislikes into criteria of moral and aesthetic value. Indeed Joad saw positive merits in 'Butlineering', compared to the old fashioned working class holiday. But the camp also had an educational role, for it aimed

*at the development and expression of personality. There are games and competitions, there are amateur theatricals, there are discussions and debates, there is the self-government of communities by their members. Men and women whose lives are spent in monotonous routine jobs experience for the first time on their holidays the joy of the awakened mind, the exercised talent and the pouring out of energy in vivifying effort and hard endeavour. They do not passively receive; they actively contribute and in so doing find the outlet for personality which their working lives deny. Also they develop their social senses.*

'Butlineering' also had a part to play in inculcating in townsfolk the 'correct' appreciation of nature. Beauty of spirit was the right of working people, but a right denied them. Many argued that Butlin's pleasures would be equally enjoyable in already developed surroundings, but the people, Joad argued, had a right to beauty of scenery. The Penychain camp's opponents - "Rumbling with apprehension, as if they were the Welsh national bowels" foresaw the destruction of yet another stretch of coastline and hordes of Butlineers invading Snowdonia. Why not, they asked, place the camp on an already despoiled site? But why, Joad asked "should Butlineers who look at bricks and concrete all the year round be required to look at the bricks of Southend and the concrete of Colwyn Bay all their holidays? Why should they not look at Snowdon?". Campers could not, claimed Joad, educate themselves overnight to reject the Southend holiday in favour of spartan communion with nature. There should first be the chance to see mountains "and then perchance you may feel their spell and learn to love them". In this way the Penychain camp became "a kindergarten for future mountaineers", an integral part of the tutoring of the barbaric townspeople so that they might commune with, rather than destroy, the countryside.

But Joad saw other benefits to the camp. Like the planners, he saw the opportunities holiday camps offered to rationalise the use of the coast. Whilst a Butlin's camp was not a thing of beauty in itself, it did

*canalise and concentrate, gathering together in a single block 4,000 persons, some of whom would otherwise straggle in long line of frowsy bungalows*
and ambiguous con-urbanisations along many miles of coast. Just as a sewage farm accumulates and concentrates refuse and prevents it from spreading, so does the camp concentrate those very elements whose unchecked spread would overwhelm the coastline.

And so despite his ideological concern for the working class (here symbolised by sewage!), Joad was as concerned with control and concentration, so that others - able to appreciate the messages of wild country - might have full reign over what remained.

As I have noted, the C.P.R.W. were expressing less concern on amenity issues than on the camp's use. This was noted by Butlin's solicitor who argued "that it was inconsistent to attack the camp proposal because it interfered with the natural beauty of the district while the deputations were quite prepared that it should be used for purposes other than a holiday camp". But the C.P.R.W., in this sense, represented the concerns of the rapidly organising local opposition. Amenity arguments became increasingly irrelevant in a campaign which focussed rather on threats to Welsh culture and national development. These concerns were more vigorously represented by new local groups, and it is these groups' activities which I now consider.

THE DEFENCE OF LLYN

Local camp opponents did fear damage to amenity. The Friends of LLyn, formed late in 1941, argued that Butlin's noisy, communal and commercial camps "would spoil the entire character of the area. We strongly recommend that no holiday camps be permitted in any portion of Lleyn". But in general, local opposition revolved around other concerns. As Abercrombie noted to the beleaguered Williams-Ellis "there is much in this besides town-planning. Butlin, nationalism, drink, water, morals, Sunday trading etc.!". In response to the County Council's sanctioning of the plan in February 1944, a pressure group calling itself the LLyn Defence Committee (L.D.C.) was formed. Its initial 21 members included several academics and ministers of religion, amongst others. Thomas Jones - author of "Multitude and Solitude" - became President with Griffith Evans, a Liberal agent and County Councillor, as Chairman. J.E. Jones and the Reverend Robert Williams acted as secretaries; J.E. Jones was also, at this time, secretary of Plaid Cymru. Other party members on the L.D.C.'s committee included Ambrose Bebb and J.E. Daniel, the latter Plaid Cymru's President since 1937 and a theologian who had opposed the Porth Neigwl aerodrome. In no sense, however, was the L.D.C. merely a nationalist front; Thomas Jones's motivations for involvement, for instance, included his opposition to nationalism. Though the
Ll.D.C.'s first memorandum, published in April 1944, argued for the protection of nature, the Committee was to press for consideration of the broadest possible planning implications. It sought to establish major principles hitherto obscured in the debate, yet fundamental, as we have seen, in contemporary conceptions of the rural environment. The two main principles were Welsh culture, and autarchy.

Culture

For the Ll.D.C., the establishment of a Butlin's camp in Llŷn posed as grave a threat to Welsh culture as had the Porth Neigwl aerodrome. The Llŷn Peninsula was portrayed, as so often before, as the repository of Welshness:

_We most strongly feel that our mode of life, our traditions in this part of North Wales, and our traditional attitude towards such matters as drink, Sunday trading & c., all have a bearing on the matter and should be taken into consideration. To the Welshman, whether at home or abroad, Meirion and Mon, Lleyn and Eifionydd are a sanctuary and a focal point for his deepest patriotism._

Many Welsh soldiers were, at this time, answering the patriotic call of Britishness, and the Committee claimed that to allow a cultural incursion into their sanctuary was an insult. But Wales was already subject to the march of English influence. The Ll.D.C. spoke of an individuality that was "disintegrating" and of the "continuous infiltration" and "invading elements", which geographers had done so much to map. There was a growing awareness that Wales's place in Britain was ever-changing. County Council members too feared "the constant pressure and penetration of the foreign element into the very heart and life of our country. It has penetrated into the very heart of Eryri, into small farms bought and occupied by English people. this constant penetration means great danger to posterity._

J.E. Daniel opposed the placing of a Butlin's camp in the particular environment of Llŷn; and as he pointed out his objection was in no way founded on questions of coastal beauty. It was, rather, founded on his identification of the locality as a social and cultural unit. Daniel, like Saunders Lewis, spoke of Llŷn as a land which, since the 'ejection' of the Irish in the fifth century, had represented "the finest flower of our rural Welsh culture. some of the greatest names in the literature and life of Wales. have been produced by the kind of society that has existed and still exists here._ Llŷn was therefore "one of the main defences and one of the main supports of a
rural culture with its own language and traditions, which has been struggling against almost overwhelming odds for some centuries. But the area's rurality was threatened by the camp - "a whirlpool of mechanised pleasure that will swallow the life of Lleyn." In juxtaposing "mechanised" and "pleasure" Daniel conjured a vision of ritualised, soulless sin. But the machine (that most modern of metaphors) threatened also to corrupt its surroundings. It would become a "vortex, whirling ever more quickly, and it will tend, because of its size, because of its unmanageability, because of its unabsorbability, to suck into itself all the things that we now regard as valuable in this land of ours." The Butlin camp would be the largest unit of population on the peninsula, its campers hellbent on 'high-pressure' entertainment amongst the gwerin, a people whom Daniel idealised. Societies like Llŷn's were, he claimed, "very close-knit. Culture, religion and life... are all intertwined; the warp and the weft are very closely joined, and any interference with the unity and the homogeneity and the organic wholeness of that sort of society is going to produce terrible effects in all sorts of directions." The woven tapestry of rural life (a metaphor also used by Iorwerth Peate) was threatened by the camp's uncontrollable force, drawing all into its currents. This force's fragmentation of the rural society of Llŷn could not, as Williams-Ellis and Abercrombie had suggested, be ameliorated in any way - "We prefer the twenty thousand saints which our tradition says are buried at Bardsey Island, and what they stand for, to the twenty thousand trees Mr. Butlin is going to put in the camp!"

Religion
As in the case of Preseli, strong leadership emerged from the religious denominations. Their resistance centered in part on the theological role of small nations, that being the retention of individuality for the sake of civilisation and for a clearer vision of the Truth. These values, also stressed by Saunders Lewis in the Porth Neigwl case, were then, ostensibly, being fought for in the Second World War. But the camp also posed a threat to the Welsh way of life. Although Ward and Hardy claim that post-war acceptance of camps promised to "depend more on their external impact than on what actually went on within the compound," visual impact played little part in Penychain. The camp's impact was conceived precisely in terms of its activities, and threats to religion, culture and morality. One Joint Planning Committee member argued, in October 1943, that "We, as Welshmen, should not let an Englishman come here and plant down amongst us an institution which will militate against our culture and traditions... I am sure all religious bodies would support these objections." 'Foreign elements' were poised to swamp native culture and tradition. Whilst on the roadsides Englishness was marked by garish adverts and bungalows, its harbingers in Llŷn were identified by the Ll.D.C.'s Griffith Evans as being 'gay Viennese nights', 'dungeon bars' and Sunday afternoon bathing beauty competitions. The North
Wales Congregational Union "specially feared the increased and unnecessary dangers to the moral and religious standards that would follow the establishment of a camp of this kind"90. A joint meeting of denominations argued for severe restrictions on Sunday activities, lest the locals be corrupted and the area's moral fibre weakened91.

A series of resolutions by the religious bodies early in 1944, resulted in a claim by the Ll.D.C. that 17,000 out of Llŷn's adult population of 20,000 opposed Butlin92. The entrepreneur responded by stressing his camps' high moral standards93, though offering some supervision of the camp by "a committee of public men and women of the highest moral character"94. But Butlin's solicitor attacked Welsh backwardness and resistance to progressive movements like this camp. Other camp supporters lamented the minsters' "shortcomings and short-sightedness on many questions"95, one correspondent accusing them of seeking to re-establish Medieval tyranny on the people. Another saw intolerance and narrow-mindedness everywhere: "A parade of bathing belles, to them, is fraught with moral danger... The twin gods of rural Wales have been, for too long, respectability and Sunday observance"96. He did, however, question the ministers' own personal morality - "ministerial students in general are regarded by their fellow students of the University of Wales as the filthiest minded section of the college community" - and noted that the religious revival at the beginning of the twentieth century was accompanied by "an alarming number of illegitimate and irregular births"97.

In defence, one camp opponent suggested that the ministers were again - as in the nineteenth century - protecting Welsh independence and dignity. And he added that "My new idea of Wales after the war is very different to the [critics], in that I look forward to a Wales true to its traditions and its fine culture"98. The camp buildings were seen as an opportunity to establish a modern Wales on secure foundations of tradition and morality.

**Autarchay**

Through a series of advertisements in both Welsh and English (Fig.52), Butlin presented himself as the district's saviour. He claimed that his camp would be "carried on in a proper and orderly manner consistent with the moral and cultural traditions of Wales"99. He promised to free the farmer from price and market uncertainties, and outlined potentially huge demand for agricultural produce. Shopkeepers and boarding house proprietors would also benefit in his wake. Butlin promised to employ 500 staff during the close season and up to a thousand in summer. He particularly outlined the need for jobs for returning soldiers, many of them partially disabled. But finally, Butlin issued a series of veiled threats. The camp was, he claimed, his to do with as he
THE QUESTION OF MORALS

A Statement by Messrs. Butlins

The following facts are repeated for the benefit of the public interested.

1. Butlins Ltd. have publicly given the following undertakings six months ago:
   a. That there will be no organised games on Sundays.
   b. That there will be no entertainments of any kind on Sundays, except such as are decided.
   c. That the law as to sale of drink on Sundays for Wales and at all times will be strictly observed, and that no drunkenness will be tolerated.
   d. That no drink will at any time be sold in the camp to local people.
   e. That there will be regular religious services every Sunday in the camp, and Sunday worship will be an important feature of the camp.

2. In order to be on friendly terms with their neighbours Butlins Ltd. have already publicly invited local religious leaders to form a committee to satisfy themselves and the public that the above undertakings are carried out and also to ensure that the camp is carried on in a proper and orderly manner consistent with the moral and cultural traditions of Wales.

3. At the Company realise that many religious leaders and others may not be aware of the above facts or may have lost sight of them as they take this opportunity of renewing their offer and once more inviting the friendly co-operation of those concerned.

4. Three-quarters of the visitors to Butlins Camps are families with children. There has never been any complaint from any religious or other responsible authority about any of Butlins other camps and had there been any, the opponents of the camp would have published it.

5. Statements misleading to the public have been made by opponents of the Camp to the effect that all the religious denominations are unanimously against the camp. It is self-evident that this statement is untrue because the opponents of the Camp would not be canvassing so hard for signatures if it were true.

If you have signed a petition against the Camp on Moral grounds ask yourself these questions:

1. Did I know then what I know now?
2. Would I have signed if I had known.
3. Did I sign because I did not like not to?
4. The answers to these questions will tell you the value of the petition you have assisting.
5. If you have not made up your mind wait until now.
6. If you have not decided yet which way you do intend to vote, if you live in Llwydowr or Eirwydd, do not sign.

The following suggestions for your further information are made:

1. Ask your minister or person if he knows about the above undertakings and offer by Butlins.
2. Ask him if he is aware that Butlins are not being pursued by the Boarding House business.
3. Ask him if he is aware that Butlins are not being pursued by the Boarding House business.
4. If he is aware that he morally guarantees the answer.
5. If he is not aware that he morally guarantees the answer.

Figure 52. Propaganda: Two adverts in Butlin's campaign for local acceptance (from e.g. Caernarfon & Denbigh Herald May 1944)
wished for he had a legally enforceable agreement "with the Government of Great Britain". His concessions were gestures of goodwill and Butlin attached "no weight at all to the opinions of their opponents as to the value or validity of these offers. If these offers are taken at their face value and in the spirit in which they are offered the Company will be glad to give effect to them, and if they are not so taken the Company will have lost nothing". Butlin dismissed interference from nationalists and religious organizations.

As far as Butlin's opponents were concerned, the holiday camp did not augur well for a modern, independent Wales. The creation of a private monopoly in Llyn and the influence of an acquisitive capitalist interest over the rest of the area was condemned. The Ll.D.C. opposed the seizing of Welsh assets for corporate profit "when our traditions, our culture, and, indeed, our self-respect as a nation may be prejudiced thereby". There was nationalistic anger that the State should transfer control of part of Welsh territory to an individual, thus undermining sovereignty and sentiment. But there were other principles at stake, primarily that of monopoly versus co-operation. Griffith Evans argued that Butlin's scheme "puts privilege and property once more in the saddle. We look in vain for signs of the co-operation principle, of profit sharing or of the motive of service. The charge of £5 per week per head puts the camp out of reach of the large majority of those who have sweated and bled to make Wales safe for the rest of us, and to whom Mr. Butlin makes such moving references".

Butlin's monopoly threatened to permeate the local community, making it dependent on his promises of prosperity and employment. It was argued that this, rather than a public concern, did not provide the necessary security for large scale schemes of agricultural supply and local economic development. The Ll.D.C. therefore attempted to undermine Butlin's legal position, and suggested the same alternative uses for the camp as had the C.P.R.W.: a T.B. recuperation settlement, a services' rehabilitation, youth, or teachers' training camp. The camp's future should await the machinery of the New Order, and they asked that the best use for the camp be chosen deliberately. Their pamphlet, The Llyn Camp: for Capitalist Monopoly? or for Public Service? boiled the choice down to one between a "luxury holiday, highpressure amusement camp, for those who can afford £5 per head per week" or a co-operative venture in the public interest.

But the Ll.D.C.'s proposals also addressed Wales's national self-respect and role in reconstruction. "If the Government really desires national unity", it asked, "would it not be wise to prevent the Departments goading the Provinces into opposition by acts such as this transaction?". The failure to disclose the full terms of the Admiralty's agreement with Butlin undermined Welsh
territorial claims, but the State's vision of Wales's future also offended. As the correspondent 'Celt' of the Liverpool Daily Post put it

*Personally, I dislike the assumption that we are content to be a nation of entertainers, of waiters and waitresses. There are other lines along which Wales should develop and ensure her prosperity, and her first duty is to her agriculture and its concomitant industries. Also, our nationality is as important and as sacred to us as that of the Norwegians to the Norwegians or that of the Greeks to the Greeks. It sounds an elementary thing to say, but there are quite a number of people who do not understand it*.105

For Celt, economic status as a service nation was symptomatic of Wales's subjugated political status, and the consequential threat to cultural difference and vigour. Geographical peripherality paralleled remoteness from economic and political power, and the seizure of Welsh land and assets confirmed this colonised mentality. Penychain's fate had, after all, been decided from London as part of a State policy. J.E. Daniel of Plaid Cymru argued that the camp offered an opportunity "to ensure better and more regular employment for the girls of Llŷn than 'handing plates to fat strangers' in the summer months"106. In Butlin's hands, tourism threatened humiliation: Butlin "thinks that when people go to Wales, they want a Welsh atmosphere, and he means to see they get it. There will be real Welsh men and women to provide the service at the Caernarvonshire camp, for instance, and Welsh boatmen on the beach hiring out their own boats. The camp will have its own chapel, just as Skegness has its own church"107. This was not the "new and modern Wales" that many envisaged as a result of the formation of the L.I.D.C.108, neither was the suggested co-operation with Butlin compatible with giving the Welsh tourist industry a character of its own. But if developed on national lines rather than by capitalists, Daniel saw tourism as one route to national salvation. Tourism had a role in national planning, and its control was linked to demands for a Secretary of State for Wales. But exploitation had first to be resisted, and echoing Plaid Cymru's stance on the planning of Wales, it was suggested that each county formed its own Defence Committee, together forming a Central Council to uphold the interests of rural Wales. The undemocratic loss of one of Llŷn's hallowed beaches had threatened national pride.

A planned future

In a letter to Herbert Morrison, Minister of Town and Country Planning, the L.D.C. saw the camp debate as part of the "great argument, or principle, the argument between those who think of life in terms of human welfare and those who think in terms of money and power"109. Butlin signified
the latter, but the Ll.D.C. had evolved an alternative scheme addressing the issue of human welfare. It proposed a mix of County Residential Colleges for schoolchildren, teachers' training facilities, school transfers, up to a thousand convalescents, and long term technical classes, totalling an all-year-round attendance of some 4000\textsuperscript{110}. It might be also be used for youth rallies from April to May and as a State holiday camp over the Christmas period. Butlin was to have exclusive use from early June to early October, but this was incidental to the camp's central role in the revival of Welsh and regional life through social service. Their proposal won widespread support. Social workers felt the scheme would be "of immense benefit to Welsh children. It is, of course on a large scale, but we really shouldn't be afraid of that"\textsuperscript{111}. A miners' welfare group had already expressed interest in accommodation for their children, and a member of the Board of Trade claimed that the premises "would make a first-class educational establishment. [They] would be the last word in lecture rooms + recreational facilities for hundreds of youth or adult education students, properly housed, fed + bedded"\textsuperscript{112}. The establishment of a healthy educational regime, blending recreation and social service, was also supported by Ifan ab Owen Edwards, founder of Yr Urdd (The Welsh League of Youth) and the Board of Education gave its blessing.

The camp was seen as having broader economic benefits if put to national, social service use. It was argued that full use of the camp would stimulate far greater food production locally than Butlin's proposals, for "It is certain that seasonal demand of that kind would not stimulate the necessary interest for the development of market gardening in South Caernarvonshire, and that would be a serious loss, because it has long been recognised that this area with its long coast line, good soil and equitable climate is eminently suited for that purpose"\textsuperscript{113}. Llyn's existing market gardens suffered from lack of demand, but the Penychain camp could provide the market, thus creating up to 1,000 jobs. Such development would entail organisation and planning with local agriculture being placed on a firm business footing to meet perennial rather than seasonal demand. This vision recalls Fleure's of Cardigan Bay fisheries as catalysts for social re-integration and revival, and it was repeated in the Nuffield College Report in 1945 which proposed the planned and co-ordinated development of tourism, industry and agriculture in North Wales. Celt saw this specific proposal as part of "a new orientation... a new view of Wales and of what it should be - self-reliant, self-respecting, enterprising, and trusting to its own energies and initiative"\textsuperscript{114}.

But the camp's benefits were to affect Wales as a whole. A technical college at the camp might parallel the University in training the Welsh in the skills of modern nationhood. But more important was its proposed youth use. The Board of Education planned to relocate entire schools from the industrial areas thus bringing the children of the south in touch with their environmental
and spiritual heritage. The *Western Mail*, usually reticent in supporting nationalist causes, supported Welsh education authorities' calls that Penychain should become a school camp for 40,000 children per annum. Referring to school camps established in South Wales in the 1930s by the Special Area Commissioner, they looked forward to physiological and psychological improvements in deprived children. Penychain might also improve awareness of the countryside, and so the rural impulse was evidently still strong in ameliorating industrial ills. In these ways, Penychain could provide a service surpassing Billy Butlin's scheme and intensifying the culture of Wales, and of the coming generation:

*If Mr. Butlin can face the purchase price for the sake of holiday amenities, and the material profits accruing therefrom, surely Wales has the imagination and courage to face it for the sake of intensifying and deepening its system of education with all the social benefits accruing in the way of health, initiative, fellowship and public spirit. There is another inestimable benefit - the unification of Wales and the consequent marriage of North and South Wales, too often thought of as apart.*

**Anti-Butlin**

Public opinion swung behind this use of the camp, despite few government commitments. The claim that 17,000 out of Llŷn's adult population of 20,000 apparently opposed Butlin was widely and frequently repeated. Butlin had his supporters who in some measure aligned conservation with elitism. One, probably referring to Portmeirion, mentioned somewhat "Bohemian" places in North Wales where the expensive pleasures offered were opposed by none. Alderman Hewitt of Llandudno likewise "did not see why the Lleyn peninsula should be kept for intelligenza like Dr. Thomas Jones, who had made money in England and wanted to come back to Wales, and have it all to themselves. The county to a large extent depended on the English visitors. 'We would crack up were it not for them'". But a rival plebiscite organised by Butlin's supporters failed to materialise. The Caernarfon Boroughs by-election in April 1945 saw easy victory for the Liberal candidate, but almost 7,000 votes for the Plaid Cymru candidate and Ll.D.C. member J.E. Daniel who made opposition to the camp one of the main planks of his platform. By October 1945, the Ll.D.C. claimed that resolutions against Butlin had been passed by 64 Welsh local authorities, including nine County Councils, and Urban District Councils as far afield as industrial South Wales. Accounting creatively, they announced the support of over 90% of Wales's population. The possible repercussions for a newly-elected Labour government which sought to transfer the camp to an uncontrolled monopoly were clearly enough outlined. Little surprise then that the
Labour-dominated Welsh Parliamentary Party was unanimous in calling for a public inquiry. Against this background of an "extraordinary change... in public opinion"¹²¹, the County Council withdrew the permission it had originally granted Butlin, and supported the L.I.D.C.'s call for a ministerial enquiry. Most councillors agreed with he who argued that the area was "a national heritage. Are we going to sell our birthright for a mess of pottage presented to us by Mr. Butlin on a gilded platter?"¹²².

STATE PLANNING

The C.P.R.W. actively supported the call for a ministerial enquiry, for "The opposition to Butlin is very strong, and unless some means can be found to ensure the Minister's intervention they will be left with a sense of frustration which may have a very bad effect on Planning in Wales, and possibly far-reaching repercussions"¹²³. But this appeal, and the apparent assertion of Welsh national rights was rebuffed in September 1945 when the new Minister of Town and Country Planning, Lewis Silkin, visited North Wales. In his address Silkin "stressed that North Wales did not belong to the Welsh people. It belonged, he said, to the whole of the people of Great Britain. 'You are fortunate and privileged in residing here', he added, 'but you are trustees for the whole of Britain and we shall hold you to that sacred trust"¹²⁴. This sense of Wales as part of of a British space cut dramatically across the ways in which many Welsh theorised their nationality; it undermined a particular ethnic claim on territory. It also raised the spectre of an expansive state mechanism that could ride roughshod over local dissent; a fear amplified by Silkin's assertion "that no local authority can be the sole judge of the way in which this area should be planned"¹²⁵. Silkin saw North Wales as a potential holiday Mecca for the people of Britain, the Empire and the whole World.

Nonetheless, Silkin ordered an informal conference, chaired by George Pepler, to be held in Pwllheli Town Hall over two days in February 1946 with the intention of gathering information. The arguments which evolved over the previous three to four years were vigorously re-stated in a somewhat rowdy atmosphere. The conference was preceded by a march by over a hundred ex-servicemen bearing banners exclaiming "Best Defence for Lleyn - Butlin's Camp", "Dole! No, Give us Butlin", and "W.E. Butlin - the Workman's Backbone"¹²⁶. As they entered the hall they chanted "We want Butlin" and occupied prominent positions. At each turn, the L.I.D.C. was booed, and Moelwyn Hughes - an ex Labour M.P. representing Butlin - applauded¹²⁷. Hughes remarked on Butlin's "generosity and.. public-spirited co-operation which is unprecedented in the experience of those who have spent their lives in dealing with these matters"¹²⁸. He then listed
the Butlin camp's putative economic benefits, each one greeted by cries of "Hear, hear" and applause. The Ll.D.C. were implicitly dismissed as liars and as "puritans", subject to wild flights of fancy. The Pwllheli Town Council and the British Legion gave their welcome to Butlin's offers.

Amenity was represented by Clough Williams-Ellis, though he admitted that in effect he was mis-representing both the Joint Planning Committee and the C.P.R.W.. He re-stated the strategic planning line that large-scale concentrations would be necessary to resist sporadic development elsewhere. The camp, he regretted, was undistinguished - "For a holiday camp, for a pleasedrome, I think it is rather too much like a factory" - and the delights on offer were "shall we say on the E.N.S.A. level. Well I should like to see it pass on from E.N.S.A. to C.E.M.A., with good music, concerts, lectures and library". Williams-Ellis, like Joad, perceived the camp's educative function and in Architect Errant, he recalled the effort to put 'Culture' into the camp. However, he restated the populist arguments for holiday camps; they were "almost as great a national necessity in peace as are service camps in time of war". Holidays with Pay without camps in which to spend them would be a mockery to the workers, and he saw Butlin's camp as a social service in itself.

For the Ll.D.C., J.E. Daniel argued vigorously against Butlin's incursion into the Welsh heartland of Llyn. Others appealed for expression of the local people's sense of nationhood through support for the school camp: "I am convinced that Pwllheli.. will not stand in the way of children from the mining valleys coming to the camp for a change of environment", a comment greeted by both boos and cheers! Whilst the Committee sympathised with Pwllheli's unemployed they thought it a pity that they should be content with cul-de-sac employment as waiters and 'hewers of wood'. National self-respect was at issue, and potentially symbolic of that was the camp's existing name - Glyndwr (Glendower). Owain Glyndwr was a 15th Century prince who united Wales against the English. His name might once again become a symbol of Welsh unity if given to a camp devoted to social service. Unity might be achieved through "the simpler, sounder saner amenities of improved health, renewed vitality, fellowship, initiative, social service to your children and ours", in contrast to the exotic superficiality of Butlin's pleasures.

CONCLUSION

In March, despite widespread opposition and alternative plans, Lewis Silkin announced that there were no planning objections to Butlin's holiday camp. Reaction was swift, the Mayor of Pwllheli
raising the Red Dragon over the Town Hall (the British Legion preferred to fly the Union Jack) declaring the news "One of the brightest bits of information the town has received for years".\(^{135}\)

Whilst Pwllheli rejoiced, the debate on Butlin's camp highlighted continued tensions between ways of seeing the Welsh landscape and rural environment. New tensions had also emerged. Cecily Williams-Ellis felt that whilst "a strong case was made for Welsh nationality and culture", her brother in law had made "an original and picturesque speech, giving nearly, though not quite everything to Mr. Butlin".\(^{136}\) She feared that Butlin's "urban and sophisticated crowds, will turn this coast into a holiday suburbia, and they will not be satisfied with less".\(^{137}\) The Guardian too claimed that in accepting that the buildings should remain, both sides had ignored the real point at issue - "whether the fringe of a wild mountain range destined to be preserved as a national park is the right place to put buildings that cater for crowds".\(^{138}\) Local amenity arguments had, in this case, been suppressed in favour of broader planning debates. The design opportunities of holiday camps were recognised, and utilised in an attempt to concentrate coastal recreation and thus ensure scenic order. Aesthetic opposition was also considered less important than the rather more abstract concern of national recreational planning - one of a series of strategic plans drawing on the skills of an increasingly established profession.

The State-wide task of planning and reconstruction, however, made claims on Welsh territory which undermined nationalist sentiment and proposals for national modernisation. In Plaid Cymru's opinion, Labour had 'Butlinized' Llŷn, an area hitherto protected from the currents of Anglicisation and materialism. A cartoon (Fig.53) encapsulated their perception of the issue. The spiv-like Butlin stands on a hitherto tranquil Llŷn beach - seen over the bonnet of a black limousine - with symbols of opulence, materialism and degeneracy scattered about him. He orders his obsequious servant Moelwyn (Hughes) to hand him another bullet for his rifle. Their prey is the simple bearded figure of St. David who, mortally wounded by Butlin's bullet, drops his harp to the sand. Welsh culture has been killed in its sanctuary. Griffith Evans mourned the lost opportunity to plan wholesale the future prosperity of Llŷn, based on social and cultural values: "One of the last bulwarks of Welsh tradition has been thrown to the dogs. Profits made at this camp will be spent in Piccadilly rather than be ploughed into the planned development of one of the truest Welsh areas.. This forms the strongest possible argument for self-government".\(^{139}\) J.E. Jones also attacked what he saw as Labour's failure to recognise Welsh sovereignty over its own territory. They cared more, he claimed, for a millionaire's dividends than for the Welsh nation, and the education, health and welfare of its children.\(^{140}\)
"Another bullet, Moelwyn, to finish him off."

Figure 53. "St. David, 1946" (from Welsh Nationalist Vol.15 No.3)

Figure 54. A Butlins post-war advertisement
(from Y Cymro 11/4/47)
For his part, Butlin argued that the camp, far from being an alien incursion, would reflect the culture of its locality and thus play a part in strengthening post-war Wales: "we shall appeal to thousands who have never been to Wales before and who will appreciate not only the wonderful scenery, but also the thrill of living in a country where the people, language, and customs are new to them". But a storm of protest greeted his manipulation of the name Penychain into the more cheery "Penny Chain", and other evidence (Fig.54) confirmed the fear that Butlin's view of Welshness was not his opponents.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

3. E. Rhodes Smith - Sec., Ministry of Health 25/1/37, C.P.R.W. 10/7/1
4. Ibid.
5. Mrs. J.E. Griffith - Clough Williams-Ellis 19/5/38, C.P.R.W. 10/7/1
6. Clough Williams-Ellis - J.D.K. Lloyd 23/5/38, C.P.R.W. 10/7/1
9. "It was from this pool of the economically disadvantaged, sharing the desires of the period for holidays and outings but unable to buy a villa or stay in a boarding house, that many of the plotlanders emerged to find their own distinctive outlets. Shacks by the sea, makeshift huts on a weekend smallholding, or riverside cabins were, in many cases, no more or less than a downmarket response to more general demands for leisure space." Ibid. p.24
10. Ibid. p.281
13. For instance Kinmel Bay Land Co. (1928) *How to Make £100 a Year on a One-Acre Farm with Ease and Comfort*; and *Truth* magazine's claim that Kinmel Bay was a new star arising
in the constellation of beauty that is North Wales! "The Exodus from the Cities" July 21,
1926 pp.98-9

14. Holiday Camps in Wales (1939) C.P.R.W. 10/7/2. This was primarily intended to discern
the number and location of holiday camps for civilian evacuation and for post-war state
holiday provision

15. Ibid, p.4

16. Ibid, p.1

17. On the history of the holiday camp see Colin Ward and Dennis Hardy (1986) Goodnight
Camper: The History of the British Holiday Camp London: Mansell, especially Chapter 5
"Holidays by Design". The camps' history is summarised in their (1987) "Come Back
Soon" Geographical Magazine Vol.59 No.8, pp.400-4

18. The C.P.R.E., for instance, outlined types of land which camps should avoid, whilst the
Town Planning Institute addressed location, size and design. the Institute urged that camps
"be as inconspicuous as possible and may fit into the landscape": Journal of the Town
Planning Institute (1939) "Holiday Camps" October edition, pp.368-71. The C.P.R.W. did
not publish a memorandum until c.1942 in which it noted that "The growing popularity of
large holiday camps.. has got to be admitted and realistically faced. provision will have to
be made and it is a planning problem of the first importance". The Views of the C.P.R.W.
on Holiday Camps in General C.P.R.W. 10/7/2.

19. J.D.K. Lloyd - Managing Director, Thomas Cook & Son, Undated, C.P.R.W. 10/7/1

20. The Llandudno Town Council, however, heard of the 2,00 fully-equipped chalets with
apprehension and stressed that "it is essential to the very existence of health resorts that
every available power and influence should be harnessed without delay to meet the
undoubted menace to our existence": The Chronicle 26/8/38 "Prestatyn Chalet Camp -
Llandudno Council's Fear". The 'Chalet Village by the Sea' was, however, requisitioned
within days of opening.

21. The Builder (1939) "Prestatyn Holiday Camp, North Wales" June 30th, pp.1219-24 & 34;
p.1234. See also Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects (1939) "Holiday Camp
at Prestatyn North Wales" July 17th, pp.884-9

22. See Goodnight Campers especially Chapter 3; and, for a less critical view of the
entrepreneur, Rex North (1962) The Butlin Story London: Jarrolds

23. Rex North, Ibid, p.78. North describes the camps as "essential service establishments..
vitally useful to the country" (p.77).


27. Patrick Abercrombie - Commander R. Fletcher, Admiralty 9/7/41, C.P.R.W. 9/39

28. As Clough Williams-Ellis put it as late as 1944 "Never in my life have I encountered such a conflict of opinions in 'informed circles' both as to the actual facts or the legal position - or indeed as to Government 'powers' - let alone correct policy..." Clough Williams-Ellis - Thomas Jones 5/3/44, Dr. Thomas Jones C.H. Collection Group H. Vol.16, Item 140, N.L.W.

29. Reported in Patrick Abercrombie - George Pepler 20/12/41, C.P.R.W. 9/39

30. H.G. Griffin - Patrick Abercrombie 16/12/41, C.P.R.W. 9/39. Butlin had been appointed by Lord Beaverbrook to be in charge of providing entertainments for female munitions' workers living in hostels. Lord Beaverbrook and Butlin were both, apparently, "go-getters, careerists" (Rex North, p.78)

31. Patrick Abercrombie - Clough Williams-Ellis 9/7/41, C.P.R.W. 9/39

32. Clough Williams-Ellis Memorandum for Conference with Messrs. Butlin at Penychain, Oct. 5th 1941 C.P.R.W. 9/39

33. Brunner "Holiday Making and the Holiday Trades"


35. Steers "Coastal Preservation and Planning", p.16; the survey's second part was published under the same title in (1946) Geographical Journal Vol.107 Parts 1-2, pp.57-61

36. Ibid. (Part 1) p.19

37. Ibid.

38. Patrick Abercrombie (1946) "Introductory Note II" in J.A. Steers The Coastline of England and Wales Cambridge: University Press, pp.xv-xvi. "Introductory Note I" was provided by Dudley Stamp who also highlighted the need for a national coastal authority. Stamp later met Butlin at Portmeirion to discuss informally his plans for Penychain.


42. Clough Williams-Ellis Memorandum from Hampstead, N.W.3 Undated, C.P.R.W. 9/39
43. Patrick Abercrombie - Clough Williams-Ellis 17/11/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
44. Patrick Abercrombie - Clough Williams-Ellis 3/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
45. Cecily Williams-Ellis - Clough Williams-Ellis 4/10/43 Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers B41, N.L.W.
47. W.J. Hemp - H.G. Griffin 17/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
49. Humphrey Baker - Cecily Williams-Ellis 18/11/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
51. Contained in C.M. Oswald - Miss Revel 1/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
52. Caernarfonshire C.P.R.W. Resolution
55. C.P.R.W. Aberystwyth Conference Resolution 14/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39
56. Thomas Jones "Multitude and Solitude" The Observer 9/1/44
57. Lawrence Chubb, Secretary of the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society advised Jones, 10/12/43, that camps "should be restricted to urban areas like Skegness & Clacton if they are to be permitted anywhere" Thomas Jones Collection Item 45
58. "Multitude and Solitude"
59. C.H. Reilly "Coastal Belt and Mr. Butlin" News Chronicle 1/5/44
60. "Multitude and Solitude"
61. W.E. Butlin "Multitude and Solitude - A Rejoinder" The Observer 23/1/44
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. C.E.M. Joad "Why Should they Not Look at Snowdon?" Evening Standard 16/2/44; and (1946) "Butlineering" New Statesman and Nation 30/3/46, pp.226-7
65. "Butlineering" p.227
66. On the choices facing post-war holidaymakers see H.D. Wilcock (1946) "Boarding House or Butlin's?" Geographical Magazine July edition, pp.132-40
67. "Why.. Not Look at Snowdon"
68. Ibid.
69. "Butlineering" p.227
70. Ibid.
Mid, Maurice Cranston, in "Butlineering" *New Statesman and Nation* (Undated in *Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers*) claimed that "Butlin's customers may, perhaps, find time for mountaineering, but they will think the impresario has let them down if he does not erect tents for ices and shrimp teas at frequent intervals".

"Butlineering"

*Liverpool Daily Post* 19/4/44 "Welsh Holiday Camp Proposal - Divergent Views Ventilated at Caernarfon"

W.J. Hemp - H.G. Griffin 15/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39

Notes by J. St. Bodfan Griffith and D.R. Dudley on Behalf of the Friends of Llyn Undated, C.P.R.W. 9/39

Patrick Abercrombie - Clough Williams-Ellis 3/12/43, C.P.R.W. 9/39

"It is rumoured that the Admiralty are about to sell [Penychain] to Mr. Butlin.. Those of us who are familiar with the currents of Welsh opinion believe that such an arrangement would go far to feed the hostility to England which is being fanned by the Nationalist movement. As one who has opposed that movement I think they would have some justification". Thomas Jones - G.C.B. Dodds, Admiralty 21/10/43 *Thomas Jones Collection* Item 7

Li.D.C. *Memorandum on the South Caernarvonshire Holiday Camp* 4th April 1944, copy in C.P.R.W. 9/39

Li.D.C. letter in the national press e.g. *Manchester Guardian* 18/2/44

*C&DH* 9/11/45 "Penychain Camp - Question of Training Centre"


Ibid.

*C&DH* 21/4/44 "Opposition to Holiday Camp - View of Deputations"

Min of T&CP *Proceedings* p.82

Ibid.

Ibid.

Goodnight Campers

Caernarfon and Denbigh Herald (hereafter *C&DH*) 1/10/43 "Holiday Camp Project - Caernarvonshire Proposals"

Cambrian News 21/4/44 "New Facts - Llyn Council and Deputation"

Unattributed and undated cutting in *Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers*

*C&DH* 10/12/43 "Churches and Camps - Discussion at Llyn Association"

Secretaries, Li.D.C. in *C&DH* 19/5/44

William Butlin in *C&DH* 18/2/44
94. O. Wynne Griffith in C&DH 12/5/44
95. E. Williams in C&DH 19/5/44
96. W. Thomas in C&DH 22/2/45
97. Ibid.
98. R. Glyn Roberts in C&DH 28/4/44
99. For instance C&DH 12/5/44
100. For instance C&DH 2/6/44
101. Ll.D.C. letter in the national press e.g. Manchester Guardian 18/2/44
102. Griffith Evans Memo 24/2/44 Plaid Cymru Papers "Gohebiaeth + Papurau, Brwydr Pen-Ychain (Butlins)" N.L.W.
104. Ll.D.C. Memorandum 4th April 1944, p.4
105. Celt (The column was entitled "A Welsh Survey") Liverpool Daily Post 17/2/44. Local M.P. Goronwy Roberts later referred to the danger that the Welsh might become "largely a nation of flunkeys".
106. Y Cymro "Cygor Liyn a'r Gwersyll Gwyliau" Undated cutting in Plaid Cymru Papers
107. Stanley Baron "He Plans to Play Post-War Host to 400,000" News Chronicle Undated cutting in Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers
109. Ll.D.C. - W.S. Morrison 18/11/44 Thomas Jones Collection Item 209
110. Plaid Cymru Papers
111. W.J. Williams - Thomas Jones 8/9/45 Thomas Jones Collection Item 242
112. W.E. Pride - Thomas Jones 2/12/43 Thomas Jones Collection Item 37
113. Isaac Jones - Griffith Evans 10/1/45 Plaid Cymru Papers
114. Celt Liverpool Daily Post Undated cutting in Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers
115. Western Mail 9/11/45 "Make Penychain a Children's Camp"
116. Ibid.
117. C&DH 25/2/44 "Holiday Camp Project - What County Council would receive in Rates"
118. Ibid.
119. Plaid Cymru gained votes despite allegations of 'pacifism' and of Fascist sympathies. When the General Election followed in July 1945 however, the four party contest saw narrow victory for the Tory, David Price-White, and a collapse in the Nationalist vote from 24.8% to 4.5%. Though fought only between two parties under the wartime national government, the by-election result may be interpreted partly as a protest against the camp plan.
120. LLDC, The Demand for Alternative Use (memo) Plaid Cymru Papers; "N.W. Camp - Llyn Defence Committee" Undated and unattributed cutting in Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers; LLDC (1945) The Lleyn Camp (memo) Cecily Williams-Ellis Papers

121. C&DI 9/6/44 "Holiday Camp - County Council Reverses its Decision"

122. Ibid.

123. H.G. Griffin - George Pepler 27/10/44, C.P.R.W. 9/39

124. C&DI 28/9/45 "Minister of Planning - Visit to Caernarfonshire"

125. Ibid.

126. C&DI 15/2/46 "Future of Penychain Camp - Ministry's Conference at Pwllheli"

127. Ironically, Moelwyn Hughes was later employed by the Preseli Defence Fund to oppose that instance of governmental imposition.

128. Min. of T&CP Proceedings, p.12

129. Ibid, p.59

130. Ibid.


132. Min. of T&CP Proceedings p.59

133. C&DI 15/2/46 "Future of Penychain Camp"

134. Min. of T&CP Proceedings

135. C&DI 29/3/46 "Penychain to be a Holiday Camp - Pwllheli Welcomes the Official Decision"

136. Cecily Williams-Ellis - H.G. Griffin 19/2/46, C.P.R.W. 9/39. Thomas Jones was also disgruntled by Williams-Ellis's stance, and he attempted to use his political contacts to prevent Williams-Ellis's appointment to the Hobhouse Committee on National Parks: See Geoffrey Whiskard - Thomas Jones 19/7/45 Dr. Thomas Jones C.H. Collection Group H. Vol.15, Item no.123

137. Ibid.

138. Manchester Guardian 14/2/46 "The Llyn Camp" (leader)

139. C&DI "Penychain to be a Holiday Camp"

140. Ibid.

141. Liverpool Daily Post 27/7/46 "Welsh Features at Holiday Camp"

142. I would like to thank Dennis Hardy for his helpful comments on a draft of this chapter.
CONCLUSION

In the Introduction, I noted that this thesis was concerned with the making and remaking of the Welsh landscape in the first half of this century, and the role of this in debates surrounding the question of national identity. This thesis has demonstrated that, rather than in the Hoskinian sense, the whole idea of landscape was remade during this period. A number of markedly different ways of reading 'landscape', and through it Welsh rural society, co-existed in fluid relationship. The Conclusion summarises these readings and the relationships between them.

The C.P.R.W., and fellow amenity groups, were concerned to preserve the scenery of rural Wales. They, therefore, promoted an idea of landscape as an aesthetic construct largely independent of its cultural context. Landscapes were physical and scenic resources to be embraced and forged by the modernist spirit through 'the plan', producing visually ordered environments having a functional logic. The national park was perhaps the epitome of this process. Selected in objectively scientific terms - by Cyril Fox's views on natural history, and Vaughan Cornish's 'science of scenery' - they presented landscape at its most detached, framed (like a landscape painting) by rigorously delimited boundaries. Not only was the view subject to control, but so was its observation; both elements of the scene, like advertising hoardings, and viewers of it, like the 'untutored' townsfolk, could be equally 'vulgar'. An ordered landscape also demanded ordered enjoyment, and behaviour was codified in terms of 'appropriateness'. Thus, the parks represented a particularly stratified sense both of landscape and society, with education as the binding concept through which people might improve. Significantly, the 'nation' in National Parks was Britain - the Welsh parks, for instance, serving much of southern Britain - and the values represented in the parks' conception and execution were arguably those of an urban population eagerly embracing the idea of 'leisure'. The division between work and leisure forced the parks - despite the best efforts of the likes of George Stapledon - into the realm of scenery, in the sense of providing a backdrop. Landscape thus became something objective to be managed rather than an expression of an evolving relation between a native people and their land. In this sense, landscape as scenery demanded a plan and a body of interpreters to apply the specialised knowledge and to provide leadership. As we have seen, many of the individuals involved in the amenity movement subscribed to a set of broadly 'Anglicised' values, though with varying degrees of sensitivity to the social and cultural needs of rural Wales. In their concern for the look of things, they extended the tradition of the re-making of the Welsh landscape according to external taste begun, perhaps, by the Romantics.
There emerged, in parallel with this sense of landscape as scenery, an indigenous re-making of the idea of rural Wales and of landscape. Promoted largely by geographers, anthropologists, archaeologists and students of 'the rural', this remaking saw society and culture as integral parts of the landscape. Indeed, the landscape had no meaning without concern for its ethnicity. It was to be conceived as habitat or as environment, placing human occupancy and human activity at the core. This notion of landscape had a strong sense of aesthetics also; the landscape could literally be seen and read as an historical canvas or text allowing the recreation of past human geographies. People were part of the landscape, wedded, as Fleure's survey showed, to their localities. Through their actions they modified the landscape, and their relics - such as archaeological remains or vernacular dwellings - created the scene and added layers of meaning. So the visual provided the initial stimulus for a reading of Welshness and the land, and an understanding of human geography and history, and as such scenic protection had an importance. Detached from this history, however, landscape was seen as a shallow concern. Landscapes and human artefacts should, these academics argued, be preserved for didactic reasons. Certainly the lessons of craftsmanship were advanced to protect middle class tastes affronted by the cheap products of mass production, but they were also advanced as a picture of independence and self sufficiency, as an idealised understanding of a society in harmony with its land. The Welsh Folk Museum was as much an institution concerned with the future of rural Wales as with its past. Thus, whilst these academics had a strong conception of the need to plan, stimulated by the decline of traditional rural society, they produced arguments which placed people in their environments in a profound way, dubbed 'Human Ecology' by George Stapledon. They stressed the continuity of Wales's human geography and its social patterns, but also saw this continuity as a model for future development. Iorwerth Peate's ferocious rebuff to the C.P.R.W. on the 'bombing school' issue illustrated clearly the incompatibility of ideas of landscape as scenery and landscape as habitat or environment. His response to the Scott Report, however, revealed that questions of scenic beauty and of social development need not be separate.

Both scenic and environmental conceptions of landscape were represented in the work of Plaid Cymru. As I have argued, they possessed a sense of aesthetics wedded to notions of patriotism, which attacked the despoliation of scenic landscape on its own terms. They joined with the C.P.R.W. in lamenting the lack of aesthetic sense amongst the Welsh, propagated by an overly textual culture. Nonetheless, they departed from this aestheticism by the development of a 'territorial' sense of landscape. Plaid Cymru drew on the work of geographers, archaeologists and the like in arguing that the length of ethnic occupancy in Wales had been 'scientifically' revealed,
and that this evidence legitimised claims to sovereignty. In this way, Wales was tied into European currents of thought and distanced from Englishness. Moves 'back to the land' were but one illustration of this conceptual shift. Academic work certainly informed political rhetoric; it was with this sense of ethnicity and territoriality that War Office demands and Butlin's holiday camp were opposed. But his rhetoric was fused with developments in planning thought around the question of Wales's future national development. Maintaining control of Wales's land was materially central to the quest for nationhood, and landscapes thus became symbolic of sovereignty. The sense of landscape advanced was environmental in that the Welshness of land was presented and defended, and its aesthetics were read through this lens. Scenic despoliation thus became symbolic of English materialistic values and of the economic exploitation and political oppression of Wales. So planning could become an intervention in these processes, with the manipulation of landscape (in its synthetic, territorial sense) both effecting and symbolising a new sense of nationhood. As we have seen, however, this sense of planning was in constant conflict with the managerial ideals of centralised state, and with those plans which received the state's blessing. Whilst these plans offered aesthetic opportunities in their breadth of conception - the Butlin's camp, for instance, concentrating coastal development into one managed site - they frequently undermined local culture and seemingly attacked the emerging sense of Welsh sovereignty over land. Change in the landscape then could not be understood in solely aesthetic terms. The complexity of the issue of landscape in Wales was exhibited in a series of (often literally) inflamed debates. Given these tensions, the role of the aesthetic - landscape art for instance - in Welsh culture appears to be an important, though vast, area to be examined.

There were, however, clearly areas of congruence which make it inappropriate to discuss inter-war rural Wales entirely in terms of conflicting ideologies. None of these ideologies had a coherence which excluded the values and opinions of others; I have, for instance, suggested that a range of stances co-existed within the 'Aberystwyth School'. The senses of landscape merged to some extent and, as I have shown, informed one another. Amenity groups like the C.P.R.W. were made painfully aware of the ethnicity of Welsh land, and the inappropriateness of their scenic notion of landscape. They came to share environmental perspectives on the relationship between communities and the land, and to appreciate territorial claims, particularly in the context of post-war military land requisitioning. Debates within the council centred on the extent to which they could evolve an appropriately Welsh attitude to landscape, underpinning their aestheticism though perhaps not yet informing it. A feeling for tradition and for culture gradually imbued the planners' modernism. Landscape aesthetics were also utilised by Plaid Cymru to reveal the exploitation of Wales and the lack of indigenous pride. If planning, as employed by the C.P.R.W., had seemed an
ineffectual way of protecting rural Wales, Plaid Cymru utilised and modified the techniques of spatial and scenic planning - through proposed large-scale public works like the 'North-South' road - to engender national spirit and to re-create the Welsh community on a new foundation.

In their sense of national spirit, nationalists drew on tendencies then clearly apparent on the European Right, but we should be wary of drawing too many conclusions from this. The uncertainty of the inter-war years precipitated a number of radical solutions and the emergence of rival, though often overlapping, populist ideologies. Together these challenged the old orders whilst drawing selectively from them. As Stephen Kern puts it, "seemingly antithetical developments energized each other and occurred in dialectically related pairs"\(^1\). Left and Right were certainly not coherent polarities, and as far as landscape - in all its forms - was concerned, the dialogue between ideologies was open and vigorous\(^2\). We have also clearly seen that in inter-war Wales tradition and modernity enjoyed a reciprocal relationship. Whilst seeing the threats of modernity and mourning its transcending of the old geographical barricades, the academics and nationalists also grasped the opportunities of modernism and of 'the plan' as a means of combating this cultural erosion. Peate, Fleure and Stapledon foresaw the re-establishment of the old polities on new, technological foundations thus transforming one of Europe's 'regions of difficulty'. Hydro-electric power had an almost transcendent part to play in this 'regeneration' of community\(^3\), and mobile industries like plastics were seen as stabilisers of rural populations.

Despite the fact that I have qualified the idea of a naive or pre-modern gwerin in Wales at this time, the question remains of the extent to which interventions and the whole process of education by learned, middle class intellectuals - nationalists and academics - were ultimately self-defeating in that they would change that which, at a glance, they sought to preserve, namely the peasantry and their landscapes. John Berger suggests that notions of 'progress' are inimical to a peasantry for whom survival is the key and the future a series of 'ambushes' or challenges\(^4\). Thus planning has little meaning. But he also suggests that, far from being 'backward', the peasant has a more cyclical understanding of time: "His determination is to hand on the means of survival.. to his children. His ideals are located in the past; his obligations are to the future"\(^5\). Arguably, this represents some of the qualities of the conception of planning and landscape advanced by the academics and adopted by the nationalists. Its ideals were those of the past - it was founded on the notion of the smallholding and of the organic community - but it accepted if not the obligations of the future then at least its preconditions as expressed in industrial and economic change. Particularly in Peate's mind, the traditional structure of Welsh rural society, which fostered the crafts and the language, could be rebuilt and advanced on new foundations; thus, to quote Berger,
"The future path through future ambushes is a continuation of the old path by which the survivors from the past have come". It may be that Peate's view is rather more evolutionary than Berger's, nonetheless both seem to represent a reconciliation between tradition and modernity. The complexity and dynamism of this argument, though, emerges in the varied responses to the North-South road. For Peate, progress and accessibility without sovereignty had profound implications for a society which had hitherto thrived on remoteness.

LANDSCAPE, PLANNING AND POST-MODERNITY

One conclusion to emerge from this study is the continued importance of geography and of various understandings of landscape in shaping Wales's historical experience. Wales's terrain was seen as a cause of the persistence of an elusive thread of independence. In the Romantic period, however, Wales's experience was that of other European mountain countries - newly attractive to the discerning traveller. Primary and secondary industries swarmed around Wales's natural resources in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the concerns of the twentieth century arguably brought even greater changes. Increased accessibility made the mountains and coasts of Wales the haunts of the growing ranks of tourists and recreation-seekers. The emergence of planning as a technique of modern statehood also made demands on Wales's geography. Large areas were sterilised as National Parks, and post-Second World War agglomerations of holidaymakers were considered within a State policy context, rather than in terms of local impacts - a fact distressing to local scenic enthusiasts and to nationalists alike. During the war, the physical geography of Wales's mountainous lands and flat coastal plains - allied to their distance from continental Europe - proved to be useful resources in strategic mobilization, again irrespective of indigenous concern. Ironically, the geography which increasingly drew the state and big business to Wales was perhaps the very thing which had promoted a persistent sense of cultural and political difference. The pattern for conflict was thus set and has continued, as has the conflict over the meanings and control of landscape. History seems to show that Wales's geography makes for a complex political climate. As we have seen, various understandings of landscape prompted many conflicts in the inter-war years. This poses the question of how we can learn from this and forge a new form of planning which considers environment in more synthetic terms.

To study planning as a central plank of modernism is pertinent in the 1980s, a decade which has witnessed the fall from political favour of such corporatist conceptions. The managerial, state-led sense of planning reached its pinnacle in post-war Britain with reconstruction, welfare statism and mass housing. This experience had its alienating features though, prompting a rising and
sustained tide of opposition to modern planning and architecture in the 1960s and 1970s which, along with a reorientation in the arts and literature, was seen as the onset of 'post-modernism'.

Post-modernism has been seen as an opportunity to recapture the environment. The supposed rediscovery of pastoralism in art, for instance, has been aligned with a post-modern environmentalism and stress on quality of experience. In architecture and planning, this has signified a new 'struggle for place', attacking the lack of historical and regional reference in modernism, asserting local and minority cultures, the vernacular, human proportions and subjective needs. Community architecture, for instance, stresses locality and human requirements with experts as servants rather than masters. Whether we are witnessing the 'death of planning' is debatable; it seems more likely that its aims have been suppressed in favour of the market and the interests of capital. But possibly in response there has been an emergence of planning from below, of community- rather than state-led solutions. Community architecture and housing associations are generally solutions in local context, locally conceived and managed. In Wales, for instance, housing associations are seen as a way of maintaining community and, thus, culture.

This thesis has shown that, in inter-war Wales, planning was seen as both representing a destructive form of modernity, lacking a historical or contextual sense - something imposed on the 'periphery' from the 'core' - and as a movement optimistically offering the potential to revive old structures. The conflict between representations of landscape was reflected in the C.P.R.W.'s experience. But significantly there was also an attempt in Wales to mould planning into an indigenous frame, to instil a concern for culture and tradition, and thus harness modernism's opportunities. This attempt has been sustained. In 1970, for instance, the prominent nationalist Dafydd Iwan outlined what he - and, by implication, the movement - understood by 'conservation'. It was a classic re-statement of the debates we have seen outlined between the wars. The predominant interpretation of environmental protection was, he said, superficial: "like designing the colour scheme for a house whose foundations are cracking..". In Wales, 'our environment' "is considerably more than clean air and soil, far more than picturesque mountains, valleys and moorland, and an inspiring coastline. We have a people, a way of life, a long cultural tradition, an intricate network of rural communities, and, above and basic to all these, we have a language.. Just as our physical environment is being eroded, so is our cultural environment, and of the two, the latter is of more fundamental and lasting importance."

As both academics and nationalists had shown between the wars, landscape could be communicated in ways other than the visual.

It may be, in the 'post-modern' 1980s, that there are slight shifts towards a culturally-sensitive form of planning. The C.P.R.W. recently argued that the Welsh language should be amongst the
aspects of rural Wales it should protect. And Circular 53/88 - issued by a supposedly free market Tory government - gives the Welsh language status as a 'material consideration' in planning applications. But there are also signs, as in the inter-war years and after, of attempts to guide change in a more indigenous direction, bringing a traditional structure to bear on modern materials and techniques. Fleure and Peate argued for the diversification of regional economies away from dependence on tourism and 'amenity'. Peate called for the introduction of small, sympathetically-designed industrial schemes in rural areas. Similarly Dafydd Iwan argued that "the myth that increased 'efficiency' means centralization must be exploded once and for all, and faith restored in the small units"13. He called for a variety of regenerative schemes conserving traditional structures on which to build a future Wales. A recent report by a Llŷn co-operative venture calls for a new strategy for the peninsula14. In its visions of diversified small-scale industries, and its balance between these and agriculture and tourism, it recalls Fleure, Peate and Stapledon's schemes. There are also more specific geographic resonances. As in the case of the Penychain camp alternative, market gardening is proposed on the fine lands of that part of the peninsula. The plan's flavour, therefore, is strongly post-industrial and post-modern. Such developments appear to be fruitful areas for future study.

It may appear that an 'agreed' sense of landscape emerged from the inter-war years in Wales. Continued conflicts over its meaning show, however, that this is not the case; the discourse between ideas of landscape may simply have shifted ground in changing contexts. But this shows that the concept of landscape is a powerful and potentially sophisticated way of understanding questions of importance in contemporary human geography; questions of ethnicity, territoriality, planning and the environment, for instance. Indeed studies of landscape in the 'new' cultural geography reflect a broader acculturation and sense of history within human geography as a whole15. This sophistication, however, depends on an understanding of landscape distanced both from scenery and from Landschaft, yet incorporating aspects of both. We must come to understand both landscapes and ideas of them as cultural and political constructions, and rather than argue for an 'authentic' or 'consensus' response to them be sensitive to the dialogues between them. Thus landscape should remain a fluid and contested concept in a way which does justice to a multiplicity of perspectives.

The study of landscape then is far more than a play on aesthetics, and in this sense a rich, yet neglected vein of synthetic human geography exists in the work of the Aberystwyth geographers and their contemporaries. Methodologically, they promoted a blurring of disciplinary boundaries and brought a breadth of perception to an understanding of how cultural systems informed attitudes
to geography. But we can also learn from this tradition of what is, in many ways, cultural geography and its stress on critical, and also political, engagement. There are tendencies in post-modernism which, according to Peter Jackson, lead all too easily into empty posturing and sophistry, "a never-never land of refractive images for endless, but groundless speculation". Post-modernism threatens to pass into a relativism unwilling to make any value judgements, in a quest for plurality of meanings. This challenge to 'authenticity' is a vital project, but can lapse into cynicism in a way which mirrors the tendency of the worst post-modern architecture to descend into pastiche and a rifling of history. Post-modernism's stress on 'surface' at the expense of 'depth' for instance, denies much human experience and beliefs, the fixity of meanings and authority. Salman Rushdie might, however, care to dwell on the 'depth' of cultural and religious belief that he has exposed, on the power of the word rather than of fiction. There is a need to imbue cultural geography with a critical idealism; this might come from a recognition that the process of writing and research places us firmly at the centre of any narrative. We, as authors, have constructed that narrative. As individuals, with our own motivations, ideals, histories and interests, we select and assemble the fragments and create our own meaning. In so doing, we do not claim, indeed cannot claim, any moral or explanatory superiority, but neither should we deny that we will attach to some sense of the 'authentic' brought about through experience. This does pose challenges of idealism - I will undoubtedly, for instance, tend towards those constructions of 'Welshness' most closely approximating to my own - but to deny this is to claim a spurious, if not 'scientific', objectivity. More important is the ability to see 'Welshness', for instance, as a construct, even if we do attach particular meaning to certain of its manifestations. Welshness has, in the past, been read as a rural phenomenon. With continued in-migration by the non-Welsh, and the migration of Welsh speakers to the urban south, the future challenge may be as much the creation of a new identity for Wales as the protection of the old one. We should continue to see both writings and identities as 'fictions' in the sense of 'something made', and made by individuals and societies in response to changing contexts. Idealism, personal and political commitment can strengthen cultural geography and the study of landscape. Equally, the understanding of contextual, minority and vernacular senses of landscape was of idealistic concern for Fleure and Peate in inter-war Wales, and should be of broader concern now.

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3. Pyrs Gruffudd "Uncivil Engineering': Nature, Nationalism and Hydro-Electrics in Wales" in Denis Cosgrove and Geoff Petts (eds) *Water, Engineering and Landscape: Water Control and Landscape Transformation in the Modern World* Bellhaven Press (in press); Continuing the sense of an external re-cycling of Welsh history and landscape, Clough and Amabel Williams-Ellis produced a satire of Thomas Love Peacock's *Headlong Hall* in response to proposed H.E.P. plans for Snowdonia in the 1950s. Though their objections were aesthetic, the book nonetheless included a nationalistic warning in an epilogue by the author Richard Hughes: (1951) *Headlong Down the Years: a Tale of Today* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.


5. Ibid., p.201.

6. Ibid., p.203.


12. Ibid., pp.21-2.

13. Ibid., p.25.


17. "By acknowledging that our story is related to and constitutive of our personal and social experience, by admitting that our story enters political and moral discourse we become more fully rational. We make sense of the world in the only truly 'rational' way: from our own experiences. Such an admission makes evident the power of our words, opens the creativity of meaning and honestly faces the assumption of authority" (My italics). Mona Domosh and Denis Cosgrove "Author and Authority: Writing the New Cultural Geography" Mimeo.
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