Religion and
the Book Trade

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Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

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Those, like me, who received their religious education either through a Church in Wales Sunday school or primary school will be familiar with the tale of Mary Jones and her epic walk to Bala. In 1799, sixteen-year old Mary Jones, Welsh-speaking daughter of a local weaver, walked twenty-five miles to Bala to obtain a copy of a Welsh Bible. Unfortunately, there were none to be had but Mary's tale won over the local Rev. Thomas Charles who gave her a copy that had been reserved for another subscriber.

Not only was the story of Mary's journey the inspiration for the creation of the British & Foreign Bible Society[1] it also illustrates the close relationship between religion and the book trade. This relationship was demonstrated at the 2011 Print Networks annual conference which adopted religion and the book trade as its theme. The date was auspicious, being the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible–a book described as a "foundational religious and literary text ... the quintessential English book"[2] and "a supreme masterpiece of English prose".[3] Numerous events throughout the United Kingdom and the English-speaking world took place to commemorate this historic event, the Print Networks conference being one of many. There were few better locations to celebrate the relationship between religion and the book trade than the magnificent National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, which holds a copy of the first Welsh-language Bible, translated in 1588, which is generally considered as having ensured the survival of the Welsh language.[4] As a side-note, and

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[1] John D. Haigh, "Jones, Mary (1784-1866)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com)

[2] "The King James Bible in Cultural Context," review by W. Brown Patterson, *Sewanee Review*, 120 (2012): 651.

[3] Pauline Croft, "The Emergence of the King James Version of the Bible, 1611," *Theology*, 114 (2011): 249.

[4] See chapter 4 of Prys Morgan, "A Bible for Wales," National Library of Wales, http://www.llgc.org.uk/big/index_s.htm

to emphasise the close working relationships between religion and the book trade, the translator, Bishop William Morgan, personally supervised the printing in London.[5] The significance of the King James Version and Bishop Morgan's Welsh translation of the Bible upon their respective languages went beyond mere biblical study and expanded into culture, literature, and the language itself.[6] A similar claim is made for the Roman Catholic equivalent of the Book of Common Prayer, the *Missale Romanum*; a copy of which forms a chapter of this work. However, in remembering the efforts of these translators and contributors, the vital role of the book trade must not be overlooked.

Religious books–be they tracts, sermons, homilies, hymn books, or Bibles–are not only credited with the survival of indigenous languages, but were primarily used by all denominations to spread their version of Christianity, to persuade people to their cause, and to retain the loyalty of supporters. Naturally, the printers and distributors of these religious works were crucial to the process, as was the spread of literacy among the population. Richard Altick wrote of the

> emphasis [placed] upon private Bible reading as a way to religious truth and thus to personal salvation … And the controversies were carried on by floods of tracts and pamphlets, arguments and replies, and rejoinders and concounterrejoinders [*sic*]–printed matters which found a seemingly limitless market among all classes that could read.[7]

It was for the book trade to print and spread these controversies.

Contributions to the Print Networks conference covered various aspects of religion and the book trade. There were tales of printers and publishers of religious works, authors, religious periodicals, promoters of libraries, and even those who smuggled religious works from one country to another.

Unsurprisingly for a conference held in Wales, there were three contributions focusing on the relationship between religion and the book trade in that country. Dr Eryn White, from the University of Aberystwyth and one of the keynote speakers, contributes a chapter on "The Bible and

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[5] John Edward Lloyd and R.T. Jenkins, "Bishop William Morgan (c.1545-1604)," *A Dictionary of Welsh Biography Down to 1940* (London: Hon. Society of Cymmrodorion, 1959), 656.
[6] For example, Leland Ryken, *The Legacy of the King James Bible: Celebrating 400 Years of the Most Influential English Translation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).
[7] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 25.

the book in early modern Wales, 1546-1770" which describes the publication of the first ever Welsh-language printed book, which was religious in nature. The need for the Welsh to receive religious instruction in their native tongue was emphasised many times by those who translated the Bible into Welsh and was described as "as central to the experience of the Welsh as was Luther's Bible to that of the Germans or the Authorised [King James] Version to that of the English".[8] White traces the history of Welsh Bible printing, predominantly in London, later in the border town of Shrewsbury, until the printing of the first Welsh Bible in Wales itself in 1770. Leaving the eighteenth century and moving to the nineteenth, Philip Henry Jones discusses the publishing of Nonconformist Welsh sermons. Whereas printed sermons became popular in England from the early seventeenth century, the corresponding market for Welsh-language sermons developed later. To convert sinners, preachers extolled their audience (who could run into thousands)–confronting them with their failings and exhorting them to reform their behaviour. From the early decades of the nineteenth century, sermons came to constitute a significant proportion of the output of the Welsh-language press and were published in a variety of formats from individual sermons to multi-volume collections to appearances in denominational periodicals. Jones rescues these sermons from scholarly obscurity and seeks to discover how they made their way from the pulpit to the printed word and why authors though it worthwhile to arrange for their production. The final Welsh contribution comes from Huw Owen, who considers the impact of Calvinistic Methodism–a leading religious denomination in Wales–upon the visual culture of Wales by discussing the contributions made by the paintings and engravings of the Rev. Evan Williams, the Rev. Robert Hughes, Hugh Hughes, and S. Maurice Jones.

Wales was not the only nation whose relationship between religion and the book trade was examined at the conference. Toby Barnard, a noted scholar of Irish religious history, contributes a chapter on print and confession in eighteenth-century Ireland, which, as a predominantly Catholic country, differed from the rest of Britain both in religion and the nature of its print trade. In Ireland, as in Wales, printing developed slowly–although printers, booksellers, and publishers began to appear in Dublin from the 1690s–and religious material needed to be translated into the native language of the populace. Sermons trumpeted defections from Catholicism to Protestantism and vice versa, significant dates were

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[8] John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin, 1993), 244.

commemorated (such as the arrival of William of Orange on English soil in 1688), fast days were marked, and military victories celebrated in print.

Over the years, the Print Networks conference has enjoyed a number of excellent papers focusing on aspects of the Anglo-Dutch trade and Marja Smolenaars's chapter "Controversy, contraband and competition: religion and the Anglo-Dutch book trade in the seventeenth century" continues that tradition. Her work delves into the exciting underworld of smuggling religious works across the English Channel. Sometimes such works were hidden for religious reasons but more often for commercial reasons, as demonstrated by Robert Barker, the official Bible printer, who organised the seizure of Bibles printed overseas in order to protect his monopoly. Given the choice between religion and money, it was not always the higher ideal that prevailed.

Undoubtedly the most eye-catching title was chosen by Keith Manley who explores James Kirkwood and Scottish parochial libraries by announcing that "They never expected the Spanish Inquisition!" James Kirkwood (c.1650-1709) was a benefactor of Scottish parochial libraries, an illicit distributor of Irish Bibles to clergy in the Scottish Highlands, and was also involved in the movement for dispensing libraries for the benefit of clergy and gentry whose aim was the spread of learning amongst impoverished ministers. Kirkwood recognised the power of the printed book in spreading religious learning and sought to share that belief with others.

Providing a contrast to the "Protestant" contributions, is a case study of a *Missale Romanum*, published in Venice in 1597 and now in the possession of typographic historian Caroline Archer. She and co-author Barry McKay place the *Missale Romanum* on a par with the King James Version of the Bible as having an equally widespread influence on both language and religion as it remained the central service book of the Roman Catholic Church until the 1960s. Archer and McKay trace an 'underground' network of circulating Catholic books in England and describe the dangers faced by those who distributed such texts.

In her chapter "Bindings as an Indication of Religious Dissent" Diana Patterson discusses the large number of Unitarian writers whose works appear in decorated wastepaper bindings. The advantage of such bindings was their cheapness, which enabled the poorer sections of the society to purchase these religious works, which could indeed have been the aim of many of these authors.

The second of the conference's keynote speakers was Professor Cathy Shrank who spoke on Mise-en-page, "the Authors Genius", "the Capacity of the Reader", and the Ambition of "a Good Composter". Her chapter

traces the relationship between author, printing house, and reader. It looks at ways in which we can trace how printers and publishers shaped the works that they commissioned, produced, or sold. It also focuses on the challenges faced by historians of print, as they try to trace these paths and directions of influence as collaboration was common in the early modern printing trade.

Amongst the numerous contributions made during the King James Bible anniversary year of 2011, it is hoped this volume of essays emphasises the pivotal role played by those in the book trade, be they creators, printers, or sellers, in the distribution of religious works and that spreading the ideas of their authors, creators, or translators would have been far more difficult without their involvement.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BIBLE AND THE BOOK IN EARLY MODERN
WALES, 1546-1770

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The year 1546 witnessed the appearance of the earliest known printed book in the Welsh language: a seventeen page quarto volume from the press of the printer Edward Whitchurch of London. This first book was the work of Sir John Prise,[1] secretary of the Council in Wales and the Marches, a scholar with quite a distinguished career in the royal service, perhaps assisted in the previous decade by his connection through marriage to Thomas Cromwell. After Cromwell's fall from grace, Prise may well have received discreet support for his humanist interests from William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, one of the most influential Welshmen at court.[2] Prise was someone well placed to receive official approval for his publication and it may be significant that the work was printed by Whitchurch, who held the royal patent for service books and went on to print the 1549 Book of Common Prayer.[3] Although it is difficult to categorise Prise as a "Protestant", he evidently firmly believed in the principle that everyone should have access to the Scriptures in their own tongue. His work actually bears no proper title; it is known simply by the first words setting out its purpose: *Yny lhyvyr hwnn...* or "In this book..."

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[1] His surname is also frequently spelled as Price or Prys.

[2] R. Geraint Gruffydd, "*Yny lhyvyr hwnn* (1546): The Earliest Welsh Printed Book," *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 23 (1969): 115-6; See also R. Geraint Gruffydd, "Y print yn dwyn ffrwyth i'r Cymro: *Yny lhyvyr hwnn*, 1546," *Y Llyfr yng Nghymru / Welsh Book Studies*, 1 (1998): 1–20.

[3] John Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 64-5; Alec Ryrie, "Whitchurch, Edward (*d.* 1562)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com).

for "in this book are set out the Welsh alphabet, a calendar, the Creed, the Paternoster, the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments of the Church, the virtues to be practised and the vices to be avoided and their ramifications". The introduction refers to the King, the ailing Henry VIII, and his desire to see knowledge of the gospel spread among his people. In the light of this desire, the author deemed it "fitting" to render in Welsh some essential elements of the Scripture for those "who know no language in the world but Welsh" because a large part of the nation are in "darkness for want of knowledge of God and his commandments":

> And now that God has placed print in our midst in order to multiply knowledge of his blessed words, it is proper for us, as all Christendom has done, to take a part of this goodness along with them, so that so good a gift as this should be no less fruitful to us than to others.[4]

This slim book, with its quite brief introduction, thus sets the stage for the history of the development of printing through the medium of Welsh. It emphasises the need to spread religious knowledge, particularly knowledge of the word of God in the Bible, and also urges the use of that God-given invention, the printing press, to that end. These were themes that would recur time and time again in the works of authors during the early modern period. It is indeed highly appropriate that the first book to be printed in Welsh contained the first printed extracts of the Bible in Welsh, marking the beginning of the long association between the printing press, the Bible, and zeal for the promotion of religious knowledge. Aside from their love of "the old British tongue", the strongest justification for the continued use of Welsh by authors was in order to spread religious knowledge through the means of the only language the bulk of the population could understand. William Morgan argued in his preface to the 1588 Bible that:

> … although it is much to be desired that the inhabitants of the same island should be of the same speech and tongue, yet it is to be equally considered that to attain this end so much time and trouble are required, that in the meantime God's people would be suffered to perish from hunger of His word which would be barbarous and cruel beyond measure.[5]

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[4] Garfield H. Hughes, ed., *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659* (Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1951), 3; see also the reproduction ed., John H. Davies, *Yny lhyvyr hwnn a Ban o gyfreith Howel* (Bangor, 1902).
[5] English translation from A.O. Evans, *A Memorandum on the Legality of the Welsh Bible and the Welsh Version of the Book of Common Prayer* (Cardiff: W. Lewis (Printers), 1925), 134.
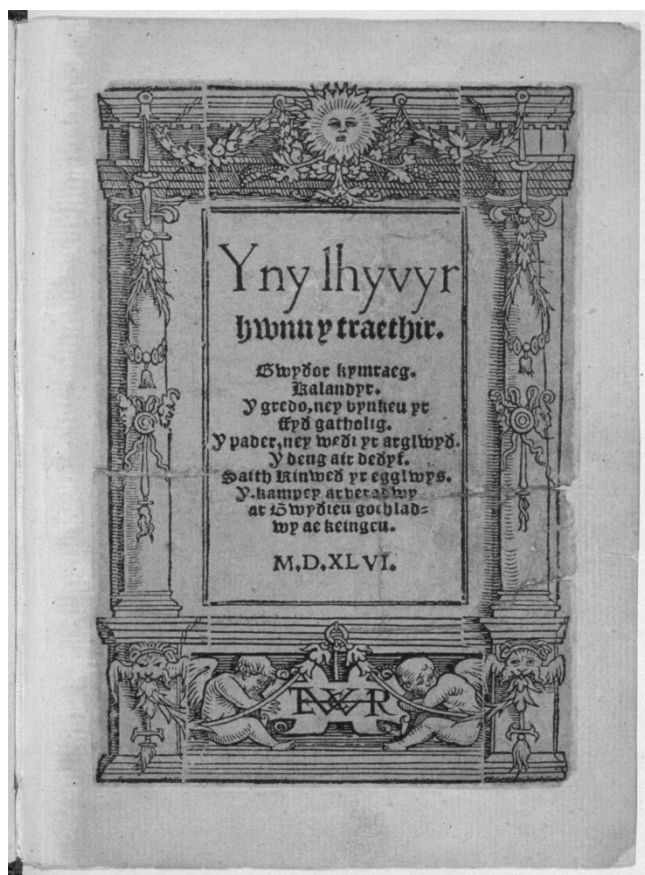
Fig. 1-1. *Yny lhyvyr hwnn* (1546). By permission of the National Library of Wales.

The Puritan Morgan Llwyd in the seventeenth century and the Anglican Griffith Jones in the eighteenth century both used the verse, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" to explain their motivation in writing.[6] It was always virtually impossible to produce a convincing riposte to the argument that here were a people who needed to be given vital information in order to be saved and who could only understand that

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[6] Hosea 4:6; Morgan Llwyd, *Llyfr y Tri Aderyn*, ed., M. Wynn Thomas (Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1988), 104; Griffith Jones, *Cyngor Rhad i'r Anllythrennog* (London, 1737), 3.

information in Welsh, thus making the use of that language essential. To argue to the contrary would seem to be to condemn people to ignorance and possible eternal damnation.

It was the need to use the Welsh language to reach the majority of the people of Wales which led to the passing of the 1563 Act for the Translation of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer under Elizabeth I.[7] Official permission for the translation may not have been strictly necessary, but government sanction was required for the translation and use of a Welsh version of the Book of Common Prayer, which was also, crucially, required under the terms of the Act.[8] This Act, and the subsequent publication of the New Testament and Book of Common Prayer in 1567 and the complete Bible in 1588, marked the beginning of a long campaign to ensure familiarity with the content of the Scriptures and to introduce the Protestant faith in the fullest sense to the Welsh people. Establishing the "religion of the book" amongst an overwhelmingly illiterate population was never going to be an easy task, as Richard Davies, Bishop of St David's, acknowledged in his introduction to the 1567 New Testament, when he foresaw that it would take more than a day's work to convert "a large, populous kingdom to Christ".[9] As if to confirm the truth of his prediction, in the very same year, Nicholas Robinson, Bishop of Bangor, was complaining that there remained in north Wales:

> Images and aulters standing in churches undefaced, lewde and indecent vigils and watches observed, much pilgrimage-goying, many candles sett up to the honour of sainctes, some reliquies yet caried about and all the cuntreis full of bedes and knots ...[10]

Local people clung to their Catholic traditions out of ignorance of, it was felt, the Protestant gospel, giving rise to the pressing need for further explanation through the medium of Welsh. In 1595 Hugh Lewis published *Perl mewn Adfyd*, his translation into Welsh of *A Spiritual and most Precious Pearl*, previously translated from German by Miles Coverdale.

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[7] See Ivor Bowen, ed., *The Statutes of Wales* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908), 149-51.
[8] Peter R. Roberts, "Tudor Legislation and the Political Status of 'the British Tongue'" in *The Welsh Language Before the Industrial Revolution*, ed., Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 142-3.
[9] Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659*, 19.
[10] David Mathew, ed., "Some Elizabethan Documents," *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 6 (1931): 77-8.

Fig. 1-2. The 1588 Welsh Bible. By permission of the National Library of Wales.

Lewis cited as part of his reason for publishing the work the lack of easy access to the Bible, given that it was locked in the church and only heard once a week.[11] It was obviously not enough, therefore, simply to produce copies of the Bibles to be placed in church pulpits ready for use in the Sunday service; people had to be brought to greater knowledge of the content of the Bible for themselves.

The first editions of the Welsh Bible were intended for use in parish churches.[12] The 1588 Bible was a folio edition, consisting of some thousand copies costing one pound each. The revised version which appeared in 1620, edited by Richard Parry and John Davies, was similarly a folio edition which would replace the increasingly aging and tattered copies in the churches.[13] The initial focus was therefore on supplying Bibles for public worship rather than for individual reading. The shift towards the production of Bibles for reading at home came in 1630, with the publication of the "Little Bible", the first octavo edition, priced at a more affordable crown or 5*s*. This marked the start of the concerted effort to ensure more widespread reading of the Scriptures, even though it must be remembered that there were still only 1,500 copies in this issue and that 5*s* remained a substantial sum for many hard-pressed families. From 1630 onwards the octavo would be the most common format for editions of the Welsh Bible, apart from occasional, usually limited, issues of folio Bibles to furnish church pulpits.

It is generally accepted that the appearance of the Bible in Welsh, at a relatively early point in the history of such translations, was immensely significant for the future of the language.[14] It set a common standard for the written language to which authors could aspire. For a stateless language in a country without a university or a printing press, this was a

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[11] Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659*, 100-101.

[12] For the various different editions of the Welsh Bible see John Ballinger, *The Bible in Wales* (London: Sotheran, 1906); Eryn M. White, *The Welsh Bible* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007).

[13] See R. Geraint Gruffydd, "Richard Parry a John Davies," in *Y Traddodiad Rhyddiaith*, ed., Geraint Bowen (Llandysul: Gwasg Gomer, 1970); Gwilym H. Jones, "John Davies and the Welsh Translations of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer," in *Dr John Davies of Mallwyd: Welsh Renaissance Scholar*, ed., Ceri Davies (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), 208-25.

[14] Derec Llwyd Morgan, *Y Beibl a Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg*, (Llandysul: Gwasg Gomer, 1998), 15-44; Glanmor Williams, *The Welsh and their Religion: Historical Essays* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), 41-42; Glanmor Williams, *Wales and the Reformation* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 356-60; Isaac Thomas, "Translating the Bible," in *A Guide to Welsh Literature c.1530-1700*, ed., R. Geraint Gruffydd (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 173.

remarkable achievement, as was the introduction of the language into public worship, granting it a certain status in public life which indicated that it might be considered good enough for the word of God even if not for English law. Morris Kyffin in his translation of John Jewel's *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* in 1595 denounced an unnamed cleric who had insisted that it would be better for the Welsh to learn English for showing such scant concern for the welfare of souls, adding confidently that "now that the book of the word of God is in Welsh and printed, none of the devil's children can attempt to darken the light of the Welsh, let them do their worst".[15] Yet, in some ways it could be argued that the existence of the Bible in Welsh did little to promote the development of the print industry, since for most of the early modern period it was printed outside of Wales. The designated royal printers at any given time held a monopoly on the printing of the English Bible and from 1588 onwards it was understood that the Welsh Bible was included as part of that privilege. The first Bible was produced by the Queen's printer, Christopher Barker, and, for the next two hundred years or so, the same names crop up time and time again as printers: generations of Barkers, Bills and Basketts, printing dynasties who acquired the right to print Bibles.[16] That right was to some extent challenged by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge,[17] which led to a folio edition of the Welsh Bible in Oxford in 1690, the only issue of the Bible prior to the eighteenth century which was not produced in London.

It was not only royal patents which restricted the printing of the Bible, however, but the licensing laws, which prevented the earlier growth of a print industry in Wales by limiting presses to London, Oxford and Cambridge.[18] Most early Welsh books were published in London as a result, a situation which inevitably entailed additional expense, greater

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[15] Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659*, 95.

[16] M. H. Black, "The Printed Bible," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed., S.L. Greenslade (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1963), 456-63; John Feather, *A History of British Publishing* (London: Routledge, 1988), 16-23; Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 15-6; B.J. McMullin, "The Bible Trade," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain IV: 1557-1695*, eds., J. Barnard and D.F. McKenzie (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2002), 471-2.

[17] Leslie Howsam, *Cheap Bibles: Nineteenth-Century Publishing and the British and Foreign Bible Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 75; McMullin, "The Bible Trade," 460.

[18] Charles Parry, "From Manuscript to Print II: Printed Books," in *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1530-1700*, ed., R. Geraint Gruffydd (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 263-276.

difficulties with distribution and increased likelihood of textual errors. The typesetters were unlikely to have any familiarity with the language, which led to further errors in the course of printing. In addition, most of the printers used type which was better suited to printing English books, which presented problems when using the Welsh alphabet.[19] There was a distinct lack of letters with circumflex accents, for instance. Sometimes two letter "v"s had to be substituted for a "w". Hugh Lewis apologised in his introduction to *Perl Mewn Adfyd* in 1595 for the use of the apostrophe to compensate for the fact that the printers lacked sufficient numbers of the letter "y" (which in Welsh serves both as a vowel and as the definite article and thus makes a frequent appearance). Lewis went on to urge his readers, "if a letter or word happens to be out of place, consider that it was printed by Englishmen, who were unfamiliar with the language".[20]

That was a not uncommon refrain in many authors' introductions throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A similar apology was given by John Edwards, translator of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* in 1651, who claimed that the printers had informed him that "there was scarcely one Welshman in the whole of London who could look at the proofs and who could advise the English workmen and correct the frequent errors".[21] Rheinallt Llwyd has suggested that works printed at Oxford tended to contain fewer errors and argues, quite plausibly, that there were sufficient Welsh students at Oxford who could be recruited to act as proof readers for a modest wage.[22] On the whole, however, authors who wanted to ensure greater correctness had to spend time in London overseeing the printing, a process which most could not easily afford. Too often, the mistakes had to be endured, apologies offered and hastily devised lists of corrections included in the print run. The situation was hardly any easier for those few works published further afield in Europe, mainly written by Catholic exiles such as Gruffydd Robert.[23] The one

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[19] Eiluned Rees, "Wales and the London Book Trade before 1820," in *Spreading the Word: The Distribution of Networks of Print 1550-1850*, eds., Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), 4.

[20] Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659*, 102.

[21] E.F., *Madruddyn y difinyddiaeth diweddaraf*, trans., John Edwards (London, 1651), Sig. A6.

[22] Rheinallt Llwyd, "Printing and Publishing in the Seventeenth Century," in *A Nation and its Books: A History of the Book in Wales*, eds., Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1998), 95.

[23] See H.W. Lloyd, "Welsh Books Printed Abroad in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Y Cymmrodor* 4 (1881): 25-69; Geraint Bowen, "Roman Catholic Prose and its Background," in *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1530-1700*, ed., R. Geraint Gruffydd (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 210-40;

definite exception to the embargo on printing in Wales itself was the illicit printing in 1587, by Roger Thackwell and others, of the first part of the Catholic *Y Drych Cristionogawl* (*The Christian Mirror*) on a secret press hidden in a cave near Llandudno, before the authorities were alerted and raided the cave, only to discover that the printers had fled.[24] Other attempts to set up clandestine presses in Brecon and on the Flintshire border seem to have failed to produce any results.[25]

The central importance of London for the Welsh book trade continued into the seventeenth century with the role of the Welsh Trust (1674-84) as a patron and promoter of publishing in the language. The Trust was established in 1674 by Thomas Gouge, who had been ejected from his living at St Sepulchre in London under the terms of the 1662 Act of Uniformity.[26] He had no prior connection with Wales and was seemingly driven by a purely altruistic concern for the lack of Bibles and improving literature to supply the needs of the Welsh people. The Trust established a number of schools in the country which were somewhat limited in their influence since they adopted English as the medium of instruction. The most significant contribution of Gouge's initiative was, therefore, its sponsorship of Welsh-medium publications, including a new edition of the Bible. In this respect, Gouge's collaboration with another ejected Dissenter, Stephen Hughes, former minister of Meidrim, Carmarthenshire, proved to be crucial in offering advice about which works would prove most beneficial.[27] With Gouge concentrating on collecting financial contributions, including from the more affluent of the London-Welsh, an effective partnership took shape. The Trust began by buying up as many

Geraint Bowen, *Welsh Recusant Writings* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999); Angharad Price, *Gwrthddiwygiwr Cymreig yr Eidal* (Caernarfon: Gwasg Pantycelyn, 2005).

[24] R. Geraint Gruffydd, *Argraffwyr Cyntaf Cymru: Gwasgau Dirgel y Catholigion adeg Elisabeth* (Cardiff; Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1972), 8-9; Philip Henry Jones, "Wales and the Stationers' Company," in *The Stationers' Company and the Book Trade 1550-1990*, eds., Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1997), 186.

[25] R. Geraint Gruffydd, "The First Printed Books, 1546-1604," in *A Nation and its Books: A History of the Book in Wales*, eds., Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1998), 61-2.

[26] M.G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement: A Study of Eighteenth-century Puritanism in Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938)*,* 277-89.

[27] See Geraint H. Jenkins, "Apostol Sir Gaerfyrddin: Stephen Hughes c. 1622-1688," in *Cadw Tŷ mewn Cwmwl Tystion* (Llandysul; Gwasg Gomer, 1990), 86-102; Glanmor Williams, "Stephen Hughes (1622-1688): 'Apostol Sir Gâr', 'the Apostle of Carmarthenshire,'" *Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 37 (2001): 21-30.

Welsh books as possible, purchasing thirty-two Welsh Bibles and 479 New Testaments by 1675, which represented "all that could be had in Wales or London", illustrating the dire need for a fresh stock of Bibles.[28] This was obtained in 1678 when the Trust ensured that 8,000 copies were produced by the royal printers, with subscriptions being used for the first time to help meet the £2,000 cost of printing. One thousand copies of the Bible were distributed free to the needy and the remainder sold for 4*s* 2*d* each. Remarkably, the 1678 Bible was edited by Stephen Hughes, who was at the time under sentence of excommunication for his Dissenting activities, and proofread by Charles Edwards, another minister who had lost his church living, under circumstances which are less than clear, but who was also a known Dissenter.[29] However, the moderate religious attitude espoused by Gouge and his colleagues seems to have persuaded both Anglicans and Dissenters of their good intentions. In addition to the Bible, the Trust also published a number of improving works, including a revision by Edwards of the translation of Lewis Bayly's *The Practice of Piety* in 1675. The fact that Edwards was based in London and was therefore at hand to oversee the printing substantially reduced the number of errors in the books published by the Trust. The Trust's activities were wound up after Thomas Gouge's death in 1684, but Stephen Hughes continued to oversee the publication of religious literature in Welsh until his own death in 1688. The 1670s and 1680s therefore proved to be relatively productive for Welsh-medium publishing as a result of the support from London and the talents of a small group of Dissenters.

London therefore emerged as a vital centre for Welsh print culture, particularly for the production of the Bible, and remained so even after the licensing laws lapsed in 1695. This historic milestone hardly engendered a rush to challenge the monopoly on the printing of the Scriptures. It was a task which represented a particularly challenging undertaking since here was a book which needed to be printed with the utmost care. It was unusual for one thing because of its size: it was far longer than most printed books throughout this period, calling for a substantial amount and variety of typefaces to set up the pages, and with far greater print runs than for any other publication. The English Bible was similarly expensive to produce and it may have been the existence of the Bible patent which

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[28] M.G. Jones, "Two Accounts of the Welsh Trust, 1675 and 1678(?)," *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 9 (1937): 72-3.

[29] Derec Llwyd Morgan, *Charles Edwards* (Caernarfon: Gwasg Pantycelyn, 1994), 9-62; Eryn M. White, "From Ejectment to Toleration in Wales, 1662-89," in *The Great Ejectment of 1662: Its Antecedents, Aftermath, and Ecumenical Significance*, ed. Alan P.F. Sell (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 166-8.

helped ensure a regular supply, in the face of such disincentives.[30]
However, the Bible must also have caused trepidation because of the
sacred nature of the text, which made any errors seem more serious than in
other works, as in the case of the embarrassment caused by the so-called
"Wicked Bible" of 1631 which contained the verse "Thou shalt commit
adultery".[31] That transgression cost the printers a hefty fine, so care was
needed with the printing of such an important work. Thomas Durston of
Shrewsbury did produce what might be called a pirate copy of the New
Testament in 1741, with a rather clumsy attempt to copy the royal arms on
the title page to give it a certain spurious air of authority.[32] However, apart
from that, most Bibles continued to be printed in London. Although to
some extent that may seem to make the Bible peripheral in the
development of the Welsh book trade, in many vitally important ways it
was completely crucial. The efforts to increase familiarity with the
message of the Scriptures were at the heart of publishing in Welsh.
Throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, committed
Protestants sought to convince their compatriots of the importance of
knowledge of the Bible and tried many ways to induce them to read and
appreciate its words. Robert Llwyd in 1630 urged the Welsh people to
make more time for reading, bearing in mind that:

> ... the nights are long in winter, and Sundays and holidays are long in
> summer; leave the playing field, and bowls, and taverns, and football, and
> tennis, and your errands; do these things in your own time, if need be: but
> serve God on his own day, otherwise he will anger, and where will you flee
> from him?[33]

As more and more people learnt to read, there was a growing sense of a
need to guide their reading of the Bible, since it held many snares for the
unwary and without direction it was feared that some might misinterpret
what they read and stray into heresy. As late as 1714, Thomas Price of
Breconshire argued in a letter to the Society for Promoting Christian
Knowledge that the Bible was unsafe in the hands of ignorant people, who
needed to have it explained from the pulpit and through written

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[30] Scott Mandelbrote, "The English Bible and its Readers in the Eighteenth
Century," in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New
Essays*, ed. Isabel Rivers (London: Continuum, 2001), 51.
[31] Green, *Print and Protestantism*, 48; David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its
History and Influence* (London: Yale University Press, 2003), 460.
[32] Eiluned Rees, *The Welsh Book Trade before 1820* (Aberystwyth: National
Library of Wales, 1988), 19.
[33] Hughes, *Rhagymadroddion 1547-1659*, 128-9.

exposition.[34] Several works were thus produced both to encourage people to read the Bible and to guide their reading of it.

Around 160 Welsh titles were published between 1546 and 1660, including five issues of the Bible and five issues of the New Testament, a not inconsiderable proportion of the total output.[35] There were also six issues of the Book of Common Prayer and six of the Psalms. The twenty or so books which survive from the period prior to the appearance of the complete Bible in 1588 are a mixture in terms of their content, including as they do the first Welsh dictionary, by William Salesbury, one of the great pioneers of the use of the printing press to further Welsh Protestant humanism, along with a few works of grammar, reflecting the humanist interest in elevating the language. There are a few histories and a handful of works relating to religion, some of them arguing from either the Protestant or Catholic perspective. Once the 1588 Bible appeared, however, there was an obvious increase in religious publications, many of which would have been extremely difficult to write without the translation of the Scriptures.[36] Of the seventy or so books published between 1600 and 1660, nearly forty can be categorised as improving, devotional or catechising works and that concentration on religious material continued thereafter.[37] Geraint Jenkins in his work on the period between 1660 and 1730 lists a total of 545 publications, with Bibles, Psalms, and Books of Common Prayer comprising nearly nine per cent of the total number of Welsh books printed during that time. Works that he categorises as "didactic and devotional" comprise 37.6% (205 titles); catechisms and explanations on the Scriptures 5.9% and religious verse 21.5% (117 titles).[38] Religious material continued to dominate after that, as the number and type of publications grew to the extent that it becomes difficult to

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[34] Mary Clement, ed., *Correspondence and Minutes of the SPCK Relating to Wales 1699-1740* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1952), 69.

[35] R. Geraint Gruffydd, "The Welsh Language in Scholarship and Culture," in *The Welsh Language Before the Industrial Revolution*, ed., Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff University of Wales Press, 1997), 355.

[36] Branwen Jarvis, "Welsh Humanist Learning," in *A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1530-1700*, ed., R. Geraint Gruffydd (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 130; Glanmor Williams, "Unity of Religion or Unity of Language?" in *The Welsh Language Before the Industrial Revolution*, ed., Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 220.

[37] For a full list of published titles, see Eiluned Rees, *Libri Walliae: A Catalogue of Welsh Books and Books Printed in Wales 1546-1820*, 2 vols (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1987).

[38] Geraint H. Jenkins, *Literature, Religion and Society in Wales, 1660-1730* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1978), 35-7.

quantify them accurately. Certainly the vast majority of surviving books from the mid-eighteenth century are on a religious theme. There was also probably a large amount of cheap print which has just not survived, but the more substantial works tended to deal with matters of faith. Throughout the early modern period, a number of these works were translations, usually from English. Since often the major consideration was to try to spread knowledge in an effective way, if a book had proved popular in English and its content was deemed suitable, then it was often considered to be quicker and more convenient to adapt that tried and tested formula than to start from scratch. It seemed entirely practical in terms of content and commercial potential to produce Welsh versions of works like Lewis Bayly's *The Practice of Piety* and Richard Allestree's *The Whole Duty of Man*. Slightly more risky were some of the translations of John Bunyan, especially *Taith y Pererin* (*The Pilgrim's Progress*), published for the first time in 1688. The translator, Stephen Hughes, was concerned that the unfamiliar medium of fiction would prove confusing for Welsh readers.[39] However, his fears proved groundless as *Taith y Pererin* was a consistent bestseller for years to come.

There were also a number of home-grown attempts at deepening knowledge of the Scriptures, some in verse as well as prose. Richard Jones had been vicar of Llanfair Caereinion in mid Wales until he was ejected from his living under the Puritan regime of the 1650s. In order to put his enforced spare time to good use he produced verse paraphrases of the New and Old Testament, each verse a précis of a chapter in the original.[40] It was no mean feat, although it must be said that the result is not the finest of poetry. His publications were intended to increase knowledge of the Scriptures and also to help people to learn to read in their own language, so that an alphabet was included as a basic primer. Far more popular were the verses composed by Rees Prichard, vicar of Llandovery, which did not attempt to mirror the content of the Scriptures so exactly, but instead sought to convey basic moral messages and to convince readers and hearers of the importance of the Bible. His work appeared in print for the first time in 1646, with seven further editions in the seventeenth century,

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[39] John Bunyan, *Taith neu Siwrnai y Pererin*, trans., Stephen Hughes and others (London, 1688), sig A2r.
[40] Richard Jones, *Testûn Testament Newydd ein Harglwydd a'n Jachawdwr Jesu Grist* (London, 1653); Richard Jones, *Perl y Cymro: Neu Cofiadur y Beibl* (London, 1655). The latter was printed by Edward Brewster, a member of a family who printed a number of Welsh books and certainly employed a Welsh-speaking apprentice in the mid-seventeenth century.

most of which have not survived. However, there is also evidence of a strong oral transmission of his quite easily memorised verses.

Works directly linked to the Scriptures continued to appear, including catechisms and concordances. Thomas Jones, for instance, produced the *Atcofiad o'r Sgrythur (A Reminder of the Scriptures*) in 1704, which was basically a synopsis of the Bible in the form of a catechism dealing with some of the major messages, characters and events. Thomas Jones was based in the border town of Shrewsbury, which rapidly emerged as a publishing centre serving Wales after 1695. Born near Corwen, Jones had mastered his trade in London before moving his operation once the licensing laws allowed it.[41] His was one of the earliest provincial presses to be established in England and had the advantage of being able to cater for the specialist Welsh market.[42] Among his most popular publications were the annual Welsh almanacs, for which he received the privilege from the Stationers' Company and in which he regularly urged his readers to become better acquainted with the Scriptures. There was a certain tendency for these early provincial presses to concentrate their more limited resources on less formal publications like the almanacs, whilst works of greater erudition were still entrusted to the more experienced and better-equipped print houses in London.

Even so, for the next forty to fifty years, the majority of Welsh books were printed in Shrewsbury rather than London, a situation which persisted even after the first printing houses were established on Welsh soil. The very first was founded by Isaac Carter in 1718 in the village of Trefhedyn, now better-known as Adpar, on the banks of the River Teifi in the county of Cardiganshire near the small market town of Newcastle Emlyn. Far from the most obvious location for such a pioneering venture, the venue probably reflected the concentration of literary talent and interest in the surrounding area of the Teifi valley in south-west Wales.[43] It is something of an anti-climax that the first works printed in the first

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[41] Geraint H. Jenkins, *Thomas Jones yr Almanaciwr 1648-1713* (Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1980); Geraint H. Jenkins, "The Sweating Astrologer: Thomas Jones the Alamanacer," in *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical Essays Presented to Glanmor Williams*, eds., R. R. Davies *et al.* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1984), 161-77.
[42] John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 15-6; Jones, "Wales and the Stationers' Company," 196-7.
[43] Geraint H. Jenkins, "Bywiogrwydd Crefyddol a Llenyddol Dyffryn Teifi, 1689-1740," yn *Cadw Tŷ Mewn Cwmwl Tystion* (Llandysul: Gwasg Gomer, 1990), 103-52.

official press were two ballads, including Alban Thomas' *Cân o Senn i'w hen feistr Tobacco,* complaining about the difficulty of giving up smoking. This somewhat inauspicious start was soon followed by works of a more serious, religious nature, including Thomas' translation of William Melmoth's *The Great Importance of a Religious Life Considered* (*Dwysfawr rym buchedd grefyddol)* in 1722 and John Pugh's translation of Thomas Vincent's exposition on the catechism, *Eglurhaad o Gatecism Byrraf y Gymanfa* (1719).

Carter did not tarry long at Trefhedyn, but chose in 1725 to relocate to the more bustling environment of Carmarthen, where Nicholas Thomas had already set up a press in 1721. It is no great surprise that Carmarthen began to emerge as one of the foremost centres of the print industry. One of the largest towns in Wales in the eighteenth century, it served as an important market and port and had long been established as a legal and administrative centre for the south-west. It was sometimes called "the London of Wales" because of the polite society which congregated there, although visitors from England who were well-acquainted with the capital city sometimes claimed to be unable to detect any resemblance.[44] The presence of a grammar school and a dissenting academy also gave the town a certain academic distinction. All in all, it would perhaps have been curious if it had *not* also acquired at least one printing house.

These were the first faltering steps of the book trade in Wales and it was the second half of the eighteenth century which saw it begin to take significant strides forward, not just in terms of the number of presses, but also in regard to the growing professionalization of the industry. An increasing number of those involved had previously worked as apprentices in print houses in London or Shrewsbury and brought the benefits of that training with them. At the same time, the Welsh concerns themselves were gaining in experience and confidence in their own abilities. Eiluned Rees points to the arrival of John Ross as one of the key developments in the establishment of more professional standards.[45] Ross was a Scotsman who had spent several years in London learning his trade before setting up his successful press in Carmarthen in 1764, the press which was ultimately responsible for publishing the first edition of the Welsh Bible to be produced in Wales itself. The adoption of the subscription method from

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[44] Herman Moll, *A New Description of England and Wales* (London, 1724), p. 258; B.H. Malkin, *The Scenery, Antiquities and Biography of South Wales, 1803* (London, 1804), 419-20.
[45] Eiluned Rees, "The Welsh Book Trade from 1718 to 1820," in *A Nation and its Books: A History of the Book in Wales*, eds., Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1998), 125.

the late seventeenth century onwards had also made printing more viable in many cases[46] and the lists are often useful evidence of who exactly was buying the books–frequently, as one might anticipate, the pious middling sorts of society.[47]

At the same time, by the eighteenth century, the responsibility for producing copies of the Welsh Bible had been largely assumed by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), established in 1699, who did much to increase the supply. Fewer than 30,000 copies had been printed prior to the eighteenth century and only a limited number would have survived, so there was considerable need for a fresh edition. Welsh correspondents, with Sir John Philipps of Picton Castle in Pembrokeshire prominent among them, lobbied the Society leading to the appointment of Moses Williams, clergyman and scholar, as editor in 1714.[48] The proposal had the backing of the bishops of Wales and those of Hereford and Worcester, as well as offers of practical assistance in preparing the text from such capable men as Erasmus Saunders and Griffith Jones. Williams campaigned heroically to collect the 5,000 subscriptions, which made the 1717-18 SPCK Bible a reality.[49] One thousand of the 10,000 copies of this octavo volume were distributed freely to the poor and the remainder soon sold out. A further edition under the mantle of the SPCK appeared in 1727, probably comprising another 10,000 copies. It was followed by two editions of 15,000 copies each in 1746 and 1752 and by a further 20,000 volumes in 1769. In total, 55,000 Welsh Bibles were published by the SPCK within the space of fifty years: a substantial increase in output, but still nowhere near enough to meet the growing demand.[50]

A large part of the reason for the increased demand was the growth in literacy created by the efforts of the Welsh circulating schools.[51] The

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[46] Jenkins, *Literature, Religion and Society*, 238-43; Raven, *The Business of Books*, 315-7.

[47] For instance, Gomer M. Roberts, "Tanysgrifwyr Pregethau Cymraeg Daniel Rowland," *Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales*, 45 (1960): 35-45; Eiluned Rees, "Pre-1820 Welsh Subscription Lists," *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, 11.1-2 (1973-4): 85-119; Jenkins, *Literature, Religion and Society*, 255-304.

[48] Mary Clement, *The SPCK and Wales 1699-1740: The History of the S.P.C.K. in Wales from its Foundation to the Early Years of the Welsh Methodist Movement* (London: SPCK, 1954), 29-31.

[49] Jenkins, *Religion, Literature and Society*, 61-2.

[50] White, *The Welsh Bible*, 62.

[51] See Geraint H. Jenkins, "'An Old and Much Honoured Soldier': Griffith Jones, Llanddowror," *Welsh History Review*, 11 (1983): 449-68; Eryn M. White, "Popular Schooling and the Welsh Language 1650-1800," in *The Welsh Language before*

earliest evidence available regarding the origins of these schools comes in a letter from Griffith Jones, rector of Llanddowror in south Carmarthenshire, to the SPCK, on 22 September 1731, asking for forty to fifty Welsh Bibles "upon the usual kind terms" so that he could set up a school in the area "for all comers".[52] He was prompted, he said, by the fact that it was "a very sickly time" in his neighbourhood, "where many die", which was indeed the case, since there had been a severe outbreak of typhus in Carmarthenshire in the preceding years. On 9 November 1731, Griffith Jones wrote to give thanks for the fifty Welsh Bibles which he had safely received.[53] In January 1737, he informed the SPCK that he hoped to collect sufficient donations to fund the purchase of 1,000 Bibles, on the Society's usual reasonable terms for its members, a measure made necessary by the fact that "the Welch Schools increase beyond their ability to manage".[54] Thirty years after that first letter to the SPCK, Griffith Jones died in 1761, by which time between 200,000 and 250,000 pupils had been taught to read in these circulating schools, at a time when the population of the country was around 451,000.[55] With evening classes for those who could not attend during the day, a large proportion of the pupils were adults, taking advantage of the opportunities offered freely to all, regardless of gender, age, or social status. It was a remarkable achievement from small and unpromising beginnings. The success depended not just on Jones' vision of what might be achieved through sheer dogged determination, but also on the co-operation of the SPCK and the assistance of wealthy patrons such as Sir John Philipps, and Bridget and Arthur Bevan, which helped ensure the essential supplies of Bibles, New Testaments, and catechisms. The vast majority of these texts were in Welsh, which was the language used in most of the schools, apart from those set up in more anglicised areas such as south Pembrokeshire and the borderlands. Every system of schools set up in the country prior to this–the schools set up under the Commonwealth in the 1650s, the Welsh Trust schools in the 1670s, and

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the Industrial Revolution, ed., Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 324-37; Eryn M. White "Piety and Charity in Eighteenth-Century Wales," The Welsh Journal of Religious History, 2 (2007): 53-5.

[52] Clement, Correspondence and Minutes, 163.

[53] Clement, The S.P.C.K. and Wales, 165.

[54] Clement, The S.P.C.K. and Wales, 176.

[55] Thomas Kelly, Griffith Jones, Llanddowror: Pioneer in Adult Education (Cardiff University of Wales Press, 1950), 45-6; Glanmor Williams, Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1979), 207-8; White, "Popular Schooling," 331; W.T.R. Pryce, "The Diffusion of the 'Welch' Circulating Schools in Eighteenth-Century Wales," Welsh History Review, 25 (4) (2011): 491-2.