



## Postgraduate Dissertation coversheet & feedback form:

**THIS SHEET MUST BE THE FIRST PAGE OF THE ASSIGNMENT YOU ARE SUBMITTING (DO NOT SEND AS A SEPARATE FILE)**

<i>For completion by student:</i>		
<i>Student Name: Rachel Eirlys McLean</i>		
<i>Student <b>University</b> Email: 29000634@student.tsd.ac.uk</i>		
<i>Module code: CYCS7010</i>	<i>Student ID number: 29000634</i>	<i>Educational support needs: No</i>
<i>Dissertation title: The extent of 'Welshness' among the exiled Welsh living in England, Scotland and Ireland.</i>		
<i>Supervisor: Dr. Christine Jones</i>	<i>Word count: 19,417</i>	
<p>I confirm that this is my original work and that I have adhered to the University policy on plagiarism. Signed .....</p> <p><b>Email submission: if you are submitting this form via email, please tick this box ✓ (as a substitute for your signature) to confirm that you agree to the above declaration.</b></p>		
<i>For completion by the first marker:</i>		
<i>Comments:</i>		

First Marker's Mark:  Signature:	<i>Date:</i>
<i>For completion by the second marker:</i>  Comments:	
Second Marker's Mark: Signature:	Date:
Agreed internal mark:  Signature 1 <sup>st</sup> marker:  Signature 2 <sup>nd</sup> marker:	Date

Comments (for completion by the internal markers which indicate how the agreed internal mark has been arrived at):

**NB. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the final examination board.**

For completion by the External Examiner:

Comments:

Proposed Mark:

Signature of External Examiner:

Final Agreed Mark:

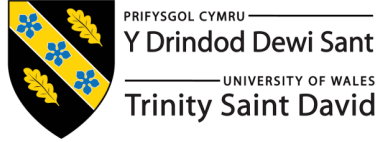
Comments (to indicate how the final agreed mark has been arrived at):

The extent of 'Welshness' amongst the exiled Welsh living in  
England, Scotland and Ireland.

A dissertation submitted to the  
University of Wales Trinity Saint David  
In fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts.

2013

Eirlys McLean.



**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation  
Declaration Form.**

1. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed.....R. E. McLean

Date 25/03/2013.

2. This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. Celtic Studies.

Signed .....R.E.McLean

Date 25/03/2013

3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

A bibliography is appended.

Signed candidate: R.E.McLean

Date: 25/03/2013

4. I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying, inter- library loan, and for deposit in the University's digital repository

Signed (candidate)...R.E.McLean

Date...25/03/2013

**Supervisor's Declaration.**

I am satisfied that this work is the result of the student's own efforts.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## ABSTRACT

There appears to have been an upsurge of interest in 'Welshness' among Welsh people living in Wales during the last two or three decades. This is evidenced by the reversal, if only slight, of the decline in the number of Welsh speakers as indicated by the census figures and by the setting up of the Welsh Assembly Government. The purpose of this dissertation was to find out if there has been a similar upward trend amongst the exiled Welsh living in the British Isles.

To begin with it was important to isolate what characteristics define a Welsh person apart from being born in the geographical area of Wales. Language is of paramount importance in defining a national identity, although not exclusively so. The Welsh have a tendency towards non-conformity in religion and radicalism in politics. They appear to be musical and enjoy sports particularly rugby.

Also of interest was to determine the time when and why migration from Wales occurred. There appeared to have been three well defined periods. Migration from the rural areas occurred during the nineteenth century. The industrial depression of the 1920s and 30s hit the Welsh valleys in particular. Again in the 1950s to the 1970s there was an exodus of graduates predominately.

To begin the survey, Welsh Societies were contacted through the website [ww.taffia.org](http://ww.taffia.org) which unfortunately ceased to function. It soon transpired that there were Welsh learner and conversation groups out with the Societies; therefore the search had to be extended to include these.

Disappointingly a number of the Welsh Societies are reliant on elderly members and seem unable to attract newer and younger members. Some Societies though are resisting this trend and an attempt is made to try and understand why this is so. There is, however, considerable enthusiasm for learning Welsh in England in particular. In the main though, this appears to be dependent on a few enthusiastic individuals.

## Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank the following people for the help that I have been given for the preparation of this dissertation.

Dr. Christine Jones who has supervised me with patience and understanding during the preparation of this dissertation. I have greatly valued her advice.

Dr. Jane Cartwright: without her encouragement, I would not have completed the course.

The Librarians at the University of East Anglia library and the Norfolk County Council libraries. In particular, a thank you to the librarians at my local NCC (Acle) who have been very diligent in finding the books that I required.

A thank you to the officer, usually the Hon. Secretary, of the following Welsh Societies for completing and returning the questionnaire.

Birmingham Cymmrodorion Society.  
Bradford & District Welsh Society.  
Bristol Welsh Society.  
Chelmsford Welsh Society.  
Chiltern & District Welsh Society.  
Cornish Welsh Society.  
Coventry Cambrian Society.  
Derby Welsh Society.  
*Draig Werdd*. The Welsh Society of Ireland.  
Droitwich Welsh Society.  
Edinburgh Welsh Society.  
Hastings Welsh Society.  
Huddersfield Welsh Society.  
Hull & East Yorkshire Welsh Society.  
Liverpool Welsh Society.  
Manchester Welsh Society.  
Newcastle upon Tyne Welsh Society.  
Newport (Salop) Welsh Society.  
Nottingham Welsh Society.  
Norwich Welsh Society.  
Northwich Welsh Society  
Oxfordshire Welsh Society.  
Portsmouth & District Welsh Society.  
Reading & District Welsh Society.  
Sheffield & District Cambrian Society.  
Shrewsbury Welsh Society.  
Slough & District Welsh Society.  
Taunton & District Welsh Society.  
Woking Welsh Society.  
Wolverhampton & District Cambrian Society.

London Welsh Society was contacted by telephone. My thanks to Rhian and her team for answering my many questions.



Jonathan Simcocks, an Englishman who has learnt Welsh and is enthusiastic in his support of Welsh learners in England. He provided me with a list of colleges and groups in England that organise Welsh language courses

The following colleges and Universities for providing me with information regarding their Welsh classes- The Open University, U3A Sheffield, Brasshouse Language Centre, Birmingham, Queen Mary College Basingstoke and the Wirral.

Also, the groups which are not part of a Welsh Society run by dedicated individuals, at Belper, Derby and Solihull & Dorridge, West Midlands.

A special thank you to the Hon. Secretaries of the Slough and District Welsh Society and the *Draig Werdd*, Dublin for giving their permission to include their completed questionnaires in the Appendix.

My thanks for help with Excel and the computer presentation work to Ciaran Chapman my 14 year old grandson and Christopher Charles my godson.

Finally, thanks to my husband Graeme for proof checking the dissertation and for allowing me to commandeer the PC while working on the dissertation.

## Contents.

1. Introduction.....pages 11-12.
2. Chapter 1. Welsh National Identity & Culture..... pages 13-28.
3. Chapter 2. The Welsh diaspora in Britain & Ireland...pages 29-40.
4. Survey of the Societies in the British Isles (2012-13)...pages 41-66.
5. Conclusion and recommendations..... pages 67-70.
6. Bibliography..... pages 71-74.
7. Appendix 1. The Covering Letter.....page 75.
8. Appendix 2. The Questionnaire.....page 76-77.
9. Appendix 3. List of Welsh Societies contacted.....page 78.
10. Appendix 4. Slough & District Welsh society .....page 79-80.
11. Appendix 5. *Draig Werdd*, Dublin.....page 81-84.

## Introduction

The inspiration for this dissertation came partly from studying the module on ‘The Sociolinguistics of Welsh’. The reasons behind the rise and fall in the number of people able to speak Welsh in Wales, followed by the remarkable rise in percentage of people speaking Welsh in the last two decades of the twentieth century was fascinating. This resurgence of interest in Welsh identity matched what I and many other Welsh exiles have found when returning to Wales especially after a gap of a few years.

The second reason was the unexpected finding, when a couple of years ago, we called in at ‘The Little Welsh Harp Shop’ in Derby. Here we were informed that not only was there a thriving Welsh Society in Derby but there was also a Welsh learners group. Apparently, not all the people learning Welsh had a connection either by family or birth to Wales. I, therefore, decided to find out what was happening in other parts of Britain. Ireland has been included as I had been a member of the Dublin Welsh Society when I lived in Dublin when studying medicine there in the 1960s.

For the background to this research study, I decided to investigate what constituted ‘Welshness’, that is, what particular traits identified a Welsh person and what made that person proudly declare that they were Welsh. Undoubtedly the fact that there is a Welsh language still in existence is of paramount importance but there are other factors as well such as being born in Wales, having a love of music, being religious, a tendency to be radical in the field of politics and a love of rugby. Not every Welshman needs to possess all these traits to feel Welsh.

The second area of study was to explore the reasons why the people had left Wales and when. Most of the Welsh that emigrated to England did so for economic reasons whatever time this had occurred. A fascinating find was the number of non-conformist Welsh chapels that had been built in Britain and even one in Dublin following the Methodist revival and the wave of non-conformism that had swept through Wales during the late eighteenth century, early nineteenth

centuries. Indeed, a study of where and when these chapels had been built would have provided a fairly accurate map of the Welsh diaspora.

To gauge the degree of ‘Welshness’ among the exiled Welsh in the British Isles, a questionnaire was sent to all the Welsh societies that could be located through the Taffia website.<sup>1</sup> It soon transpired that there were many Welsh learner groups and Welsh conversation groups out with the Societies, therefore the research had to be extended in order to include as many of these groups as possible.

It became obvious when analysing the returned questionnaires that some of the societies were struggling to exist and possibly on the verge of closure. Indeed, at least five on the original list of Societies approached were defunct. However, there were a few that were bucking the trend and were able to attract new and younger members.

The need to meet up with fellow countrymen who have an identity in common is profound even today when a person emigrates to a foreign country. This need must have been even more important in the past when travel was difficult and there was little communication apart from surface mail. It is little wonder that there are so many Welsh songs about ‘hiraeth’, the longing for the familiarity of home.

Therefore, initially the purpose of the research was to discover how active were the Welsh societies in maintaining Welshness, particularly the Welsh language. The project expanded to locate all the locations outside Wales where Welsh is taught. Another diversification was to examine why some of the Societies were successful in increasing their membership numbers, what were they doing well and could the failing Societies emulate their success.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.taffia.org.uk](http://www.taffia.org.uk) appears not to be functioning at present <attempted access 16/03/2013>

## Chapter 1 Welsh National Identity and Culture.

Identity can be a difficult and intricate concept to understand particularly when the word is used almost daily in common parlance. It is also used in such disciplines as philosophy, psychology and sociology for example, and has slightly different meanings in the differing specialities. Although an attempt will be made to define 'identity' as it appertains to nationality, this is by no means definite and still causes controversies.<sup>2</sup> The word identity itself stems from the Latin root-*idem* meaning 'the same'. However, it is a fact that no two persons amongst the millions on this earth are identical. The etymological origin of the word is therefore somewhat misleading. Identity though does look at traits that people have in common with others, for example, language, place of origin, ethnicity etc.

The form of identity touched upon above would make up part of someone's personal identity. Cultural identity is defined by Chimisso as 'the totality of symbols and artefacts produced by human beings'.<sup>3</sup> In constructing national identity, language, culture, geography, history as well as religion and politics would be included. Additionally, identity is not fixed, apart from possibly gender identity. While in the present day a person can change his or her outward sexual appearance through surgery, drug therapy etc, their gender remains fixed. Identity was more fixed a few generations ago, when children tended to follow their parents' profession and remain in the locality of their birth.

To develop an understanding of identity, it is probably worthwhile attempting to trace the development of the concept of identity from its inception in the seventeenth century to the present day. The philosopher Descartes (1595-1650) was the first to attempt to make sense of his identity by defining human beings as being able to think *cognito ergo sum* – 'I think, therefore I am'.<sup>4</sup> This set humans apart from animals, plants and inanimate objects.

---

<sup>2</sup>C. Chimisso.(ed.) *Exploring European Identities*,(Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2003) p.5.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* p.7.

<sup>4</sup> Katherine Woodward, *Understanding Identity*, (London: Arnold a member of the Hodder Headline Group, 2002) p.16.

This 'Cartesian' concept of identity promoted the universality of human beings. The concept was further developed during the Enlightenment, a cultural movement during the eighteenth century in Europe, which gave impetus to the French Revolution. According to Chimisso, 'this universalistic conception... has been the intellectual underpinning for the advocating of universal rights, universal suffrage and equality before the law'.<sup>5</sup>

Theological and philosophical debates too have been going on, for at least the last two thousand years, promoting the concept of the self as being responsible for the person's actions.<sup>6</sup> In the early twentieth century, the psychoanalysts, led by Sigmund Freud maintained that the self in the child developed into the 'super-ego', which is that part of their personality that takes over from the parent as part of the child's behavioural control.<sup>7</sup>

Sociologists in more recent times have opposed the Cartesian view of identity as the self is being viewed in isolation and devoid of interaction with others. As Stuart Hall argues:

'the subject still has an inner core or essence that is "the real me", but this is formed and modified in a continuous dialogue with the cultural worlds "outside" and the identities which they offer.'<sup>8</sup>

In summary, Descartes visualizes the human individual as being universal; the Enlightenment perpetuated this concept of universality and this idea had been at the core of European social and political reasoning since the eighteenth century. This universal subject has in recent years been claimed to be that of the idealized middle-class male. Gay activists, feminists and others such as the black minority movement have contested this and have fought for recognition of their different identities.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> C.Chimisso, (ed.) *Exploring European Identities*, p.7.

<sup>6</sup> Kath Woodward, *Understanding Identity*, p.2.

<sup>7</sup> C.Chimisso, (ed.) *Exploring European Identities*, p.10.

<sup>8</sup> S.Hall quoted in C. Chimisso, *Exploring European Identities*, p.10.

<sup>9</sup> C.Chimisso, *Exploring European Identities*, p.10.

Additionally, sociologists have argued in recent years that identity is not fixed at birth but is being continually constructed and adapted.<sup>10</sup>

As stated previously, national identity is formed by the interaction of various influences: language, being of paramount importance, history, geographical area, culture, religion and politics. Each of these will be examined in depth when constructing a Welsh national identity and an attempt will be made to show how the national identity has changed over the years. However, before looking at national identity it may be instructional to examine how others see us.

Every nationality inevitably has a stereotype constructed by others and the Welsh are no exception. The English have this verse emanating from Victorian times about the Welsh:

Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief,  
Taffy came to my house and stole a leg of beef.

This maintained that the Welsh were devious and not to be trusted. Practically the same character description of the Welsh was given by Geraldus Cambrensis in the book he wrote following his travels around Wales in 1188 -

‘It is a habit of the Welsh to steal anything they can lay their hands on and live on plunder, theft and robbery, not only from foreigners and people hostile to them but from each other.’<sup>11</sup>

One has to wonder if there was after all an element of truth in the Victorian rhyme or had the stereotyping been passed down through the generations as a result of what had been written by Geraldus Cambrensis.

Other icons of Wales, which were prevalent in the past, have included chapels, miners, male voice choirs, leeks, daffodils and rugby. These have changed slightly in the twenty-first century; the miners are now very few in numbers, the chapels and churches

---

<sup>10</sup> Ian Davidson & Brec'hed Piette, *Without and Within: inclusion, identity and continuing education in a new Wales*, online <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/documents/00001441.htm> <accessed 06/09/2012>, p.2/7.

<sup>11</sup> Leonard James, *The Journey of Gerald of Wales*, online <http://wwwSwansea.ac.uk/history/wales/travel/gerald2.html> <accessed 08/03/2013>

are emptying as a result of the secularization that swept Britain and the Western world from the 1960s. The remainder, however, are still applicable.<sup>12</sup>

The Englishman is similarly stereotyped by others as being the ‘stiff upper lip’, non-emotional white gentlemen, typifying by the military upper-class men that ruled the colonies. Apparently, according to Ian Hislop in the BBC 2 documentary *Stiff upper Lip*, this characterized English man is on the wane. One has only to remember the outpouring of emotion that occurred at the time of Princess Diana’s death. Queen Elizabeth was one of the few to still uphold the stance of being non-emotional, in public at least. However, as far as national identity is concerned it is not how others see us that is important but how we perceive ourselves.

What makes someone declare with pride ‘I am Welsh’? As stated previously, language is the corner stone in the formation of a national identity. Where there is a separate language there is the foundation for a separate nation state.<sup>13</sup> Language is also the means by which we can communicate with others living in the same community and is thus connected to personal identity. Language can also indicate the person’s status and class within the group.

It is quite remarkable that the Welsh language has survived given the disincentives that have occurred since the accession of the Tudors to the throne of England. When Henry Tudor, a Welshman, became king of England in 1485, the Welsh must have hoped that Wales would have regained influence and status having lost territory to England during the Edwardian period. However, during Henry VIII’s reign, in 1536 and 1542, the Laws of Wales Act and the Act of Union Law were passed, whereby all judicial proceedings, laws and government in Wales would be conducted in English. In addition in order to hold an official position in Wales, the person had to be fluent in English.

The Welsh nobility, seeing that their advancement resided in the English Court, relocated to London, their sons were educated in England and soon they lost the ability

---

<sup>12</sup> Hugh Mackay, (ed.) *Understanding Contemporary Wales*, (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2003) p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte quoted in Chimisso, C., (ed) *Exploring European Identities*, p.158.



to speak the Welsh language. An added blow was the fact that the nobility ceased to employ Welsh bards and musicians on their Welsh estates to the detriment of Welsh culture. The Welsh language thus became the language of 'y *werin*', the peasantry.

The language would have undoubtedly have died were it not for the Reformation and Henry VIII's schism with the Roman Catholic church over his divorce to Katherine of Aragon. Martin Luther decreed that the Bible should be in the vernacular, so that all could read and understand its contents. Elizabeth I passed an act in 1563 decreeing the Bible should be translated into Welsh. The aim was to promote the Protestant faith in Wales but in addition it was to teach the people English by having the Welsh and English Bibles side by side in the Churches.

Bishop Morgan translated the Bible into a Welsh of 'the bards' in 1588 which helped to prevent the language from deteriorating into a purely colloquial language. Another clergyman, Griffith Jones of Llanddowror in around 1734, established circulating schools in order to teach both children and adults to read the Bible in Welsh, their mother tongue. According to figures quoted by Davies in *A History of Wales*, by 1771 over two hundred thousand people, almost half the population of Wales, had attended these schools.<sup>14</sup> It was stated that by the second half of the eighteenth century, this fact had come to the notice of Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, Wales being at that time one of the few countries to have a literate majority amongst its population.<sup>15</sup> Following the death of Griffith Jones, a Methodist minister, Thomas Charles founded Sunday schools in the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. This made the infamous 1847 report on the state of education in Wales even more improbable.

This report, written by three non Welsh speaking English barristers described the Welsh as being illiterate, immoral and drunkard. Subsequently this became known as *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* –The Treachery of the Blue Books.<sup>16</sup> As a consequence, elementary schools were set up in Wales, where the language of education was English. The punishment for speaking Welsh in school was the wearing of the notorious 'Welsh Not'.

---

<sup>14</sup> John Davies, *A History of Wales*, (London: Penguin Books, Revised edition, 2007), p.298.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.299.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.* p.380.

This was small wooden plank on which was carved the words ‘Welsh Not’ which was hung around the neck of the offending child. The ‘Welsh Not’ was passed on from one child to the next when they were caught speaking Welsh at school. The child wearing the ‘Welsh Not’ at the end of the day would be punished. This practice continued until early twentieth century. Interestingly, similar wooden panels were apparently in use in Brittany and in Scotland.<sup>17</sup> The cynic would claim that it was not altruism that prompted the government to educate the poor but the need for a literate and disciplined workforce to man the factories and mines of the burgeoning industrial revolution.

The industrial revolution did change the parts of Wales where extractive industries were being set up from being a rural Welsh speaking community to an urban Welsh speaking community. To begin with most of the people that migrated to these areas were from the Welsh countryside but later as more manpower was required, migration took place from England and Ireland. This naturally had the effect of diminishing the percentage of Welsh speakers in these areas. Having survived Wales becoming effectively part of England under the Tudors and education being Anglicized in Victorian times, the Welsh language now began to lose ground.

From the 1901 census until the 1991 census, there was a precipitous decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers from 49.9% in 1901 to 18.6% in 1991.<sup>18</sup> There were several factors that accounted for this. World War I took its toll, not only in deaths but in Welshmen who settled elsewhere in Britain after the war. By 1919, 13.82% of the population had joined the army and at that time they would have been all male. The slaughter that ensued resulted in a generation of Welsh women unmarried and consequently fewer potentially Welsh speaking families.

Two happenings during the interwar period affected the survival of the language. Due to the depression in 1920-1930 there was an outward migration from the industrial and to lesser extent from the rural areas of Wales to England and further afield seeking employment. On the positive side, in 1925 a small group of activists formed what was to be known as the Welsh Nationalist Party (*Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru*). To begin

---

<sup>17</sup> This information was given to me on a visit to Brittany some three years ago. A Scottish friend informed me of the practice in Scotland. Neither claim has been verified.

<sup>18</sup> C. Williams, *The Sociolinguistics of Welsh* (Course Work), (Lampeter: Lampeter University of Wales), p.5.

with, the party had very little influence with the vast majority of the people of Wales, being mainly interested in the preservation of the language. However, later on from the 1960s onwards, as will be discussed later, it became a powerful political force, promoting Welsh language and identity.

One of the founder members of *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru*, Saunders Lewis in 1962 in his BBC Radio lecture, painted a very bleak future for the Welsh language. This was a 'wake-up' call and prompted some students from Aberystwyth University to form the Welsh Language Society, *Cymdeithas y Iaith Gymraeg*. This society brought attention to themselves through such actions of civil disobedience as refusing to pay fines when the demand was printed in English and painting out English place names on road signs in Wales.

Youngsters growing up in a Welsh family in the immediate post-war period in Wales were frequently discouraged by their parents from learning Welsh at school as it was deemed a waste of their time. As a consequence, a language which was once passed on within the family started to fail. About the same time, Welsh medium schools began to emerge and flourish. These became popular, not just among the Welsh speakers but also with English speaking parents as they were proving to be scholastically superior to the other 'English' state schools.<sup>19</sup>

The 2001 Census produced a turning point for the language. For the first time in a hundred years the percentage of people in Wales with a knowledge of Welsh increased. In addition, in the last two censuses there has been an increase in the percentage of children under the age of fourteen years speaking Welsh. This has been as a direct result of the promotion of the language in schools. The language seems now to be primarily acquired through state education and not the home. Tim Williams has cautioned though that "language can not be resuscitated by means of school alone".<sup>20</sup> In this age of globalization, where English is the language of commerce, media and the world wide web, it seems surprising that people are prepared to learn another language. Several

---

<sup>19</sup> *ibid* p.7-8.

<sup>20</sup> Tim Williams (1989) quoted in Mark Pittaway, chapter 6, *Language, Identity and Nation, in C. Chimisso (ed.) Exploring European Identities*, (Milton Keynes: Open University, 2003)p.177.

sociologists, among them Manuel Castells and Alain Touraine, have theorized about the increased interest in the smaller nations. This will be discussed later.

The first results of the 2011 census regarding the Welsh language were published in December 2012. Disappointedly, the percentage of people speaking Welsh in Wales had decreased from 20.8% in 2001 to 19.0% in 2011. There was one glimmer of hope however, in that there was a considerable increase in the number of younger children (age 3-4 years) speaking Welsh and a slight increase in Welsh speaking adults aged between 20-44 years. The most disturbing decrease in numbers occurred in the traditionally Welsh speaking counties of Ceredigion, down to 47.3% from 52.0% in 2001 and Carmarthenshire down from 50.3% in 2001 to 43.9 in 2011. These are rural counties in the main and these are the counties that have experience the greatest number of in-migration of English speakers seeking the ‘good life’. There are very few employment opportunities for younger people who have to migrate to look for work elsewhere in Wales or even to England. In addition, a number of Welsh speakers in ‘*y Fro Gymraeg*’ were elderly and inevitably some have died.

The role of education in preserving the language and subsequently Welsh culture has been alluded to but education has also a role in promoting the other factors that are important in the formation of a national culture - such as Welsh history, literature, geography and customs. For example, in the 1950s and early 1960s in a typical Grammar School in Carmarthenshire, the history taught was English history, literature apart from those that were studying Welsh was English literature and there was no Anglo-Welsh literature ever on the syllabus. Pierre Bourdieu was quoted in *Exploring European Identities*: “Culture and values of school education are those of the dominant class”. In this case he was talking about the French educational system but this would equally apply to Welsh education of the fifties.<sup>21</sup> Given that the Welsh Grammar Schools had been modelled on the English public schools, the culture and values at that time was that of the English middle class.

One organization which has been outstanding in promoting Welsh Culture is the *Urdd*. Since its inception in 1922 by Ifan ap Owen Edwards to the present day it has “infused a

---

<sup>21</sup>C. Chimisso (ed) *Exploring European Identities*, p.55.

love of language and culture” amongst the young people of Wales through its publications, eisteddfodau and summer camps at Llangranog and Glanllyn.<sup>22</sup> The first Welsh primary school was started in Aberystwyth in 1939 by the people closely connected with the *Urdd*, in order to maintain the Welsh identity of the children when flocks of English evacuees descended upon the town. The *Urdd* has always been an organization aimed specifically at children and young adults. Through its educational programmes, delivered wholly through the medium of Welsh, it has over the years “promoted the virtues of community and Welshness”.<sup>23</sup>

More recently other pressure groups have been set up with the aim of promoting Welsh communities in Wales. *Mentrau Iaith* has been set up to promote the use of the language in a locality<sup>24</sup>, there is even a *Menter Iaith Lloegr* which will be discussed in more detail later in connection with Welsh speaking groups in England. *Cymuned*– (community) was established in 2001. Its aims is to look at everyday factors which adversely affect a Welsh community, for example, too many homes being sold to non Welsh speaking immigrants at prices that the local people could not afford, developing local employment opportunities and ensuring that all children have a bilingual education.<sup>25</sup> Another pressure group, this time aimed at younger people is *Dyfodol*, which the Welsh word for future. This is a very apt title for this pressure group as it is interested in the effect of modern day living on the environment and the sustainability of the community as well as promoting ‘Welshness’.<sup>26</sup>

Until the 1960s, the Welsh non-conformist chapels also promoted the language and culture. Sunday Schools were started by Thomas Charles at the turn of the nineteenth century, to replace the circulating schools discussed earlier. The main purpose of the schools was to teach both adults and children to read the Bible in Welsh. About this time a young girl called Mari Jones walked the forty kilometres from Llanfihangel y Pennant to Bala to buy a Bible.<sup>27</sup> She eventually became the impetus for the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

---

<sup>22</sup> D.Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p.119.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.119.

<sup>24</sup> Online-[www.mentrauiath.com](http://www.mentrauiath.com). <accessed 12/03/2013>.

<sup>25</sup> Online-[www.cymuned.org.uk](http://www.cymuned.org.uk) <accessed 12/03/2013>.

<sup>26</sup> Online- [www.dyfodol.org.uk](http://www.dyfodol.org.uk) <accessed 12/03/2013>

<sup>27</sup> John Davies, *A History of Wales*, p.331.

The Methodists to begin with were still part of the established Anglican Church but from 1811 onwards a separation took place and from then onwards the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales joined the ranks of the non-conformist denominations. This greatly increased the proportion of non-conformists in Wales. It was also a time of expansion with the development of the coal fields. It was estimated that between 1801 and 1851 a non-conformist chapel was completed every eight days.<sup>28</sup> The language used in these chapels was Welsh. Welsh identity was supported not just by learning to read in the Sunday schools but also through hymns and choral singing and through the oratory from the pulpit.

The chapels continued to be in the forefront as guardians of Welsh identity until the 1960s as stated earlier. However, in Wales as elsewhere in Britain, secularization resulted in people turning their backs on organized religion. Cultural developments in the 1960s included for example, the Abortion Act and the Male Homosexuality Act in 1967, the easier Divorce laws in 1969, the availability of the contraceptive pill promoted female emancipation and the emphasis on youth culture all contributed to a less constrained society. Whether this resulted in a less 'Christian' society is a debatable point.

The non-conformists generally supported radical politics. The Conservative party was seen as "the political representatives of the Anglican Church."<sup>29</sup> The Liberal party had a comfortable majority in Wales from 1868 until 1922. Their political platform at that time consisted of land reform, improvement to working conditions and the disestablishment of the Church in Wales. Tenant farmers at the time were forced to pay tithes to the Anglican Church even if they were non-conformists. It is interesting that leading Liberal politicians at the turn of the twentieth century, David Lloyd George and Tom Ellis both described themselves as Welsh nationalists.<sup>30</sup> Wales however, did not follow Ireland in wanting 'home-rule' even though both were predominately agrarian societies under English domination, farmed in the main by tenant farmers. Wales did

---

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p.349.

<sup>29</sup> Vernon Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.145.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p.146.

not have absentee landlords as was the case in Ireland. Welsh landlords were in the main of Welsh decent even if they had become completely Anglicized.<sup>31</sup>

However, in the wake of industrialization and the formation of trade unions, the Labour Party was formed and this political party replaced the Liberal Party in the South Wales coalfields in 1922.<sup>32</sup> The Labour Party was a British-wide institution; some members may even have had international aspirations. The retention of the Welsh language and culture did not feature in the party's political agenda. Even in more recent times, the Labour party leader Neil Kinnock, a Welshman, was an anti-devolutionist.<sup>33</sup>

As stated earlier, the Welsh Nationalist Party was founded in August 1925. The party began as a movement to preserve the language. Several of the party's leaders were pacifists; this factor was unpopular with the populous of Wales during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The party did not become a credible political power until 1966, when Gwynfor Evans, its then president, won a parliamentary bi-election in Carmarthenshire with a substantial majority.

An interesting political 'three Wales model' has been drawn by Denis Balsam, whereby Dyfed, Gwynedd and Anglesey correspond to the *Fro Gymraeg*, the Welsh speaking part of Wales; the people in East Carmarthenshire and Glamorganshire, Welsh Wales, speak English but consider themselves Welsh whereas the remainder, South Pembrokeshire and the borders are British-Welsh, in these areas the people speak English and consider themselves British first and foremost.<sup>34</sup> The *Fro Gymraeg* was the part of Wales most likely to return a Plaid member of parliament having been strongly Liberal previously while Welsh Wales was staunchly Labour.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the dilemma faced by the Welsh Nationalist Party was how to shed its old exclusivity of being a Welsh speaking party. In 1998 the name was changed from *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* to *Plaid Cymru*, the Party of Wales and the party adopted a policy of bilingualism. A 'Welshman' was defined on the basis

---

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p.146.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*, p.150.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p.165

<sup>34</sup> John Osmond, *The National Question Again, Welsh Political Identity in the 1980s*, (Llandyssul: Gomer Press, 1985) p.5.

of domicile. It was not necessary for someone to be of Welsh decent provided that the person was well disposed towards the Welsh language.<sup>35</sup> This illustrates how it can benefit a political party to have a slight change of identity in order to achieve its aims i.e. more Welsh Assembly members, not just from *Y Fro Gymraeg* but also from the English speaking part of Wales.

National buildings are important in forming a countries identity. The City Hall, an imposing building set in Cathays Park in the centre of Cardiff was completed in 1906, a year after Cardiff had been designated a city. Eleven statues sculptured from Serraveza marble of ten eminent Welshmen of the past together with a statue of one Welsh woman were commissioned and erected within the building to enhance the status of the newly proclaimed city. The *Welsh Outlook* magazine stated when the statues were unveiled in 1916 during the First World War:

The statues were ‘a great treasure’, representing ‘both historically and spiritually the life of the Welsh people, whose spirit is the same today, yesterday and forever - the spirit of freedom, hatred of intolerance, and a power to see beauty even through pain and suffering’.<sup>36</sup>

The centre of Cardiff planned as it was at the beginning of the twentieth century did enhance the status and standing of Cardiff as a city until well after it was proclaimed as the capital city of Wales in 1955. However, as the twenty-first century approached the old Cardiff dock area was redeveloped and newer buildings, more appropriate in style, were built to celebrate Welsh devolution and the new Millennium. The National Assembly building, the *Senedd*, constructed as it is from glass to represent the transparency of government in Wales and the Welsh Millennium Centre, built of Welsh slate with a copper dome are innovative and have become as iconic as the Edwardian City centre. The Millennium Stadium which replaced the old Cardiff Arms Park completes the trio of new builds that have become the symbols of the new Cardiff. The Millennium stadium was in the forefront of the development of sports stadiums and provides a most suitable venue for the Welsh national game of rugby.

---

<sup>35</sup> Bud B. Kheif, *Language, Ethnicity and Education in Wales*, (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1975) p.218`

<sup>36</sup> Hugh Edwards, *Icons of Wales*, a booklet produced to accompany the BBC Wales series ‘The Story of Wales’, (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 2012) p.1.



All these developments together with the signs of bilingualism in present day Cardiff gives the city the identity that is required if Cardiff is to be truly the capital of Wales. The ambience perceived when visiting present day Cardiff is that it is a far more 'Welsh' city than that of the 1970s. In those days it could have been any large city anywhere in the British Isles. Young middleclass Welsh people have moved to Cardiff in recent years being employed in the media and service industries. This has resulted in the establishing of Welsh medium schools in the capital. There were nineteen at the last count including a highly successful Welsh secondary school, *Ysgol Glan Taf*.

The media has contributed greatly to the phenomenon of Welshness. *Sianel Pedwar Cymru*, SC4, which the Thatcher government reluctantly allowed to develop, following Gwynfor Evans's threat to starve unto death unless the promised Welsh language channel was allowed to go ahead. SC4 started broadcasting in November 1982. The channel does not produce programmes of its own but commissions from others such as BBC Wales. This is the reason why the popular soap *Popl y Cwm* changed channels. In these days of Sky television, Welsh language programmes can be enjoyed in many parts of the world, even in England.

Welsh film and television personalities are prominent in British media. In the past Richard Burton proclaimed his Welshness with pride and was active in promoting the works of the Anglo-Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas. Nowadays, Alex Jones, Aled Jones, Hugh Edwards, John Humphries to name but a few appear regularly on British television and no attempt is made to disguise the fact that they are Welsh by modifying their accents. Other media personalities include Bryn Terfel in the operatic field and in the world of popular music, Katherine Jenkins, Charlotte Church, Shirley Bassey and Tom Jones, not forgetting the bands Stereophonics and Manic Street Preachers, are icons of Welsh identity.<sup>37</sup> Cardiff is also home of the very successful television series Doctor Who.

Before completing the various factors that makes up Welsh identity, a mention must be made of the national game, rugby. The game in England is perceived as belonging to the upper classes as it was a game which in the past had been played almost exclusively

---

<sup>37</sup> Hugh Mackay, *Understanding Contemporary Wales*, p.2, for a list of media personalities together with a list of Welsh institutions that have fostered Welsh identity.

in the Public schools. In Wales, the game has been open to all classes even though it had its origins in the public schools of Llandovery and Christ College Brecon.<sup>38</sup> However, some people at Lampeter may dispute this as St. David's College; Lampeter is regarded by some as the cradle of rugby in Wales.<sup>39</sup> Welshmen follow their national team with a passion and the nationalism that exudes from the Millennium Stadium on international days is well worth experiencing. On those particular days, there is no doubt that a separate Welsh nation exists and is flourishing.

Finally, the National Eisteddfod and *Gorsedd y Beirdd* are icons of Welsh culture. Many would dismiss the pageantry and ceremonial as being an invention of Iolo Morgannwg's in the early nineteenth century. How many would similarly dismiss the pageantry surrounding royalty? Trooping the colour, State Opening of Parliament amongst others were re-instigated and revamped by Edward VII. The purpose was to promote the royalty when the popularity of the royal family was at a low ebb at the beginning of the twentieth century. These ceremonials are now viewed as being iconic of British culture.

Has there been a resurgence in the need to describe oneself as Welsh as well as British in recent years? Is there a greater pride in one's heritage? There has been an increased interest in finding out who we are and where our ancestors come from, as evidenced by the television programme 'Who do you think you are?' and the plethora of magazines and books on how to trace your ancestors. Perhaps, however, there is another explanation for the need to feel that one is different.

English, for the present, appears to be the most important language as far as global communication is concerned, therefore why make the effort to learn another language? This is similar to the sentiment that was prevalent in the Wales in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet, even though the 2011 census showed a decrease in the number of people able to speak Welsh, there appears to be a greater interest in the language and Welshness now compared to the early 1970s.

---

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.

<sup>39</sup> John Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 427.

It must be remembered that globalisation is not a new phenomenon, it been with us for centuries, the only difference in the present day is that time and distances have contracted. One can instantly communicate with the other side of the world and global transportation takes a matter of hours not weeks or months. Organisations are world wide, well known coffee houses and McDonalds are to be found in high streets all over the world. Banks and financial institutions are also global so that an adverse occurrence in one country has implications world wide.

However, there appears to be a resurgence of interest in nationality and nation states. Castells suggests that it is a reaction against the universalism of a largely shared culture which is being spread with such rapidity by the electronic media and other factors.<sup>40</sup> Castells states that there has also been a resurgence in the number of newly formed nation-states following break-up of the former Soviet Union and certainly what he calls national quasi-states, are being formed which are forcing the parent state to cede sovereignty e.g. Spain and Catalonia; Britain and Scotland.<sup>41</sup>

Castells is not the only sociologist to promote the theory that there is a resurgence of interest in national identity as a rebound to globalisation. Stuart Hall states that as a reaction to globalisation there has been a strengthening of local identity by dominant ethnic groups who feel threatened by the presence of other cultures.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, Alain Touraine has also maintained that the cultural homogeneity promoted by globalisation has resulted in individuals seeking local or 'old' cultural identities.<sup>43</sup> More recently, Yi Wang from Harbin maintains that globalization does not result in homogenization, but in fact enhances separate cultural identities.<sup>44</sup>

These theories may account for the fact that there has been an upsurge of interest in not only Welsh and Welsh culture but also in the Gallic and Scottish culture in Scotland. In the past as far as England was concerned Britain was synonymous with 'England'.

---

<sup>40</sup> Manuel Castells, *Vol.II The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1997), p.22.

<sup>41</sup> i.b.id., p.51.

<sup>42</sup> Stuart Hall, The question of cultural identity, in S.Hall, D.Held and T.McGrew (eds.), *Modernity and Its Futures*, (Cambridge/Milton Keynes, Polity Press in association with Blackwell Press & Open University, 1992) p.308

<sup>43</sup> Alain Touraine quoted in C.Chimisso, *Exploring European Identities*, p.27.

<sup>44</sup> Yi Wang, Globalization Enhances cultural Identity, in *Intercultural Communication Studies XVI* : 1 2007 online <http://www.uri.edu/iaics/content/2007v16nl/09YiWang.pdf> <accessed 06/03/2013>.

However, the media and others were very careful in describing the country's Olympic team in 2012 as 'Team GB'. It was a pity that the opening ceremony was not similarly inclusive. Yes, rather dismissively, there was a song each sung in English from choirs of children from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland but the tableau then depicted green fields and sheep of a 'green and pleasant land' before moving on to depict the old industrial heartlands of England. The popular music feature towards the end, however, did include Caribbean and other ethnic minorities that are now part of modern day Britain.

Wales as a nation ceased to exist as a quasi independent country when the Act of Union with England Law was passed in 1542 by Henry VIII. Shortly before this in 1536, Wales had been made to accept English laws. It is surprising that the Welsh language has survived but a few events worked in its favour. The acceptance of the Protestant faith by Elizabeth I resulted in the availability of the Bible in the vernacular for all. In Wales this resulted in the Bible being translated into Welsh. The setting up of Circulating schools, then Sunday schools and finally the Methodist revival and non conformism resulted in the language not only surviving but thriving into the nineteenth century. The language is paramount to the formation of a national identity, through this Wales was able to keep its separate nationhood. Other cultural traits such as the love of choral singing, eisteddfodau and radicalism were also nurtured through the chapels. Even though the number of people able to speak Welsh has reach dangerously low levels perhaps, if the sociologists mentioned above are correct about the reaction to homogenization, globalization may yet prove to be the salvation of the Welsh language and as a consequence Welsh national identity.

## Chapter 2. Welsh Diaspora within the British Isles.

The etymological origin of the word diaspora is Greek, meaning dispersion or scattering. Originally diaspora referred exclusively to the migrations of the Jewish race. The Jews have experienced dispersion and migration from their established home from 587 BCE when they were exiled by the Babylonians until the last century when they were persecuted by the Nazi regime of Germany's Third Reich. However, during the last half century, the term diaspora has been adopted to describe a significant dispersion of people of any nationality from their homeland to another country.

Man has had a long history of migration. In pre-historic times when man was a hunter-gatherer, the whole tribe would move on in search of food. Woodward states that most migration occurs for economic reasons, that is, at its most basic, for food and sustenance. There can also be elements of 'push' to the migration which includes threats of violence and starvation and of 'pull' when other factors such as social and political as well as economic motives come into the equation. Some people have a strong urge to better themselves; upward mobility has been with us since pre-history.<sup>45</sup>

Two examples of diaspora which had elements of 'push' were the *An Gorta Mór*, the 'great hunger' of the Irish famine in the mid nineteenth century and the Scottish clearances which began in the eighteenth century shortly after the battle of Culloden when the power of the highland chiefs was curtailed. The year 1792 has become known as *Bliadhna nan Coarach* –the 'year of the sheep' in Gaelic. Keeping sheep on the land was found to be far more profitable than renting the land to the crofters.

The Welsh diaspora of the nineteenth century, while not as savage or well known as the above examples, demonstrated primarily the need to migrate for economical reasons. There had been a population explosion following the Napoleonic wars. This phenomenon was not confined to Wales as the whole of Europe was affected. The land in Wales away from the coastal regions and the river valleys was relatively poor and therefore could not sustain the increased population. There was a further element of 'push' in that following the general election of 1849, tenant farmers who had refused to

---

<sup>45</sup> Kath Woodward, *Understanding Identity* (London, Arnold a member of the Hodder Headline Group, 2002), p.51.

follow the lead of their landlords in voting for the landlord's favoured political party were evicted from their farms.<sup>46</sup> Fortunately, 'black gold' had been discovered under the soil of south east Wales and therefore work became available in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire for the vast majority of displaced rural Welshmen. Moving to a different part of the same country however, does not fulfil the above definition of diaspora.

Probably some rural Welshmen did migrate to England as well at this time looking for work. Welshmen had travelled to distant lands throughout the ages. For example, sailors would have been familiar with the major ports of the British Isles and possibly further afield and the drovers herded their cattle from rural Wales to the cattle markets of London. Indeed there is evidence that there have been Welsh in London for at least six hundred years. Henry Tudor had raised Welsh hopes as at last there was a Welshman sitting on the English throne and the Welsh nobility flocked to attend the English court. Apparently, the Welsh integrated well with the local community according to Jones, they had a common religion, common legislation and even though their language was different they were quite prepared to learn English:

*I can speak English, lord, as well as you,*

*For I was train'd up in the English court*

*(Glendower in Henry IV, Pt 1, Act III, Scene 1)*

Documentary evidence for the integration of the Welsh in London is found in the rent rolls of the seventeenth century.<sup>47</sup> This assimilation of the Welsh was also noted by Daniels, when describing the London of more recent times. Other nationalities tended to occupy ghettos when they migrated to London, for instance the Jews in the East End of London, the Irish in Kilburn and the West Indians in Notting Hill but not the Welsh. Apart, that is, from the fact that there are several Welsh run hotels in the Paddington area and Harrow seems to have been a popular area for the Welsh, they do not appear to have congregated in one particular area.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Bud B. Khleif, *Language, Ethnicity and Education in Wales* (The Hague, Mouton Publishers, 1975), p.241.

<sup>47</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.) *The Welsh in London 1500-2000* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press on behalf of 'The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion', 2001), p. 193.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Daniels, *In Search of Welshness* (Talybont, Ceredigion, Y Lolfa, 2011), p.44.

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the wave of non-conformity had not yet overwhelmed Wales. The Welsh societies in London at this time were based around meetings and conviviality and not the chapels as was to occur later on towards the end of eighteenth century. The first society to be formed as far as is known was the Loyal Society of Antient Britons in 1715. The title 'loyal' was used in order to highlight that the Welsh had no intention of rebelling against the Hanoverian kings as indeed the Scots had done in 1715.<sup>49</sup> By 1750, as more Welsh people began to move to London, it was felt that there was a need to create a society that would meet more frequently. Thus the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion was formed in 1751.

The Cymmrodorion at that time 'was a club, very much in the spirit of the tavern and coffee-house society that flourished in London'.<sup>50</sup> While members of the society enjoyed conviviality they did maintain a charitable function in that a Welsh school was started at Clerkenwell Green for children of families who were experiencing financial difficulties. Members of the Cymmrodorion in the 1790s had a hand in the formation of the *Gorsedd y Beirdd*, which still forms a pivotal part in the present day National Eisteddfod. In the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century the Society led the way in the foundation of such Welsh institutions as the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth, the Welsh National Museum and the National Library of Wales.

By the 1840s, with the growth of non-conformism, the way of life of the London Welsh changed. Out went the conviviality and the 'musical junketings' of the old Cymmrodorion meetings.<sup>51</sup> The Society, excluding a few gaps in years kept going. New member had to be proposed and balloted before being allowed to join, giving the Cymmrodorion a reputation of being élitist. This is a reputation that is still prevalent today.<sup>52</sup>

Incidentally, by the twenty-first century, Welsh cultural life in London seems to be returning to the earlier way of life as far as the younger element of London's Welsh

---

<sup>49</sup> Professor Emeritus Prys Morgan, 'A Brief History of the Cymmrodorion' online. Available: [www.cymmrodorion.org](http://www.cymmrodorion.org) <accessed 13/03/2013>.

<sup>50</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.) *The Welsh in London 1500-2000*, p.68.

<sup>51</sup> Professor Prys Morgan, 'A Brief History of the Cymmrodorion' online [www.cymmrodorion.org](http://www.cymmrodorion.org) <accessed 13/03/2013>.

<sup>52</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.) *The Welsh in London 1500-2000*, p.71.

society are concerned according to Jones.<sup>53</sup> A group of young Welsh people, mainly from the media and professions had a loosely organized group who would meet up in various pubs and clubs to enjoy an evening of conviviality and ‘Welshness’ rather than attend the chapels or the London Welsh Societies. This group maintained contact through the internet and call themselves Social, Welsh and Sexy (SWS).<sup>54</sup>

From the late eighteenth century onwards, Welsh rural life was being influence initially by the non-conformists and later the Methodists who were, to begin with, part of the Anglican Communion. In order to survive the hardships of rural life the community had always worked together. Now the chapel became the hub of the community, developing certain secular activities that would have been approved of by the chapel elders, such as choral singing and eisteddfodau. Two chapels or churches of different denominations in a village would and did divide the community. Other older folk customs such as dancing, sports and the *Mari Lwyd* were to be discontinued as they had no place in the way of life advocated by the non-conformists.<sup>55</sup> Being seen in a tavern was considered disgraceful. As discussed previously in connection with the London Welsh, the Welsh identity gradually changed to being linked with the chapels, temperance, hard work and the Welsh language.<sup>56</sup>

The industrialist Robert Owen who was born in Newtown, mid-Wales in 1771 is an example of a person who emigrated from Wales at the age of ten. He went to London as an apprentice to a draper before embarking on a career in the cotton mills of Manchester to begin with before ending up owning the Mill at New Lanark, South of Glasgow. At New Lanark he instituted a social system whereby his worker’s children were educated; he looked after his workers in their old age but in return he expected hard work and sobriety. In this he may have been influenced by non-conformity in his early childhood environment although his family remained Anglicans or by his father-in-law who was the head of a Scottish Dissenting Presbyterian sect<sup>57</sup> One wonders if the

---

<sup>53</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.), *The Welsh in London 1500-2000*, p.191.

<sup>54</sup> SWS set up originally by Stifyn Parri is now inactive according to the web-site-  
[www.walesonline.co.uk/news/datastore/wales-data/2013/01](http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/datastore/wales-data/2013/01) –accessed 13/02/2013.

<sup>55</sup> Trefor M.Owen, *Welsh Folk Customs* (Cardiff, William Lewis (Printers) Ltd., 1974 (3<sup>rd</sup> edition),) p.24

<sup>56</sup> Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles, A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.317.

<sup>57</sup> Ian Donnachie, course A207, Units 18-19 Robert Owen in *Industry and Changing Landscapes, From Enlightenment to Romanticism, c1780-1830* (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2004), p.108 & p.105.



non-conformist, chapel attending Welsh of the early nineteenth century, being sober and hardworking, were being deliberately sought by employers in England.

The population explosion that occurred in the early nineteenth century created real hardship in rural Wales based as it was on subsistence agriculture. In 1801 the population of Wales was 587,245 according to the census but by the census of 1851 the population had approximately doubled to 1,163,000.<sup>58</sup> At this time 10% of the male labour force was employed in the burgeoning coal industry while 35% of the male labour force was employed in agriculture.<sup>59</sup> There were other industries in Wales at the time: copper mines in Anglesey, lead and silver mines in North Cardiganshire. All were closed by the end of the nineteenth century. The woollen mills in Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire succumbed to the larger, more profitable mills of the English midlands. The small ports along Cardigan Bay which all had previously important trading links with the Iberian peninsular, even America, suffered from the development of ports such as Liverpool<sup>60</sup>. The South Wales ports of Cardiff, Newport and Swansea were also being developed for exporting coal, steel and tin-plate. Some of the Cardigan Bay ports for example, New Quay, also had a viable boat building industry but larger ships were now required. The slate quarries of Caernarfon continued to thrive and make a profit for the owners.

Up until the last decade or so of the nineteenth century most of the migrants to the coalfields came from rural Wales. In the sixty years from 1851 to 1911, rural Wales lost 388,000 people. The inward migration to the south Wales coalfields for the same sixty years was 366,000.<sup>61</sup> Chapels were built in the valleys and the close knit communities that were the hallmark of the rural communities were now developed around the chapels of the coalfields. This migration is reflected in the census figures for 1801 when 20% of the population of Wales inhabited the counties of Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire while by 1911 almost 63% of the population of Wales lived in the two counties.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> D.Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p.1.

<sup>59</sup> John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, Penguin Books, 2007 (revised edition),) p.387.

<sup>60</sup> Kenneth O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation, A History of Modern Wales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, University of Wales Press, 1981), p.59.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>62</sup> D.Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p.1.

Despite the religious fervour brought about by the non-conformists, the religious census of 1851 disclosed that approximately half of the population of Wales did not attend a place of worship.<sup>63</sup> The chapels competed with the taverns for the escape route for the workers “from the harshness of industrial squalor and exploitation.”<sup>64</sup> During the 1880s new activities were introduced into the valleys to compete with the Sunday schools for the attention of the miners and their children. This is how rugby became a working class game in Wales. Boxing was also popular much to the disgust of the non-conformist leaders.<sup>65</sup>

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century there was an in-migration of Irish and English from the West Country predominately into the south Wales valleys thus diluting the Welsh influence. The Anglicisation was accelerated by the political change in the industrial areas from Liberalism to Socialism. The early Socialists had international aspirations therefore English was a more appropriate language. The growth of the Trade Union movement also had its affect on the language as all transactions at meetings were conducted through the medium of English.

Even if the vast majority of migration was to the South Wales valleys and the coal fields of Flintshire, there was also considerable migration to England. In 1891, 228,000 native Welsh were living in England. The cities of the industrial midlands such as Birmingham, Manchester, Middlesbrough as well as London attracted a considerable Welsh workforce.<sup>66</sup> In the 1880s many went to Yorkshire to work in the coal and steel works. A number went to Huddersfield to work in the mills there after their woollen mill in Newtown in Mid Wales burnt down. There was apparently a very active Newtown Society in the area until 1920.<sup>67</sup> As in the case of the Welsh industrial areas, these emigrant communities soon built Welsh chapels. Indeed, the date and number of Welsh emigration to England can be estimated by mapping out the date building, the size and the number of the Welsh chapels and churches.

---

<sup>63</sup> Kenneth O.Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation, A History of Modern Wales*, p. 15.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p.72.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, p 73.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>67</sup> The Bradford and District St. David's was formed in 1902.. in West Yorkshire Archive project online <http://nowthen.org/collections/st-davids-society-bradford> <accessed 14/01/2013>.

The earliest Welsh chapel to be built in London was a Calvinistic Methodist Chapel in Cook lane, Smithfield in 1774.<sup>68</sup> Although not suggested in any of the books read, could this church have been built primarily for the use of the itinerant drovers who brought cattle from Wales to the markets in London? As will be discussed later, chapels were built in the port cities, for example, Dublin for the use of the transient Welsh sailors. The Congregationalists established a chapel in Southwark in 1806 and the Baptists at Moorfields in 1823. More chapels were built in the mid nineteenth century as more Welsh people migrated to London. With the expansion of the city, chapels were also built in the suburbs as people did not want a long journey across London to attend Sunday school and services. Therefore, the later half of the nineteenth century saw an increase in chapel building and a marked increase in the size of congregations. However, it was in the 1920-30s during the great depression that the London Welsh chapels were really full.<sup>69</sup>

The Chapels can be regarded as the forerunners of the Welsh Societies. Not only were the usual Sunday services held but the Chapels also provided a venue for meetings during the week for Choral singing,<sup>70</sup> literary debates, eisteddfodau as well as prayer meetings.<sup>71</sup> A young person from Wales would bring his/her 'letter' from his/her chapel in Wales to a chapel of the same denomination in London. The parents along with the minister of the home chapel would know that the person would be looked after and guided from the religious and moral point of view while in the strange city.

Welsh chapels were also set up in other cities. Birmingham had its first significant influx of Welsh people in 1832 when the town hall was built of Anglesey marble. Builders from Wales were imported as they were the only people capable of handling the material. A Calvinistic Methodist chapel was established in Peck Lane in 1842 and according to the website, other denominations built churches too. The Congregationalists by 1860, the Welsh Baptists by 1854 and in 1878 the Welsh Wesleyans built their church.<sup>72</sup> At one point there were four Welsh chapels or churches

---

<sup>68</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.), *The Welsh in London 1500-2000*, p.163.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

<sup>70</sup> The Tonic Solfa had been published in 1861 by Joseph Parry. This enabled the non musically trained to sing choral music.

<sup>71</sup> Kenneth. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation, A history of Modern Wales*, p.20.

<sup>72</sup> Birmingham History Forum-Welsh Chapels, online. Available: [www.birminghamhistory.co.uk/forum/showthread.php?t=24163](http://www.birminghamhistory.co.uk/forum/showthread.php?t=24163) < accessed 9/02/2013>.

in Yorkshire in Barnsley, Leeds, Doncaster and Sheffield.<sup>73</sup> Manchester still has three functioning Welsh Chapels at Altrincham, Didsbury and Warrington. The present Manchester Welsh Society has very close links with the chapels. Every year a *Gymanfa Ganu* is held in the chapels in rotation.

The number of Welsh chapels in Liverpool surpassed all expectations. Liverpool had long been regarded as the capital of North Wales and this was before Cardiff had been designated capital city of Wales. As well as Welsh immigrants there would have a number of passing Welsh sailors calling in regularly. Liverpool was developing into the most important port in Europe and would be the port of embarkation for the Americas. Incidentally, the 'Mimosa' left Liverpool for Patagonia in 1865. The first Calvinistic Methodist (Welsh Presbyterian) Chapel in Liverpool was built in 1787. Twenty eight were built in all but some of these were built to replace others. The Welsh Independents built ten chapels, the first being built in 1817. In addition the Baptists had two and the Wesleyans one.<sup>74</sup>

What is surprising is that there was a Welsh Chapel in Dublin in use as a Chapel until 1938. The foundation stone was laid in Talbot Street in 1838. Previously they had the use of a Dutch Lutheran chapel on the proviso that all the collection money went to the Dutch. The Chapel was primarily for use of the visiting sailors and any Welsh soldiers which may have been billeted in the city. Surprisingly it was also used by sick patients from Holyhead coming over to Dublin for treatment at the Adelaide Hospital, the Protestant hospital in Dublin. The Chapel was called Bethel, apparently a favourite name of sailors for a chapel. In the early nineteenth century, life at sea was extremely perilous, ships were small and the rescue services as are known today almost non-existent. It is not surprising that the sailors of the time were very religious and a tad superstitious.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> 'The Bradford & District St.David's Society was formed in 1902..' in West Yorkshire Archive Project online. Available:<http://nowthen.org/collections/st-davids-society-bradford-and-district>.. <accessed 14/01/2013>.

<sup>74</sup> Olwen Morris-Jones, Welsh Migration and the retention of Identity in Liverpool, (Thesis for B.A, University of Liverpool, 2010-11) online. Available: <http://liverpool-welsh.co.uk/DISSERTATION>, <accessed 14/01/2013>.

<sup>75</sup> Howell Evans. 'A Short History of Dublin's Welsh Church 1831-1931' written in 1981. The author died in Dublin in January 2012 aged 104. Online. Available via the *Draig Werdd* website- [www.draigwerdd.org](http://www.draigwerdd.org) <accessed 20/01/2013>

Following depopulation of the rural areas, agricultural methods changed from arable which was more labour intensive to pastoral. The agricultural depression which occurred during the last decades of the 1880s was due initially to the flooding of the English market with cheap grain from America, Argentina and the Russian steppes. This did not affect the Welsh farmer as much as it did the arable farmers of East Anglia. However, this was soon followed by a drastic decrease in the price obtained for dairy and meat products which was accompanied by a rise in rents. Some of the farmers had to lay off their farm labourers while others less fortunate had to leave their farms.<sup>76</sup>

It was the preparation for the First World War that improved matters for the farmer and the industrial areas of Wales. It also brought more government control which impinged upon the freedom that the populous had previously enjoyed. Control boards were set up for agriculture, shipping and engineering but despite this, generally there was prosperity in the Welsh valleys both industrial and agrarian<sup>77</sup>

This came to an end in the 1920s when domestic prices collapsed following the government's attempted to control post war inflation by raising the bank rate. Many parts of the English Midlands and the South East started to recover due to the setting up of light industry such as the motor car manufacturing industry. Very few incentives came to South Wales to reinvigorate the heavy industries which had been suffering from underinvestment for years. The collapse of Wall Street in 1929 and the resulting financial collapse served to hasten the depression of the Welsh industrial areas.<sup>78</sup> In 1932, Merthyr Tydfil had an unemployment rate of 62.3%. Long term unemployment in the Rhondda increased from 33% in 1932 to 63% in 1936.<sup>79</sup>

The only solution was to emigrate to find work elsewhere. This strategy tended to favour the younger man, leaving the older people to compound the problem of the long-term unemployed. Migration at this time was mainly to the industrial towns of the midlands and to the south east of England; where as stated previously, light manufacturing industries had already been set up.

---

<sup>76</sup> Kenneth o. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation, A History of Modern Wales*, p.82.

<sup>77</sup> D.Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000*,p.17.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*,pp.46-7.

An indicator as to the degree of deprivation in these areas was the increase in the death rate from the disease tuberculosis in the Rhondda from 790 in 1932 to 1,030 in 1937. At the time, this rise in the rate of tuberculosis deaths was an embarrassment to the Ministry of Health in London and was explained by the myth that the Celtic races were particularly susceptible to the disease.<sup>80</sup> This myth was perpetuated in the medical textbooks of the 1960s.

Again, the Welsh coalfields and the contiguous heavy industries earned a reprieve due to rearmament and preparation for war in the late 1930s onwards. The farmer equally benefited as it was now required that the country should be as self-sufficient in food as possible during wartime. However, at the end of the war boom time was over, farms started to get uneconomical; land lost its value and large tract of upland Welsh land was sold off to the forestry commission. This was the subject of Islwyn Ffowc Ellis's novel *Wythnos yng Nghymru Fydd*. Coalmines were closed as it was uneconomical to mine coal from pits that had relied on manpower rather than machinery. The anthracite coalmines of Carmarthenshire and West Glamorganshire were still viable. To compound matters alternative fuel in the form of cheap oil became available from the Middle East in 1956. Gas and oil exploration started in the North Sea.<sup>81</sup>

From the 1950s onwards it was the graduate Welsh that made the most impact in England. Apparently there were proportionally more Grammar school places in Wales than in England and consequently more Welsh children passed the 11 plus examination.<sup>82</sup> This in turn resulted in a greater number of graduates as a vast majority would continue to either tertiary education or a career in banking, nursing or similar professions. The number of Welsh teachers in London occasioned comments such as "without them London's educational system would surely break down" and "60% of all new teachers were Welsh".<sup>83</sup> Fortunately for the Welsh graduate, London at the time had a great need for teachers as the evacuees had returned after the war together with children being required to stay on longer at school after the 1944 Education Act. Having moved to England, made friends and possibly married, it would have been difficult to

---

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, pp.50-1.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 145-150.

<sup>82</sup> John Davies, '*A History of Wales*', (London: Penguin Books, 1990) p.617.

<sup>83</sup> Emrys Jones, (ed.) '*The Welsh in London 1500-2000*', (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 142.

move back to Wales. Gwyn Williams maintained that in 1985 it would have precipitated a crisis in most English city schools, if all the Welsh teachers left their posts at the same time.<sup>84</sup>

The gradual depopulation of the Welsh countryside continued well into the 1970s. Small farms were becoming uneconomical. In 1971 there were 16,810 holdings under 20 hectares, by 1996 there were as few as 10,977.<sup>85</sup> Many of the farms were amalgamated or sold off for building land or sold to English speaking urbanites who had become disillusioned with life in the 'rat race'. This in-migration into the rural areas thus tipped the balance against the Welsh language and the Welsh way of life. Further damage was done by the sons and daughters of these small farmers, who after higher education would seek employment in cities, quite often English cities.

Lack of employment also affected the industrialized areas especially following the closure of the heavy industries which occurred in the last decades of the twentieth century. The children of steel workers and miners would similarly, having acquired further education, migrate to find employment thus accelerating the breakdown of the old communities.<sup>86</sup>

As was stated in the beginning of this chapter, man has been on the move continually since time immemorial. The Welsh usually migrated for economic reasons, although the first Welsh migrants to Patagonia were said to have done so as a protest against the Anglicization of their country. Welsh migration to London can be traced back to the 1500s and in the nineteenth century there was some migration to London and the other cities in the British Isles but as coal had been discovered in South Wales and Flintshire, economic migrants found work in Wales. The presence of the Welsh outside Wales after the non-conformist reformation can be mapped out by the trail of Welsh Chapel and Churches that were built. During the 1920 and 1930s as a result of the great depression, outward migration in droves occurred from the industrial areas of South Wales and North East Wales, primarily to the English Mid-Lands and the South East of

---

<sup>84</sup> Gwyn A. Williams, 'When was Wales?' (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin books, 1985), p.122.

<sup>85</sup> John Aitchison & Harold Carter, *Spreading the Word, The Welsh language in 2001* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2004) p. 16.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

England. Further emigration occurred in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. This time it was the turn of the professionally trained people to cross Offa's Dyke. .

The Welsh did emigrate further afield, to the Americas and to Australasia but this has not been included in this work as the main thrust of the work was to research the retention of Welsh identity amongst the Welsh and their descendents living within the confines of the British Isles.



## **A SURVEY OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WELSH SOCIETIES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND (2012-13).**

### **Introduction.**

The first chapter 'Welsh National Identity and Culture' and to a lesser extent the second chapter 'Welsh Diaspora in the British Isles' provide the material from which deduction can be made as to what constituted a 'Welsh Identity,' that is, what made a person declare that they are and feel Welsh even through they may have lived for the majority of their life outside Wales or may even have not been born in Wales but are of Welsh parentage. The following were judged to be the main factors and the questions asked were formulated around these issues. An attempt was made to make the questionnaire as succinct as possible.

**The Language.** The 2011 census results were disappointing in that there was a decrease in the number of people over three years old able to speak Welsh, down from 20.8% in 2001 to 19.0%. However, there were many more young children between the ages of three and four being able to speak Welsh than in the previous census, 23.3% in 2011 as compared with 18.8% in 2001, making a difference of 4.6 percentage points. The language is now primarily taught in schools and not acquired 'on the hearth' as during the first half of the twentieth century. It can be deduced that the decline in the ability to speak Welsh has plateaued and not continued on the downward spiral of 1960s-70s. It will be very interesting to find out how the language has fared outside Wales.

**Religion.** The Celts have a reputation of being a very spiritual people and the Welsh are no exception. Non-conformism swept through the country in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and instilled an ethos of sobriety and seriousness among the *werin*. The exiled Welsh appeared to have taken this religious fervour with them judging by the number of Welsh chapels and churches that were built outside Wales. However, statistical evidence published as a result of the 2011 census states that a third of people living in Wales (32%) have no religion, a rise of 13.6 percentage points since 2001.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Religion in England and Wales information obtained from National Statistic Office on [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk). <accessed 26/02/2013>

**Music.** The Welsh also have a reputation of being musical. This is certainly evidenced by the number and popularity of Welsh choirs particularly male voice choirs that are in existence. The London Welsh Society alone has three such choirs. This love of music was documented as early as the twelfth century. Geraldus Cambrensis in a journey through the Welsh hinterland stated that not only did the Welsh play three musical instruments the harp, pipe and *crwth*, they were also fond of communal singing:

*‘The Welsh sing their traditional songs, not in unison as is done elsewhere, but in parts, in many modes and modulations.’*<sup>88</sup>

This mode of singing was encouraged in churches and later chapels thanks to Protestantism. Luther encouraged the congregation to sing in his churches and he even composed and wrote a few hymns. The publication of the Tonic Solfa by Joseph Parry in *Y Certhor Cymraeg* in 1861 made it easier for the masses to master choral singing. It is a myth that all Welshmen can sing but they can join in a bit of choral singing be it at a *Cymanfa Ganu* or at the Millennium Stadium.

**Rugby.** As stated in Chapter 1, pp. 20-1, rugby is not an exclusive game in Wales as the game is not confined to the public schools as was the case in England. Rugby certainly has a large following in Wales whether it is played at club level or at international level. Association football has also gained popularity thanks to the successes of the two South Wales clubs, Swansea and Cardiff in the English league. There is little doubt that success increases the popularity of a sport. However, rugby appears to be the one sport in Wales that has the greatest connection with the Welsh language. This may be because of the enthusiastic singing of Welsh hymns before and during a rugby match or the fact that there are a number of Welsh speaking ex-rugby internationals currently commentating on the media at rugby matches.

**Croeso.** This has not been dealt with to any great extent previously. Any Welsh person will tell you that visiting relatives in Wales incurs numerous cups of tea and mounds of cakes. No one was ever turned away from a Welsh hearth without being offered some refreshments. The Welsh in Patagonia have made a tourist attraction out of supplying

---

<sup>88</sup> The Journey of Gerald of Wales, online. Available: <http://www.swanseamass.org/history/wales/travel/gerald1.html#music> <first accessed 24/02/2013>

‘Welsh Teas’ to the tourists. The provision of hospitality is not however a recent phenomenon. Minwel Tibbott quotes written evidence of this having occurred as early as 1188 when Geraldus Cambrensis wrote that the Welsh “considered liberality and hospitality amongst the first virtues”. Then there was Thomas Pennant who wrote of a “most hospitable reception” in *Cwm Bychan* near Harlech<sup>89</sup> and finally, George Borrow in *Wild Wales* gives a description of a miller’s wife who produced a bowl of sugar lumps for his exclusive use in his tea.<sup>90</sup> The expression of ‘welcome’ could be difficult to demonstrate but a few examples did come to notice during the survey.

It was also felt necessary to include a question about the history of the society as this could prove very interesting considering that there were distinct waves of Welsh emigration in the time under investigation. There was a constant migration from the rural communities during the nineteenth century and although most found work in the newly industrialised areas of Wales some did go further afield; then there was the diaspora that occurred during the ‘great depression’ of the 1920s and 1930s and finally the emigration of mainly Welsh graduates in the 1950s, 1960s and even the 1970s.

### **The Questionnaire.**

In addition to the above information regarding the date of the setting up of the particular Society, the investigative stratagem also included the following questions. How many members belong to the Society at the present time and what age groups do they fall into? Whether there are any religious activities occurring and what other entertainment was provided as well as the St. David’s Day celebrations? Of particular interest was whether there were any Welsh classes or Welsh conversation classes organized by the Society. The proportion of the members that were fluent Welsh speakers would be of interest and how did the Society set about attracting new members. The explanatory letter together with the questionnaire can be found in appendix 1 and appendix 2 respectively.

### **Data Collecting Techniques.**

The names of the Welsh Societies were found initially through [www.taffia.org](http://www.taffia.org)

---

<sup>89</sup> S. Minwel Tibbott, ‘Liberality and hospitality: food as communication in Wales’, *Folk Life*, 24 (1985-6), 32-51; republished in *Domestic Life of Wales*, Beth Thomas (ed.), ( Llandysul: Gwasg Gomer, 2002), pp. 1-4.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.1-4.

The next step was to look at each society's entry and their web-site if they had one, for up to date information as to whom to contact. The entries in Taffia web-site were unfortunately out of date (2006). Several of the contact numbers were unknown, indeed two had died. Another source of information was found on-line from reprints of the relevant pages from the book *Welsh Societies across the World*.<sup>91</sup>

In the process of doing this exercise, each society's web-site or lack of it was graded as follows-

5\* A web-site that was up to date, had contact details for their officers, was easy to navigate and was attractive.

4\* Either one of what was considered the most important criteria was missing, that is, either no contact details or not up to date.

3\* Not up to date and no contact details.

2\* Some attempt at a web-site.

1\* information from Taffia or similar web-site.

Nothing.

The results, which may be subjective to a certain extent, together with the importance of having and maintaining a 'good' website will be discussed later.

**Contacting the Societies.** If there was a telephone number, then the society was contacted by telephone initially to ascertain whether the person was indeed the correct contact, then this was followed up by sending the explanatory letter and questionnaire either by e-mail or by post. A stamped self-addressed envelope was enclosed for replies if the request was sent by surface mail.

Unless the society had an up-to-date web-site, there was no way of knowing whether the correct people were being contacted. Indeed in two instances as has been mentioned earlier, this was quite embarrassing as the persons given as contacts, were deceased.

The initial tranch of questionnaires were sent at the beginning of December 2012 with a return date set at 21<sup>st</sup> December. However, details of other societies not included in the 'Taffia' website were made known through the officers of the already contacted

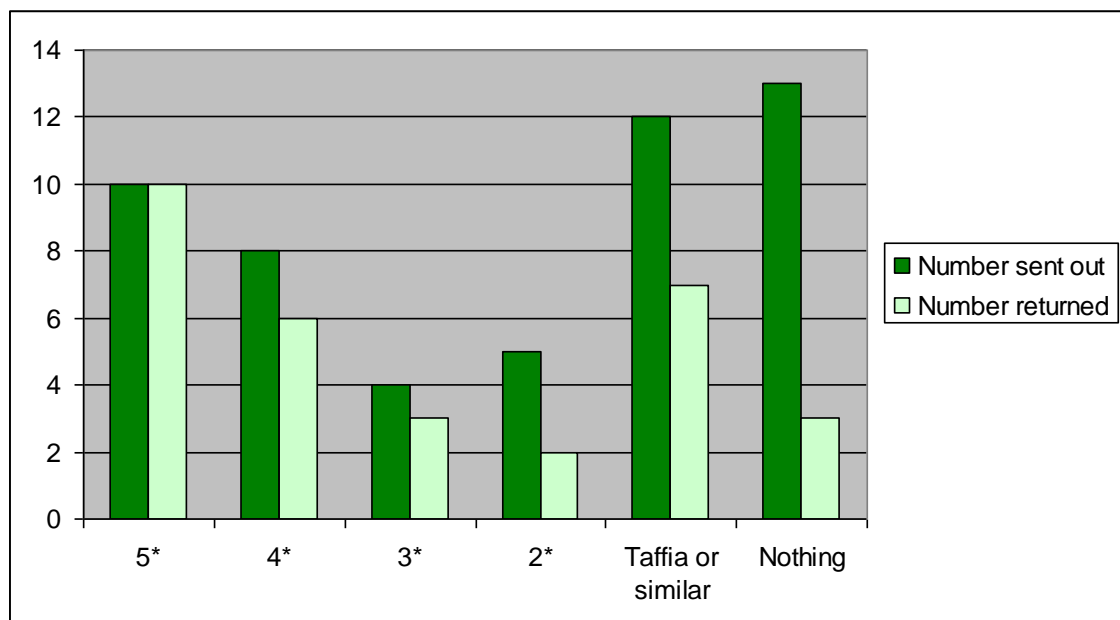
---

<sup>91</sup> Welsh Societies across the World, online. Available: [www.walesbooks.com/societies/php](http://www.walesbooks.com/societies/php) ,<accessed 14/11/2012>

societies and a second attempt was made in the case of societies, for example, Birmingham and Northern Ireland, where one would have expected a reply.<sup>92</sup> The last few questionnaires were returned during the first week of February apart from the one from Birmingham. The London Welsh Society was contacted by telephone. Table 1 (Appendix 3) gives the list of the Welsh Societies contacted. It is by no means an exhaustive list of Welsh Societies, for instance The London Welsh Society was the only Welsh Society contacted in London. This was due to the difficulty in obtaining contact details.

52 requests were sent, of those it transpired that 4 of the Societies had ceased to exist. There were 31 replies which are printed in red in Table 1 (Appendix 3). One of the Societies, Newport (Salop) did reply but sadly the Society is now defunct. It was also difficult to decide whether ‘Y Mabinogion’ Society, Cambridge was still in existence as the only information on the website was that the site had been withdrawn as it was no longer being maintained. In Table 1, the Societies are set out according to their website star ratings discussed previously. It probably is no surprise that there is proportionally a greater response from the Societies with a rating of 3\* upwards.

Table 2. Graphical representation of returned questionnaires against non-returned.



Keeping an attractive, welcoming, easy to navigate and up-to-date website appears to be an important factor in attracting new members. A quote from the reply from Chelmsford Welsh Society demonstrates this:

<sup>92</sup> A reply was received from *Cymdeithas Cymrodorion Birmingham a'r Cylch* on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

*“One of our newest members was living in London and she and her husband chose to live in Chelmsford because they had discovered on the website that we had a flourishing society.”*

An attractive website with easily accessed contact details of the officers also demonstrates the *Croeso* or welcome that you would expect to find in that society. The importance of a ‘good’ website will be emphasized again when examining the question regarding the different age groups in a Society.

The result of the question on the history giving the year of founding of the various Societies is summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3. Year of Foundation of the Societies.**

<b>1900-10</b>	<b>1920-1935</b>	<b>1945- 1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>
Bradford & District 1902	London Welsh 1920	Bristol 1945	Norwich 1970s
Nottingham 1904	Edinburgh 1920	Woking 1947	Hastings 1972
Newcastle & Tyneside 1905	Derby 1928	Slough 1952	Coventry 1972
Manchester 'over 100yrs'	Northwich 1930	Taunton & District 1953	
Sheffield & District 1910	Reading & District 1931	St.David's Society, N.I.1950s	
Portsmouth & District 1911	Shrewsbury 1935	Hull & East Yorkshire 1950s	
	Birmingham over 70yrs.	Chelmsford 1962	
		Cornish 1948	
		Huddersfield 1948	
		Wolverhampton 1968	

<b>Miscellaneous (Table 3 Continued).</b>
Oxfordshire Welsh Society 2009
Liverpool Welsh Society 1980. Originally 4 Welsh League of Youth Societies in 1948, these amalgamated in 1967.
Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion 1751
Droitwich Spa Welsh Society 1982
Chiltern & District Welsh Society 2000
Draig Werdd 2002

The four sets of dates were dictated by the results and seem to confirm the findings given in Chapter 2 in that there were three distinct waves of Welsh migration. The cynic would point out that during the years 1910 to 1920 and 1935 to 1945 there were World Wars; therefore setting up a Welsh Society would not have been a priority. However, as has been explained in Chapter 2, the war years were particularly prosperous for both the rural and the industrial communities in Wales so there was very little need for economic migration during those times.

Additionally, in the period 1900-1910, apart from the Portsmouth and District Welsh Society, all the others are geographically situated in the Midlands (Manchester and Nottingham) and North East of England. In Chapter 2, there was evidence that there was an ‘upsurge’ of Welsh people moving to the North East in 1880 onwards to work in the heavy industries established in that region.<sup>93</sup>

The period 1920-1935 coincides with the ‘great depression’. People at this time would seek work in the motor, electrical and light industries set up in the Mid-lands and the South East of England. The Welsh chapels in London experienced an unprecedented

<sup>93</sup> West Yorkshire archive project in <http://nowthen.org/collections/st-davids-society-bradford-and-district>.<accessed 14/01/2013>

increase in membership during this interwar period. An example is that of the Tabernacle, King's Cross whose membership rose from 600 in 1900 to over a thousand in the 1930s. However, since then the membership number has dwindled.<sup>94</sup>

In the years after the Second World War, there appears to have been a superfluity of Welsh Societies set up throughout England and further afield in Dublin and in Northern Ireland. A Dublin Welsh Society was set up in 1964(see later) while the origin of the St. David's Society, Northern Ireland was gathered from the website as no reply was forthcoming from this Society. It has been postulated that this was in the main due to a graduate exodus from Wales. A prominent member of a Home Counties Welsh Society in a telephone conversation stated that:

*“When we graduated in the 1960s there were no teaching posts in Wales. A relative who was on the LEA told me to go to England for five years to make my mistakes before returning to Wales. Of course after five years we had made our homes here in England”.*

The Chelmsford Golden jubilee information leaflet states that:

*‘Many of our members then as now were teachers and that explains why the Society works to an academic year rather than a calendar year’.*

There are many such stories and as has already been stated in Chapter 2, the schools of many parts of England would have been in crisis had it not been for the Welsh teachers.

Several of the societies had a longer history than that given in Table 3. For example, from the secretary of *Draig Werdd*:

*‘There had probably been a St.David’s Society in existence in the nineteenth century. It was resurrected in 1905 ....  
It celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year in 1955, but closed shortly afterwards.’*

A Dublin Welsh Society was started briefly in 1964 but events petered out by the 1970s. However a Dublin Welsh Choir started at that time in a Dublin pub called ‘The Toby Jug’ continues to flourish.<sup>95</sup> There had been a Welsh Society in Huddersfield also as

---

<sup>94</sup> For a graphical depiction of the rise and fall of the membership of the Tabernacle, King's Cross, see, Emrys Jones (ed.) ‘The Welsh in London 1500-2000’ (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), p.194.

<sup>95</sup> As a medical student in Dublin from 1964-1970, I had been a member of the Dublin Welsh Society.



well as in other Yorkshire towns since around the 1880s-1890s, but according to the questionnaire reply, the present Huddersfield had its beginnings in 1948.<sup>96</sup>

**Table 4. Membership Numbers**

<u>Under 50</u>	<u>50-100</u>	<u>over 100</u>
Derby.....35	Bradford.....50	Chelmsford.....101
Hull.....30	Bristol.....55	Oxfordshire..... 290
Liverpool.....35	Edinburgh.....80	London Welsh....
Manchester.....42	Norwich.....65	Chiltern & District..111*
Newcastle.....45	Reading..... 70	Draig Werdd.....156
Nottingham.....45	Slough..... 50-60	
Northwich.....15	Sheffield.....70	
Taunton.....35	Woking..... 86	
Wolverhampton.....46	Shrewsbury..... 60	
Huddersfield.....15	Hastings .....90	
Coventry.....41	Cornish..... 65	
Droitwich Spa.....30	Birmingham.....60	
Portsmouth & District.....40		
* have experienced an increase of approx. 20%		

<sup>96</sup> West Yorkshire archive project found in –<http://nowthen.org/collections/st-davids-society-bradford-and-district> <accessed 14/01/2013>

Some of the societies have relatively small numbers of members. If the age group of the membership is examined in conjunction with the numbers, the demise of a few more societies is inevitable and this despite the enthusiasm and hard work of the existing members.

**Table 5. Percentage of Members over 65years.**

> 90%	70-90%	<70%
Bradford & District..99%	Bristol..70%	Norwich.... 50%
Manchester 100%*	Chelmsford....78%	Working..... 40%
	Birmingham...78%	
Slough.....95%	Derby.....80%	Y Draig Werdd....25%
Sheffield "vast majority".	Edinburgh...68%	Chiltern & District...55%
Taunton.....100%*	Hull...70%	Nottingham...60%
Wolverhampton....94%*	Reading.....78%	Oxfordshire.....50%
Shrewsbury.....90%	Newcastle....82%	
Droitwich Spa...100%*	Hastings.....80%	
Portsmouth & District..98%*	Cornish....85%	
	Huddersfield....80%	
	Coventry.....75%	

Miscellaneous (Table 5 continued).
Liverpool.... 50-65-yes! Over 65-yes!
Northwich & Huddersfield....all over 50.
<b>&lt; 35yrs</b>
Chelmsford...3%
Edinburgh.....2%
Woking...10%
Slough & District...2%
Y Draig Werdd, Dublin...20%

Table 5 shows the percentage of the membership that is of retirement age (taken as being sixty-five years) or over. The ones marked with an asterisk denote the societies that are particularly vulnerable due to the membership being few in number and almost all over the age of sixty-five.

The secretary of a Midlands Welsh Society made the following comments in the questionnaire:

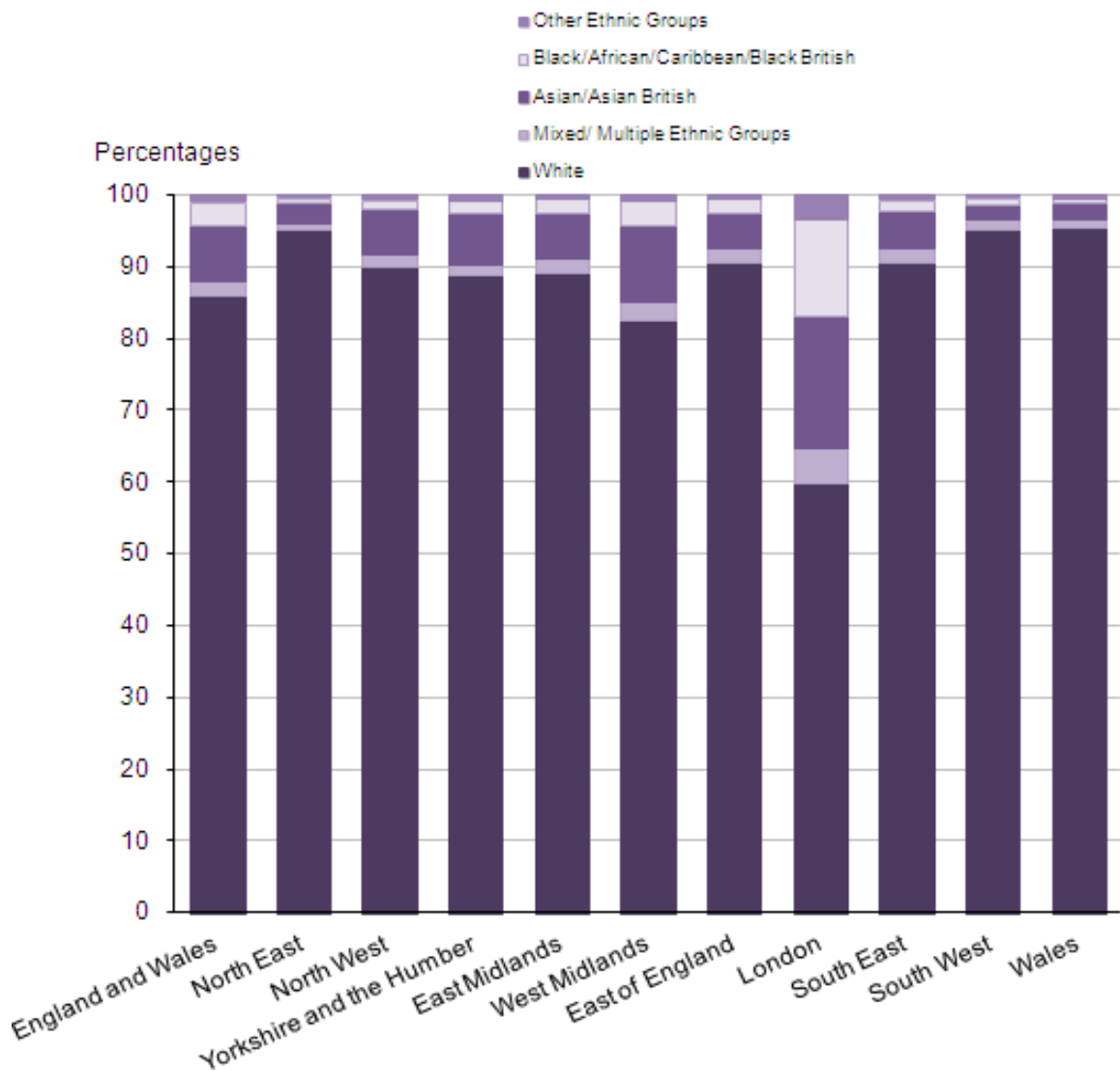
*‘As you can see from my return, our society is now the elderly rump of a much more effective society. We have aged and not succeeded in finding new members. However, we enjoy our lunches and to a reasonable extent look after each other when needed.’*

This demonstrates a very close community of older folk helping each other and enjoying each others’ company. The formation a close community was one of the characteristics of Welsh identity that was emphasised in an earlier part of this dissertation.

Older people find it difficult to venture out of an evening to attend meetings especially if they live alone and cannot drive a car. They may also feel that the ethnic mix in their neighbourhood is rather intimidating especially if they are living in one of the larger conurbations. Nowadays, London and several of the major cities in England are very

cosmopolitan and are home to a large numbers of people from various ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. In the last 2011 census, British white people were found to be in the minority in London at 45%, (3.7 million out of 8.2 million of usual residents were white British).<sup>97</sup> Harrow the area of London once favoured by the Welsh has now only 30.9% of the population described as white British.<sup>98</sup> The ethnic mix of Wales and of the other English regions is shown below in the graph produced by the Office of National Statistics as a result of the 2011 census.

**Ethnic Groups by English region and Wales 2011.**(Copied from the Office of National Statistic Website).



<sup>97</sup> Ethnicity and national Identity in England and Wales 2011, online. Available: [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) <accessed 25/02/2011>.

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*, Difference in Ethnicity across local authorities , online. Available: [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) <accessed 25/02/2011>.

This together with the fact that there is a drug and violence culture in many of the major cities make the older person living in such a city a virtual prisoner in their own home, certainly at night time.<sup>99</sup> One person from the Bradford Welsh Society described present day Bradford as a “*twll o le nawr*”. Another comment, this time from Portsmouth Welsh Society which reiterates what has been said previously:

*‘Meetings held in afternoons now rather than evenings since members retired and don’t like venturing out on cold winter nights’*

Therein lies a dilemma, older people for reasons given above do not feel they can attend evening meetings while, younger people are working and generally busy during the day. However, some of the Societies appear to be able to overcome the trend of being a Society exclusively for the elderly. Five of the Societies have succeeded in attracting members who are under the age of thirty five years old (see Table 5 above). They are Chelmsford, Edinburgh, Woking, Slough & District Welsh Societies and the *Draig Werdd*, Dublin. An in-depth examination of how these Societies have managed this will be looked at later to try and ascertain why they appear to be so successful. Four, however, had 5\* Web-sites and Woking Welsh Society and *Draig Werdd*, Dublin confessed to making full use of the social websites such as ‘Facebook’ and ‘Twitter’.

Only one Society, Liverpool Welsh Society, went to talk to students during ‘Freshers’ week to try and entice Welsh students to join the Society. The result of this effort appeared to have been rather disappointing. Most Societies dismissed students as being interested only in getting drunk. A Midlands Society officer commentated that:

*‘I don’t think students would be interested in joining a group with our age profile.’*

A similar comment is made by an officer of the Manchester Welsh Society in response to question 8 (see Appendix 2):

*‘Unfortunately, the students who attend the various colleges all have cars and go back to Wales over the weekend. Hence, our age group is 65+. It’s not easy to keep things going in a city the size of Manchester but we keep going...! There used to be 18+ Welsh chapels in the city at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. Things change more is the pity.’*

---

<sup>99</sup> As a trustee of AgeUK Norfolk, I am made well aware of the isolation and loneliness of the older person.

The above comment from Manchester is also tied in with the regret over the demise of the Welsh chapels. It is an unfortunate fact that religion has become less relevant to the present day younger generation. This is a process that has been occurring gradually since the 1960s. In the recently published 2011 census report, 32% of the population of Wales professed to have no religion, confirming what has been noted earlier. However, taking England and Wales as a whole Christianity is still the major religion with 59.3% professing to be Christians.<sup>100</sup> It is probably true to say that a profound emphasis on religion could discourage young people from joining a Welsh Society.

**Table 6. Religious Services held by Societies.**

<b>St. David's Day</b>	<b>Gymanfa Ganu</b>	<b>Carol Service</b>
Chelmsford	Chelmsford with local Church	Northwich
Cornish*	Edinburgh on St.David's Day	Slough & District
Droitwich Spa	Oxford alternates with concert for St. David's Day	Sheffield & District**
Hull		Huddersfield
Liverpool		Coventry
Manchester		Newcastle & Tyneside
Newcastle & Tyneside		Wolverhampton jointly with Saron Welsh Chapel
Norwich		Bradford & District**
Reading		
Working		

\* Service held in Truro Cathedral.

\*\* Carol Service held with Xmas dinner/party.

<sup>100</sup> Religion in England and Wales in [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) <accessed 25/02/2013.

<b>Regional Cymanfaoedd Canu.</b>
1. Wessex- (Bournemouth, Windsor, Portsmouth, Southampton (finished) & Petersfield).
2. Thames Valley Societies- Slough
3. Bristol- (Taunton, Bristol & Burnham).
4. Cymanfa'r Canoldir- (Wolverhampton, Coventry, Redditch, Birmingham, Gloucester & Droitwich).

Religious services to celebrate St. David's day took place in 2012 in ten of the Societies. The Cornish Welsh Society held their St. David's Day service in Truro Cathedral which is by far the most prestigious location of all. Many organise a *Cymanfa Ganu* and Carol Services both of which would be more likely to attract the wavering Christian that enjoys participating in a session of choral singing. There is no doubt that a chapel or church service is more enjoyable if the venue is filled with a reasonably large congregation. To achieve this Chelmsford Welsh Society have joined forces with a local church to hold a *Cymanfa Ganu* / 'Songs of Praise' service. Other Societies in Wessex, Thames Valley, Bristol, the Midlands and North of England have joined forces in a regional *Cymanfa Ganu*. Several of the Societies demonstrate their Welsh hospitality by having tea with Welsh cakes and *bara brith* after the service.

The earliest of Welsh Societies had their inception in the Welsh Chapels or Churches of the adopted city, apart that is from The *Honourable Cymdeithas y Cymmrodorion* of London. (For the history of the *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* see Chapter 2, page 31) Liverpool and Manchester Welsh Societies appear to have preserved this close connection with the Welsh chapels. Derby Welsh Society hold a '*Capel Cymraeg*' on the second Sunday of the month (excluding August) in the Fellowship Room of St. Mathews church, Darley Abbey. Similarly, the Nottingham Welsh Society hold monthly Sunday services which are 70% in Welsh and 30% in English at St. Andrews, Goldsmith Road, Nottingham. Finally, the *Draig Werdd* although not organising any activity that is remotely religious, is campaigning to get the status of the Welsh Chapel

in Dublin upgraded to that of a listed building. At present it is a graffiti strewn Chinese Internet Café.

Questions 5, 6 and 7 are specifically about the Welsh language and what steps are being taken by the Societies to promote the language. However, even *Plaid Cymru* now known as ‘The Party of Wales’, subscribes to the fact that you do not necessarily have to speak Welsh to consider yourself a Welsh man or woman. According to the late Gwynfor Evans:

*“Wales has no finer patriots than some who have no knowledge of the national tongue”.*<sup>101</sup>

What is required though is a certain readiness to support the language. One Welsh Society had apparently in the past decided to hold all the meetings in English as they felt that the use of the Welsh language by a few would have been divisive. Happily the same Society has started Welsh classes for learners and a Welsh Conversation Group.

Three of the Societies, Liverpool, Manchester and Shrewsbury very commendably hold all their meetings in Welsh. Most of the other Society’s activities are bilingual to a certain extent with probably a greater emphasis on English rather than Welsh. The following quote is from the Hastings Welsh Society, which echoes Gwynfor Evans’s sentiments:

*‘We keep the Welsh Flag on display at our events, we may be unable to speak Welsh but we keep our love of Wales alive and memories of growing up in Wales are very important-including learning Welsh then, even if we haven’t continued learning’.*

When attempting to ascertain how much interest there was in Welsh speaking and learning outside Wales it soon became apparent that contacting the Welsh societies alone would not give the complete picture. Through the Derby Welsh Society, contact was made with a Jonathan Simcock who was instrumental in starting a Facebook group, ‘*Menter Iaith Lloegr*’. Jonathan provided a list of Welsh classes and conversation groups active in England. Therefore a further investigation was carried out, this time by contacting each group or organisation by telephone or e-mail. The questions asked were

---

<sup>101</sup> Gwynfor Evans quoted in Vernon Bogdanor, ‘Devolution in the United Kingdom’, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.154.



based on questions 5 and 6 of the questionnaire sent to the Societies (Appendix 2) that is, the number of people attending the classes. Also, an attempt was made to find out whether there had been an increase or decrease in the numbers of participants in the last year or so and the fee charged if applicable.

Table 7 therefore is in two parts, (a) the Welsh conversation groups run by the Welsh Societies and (b) conversation groups run by other organisations.

<b>Welsh Conversation Groups.</b>		
<b>(a) Run by the Societies.</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>How often?</b>
Chelmsford. 'Tea Afternoons'	15 to 20	
Manchester as part of the learners class.		
Nottingham. Coffee mornings--'Pobpeth yn Gymraeg'	12 to 15	
Norwich. 'Clwb Clebran'	6 to 7	bimonthly
Slough & District		every 2-3 weeks.
Shrewsbury 'Siop Siarad'	6 to 8	
Chiltern. 'Noswaith Siarad Cymraeg' informal evening in a local pub.		
Coventry & Oxford both 'thinking about setting one up'.		
<b>(b) Other organizations</b>		
Clwb Cymraeg Telford	4 to 6	
Clwb Clebran Bradford	usually 6	
Clwb Siarad Norfolk	just started	Monthly
Clwb Siarad Suffolk in Bury St.Edmund's library.		Monthly
Clwb Siarad Milton Keynes (OU)	just started	
Sheffield through U3A 1) 'Grwp Sgwrsio'	5 to 8	
2) 'Meistrol'i'	10 to 12	
<b>Web sites-</b>		
Say Something in Welsh- <a href="http://www.saysomethinginwelsh.com">http://www.saysomethinginwelsh.com</a>		
Menter Iaith Lloegr (Facebook)- <a href="http://www.facebook.com/groups/31395206651">http://www.facebook.com/groups/31395206651</a>		

There was an article in the *Eastern Daily Press*, an East Anglian daily newspaper on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2013 announcing the formation of ‘The Suffolk Welsh Group’ which owed its existence to the website [www.saysomethinginwelsh.com](http://www.saysomethinginwelsh.com). The article claimed that, “as a result of this website, Welsh groups were now springing up all over the UK.”<sup>102</sup> *Clwb Siarad* Norfolk on the other hand, has been started as a direct result of this survey. Jonathan Simcocks made the introductions between an English person living in King’s Lynn who has learned Welsh very well indeed and others in the area both learners and native Welsh speakers. Eight people turned up for the first meeting. It is hoped that this group will form a conduit between the learners and members of the local Welsh Society.

It was very noticeable during the survey that Welsh learners very rarely joined the Welsh Societies. The University of the Third Age (U3A) in Sheffield is very active in providing Welsh learner classes as well as Welsh conversation groups but according to the respondent from the Sheffield and District Cambrian Society:

*‘It may appear strange but only a small percentage, less than 20%, of the Welsh Learners join the Welsh Society.’*

This may be due to the different age groups as alluded to earlier or possibly that the Welsh learner feels either intimidated by the native Welsh speakers belonging to the society or that as there is a negligible amount of Welsh being spoken it would be waste of their time to attend the social events.

By far the largest numbers of people wanting to learn the Welsh language attend the courses run by the London Welsh Society. They have no difficulty in filling their places. According to a spokeswoman for the Society, “Welsh classes were ridiculously popular this year”. There were more than a hundred applicants each paying £200 for a year’s course. The majority of the applicants were retired people. Some of whom had lived in London all their lives, were of Welsh decent but had never learned the language. Peter Daniels describes attending Welsh classes in Gray’s Inn Road;<sup>103</sup> he was born in Llanelli and attended secondary school in the 1950-60s but was dissuaded from learning Welsh at the time by his parents.

---

<sup>102</sup> Eastern Daily Press. 2/03/2013 p.30.

<sup>103</sup> Peter Daniels. ‘In Search of Welshness’ (Talybont, Ceredigion, Y Lolfa, 2011), p. 76.

Peter Daniels did attend the other establishment in London catering for the Welsh learner. This is the London City Literary Academy (City Lit), off the Holborn Kingsway. From their website they appear to cater for the Welsh learner of a wide range of ability from Level 1 to Level 5. Unfortunately, they failed to reply to the e-mail requesting further information. However, according to Daniels there were several persons of English decent in his class as well as a Chinese and a Canadian.<sup>104</sup>

Table 8, below is similarly in two halves, the first half lists the Welsh Societies that provide Welsh classes while the second part lists other establishments that provide Welsh classes.

**Table 8. Welsh classes held in England.**

<b>Welsh Classes held by a Welsh Society</b>	<b>Numbers &amp; Remarks.</b>	<b>Fee</b>
London Welsh.	>100. Majority retired. Day classes also organised.	£200/course
Manchester (Didsbury)	10 /11.Classes on Thurs.am All bar 3, retired.	
Norwich	? No. Started in 2011 for beginners.	
Bradford & District	12. Some knowledge of Welsh expected.	
Slough & District	6 of mixed ability.	
Chiltern & District	mixed, beginners & improvers.	

---

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p.76.

Welsh Classes held outside Societies	Numbers & Remarks.	Fee
Belper	10 beginners & 7 advanced.	
Cilgwri (Wirral)	10 in beginners, 5 each Levels 2&3	Fees have been increased.
Derby Welsh Learner Circle	8-10. Group uses 'Menter Iaith Lloegr' website.	
Sheffield U3A	18 beginners & advanced.	
City Lit (London).		
Birmingham (Brasshouse Language Centre).	25 students in two courses.	
Basingstoke- Cyrsia Cymraeg Queen Mary's College	14. At least 6 people with no Welsh connections.	
Solihull & Dorridge West Mid-lands	24 majority make use of web-sites.	
Open University.	78-from England for Beginners Welsh Course.(2012-13)	£1250 / 30 credit course. <sup>105</sup>

This is by no means an exhaustive list. The Derby Welsh Learners Circle-website <http://www.derbywelshlearnerscircle.blogspot.com> provides a list of websites that can be accessed, one of which is a list of colleges and universities that teach Welsh. Other institutions provide 'distance' learning facilities. For example, the Open University runs a beginners Welsh course for people aged 20 or so upwards. The majority of people fall into the 45-49 and over 65 age groups. Numbers have dwindled in the last few years, from 156 in 2008/9 to 97 in 2009/10 and 78 for 2011/12. These are the figures for students living in England. The high cost of the course at £1250 for a 30 credit course may be a factor.

Derby Welsh Learners Circle is a very enthusiastic group of learners under the guidance of Jonathan Simcock. The classes are held weekly. In addition they produce a monthly

<sup>105</sup> Course fee 2013-14 is £1281, information online. Available: <http://www3.open.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/course/L196.htm#future-availability> , <accessed 25/03/2013>.

*papur bro*, called ‘*Llais y Dderwent*’ completely in Welsh. The first national ‘Welsh Learners Scrabble’ competition was held in Nottingham last February (2013). The result of which can also be accessed online through the ‘*Menter Iaith Lloegr*’ website. While this group has close connections with the Nottingham Welsh Society and the other Welsh Societies in the vicinity they are not affiliated to any of the Societies.

The Welsh classes, *Dosbarthiadau Cymraeg Penbedw*, held in the Wirral, according to the spokeswoman, “had always been well attended, and credit for their popularity had been given to their excellent teacher”. Numbers this year are 10 beginners and 5 each in level 2 and 3 classes. The numbers are down possibly due to the increase in cost of the fees, which remained undisclosed, that the college had to introduce a year or so ago. According to a college spokeswoman, there was a comparable decrease in numbers in other courses run by the college. This is hardly surprising given the financial constraints that people are experiencing nowadays.

Just by possessing the minimum of computer skills, a person can access a wealth of material which can facilitate the learning of a new language. The group at Solihull and Dorridge in the West Midlands make full use of the ‘Say something in Welsh’ website, as well as attending the usual conventional Welsh classes. A troll through Amazon books will reveal that books for Welsh learners are far more attractive and user friendly than language books used to be in the past.

Apparently, the teacher at Solihull knows of four families living in the West Midlands who are attempting to bring up their children bilingually in Welsh and English. The headmistress of a school in Peterborough in a report in one of the Sunday newspapers maintained that as none of the children in her school has English as a first language, bilingualism of necessity is the culture of the school. Furthermore she maintains that “more and more of the world is going bilingual”<sup>106</sup> It follows that at the present time when English seems to be the language of the globalization, there is still the call for a second language. This is contrary to the ethos in the Wales of the 1950s and 1960s when learning Welsh was deemed a waste of time and effort. (Chapter 1, page 19).

---

<sup>106</sup> Nicholas Hellen, (social affairs editor), The Sunday Times, 24/02/2013.online  
[www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk-news/education/article1229356ece](http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk-news/education/article1229356ece)

Each of the smaller groups providing Welsh learner classes seems to depend on a small number of enthusiasts to keep the group going. One such group exists at Basingstoke. This group has even entered competitions for Welsh learners at the National Eisteddfod of Wales in 2010. They have at least six people out of fourteen who have no prior Welsh connections. Their activities can be accessed through their website [www.cymraegbasingstoke.blogspot.com](http://www.cymraegbasingstoke.blogspot.com) . This again reiterates the importance of embracing modern technology if an endeavor is to succeed, be it a learner group or a Society.

Table 9 shows the percentage of people able to speak Welsh in the Societies who responded to the questionnaire. The majority of the Societies have over 20% of their members able to speak Welsh. As would be expected the Societies which hold their meeting in Welsh have nearly all their members being able to speak Welsh. The interesting one with a high proportion of Welsh speakers is the Woking Welsh Society. This society is also able to attract younger members, 10% are under thirty-five, 20% are between thirty-five and fifty years and 30% between fifty and sixty-five years old. A closer look at the activities that are organised for the members may reveal the secret of their success. According to their respondent:

*‘Their aim is to promote and encourage Welsh cultural and social activities and friendships within and around the Woking area.’*

Table 9. Percentage of Welsh Speakers in the Societies.

<b>Under 20%</b>	<b>20-40%</b>	<b>50-70%</b>	<b>over 70%</b>
Bristol...10%	Bradford...20%	Derby 60%-30% fluent	Liverpool....100%
Hull...10%	Chelmsford...25%	Northwich...50%	Manchester...99%
Oxford...15%	Edinburgh....30%	Huddersfield... 50%+	Woking....70%
Hastings<3%	Newcastle...25%		Shrewsbury...99%
Cornish..10%	Nottingham...30%		
Chiltern & District..<20%	Norwich <40%		
Portsmouth..10%	Reading.....30%		
	Slough...20%		
	Sheffield...25%		
	Taunton....20%		
	Wolverhampton...20%		

Under 20%	20-40%	50-70%	over 70%
	Coventry....39%		
	Dublin..30%		
	Birmingham 25%		
	Edinburgh..30%		
	Droitwich Spa..40%		
London Welsh.. No data.			

As well as a St. David's Day Dinner Dance and a religious service on the Sunday nearest to the 1st of March, the Woking Welsh Society holds a variety of meetings which are held monthly. Typical events include quiz evenings, talks from visiting Welsh celebrities, a film night featuring a film with Welsh connections, jazz evening with a fish and chip supper and walks at week-ends culminating in a pub for a meal. There are special Christmas and New Year get-togethers as well. The programme appears to have something that would appeal to the different age groups which is vital if the Society is to continue to keep members and attract new members.

All the Welsh Societies organize a special function to mark St. David's Day be it a dinner, dinner dance or a concert. For example, the Chiltern and District Welsh Society were being entertained by the harpist Claire Jones at their St. David's Day celebrations this year (2013). All the Societies aim to hold more than three events during the year; however, the more successful Societies hold more frequent meetings. This of course takes organisation and a lot of work. Some of the officers of the smaller Societies have been in post for years with no hope of any one new volunteering to help.

The following is a list of other activities taking place within the different Societies.

Walks.

Summer Lunch and walk. (Bradford and District Welsh Society).

Walk in the Wicklow hills. (Draig Werdd).

Walking trip to Wales. (Chiltern and District Welsh Society).

Outings and Lunch.

*Ffwrdd a ni* (Bristol Welsh Society).

Visit to a stately home or similar (Norwich Welsh Society).

Outings to museums and art galleries.

Film evenings.

Showing a film with a Welsh flavour, for example, 'Patagonia' or Hugh Edwards's very successful 'History of Wales'.

#### Lunch or Supper

The Societies with a majority of elderly members tended to prefer meeting for a meal at lunch time.

Lunch in the Country (Chelmsford Welsh Society).

Supper in pubs combining this with a Skittles match or similar activity.

#### Choirs.

The London Welsh Society has three choirs, the London Welsh Male Voice Choir, the London Welsh Chorale and the Gwalia Male Voice Choir. The *Draig Werdd*, Dublin has a choir the Dublin Welsh Male Voice choir affiliated to it.

This choir has been in being since the days of the Dublin Welsh Society in the 1960s.

Manchester Welsh Society even manages to hold an eisteddfod. Taunton and District Welsh Society organize what they call an 'Inter-town Rally'. From the programme it appears to be a cross between an eisteddfod and a craft show, in that there are prose competitions in English and Welsh and also knitting, crochet and cookery classes. More uniquely, the *Draig Werdd* in Dublin celebrates an *Owain Glyndwr* evening on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. They are not forthcoming however, as regards the programme for the evening.

It is perhaps surprising that only two of the Welsh Societies organize rugby sessions given the popularity of the game amongst the Welsh. London Welsh have large television screens to show the rugby on international days in their headquarters in London's Grey's Inn Road, while the *Draig Werdd* in Dublin view the matches in their regular bar. At the present time, pub landlords are finding it more and more difficult to run a profitable establishment so most would surely welcome the trade that would ensue if a group expressed a wish to use their facilities to view a match. Matches can always be viewed in your own sitting room but the *hwyl* that is experience when watching the match as a crowd is missing.



As alluded to earlier there does not seem to be any contact between the Welsh Societies and the students from the local universities. Although one Society, Nottingham, did admit to having a useful relationship with their local University, in that the academic staff were always happy to give talks and lectures to the Society. Several universities, Durham, Exeter, Oxford to name but a few do have active Welsh Societies.

Three of the Societies at least produce a regular newsletter. Again, this takes time to prepare but can be extremely important to keep members of the Society in touch with each other as well as giving information as to who the present officers are, the programme that has been proposed for the coming year and reports of previous meetings. If the society has a website then the newsletter can be accessed online thus keeping down the cost of printing and posting.

### **The Findings.**

1. The viability of some of the Societies is in doubt due to small numbers and the fact that the members are elderly. However, even if all the society does is meet up on a fairly regular basis for lunch, it provides friendship and companionship to a group of people who could otherwise be very isolated and lonely.

It would be commendable if the less threatened societies would make a point of catering for their older members when drawing up a programme. For example, have a lunch time meeting occasionally, organize a bus trip to somewhere of interest and when organizing a walk, make sure that there is an easier alternative route.

2. It would appear that having an up to date, easy to navigate web-site is mandatory if the society is to attract new members. Also, a newsletter whether accessed as part of the website or sent to the members via e-mail or post, is important as it helps to keep members well informed and advertises future events.

3. There appears to be many people interested in learning the Welsh language, but very few of these people show any interest in joining a Welsh Society. The reason for this is not known but the onus should be on members of the Society to encourage Welsh learners to come along if only to the meetings that are of interest to the learner. Inclusivity should be the culture of the Society and not exclusivity.

4. In this increasingly secular age, practicing religion is no longer fashionable. However, Christianity and particularly non-conformity is part of the Welsh heritage. In these days of dwindling congregations, some societies have very sensibly joined forces for certain services such as *Cymanfaoedd Canu*.

## Conclusion.

As discussed in Chapter 1, identity, even national identity, is not fixed once and for all. This can be illustrated by the change in Welsh identity following the non-conformist and Methodist revival that occurred in Wales towards the end of the eighteenth century. Prior to this time, the Welsh were not very different from the stereotypical Celt, happy to drink to excess. This trait had been noted in Roman times, according to Didorus Siculus they, the Celts were ‘exceedingly fond of wine’<sup>107</sup>In Chapter 2, it was stated that the Welsh Societies in London in the 1700s were very fond of ‘carousing and conviviality’. This description epitomized the meetings of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion held at the time.

As a result of the influence of non-conformity and Calvinistic Methodists in particular the Welsh identity had changed to one of sobriety and religiosity. This fact is emphasised by the number of chapels and churches that were built by the Welsh wherever they settled. However, since the nineteen sixties, Britain as a whole has become more secularised. Chapel and church attendance has declined and once again tavern society seems to be on the ascendancy. Modern day Welsh society is no exception as the 2011 census figures confirm. Despite this trend a few of the Welsh Societies in England, even today, have their foundations firmly fixed on the chapels and religion

It had been noted in Chapter 1, that chapels during the hundred and fifty or so years up to the 1960s had been pivotal in Wales in keeping the Welsh language alive. They probably served a similar function amongst the exiled Welsh in England. However, the chapel going generation are dying out and the chapels can no longer be instrumental in keeping the language alive in England either. Therefore, as in Wales where Welsh is no longer learnt ‘*ar yr aelwyd*’ or ‘*yn y chapel*’, Welsh is now taught mainly in schools. Likewise in England, Welsh is learnt in classes.

There appears to be enthusiasm for learning Welsh especially in the English Midlands and in the London area. Surprisingly, these learners do not always have a connection

---

<sup>107</sup> Didorus Siculus quoted in Mark Pittaway, (ed.) *Globalization and Europe* (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2003), p.119.

with Wales and unfortunately the majority seem reluctant to join the local Welsh Society. Further investigation need to be carried out to ascertain the reason for this. Most of these learners use the website 'Say Something in Welsh' and 'Menter Iaith Lloegr' to form groups. This just emphasises how important it is to embrace modern technology. It was noted in the survey that the more successful societies had excellent websites.

The Chapels were also responsible for encouraging choral singing not only during the Sunday services but also in *Cymanfaoedd Canu* and carol services. It was heartening to find that these traditions were still taking place under the auspices of some of the Welsh societies in England. The London Welsh Society as would be expected, support three prestigious choirs. Also, both the Liverpool Welsh society and the Dublin Welsh have male voice choirs. Not all Welsh persons can sing but most will join in in choral singing under certain circumstances.

According to the Roman historian Stabo, the Celts were described as being 'madly fond of war, high spirited and quick to battle'.<sup>108</sup> In the present day, sports matches have been substituted for battle. Given that rugby is the national game of Wales it is surprising that so few of the Welsh Societies organise meetings around international games.

The Welsh language unfortunately did not feature to any great extent in most societies' meetings, although a few, for example, Norwich, have started to organise Welsh conversation classes and Welsh learner classes within the last couple of years and at least two other societies 'are thinking of it'. However, it must be emphasised that it is not necessary to be able to speak the language to be Welsh, after all only a fifth of the population of Wales speak the language. To quote *Plaid Cymru*, the Party of Wales, it is not essential to speak the language to Welsh but a certain empathy for the language is essential.

Is there a resurgence of Welshness amongst the exiled Welsh? As far as is known no similar survey has been done before so there is nothing available for comparison. There is evidence that Welsh learner classes are thriving. However, some of the Universities

---

<sup>108</sup> Stabo, quoted in Mark Pittaway (ed.), *Globalisation and Europe* (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2003), p. 119.

and colleges have experienced a decrease in number of students but this could be due to the increased fees that these institutions have to charge these days and the fact that there is a monetary recession affecting us all at present.

The main problem with the continuation of the Welsh Societies appears to be the fact that the members of the societies are generally elderly and the societies are unable to attract younger members. In the past these societies with the backing of the Welsh Chapels would have been pivotal in keeping the Welsh community together. It would be a pity if more folded as this would speed up the complete integration of the Welsh population of a particular area and therefore a loss of their Welsh identity.

Recommendations.

1. A numbers of the Welsh clubs have registered an interest in the findings of this research. In particular, what steps they should take in order to attract new and younger membership. The following are the main recommendations.

(a). Communication is vital. In the present day an attractive, easy to navigate and up to date website is a must. Essential details should include information as to who to contact together with the programme of events on offer. A periodic newsletter can include articles of interest written by members of the Society and can be available online or sent by post to those that do not possess a computer.

(b). There should be a variety of activities at reasonably frequent intervals. All the activities on offer need not attract all the members. For instance, the elderly in the Society should be catered for by holding some lunchtime meetings. Also, joining forces with neighbouring Welsh Societies for *Cymanfaoedd Canu* or an eisteddfod would share the organising.

(c). The Welsh learners in the area should be encouraged to join the Society.

(d). Gentlemen of all ages and possibly some ladies would happily congregate at a designated hostelry to view international rugby matches. This should be a fairly easy activity to arrange.

(e). When organising an activity a Welsh slant can nearly always be found. For example, the Bristol Welsh Society named their organised trip, *Ffwrdd a Ni*. Instead of Halloween, the celebration should be *Nos Calan Gaeaf* and instead of a carol service

how about a *Gwasanaeth Y Plygain*. On the 16<sup>th</sup> September a *Noson Owain Glyndwr* could be celebrated.

2. The Welsh Assembly Government have a number of incentives to promote the language within Wales. Are they aware of the enthusiastic teachers and the number of learners on the other side of Offa's Dyke? The Welsh Assembly could fund a website giving a list of Welsh classes available in England, Scotland and Ireland together with the Welsh Societies in those countries. (Taffia.org was the site undertaking this excellent work but it unfortunately appears to have been closed). Apparently the Welsh Language Project in Patagonia was funded to the tune of £162,000 for a period of four years 2009-2012 by the Assembly. This was for supplying teachers, training native teachers, the formation of Welsh language activities and the establishment of structured courses.<sup>109</sup>
3. The National Eisteddfod holds competitive classes for Welsh learners and produces a list of these classes in the booklet *Beth Amdani?* This is distributed throughout Wales through the 'Welsh for Adults' courses? As far as I am aware there is not a similar distribution to England although the group at St. Mary's College, Basingstoke have competed in the past. Should the Eisteddfod have a class specifically for Welsh learners living outside Wales? It is certainly more difficult to learn a new language in an environment where there is no trace of the language being learnt.
4. There are excellent short courses for the Welsh learner being held at the Universities of Aberystwyth and Lampeter, at Nant Gwytheyrn and not forgetting the 'boot-camp' organised by SSIW at Llangranog. However, the Welsh tourist Board could play a part as well by encouraging activity holidays in Welsh catering for the Welsh learner. Learn, for example, to cook, paint, and horse ride while practicing the language.
5. The ten-yearly national census should contain a question on languages understood or spoken throughout Britain. English and Welsh speakers were grouped together in the

---

<sup>109</sup> Information obtained from the Welsh assembly website.

2011 census, which resulted in the headline in 'The Times' newspaper, that Polish can now claim the title as 'England's second language'<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup> Richard Ford (Home Correspondent), 'Polish talks its way into mainstream to claim title as England's second language' in The Times 31/01/2013.

## Bibliography.

Aitchison, J. and Carter, H., *Spreading the Word- The Welsh Language 2001* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2004).

Anon. There will be a Welsh county welcome, *Eastern Daily Press*, 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2013, p.30.

Birmingham History Forum : Welsh churches, online. Accessed: [www.birminghamhistory.co.uk/forum/showthread.php?t=24163](http://www.birminghamhistory.co.uk/forum/showthread.php?t=24163), <accessed 09/02/2013>.

Bogdanor, V., *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Breverton. T., *The Welsh, The Biography* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberly Publishing, 2012).

Castells, M., *The Power of Identity, Vol.II of The Information Age, Economy, Society & Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997).

Castles, S., Miller, Prof. M. J., *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (Palgrave: Mcmillan, 2009).

Chimisso, C., (ed.), *Exploring European Identities* ( Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2003).

Cymuned, online. Available: [www.cynuned.org.uk](http://www.cynuned.org.uk) , <accessed 12/03/2013>.

Daniels, P., *In Search of Welshness* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2011).

Davidson, I. & Brec'hed, P., *Without and Within: Inclusion, identity and continuing education in a new Wales*, a paper presented at SCUTREA Conference in July, 2000, online <http://www.leeds.ac.uk?educol/documents/00001441.htm>, <accessed 06/09/2012>.

Davies, J., *A History of Wales*, revised edition (London: Penguin Group, 2007).

Dyfodol, online. Available: [www.dyfodol.org.uk](http://www.dyfodol.org.uk) , <accessed 12/03/2013>.

Edwards, H., *Icons of Wales*, a booklet to accompany the BBC Wales series 'The Story of Wales' (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2012).

Evans, D.G. *A History of Wales 1906-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000).

Evans, H., *A Short History of Dublin's Welch Church, 1831-1939* online. Available: <http://www.draigwerdd.org?Newsletters/capel962cymraeg.rtf> <accessed 08/03/2013>



- Ford, Richard, Polish talks its way into mainstream to claim title as England's second language, *The Times*, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013, p.4.
- Hall, S., & Du Guy, P. (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1996).
- Hall, S., Held, D., & McGrew, T. (eds.), *Modernity and Its Futures* (Cambridge/Milton Keynes: Polity/ The Open University, 1992).
- Hellen, Nicholas, School where English is foreign to all pupils, *The Sunday Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2013, online. Available: [www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk\\_news/education/article1220356ece](http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/education/article1220356ece).
- Humphreys, E., *The Taliesin Tradition, A Quest for Welsh Identity* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press Ltd., 1989).
- James, L., *The Journey of Gerald of Wales*, online. Available: <http://www.Swanseamass.org/history/wales/travel/gerald2.html>, <accessed 08/03/2013>.
- Jelenienoski, V., *Embodying Identities* (Cambridge: Seidler Policy Press, 2010).
- Jobins, S. T., *The Phenomenon of Welshness or 'How Many Aircraft Carriers Would an Independent Wales Have?* (Llanrwst: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2011).
- Jobins, S.T., Sion jobbins on the DAI-aspura, in *Cambria Wales Magazine*, online. Available: <http://www.cambrianmagazine.com/index.php/Cambria-Articles?DAI-as..> , <accessed 12/05/2012>.
- Johnes, M., *Wales since 1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).
- Jones, E. (ed.), *The Welsh in London 1500-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, on behalf of 'The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion', 2001).
- Jones, R.W., & Scully, R., *Wales Says Yes. Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012).
- Kearney, H., *The British Isles*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- Khelif, B. B., *Language, Ethnicity and Education in Wales* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1975).
- Lawler, S., *Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).
- Mackay, H., (ed.), *Understanding Contemporary Wales* (Cardiff/Milton Keynes: University of Wales Press/ The Open University, 2010).
- Mentrau Iaith Cymru, online. Available: [www.mentrauiath.com](http://www.mentrauiath.com) , <accessed 12/03/2013>.

Menter Iaith Lloegr, online. Available: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/31395206651/> <accessed 20/03/2013>.

Morgan, K.O., *Rebirth of a Nation, A History of Modern Wales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

Morgan, Prof. P., A Brief History of the Cymmrodorion, online. Available: [www.cymmrodorion.org](http://www.cymmrodorion.org) , <accessed 13/03/2013>.

Morris-Jones, O., Welsh Migration and retention of Identity in Liverpool, (Thesis for B.A. University of Liverpool, 2010-11), online. Available: <http://liverpool-welsh.co.uk/DISSERTATION> , <accessed 14/01/2013>.

Nasadowska, M., Personal identities are not given once and for all, but can be rather re-shaped and changed , Oct.31, 2009, Language and Culture, online. Available: <http://langculture.wordpress.com/2009/10/31/possibility-of-change-is-e> , <accessed 06/09/2012>.

Office of National Statistics, online. Available: [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk) , <accessed 30/01/2012>.

Owen, T. M., *Welsh Folk Customs* (Cardiff: William Lewis (Printers) Ltd., 1959).

Parker, M., *Neighbours from Hell? English Attitudes to the Welsh* (Talybont, Ceredigion: Y Lolfa, 2007).

Pittaway, M.,(ed.), *Globalization and Europe* (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 2003).

Rees, J., *Bread of Heaven* (Profile Books)

RTÉ Irish televisions magazine programme “Capitol D”(2011), *Welsh Chapel in Talbot Street, Dublin*. Available: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpFHYO-DN24](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpFHYO-DN24) . Also available: [www.draigwerdd.org](http://www.draigwerdd.org) , <accessed 02/02/2013>.

Rupp, G., *Globalization-Conviction, Conflict, Community Challenged* New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

Rutherford, J., (ed.), *Identity, Community, Culture, Differences* (London: Lawrence& Wishart, 1990).

Say Something in Welsh, online. Available: <http://www.saysomethingin.com/welsh/> , <accessed 14/03/2013>.

Tibbott, S. M., ‘Liberality and hospitality: food as communication in Wales’, *Folk Life*, 24 (1985-6). 32-51; republished in *Domestic Life in Wales*, ed. Beth Thomas (Llandyssul: Gwasg Gomer, 2002).

Walsh, L., Block 4. *Industry and Changing Landscapes, From Enlightenment to Romanticism, c.1780-1830*, (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 2004).

Wang, Yi, Globalization Enhances Cultural Identity, (2007), online. Accessed: <http://www.uri.edu/iaics/content/2007v16n1/09YiWong.pdf> , <accessed 06/03/2013>.

Welsh Assembly Government, online. Available: [welsh.gov.uk](http://welsh.gov.uk) <accessed 12/03/2013>.

Welsh Societies across the world, online. Available: [www.walesbook.com?societies/php](http://www.walesbook.com?societies/php) , <accessed 03/12/2013>.

West Yorkshire Archive Project, Societies for Welsh Immigrants into the rest of United Kingdom...., online. Available: <http://nowthen.org/collections/st-davids-society-bradford> , <accessed 14/01/2013>.

Willis, Gwenllian, *Cynllun Rhannwch eich Cymraeg*. Available: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut7GzOzgQo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut7GzOzgQo) , < accessed 14/03/2013>.

Woodward, K., (ed.), *Questioning Identity: Gender, Class, Ethnicity* (London: Routledge/The Open University, 2000).

Woodward, K., *Understanding Identity* (London: Arnold a member of the Hodder Headline Group, 2002).

Williams, G.A., *When was Wales?* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1985).

Appendix 1.

**CROSSWINDS,  
1 THE DRIVE,  
OLD ROAD,  
ACLE,  
NORWICH.  
NR13 3RF.**

**Tel. 01493 750326**

**e-mail [eirlys@homecall.co.uk](mailto:eirlys@homecall.co.uk)**

**19th January, 2013**

Dear Hon Secretary,

I am nearing completion of the M.A. course in Celtic Studies at Trinity Saint David's, University of Wales, Lampeter as a distance-learning, part-time student. For my dissertation, I have decided to investigate how much interest and enthusiasm there is in Welsh culture, particularly the Welsh language amongst the exiled Welsh in the British Isles.

What is of particular interest is exploring whether there has been a corresponding resurgence of interest in the language outside Wales. There seems to have been a greater interest in learning Welsh in Wales during the last 30-40 years, particularly amongst the young.

I have lived in Norfolk now for over thirty and am a retired medical doctor. I was able to practice my Welsh speaking while my mother was alive, since then I have joined the 'Clwb Clebran' at the Norwich Welsh Society.

I would be very grateful if you would complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible. I am hoping to complete the dissertation by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.

Diolch yn Fawr,

Eirlys.

Appendix 2.

.....Welsh Society.

Name of the Hon. Secretary & contact details (optional)

A brief history of your society, e.g. when was it formed etc.

1. Your current membership.....

2. In the passed five years has the number increased or decreased & by how much.....  
...

3. Age Range...in % approx. below 35 years ..., 35-50 ..., 50-65....., over 65 years .....

4. Social events-

St. David's Day Dinner.....Yes/No.

St. David's Day Religious Service.....Yes/No

Other events (please specify) also please comment as to how much does the Welsh language features in these events.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. Do you organize Welsh Language classes? If so how often, are the classes for beginners & how many people attend?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6. Do organize Welsh conversation groups? How many attend and how frequently do they meet? Please comment on the fluency of those attending.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

7. Approx. what is the percentage of Welsh speakers among your membership?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

8. Any other information that could be of interest? e.g. contact with local University, Rugby etc. How do you attract new members?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Diolch yn fawr.

Appendix 3.					
5*	4*	3*	2*	Taffia or similar	Nothing
Birmingham Welsh Society	Chilton Region Welsh Club	Derby Welsh Society	Petersfield Welsh Society	Bournemouth Welsh Society	Coventry Cambrian Society
Bradford & District Welsh Society	Liverpool Welsh Society	Loughborough Welsh Society	Hastings Welsh Society	Bristol Welsh Society	Evesham Welsh Society*
Chelmsford Welsh Society	Nottingham Welsh Society	Northwich Welsh Society	Huddersfield Welsh Society	Newcastle upon Tyne Welsh Society	Exeter Welsh Society
Hull & E. Yorkshire Welsh Society	Reading & District Welsh Society	Sheffield & District Cambrian Society	Gloucester Welsh Society	Norwich Welsh Society	Isle of Wight Welsh Society
London Welsh Society	Shrewsbury Welsh Society		Redditch Welsh Society	Slough & District Welsh Society	Leeds Welsh Society*
Manchester Welsh Society	Edinburgh Welsh Society			Stoke on Trent Welsh Society*	Mid-Herts Welsh Society*
Oxfordshire Welsh Society	St. David's Society, N.I.			Wolverhampton & District Cambrian Society	Newport Welsh Society*
Taunton & District Welsh Society	Chiltern & District Welsh Society			Cornish Welsh Society	Preston Welsh Society
Woking Welsh Society				Mabinogion Society, Cambridge	Wessex Welsh Society
Y Ddraig Werdd, Dublin				Glasgow Welsh Society	Durham Welsh Society
				Croydon Welsh Society	Droitwich Welsh Society
				Portsmouth & District Welsh Society	Windsor Welsh Society
KEY					Romney Welsh Society
Societies that have responded (31)					
* denotes no longer in existence (5)	Result: 52 sent out initially, as 5 have ceased to exist , no. of possible replies 47.		N.B. one of the replies was from an already defunct club- Newport (Salop).		

Appendix 4.

Slough and District.....Welsh Society.

Name of the Hon. Secretary & contact details (optional)Our current Sec is relinquishing her post at our AGM in January

A brief history of your society, e.g. when was it formed etc.

The Society was started in 1952.We celebrated our ‘Golden’ year in June with a trip to Cardiff and Swansea.Formed by Welsh people living in Slough,some second generation of those who came to Slough to look for work. An area of Slough,commonly known then as Timber Town (now Manor Park) was a ‘Welsh’ area with a lot of people working in the growing number of factories on the Slough Trading Estate.

9. Your current membership...50/60.....

10. In the passed five years has the number increased or decreased & by how much...  
...decreased,mostly with members passing away,but some moved back to  
Wales.....

11. Age Range...in % approx. below 35 years ...2%, 35-50 ..., 50-65...3%., over 65  
years 95%.....

12. Social events-

St. David’s Day Dinner.....Yes/.

St. David’s Day Religious Service...../No

Other events (please specify) also please comment as to how much does the  
Welsh language features in these events. ....We meet once a month but our  
events are in English,but with some Welsh connection if possible.We have  
Quiz eve,Cheese and Wine, last year’s ‘first’was Cawl a Chan, BBQ talks,  
aGymanfa in conjunction with other Thames valley Societies is now almost  
defunct.We had to cancel this year’s in Slough as the Church had double  
booked so whether we try again is undecided at the moment.Christmas Carol  
Service held at the Welsh Chapel in december and also a Christmas lunch in  
a local  
hostelry!.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



13. Do you organize Welsh Language classes? If so how often, are the classes for beginners & how many people attend?

....I take a Welsh class of (now) 6 'pupils'. We meet once a fortnight and there is a mixture of ability within the class.....

.....  
.....

14. Do organize Welsh conversation groups? How many attend and how frequently do they meet? Please comment on the fluency of those attending.

The Welsh class group meet once a fortnight/three weeks in someone's home for a conversation session without teacher being there!.....

.....  
.....  
.....

15. Approx. what is the percentage of Welsh speakers among your membership?

...20%.....

.....  
.....

16. Any other information that could be of interest? e.g. contact with local University, Rugby etc. How do you attract new members? ..Some of our male members are singers with the London Welsh Male Voice Choir and the London Welsh Rugby club choir. Rugby followers but no active visitors to

matches!!.....New members if any come thro word of mouth/contacts and rarely from follow up on newspaper reports of our activities. We have tried different avenues but none seem to attract youngsters!.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Diolch yn fawr.

## Appendix 5.

### **Draig Werdd.....The Welsh Society in Ireland**

Name of the Hon. Secretary & contact details (optional)

Gareth Llwyd Jones  
5 Kennington Crescent,  
Templeogue  
Dublin 6W  
00.353.1.456 5766  
conodate@mac.com

A brief history of your society, e.g. when was it formed etc.

Draig Werdd was formed in 2002.

There had probably been a St. David's Society in existence in the nineteenth century.

It was resurrected in 1905 when the founders included William H. Williams, O.R. Williams and W.T. Edwards.

In 1927 the guest at the St. David's festival was Lord Glenary

It celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year in 1955, but closed shortly after that.

It was resurrected some time later by Howell Evans and Gwilym Jones and petered out in the early 1960s.

St. David's Society was restarted in 1964 by Dublin Welsh residents and students from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and from Trinity College Dublin. For some time it was intimately interwoven with the Welsh Choir (see below) and they held St. David's Day Dinners and other meetings. It eventually petered out in about 1993.

Draig Werdd formed in January 2002 to celebrate St. David's Day and to give a focus to the Welsh community in Dublin.

17. Your current membership...

No formal membership, but a system of Friends of Draig Werdd who make voluntary contributions, number usually up to 150.

A Facebook page has about 140 followers. Recently a linked Twitter account has proved popular.

A bilingual newsletter is produced 3 or 4 times a year which is emailed to members.

18. In the past five years has the number increased or decreased & by how much...

Static – We have seen a small increase in membership/activity through social media promoting events.

19. Age Range...in % approx. Pure guesstimate

below 35 years 20%, 35-50 years 30%, 50-65years 25%, over 65 years 25%

20. Social events-

St. David's Day Dinner.....

Yes biannually, with an invited guest speaker

and on alternative years we hold a popular informal Noson Gwyl Ddewi.

St. David's Day Religious Service.....

No

Other events (please specify) also please comment as to how much does the Welsh language features in these events.

An Owain Glyndwr evening is organized for 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Welsh rugby matches are watched in a regular bar.

Occasional visits to Welsh interest events such as concerts & theatre, e.g. a play on Frongoch.

Once or twice a year we hold a hill walk in the adjacent Wicklow Hills.

.....

21. Do you organize Welsh Language classes? If so how often, are the classes for beginners & how many people attend?

We used to have Welsh classes, but not at present. One of our members is an Irishman who learnt Welsh at University College Dublin

.....

22. Do you organize Welsh conversation groups? How many attend and how frequently do they meet? Please comment on the fluency of those attending.

No. But impromptu meetings take place in Welsh between members

.....

23. Approx. what is the percentage of Welsh speakers among your membership?

30% ?

.....

24. Any other information that could be of interest? e.g. contact with local University, Rugby etc. How do you attract new members?

25.

New members are attracted by the old system of word of mouth, but in recent times modern social media plays an increasing role. First through the website:

<http://www.draigwerdd.org> and then through Facebook and recently with Twitter <[twitter.com/draigwerdd](https://twitter.com/draigwerdd)>.

The Dublin Welsh Male Voice Choir <<http://www.dublinwelsh.com>> was formed in 1966 and a couple of our members were founder members of the choir (including myself GLIJ). Draig Werdd takes an interest in the Choir and supports their concerts and events as appropriate, especially for carols.

Draig Werdd currently has a project to have an old Welsh chapel included as a listed building. It was built in 1831 and survived until the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The structure is still intact and it looks like a Welsh Chapel, apart from the graffiti covering it, because it is now a Chinese internet café. It was called Bethel since it used to serve visiting Welsh sailors as well as the local Welsh population. It was a daughter chapel of the Calvinistic Methodists of Holyhead, Anglesey. A recent publication "At Anchorage in Dublin"

details its rich history (Williams, Genealogical Society of Ireland, 2012, 112pp, ISBN 978-1-898471-72-1).

In January 2012, Howell Evans died at the sprightly age of 104. He was a stalwart of both the Welsh Societies and the Welsh Chapel. His history of the Welsh Chapel is on the Draig Werdd website.

There are Welsh Societies / groups in Belfast / Cork / Galway. Contact details:  
Gwenda in Cork (Geraint will have email);  
Deiniol ap Phillip in Galway (via Facebook) -  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ConnachtWelshCymry>  
St. David's Society of Northern Ireland

---

Diolch yn fawr.