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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Praise and performance : congregational and choral music in the Nonconformist chapels of North-east Wales and Liverpool during the 19th century

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Praise and Performance

**Congregational and choral music in the Nonconformist chapels
of North-east Wales and Liverpool during the 19th century**

Godfrey Wyn Williams

Volume 1

**The thesis is submitted for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the transition of congregational singing from Christian praise to competitive choral performance in relation to the counties of Denbighshire, Flintshire and the Welsh community on Merseyside during the 19th century. At the heart of the working-class communities were Nonconformist chapels that provided free education in the Sunday schools, and with the formation of *Yr Ysgol Gân* (singing schools) the religious curriculum was extended to include singing. Through this faculty, indigenous Welsh composers were trained as language, religion and culture became the dominant social influence that underpinned the development of the choral tradition.

During the mid-1830s the social blight of drunkenness prompted the Temperance Movement to begin its campaign for reform, and the attractions of the tavern were challenged by means of choirs, *eisteddfodau* and a repertoire of popular Welsh melodies. A competition for unpublished airs at the Llangollen Eisteddfod of 1858 revived interest in Welsh traditional music and inspired John Owen (*Owain Alaw*, 1821-1883) to publish his *Gems of Welsh Melody*. In the following year, Ieuan Gwyllt (1822-1877) published a collection of hymn-tunes, *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* that swept across Wales in step with the Great Religious Revival of 1859. Curwen introduced Tonic Sol-fa to the worshipping communities in Liverpool and in turn, Eleazar Roberts (1825-1912) promoted the method throughout Wales with the help of Ieuan Gwyllt, who launched his Welsh language music journal, *Y Cerddor Cymreig* [The Welsh Musician], in 1861.

This thesis also evaluates the contribution of the two American evangelists, Moody and Sankey, who sang the Gospel story to the people of Liverpool with unfettered melodies which Gwyllt adapted to Welsh hymnody in his *Sŵn y Juwbili* (1874). From the 1880s, elaborate pipe organs were being installed in chapels and *cymanfaoedd canu* became 'showcase events', while *eisteddfodau* gratified the obsession with competitive singing until the religious revival of 1904-05 when Welsh choral singing returned to its spiritual roots.

**Dedicated to my dear wife Pat
for her endless support and
encouragement**

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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|
| A.C. | Advanced Certificate (Tonic Sol-fa Association) |
| Cyf. | Cyfrol (Vol. Volume) |
| C.M. | Calvinistic Methodist |
| DRO | Denbighshire Record Office |
| Ed. | Editor/Edition |
| FRO | Flintshire Record Office |
| F.R.C.O. | Fellow of the Royal College of Organists |
| Gol. | Golygydd (Editor) |
| G.T.C.L. | Graduate of the Tonic Solfa College London |
| Ind. | Independents or Congregationalists |
| L.T.C.L. | Licentiate of the Tonic Solfa College London |
| M.C. | Methodistiaid Calfinaidd |
| NLW | National Library of Wales |
| Rhos | Rhosllannerchrugog |
| Trans. | Translated |
| T.S.F. | Tonic Sol-fa |

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Introduction

One of the most defining characteristics of eighteenth century Wales was the influence of the circulating schools established by Griffith Jones (1683-1761) of Llanddowror which enabled the peasantry to read in their mother tongue to the extent that by the second half of that century, Wales was one of the few countries with a literate majority.¹ The people of north-east Wales were able to read their Bible and were well prepared for the eighteenth century religious revival that was manifested in the *seiadau* or *society profiad* [experience meeting] that gathered in *Lloffft Wen*, Adwy, near Wrexham in 1746, from where it spread across Denbighshire and Flintshire. The revivalist Howel Harris (1714-1773) had visited the *seiat* at *Lloffft Wen*, Adwy in 1747 and encouraged hymn-singing as an essential part of worship which in turn, prepared the way for the transition from psalmody to hymnody.² Unlike the older forms of Dissent, such as the Baptists and Congregationalists, both of which were protected by the Toleration Act of 1689, the Methodists were a faction within the Established Church until Thomas Jones, a layman, administered the sacraments in *Capel Mawr*, Denbigh and hastened the separation of Methodists from the Established Church. North-east Wales, therefore, played a significant part in the history of Welsh Methodism as well as in the growth of other Dissenting denominations.

The development of congregational singing in the Nonconformist chapels in north-east Wales was established through the efforts of itinerant vocal teachers such as John Ellis (1760-1839) of Llangwm, John Williams (*Siôn Singer*, 1750-1807) and Henry Mills (1757-1820) of Llanidloes. It was their influence that set the foundations for *Yr Ysgol Gân* (singing school) and the training of *codwyr canu*, [precentors], despite the misgivings of some chapel officials who considered music as frivolity that detracted from the sanctity of the pulpit. This view was not, however, shared by the majority of Welsh denominational journals that encouraged amateur composers by publishing hymn-tunes and matters of musical interest and provided an essential conduit for those who had migrated to other regions of the

¹ John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994), 307

² J. Price Williams, 'Methodistiaeth a Chaniadaeth', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes Eglwys Methodistiaeth Calfinaidd Cymru*, Cyfrol XVI, Rhif 4, Rhagfyr (1931), 137

United Kingdom. Chapel life was no different amongst the Liverpool Welsh community to that which they had left behind, which is hardly surprising as the Welsh denominational structure had been established by chapel leaders from Denbighshire and Flintshire. Therefore, the religious and cultural values of the Liverpool Welsh community were transferred with the migrating population, and for the greater part of the nineteenth century, both regions became as one. Such was the success of the *Ysgol Gân* in Adwy'r Clawdd that other Calvinistic chapels adopted the initiative and the rapid spread and popularity of this movement coincided with the formation of the singing societies that appeared soon after John Ellis moved to Liverpool in 1822 to be precentor at Pall Mall M.C. Chapel.

By the end of that decade, the American-inspired Temperance Movement headed for Greenfield, Holywell, - well-known for its paper-making factories and metal processing, and equally so for its endemic drunkenness. The Primitive Methodists were the first to welcome the Movement into Flintshire, and by the mid-1830s every other denomination subscribed to the ideals of social reform. The philosophy of Temperance was based on the need to preoccupy the working classes in more worthwhile pursuits, which they achieved by providing a counter-attraction to the tavern by means of instrumental bands, choirs and competitive meetings and in due course, *eisteddfodau*. While the Movement expanded the repertoire of popular music and introduced a new dimension to the dissemination of the moral message by reviving many of the folk melodies that were familiar to the tavern, they also promoted the concept of competitive singing. To some extent, the Temperance Movement challenged the prejudice of the chapels that were in no position to criticise the laudable objectives of social reform.

The heightened interest in matters musical brought a new energy to the Nonconformist chapels in the region, and the appointment of John Ambrose Lloyd (1815-1874) as precentor of the Liverpool Congregational Tabernacle Chapel in 1835 and the publication in 1838 of *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* [Grammar of Music], by John Mills (*Ieuan Glan Alarch*, 1812-1873) re-established the boundaries between secular and sacred music. Mills' affordable grammar had a tremendous impact on the chapel music of north-east Wales and enabled the self-taught *codwyr canu* to become musically literate at a time when the denominational journals began

to include new hymn-tunes. When Rev. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt 1822-1877) arrived in Liverpool in 1852 to edit the Welsh language newspaper, *Yr Amserau*, the foundations of musical culture within Welsh chapels had been laid, although he was of the view that the standard of hymn-tune composition and congregational singing left much to be desired. Towards the end of his association with *Yr Amserau*, Gwyllt became increasingly aware of the influence of the Great Religious Revival that was about to impact on north-east Wales and Merseyside.

Arguably, the decade which had the most profound effect on the musical life of north-east Wales and Liverpool was that which occurred between 1858 and 1868. First came the Eisteddfod at Llangollen, (the prototype of the National Eisteddfod), directed by John Owen (*Owain Alaw*, 1821-1883) that widened the musical parameters of *eisteddfodau* by including chapel choirs and popular music. During the following year, in the heat of the Great Religious Revival, Ieuan Gwyllt published his *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* and convened a *cymanfa ganu* [singing festival] in 1859 to celebrate the new tune-book that coincided with the religious awakening. The impact of Gwyllt's hymnal and the *cymanfa ganu* which followed was immeasurable as it established a style of congregational singing that formed the basis of the choral structure that would, in time, characterise the Welsh nation. There were also developments in the field of secular music and from a competition at the Llangollen Eisteddfod for previously unpublished airs, *Owain Alaw* compiled his *Gems of Welsh Melody*,³ a substantial volume of traditional songs with piano and harp accompaniment, and the surge in demand would eventually lead to north-east Wales becoming the main publishing centre for Welsh music. Concurrent with the heightened interest in choral and congregational music was the introduction of Tonic Sol-fa in 1860 which can be regarded as a cultural turning point in the history of the region.

The 1870s denote the shifting priorities from the spiritual to a materialistic phase as evidenced by the cathedral-like chapels that were built in north-east Wales and Liverpool as an embodiment of power and influence. These were not 'open' places

³ John Owen (*Owain Alaw*), *Gems of Welsh Melody A selection of popular Welsh songs, with English and Welsh words; specimens of pennillion singing, after the manner of North Wales; and Welsh national airs, ancient and modern. With symphonies and accompaniments for piano or harp* (Ruthin, 1860)

of worship, but rather chapels primarily for 'members only' that had become estranged from the fundamental purpose of the Dissenting forefathers who preached and sang the Gospel to the masses. For those who yearned for a spiritual awakening, their prayers were answered when the American evangelists, Dwight Moody and Ira.D.Sankey, came to Liverpool in February 1875, to preach and sing the Gospel. Ieuan Gwyllt had travelled to Edinburgh in 1874 to witness the power of the Moody and Sankey revival meetings and he was captivated by the simple Gospel songs that carried such a distinct Christian message. With Moody and Sankey's agreement, he compiled a selection of hymns from Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos* and published a Welsh language edition under the title, *Sŵn y Juwbili* in 1874 which gained considerable popularity in the Sunday schools of every denomination.

When Ira.D.Sankey accompanied the multitude in the Victoria Hall, Liverpool on a harmonium, he challenged the Presbyterian bigotry that had demonised the use of musical instruments in the Welsh chapels of north-east Wales and Merseyside although Baptists, Congregationalists and Wesleyans had accepted the use of the organ. The contest for the largest and most elaborate buildings and ornate galleries had been settled by the end of the 1870s, when the attention turned to the installation of grand pipe organ as a signifier of denominational advantage. With the addition of superior instruments and the seating capacity of a concert-hall, the chapels in north-east Wales found a useful source of funds through concerts and competitive meetings, which points to the increased secularisation of such places of worship as its music crossed the boundaries that divided sacred from secular.

The choral culture was an outgrowth of Nonconformity in that it developed from chapel choirs, and although community choral societies retained the staple gamut of oratorio that appealed to the 'respectable' chapel-going middle-classes, their focus soon became the *eisteddfod* stage rather than the chapel gallery. Competition became obsessive in the populated mining districts of Rhosllannerchrugog, Penycae, Cefn Mawr, Adwy'r Clawdd, Leeswood and Mold, although it was the Birkenhead Cambrian Choral Society that would eventually challenge the might and prowess of the south Wales choirs. The choral societies in north-east Wales were unwilling to forfeit their independence, and a valiant attempt in 1873 to unite

choirs and create a chorus of sufficient size to compete in the major choral competition was rejected. Male choirs, many of which had evolved from Glee parties and the male sections of mixed choirs, provided a solution for choral conductors in the lesser populated districts, although the rapid growth of the *genre* threatened the existence of mixed choral societies as the working classes followed their champions to *eisteddfodau* in such numbers that the gladiatorial clashes became the main attraction.

Chapel music also became of greater importance to the denominations and singing festivals, such as the event at Ruthin Castle in 1869 which marked the publication of the Congregationalist hymnal, *Llyfr Tonau ac Emytau*,⁴ were convened, 'for the purpose of promoting Welsh congregational singing.'⁵ These were not *cymanfaoedd canu* in the true sense, but choral performances by united denominational choirs, and authorities in the field rightly maintain that the publishing of hymnals specific to each persuasion marked the beginning of a period when *cymanfaoedd canu* became more denominational.⁶ By the 1880s, the massed 'choral festival' of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists at Hengler's Circus in Liverpool became a showcase event where success was determined by the numbers who attended and the agreeable comments of the conductor. As for the *codwyr canu* who had rehearsed the choirs, they were rarely acknowledged as *cymanfaoedd canu* became little more than a contrived performance that gloried the denomination.

The spirit of the *cymanfaoedd canu* was soon lost when it became a denominational contrivance and for chapels that had squandered their energies on divisive rivalry, the only resolution lay in a spiritual awakening that was already simmering in north-east Wales through the evangelistic work of Rosina Davies and others. It was when Rev. Richard Bevan Jones of Porth (Rhondda) came to Rhos as the messenger of revival that congregational singing found its true purpose.

⁴ E. Stephen a J.D. Jones, *Llyfr Tonau ac Emytau* (Wrexham, 1868)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Y Gymanfa Ganu: ei Gwreiddiau a'i Natur', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emytau Cymru*, Cyfrol II, Rhif 9 (1986-87), 280

Chapter One

Preparing the Ground

Industry, by creating new centres of population, gave Methodism its big congregations; Methodism gave to industry a body of labour disciplined to suffer hardships and forego rewards in this world by the thought of spiritual glories to come; and each had its share in undermining the social and political supremacy of the landlords.

(A.H.Dodd)

The eastern regions of Denbighshire and Flintshire, collectively referred to as north-east Wales, are proximate to the coal, ironstone and lead seams that precipitated the industrial boom, and it was the movement of population from the rural communities that contributed to the rapid growth of the Dissenting causes. It was in the chapels that the working classes were educated, and those gifted with a literary or musical ability found the opportunity to express their spirituality through hymnody. The first and most significant change in the music of the early Dissenting chapels was the transition from psalmody to the hymnody of revivalist poets, such as William Williams, Pantycelyn (1717-1791), who had left a store of over 900 hymns and provided the inspiration for the musical *renaissance* that manifested in the nineteenth century.¹ There were other factors that shaped the character of Welsh congregational music, not least being the *Ysgolion Sul* (Sunday Schools),² *Ysgolion y Gân* [Singing Schools] and the travelling singing masters who nurtured the interest in congregational music. That industrial communities became strongholds of choral and congregational singing was determined by population mass, commonality of religion and language.

On account of the maritime access that enabled a lively trade with Lancashire and Cheshire, particularly in the smelting and processing of lead and copper, Flintshire was already a thriving industrial settlement by the eighteenth century, to the extent that Holywell, by 1801, was the third largest town in Wales.³ *Pigot's Directory* records that trade in Holywell was 'chiefly in the manufacture of cotton goods, the smelting of lead, rolling of copper and making of paper; here are also several iron and brass foundries, and lead, calamite and coal are found in the immediate neighbourhood'.⁴ A.H.Dodd states: '... for the greater part of the eighteenth century and through to the early nineteenth, Flintshire was *facile princeps* in both mining and smelting as the ore was found in juxtaposition with coal, and both lay within easy distance of the Dee estuary'.⁵ Denbighshire had no such maritime

¹ J.R.Kilsby Jones, *Holl Weithiau Prydyddawl a Rhyddieithol y diweddar Barch William Williams, Pantycelyn* (Llundain ac Abertawe, 1867).

² David Evans, *The Sunday Schools of Wales, their Origin, Progress, Peculiarities & Prospects* (London, 1883); G. Wynne Griffith, *Yr Ysgol Sul - Penodau ar Hanes yr Ysgol Sul yn bennaf ymhlith y Methodistiaid Calфинаidd* (Caernarfon, 1936).

³ G. E. Jones & D. Smith (eds.), *The People of Wales* (Llandysul, 1999), 124.

⁴ Pigot & Co., *National Commercial Directory for 1828-9* (London, 1828), 1157.

⁵ A.H. Dodd, *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales*, 3rd edition (Wrexham, 1971), 171.

facility and was the first region in north Wales to address the appalling condition of its roads: 'Five turnpike trusts had been established there by 1760 which joined the main centres of the region with Shrewsbury and Chester and thus with the English road network'.⁶ Prior to the formation of the Ellesmere Canal Company and the waterway that linked the Ruabon coal and iron district with Shrewsbury and Chester in 1805, the coalfields and iron works of Denbighshire were restricted by slow and costly road transport.⁷

Juxtaposed to Wrexham and the coalfields of Ruabon, the hamlet of Bersham had already become the manufacturing centre of ironmaster John Wilkinson, one of Europe's leading exporters of armaments, particularly cannon, to Russia.⁸ The Bersham foundry altered the pace of the Industrial Revolution as the precision boring technology acquired through the manufacture of cannon led to the manufacture of cylinders that powered the steam engines of Boulton and Watt.⁹ During Wilkinson's period at Bersham, the lead and zinc mines of Minera were major employers around which grew the settlement of Adwy'r Clawdd, later to become known as Coedpoeth [hot wood] as it fuelled the Wilkinson furnaces. Topographer William Camden (1551-1623) described the area during the seventeenth century as: 'a small territory, but very rich and pleasant, plentiful withal of lead; here is Wrexham to be seen, much spoken of for a passing fair tower steeple that the church hath, and the musical organs that be therein'.¹⁰

Population figures for Bersham and Brymbo in 1801 show that more people were employed in trade and manufacturing than on the land, as compared to the village of Broughton where almost twice as many people were employed in agriculture (477 persons) as there were in industry (285 persons).¹¹ Within a decade of John Wilkinson acquiring the Brymbo estate c.1792, the village of Broughton was

⁶ John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994), 326.

⁷ Gareth V. Williams, 'The Ellesmere Canal Navigation – a Great Public Utility', *Transactions of the Denbighshire Historical Society*, Vol. 48 (1999), 38.

⁸ S. Lewis, 'Wrexham', *A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, Vol. II (London, 1842), WRE -3R2.

⁹ G. G. Lerry, 'The Industries of Denbighshire from Tudor Times to the Present Day', Part II, *Transactions of the Denbighshire Historical Society*, Vol. 7 (1958), 53.

¹⁰ Quoted in Peter le Huray, 'The Chirk Castle Partbooks', *Early Music History*, Vol. 2 (1982), 17.

¹¹ 1801 Census of Great Britain, *Abstract of the Answers and Returns: Enumeration, Part I, Denbighshire* (London, 1801), 473.

industrialized with less than a quarter of the workforce employed on the land,¹² and by the first quarter of the 19th century it had developed into a productive coal mining community. Having partially worked the minerals deposits of their estates, many landowners turned their attention to the technological developments in agriculture, and Edward Pugh in an article in *Cambria Depicta* (1816) observed: ‘... the lack of enterprise of the Welsh gentry brought in immigrant capital to exploit the mines’,¹³ and the abundance of mineral resources attracted a new wave of opportunists who would re-define the industrial contour of north-east Wales.¹⁴

With the expansion of industry came the movement of labour from the rural villages, and Brinley Thomas, in an article, ‘A Cauldron of Rebirth’, claims that while industrialization brought about the redistribution of population, it saved rather than destroyed Welsh-speaking communities,¹⁵ and ‘gave the Welsh language a new lease of life and Welsh Nonconformity a glorious high noon’.¹⁶ This is corroborated by the statistical evidence of W.T.R. Pryce which credits the industrial expansion in north-east Wales with having doubled the number of Welsh speakers from 62,000 to 118,000 in the first half of the 19th century.¹⁷ Denominations followed the working classes to the expanding industrial areas of north-east Wales, and I.G.Jones maintains that it was the constant flow of an already religiously socialised people from the countryside that shaped the religious character of the Welsh industrial towns and made them so very different from those of England.¹⁸ Furthermore, the social effects of industrial growth during the early 19th century were eased by the fact that short distance migration from regions of shared cultural values accounted for much of the population movement to the overcrowded industrialised ghettos where social options were limited to the tavern and the tabernacle. (See Fig.1.1 over).

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *The Brymbo Works Magazine*, Vol. IV, No. 4, December (1928), 81.

¹⁴ Friends of Wrexham Museums and Clwyd Family History Society, *Slater's North Wales Directory 1850* (CD-Rom, 2003), 216.

¹⁵ Brinley Thomas, ‘A Cauldron of Rebirth: Population and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century’, *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 13, No. 2, December (1986), 419; Brinley Thomas (ed.), *The Welsh Economy: Studies in Expansion* (Cardiff, 1962), 26.

¹⁶ Brinley Thomas (ed.), *ibid.*, 29.

¹⁷ Brinley Thomas (1986), *op. cit.*, 427; W.T.R.Pryce, ‘Migration and the Evolution of Culture Areas: Cultural and Linguistic Frontiers in North-east Wales, 1750 and 1852’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, June (1975), 92.

¹⁸ I. G. Jones, *Communities: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1987), 222.

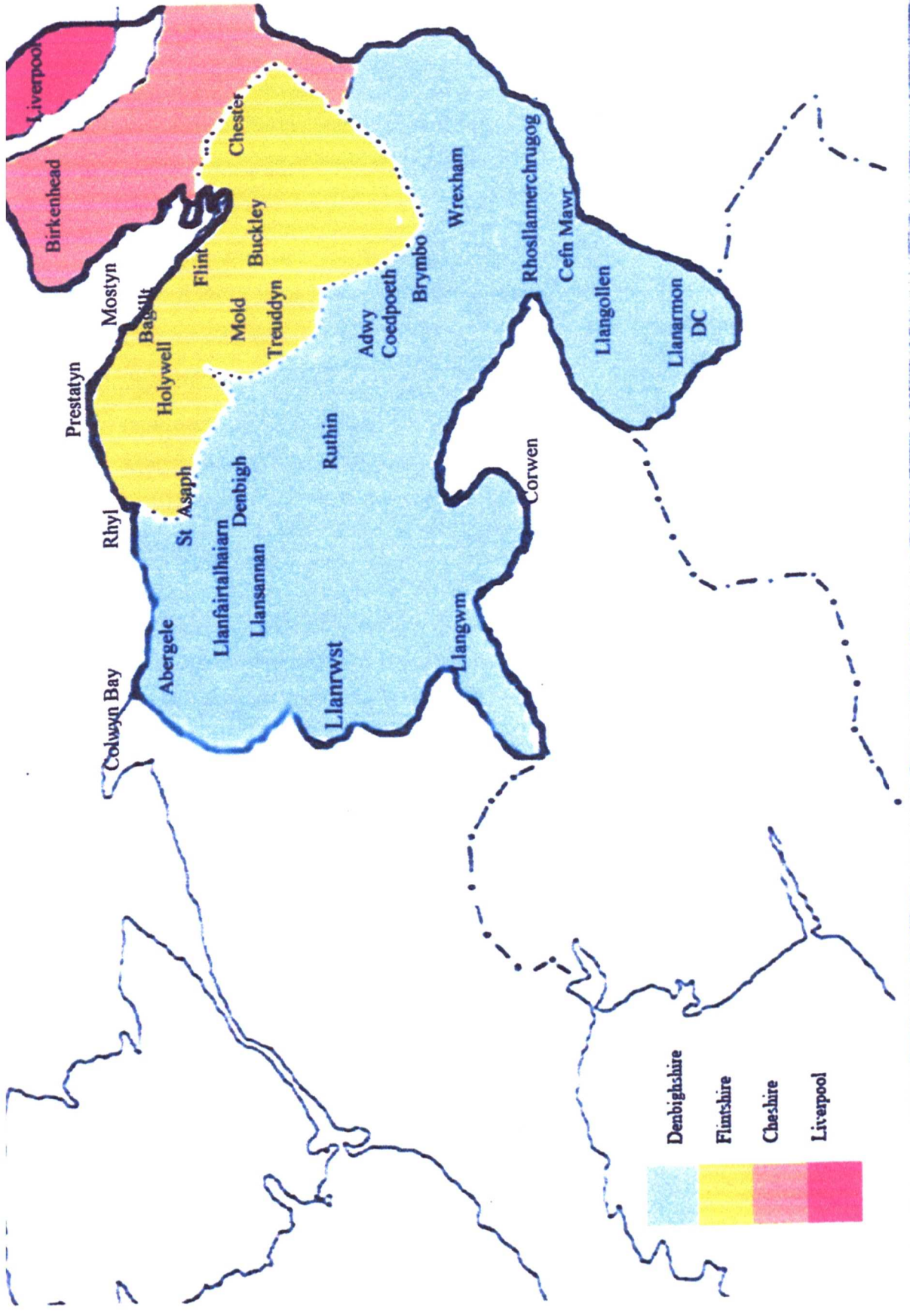


Fig 1.1 Map of 19th Century north-east Wales and its proximity to Merseyside

It was the Dissenting forces of Methodism that conserved the Welsh language, while the influence of the circulating schools established by Griffith Jones, Llanddowror (1683–1761), between 1746 and 1777,¹⁹ extended the spiritual awareness of the rural population and educated the common people. As a result, says Robert Pope: ‘Welsh would emerge as the language of religion and a literate *gwerin* [peasantry] emerged through the remarkable success of circulating schools inaugurated by Griffith Jones, vicar of Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire’.²⁰ If anything prepared the soil for the 18th century Methodist Revival, it was the enlightening of the people and, says Johnes: ‘if the influential members of the Church had evinced the same zeal for the religious education of the people as demonstrated by Griffith Jones and his coadjutors, the Welsh peasantry would have continued to look to the Church for instruction rather than seeking it from the Methodists’.²¹ Davies observes: ‘With the growth of education, lay-people sought a greater role than they were allowed in the parish church, an ambition which Methodism, with its network of counsellors, was well placed to fulfil’.²²

Towards the mid-eighteenth century, the Established Church was encouraging the publication of a simpler version of psalms in English, and Griffith Jones was asked to do likewise for Welsh adherents as a means of improving congregational worship through songs of praise.²³ The Psalters of Edmwnd Prys (1544-1623),²⁴ particularly *Llyfr y Salmau* (1621), was the first metrical psalter to be published in Welsh and also the earliest Welsh book of printed music,²⁵ and it was Griffith Jones who simplified some of the psalms of Edmwnd Prys that appeared in *Crynodeb y Salmau Canu* in 1743.²⁶ This suggests that the Established Church had

¹⁹ After Griffith Jones’s death in 1761, his work was continued by *confidante* and philanthropist Madam Bevan (1698-1779). In Denbighshire, some 60 circulating schools visited areas around Denbigh (Llansannan, Llangernyw), Ruthin (Cyffylliog, Llanbedr, Llandyrnog), Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog and Llanrwst (Llanddoged). Only four were held in Flintshire – Cwm, Dyserth, Galt-Melyd and Melidan. See M.G.Jones, *The Charity School Movement – a study of eighteenth century Puritanism in Action* (London, 1964), 399.

²⁰ Robert Pope (ed.), *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland c 1700-2000* (Cardiff, 2001), 4.

²¹ A.J. Johnes, *An Essay on the Causes which have produced Dissent from the Established Church, in the Principality of Wales* (London, 1835), 27.

²² John Davies, *op. cit.*, 310.

²³ Griffith Jones, *Crynodeb y Salmau Canu: sef rhai salmau detholedig yn gyfan* (Llundain, 1743), v.

²⁴ Alan Luff, *Welsh Hymns and their Tunes* (London, 1990), 136.

²⁵ Sally Harper, ‘Tunes for a Welsh Psalter: Edmwnd Prys’s *Llyfr y Salmau*’, *Studia Celtica*, XXXVII (2003), 221.

²⁶ Griffith Jones, *op. cit.*

accepted the need to improve congregational music some time before the Methodist Revival, although it was the spiritual awakening during the mid-18th century, says Luff, 'that encouraged singing in general and drew a number of the teachers of singing into the movement'.²⁷

Congregational singing was an important part of worship for the Dissenting Methodists, and D. E. Parry Williams states that: 'through the influence of Wesley and Whitefield on the revivalist leaders Howel Harris (1714-1773) and Daniel Rowland (1713-1790), the practice of hymn-singing by congregations in Wales became established and widespread'.²⁸ Harris recognised the value of music as a means of fanning the revivalist flames and began preaching through the *Ysgol Gân* and *seiadau* [fellowship meetings], where he witnessed people gathering together to sing psalms.²⁹ This was usually followed by a singing lesson, and in his sermon in the *Sasiwn* [Association Meeting] of 1743, he encouraged student poets to compose hymn-tunes, in order to encourage William Williams' hymn-writing.³⁰ Harris had acquired a copy of Wither's hymnal³¹ in 1741, and the first 'Association' of the Welsh Methodists established rules for the new 'Societies', one of which was that each Society meeting would begin with the singing of a hymn,³² and this would probably have been the order of service when Harris visited Adwy'r Clawdd, Coedpoeth, in the autumn of 1747.³³

²⁷ Alan Luff, op. cit., 136-7.

²⁸ D.E.Parry Williams, 'Music and Religion', in P.Crossley-Holland (ed.), *Music in Wales* (London, 1948), 53. Evangelists, John Wesley (1703-1791) and George Whitefield (1714-1770), were members of the same religious group in Oxford, but Whitefield broke away from Wesley's doctrines in 1741 and became more Calvinistic in outlook. Wesley founded the Methodist Movement, while Whitefield began as a moderator for the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales in 1743.

²⁹ John Hughes, *Methodistiaeth Cymru; sef Hanes Blaenorol a Gwedd Bresennol y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Nghymru; o Ddechreuad y Cyfundeb hyd y flwyddyn, 1850*, Cyfrol 1 (Gwrecsam, 1851), 75; R.W.Jones, *Y Ddwy Ganrif Hyn – Trem ar Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd o 1735 hyd 1935* (Caernarfon, 1935), 34.

³⁰ J. Price Williams, 'Methodistiaeth a Chaniadaeth', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes Eglwys Methodistiaeth Calfinaidd Cymru*, Cyfrol XVI, Rhif 4, Rhagfyr (1931), 137.

³¹ George Wither published a collection of hymns in 1623, entitled *The Hymns and Songs of the Church* which was set to music by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1685), a court musician and organist of Westminster Abbey. Many of Wither's compositions, along with the chants of Edmwnd Prys and Tallis formed the basis of the early hymnals and were also included in later compilations.

³² Alan Luff, op. cit., 91.

³³ John Hughes, op. cit., 147, 365; Huw Llewelyn Williams, *Hanes Eglwys y Methodistiaid yn Adwy'r Clawdd* (Wrecsam, 1947), 29, 32. Adwy'r Clawdd is in the village of Coedpoeth, near Wrexham.

Inspired by the preaching of Howel Harris and Daniel Rowland, the early Dissenters gathered in small groups referred to as *seiadau* or *society profiad* [experience meetings], and met in barns and cottages, although they continued to attend the Established Church in order to receive the Sacrament.³⁴ As their numbers increased, the Christian leaders became aware of the need to provide a consecrated building to facilitate the societies and to administer Holy Communion.³⁵ The Calvinistic Methodists had been holding *seiadau* in a cottage known as *Lloffft Wen* in Adwy'r Clawdd, Coedpoeth, by the mid-eighteenth century,³⁶ and were later permitted under the terms of the Toleration Act of 1689³⁷ to gather in meeting houses with the written consent of a dignitary of the Anglican Church.³⁸ So began in 1746, one of the earliest Calvinistic causes in north-east Wales under the leadership of John Evans, a skilled weaver who had moved from Bala³⁹ to work in the lead mines of Minera, and in 1750 he gifted the land for the first chapel before moving back to Bala to assist Thomas Charles.⁴⁰ Under the ministry of Howel Harris and Daniel Rowland,⁴¹ the Calvinistic Methodist network extended from Adwy'r Clawdd and Berthen in Flintshire to Bont Uchel, near Ruthin and Y Dyffryn in Llandyrnog where Robert Llwyd (1715-1792), evicted from his farm in Cilcain on account of his association with the Methodists had moved in 1749 to pioneer Calvinism in that area.⁴² These were the four beacons of the Dissenting cause in north-east Wales that formed the Sunday preaching circuit before the turn of the 19th century.⁴³

D.E. Parry Williams says that the influence of the revivalist movement was already being felt in Wales when Richard Morris' new edition of *Llyfr Gweddi Cyffredin* [Book of Common Prayer] appeared in 1755, although the re-publication of this volume may have been in response to the new religious situation.⁴⁴ It was reprinted

³⁴ T.J. Jones, 'Seiadau', *Cymru*, Cyfrol XXVIII (Caernafon, 1905), 209; E.P. Jones, *Methodistiaeth Galfinaidd Dinbych 1735-1909* (Dinbych, 1936), 23, 60; Thomas Rees, *A History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales, from its rise to the present time* (London, 1861), 388.

³⁵ T.J. Jones, *ibid.*, 207.

³⁶ John Hughes, *op. cit.*, 149.

³⁷ The Toleration Act of 1689 replaced the Conventicle Act of 1664.

³⁸ John Hughes, *op. cit.*, 149.

³⁹ John Hughes, *op. cit.*, 147.

⁴⁰ Griffith Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir Fflint* (Dolgellau, 1914), 24.

⁴¹ Jonathan Jones, *Cofiant y Parch. Thomas Jones o Ddinbych* (Dinbych, 1897), 41.

⁴² E.P. Jones, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁴³ Huw Llewelyn Williams, *op. cit.*, 43.

⁴⁴ D.E. Parry Williams, *op. cit.*, 52.

in 1770 with the addition of twenty-four psalm-tunes edited by Evan Williams of Llangybi (born c.1706) who provided an accompanying bass part, leaving the inner voice to be sung extemporaneously by the tenors.⁴⁵ That individuals sang differing versions of a tenor part simultaneously, suggests that sung worship in the late eighteenth century was an unruly art and often led by a precentor who could strike only one tune. Generally, hymn-tunes were poor,⁴⁶ and the implication that poetry was seen as a substitute for the words of the Scriptures met with opposition from strict observers of a Calvinistic doctrine that was profound on the propriety of sung worship, as articulated in the preface to the Genevan Psalter of 1542 in which Calvin's attitude towards music in the sanctuary is made clear.⁴⁷

Care must always be taken that the song be neither light nor frivolous: but that it have weight and majesty (as St. Augustine says), and also, there is a great difference between the music which one makes to entertain men at table and in their houses, and the Psalms which are sung in the Church in the presence of God and His angels.⁴⁸

Although Welsh traditional folk melodies were readily available, 'William Williams (Pantycelyn) and his fellow hymnwriters turned to the more expansive metres by then available in England and modelled much of their work on Wesley and Watts rather than on their Welsh forerunners', observes Rhidian Griffiths.⁴⁹ It is only in one collection, *Caniadau Duwiol* (1757),⁵⁰ that Williams made an exception by setting hymns to four folk songs – 'Nutmeg and Ginger', 'King's Farewell', 'Lovely Peggy', and 'Gwêl yr Adeilad'.⁵¹ Folk music, observed John Graham, was dismissed by the chapels as a secular expression: 'The sweet sound of the mountain harp had been far too much associated with scenes of profane and riotous mirth, from which it became the aim, as it was the duty, of the religious

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Delyth G. Morgans, *Cydymaith Caneuon Ffydd* (Aberystwyth, 2006), 9.

⁴⁷ Charles Garside, 'Calvin's Preface to the Psalter: A Re-Appraisal', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4, October (1951), 567.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 568.

⁴⁹ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Welsh chapel music: the making of a tradition', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 6 (Cardiff, 1989), 36.

⁵⁰ *Caniadau Duwiol* included secular melodies such as 'Lovely Peggy', 'King's Farewell' and 'Nutmeg and Ginger'. See Meredydd Evans, 'Alawon y Caniadau Duwiol', *Y Traethodydd*, 146 (1991), 234.

⁵¹ Alan Luff, op. cit., 137. Luff states that most of the folk songs were of English origin and the tune 'Lovely Peggy' is an example of the metre (8.8.8.6.D).

reformers, to wean the people'.⁵² The poetry of Pantycelyn's hymns, written in a language easily understood by y *werin* [the peasantry], were inspired by nature and in the preface to the first edition of *Ffarwel Weledig* (1763) he justifies borrowing new English measures so that Welsh congregations would not be disadvantaged in public worship.⁵³ Furthermore, he avoided the use of folk songs, preferring instead to borrow English hymn-tunes, such as 'Nashville' and 'Helmsley'.⁵⁴

When Pantycelyn expanded the metric range beyond the four familiar psalm measures of Edmwnd Prys, the Established Church responded by engaging teachers of psalmody who were paid 'for teaching the Parishioners to sing Psalms', as was the practice in Llanrhaiadr, near Denbigh, in 1772 where one Wm. Williams was paid £3 19s. 0d. for his services.⁵⁵ A similar arrangement was in place at Llanfwrog Church, Ruthin, where choristers were paid 11s. 'for singing 11 Carols', and the Ruthin singers who were remunerated for carol singing at Treuddyn, near Mold.⁵⁶ In the settled conformity of the Established Church, choral music was more refined than the Dissenting fellowships where it was customary to chant a psalm at the end of a chapel service with no consistency or accuracy in the singing, but rather, a disorganised monotonous refrain repeated over and over again.⁵⁷ Notwithstanding the poor rendition of psalmody in the Dissenting causes of the late eighteenth century, the movement continued to expand in procession with migration to the industrialised areas and built their chapels at the centre of the developing communities to challenge the more remote Anglican churches.

By 1770, the Adwy'r Clawdd fellowship was attracting worshippers from neighbouring villages and as congregations increased other parishes began to establish causes as an outgrowth of Adwy'r Clawdd. In Rhosllannerchrugog, for example, the Calvinistic Methodists began worshipping in a barn before building Capel Jerusalem which had to be enlarged in 1785 to accommodate the growing

⁵² John Graham, *A Century of Welsh Music* (London, 1923), 32.

⁵³ Evan Isaac, *Prif Emynwyr Cymru* (Lerpwl, 1925), 68.

⁵⁴ D.E. Parry Williams, op. cit., 53.

⁵⁵ J. Fisher, 'The Religious and Social Life of Former Days in the Vale of Clwyd', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, April (1906), 159.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁵⁷ 'Cestrian', 'Adgofion am Sir Ddinbych', *Y Drysorfa*, Mawrth (1855), 81.

congregation, hence its familiar title, *Capel Mawr*.⁵⁸ In similar manner, Thomas Edwards, 'Thomas the Turner', took the gospel to Caergwre in 1770, while Methodist minister, John Hughes (1796-1860),⁵⁹ a member of the Adwy movement, established the Methodist 'Academy' at Fairfield House in Wrexham.⁶⁰ The Calvinists of Coedpoeth also assisted the founding causes in Flintshire and missionaries, such as Dafydd Jones (1723-1774),⁶¹ a popular preacher of his time in north-east Wales, ministered at Berthengron, Lixwm - the first Calvinistic Methodist chapel to be established in the county of Flintshire.⁶² John Owen (1733-1776), who was converted under the preaching of Daniel Rowland,⁶³ began the building of Berthengron chapel in 1775, but his untimely death delayed the official opening by Daniel Rowland which took place some time after 1776.⁶⁴

Critical to the growth of the Dissenting chapels was their function as educators, and the earlier success of Griffith Jones' circulating schools had cast the mould for the work of Thomas Charles (1755-1814) of Bala,⁶⁵ whose Sunday schools would flourish in north Wales from 1785,⁶⁶ in the same year that he left the Church of England and joined the Calvinistic Methodists.⁶⁷ Whereas the schools of Griffith Jones had been of considerable benefit, they were confined mainly to south Wales,⁶⁸ but under Thomas Charles, the illiterate of north Wales were introduced to reading and the exposition of scripture.⁶⁹ North Wales was a daunting challenge as Thomas Charles estimated that only one-fifth of its population could read, and he was of the opinion that Denbighshire and Flintshire were the most immoral of all the north Wales counties.⁷⁰ Calvinistic minister Thomas Jones (1756-1820), a

⁵⁸ Griffith Owen, op. cit., 40.

⁵⁹ John Hughes, better-known as Rev. John Hughes, Liverpool, was the author of the three-volumed *Hanes Methodistiaeth Cymru* (Gwrecsam, 1851, 1854 and 1856).

⁶⁰ Edward Francis, *Hanes dechreuad a chynydd y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Ngwrecsam, er oddeutu'r flwyddyn 1769, hyd y flwyddyn 1870* (Gwrecsam, 1870), 37.

⁶¹ Griffith Owen, op. cit., 153.

⁶² John Hughes, op. cit., 148-9.

⁶³ Ibid., 287.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 157; Griffith Owen, op. cit., 156.

⁶⁵ G. Wynne Griffith, *Yr Ysgol Sul - Penodau ar Hanes yr Ysgol Sul* (Caernarfon, 1936), 29

⁶⁶ Gomer M. Roberts, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Galfinaidd Cymru - Cynnydd y Corff, Cyfrol II* (Caernarfon, 1978), 433.

⁶⁷ Jonathan Jones, op. cit., 74.

⁶⁸ William Williams, *Welsh Calvinistic Methodism* (Bridgend, 1998), 191.

⁶⁹ John Rhys and David Brynmor-Jones, *The Welsh People* (London, 1923), 507.

⁷⁰ Jonathan Jones, op. cit., 75-6.

native of Caerwys, Flintshire, and better known as Thomas Jones of Denbigh,⁷¹ who became one of the foremost nineteenth century Calvinistic leaders of his day⁷² assisted Thomas Charles in the development of the Sunday schools, the Bible Society⁷³ and also the publication of *Trysorfa Ysbrydol* [Spiritual Treasury].⁷⁴ The circulating schools and the Sabbath schools of Thomas Charles created a passion for learning that extended beyond the basic function of literacy to form the bedrock of Welsh culture that began in the *Ysgolion Sul*.

The precedent of taking education to the people as established by the circulating schools had succeeded and this proven method was later adopted by the travelling teachers of psalmody who had acquired their knowledge of music through the Established Church, and their influence was pivotal to the reform of congregational singing in the chapels of north-east Wales. From the neighbouring counties of Merioneth and Montgomeryshire, the circulating maestros frequently crossed parish boundaries into Denbighshire, one such exemplar being John Symmons (c.1720-early 1800s),⁷⁵ the Montgomeryshire musician who tutored John Williams, Dolgellau (*Ioan Rhagfyr*, 1740-1821), when he joined his class as a 17 year-old c.1757.⁷⁶ Thereafter, Symmons and *Ioan Rhagfyr* became good friends and refined each other's work by exchanging musical compositions.⁷⁷ *Ioan Rhagfyr* whose major contribution to Welsh hymnody were the hymn-tunes 'Sabbath,' 'Cemmaes,' and 'Dyfroedd Siloah' had received lessons in playing the trumpet and flute and had a gift for teaching'.⁷⁸ Many of the travelling teachers and musicians were

⁷¹ Thomas Jones was the author of a small collection of hymns, *Hymnau Newyddion ar amryw Fesurau, ac wedi eu Cyfaddasu at Amryw Achosion* (Thomas Gee, Dinbych, 1814).

⁷² Jonathan Jones, op. cit., 82. Thomas Jones ministered in Mold, Ruthin and Denbigh.

⁷³ Ibid., 217.

⁷⁴ Thomas Charles and Thomas Jones jointly edited the Calvinistic Methodist quarterly publication, *Trysorfa Ysbrydol* (Caerlleon) from 1799 until 1801.

⁷⁵ John Symmons was a church choirmaster, who taught the choir of St. Mary's Church, Dolgellau. See NLW MS 22549iD, *Eos Llechid*, Hanes Bywgraphyddol a Beirniadol o Gerddorion Cymreig; hyd Ganol y Ganrif Bresennol, 1887-1917 (1887), 351.

⁷⁶ M.O. Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), *Bywgraffiaeth Cerddorion Cymreig: O'r oesoedd boreuaf hyd y ganrif bresennol* (Caerdydd, 1890), 139; John Parry, 'Williams, John (Ioan Rhagfyr)', *Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig*, Cyfrol X (Dinbych, 1879), 174.

⁷⁷ John Parry, 'Williams, John (Ioan Rhagfyr)', *ibid.*, 174.

⁷⁸ D.Emlyn Evans, 'Ein Cerddorion: John Williams, Dolgellau', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol I, Rhif 2, Chwefror (1889), 12-13. 'Sabbath' was first published in John Parry's *Peroriaeth Hyfryd* (Chester, 1837); 'Cemmaes' appeared in Owen Williams' *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion* (1819) and was also included in Mills' *Y Cerddor Eglwysig* (Llanidloes, 1846) and David Richards' collection *Sŵn Addoli* (Llanidloes, 1862), whilst 'Dyfroedd Siloah' appeared in *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (Dinbych, 1839) John Roberts Henllan, and re-named 'Dolgelley'.

known to each other and the extent of this network in mid and north-east Wales towards the close of the eighteenth century was remarkable.

The market day activity in the towns of Denbigh and Ruthin were central to the exchange of cultural knowledge, and it was customary for pamphlets and poems to be sold or exchanged. *Ioan Rhagfyr*, on his tour of fairs and markets selling felt hats, often visited Ruthin where he sought the advice of John Jeffreys (1718-1798)⁷⁹ and other musicians,⁸⁰ and it was in the marketplace that he was tutored by John Jeffreys.⁸¹ On one occasion, *Rhagfyr* arrived in Ruthin to ply his trade, but after spending the entire day in the company of Jeffreys and others, he missed the opportunity to sell his felt hats and his friends held a collection to make good his financial loss.⁸² This was a productive fellowship through which the circulating musicians had the opportunity to collect hymns and anthems from contemporaries, and the inclusion of hymn-tunes by John Ellis, *Ioan Rhagfyr* and John Jeffreys in Owen Williams' *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion*⁸³ suggests that Williams may also have been linked to this fraternity.

Denbigh-born David Griffiths (*Clwydfardd*, 1800-1894)⁸⁴ describes Jeffreys, who became a schoolmaster in Llanrhaeadr, near Denbigh, in 1790 as 'a noted bass singer and reckoned to be the champion of bassers,' who tutored 'several young men in the neighbourhood of Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd as church singers'.⁸⁵ Accompanied by John Symmons, he travelled the neighbouring parishes of Ruthin and Denbigh teaching church music and singing, using the Guido⁸⁶ method of *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*⁸⁷ and such singing classes were referred to as 'cadw Sol' [holding

⁷⁹ John Jeffreys was born in Llanynys, Denbighshire. He composed a number of hymn-tunes and anthems, the tunes 'Dyfrdwy' (1780) and 'Llangoedmor' (1789) being his most lasting legacy. Owen Williams (o Fôn) included some of his work in *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion* (1819).

⁸⁰ John Parry, op.cit., 175.

⁸¹ NLW MS 22549iD, *Eos Llechid*, op. cit., 352.

⁸² Ibid., 175.

⁸³ Owen Williams, *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion* (Llundain, 1819), 1; M.O. Jones (D.Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 145. See Appendix 1. for list of hymnals.

⁸⁴ *Clwydfardd* was a Wesleyan lay preacher who was appointed the first Archdruid of Wales at the Wrexham National Eisteddfod in 1876.

⁸⁵ Denbighshire Record Office, NTD/1017, Letter to David Lewis, Llanrhystud from Clwydfardd, dated 28 February 1887.

⁸⁶ Eleventh-century monk Guido d'Arrezzo introduced the hexachordal system. See 'Guido d'Arrezzo', Britannica Online Encyclopaedia, <http://www.britannica.com/>, accessed 20 June 2009.

⁸⁷ *Eos Llechid*, Owen Humphrey Davies, 'Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol a Beirmiadol o Gerddorion Ymadawedig Cymru', *Yr Haul*, Cyfrol X, Mehefin (1894), 175.

So].⁸⁸ In a letter to David Lewis, Llanrhystud, *Clwydfardd* says of Jeffreys: 'I have seen his name attached to a great number of tunes in several old Note Books many years ago. I think that he was the author of the musical composition of the anthem *Ac yr oedd yn y Wlad hono fugeiliaid*'.⁸⁹ The tune 'Vale of Clwyd', composed by John Jeffreys and set to Edmwnd Prys' Psalm 19, appeared in the tune book [*llyfr pricio*]⁹⁰ of David Lewis of Llanrhystyd in 1777,⁹¹ and his hymn-tunes are also included in William Jones' *llyfr pricio*, 'Tonau ac Anthemau', c.1800.⁹²

Jeffreys was described as 'one of the chief musicians of the area' of that era,⁹³ and in the tune-book of Lewis Lewis, published in 1815, there are a number of hand-written tunes composed by popular hymnists of the period such as John Jeffreys whose compositions appear with those of John Ellis, John Williams and James Mills.⁹⁴ Although Jeffreys and John Symmons remained loyal to the Anglican Church, there were church musicians converted by Methodist preaching during the eighteenth century revival who changed their allegiance to the Dissenters, and there were those who attended both. One such was Edward Ellis of Caergwrle, near Wrexham, who continued to attend church after joining the Calvinistic cause in the village in 1797,⁹⁵ before eventually becoming a full-time Methodist, despite incurring the wrath of his father who expelled him from the family home. Traditionally, Sunday was the pay-day for workers at the Boydell works, a custom which offended the Nonconformists, but on moving to work with his uncle, Edward Ellis was able to attend the *seiat profiad* with a clear conscience.⁹⁶

Many of those who defected to the Dissenting causes were travelling musicians, some of whom may have performed in the wind and reed bands that pre-dated the introduction of organs in the rural churches of north-east Wales. David Russell

⁸⁸ NLW MS 22549iD, *Eos Llechid*, op. cit., 312.

⁸⁹ Denbighshire Record Office, NTD/1017, op. cit.

⁹⁰ *Llyfrau pricio* were manuscript tune books, compiled by precentors during the period before musical accompaniment when congregations followed the *arweinydd y gân* [leader of singing] on a line by line basis, referred to as 'lining out' or 'ledio' in Welsh.

⁹¹ NLW MS 819A, The Tune book of David John Lewis, otherwise David Jones, Tymawr, Llanrhystyd (1777), 41.

⁹² NLW MS 12018C, William Jones, *Tonau ac Anthemau* (1800), 2.

⁹³ 'Deugain mlynedd yn ôl', *Y Genedl Cymreig*, 5 Ionawr 1887, 6.

⁹⁴ NLW MS 8194A, Lewis Lewis, *Llyfr Tonau* (1815).

⁹⁵ 'Cestrian', 'Adgofion Hen Ddisgybl', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CLXXV, Llyfr XV, Gorphenaf (1861), 249.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

alludes to the 'presence of a large number of military bands, both regular and volunteer throughout the Northern Counties',⁹⁷ and many instrumentalists in north-east Wales were trained in the bands of the Denbighshire and Flintshire militia as well as The Loyal Holywell Volunteer corps.⁹⁸ The eminent Welsh composer, John Parry (*Bardd Alaw*, 1776-1851), who was born in Denbigh, began his musical career playing the clarinet in church and mastered many instruments including the harp, violin, and flageolet before becoming band master of the Denbigh Militia in 1797.⁹⁹ Writing in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, John Fisher refers to the musical arrangements in the Ruthin area, citing examples such as clarionet reeds being purchased by Llanynys Church c.1805, bass-viol strings by the church in Llanfwrog c.1808, a hair violin-bow for the church at Llanbedr, and the acquisition of a barrel and finger organ at the parish church of Ruthin.¹⁰⁰

In the churches of Flintshire, the musical arrangements followed much the same pattern and in Ysceifiog Church, one of the largest parishes in Wales, the musicians' gallery was in use c.1835 as records pertaining to the purchase and repair of various musical instruments indicate that the church had an orchestra.¹⁰¹ In the neighbouring parish church of Nannerch, near Mold, there was a band led by local saddler and bellringer, Thomas Hughes (1801-1848), a talented musician who it is said, was given a free rein by the curate, Rev. Llewelyn Lloyd.¹⁰² As well as being choirmaster, he was a proficient player of the bassoon, clarinet, flute, trombone and violin, and tutor of the Nannerch brass band¹⁰³ that also led the processions of the local Friendly Societies.¹⁰⁴ Instrumental music was more readily associated with the folk tradition of the tavern and the pomp of the Anglican Church, while the congregations of the Dissenting chapels expressed their worship through unaccompanied song. Elie Halévy observes: 'If the Church of England at

⁹⁷ D. Russell, *The Popular Music Societies of the Yorkshire Textile District, 1850-1914*, Ph.D. unpublished thesis (University of York, 1979), 46.

⁹⁸ R. Paul Evans, 'The Flintshire Loyalist Association and the Loyal Holywell Volunteers', *Flintshire Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 33 (1992), 62.

⁹⁹ M.O. Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 90-91.

¹⁰⁰ J. Fisher, op. cit., 159.

¹⁰¹ Pamphlet, 'St. Mary's Parish Church Ysceifiog – Notes for Visitors', October (2009), 1.

¹⁰² Bangor University Archive, GB 0222/GAB, 'Thomas Hughes of Nannerch', Gabriel Hughes Papers, 57; Canrhawdfardd, 'Ein Cerddorion Ymadawedig', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Rhagfyr (1889), 513.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Canrhawdfardd, op. cit., 513.

first discouraged hymn-singing as tainted by its Methodist associations, she encouraged instrumental music as a reaction against hymnody and as a counter attraction'.¹⁰⁵ Supporting Halévy's observation is a deed of faculty for the building of an organ in Ruabon Parish Church that was drafted in 1769,¹⁰⁶ and the new organ that was installed in Wrexham Parish Church in 1776 by public subscription at a cost of £378.¹⁰⁷ Edward Randles (1763-1820), the blind harpist and organist, and a former pupil of the blind virtuoso John Parry of Ruabon, became the organist at Wrexham Church in 1788.¹⁰⁸ It was when the 'quires' and amateur ensembles in the rural churches were disbanded and replaced by surpliced choirs and organs that many musicians began to change their allegiance to the Dissenting causes, a theory expounded by Ashman and Townsend of the West Gallery Music Association who claim that 'many of the singers simply crossed the street to the welcoming Methodist chapels'.¹⁰⁹

One such convert was Henry Mills (1757-1820),¹¹⁰ a young musician who joined the Bethel Calvinistic Methodist cause in Llanidloes c.1776 as a youth leader, and took a prominent role in the fellowship's singing activities,¹¹¹ to the extent that Thomas Charles of Bala persuaded the *Cyfarfod Misol* [Monthly Association]¹¹² to appoint him as a teacher of psalmody.¹¹³ Despite opposition from the elders to the talented young man who could play two or three instruments, the doubters relented and approved the appointment.¹¹⁴ Henry Mills was 'recognised as a public performer with a distinctly secular bent'¹¹⁵ and Llanfyllin-born Sir Percy Watkins (1871-1946), a noted civil servant, describes the Mills' family as: '... originally

¹⁰⁵ Elie Halévy, *Victorian Years 1841-1895* (London, 1961), 116.

¹⁰⁶ Denbighshire Record Office, DRO/PD/89/1/68, 'The Deed of Faculty for fitting pews, organ chamber and fitting organ'.

¹⁰⁷ Denbighshire Record Office, DRO/PD/101/1/206, 'Faculty for installation of organ in Wrexham Church'.

¹⁰⁸ 'Early parish church organs', *Wrexham Leader*, 18 November 1983, 11.

¹⁰⁹ George Ashman, 'West Gallery Music', West Gallery Music Association website, www.wgma.org.uk/Articles/intro.htm, accessed 12 July 2009.

¹¹⁰ M.O. Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 72.

¹¹¹ T. Mordaf Pierce, 'Millsiaid Llanidloes (1644-1800)', *Y Traethodydd*, Cyfrol LVI (1901), 341.

¹¹² The purpose of the *Cyfarfod Misol* was to unify the work of the scattered *seiadau* [societies] and a General Association of all counties was held once every quarter.

¹¹³ Huw Williams, 'Agweddau ar Waith Teulu'r Millsiaid Llanidloes', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1984), 100.

¹¹⁴ M.O. Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 72.

¹¹⁵ Personal papers of Richard Meredith of Tamworth, a descendant of the Mills' family - consulted privately and used with the permission of the owner.

musicians of a definitely unpuritanical kind. They used to take their fiddles and harps from market to market, mansion to mansion, and tavern to tavern, and generally added to the gaiety of the countryside'.¹¹⁶ This revelation only raised the suspicions of the malcontents who held firmly to the prejudice of Williams Pantycelyn who was resolute on the subject: 'When the blessed gift of the Holy Spirit came upon the people, the 'spirit within' is of itself sufficient to the whole man, body and soul, to praise the Lord without musical instruments'.¹¹⁷

The timely appointment of Henry Mills acknowledges the fact that the standard of congregational singing had not kept pace with the prolific hymnody of the poets, as evidenced by the publication of Williams Williams' *Grawn-Syppiau* in 1795.¹¹⁸ This was a substantial collection that included the compositions of other hymnists, and the first hymnal to be adopted by the Calvinistic Methodists in north Wales.¹¹⁹ The second edition of *Grawn-Syppiau*, published in 1805, included the work of Ann Griffiths (1776-1805), and embodies her spiritual experiences after she had left the Established Church to join the Society meeting in Pontrobert in 1797.¹²⁰ What is clear is that the literary aspect of hymnody had exceeded the limited output of Welsh composers and the memory of those chapel musicians who preferred to rely on their recollection of old tunes. Such was the case in the chapel at Dolywern in the Ceiriog Valley where the precentor could pitch only one tune in the common metre, 'Martyrdom', and there were occasions when this hymn-tune was sung two or three times in the same service.¹²¹

In the absence of congregational tune-books, it was left to the precentor to set the pitch and the singing was punctuated by the leader's intoning of the next line of the hymn. For example, the congregation of *Capel Mawr*, Denbigh, were led by John Roberts, a man both large in personality and voice who was instrumental in

¹¹⁶ Percy Watkins, *A Welshman Remembers* (Cardiff, 1944), 5-6.

¹¹⁷ Quoted in D. E. Parry Williams, 'Music and Religion', in P. Crossley-Holland (ed.), op. cit., 54.

¹¹⁸ William Williams, *Grawn-Syppiau Canaan, neu Gasgliad o hymnau; gan mwyaf o waith y diweddar barchedig Mr. William Williams, sef Pigion o'i holl lyfrau cynghaneddol ef, ac o rai awdwyr eraill*, (Liverpool, 1795).

¹¹⁹ Delyth Morgans, op. cit., 8.

¹²⁰ E. Wyn James, 'Introduction to the life and work of Ann Griffiths – The Pontrobert *seiat*', Cardiff University website, <http://www.anngriffiths.caerdydd.ac.uk/introduction.html>, accessed 12 June 2010.

¹²¹ T. Frimston, *Dewi Mawrth a'i Amserau, Dolywern* (Blaenau Ffestiniog, 1924), 78.

reviving the Sunday schools of Denbigh and nearby village of Henllan¹²² and often referred to as 'Cantwr Mawr y Gogledd'¹²³ during the revival of 1810-11, which inspired the children and young people in Denbigh.¹²⁴ Although limited in musical knowledge, he was a well respected precentor who used his own metres and often sang two or more verses himself while conducting the service in what was referred to as 'lining out'.¹²⁵ Ruabon-born Peter Roberts (1760-1819), at one time the rector of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog and Halkyn, says in 1814: 'The practice of singing in parts is, in Wales, so far lost, that scarcely a trace of it remains'.¹²⁶

Part-singing was not encouraged in the early chapel service where unison singing was led by a *codwr canu* or *arweinydd y gân* [precentor] who relied solely on a *llyfrau pricio* of familiar tunes. Furthermore, the prejudicial stance of the Calvinistic Methodists on any variation from plain chant had been laid down by Pantycelyn, who felt that earthly things should not displace the human voice in the act of worship and he questioned the propriety of singing anything beyond the melody.¹²⁷ Other denominations took a broader view, and when the question of choirs and instruments was discussed at the Wesleyan Conference which met at Sheffield in 1805, it was decreed: 'Let no instruments of music be introduced into the singers' seats, except a bass viol, should the principal singer require it'.¹²⁸ Whilst it could be argued that the bigotry of the Calvinistic Methodists retarded the development of instrumental music, the reformers were sincere in their belief that singing was the only appropriate devotional expression for believers.¹²⁹ Regardless of the denominational motive that lay behind the Presbyterian policy, there is little

¹²² J. F., 'Adgofion am Sir Ddinbych – Ei Hen Flaenoriaid', *Y Drysorfa*, Llyfr VIII, Rhif XCII, Awst (1854), 255-6.

¹²³ John Roberts (-1840), originally from Llanrwst, spent most of his life in Denbigh and died in 1840. In an obituary of his pupil (Robert Evans) in 1900, reference is made to John Roberts, 'the big precentor of North Wales'. See 'Marwolaethau', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 31 Ionawr 1900, 13.

¹²⁴ J. F., 'Adgofion am Sir Ddinbych – Yr Hen Ddiwygiadau', *Y Drysorfa*, Llyfr IX, Rhif CI, Mai (1855), 150. James Mills recalls hearing John Roberts singing c. 1812. See 'Peroriaeth', *Yr Athraw*, Mai (1837), 80. It is claimed that the Sunday School in Denbigh had risen to 600 scholars during John Roberts' time. See Owen Evans, *Hanes Cychwyniad a Chynnydd Methodistiaeth Calfinaidd yn Nhref Dinbych* (Dinbych, 1897), 18-20, 31-32.

¹²⁵ Owen Evans, *ibid.*, 20.

¹²⁶ Peter Roberts, *The Cambrian Popular Antiquities; or, an Account of some Traditions, Customs and Superstitions of Wales* (London, 1815), 156, Open Library website, www.archive.org/stream/cambrianpopular00robegooq#page/n9/mode/lup, accessed 27 April 2011.

¹²⁷ Alan Luff, *op. cit.*, 188.

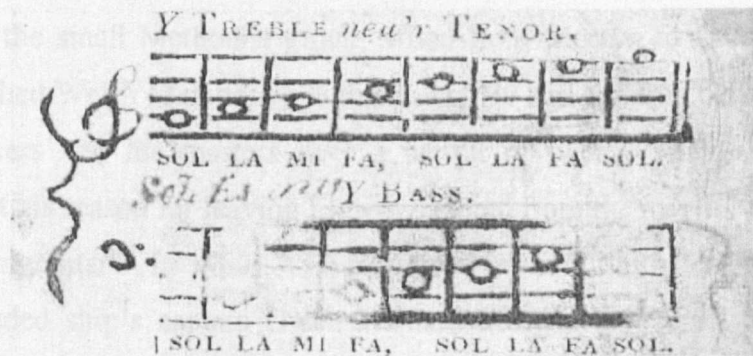
¹²⁸ Carlton R. Young, *Music of the Heart* (Carol Stream, 1995), 102.

¹²⁹ Alun Davies, 'Joseph David Jones, 1827-1870', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynau Cymru*, Cyfrol 1, Gorffennaf (1974), 178.

doubt that their determined stance to prioritise on congregational singing enabled the majority to participate in sung worship, and it was this characteristic that defined the music of the Dissenting chapels.

Little was published on musical theory until John Williams (*Siôn Singer*, 1750-1807) produced *Cyfaill mewn Llogell* [The Pocket Companion],¹³⁰ a Gamut published in three parts in 1797, and the first to explain the musical scale in the Welsh language.¹³¹ This was written in the form of a dialogue between Orpheus, the teacher, and Indoctus, the pupil, and the notes of the scale were hand-written onto a printed stave to illustrate the exercise.¹³² According to chapel deacon, John Griffiths (1874-1948) of *Capel Mawr*, Rhos, it was the earliest musical grammar to be used in that area.¹³³ Staff notation was cross-referenced to an early form of sol-fa and precentors were therefore able to adapt the text of the Gamut to suit their own teaching methods. The reference to 'Y Treble neu'r Tenor' and 'Y Bass'¹³⁴ gives an insight into the teaching of part-singing, although many religious leaders prevailed against the singing from notation as being ungodly.¹³⁵ (See Fig 1.2 below)

Fig. 1.2:



Reproduced from Ioan Williams, 'Agoriad ar y Gamut', *Cyfaill mewn Llogell yn cynnwys agoriad byr ar y Glorian Peroriaeth* (Aberystwyth, 1811), 9.

¹³⁰ John Williams, *Cyfaill mewn Llogell* (Abertawe, 1797). This three-part work included an introduction to the rudiments of music and a collection of hymn-tunes, with the tunes in the third section composed by the author.

¹³¹ J.M. Davies, 'Crefydd y Ganrif: Y Bedyddwyr', in J.M.Jones (ed.), *Trem ar y Ganrif* (Dolgellau, 1902), 233.

¹³² Ioan Williams, 'Agoriad ar y Gamut', *Cyfaill mewn Llogell yn cynnwys agoriad byr ar y Glorian Peroriaeth* (Aberystwyth, 1811), 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 20, 24; W. Rhidian M. Griffiths, *Cyhoeddi cerddoriaeth yng Nghymru yn y cyfnod 1860-1914: astudiaeth lyfryddol ynghyd â llyfryddiaeth o gyhoeddiadau rhai cyhoeddwr*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales (1991), 10.

¹³³ Llyfr Adroddiad y Capel Mawr, Rhosllannerchrugog (1948).

¹³⁴ Ioan Williams, 'Agoriad ar y Gamut', *Cyfaill mewn Llogell yn cynnwys agoriad byr ar y Glorian Peroriaeth* (Aberystwyth, 1811), 9.

¹³⁵ Alan Luff, op. cit., 162.

John Williams, who described himself alternately as ‘Dysgawdwr Muwsig,’ ‘Athro Cerdd,’ and ‘Siôn Singer,’ kept a school at Llanfairtalhaearn and had established a Baptist cause in Llanrwst c.1787.¹³⁶ He attended the inaugural meeting of the Salem Baptist Chapel at Penycae, near Wrexham, in 1791¹³⁷ where the singing was led by Hugh Davies (1756-1818) who did not understand music, but relied on his memory of three old hymn tunes from a period when music text books and hymnals were scarce, with the exception of Edmwnd Prys’ *Psalms*.¹³⁸ Hymn-tunes were learnt by ear and Luff says that ‘many of the travelling Psalm teachers were ignorant of music and simply taught by rote’,¹³⁹ while Hawkins cynically dismisses them as ‘illiterate professors’,¹⁴⁰ although many were trained instrumentalists who made a significant contribution to the music of the chapels. In the absence of Welsh language music text books, it was left to peripatetic tutors such as *Siôn Singer* to provide such material, often at their own financial risk, and although the Dissenting denominations acknowledged the need to improve congregational music, it was a lesser priority than extending the cause into new territories.

It was from Berthengron chapel at Lixwm that the Calvinistic Methodists expanded into Merseyside, when William Llwyd, a 26 year-old miner from Ysceifiog and a member of the small Methodist group, sailed from Mostyn to Liverpool in 1781 and established Welsh Methodism in that town. He had suffered persecution by his fellow-workers and his masters over a period of twenty years, although it is unlikely that his reason for leaving Lixwm differed from the myriad of other Welsh economic migrants.¹⁴¹ In 1782, William Llwyd invited a number of Welsh exiles which included ship’s captain Owen William Morgan and Israel Matthew from Anglesey,¹⁴² to a prayer meeting at his home in Pitt Street, Liverpool,¹⁴³ and from this small gathering Pall Mall Calvinistic Methodist Chapel was established in

¹³⁶ Spinther, ‘John Williams, Athraw Peroriaeth’, *Seren Gomer*, Ebrill (1880), 133; R. D. Griffith, ‘Cyfraniad Meibion Arfon i Gerddoriaeth’, *Transactions Caernarfonshire Historical Society*, Vol. 9 (1948), 93.

¹³⁷ The Baptists began with cottage meetings at Penycae in 1770 before Salem chapel was built, and from here the cause was extended to Cefn Mawr and later to Llangollen.

¹³⁸ John Owen Jones, *Hen Arweinyddion y Canu yn Salem, Penycae* (Colwyn Bay, 1911), 6.

¹³⁹ Alan Luff, *op. cit.*, 162.

¹⁴⁰ J. Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, Vol. II (London, 1853), 768.

¹⁴¹ J. Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol I (Liverpool, 1929), 26-27.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 28; ‘A Remarkable Coincidence’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 December 1868, 8.

¹⁴³ R.C. Owen, ‘Cenhadaeth drefol Methodistiaid Calфинаidd Cymreig Liverpool’, *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif 568, Llyfr XLVIII (Mawrth, 1878), 109.

1787,¹⁴⁴ in an area later to become known as 'Little Wales'.¹⁴⁵ Pall Mall, the first Welsh chapel to be built in the city, was an extension of the north Wales Presbytery and financed in part by Thomas Charles of Bala and from collections made in a few north Wales chapels.¹⁴⁶ Charles prevailed upon the founders to offer free schools for the children of the Liverpool Welsh and in 1807 the poet and hymn-writer Peter Jones (*Pedr Fardd*, 1775-1845), was appointed as the first teacher.¹⁴⁷ Such was the success of the early cause that it was rebuilt in 1816 and *Pedr Fardd*, an elder of the chapel, continued as the teacher until 1830.¹⁴⁸

The conduit between north-east Wales and the expatriate Welsh Nonconformists in Liverpool was sealed during the first decade of the 19th century when the Calvinistic Methodists consecrated Pall Mall.¹⁴⁹ In the same decade, Evan Evans (1773-1827)¹⁵⁰ of Cefn Mawr extended the Baptist cause into Liverpool in 1805, after which time it became a constituent of the Cefn Mawr Baptist Union where it remained until 1808.¹⁵¹ Following a prayer meeting in Ruthin on Easter Monday 1801, a group of Welsh Wesleyan Methodists arranged a meeting in the ante-room of Leeds Street Chapel,¹⁵² from where they established their cause. When William Williams *Y Wern* (1781-1840)¹⁵³ led students from the Wrexham Academy¹⁵⁴ on

¹⁴⁴ J. Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol II (Liverpool, 1932), 421.

¹⁴⁵ J. Hughes Morris (1929), op. cit., 42.

¹⁴⁶ John Edward Jones, *Antur a Menter Cymry Lerpwl* (Lerpwl, 1987), 2.

¹⁴⁷ J. Hughes Morris (1929), op. cit., 74.

¹⁴⁸ D. Ben Rees, *The Welsh of Merseyside*, Vol. 1 (Liverpool, 1997), 4.

¹⁴⁹ Pall Mall was the first Welsh chapel to be built in Liverpool c.1787. The chapel was extended to include a gallery in 1789 and further extended in 1799. See R.C. Owen, *Y Drysorfa*, Mawrth (Treffynnon, 1878), 110.

¹⁵⁰ Evan Evans of Llanarmon, Eifionydd, came to Cefn Mawr in 1802, and the Baptist cause was formally incorporated in 1804. He travelled through Rhos and Brymbo and into Flintshire and moved to London in 1818 where he founded a Welsh Baptist cause. See Joseph Davies, *Bedyddwyr Cymreig Glannau'r Mersi* (Lerpwl, 1927), 28; Thomas Frimston, 'Bywyd a Llafur y Parch. Evan Evans, Cefn Mawr a Llundain, 1773-1827', *Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru* (1923), 10.

¹⁵¹ Joseph Davies (1927), op. cit., 28.

¹⁵² A.H. Williams, *Welsh Wesleyan Methodism 1800-1858* (Bangor, 1935), 105.

¹⁵³ *Williams o'r Wern* (1781-1840), Independent minister in Wern and Harwd (Brymbo area) from 1808 and later, the Tabernacle, Liverpool in 1836. One of the three 'giants of the pulpit' along with John Elias and Christmas Evans, he returned to Wern in 1839. See W. Rees, *Cofiant y Diweddar Barch. W. Williams o'r Wern* (Llanelli, 1842); *Enwogion y Ffydd: neu, Hanes Crefydd y Genedl Gymreig, o'r Diwygiad Protestanaidd hyd yr Amser Presennol*, Cyfrol II (Llundain, n.d.), 444-447 [Cyfrol I is dated (Llundain, 1880)].

¹⁵⁴ Thomas Rees, *History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales, from its rise to the present time* (London, 1861), 492. Nonconformist Academies to educate the ministry were set up in the late 17th century. The Academy was under the care of Jenkin Lewis of Wrexham in 1791 as the 'Wrexham Academy' until 1811 when Dr. George Lewis transferred it to Llanfyllin. See W. Rees, op. cit., 13.

the long walk to the first Congregationalist preaching meeting at Liverpool,¹⁵⁵ the Welsh Congregationalists were firmly ensconced at Edmund Street Chapel, Liverpool which was built c.1807.¹⁵⁶ That the four Welsh denominations were established in Liverpool by preachers from Denbighshire and Flintshire accounts for the close affinity between Merseyside and north-east Wales and the parallel culture that would prevail throughout the nineteenth century.

Before the beginning of the 19th century, the Calvinistic Methodists had established causes in Berthen (Lixwm), Adwy'r Clawdd (Coedpoeth), Bont Uchel and Dyffryn (Ruthin), and Liverpool (Pall Mall), while the Calvinists of Mold, centrally situated in the Sabbath circuit¹⁵⁷ built the Ponterwyl (Chester Street) chapel in 1794 to accommodate 300 hearers.¹⁵⁸ One member of this early fellowship was William Roberts (grandfather of John Roberts, Henllan) who lived in Pontybodkin, near Mold and regularly walked from his home village to Tan-y-fron, near Llansannan to attend the morning service before making his way to Bont Uchel for two o'clock and later to Berthen for evening worship.¹⁵⁹ In the neighbouring town of Holywell, attendance at the cottage meetings had increased to the extent that the congregation found it necessary to move to the more commodious upper room in the Coach and Horses Inn, and it would be a decade or so before Bryn Sion Chapel, Holywell, opened for public worship in 1803.¹⁶⁰ Despite the feverish expansion, by 1804 the total membership of Calvinistic Methodists in Denbighshire and Flintshire barely amounted to two hundred, of which twenty were members of Adwy'r Clawdd.¹⁶¹ Doubtless, the success of the Calvinists in the urban areas of north-east Wales attracted other denominations to the area and within a mile of Adwy'r Clawdd in

¹⁵⁵ T. Eli Evans, *Hanes Cymanfaoedd Annibynwyr Lerpwl* (Liverpool, 1902), 26.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ The Sunday circuit often involved a round trip of almost 50 miles. For example, the preacher would travel from Bontuchel to reach Adwy'r Clawdd for nine o'clock on Sunday morning, moving to Mold for two o'clock and onwards to Berthengron for the evening service, before returning home. See 'Adgofion am Sir Ddinbych', *Y Drysorfa*, Mawrth (1855), 79; 'Cymeriadau hynod ymhlith y Methodistiaid', *Y Goleuad*, 20 Rhagfyr 1873, 9.

¹⁵⁸ Griffith Owen, *op.cit.*, 242; T.M. Jones (*Gwenallt*), *Cofiant y Parch. Roger Edwards, Yr Wyddgrug* (Gwrecsam, 1908), 59.

¹⁵⁹ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), 'Roberts, John, Henllan', *Yr Attodiad yn John Parry* (gol.), *op. cit.*, Cyfrol X (Dinbych, 1879), 704.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁶¹ Jonathan Jones, *op. cit.*, 73-4.

the village of Mwynglawdd (Minera), the first Wesleyan Society in that neighbourhood was formed in 1803 at the home of Robert Blunt.¹⁶²

John Hughes (1776-1843) was one of the missionaries sent by the Wesleyan Conference to establish the Welsh Mission in North Wales in 1800,¹⁶³ but it is Richard Roberts (1768-1845),¹⁶⁴ originally from Llanellidan, near Ruthin, who is credited as being the founder of the society at Mwynglawdd (Minera), and it was at his cottage that Robert Jones of Maeshafn, near Mold, held the first service for the Welsh Wesleyans in that locality.¹⁶⁵ Aptly named *Pen-y-Bryn*, the Mwynglawdd cause was one of the earliest Wesleyan chapels in the Wrexham area and opened for worship in 1804. The service was led by the 'sweet singer', Edward Ragg, whose fine voice attracted people from far and wide to hear him sing and preach.¹⁶⁶ The members of Pen-y-Bryn were reputed to be good singers and meetings were held at Brymbo, Hope, and Llangollen with the adherents singing and praying on their journey,¹⁶⁷ their voices 'echoing among the rocks from afar'.¹⁶⁸ Although he attempted to learn Welsh, the only Welsh hymn he mastered was 'Dewch, Dewch O fawr i fân', which became known locally as 'Hymn Edward Ragg,' and it is said that his rendition attracted more members to the cause than the preaching.¹⁶⁹ Insofar as the chapel at Adwy'r Clawdd was regarded as the founding cause of Calvinistic Methodism in north-east Wales, so too the chapel at Pen-y-Bryn would become the mother-church of Wesleyan Methodism in that district.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶² David Young, *The Origin and History of Methodism in Wales and the Borders* (London, 1893), 504.

¹⁶³ A.H. Williams, 'Journal of the Rev. John Hughes', reprinted in *Bathafarn*, Cyfrol 11 (1956), 5.

¹⁶⁴ Richard Roberts spent a few months with the Wesleyan Mission in Manchester and returned home to found a cause in Minera. See Tom Carrington, 'Trem ar Hanes Bore Cylchdaith Coedpoeth', *Bathafarn*, Cyf. 4 (1949), 15.

¹⁶⁵ David Young, op. cit., 504.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Charles, *Dathliad Canmlwyddiant Wesleyaeth yn Brymbo, 1900* (Gwrecsam, 1900), 6. Edward Williams from Caergwrele changed his name to Edward Ragg. He admitted to youthful sins of taking part in bull and cockfighting and merry evenings of singing, dancing and drunkenness, but after being converted, he preferred to preach in the open air.

¹⁶⁷ David Young, op. cit., 505.

¹⁶⁸ Glyn Davies, *Minera* (Wrexham, 1964), 70.

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Charles, op. cit., 7. The hymn, 'Dewch, Dewch o fawr i fân', was written by Rev. Roger Edwards, Mold, and was sung to the tune 'Llanidloes', composed by Richard Mills, Llanidloes. See *Tonau ac Emynu y Wesleyaidd* (London, 1904).

¹⁷⁰ David Young, op. cit., 505.

Edward Jones of Bathafarn (1777-1837) had formed the first Welsh Wesleyan chapel in Ruthin in January 1800,¹⁷¹ some seven months before John Hughes' mission (1776-1843) began in August 1800 at Wrexham,¹⁷² when he preached in English and Welsh at the Brymbo Ironworks of John Wilkinson. The ironmaster had agreed to build a chapel nearby on condition that the workmen reformed their ways, but the project failed to materialise, although he did offer the use of a shed that was normally used for drying bricks.¹⁷³ Preaching in both English and Welsh continued at Brymbo for some years before the first Wesleyan Methodist chapel was built on ground gifted to the cause by Mr. Stephenson, a local lay-preacher who persuaded every charter master to contribute £1 each and local farmers to haul the materials free of charge.¹⁷⁴ From 1802, 26 year-old John Hughes ministered in Denbighshire and Flintshire, and compiled the first Welsh Wesleyan hymnal *Diferion y Cyssegr*.¹⁷⁵

Although the Wesleyan membership in Wales was only 545 in 1802, within a few months of its publication, 1300 copies of *Diferion y Cyssegr* were sold, which suggests that the hymnal may have been used by other denominations.¹⁷⁶ As it was customary during the first half of 19th century for some Wesleyan families to attend both church and chapel services, the hymnal served both congregations and Thomas Hughes, the versatile choirmaster of Nannerch Church and an able composer of hymn-tunes, described the hymnal¹⁷⁷ as 'the best one available'.¹⁷⁸ Music undoubtedly attracted young men to the cause, one of whom was Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*, 1823-1904),¹⁷⁹ and as soon as the chapel service ended

¹⁷¹ T. Jones-Humphreys, *Emynyddiaeth Wesleyaidd Gymreig* (Bangor, 1903), 28.

¹⁷² A.H. Williams (1956), op. cit., 6.

¹⁷³ A.H. Williams (1935), op. cit., 90; A.H. Williams (1956), op. cit., 7.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ John Hughes, *Diferion y Cyssegr – Crynodeb o Hymnau o Waith Amrywiol Awdwyr i'w harfer gan y Bobl a elwir Methodistaidd Westeidd* (Caerlleon, 1802). It contained over 300 hymns, including many by Williams Pantycelyn, Dr. Watts and Charles Wesley that were set to five metres (psalm, common, short, long and new metres), with further editions in 1804, 1807, 1809 and 1812. See John Thickens, *Emynau a'u Hawduriaid* (Caernarfon, 1945), 11.

¹⁷⁶ T. Jones-Humphreys, op. cit., 35.

¹⁷⁷ Two of Hughes' tunes, 'Cynhebrwng' and 'Heddwch', were included in J.A.Lloyd's collection, *Casgliad o Donau, ar y gwahanol fesurau arferedig ym mysg y Cymry* (Liverpool, 1843).

¹⁷⁸ Bangor University Archive, GB 0222/GAB, 'Thomas Hughes of Nannerch', Gabriel Hughes Papers, 58.

¹⁷⁹ Thomas Jones was born near Nannerch, Flintshire and, aged sixteen, was the *codwr canu* at the Wesleyan chapel. He became one of the Wesleyans' most prominent musicians in north Wales. On moving to Coedpoeth in 1864, he established a business as a printer and bookseller. See M.O. Jones, op. cit., 58-9; 'Canrhawdfardd', *Ceninen Gwyl Dewi*, Mawrth (1905), 12-13. See Chapter 2.

they would rush to Nannerch Church where it was the practice to sing anthems rather than chants, and before the sermon it was customary to sing a hymn from *Diferion y Cyssegr*.¹⁸⁰ After pitching the tune with one of the instruments, Hughes would read aloud the first verse before it was sung, a process that was repeated with subsequent verses until the singing reached its peak with the doxology.¹⁸¹

Concurrent with developments in the Brymbo district was the expansion of the Wesleyan Mission into Flintshire that began when Edward Jones and John Bryan (1776-1856) of Bathafarn, Ruthin,¹⁸² preached outside 'The Five Courts' in the centre of Holywell on 10 September 1801.¹⁸³ A Wesleyan society was formed in 1807 and met in 'Hen Sgubor Fawr', Penyball Street, some time before Pendref Chapel was built in the town in 1808 on land acquired from the Pennant family.¹⁸⁴ The doctrines of the Wesleyan Methodists were compliant with certain articles of the Established Church and as such they did not regard themselves as being Dissenters, a characteristic which set them apart from other denominations.¹⁸⁵ Regardless of this, the Methodist society in Halkyn came under threat from Earl Grosvenor who instructed his mining agent to serve notice on those miners who attended chapel and to present them with the option of going to church or leaving their place of work.¹⁸⁶ When it was realised that the most reliable and sober workers had left, the order was rescinded and slowly Society numbers increased to around sixty members.¹⁸⁷

Wesleyan Methodism and its derivative connexions found greater acceptance in the bilingual industrialised communities, particularly the border areas of Flintshire that followed the Dee estuary, and Richard Warner, referring to Flintshire during his second walk through Wales in 1798, commented: 'We have had occasion to observe that English is very generally spoken by all classes of society; in so much

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 59.

¹⁸² John Bryan (1776-1856) made a valuable contribution to Welsh Wesleyan hymnody by translating Wesley's hymns. See T. Jones-Humphreys, *Methodistiaeth Wesleyaidd Gymreig* (Treffynnon, 1900), 185.

¹⁸³ Hugh Jones, op. cit., 1462.

¹⁸⁴ Anon., 'Centenary of Pendref Chapel', *Flintshire County Herald*, 26 February 1908, 4.

¹⁸⁵ K.D.M. Snell & Paul S. Ell (eds.), *Rival Jerusalems – The Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge, 2000), 123.

¹⁸⁶ David Young, op. cit., 467.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 468. A new Methodist chapel was opened in Halkyn in 1828.

as nearly to supersede the use of the national tongue'.¹⁸⁸ A prime example was the border settlement of Buckley where the clay workers and coal miners from Staffordshire had imposed their dialect on what was already a predominantly anglicised corner of Flintshire. Methodism had followed the faithful to Buckley and, says Dodd: 'They formed a straggling, squalid community, neglected by all but the Methodist preachers, and preserving in speech and habits, the marks of its separate origin'.¹⁸⁹ Aside from the language of worship, the English causes differed little from the Welsh chapels in that the 'keeping of school' was a necessary addendum to the duties of Nonconformist ministers.¹⁹⁰ Staffordshire historian Nettel observes: 'In cultural development, Methodism had a more beneficial influence – its nature made for the training of local leaders, and singing was always regarded as one of its main virtues'.¹⁹¹ Despite the strong Methodist persuasion that shaped the religiosity of the Staffordshire miners and potters, it was a different denomination that first took root in this forlorn corner of Flintshire.

The first Nonconformist cause in Buckley was St. John's Congregational Church, founded in 1792 by Jonathan Catherall (1761-1833),¹⁹² who began attending church at Hawarden at a time when Buckley had no Nonconformist minister and the nearest churches were those at Hawarden, Hope, Northop and Mold.¹⁹³ Inspired during an open-air preaching meeting at Hawarden Cross, Catherall was converted to the Nonconformist religion, and after inheriting his grandfather's pottery and brickworks, he held the first licensed service in a pottery shed on Buckley Common on 24th April 1792, before purchasing a parcel of land nearby to erect a chapel building in 1811.¹⁹⁴ Those who were unable to contribute financially to the new chapel provided practical help by demolishing the old building and making bricks after their own day's work.¹⁹⁵ Jonathan Catherall also built a chapel at Mold and in a letter to a Mr. Hale in 1813, he refers to a young minister: 'We have a

¹⁸⁸ Richard Warner, *A Second Walk through Wales – in August and September 1798* (Bath, 1799), 262.

¹⁸⁹ A.H. Dodd, op. cit., 193.

¹⁹⁰ Thomas Cropper, *Buckley and District* (Edinburgh, 1923), 81.

¹⁹¹ R. Nettel, *Music in the Five Towns 1840-1914* (Oxford, 1944), 4.

¹⁹² Thomas Cropper, op. cit., 80.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹⁹⁴ Flintshire Record Office, FRO/D/DG/53, Joseph Griffiths, 'A History of Buckley Congregational Church', 1894; FRO/N/39/17, 'St. John's Congregational Church', *Buckley Sunday School Centenary Jubilee 1857-1956*.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

young man, Powel, chosen last May, not ordained. He preaches English at ten, Welsh at two and six. My girls have a Sabbath School, eighty children we had lately, and a Bible Society at Holywell for the county'.¹⁹⁶

While the English causes were taking root in the bilingual areas of Denbighshire and Flintshire, so indeed were the Welsh Congregationalists, and Dafydd Jones (1770-1831), a student of Dr. Jenkyn Lewis' Academy¹⁹⁷ in Wrexham, took charge of the Congregationalist worshippers at Holywell in 1801 which he later extended to the neighbouring villages of Bagillt, Rhesycae and Heol Mostyn.¹⁹⁸ Dafydd Jones was encouraged by the enthusiasm of the young people for congregational music and the Lutheran¹⁹⁹ mode of sung worship proved effective in attracting new converts. 'Hymn-singing by the congregation became customary at the end of services, and a hymn-tune, once begun, would be repeated upwards of thirty to forty times',²⁰⁰ although the singing of a recessional hymn instead of a prayer at the close of the service met with disapproval from some worshippers who took to walking out noisily and disrespectfully.²⁰¹ Through his preaching in Ruthin, the Congregational cause was established in the town c.1805,²⁰² and he later ministered at Rhesycae, Flintshire, although it was Thomas Williams (1772-1847) who founded that cause between 1806 and 1809.²⁰³ Dafydd Jones published *Casgliad o Bum Cant o Hymnau* (1810), a collection of 500 hymns in six parts, as a means of encouraging the whole congregation to participate in worship and in the preface, the author pays tribute to travelling musicians, such as John Ellis who taught young people to sing songs of praise.²⁰⁴ A number of hymns written by Thomas Williams

¹⁹⁶ Quoted in Thomas Cropper, op. cit., 80.

¹⁹⁷ Nonconformist Academies to educate ministers were established in the late 17th century. The Congregational Academy was under the care of Dr. Jenkin Lewis of Wrexham in 1792 and referred to as the 'Wrexham Academy' until 1811 when Dr. George Lewis transferred it to Llanfyllin. See Joseph Edwards, 'Hanes Boreuol Anibyniaeth yng Ngwrecsam', *Y Cyfarwyddwr Anibynnol*, Cyfrol III, Rhif 1, Ionawr (1903), 5.

¹⁹⁸ W. Alonzo Griffiths, *Hanes Emynwyr Cymru* (Caernarfon, 1892), 148.

¹⁹⁹ 'One of the most remarkable attributes of Martin Luther, was his love for and knowledge of music. "Music is a lovely and noble gift of God's, and nigh to theology. Youth should be employed continually in the practice of this art, for it maketh a fine and clever people'. See *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 1, No. 11, April (1845), 82-87.

²⁰⁰ D.E. Parry Williams, op. cit., 53.

²⁰¹ Dafydd Jones, *Casgliad o Bum Cant o Hymnau* (Treffynnon, 1810), iv.

²⁰² T. Rees & J. Thomas, *Hanes Eglwysi Annibynnol Cymru* (Liverpool, 1875), 58; 'Capel Visit to Ruthin - Pendref Independent Chapel, Well Street', *Capel - The Chapels Heritage Society*, Local Information Sheet 28, Spring (2006), 2.

²⁰³ W. Alonzo Griffiths, op. cit., 152.

²⁰⁴ Dafydd Jones, op. cit., v.

are included in this collection,²⁰⁵ which became popular in Congregational worship in north-east Wales, despite the outlay of 4s.6d. for the cloth-bound edition.²⁰⁶

The Congregationalists in the Wrexham area, led by William Williams *o'r Wern*, were already worshipping in a cottage in Gyfynys near Brymbo by 1807, although the progress of the cause was frustrated by his frequent absence on account of his other commitments, not least being the causes in Wern and Rhosllannerchrugog with which he was preoccupied for much of the time.²⁰⁷ Clearly, the priorities of the Congregationalists were biased towards the more populated areas, hence the developments in Flintshire and Liverpool that took precedence over chapel building in villages such as Rhosllannerchrugog by almost a decade. Students from the Independents' Academy²⁰⁸ in Wrexham preached there to a very small congregation c.1810, after which they were able to lease a house as a meeting place, and two years later, 'Bethlehem,' the first Congregational chapel in Rhosllannerchrugog was built.²⁰⁹ It was constructed from stone 'of every size and type' with a stone floor and measuring 13 x 10 yards, with the later addition of a small gallery to accommodate the increase in membership.²¹⁰

Though the triumphant advance of the Calvinistic Methodists into territories beyond the founding cause at Adwy'r Clawdd had consolidated their position as the most influential of the denominations, the standard of congregational singing was mediocre when compared to the refined poetry of hymnody and pulpit oratory of that period. In order to address this issue, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists appointed John Ellis (1760-1839), a church musician from the village of Llangwm, Denbighshire, as the travelling tutor of congregational singing c.1807,²¹¹ although his appointment was opposed by many of the older deacons.²¹² Ellis had developed

²⁰⁵ T. Pierce, 'Cofiant Mr. Thomas Williams, Rhesycae', *Y Dysgedydd*, Hydref (1847), 292.

²⁰⁶ 'Llyfr Hymnau', *Y Dysgedydd*, Cyfrol X, Rhif 110, Chwefror (1831), 78.

²⁰⁷ W. Rees, *op. cit.*, 14.

²⁰⁸ *Williams o'r Wern* studied at the Wrexham Academy for four years before leaving in 1807 to become a preacher on probation in Y Wern and Harwd. See W. Rees, *ibid.*, 13.

²⁰⁹ Kevin Matthias, 'The Chapels of Rhosllannerchrugog', *Capel – The Chapels Heritage Society*, Local Information Sheet 5, Winter (1992), 2. Bethlehem Chapel is known locally as *Capel Bychan*.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Eos Llechid*, Owen Humphrey Davies, *op. cit.*, *Yr Haul*, Cyfrol V, Mehefin (1889), 169;

M.O.Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, *gol.*), *op. cit.*, 23.

²¹² John Hughes (1851), *op. cit.*, 268.

an interest in music through learning the flute²¹³ and may have defected to the Calvinistic Methodists in Llanrwst²¹⁴ when the Established Church began to disband the wind and reed bands. His appointment marks the beginning of a musical renaissance in north-east Wales as both congregation and young people were taught to sing hymns and anthems.²¹⁵ Whilst evidence of the terms of Ellis' appointment is scant, a Llanfairfechan chapel record shows that he was paid 2s.0d. 'for teaching singing',²¹⁶ probably with the aid of a home-crafted instrument that resembled a type of harmonica²¹⁷ which he fashioned by cutting glass into varying lengths.²¹⁸

It was John Ellis who prepared the ground for chapel musician Thomas Evans (c. 1785-1870), who moved from Llanrwst to Adwy'r Clawdd c.1802-3 to serve as a schoolmaster,²¹⁹ and under his leadership the chapel began to develop 'a high standard of music'.²²⁰ Encouraged by Thomas Charles to expand the cause,²²¹ and accompanied by John Hughes (1796-1860),²²² one of the leading singers of Adwy'r Clawdd, Thomas Evans took the chapel choir through the streets of Bangor-on-Dee c.1808, to sing and spread the gospel message.²²³ Methodist minister, John Hughes, one of the luminaries of the nineteenth-century Methodist pulpit, refers to Adwy'r Clawdd chapel as the first Calvinistic Methodist cause in the Wrexham district to adopt the *canu ffasiwn newydd* [new singing]²²⁴ under the tutelage of schoolmaster Thomas Evans.²²⁵ Although there were members who considered singing to be a distraction from worship, and frowned on books other than the Bible,²²⁶ the

²¹³ R.D. Griffiths, *Hanes Canu Cynulleidfaoel Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1948), 131.

²¹⁴ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.) *Yr Attodiad* yn John Parry (gol.), op. cit., Cyfrol X, 529. Ellis became a member of the Calvinistic Methodists in Llanrwst in 1800.

²¹⁵ H. Llewelyn Williams, op. cit., 46; Huw Williams, *Tonau a'u Hawduron* (Caernarfon, 1967), 68

²¹⁶ William Williams, 'John Ellis, Y Cerddor. 1760-1839', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes Methodistiaid Calfinaidd*, Cyfrol XIII, Mai (1928), 8. Llanfairfechan chapel record c. 1822

²¹⁷ *Eos Llechid*, Owen Humphrey Davies (1889), op. cit., 169.

²¹⁸ William Williams, op. cit., 5.

²¹⁹ John Hughes, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Cymru*, Cyfrol III (Gwrecsam, 1856), 101; 'Y Diweddar Mr. P.M. Evans', *Y Drysorfa*, Awst (1878), 297.

²²⁰ Edward Francis, op. cit., 10.

²²¹ 'Mr. Hugh Morris, Mwnglawdd', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif XVI, Ebrill (1848), 134.

²²² John Hughes was the younger brother of Richard Hughes, the founder of Hughes and Son, Wrexham.

²²³ Roger Edwards, op. cit., 28; Edward Francis, op. cit., 62-3.

²²⁴ While there is no exact definition of 'canu ffasiwn newydd', it is likely that the term refers to training singers to sing 'from notes' with the objective of singing in four-part harmony.

²²⁵ Roger Edwards, op. cit., 26.

²²⁶ John Parry (gol.), op. cit., Cyfrol VI, 396.

enthusiasm that John Ellis had aroused in the young people of Adwy'r Clawdd prevailed, and the singing classes contributed to improving songs of praise.²²⁷

Although John Ellis was domiciled in the county of Denbighshire, he travelled throughout the neighbouring districts, as evidenced by the account of the Saturday society meeting in Llansantffraid Glyndyfrdwy, near Corwen, in the county of Edeyrnion, when members of the Sunday schools of Gwyddelwern and Cerrig-y-Drudion (where John Ellis was baptised into the Church)²²⁸ gathered to take part in his congregational singing tutorial.²²⁹ Ellis made a significant contribution to the advance of congregational music with *Mawl yr Arglwydd* [The Lord's Praise],²³⁰ one of the first published collections of hymn-tunes for the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.²³¹ Issued in three parts in 1816, at a cost of 7s.6d,²³² and printed by Ishmael Davies of Trefriw, the first part includes two hymn-tunes, 'Adwy' and 'Mwnglawdd', composed by Thomas Evans, precentor at Adwy'r Clawdd, while parts two and three were published in London where John Ellis had spent some three months supervising the work.²³³ In the ten-page preface, he refers to the criticism levelled against him and concedes that the hymn-tunes, which were arranged for two or three voices, were not 'according to the rules of all musicians', as they did not always harmonise.²³⁴ Whilst the knowledge of the travelling teachers of psalmody may have exceeded that of the untrained chapel precentors, their musicianship was nevertheless suspect, although it was said that John Ellis had enabled the chapel at Adwy'r Clawdd to achieve an acceptable standard of sung worship.²³⁵

²²⁷ John Hughes (1856), op. cit., 100. 'Enillodd y cyfarfodydd hyn lawer o bobl ieuainc yr ardal; gwellhaodd y canu lawer yn y cynulliaidau cyhoeddus; codwyd yr achos i fwy o sylw ac i fwy o urddas ...'

²²⁸ Hugh Evans, 'John Ellis, awdur y dôn Elliott', *Y Brython*, 22 Rhagfyr 1927, 6.

²²⁹ Robert Edwards, 'Adgof am Gyfarfod Ysgolion Edeyrnion yr hanner canrif diweddaf', *Y Drysorfa*, Mehefin (1883), 218.

²³⁰ John Ellis, *Mawl yr Arglwydd, sef Casgliad o Rannau o'r Psalmiau a'r Hymnau, yn Atebion Lleisiol, a rhai Penillion, at yr hwn a Chwanegwyd Cyfarwyddiadau i osod allan y synnwyr wrth ddarllen* (Trefriw, 1816). The *Lord's Praise* was a collection of hymns and chants based on the psalms and included rudimentary instruction on music and singing.

²³¹ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.) *Yr Attodiad* yn John Parry (gol.), op. cit., Cyfrol X, 703.

²³² D. Emlyn Evans, 'John Ellis, Llanrwst', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol 1, Rhif 5, (Mai 1889), 44; T. Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif', yn J. Morgan Jones (gol.), *Trem ar y Ganrif* (Dolgellau, 1902), 279.

²³³ William Williams, 'John Ellis, Y Cerddor - 1760-1839', op. cit., 9.

²³⁴ John Ellis, op. cit., Rhagymadrodd [Preface] - 'Mae yn amlwg eisoes nad ydyw fy ngwaith yn ôl Rheolau'r holl Gerddorion'.

²³⁵ Huw Llewelyn Williams, op. cit., 60.

Shortly after the publication of John Ellis' hymnal, Owen Williams (1774-1839) of Llandyfydog, Anglesey, bridged the divide between psalmody and hymnody with *Egwyddor-ddysg ... neu Catechism ar Reolau Cerddoriaeth* (1817),²³⁶ a Welsh version of a work by Charles Dibdin (1745-1814).²³⁷ His aim was 'to teach the itinerant minstrel to become a precentor, or the shepherd to become a poet'²³⁸ and the following year, the text was combined with *Egwyddorion Canu*²³⁹ to create a single *Gamut* under the title *Egwyddorion Canu* which was widely circulated.²⁴⁰ Arguably, the most significant contribution of Owen Williams to the sacred music of Wales was *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion*,²⁴¹ a collection which was advertised in the *North Wales Gazette* in 1820 at £1.11s. 6d.²⁴² – a price that may have been beyond the means of the working classes, although there were many who were adept at copying. The importance of this work cannot be overstated. The first section brought together the tunes for Prys' Welsh psalter, while the second part was the first Welsh hymn-tune collection to include the new metrical settings of Williams (Pantycelyn) with musical arrangements by Samuel Wesley and Vincent Novello that enabled instrumentalists to play the tunes on an organ or piano.²⁴³

The Gamut of John Ellis and Owen Williams adequately served the needs of those *codwyr canu* in north-east Wales who were able to read staff notation, but the growing interest in singing demanded a simpler method and Waldo Selden Pratt observes: 'The parallel interest in sight singing in America from about 1820 and the plans for class-instruction in singing, raised questions about simplifying musical notation'.²⁴⁴ Pratt also concluded: 'The close association of the staff notation with the keyboard had made its development more adapted to the needs of

²³⁶ Owen Williams, *Egwyddor-ddysg... neu Catechism ar Reolau Cerddoriaeth* (1817). See D.Emlyn Evans, 'Owen Williams o Fôn', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol II, Rhif 15, Mawrth (1890), 30.

²³⁷ Dibdin, a composer, singer and actor, was largely self-taught. He first played the piano in public in 1767 during a performance of 'The Beggar's Opera' at Covent Garden. W.A.Barrett, 'Charles Dibdin', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 27, No. 516, February (1886), 68-71.

²³⁸ Quoted in Huw Williams, 'Owen Williams o Fôn (1774-1839) – Arloeswr Canu Cynulleidfaol', *Welsh Music*, Winter (1974-75), 57.

²³⁹ Owen Williams, *Egwyddorion Canu* (1818).

²⁴⁰ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 132.

²⁴¹ Owen Williams, *Brenhinol Ganiadau Sion neu Gynghanedd Newydd Gymraeg* (Llundain, 1819). See R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 133; T. Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif' yn J.M.Jones, op. cit., 280; D. Emlyn Evans, 'Owen Williams o Fôn', op. cit., 30; Huw Williams, op. cit., (1974-5), 59.

²⁴² Huw Williams, *Taro Tant* (Dinbych, 1994), 71; Advertisement, 'Welsh Sacred Harmony', *North Wales Gazette*, 25 May 1820, 3; List of hymnals is included in Appendix 1.

²⁴³ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 133-4.

²⁴⁴ W. S. Pratt, *The History of Music* (New York, revised ed. 1930), 620.

playing than of singing, and it was felt that scale-relationships could be more simply presented to the singer's mind if numerals or letters were used'.²⁴⁵ Such a system had been advocated as early as 1810 by Joseph Kemp (1778-1824), a Bristol Cathedral organist with his *New System of Musical Education*.²⁴⁶ His was probably one of the first methods in England to relate notes to numbers simultaneously. Kemp's work was timely in that it coincided with the early singing classes and the overriding passion for self-improvement,²⁴⁷ although it is unlikely that this method was acceptable to the Nonconformist Sunday schools in north-east Wales where music was taught through the medium of the Welsh language.

By 1819, there were 200 scholars with 30 teachers in the Sunday school at Adwy'r Clawdd,²⁴⁸ while in the more populous district of Rhosllannerchrugog; the Sunday school at *Capel Mawr* had grown to 300 pupils with 44 teachers in what was then termed the 'South-east Flintshire' administrative area.²⁴⁹ The Baptists were also eager to extend the reach of their denomination and Evan Evans (1773-1827)²⁵⁰ led missionaries of the Cefn Mawr Baptists into Flintshire and preached on the streets of Northop²⁵¹ during the summer of 1802,²⁵² although eleven years passed before the denomination built the first Baptist chapel in the village of Lixwm in 1813.²⁵³ With the Wesleyans and Congregationalists having gained a foot-hold in Brymbo, a delegation of the Cefn Mawr Baptists met on 23 August 1818 to establish a chapel in Harwt, Brymbo when Hugh Hughes of Cefn Mawr was appointed as the ordained minister and two deacons were elected by a show of hands.²⁵⁴ Within that

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Joseph Kemp, *New System of Musical Education* (1819). Kemp lectured on musical education in which he advocated the teaching of music in classes and the playing of exercises by pupils together in concert. See 'Kemp', online *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. 30, 393, accessed 29 March 2010.

²⁴⁷ W.S. Pratt, op. cit., 622.

²⁴⁸ Ellis Wynne Williams, 'Cyfnod yr Arloesi hyd at 1815' in R.H. Evans (gol.), *Hanes Henaduriaeth Dyffryn Clwyd* (Dinbych, 1986), 22.

²⁴⁹ John Davies, 'Ysgolion Sabbothol', *Goleuad Gwynedd*, Medi (Caerlleon, 1819); H. Llewelyn Williams, op. cit., 47.

²⁵⁰ Born in Eifionydd, Evan Evans first came to Rhosllannerchrugog c. 1797 to minister a small group, but moved to Llanfyllin, Montgomeryshire in 1802 before returning once more to the Ruabon area in May of that year.

²⁵¹ Thomas Frimston, 'Bywyd a Llafur y Parch. Evan Evans, Cefn Mawr a Llundain, 1773-1827', *Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru* (1923), 8.

²⁵² Thomas Frimston, 'Hanes Bedyddwyr Sir Fflint', *Y Greal*, Gorphenaf (1907), 173.

²⁵³ Evan Williams, 'Bedyddwyr Bore Sir Fflint', *Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru* (1929), 20.

²⁵⁴ 'Hanesion Crefyddol', *Seren Gomer*, 7 Ebrill 1819, 108.

same year, the Calvinistic Methodists of Adwy'r Clawdd elected two members to establish a Sunday school in Brymbo and the first part of Engedi M.C. Chapel was completed in 1820.²⁵⁵ Concomitant with the Calvinistic Methodist expansion in Denbighshire was the heightened activity at Mold that had resulted from John Elias' powerful preaching meeting in 1815 and the high standard of congregational singing led by *codwr canu*, Hugh Hughes (1784-1858).²⁵⁶ Such was the increase in membership that the purpose-built Bethesda chapel in New Street, Mold was opened in 1820.²⁵⁷

Mining activity and other labour intensive concerns in the Mold area were better suited to young working men, many of whom became active in the *Ysgolion Sul* and *Ysgolion y Gân* and regarded music as an important part of the fellowship. Although the high standard of congregational singing undoubtedly had the propensity to increase chapel attendance, there still existed a core of resistance as evidenced by the front page editorial in *Seren Gomer*²⁵⁸ (28 July 1819), the voice of the Welsh Baptists, which pointed out that while *Yr Ysgol Gân* were succeeding in many areas, there were those who opposed the development.²⁵⁹ For the musically-inclined attending the Llanarmon-yn-Iâl Sunday school there was little encouragement as the stringent 'Rules and Regulations' issued in 1819 stated that the meeting should start with a song and prayer, but that no more than ten minutes was to be spent on singing and praying.²⁶⁰ The contention of the opposing faction was that only true converts to the Christian faith should sing in chapel and they questioned the propriety of young men receiving musical instruction through the *Ysgol Gân* as well as the *cymdeithasau cerddorol* [musical societies].²⁶¹ Similar anxieties were expressed in the Congregational chapel in Rhosllannerchrugog when the change from psalmody to hymnody threatened to disturb the traditional pattern of sung worship, but the misunderstanding was resolved when John Jones

²⁵⁵ Graham Rogers, *Brymbo and Its Neighbourhood* (Wrexham, 1991), 70.

²⁵⁶ Flintshire Record Office, N28/80, MS, Hanes yr Achos yn yr Wyddgrug, 19; Rhiain Phillips, *Y Dyfroedd Byw* (Yr Wyddgrug, 1987), 88.

²⁵⁷ Griffith Owen, op. cit., 244.

²⁵⁸ *Seren Gomer* [The Star of Gomer] was the first Welsh weekly newspaper which began in 1814 as an undenominational religious and literary magazine until 1880 when it officially became a Baptist publication.

²⁵⁹ 'Ar Ganu', *Seren Gomer*, Rhifyn XV, Llyfr II, 28 Gorphenhaf 1819, 225.

²⁶⁰ *Rheolau a Threfniadau Yr Ysgolion Sabbothol a gytunwyd arnynt yn nghyfarfod chwech wythnosol Llanarmon, Swydd Fflint*, Mawrth (Caerlleon, 1819), 4.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

(1805-1837), a young man with knowledge of music, became the choir-master and precentor.²⁶² Despite the early resistance to *Yr Ysgol Gân* the success of causes such as Adwy'r Clawdd and Bethesda chapel in Mold demonstrated the positive contribution that good congregational singing made to the expansion of the cause.

Perhaps the most compelling evidence of how music enabled the expansion of a chapel could be seen in Holywell which was at the centre of a new Wesleyan Circuit that was incorporated in 1812 and included the greater part of the county of Flint.²⁶³ Pendref Wesleyan Chapel opened for worship in 1813 and was central to the cause, particularly when Carmarthen-born musician, William Jacob (1777-1846),²⁶⁴ moved from Manchester c.1818 to become the chapel precentor and established a musical tradition that would set new standards of sung worship.²⁶⁵ David Young maintains that: 'The removal of William Jacob to reside here was the beginning of a new era in the history of Wesleyan Methodism in the town',²⁶⁶ as the congregation doubled so that by 1828, there were 1,100 scholars,²⁶⁷ and Pendref Holywell became the largest Sunday school in Wales.²⁶⁸ In addition to his role as chapel precentor, Jacob also fulfilled the duties of deacon, Sunday school supervisor and Circuit Superintendent,²⁶⁹ and when the chapel was extended in 1830,²⁷⁰ the success of the cause was attributed to the strong choral tradition that placed Holywell at the centre of Wesleyan Methodism in north-east Wales.²⁷¹

As it was customary to sing an anthem or 'a similar uplifting piece' in every service,²⁷² Jacob's family were enlisted to help with choral part-practice. His elder son, Levi, led the bass section and his daughter Dinah took charge of the sopranos, while his second son Simeon helped the altos, and the tenors were led by William

²⁶² 'Bywgraffiad Mr. John Jones, Ponkey', *Y Dysgedydd*, Rhif 194, Cyfrol XVI, Ionawr (1838), 4.

²⁶³ David Young, op. cit., 474.

²⁶⁴ William Jacob was a baker and flour dealer who established a business in Holywell.

²⁶⁵ Lot Hughes, 'Treffynnon: Trem ar yr Achos Wesleyaidd yn y lle', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Mai (1863), 199; Hugh Jones, *Hanes Wesleyaeth Gymreig*, Cyfrol II (Bangor, 1912), 793.

²⁶⁶ David Young, op. cit., 474; Lot Hughes, op. cit., 199.

²⁶⁷ David Young, *ibid.*; Lot Hughes, *ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Hugh Jones, *Hanes Wesleyaeth Gymreig*, Cyfrol IV (Bangor, 1913), 1464.

²⁶⁹ 'Bu farw', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Cyfrol 38, Rhif 12, Rhagfyr (1846), 378.

²⁷⁰ David Young, op. cit., 475.

²⁷¹ 'Peroriaeth', *Yr Eurgrawn*, Ionawr (1839), 284.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

Jacob himself.²⁷³ Wesleyans preferred the orderly method of gathering singers into a choir,²⁷⁴ and in that respect, they differed little from the Established Church, although they were acutely aware of the importance of congregational singing, as confirmed in the introductory sentence of the *English Methodist Hymn Book*, 'Methodism was born in song'.²⁷⁵ William Jacob, regarded as *tad y gân* [father of singing] in north-east Wales,²⁷⁶ positioned the choir below the pulpit in order to raise the status of songs of praise to a chorus 'the likes of which was unique in congregational singing'.²⁷⁷ The area 'below the pulpit' - the *sêt fawr*²⁷⁸ - was the sanctuary of the *deaconiaid* [deacons] which suggests that congregational singing was becoming central to Sunday worship, but nevertheless beneath the paramount authority of the pulpit. Choir members were required to prove vocal ability, musical knowledge as well as good character, and were expected to attend a Sunday morning rehearsal at six o'clock,²⁷⁹ in order to prepare the tunes for the services of the day. As David Young comments: 'ere long the choir became one of the best in north Wales'.²⁸⁰

Such was Jacob's expertise and discipline that the reputation of the Pendref choir spread as far as the Llanfyllin area,²⁸¹ filling the chapel to the extent that two superintendents were required in the gallery and a further two in the main body of the chapel while Jacob conducted the entire proceedings from the *sêt fawr*.²⁸² The annual Whit festival attracted large gatherings to hear the singing which became an effective means of raising money to defray chapel debts and also motivated smaller chapels in neighbouring settlements.²⁸³ Jacob had already shown that good singing attracted large congregations and members of other Wesleyan causes in the Holywell circuit, such as those at Halkyn, near Holywell, would have attended the

²⁷³ Bangor University Archives, GB222/GAB, Gabriel Hughes Papers, 'William Jacob, Treffynnon', 62.

²⁷⁴ Anon., 'Canu yn mhlith y Wesleyiaid', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Ebrill (Llanidloes, 1839), 117

²⁷⁵ Eric Edwards, 'Llyfrfa'r Methodistiaid Wesleiaidd Cymraeg 1809-1909', *Bathafarn*, Cyfrol 22 (1967), 15.

²⁷⁶ William Rowlands, 'Eos Cymru', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Hydref (1842), 311

²⁷⁷ Hugh Jones (1912), *op. cit.*, 793.

²⁷⁸ The *sêt fawr* refers to the place of the *deaconiaid* (deacons or elders) who sit directly beneath the pulpit facing the minister.

²⁷⁹ Bangor University Archives, GB222/GAB, Gabriel Hughes Papers, 'William Jacob, Treffynnon', 61; Lot Hughes, *op. cit.*, 199.

²⁸⁰ David Young, *op. cit.*, 475.

²⁸¹ Owen Thomas, 'Peroriaeth', *Yr Eurgrawn*, Ionawr (1839), 284.

²⁸² David Hughes, *op. cit.*, 475; Lot Hughes, *op. cit.*, 199; Hugh Jones (1912), *op. cit.*, 793.

²⁸³ William Rowlands, 'Eos Cymru', *op. cit.*, 311.

festivals at Pendref. Robert Williams (1804-1855), a keen musician and hymnist who contributed to Wesleyan congregational singing with a compilation of hymn tunes, *Cydymaith yr Addolydd*,²⁸⁴ first became a member of the fellowship at Halkyn, in 1822²⁸⁵ and, inspired by the success of William Jacob, he adopted a similar approach when he took charge of the singing at the Wesleyan chapel in Bodfari. This cause had dwindled to only three members at the Sunday afternoon service, but by 1823, Robert Williams had established a morning Sunday school with between 12 and 20 pupils and a singing school in the evening when a group of young people practised singing.²⁸⁶

Unlike the progressive Wesleyans of Holywell, the Baptist chapel at Penycae appointed chapel member Hugh Davies (1756-1818) who had moved to the village from Llandrillo as the first *codwr canu* in the Salem fellowship.²⁸⁷ For reasons that had more to do with keeping the peace than upholding a musical tradition, he was succeeded by two precentors, Dafydd Phillips (1790-1850) and John Valentine (1781-1853),²⁸⁸ Reminiscing on the musical arrangements in Salem Penycae, John Owen Jones (1848-1940), son of *Owen y Cantwr*, recalled one confusing incident: 'Dafydd Phillips had already started the singing when Valentine stood up half-way through the first line singing a different tune, and both continued to sing the same words on different tunes until the end'.²⁸⁹ The role of *arweinydd y gân* often invoked rivalry and gave rise to the expression, *cythraul canu* [the devil in the singing], but that was averted in 1826 when the deacons formally 'ordained' sixteen-year old *Owen y Cantwr* (1811-1862) who came to Penycae from Cynwyd in 1824.²⁹⁰ He made his home with the family of Edward Jones (1812-1888), under whose guidance he studied Owen Williams' *Gamut*,²⁹¹ which had gained

²⁸⁴ Robert Williams, *Cydymaith yr Addolydd: yn cynnwys tros gant a haner o donau... wedi ei arolygu yn fanwl gan Thomas Jones, Nannerch* (Llanidloes, 1852).

²⁸⁵ Clwydian, 'Agoriad Capel Bodfari', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Tachwedd (1842), 337; Thomas Jones, 'Ychydig o Hanes Bywyd, Llafur a Chymeriad Crefyddol y diweddar Barch. Robert Williams', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Rhif 1, Cyfres Newydd, Cyfrol 50, Ionawr (1858), 1.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ John Owen Jones (1911), *op. cit.* 6.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁹⁰ J. Owen Jones, 'Hanes Eglwys Salem, Penycae, Sir Ddinbych', *Seren Gomer*, Cyfrol XXII, Rhif 5, Medi (1929), 226.

²⁹¹ John Owen Jones (1911), *op. cit.*, 11.

wide circulation by that time,²⁹² despite the exorbitant cost of £1.11s.6d. a copy.²⁹³ Also in circulation were hymnals such as *Y Caniedydd Crefyddol*,²⁹⁴ published in 1828 by William Owen (*Gwilym Ddu Glan Hafren*, 1788-1838) that included an exposition of the art of congregational worship which prepared the ground for part-singing, although there is no evidence to suggest that *Y Cantwr* used anything beyond the *Gamut*.

Prior to appointing *Owen y Cantwr*, a young man with an excellent alto voice, the chapel had never before held singing meetings and 'everyone in Penycae sang *prif lais*, i.e. they sang the melody in unison',²⁹⁵ until *Y Cantwr* organized a singing school and part-practices on week-nights to learn new tunes and anthems, apart from the occasion when prayer meetings or *cyfeillach* [fellowship meeting] were held.²⁹⁶ The excessive cost of music books necessitated hours of note-copying (*pricio*) by the *codwr canu* on account of the fact that the chapel could only afford one copy for the choir and provides a useful insight into the exhaustive efforts of the *codwyr canu* to improve the standard of congregational singing.²⁹⁷ That choir members were eager to improve their musical knowledge is substantiated by the fact that at least four members of *Y Cantwr*'s choir at Penycae bought a copy of Owen Williams' *Egwyddorion Canu*, and although the pages of the manual were well-thumbed, it appears that they understood little of its contents.²⁹⁸ Notwithstanding the dearth of singers who were able to read music at sight, Salem Chapel developed an enviable reputation for good singing which expanded the Penycae congregation to the extent that the chapel's seating capacity was increased to accommodate the choir.²⁹⁹

A similar attitude towards sung worship prevailed in the Llangollen Baptist chapel where the young people were given vocal lessons during Sunday school by the

²⁹² Ibid. Owen Williams (1774-1839) of Anglesey, published a number of books on the theory of music, the first, a 'Gamut', *Egwyddor-ddysg* (1817), followed by *Egwyddorion Canu* (1818), which he later combined into one volume with the *Gamut* which sold for the princely sum of £1.11s. 6d.

²⁹³ T. Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif' in J.M.Jones, op. cit., 280.

²⁹⁴ William Owen, *Y Caniedydd Crefyddol* (Caerlleon, 1828).

²⁹⁵ John Owen Jones (1911), op. cit., 16.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ John Owen Jones, 'Mr. Owen Jones (Owen y Cantwr)', *Yr Athraw*, Mai (1904), 134.

²⁹⁸ John Owen Jones (1911), op. cit., 12.

²⁹⁹ John Owen Jones (1904), op. cit., 134.

minister, Dr. John Prichard, who attempted to revive the singing.³⁰⁰ He spent almost four months in London in 1824 raising money to defray the chapel debt during which time he corresponded with the precentor, urging those blessed with a good voice to practise their musical talent and to learn and understand music from notes.³⁰¹ During his absence, Elizabeth Griffiths, the precentor and a devout member of the Baptist prayer meetings, kept the minister well informed on the progress of the work in Llangollen and requested him to buy 'a cheap copy of *Scales of Music* to help with the boys' singing, as the Wesleyans had already obtained copies from London for 4d. a copy'.³⁰²

The closing line of the letter is significant in that it suggests that the Wesleyans had gained an advantage in what was regarded as a Baptist stronghold and the urgency of her request points to the importance of choral singing in attracting new converts. Chapels were competing for members and denominational rivalry was noticeably rife in the tiny village of Glyndyfrdwy where the Baptists were in the process of building a chapel, only to be thwarted by the Wesleyans who rushed their building to completion in 1824.³⁰³ Although the defining characteristics of each sect differed in scriptural interpretation, each subscribed to unity when the need arose, and I.G.Jones observes: 'This was particularly true in periods of relative decline, when the tide of religion was at the ebb or, contrarywise, when revivals held out the promise of great conquests or significant gains'.³⁰⁴

Denominational journals were critical to the growth of the Dissenting causes as there were few other written sources of information available and John Davies observes: 'The greater part of these periodicals consisted of theological and literary articles, but they also discussed the issues of the day and it was through them that the Welsh people received their political education'.³⁰⁵ Such journals circulated through a network of Welsh chapels and reported activity from every corner of Wales as well as those causes that had followed the migrating Welsh to the English

³⁰⁰ Owen Davies, *Cofiant y Parch. John Prichard, D.D., Llangollen* (Caernarfon, 1880), 102.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 102.

³⁰³ Owen Davies, *op. cit.*, 108.

³⁰⁴ I.G.Jones, *Explorations and Explanation - Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales*, (Llandysul, 1981), 232.

³⁰⁵ John Davies, *op. cit.*, 358.

counties and beyond. Josiah Rees's *Trysorfa Gwybodaeth, neu Eurgrawn Cymraeg*, had first appeared in 1770, followed by *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd* (1809, Wesleyan), *Seren Gomer* (1814, Baptist) and *Y Drysorfa* (1818, Calvinistic Methodist).³⁰⁶ The four main Dissenting denominations succeeded in maintaining an effective communication network while secular ventures were failing, and according to Davies, 'apart from *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd* all previous efforts to establish a Welsh periodical had failed'.³⁰⁷

That other denominations began to realise the relevance of music to the growth of the Nonconformist cause was confirmed when *Seren Gomer* began to publish a hymn-tune every month from 1822,³⁰⁸ a policy that increased the circulation of sacred works and gave the *codwyr canu* an affordable source of printed music. In addition to hymn-tunes, there were critical articles on matters musical which the editor justified on the basis that they enabled the hymnist to perfect the art.³⁰⁹ The scales of music and a series of music lessons based on the *Gamut* and transcribed to a form of sol-fa first appeared in *Yr Eurgrawn* in March 1820,³¹⁰ and probably influenced *Seren Gomer* and the journal of the Congregationalists, *Y Dysgedydd Crefyddol*,³¹¹ to include new hymn-tunes from the first issue in January 1822.³¹² That the inclusion of musical scores was popular with readers is confirmed by the decision of the non-denominational journal, *Y Gwladgarwr* [The Patriot],³¹³ that published sacred music from its first issue in January 1833, and following the formation of several *cymdeithasau cerddorol* [music societies] in the mid 1830s, the journal pledged to include hymn-tunes in future issues for the benefit of music societies throughout Wales.³¹⁴

³⁰⁶ Aled Jones, *Press, Politics and Society - A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 1993), Introduction. For further detail on denominational journals see Appendix 1.

³⁰⁷ John Davies, *op. cit.*, 358.

³⁰⁸ Hymn-tunes appeared regularly in *Seren Gomer* from September 1821 onwards.

³⁰⁹ 'Peroriaeth', *Seren Gomer*, Rhif 83, Llyfr V, Awst (1822), 241.

³¹⁰ 'Cyfarwyddiadau Mewn Peroriaeth', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd neu Drysorfa*, Rhif 3, Cyfrol 12, Mawrth (1820), 94.

³¹¹ *Y Dysgedydd Crefyddol* [The Religious Instructor], published in Dolgellau, was in existence from 1822 until 1840 when it continued as *Y Dysgedydd* until 1968. See Huw Walters, *A Bibliography of Welsh Periodicals 1735-1850* (Aberystwyth, 1993), 29.

³¹² *Y Dysgedydd Crefyddol*, Cyfrol I, Rhif 1, Ionawr (1822), 32.

³¹³ *Y Gwladgarwr* was a short-lived (January 1833 - June 1841), non-denominational monthly journal which included articles of general interest, including religion, music, farming and geography. It was published in Chester before moving to Liverpool in 1841.

³¹⁴ Footnote, *Y Gwladgarwr*, Cyfrol VI, Rhif LXII, Chwefror (1838), 55.

The role of these journals cannot be underestimated as they were the only Welsh language press of any substance before the 1840s, and Nonconformist ministers had few other sources of information pertaining to matters of denominational interest. This was a captive market as the chapels were the focal-points of the local communities, and Sunday schools fulfilled a vital societal role as the main provider of free education. Aled Jones, summarises the influence of denominational journals thus: 'The idea that the periodical press could be used to help sustain and develop communities of belief was adopted most readily not by post-enlightenment radicals but by the leaders and members of religious denominations whose control of the press in Wales, particularly of the Welsh-language press, was established early and remained powerful throughout the nineteenth century'.³¹⁵ Many of the hymn tunes of the early 19th century were first published in *Yr Eurgrawn* and *Seren Gomer* when printed music was beyond the reach of the working classes of north-east Wales,³¹⁶ as evidenced by a correspondent, writing in *Yr Eurgrawn*, describing how in the 1820s he saved a penny a week towards buying a hymnal.³¹⁷

Correspondents to these journals aired their views on the subject of chapel music and often blamed chapel officials for the lack of interest in the musical content of worship, unlike Thomas Edwards (*Caerfallwch*, 1779-1858) of Northop, Flintshire who directed his acerbic criticism to many of the hymn-tunes published in the first half of the 19th century. More of a music critic than a composer of hymn-tunes,³¹⁸ this scholarly man had studied the Welsh language and the rudiments of religious music and under pseudonyms, 'T. ap Edwart ap Eurgain' or 'Zabulonum', he frequently denounced the flawed hymn-tunes that appeared in *Seren Gomer*, *Y Gwyllydydd* and *Goleuad Cymru*.³¹⁹ Other regular contributors to this debate were

³¹⁵ Aled Jones, 'Print, language and identity: newspapers in Wales since 1804', paper given at 68th. International Federation of Libraries Associations Council and General Conference, Glasgow, August (2002), 2, <http://www.archive.ifla.org/IV/ifla68/papers/048-127e.htm>, accessed 12 October 2008.

³¹⁶ Alan Luff, op. cit., 187.

³¹⁷ 'Annhrefn wrth Ganu', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Gorphenhaf (1830), 310.

³¹⁸ A few of Thomas Edwards' tunes appeared in *Ceinion Cerddoriaeth* (Hafrenydd, 1852). He was one of the first in Wales to experiment with duets for children (*Seren Gomer*, December 1827). Huw Williams, 'Cyfansoddwyr a Golygyddion Casgliadau Emyndonau Sir Fflint', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynau Cymru*, Cyfrol 1, Rhif 3, Gorffennaf (1970), 51.

³¹⁹ M.O. Jones (D.Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 21.

Ioan ab Jubal,³²⁰ the *nom-de-plume* adopted by the composer of hymn-tunes such as 'Pontadam' and 'Cefn Mawr',³²¹ [which suggests a link with the Ruabon area], and the correspondent *Ab Cora*, who unleashed his vexation at the disorganised singing, but declines to mention a specific cause and makes no reference to a particular area.³²² In a letter to the Editor of *Goleuad Cymru*³²³ in 1826, he urged every member of the congregation to 'sing the same words, and sing in the same time as one another'.³²⁴ This critique evoked a positive reaction, as the proposal made by the writer that the journal should publish hymn-tunes to supplement the existing hymn books was welcomed by its editor, John Parry of Chester.³²⁵

Three years later, a series of letters published in *Yr Athraw Crefyddol*³²⁶ in 1829, countered this argument and propounded that singing in chapel was the prerogative of the devout,³²⁷ although these letters were a virtual reprint of the article 'Ar Ganu', which had appeared on the front page of *Seren Gomer* in 1819.³²⁸ Congregational singing in the chapels was a free spiritual expression of *y werin* who sang from the heart and instinct rather than knowledge,³²⁹ unlike the more formal chanting of psalmody that constrained the congregations of the Established Church where hymns and anthems were performed by a choir. While the Wesleyans retained certain parts of the sung service of the church, in particular the chanting of psalms, it did not prevail in other denominations, and Jennie Williams, Aberystwyth, writing in *Y Cerddor*, observes:

... the chanting of Psalms is a thing which will ever remain foreign to us. That is why it has never become a real part of a Welsh religious service. To a people whose language and music are so inter-dependent that their speech is full of varying voice inflections, it seems a sheer impossibility to utter a whole phrase on one note and expect it to mean something.³³⁰

³²⁰ The identity of critics and composers was often hidden behind a *non-de-plume* and *Ioan ab Jubal* was no exception to this rule.

³²¹ 'Peroriaeth', *Seren Gomer*, Awst (1822), 256; Mehefin (1824), 194.

³²² 'Llythyrau: Canu Mawl', *Goleuad Cymru*, Llyfr IV, Rhif 92, Mehefin (Caerlleon, 1826), 416.

³²³ *Goleuad Cymru* [The Illuminator of Wales, 1818-30] was a Calvinistic Methodist denominational monthly circulating mainly in north Wales and edited by John Parry, Chester.

³²⁴ 'Llythyrau: Canu Mawl', op. cit., 416.

³²⁵ 'Peroriaeth Grefyddol', *ibid.*, 418.

³²⁶ *Yr Athraw Crefyddol* [The Religious Teacher] was a short-lived (1827-1830) monthly publication dedicated to Sunday school pupils and their teachers.

³²⁷ 'Canu Mawl', *Yr Athraw Crefyddol*, Llyfr III (Pontypool, 1829), 123.

³²⁸ 'Ar Ganu', *Seren Gomer*, Rhifyn XV, Llyfr II, Gorphenhaf (1819), 225-6.

³²⁹ Machreth Rees, 'Y Lle a Ddylai Caniadaeth ei gael yn y Gwasanaeth Cyhoeddus', *Cennad Hedd*, Cyf. IV, Rhif 48, Rhagfyr (1884), 361.

³³⁰ Jennie Williams, 'The Relation of Music and Language in Wales', *Y Cerddor*, Mai (1936), 117.

Dr. William Vincent (1739-1815), Dean of Westminster (1803), commented: 'It is not rashness to assert that for one who has been drawn away from the Established Church by preaching, ten have been induced by music'.³³¹ In contrast to the entrenched musical tradition of the Established Church was the simple but heartfelt approach of sung worship in the Nonconformist chapels where congregations united in song. This stress on congregational participation in worship became a lynchpin of the Welsh chapels and provides a clearer understanding of the Presbyterian stance on the distractions of elaborate instrumental music and the unwarranted expense of elaborate pipe organs. Such expressions of secular vanity conflicted with the Presbyterian attitudes of deacons and officers who discouraged instrumental accompaniment³³² in worship on account of its association with the tavern culture.³³³

While the grand choral festivals and organ recitals implied that the Established Church was musically more advanced than the Dissenting causes, it disguised the fact that the Welsh denominations had been more successful in attracting adherents through the medium of congregational singing. Furthermore, the development of the *Ysgol Gân* and Sunday schools had prepared Welsh congregations for Sunday worship rather than occasional concerts. Consequently, there were few ways in which the Anglican Church could answer the remarkable expansion of Welsh Nonconformist denominations other than ambitious concerts, such as the Wrexham Musical Festival held in December 1827 that was announced as 'a grand selection of Sacred Music from *The Creation, Messiah &c.*, to be performed in Wrexham Church under the baton of Mr. J. Jones Mus.Bach. Oxon, who will also preside at the new organ'.³³⁴ (See Fig.1.3, over).

³³¹ D. Russell, 'The Popular Musical Societies of the Yorkshire Textile District, 1850-1914: A Study of the Relationship between Music and Society', Ph.D. Thesis (University of York, 1979), 40.

³³² Organs did not begin to appear in the Nonconformist chapels of north-east Wales until the mid-19th century after the invention of the Harmonium. See Chapter Four.

³³³ Anthony Jones, *Welsh Chapels* (Cardiff, 1996), 115.

³³⁴ Denbighshire Record Office, DRO/DD/DM/233/1, Programme Wrexham Musical Festival, 28 December 1827.

WREXHAM MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

A GRAND SELECTION

OF

Sacred Music,

FROM

THE CREATION,
MESSIAH, &c.

WILL BE PERFORMED

ON FRIDAY MORNING, DEC. 28, 1827,

IN WREXHAM CHURCH.

PRINCIPAL VOCAL PERFORMERS.

MISS E. PATON,
MRS. ATKINSON (LATE MISS GOODALL),
MR. PHILLIPS & MR. ENTWISTLE,

CONDUCTOR,

MR. J. JONES, MUS. BACH. OXON,
Who will preside at the new Organ.

N.B. The Church Doors will be opened at Ten o'Clock, and the
Performance begin at Half-past Eleven.

☞ Tickets to the Body of the Church, 10s. 6d. and to the
Gallery, 7s.

CHESTER:

PRINTED BY R. EVANS, FOREGATE-STREET.

Local historian Edward Francis, writing on the early development of the Calvinistic Methodist cause in Wrexham, recalls a conversation with octogenarian Mrs. Rowlands who recollected that as a young girl in the early 1790s, and unable to understand but little Welsh, she sometimes attended the prayer meetings 'in order to hear the singing'.³³⁵

There were, however, English chapels that had a more enlightened view on the use of instrumental accompaniment, and Joseph Griffiths (1828-1911) in *A History of Buckley Congregational Church* makes the following observation:

A few words about the Music; first let me say that you instrumentalists were not the first to do honour to this Church. I was told by the old people that William and John Shepherd played clarionets, Peter Wilcock a Serpent, Ed Price a Bazoon [sic] and someone else a Bass Viol. I cannot remember, neither do I remember the others playing in the chapel, but I have seen some of the instruments.³³⁶

That Buckley became one of the first towns in north Wales to form a wind and reed band in 1822³³⁷ suggests that a number of its players were probably trained in the militia bands before transferring their skills to those places of worship that permitted the use of instrumental accompaniment. With the exception of the Presbyterians there were other Welsh denominations that took a more liberal view of instrumental accompaniment in the chapels and condoned the use of the bass viol (cello). What is significant is that the majority of those haphazardly thrust together on the tide of economic migration were of the Nonconformist persuasion, and apart from the issue of language, the Sunday schools, choirs, and traditions of the English chapels differed little from the Welsh denominations as both shared the same nonconformist principles. Primarily, migration to the north-east Wales and Merseyside regions was economically driven, although there were other considerations as Gwyn A. Williams observes: 'Certainly, sociological research on later times has shown the close connection between Nonconformity and its sects and the social imperatives of local community'.³³⁸ Concurring with this view,

³³⁵ Bangor University Archives, X/EM 637 WRE 370182, Edward Francis, op. cit., 11.

³³⁶ Flintshire Record Office, FRO/D/DG/53, Joseph Griffiths, 'A History of Buckley Congregational Church' (1894).

³³⁷ Dennis Griffiths, *Out of This Clay* (Denbigh, 1960), 79.

³³⁸ Gwyn A. Williams, *The Search for Beulah Land* (London, 1980), 46.

Colin Pooley identifies language and cultural characteristics as the factors that bonded the Welsh communities on Merseyside.³³⁹

There was constant shipping traffic to Liverpool from Holywell and Mostyn,³⁴⁰ and when the new steam-packet sailed from Bagillt in 1821 and reduced the journey to two and a half hours, Merseyside was as accessible as any other north Wales county.³⁴¹ Re-settlement was made easier by the fact that the Liverpool Welsh community retained the cultural and religious characteristics of north-east Wales and those who migrated the short distance did so with a denominational transfer document that introduced them into the chapel. Liverpool was perceived as a passport to a better life and a route from abject poverty and this was the reason given by farm labourer John Jones who recalls leaving Minera, 'to improve my circumstances'.³⁴² Agriculture, once the mainstay of the Welsh economy was in recession, particularly after the financial crash of 1826 which also affected other industries³⁴³ and Davies observes, 'the circumstances of the age were even more merciless to the labourers with their low wages and with underemployment rampant among them'.³⁴⁴

At the centre of the Welsh communities of Liverpool were the Nonconformist chapels, that most powerful spiritual and social influence in what would later be described as the capital of north Wales.³⁴⁵ The Established Church had yet to make provision for worship in the Welsh language and an article, 'History of Liverpool', published in *Y Drysorfa* in 1825, claimed that the '15,000 Welsh inhabitants in Liverpool had not one church of the Establishment for performing divine services in the Welsh language', while there were five Nonconformists chapels in the city.³⁴⁶ The four main denominations comprised Calvinistic Methodists (Pall Mall, 1787 and Bedford Street, 1806), Baptists (Great Crosshall Street, 1825),

³³⁹ Colin G. Pooley, 'The residential segregation of migrant communities in mid-Victorian Liverpool', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (1977), 377.

³⁴⁰ Advertisement, *Flintshire Observer*, 28 March 1861, 1.

³⁴¹ Advertisement, *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 July 1821, 13; 2 November 1821, 142.

³⁴² John Jones, 'Adgofion am Hen Eglwys Bethel, Liverpool', *Y Dysgedydd*, Mawrth (1900), 99.

³⁴³ A.H. Dodd, op. cit., 51.

³⁴⁴ John Davies, op. cit., 355.

³⁴⁵ John Bright referred to Liverpool as the 'capital of Wales' on account of its estimated 50,000 Welsh population in the mid-1870s. See R.C.Owen, 'Cenhadaeth drefol Methodistiaid Calfaidd Cymreig Liverpool', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif 568, Llyfr XLVIII, Mawrth (1878), 109.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Congregationalists (Tabernacle, 1800), Wesleyans (1)³⁴⁷ all of which were in step with the Welsh diaspora. As migration increased, so too did the rate of chapel building,³⁴⁸ and by the mid-19th century there were twenty Welsh places of worship in Liverpool.³⁴⁹

If the intention of the propaganda in *Y Drysorfa* was to strengthen the cause of Welsh Nonconformity by exploiting the weaknesses of the Established Church, then it was disingenuous in that it failed to acknowledge the efforts made by the Anglican Churches of Liverpool to welcome the Welsh diaspora into the community. Even though the bitter dispute between the Established Church and the Nonconformists over the reticence of the Church to appoint Welsh-speaking bishops was perhaps, not as relevant in Liverpool as it was in north-east Wales, the churchmen of the town shared the sense of injustice and wholeheartedly subscribed to the petition that was presented to Parliament against certain clauses of the Church Bill.³⁵⁰ That the Anglican Church authorities were slow to build a church specifically for Welsh language worship was understandable as the majority of immigrants were Nonconformists, most of whom stayed loyal to their respective denominations. In September 1826, however, the foundation stone for St. David's Church, Liverpool, built with grant aid of £500, marked a highly significant occasion as it acknowledged the building of the first Established Church outside Wales for Welsh speakers.³⁵¹

As the patron of so many concerts and musical events during the first half of the 19th century, the Established Church in Liverpool had undoubtedly widened the cultural scope of the Welsh communities in that they were introduced to the works of the great composers. Classical concerts, such as the performance of Handel's oratorio, *Judas Maccabeus*, on 6 August 1822 at St Anne's Church Great Richmond Street,³⁵² and the Liverpool Choral Society's twenty-sixth quarterly concert of Sacred Music at St Anne's Church on Tuesday evening 28 October

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ D. Jenkin Williams, *The Welsh Church and Welsh People in Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1927), 29.

³⁴⁹ John Thomas, 'Eglwysi Cymreig Liverpool', *Y Drysorfa*, Chwefror (1882), 74.

³⁵⁰ 'The Established Church in Wales', *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 February 1837, 35.

³⁵¹ 'The New Welsh church', *Liverpool Mercury*, 22 September 1826, 94; D. Jenkin Williams, op. cit., 30.

³⁵² Liverpool Record Office, H783 CRA, Concert Programme.

1823, when they performed Handel's oratorio *Joshua*³⁵³ and Attwood's *Coronation Anthem*³⁵⁴ are but two examples of the vibrant cultural activity in Merseyside. (See Fig 1.4 below).

Fig. 1.4

ORATORIO, ST. ANNE'S CHURCH

THE LIVERPOOL CHORAL SOCIETY respectfully inform their Subscribers and Friends, that their THIRTY-THIRD QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE will take place in ST. ANNE'S CHURCH, on Tuesday next, the 2nd of August. Subscribers' Tickets may be had at Messrs. BANKS', as usual where, also, and at other Music Shops, may be had Non-Subscribers' Tickets for the Gallery, at 2s. 6d. and for the Body of the Church, at 1s. 6d. each.

Leader.....Mr. G. Eyton.

First Violoncello.....Mr. J. Jackson.

Persons desirous of becoming Subscribers are requested to apply at Messrs. BANKS', Church Street.

J. DIXON, Secretary.³⁵⁵

That the Liverpool Choral Society were performing ambitious works from around 1817,³⁵⁶ is confirmed by the announcement that a 'Selection from the *Messiah* would be sung by the members of the Liverpool Choral Society' on Thursday 8 May 1817,³⁵⁷ and the concert of 'Sacred Music' held at All Saints Church on 2 August 1825 was the thirty-third quarterly performance of that society.³⁵⁸ In addition to choral societies, there were also opportunities for instrumentalists in orchestral groups such as the Philo-Musical Society, the precursor of the later Liverpool Philharmonic Society, that stated its objective which was 'the encouragement of instrumental music only, among amateurs, to those gentlemen who are desirous of acquiring a knowledge of playing in concert'.³⁵⁹

³⁵³ *Joshua*, the fourth oratorio composed by G.F. Handel was completed in 1747.

³⁵⁴ Liverpool Record Office, H780.73CHO, Concert Programme.

³⁵⁵ Advertisements & Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 29 July 1825, 32.

³⁵⁶ Liverpool Record Office, H783 SAC, Concert Programme.

³⁵⁷ Liverpool Record Office, H783 CHO, Public Announcement.

³⁵⁸ Liverpool Record Office, H783 SAC, Concert Programme.

³⁵⁹ Public Announcement, *Liverpool Mercury*, 27 October 1820, 142, which announced the first private concert meeting for the 1820 season.

While the musical performances of the choral societies associated with the Established Church in Liverpool were more ambitious than those of the Welsh Nonconformists, they did little to enrich the sung worship in the churches, whereas the chapels, having dedicated their efforts to congregational worship, sang from instinct rather than knowledge.³⁶⁰ The standard of congregational singing in the Liverpool Welsh Calvinistic chapels began to improve when John Ellis y *Cantwr*, the travelling musician who had transformed the singing of Adwy'r Clawdd, became the precentor of Pall Mall chapel c.1822.³⁶¹ He remained in post for five years before joining the Bedford Street cause in 1827, where he led the congregational singing and held singing classes,³⁶² before being elected as a deacon in 1836.³⁶³ He was succeeded as *codwr canu* by Robert Edwards (1796-1862), a young miller from Mostyn, Flintshire who moved to Liverpool and found employment as a carter, although he was better known in the Welsh community as 'Bob y Felin' [Bob the Mill].³⁶⁴ As a musically-inclined twelve-year old he was one of only three people giving singing lessons in Liverpool in 1808.³⁶⁵

W.T.R.Pryce, commenting on the characteristics of internal migration, observes that many migrants 'sought destinations which would be most congenial to them and their families, both for cultural reasons as well as for reasons of economic advantage'.³⁶⁶ Undoubtedly, language, religion and culture united the Welsh settlers, but it was the Nonconformist chapel that endorsed the continuity of nationhood in the Welsh community on Merseyside. What further sealed the bond between Liverpool and the two Welsh counties was the fact that the denominational districts of the Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists in Liverpool and Manchester were established by Dissenters from north-east Wales and regular contact was maintained through the visiting preachers. In 1832, the Bala Association meeting of the Calvinistic Methodists passed a motion which

³⁶⁰ Machreth Rees, 'Y Lle a Ddylai Caniadaeth ei gael yn y Gwasanaeth Cyhoeddus', *Cennad Hedd*, Cyf. IV, Rhif 48, Rhagfyr (1884), 361.

³⁶¹ John Hughes Morris (1929), *op. cit.*, 230.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ O.J.Owen, 'Hanes Methodistiaeth yn Lerpwl', *Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfnaid*, Cyfrol III, Tachwedd (1917), 20.

³⁶⁴ John Hughes Morris (1929), *op. cit.*, 233.

³⁶⁵ 'Anrhegu Mr. Robert Edwards, Liverpool', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CLVII, Llyfr XIV, Ionawr (1860), 23; D. Emlyn Evans, 'Awduraeth y Dôn Caersalem', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XIX, Chwefror (1907), 10.

³⁶⁶ W.T.R. Pryce, 'Language Areas in North-East Wales c. 1800-1911' in G. H. Jenkins (ed.), *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff, 1998), 60.

stipulated that two preachers, of which one was to be an (ordained) minister, from each county in north Wales were expected to spend a month in Liverpool and Manchester twice a year.³⁶⁷ May and November were designated for Denbighshire, while Flintshire's visits were allocated to June and December.³⁶⁸

The population of the Welsh community in Merseyside continued to expand as did the industrial regions of north-east Wales that profited from the rich seams of the Ruabon coalfield, to the extent that Wrexham was the largest town in north Wales by 1830³⁶⁹ and the industrial villages such as Brymbo and Broughton were transformed into townships.³⁷⁰ On account of the demand for labour, migration to north-east Wales raised the population from 83,787 in 1801 to 119,957 by 1831, and in the same period, the total number of chapels in Denbighshire and Flintshire had risen to 110.³⁷¹ (See Fig 1.5 below).

Fig. 1.5: Population chart for Denbighshire and Flintshire 1801-1831

| Population | 1801 | 1811 | 1821 | 1831 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Denbighshire | 61,624 | 66,059 | 78,626 | 84,650 |
| Flintshire | 22,163 | 26,632 | 31,178 | 35,307 |
| Total | 83,787 | 92,691 | 109,804 | 119,957 |
| Wales Total | 601,767 | 688,774 | 811,381 | 924,329 |
| % of Wales Population | 14% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13% |

North-east Wales was distinctive in many ways, not least in its religious characteristic which set it apart from England, and 'the divergence of Calvinistic and Arminian Methodism were only two of the key contrasts'.³⁷² Language, culture and religiosity were inextricably linked to the chapels that had educated the working classes and imprinted the chapel culture on the Welsh character. Industry had been causal to population movement, but it was Nonconformity in all its denominational guises that shaped the separate identity of north-east Wales and the

³⁶⁷ Edward Jones, *Y Gymdeithasfa* (Caernarfon, 1891), 53.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ H. Carter, *The Towns of Wales* (Cardiff, 1966), 121.

³⁷⁰ Population Census, *Abstract of the Answers and Returns* (1801-1861).

³⁷¹ Dot Jones, *Statistical Evidence relating to the Welsh Language 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 1998), 19.

For further population statistics see Appendix 2.

³⁷² K.D.M. Snell & Paul S. Ell, (eds.), *op. cit.*, 18.

Liverpool Welsh community. The stabilising influence of the chapel nurtured a settled obedience through the educational and cultural activity of the *Ysgolion Sul* which did much to popularise the music of the chapel particularly through the *Ysgol Gân*.³⁷³ By the 1830s, with the publication of hymnals and music grammars, congregational singing in Liverpool, Manchester and north-east Wales had the necessary texts to improve the music literacy of the self-taught chapel precentors whose pioneering efforts would prepare the ground for a musical renaissance.

³⁷³ D.M.Griffith, *Nationality in the Sunday School Movement* (Bangor, 1925), 154.

Chapter Two

Reform, Resistance and Renaissance

The degree of fulfilment experienced from singing hymns generated a desire to extend the musical horizons beyond the limits imposed by the chapels. This was permissible in view of the great quantity of religious music available.

(Gareth H. Lewis)

During the first two decades of the nineteenth century, chapels followed the movement of population into the industrial territories, and although the foundations of congregational singing had already been laid, music was of lesser importance than the expansion into the populous districts that preoccupied each of the Nonconformist denominations. The lethargic progression of congregational singing may have prevailed beyond the 1830s had it not been for *Yr Ysgol Gân* that was established for the purpose of improving sung worship. The circulating teachers of singing had stirred the interest in hymnody, particularly amongst younger chapel members, and despite some resistance from traditionalists, the *Ysgol Gân* secured its place in the chapel curriculum. Although this resource struggled to keep pace with the rapid growth of Nonconformity, a precedent had been set and musically enlightened causes such as Adwy'r Clawdd, near Wrexham, where John Ellis (Llanrwst) had introduced 'canu newydd' [new singing], were at the fore of the transition from psalmody to hymnody.

In accord with tradition, the weekly meetings of the *Ysgol Gân* were held during the winter months,¹ for the purpose of learning new hymns, and it was this primary music education that enabled John Jones of Ponciau (1805-1837) to lead the singing at the Congregational Chapel in Rhosllannerchrugog at the age of fourteen on account of his good voice and knowledge of sacred music.² Conflicting views between the younger members and the stalwarts of the fellowship were to be expected, and the attitudes of both male and female singers³ were typical of most other places of worship, although John Jones was known to have the ability and temperament to diffuse a difficult situation.⁴ Many of the older members and *deaconiaid* objected to singing 'from notes' and time-keeping,⁵ while part-singing implied a disciplined structure that contrasted with the free expression of Christian worship in the Dissenting chapels. The repertoire of chapel music was compressed into the *llyfrau pricio* used by the *codwr canu* and when familiar psalm-tunes such

¹ Richard Mills, *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol, sef Eglurhad Cyflawn ar Holl Elfenau y Gelfyddyd o Gerddoriaeth; mewn deuddeg o wersi, ar ddull ymddyddan rhwng dysgybl ac athraw* (Llanidloes, 1844), Rhagymadrodd.

² Robert Jones, 'Bywgraffiad Mr. John Jones, Ponkey', *Y Dysgedydd*, Cyfrol XVII, Rhif 194, Ionawr (1838), 5.

³ J. Pritchard, 'Bywgraffiad Mr. John Jones, Ponkey', *ibid.*, 5.

⁴ Robert Jones, *op. cit.*, 5.

⁵ Ioan Glan y Môr, 'Canu Mawl', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CXI, Mawrth (1840), 71.

as *Yr Hen Ganfed* were selected, the whole congregation sang, but when new hymns were given out only a handful of people joined in the singing.⁶ The itinerant singing teachers trained the young, more musically-inclined chapel members to learn new anthems and hymn-tunes, while many of the older affiliates lacked the enthusiasm for change and were unwilling to adapt to a more progressive style of singing.⁷

Despite the ambivalence of the Nonconformist chapel hierarchy, the appointment of the *codwyr canu* was a local decision, unlike the centralist policy of the Wesleyan Methodists which required permission from the 'Connexion' for the most menial changes.⁸ The Wesleys dismissed the notion of a congregational system, and Élie Halévy observes: 'The foundation stone of the Wesleyan organisation was the systematic denial of local autonomy'.⁹ Conversely, the Calvinistic Methodists opted for local governance by empowering the deaconate, a resolution that handed authority to the elected few. A different procedure prevailed in the older Dissenting denominations, such as Baptists and Congregationalists, as evidenced by the decision of the Penrycae Baptists to appoint 16 year-old Owen Jones *Cantwr* as *arweinydd y gân* [leader of singing],¹⁰ which required only the approval of the congregation. The outcome was that the congregational music at Salem Penrycae brought many to the chapel to listen to the singing,¹¹ and it was the success of Owen Jones *Cantwr* that inspired the formation of other *Ysgolion Gân* in the Wrexham area.

Following the example of the Penrycae Baptists, the Calvinistic Methodists of Rhosllannerchrugog took the initiative a step further in 1829 when they formed the interdenominational society, *Y Gymdeithas Gerddorol* [The Musical Society]¹² as a means of encouraging singing schools in the locality.¹³ Evidence pertaining to the repertoire of this society no longer exists, but the fact that the rules of the 'penny

⁶ Morgan Davies, 'Canu Mawl', *ibid.*, Rhif CX, Chwefror (1840), 44.

⁷ 'Y Canu', *Y Diwygiwr*, Cyfrol XXVI, Rhif 314, Tachwedd (1861), 339.

⁸ Élie Halévy, *Victorian Years 1841-1895* (London, 1961), 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰ John Owen Jones, *Hen Arweinyddion y Canu yn Salem, Penrycae* (Colwyn Bay, 1911), 16

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹² R.D.Griffith, *Hanes Canu Cynulleidfaoel Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1948), 58.

¹³ *Ibid.* Little is known of the activity of this society, although it is possible that it was convened for those chapel members without access to a singing class. By adopting an interdenominational solution, the chapels were able to attract sufficient numbers to make the project viable.

singing classes' were written by chapel officials implies that hymnody and anthems took priority as the purpose of these societies was to encourage a higher standard of congregational singing, while other conditions of membership allude to the integral role of songs of praise in worship:

1. Songs of praise have throughout the ages formed part of worship.
2. It was prophesied that singing would be part of the New Testament worship and Christ and his disciples are exemplars. Matthew 26:30
3. That singing as part of the service be distinguished from every other religious deed. Prayer, James 5:13; Thanks, Matthew 26: 30
4. That everyone should sing in the service, to quote Jonathan Edwards, 'As God had decreed that all sing, so should all out of conscience learn to sing'.¹⁴

It appears that the first four rules were common to other causes within the Calvinistic Methodist denomination as they replicate the conditions laid down for the Bethesda Singing Society (*Cymdeithas y Cerddorion Crefyddol*), near Bangor, which was formed in December 1828.¹⁵ This was no coincidence as the subject of singing societies would have been discussed at the *Cyfarfod Misol* [Monthly Meeting] and having been agreed in principle, the deaconate in districts such as Rhosllannerchrugog, adapted the initiative to their respective cause by adding the following conditions to their code of conduct:

5. That every man accepted as a member should contribute 1d. per week, and every woman a halfpenny.
6. That a fine of 3d. be levied for absence from a singing meeting announced by the officials, unless suffering ill-health, and non-payment of fine would lead to excommunication from the meeting.
7. That no new tunes are to be sung in any meeting, apart from the singing meeting, without the permission of the officials, and that the teachers decide whom they deem competent to lead the singing at that occasion.¹⁶

The *Ysgol Gân* and musical societies had a positive effect on chapel attendances throughout the first half of the 19th century, and sales of hymnals during that period give a practical indication of the growing enthusiasm for congregational singing.¹⁷ Considering the meagre earnings of the working classes in 1831, it is remarkable that 130 copies of the fourth edition of Dafydd Jones' hymnal, *Casgliad o Bum*

¹⁴ Quoted in *ibid.* 56.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ 'Ar Ganu', *Seren Gomer*, Rhifyn XV, Llyfr II, Gorphenaf (1819), 226.

Cant o Hymnau,¹⁸ the cheapest version of which was 4s.6d, were sold in Rhos and nearby Wern, and paid for by weekly instalments according to the means of the buyer, and on trust for six months.¹⁹ Aside from Welsh music text-books, denominational journals began to publish hymn-tunes with some frequency from the 1830s as well as providing an open forum for readers' contributions which enlivened the debates on congregational music.

A correspondent writing in *Y Diwygiwr*²⁰ claimed that in some quarters singers were regarded as 'riff-raff',²¹ a disparaging remark that implied an association with the tavern culture where traditional music and *eisteddfodau* prevailed beyond the influence of the Dissenting causes. Impolitely, the anonymous writer was expressing the anxiety felt by older chapel members that sung worship was becoming a performing art for chapel choirs that would ultimately open the doors of the sanctuary to secular music. Understandably, many deacons and older members were concerned that the performance of new hymns and anthems distracted from the preaching of God's word, and in a collection of short stories in *Y Drysorfa* in 1878-9,²² Daniel Owen of Mold depicts the chapelocracy and their feelings towards the Singing Schools through the experience of Gwen Rolant:

When I was young, we had a prayer meeting at five o'clock on a Sunday afternoon, to ask for blessing on the evening service; but now, Peter and his group have some 'do, do, sol' before the service. I find it hard to believe that the Good Lord is more prepared to listen to this 'do, do, sol' than to man on his knees in prayer. And before Peter and his ilk took to singing, we only used to sing one verse, and that was sung many times over and over again depending on the *hwyl*; but now, one must sing the whole hymn through, as fast as the wind, and no-one knows what they are singing.²³

¹⁸ Dafydd Jones, *Casgliad o Bum Cant o Hymnau* (Treffynnon, 1810). This was a hymnal collection, with over 300 hymns previously unpublished in Welsh, and 130 selected from the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Watts. A later collection, *Casgliad o dros Saith Cant a Thri Ugain o Hymnau* (Treffynnon, 1821), included a Gamut to teach young people to sing songs of praise, which had been published separately as *Egwyddorion neu Donraddau Cerddoriaeth (Gamut)* (London, 1821).

¹⁹ 'Llyfr Hymnau', *Y Dysgedydd*, Cyfrol X, Rhif 110, Chwefror (1831), 78.

²⁰ *Y Diwygiwr* [The Reformer] was a monthly religious and literary journal serving the Congregationalists from 1835 until 1911.

²¹ J.H. Rowlands, 'Canu a "Hen ŵr ar fin y bedd"', *Y Diwygiwr*, Cyfrol XXVI, Rhif 315, Rhagfyr (1861), 369.

²² The series was later published by Daniel Owen as *Y Dreiflan* (Holywell, 1881).

²³ Daniel Owen, 'Cymeriadau ymhlith ein Cynulleidfaoedd', *Y Drysorfa*, Llyfr XLVIII, Rhif 578, Rhagfyr (1878), 461.

The singing school at the Mold chapel referred to by Daniel Owen was under the supervision of Edward Drury (1803-1876), a long-serving Calvinistic Methodist precentor, and at a testimonial concert to him in 1870, it was said that he 'for a period of upwards of 40 years, had, among many difficulties and discouragements, remained firm and faithful as the leader of the singing in the congregation'.²⁴ In contrast to the obdurate members who militated against the organised singing and teaching of new hymn-tunes²⁵ were those who challenged the prejudice of religious leaders and defended the work of the *Ysgol Gân*.²⁶ Luff maintains that there were even some musicians who questioned the propriety of four-part harmony.²⁷ Such was the case in Tanyfron, near Llansannan, where a group of young people overruled precentor Robert Edwards by introducing 'llyfrau notes' and three and four part singing, to the annoyance of many worshippers who believed that such activity encouraged the young to become too frivolous and materialistic.²⁸

A deep mistrust of any semblance of enjoyment nourished a bigotry that often extended beyond the chapel and the wrath of strict Presbyterians was easily aroused. For example, when a band led the procession at the annual *Gŵyl Mabsant* festival of 1831,²⁹ the confrontational members of the C.M. Chapel at Nercwys, near Mold, convened their prayer meetings so as to disrupt the celebrations, to which the organisers retaliated and brought the band to play loudly outside the small chapel.³⁰ The Calvinistic Methodists of Derwen, Denbighshire, were equally opposed to *Gŵyl Mabsant* and when the powerful voice of chapel precentor William Llwyd struck up, the crowds abandoned the festivities to gather around the preacher and this was the last such festival held in the village.³¹ This incident illustrates the strength of personality of those *codwyr canu* who challenged the indifference of chapel officials and a largely disinterested ministry to raise the

²⁴ 'Presentation to Mr. Edward Drury', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 5 February 1870, 9. See *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Rhif 109, Mawrth (1870), 23; 'Mold', *North Wales Chronicle*, 20 May 1876, 6.

²⁵ 'Ar Ganu', *Seren Gomer*, op. cit., 226.

²⁶ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 72.

²⁷ Alan Luff, *Welsh Hymns and their Tunes* (London, 1990), 176.

²⁸ J.F., 'Adgofion am Sir Ddinbych: Ei Hen Flaenoriaid', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif XC, Mehefin (1854), 186.

²⁹ 'Methodistiaeth yn Nerquis', *ibid.*, Llyfr LXX, Rhif 835, Mai (1900), 221; E. Ingman, *Hyd Yma* (Dinbych, 1978), 17.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 222.

³¹ John Foulkes, *Dechreuad a Chynnydd yr Ysgolion Sabbothol yn Nosbarth Rhuthyn* (Dinbych, 1880), 25.

standards of congregational singing. In contrast to the apathy of chapel officials was the enlightened attitude of the denominational journals that published hymn-tunes and anthems composed by Welsh musicians for the benefit of the *codwyr canu* and the musically literate minority.

Yr Eurgrawn and *Seren Gomer* were probably the first Welsh periodicals to include printed music c.1820, but from the 1830s, the practice was adopted by other denominational journals and also by secular magazines. For example, the hymn-tune 'Wyddgrug', composed in 1831 by Ambrose Lloyd (1815-1874),³² found popularity after it was published in *Y Gwladgarwr* in 1835³³ and identifies with Lloyd's home town of Mold where his mentor and tutor, Edward Drury, had encouraged him in the art of composition.³⁴ Despite the dearth of music text-books produced during the late 18th and early 19th century, Ambrose Lloyd claimed that he learnt more from studying the works of Handel, Haydn and Mozart than through any other medium.³⁵ Similarly, Richard Mills (*Rhydderch Hael*, 1809-1844), the youngest son of Harry Mills, first came to prominence as a 15 year-old when his hymn-tune, 'Maes-y-llan', was printed in the Baptist paper *Seren Gomer*.³⁶ He was the first of this musical dynasty to introduce young working men to the compositions of Bach, Handel and Haydn, and *Y Gwladgarwr* printed the text of a lecture on the subject of music which he delivered to an audience in Llanidloes c.1835.³⁷

Members of the Mills family travelled extensively in north and mid-Wales lecturing to chapel congregations and members of *Ysgolion y Gân*³⁸ with John Mills tutoring on the subject of musical grammar while Richard trained the

³² Daniel Owen, 'Adgofion am Glan Alun', *Y Geninen*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 2, Ebrill (1886), 109.

³³ John Ambrose Lloyd, 'Peroriaeth: Wyddgrug', *Y Gwladgarwr*, Cyfrol III, Rhif 28, Ebrill (1835), 102. Born in Mold, Ambrose Lloyd became one of the foremost musicians of 19th century Wales, gaining recognition as a composer of hymns and anthems. The hymn-tunes 'Wyddgrug' and 'Groeswen' are perhaps his most famous, while the anthem 'Teymasoedd y Ddaear', composed in 1852, became a popular choral test-piece at *eisteddfodau*.

³⁴ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, *John Ambrose Lloyd, Hanes ei Fywyd a'i Weithiau* (Wrecsam, 1921), 14.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ M.O. Jones, (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), *Bywgraffiaeth Cerddorion Cymreig, Cymreig: O'r oesoedd boreuaf hyd y ganrif bresennol* (Caerdydd, 1890), 75.

³⁷ Richard Mills, 'Darlith ar y Gelfyddyd', *Y Gwladgarwr*, Cyfrol III, Rhif 26-27, Chwefror (1835), 39-40; Mawrth (1835), 71-2.

³⁸ 'Ar Ganu', *Seren Gomer*, op. cit., 226.

singers³⁹ and it was through these evening classes and the inclusion of hymn-tunes in denominational journals that printed music became more accessible to chapel congregations. Notwithstanding the determined efforts of John and Richard Mills to improve congregational singing, progress was slow and the appeals for greater co-operation from elders and the need for more competent precentors continued to appear in denominational journals,⁴⁰ which nurtured the debate on the development of chapel music and the wider repertoire of hymn-tunes.⁴¹ Essentially, the Mills' confined their efforts to north and mid-Wales, while the more prosperous chapels in Liverpool attracted aspiring musicians such as John Ellis of Llanrwst, and it was in this wider cultural milieu that the career of John Ambrose Lloyd flourished.

Ambrose Lloyd had been a member of the church choir at Mold before joining his brother Isaac, a Liverpool schoolmaster, c.1830, after which time he attended the Welsh church of Dewi Sant (St. David's Church, Liverpool).⁴² When his cousin, Rev. William Ambrose (*Emrys*), a member of the Tabernacle Congregational Chapel in Great Crosshall Street, prevailed on him to become a member and later the chapel precentor,⁴³ he changed his allegiance to the Congregationalists shortly before William Williams *Y Wern* (1781-1840), one of the 'three giants' of the Welsh pulpit, accepted the call to the Tabernacle in 1837.⁴⁴ Such was the standard of congregational singing that the novelist Daniel Owen commented, 'Tabernacle's singing became the best in Liverpool',⁴⁵ to which the Calvinistic Methodists responded by forming a *Cymdeithas Ganu* [Singing Society] which began at the Pall Mall Chapel in September 1837.⁴⁶ This was followed by a general singing meeting between the four Calvinistic Methodist chapels (Pall Mall, Bedford Street, Rose Place and Oil Street), and there are later references to a 'Singing Committee' and a 'General Committee of the Singing Society'.⁴⁷ By 1839, there were also

³⁹ T. Mordaf Pierce, 'Richard Mills, Llanidloes', *Y Traethodydd*, Llyfr LIII (1898), 336.

⁴⁰ 'Sylwadau ar yr Ordinhad a'r Ddyledswydd o Ganu Mawl', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif LXXXIV, Rhagfyr (1837), 301.

⁴¹ Alan Luff, *op. cit.*, 187.

⁴² John Roberts, 'Tysteb Mr. Ambrose Lloyd', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa* (1871), 41.

⁴³ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, *op. cit.*, 21.

⁴⁴ W. Rees, *Cofiant y Diweddar Barch. W. Williams o'r Wern* (Llanelli, 1842), 30.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, *op. cit.* 22. 'Canu'r Tabernacl ddod y goreu yn Lerpwl'.

⁴⁶ J. Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol II (Liverpool, 1932), 398.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

changes at Ebenezer C.M. Chapel on Bedford Street, where Robert Edwards (*Bob y Felin*, c.1796-1862), had succeeded John Ellis as precentor.⁴⁸

In 1837, a series of articles in *Y Drysorfa* urged chapel deacons to encourage the development of congregational music on a regular basis,⁴⁹ which implies that many chapel elders continued to distance themselves from the Musical Societies.⁵⁰ This prompted a correspondent to *Y Drysorfa* to enquire: 'It appears strange to me that not a single Christian congregation has recognised the need for a Musical Society in their chapel'.⁵¹ Other critics directed their comments at the *codwyr canu*, as evidenced by a letter to *Y Drysorfa* in 1845 criticising the selection of unsuitable tunes by precentors, 'either through their uncultured taste, or their inability to choose tunes ... Another factor which keeps the singing standards low, and restricts its development, is the plurality of metric verses'.⁵² Regretfully, the critical opinions published in denominational journals made little impression on the majority of chapel ministers and officials who showed little interest, and even less encouragement towards the voluntary efforts of the *codwyr canu* who toiled to improve congregational singing.

Despite the apparent indifference of chapel officials, congregational singing progressed to the extent that A.J. Johnes, a county court judge in north Wales, commented: 'The Welsh are social and fond of music ... In most of the Churches of Wales, the musical arrangements are very bad; the instruments in use are generally of no harmonious description; and in this respect, the Dissenters possess a manifest superiority; for, though they discard instrumental music altogether, their singing is generally sweet and impressive'.⁵³ Whilst Johnes' disparate critique on

⁴⁸ John Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol 1 (Liverpool, 1929), 231.

Liverpool had been the first consideration for the Welsh émigrés on account of its proximity to north-east Wales, although a number had settled in Manchester where a Calvinistic Methodist cause was established in 1788, by Edward Jones of Anglesey. The first to preach in that locality were William Davies (Holywell), Robert Prys, Plas Winter (Halkyn) and Robert Ellis of Mold. See John Edwards, *Canmlwyddiant Methodistiaeth yn Manchester* (Dolgellau, 1888), 3.

⁴⁹ 'Sylwadau ar yr Ordinhad a'r Dyledswydd o Ganu Mawl', op. cit., Rhif LXXXII, Hydref (1837), 301.

⁵⁰ 'Llythyr ar Ganu Mawl', ibid., Llyfr XII, Rhif CXLII, Hydref (1842), 304.

⁵¹ Ibid. 'Mae'n ymddangos i mi yn beth rhyfedd fod yr un gynulleidfa Gristionogol heb weld angenrheidrwydd am Gymdeithas Gerddorol yn eu capel...'

⁵² 'Canu Mawl', *Y Drysorfa*, Llyfr XV, Rhif CLXXVI, Awst (1845), 239. 'Peth arall sydd yn cadw yr *canu yn isel, ac attal ei gynnydd, ydyw lluosogrwydd hydau penillion*'.

⁵³ A. J. Johnes, *An Essay on the Causes which have produced Dissent from the Established Church* (London, 1835), 62.

the music of the Established Church may not have found favour with the Anglican hierarchy, it did find accord with Rev.J.D.Edwards (1805-1885), the vicar of Rhosymedre and one of the foremost music adjudicators in Wales.⁵⁴ He recognised the need to promote congregational singing within the Church,⁵⁵ and published *Original Sacred Music* (1836),⁵⁶ the first hymnal for the use of Anglican congregations in Wales,⁵⁷ which comprised ‘tunes of simple construction and flowing melody’.⁵⁸ This enlightened approach to sung worship was welcomed by Rev. Evan Evans (*Ieuan Glan Geirionnydd*, 1795-1855), a curate at Christleton, Chester, who strongly advocated that the whole congregation should be encouraged to sing.⁵⁹ Writing in *Y Gwladgarwr*, he criticised the custom of separating the choir from the congregation and suggested that singers should be placed closer to the worshippers.⁶⁰ While the curate was airing his concerns at the remoteness of the congregations in the Established Church, many of the larger Nonconformist tabernacles were erecting galleries to accommodate choirs, one of which was the Bedford Street Chapel, Liverpool, where singers were seated behind the pulpit.⁶¹

Although a number of chapels in north-east Wales had developed a high standard of music-making, it was the chapel choirs which were trained to sing four-part harmony in the *Ysgol Gân* that established the musical reputation, rather than the congregation. Therefore, the observation by Prys Morgan and David Thomas that ‘the natural custom of Welsh congregations even into the 1840s was to sing in unison’⁶² is a valid assumption. Eleazar Roberts (1825-1912) of Liverpool also makes reference to this characteristic in his novel, *Owen Rees, A Story of Welsh Life and Thought* as he alludes to the egotism of chapel choristers who learnt anthems to perform at public occasions, but contributed little to congregational music in the early years of the nineteenth century:

⁵⁴ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 138.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ J.D. Edwards, *Original Sacred Music / composed and arranged by John David Edwards, Curate of Aberdovey, (late of Jesus College, Oxford)* (Carnarvon, 1836).

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., Introduction.

⁵⁹ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 141.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ John Hughes Morris (1932), op. cit., 398.

⁶² Prys Morgan & David Thomas (eds.), *Wales - The Shaping of a Nation* (London, 1984), 198.

There were several good singers in every congregation, and they met together under the conductorship of some young musician, and learnt anthems and other pieces, which they showed off on special public occasions. But these singers took no interest in congregational singing, and though they attended the public service, they rendered no material help to the singing. They were out of sympathy with the tunes sung and with the precentors.⁶³

The chapel vestry nourished the ambition for self-improvement, and through the *Ysgol Gân* the working classes were able to graduate to chapel choirs that commanded a degree of respect within the fellowship. Welsh Nonconformity during the early 19th century was pivotal to nationhood and identity while its appeal to the middling ranks of society was beginning to be widely noticed and Anglican clergymen in north-east Wales were probably right to attribute this to the failure of the Church of England to offer responsibility to these classes.⁶⁴ The chapel says Lambert, 'provided offices of real responsibility which made aspiration possible in a society in which status positions for deprived nonconformists were scarce'.⁶⁵ As each of the 'big four'⁶⁶ denominations expanded in the industrial communities, so too did the opportunities for cultural participation in the chapels.

Challenging the influence of the chapel was a thriving tavern culture that encouraged endemic drunkenness and emphasised the need for social reform which came with the Temperance Movement that migrated from America, where it had taken root in the 1820s.⁶⁷ Initially, the orthodox denominations were cautious of this new cause and their reluctance to subscribe to the ideals of social reform may have stemmed from the fact that many of the Dissenting causes had first found shelter in the taverns and were not averse to drinking beer. For example, on the Coronation Day of William IV in 1830, prior to a processional march to Ruabon, celebratory events were held at the chapels of Rhosllannerchrugog, where it is said that there was one barrel of beer in the pulpit and another in the *sêt fawr*.⁶⁸

⁶³ Eleazar Roberts, *Owen Rees, A Story of Welsh Life and Thought* (Liverpool, 1893), 293.

⁶⁴ D.M. Thompson (ed.), *Nonconformity in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1972), 161.

⁶⁵ W.R. Lambert, 'Some Working-Class Attitudes Towards Organized Religion in Nineteenth-Century Wales', *Llafur* Vol. 2, No.1 (1979), 5.

⁶⁶ The 'big four' commonly refers to the four main Welsh denominations, namely Baptists, Calvinistic Methodists, Independents or Congregationalists and Wesleyans.

⁶⁷ W. R. Lambert, *Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales c. 1820-c.1895* (Cardiff, 1983), 59.

⁶⁸ Griffith Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir Fflint* (Dolgellau, 1914), 46; J. Rhosydd Williams, *Hanes Rhosllannerchrugog* (Rhosllannerchrugog, 1945), 28.

Funerals were also drunken affairs before the Temperance Movement came to Holywell in 1832 to begin its campaign for moderation in north-east Wales.⁶⁹ From the mid-1830s, says W.R.Lambert: 'Temperance ideals played a powerful part in the process of self-betterment of Welsh people, and the emphasis on thrift and "impulse-renunciation" helped to make many people respectable'.⁷⁰ Liverpool was a stronghold of Temperance activity and by 1834, there were 25,139 members in the county of Lancashire that according to *The Temperance Advocate*, represented a quarter of the membership in England and Wales.⁷¹

As to why the Temperance Movement chose Holywell as the first outpost in north-east Wales was probably as much to do with its proximity to Liverpool, from where the first orators had carried the plea for moderation into Wales,⁷² as it was to the social dislocation of the industrialised Greenfield Valley.⁷³ Perhaps a more compelling reason to embrace social reform was the cholera epidemic of 1832 which spread from Flint and Bagillt claiming forty-nine lives in Holywell by the end of July 1832, a period of anxiety during which the chapels were full as early as five o'clock in the morning.⁷⁴ The Welsh Nonconformist chapels were apprehensive of the radical movement and equally so of the sub-denominations of Methodism such as the evangelical Primitive Methodists that were the first to welcome the Temperance Societies in 1832,⁷⁵ although resistance evaporated when the chapels united in support of the Temperance Movement.⁷⁶

The Primitive Methodists had migrated from Staffordshire with the colliers and clay-workers and opened the doors of its first north Wales chapel at Alltami near Mold, in 1838⁷⁷ to provide a spiritual dwelling for the poorer classes who were at greatest risk from the vagaries of drunkenness. Joseph Davies, a keen amateur

⁶⁹ J. Roberts, *Calvinistic Methodism of Wales* (Caernarvon, 1934), 9.

⁷⁰ W.R. Lambert (1983), *op. cit.*, vii.

⁷¹ 'Mulum in Parvo', *Liverpool Mercury*, 29 August 1834, 6.

⁷² John Thomas, *Jubili y Diwygiad Dirwestol yn Nghymru* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1885), 49.

⁷³ The Greenfield Valley was a collective indicator for the industrialized parishes of Holywell, Bagillt, and Greenfield.

⁷⁴ John Thomas, *op. cit.*, 39; A.H. Williams, *Welsh Wesleyan Methodism 1800-1858: Its Origins, Growth and Secessions* (Bangor, 1935), 166.

⁷⁵ D. M. Thompson (ed.), *op. cit.*, 63.

⁷⁶ L.A. Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth yn Nosbarth Treffynnon, 1750-1910* (Dolgellau, 1910), 303.

⁷⁷ Flintshire Record Office, FRO/J/39/16, 'Alltami Methodist Chapel Souvenir of Centenary Celebrations' (1938).

musician who later became Rev. Joseph Davies, established a children's choir in the fellowship that gave concerts at Mold, Chester and Ellesmere Port to raise funds for the building project, and the first of these events was held at the Town Hall in Mold.⁷⁸ The Primitive Methodist Church in neighbouring Buckley soon followed after open-air meetings were held in Williams' Timber yard in Lane End during 1838, and later in the parlour of the Duke of York Inn, before a Mr. Lockwood generously donated a parcel of land on which the first meeting place was built in Mill Lane in 1841.⁷⁹

Rhidian Griffiths maintains that the desire to reform was a strong motivational factor in politics and culture from 1830 onwards – political reform in education, health, local government, and in cultural terms, a musical renaissance that began with the *Ysgol Gân* and its objective to raise the standard of congregational singing.⁸⁰ The Temperance Movement fulfilled a significant role by introducing the working classes to more worthwhile pursuits, and W.R. Lambert claims: 'Contemporary writers correctly believed that it was not so much a craving for drink which took the vast majority of drinkers to the public house, as a desire for company and recreation after the day's work'.⁸¹ The ethos of the movement was to raise the aspirations of the working classes and the self-worth of the individual, and from 1835, Temperance singing became popular in north-east Wales as choirs were formed and festivals were organised⁸² in the industrialised areas of Holywell and the mining communities of Ruabon and Wrexham.⁸³ Astutely, the campaigning lyrics of the Temperance crusades had been adapted to folk melodies with which the tavern clientele were familiar, such as the setting of a Temperance song written by D. James to the familiar tune of 'Ar Hyd y Nos'.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Flintshire Record Office, FRO/N/39/15, C. Moore (ed.), 'Souvenir of the Primitive Methodist Church Buckley' (1938), 4.

⁸⁰ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Y Gymanfa Ganu: ei Gwreiddiau a'i Natur', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emyrau Cymru*, Cyfrol II, Rhif 9 (1986-87), 274.

⁸¹ W.R. Lambert (1983), op. cit., 105.

⁸² R.D.Griffith, op. cit., 68.

⁸³ A.H.Dodd, *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales*, 3rd Ed. (Wrexham, 1971), 378. A large Temperance Festival was also held at Llangollen in May 1837. See T.M. Jones. *Cofiant y Parch. Roger Edwards, yr Wyddgrug* (Gwrecsam, 1908), 189; J. M. Davies, 'Crefydd y Ganrif' in J.M. Jones (ed.), *Trem ar y Ganrif* (Dolgellau, 1902), 229.

⁸⁴ D. James, 'Cân Ddirwestol', *Yr Athraw*, Mai (1843), 135-6.

Cân Ddirwestol [Temperance Song]

Galwaf arnat, Gymro hylon,
Ar hyd y nos;
I roi benthyg clust i'm cwynion,
Ar hyd y nos:
Gŵr wyf sydd yn methu cysgu,
Ar ôl gorwedd yn fy ngwely,
Gan sŵn meddwon yn taranu,
Ar hyd y nos.

Gwranddo feddwyn mawr dy dwrw,
Ar hyd y nos;
Gad dy oferedd cyn dy farw,
Ar hyd y nos:
Rhag i'th bechod tra mynwesol
Dy droi i ffwrn y ffau uffernol,
Lle bydd gwaeau yn dragwyddol,
Ar hyd y nos.

D. James, Llundain, 22 Mawrth 1843

When a branch of the Temperance Society was formed in the mining community of Leeswood, near Mold, in 1836, almost every chapel member in the village joined the movement,⁸⁵ and the Musical Society that followed a year later included every member of the Temperance Society.⁸⁶ John Jones (1798-1857), a local saddler and precentor at Bethel Congregationalist Chapel (Ind.), Mold,⁸⁷ taught young people the rudiments of music for which he was paid a fee of 3s.6d for each meeting and later formed a Temperance choir.⁸⁸ He attended the meetings regularly for over a year, sometimes twice weekly, and as a result, the singing in Leeswood 'became renowned in north-east Wales'.⁸⁹ John Jones is described by W.T.Thomas as 'one of the most well-known musicians in the Principality', having established music classes in Mold, Holywell, Ruthin, Denbigh, Wrexham and Llanarmon yn Ial.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ John Powell, 'Dechreuad a Chynnydd Achos y Methodistiaid Calфинаidd yn Nghoedllai, Sir Fflint', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif 509, Mawrth (1873), 97.

⁸⁶ 'Coedllai', *Y Cerbyd Dirwestol*, Cyfrol I (1838), 29.

⁸⁷ Bethel Chapel, belonging to the Independent or Congregationalist denomination, was built in New Street, Mold in 1827. See Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, *The Religious Census of 1851 – A Calendar of the Returns Relating to Wales*, Vol. II (Cardiff, 1981), 119.

⁸⁸ John Powell, op. cit., 97.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 'Codwyd y canu i fri mawr iawn, fel ag yr aeth sôn mawr am ganu Coedllai ymhell ac agos'. 'The singing became renowned, and the reputation of Leeswood's singing spread far and near'. See Robert Roberts, Coedtalon, 'Coedllai: ei hynafiaethau, ei phobl a'i chrefydd' (Tryddyn, 1892), 9.

⁹⁰ W.T. Thomas, 'Mr. John Jones, Yr Wyddgrug', *Y Dysgedydd*, Cyfrol 36 (Dolgellau, 1857), 16; Robert Roberts, Coedtalon, *ibid.*

The first Temperance festival to take place on Welsh soil was at Mold in August 1836,⁹¹ followed by a similar event in Holywell later that year,⁹² which coincided with the October race meeting when factories closed to give workers the opportunity to enjoy the sport, albeit the Temperance procession far outnumbered those attending the racing event.⁹³ Two months later, in October 1836, a procession marched through the streets of Wrexham singing Temperance songs, after which the message of social reform spread like wildfire,⁹⁴ to the extent that the Movement claimed to have enrolled 100,000 converts in north Wales, with a particularly good following in the mining communities of Wrexham and Ruabon.⁹⁵

The Holywell Temperance Society was formally incorporated on 29 July 1836 and led by Wesleyan minister, Rev. J. Barker, as a branch of the Chester Temperance Society.⁹⁶ He continued to minister to the notoriously inebriated copper workers of Maesglas,⁹⁷ and during the period of 1837-1840, Flintshire became well-known for its Temperance activity with choirs, open-air meetings, and marches.⁹⁸ Another ardent supporter of the ideology was Wesleyan minister, Rev. Griffith Hughes of Holywell,⁹⁹ who did much to promote the Movement in the communities of Bagillt, Leeswood, Mostyn, and the surrounding villages.¹⁰⁰ In contrast to the chapels that distanced their cause from *eisteddfodau* on the premise that they convened in the local hostelry, the proactive Temperance Movement addressed the demand for popular culture by organising a series of *eisteddfodau* and other community events to challenge the appeal of the tavern. Many of these events took place in the chapels and influenced by the songs of Temperance and the liberal use of instrumental accompaniment, and when well-known hymns were sung to the poetry of abstinence, Wales developed a counter-culture that was characteristically Nonconformist in that it extended the influence and control of the chapel.

⁹¹ John Thomas, *op. cit.*, 151.

⁹² W. Davies, 'Cymdeithas Ddirwestol Treffynnon', *Y Cerbyd Dirwestol*, Rhif V, Mawrth (1838), 76.

⁹³ L.A. Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth yn Nosbarth Treffynnon, 1750-1910* (Dolgellau, 1910), 307; Griffith Owen, *op. cit.*, 643; Benjamin Hughes, 'Y Diwygiad Dirwestol', *Y Dysgedydd* (1837), 31.

⁹⁴ Alan Luff, *op. cit.*, 166.

⁹⁵ A.H. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 378.

⁹⁶ John Thomas, *op. cit.*, 76.

⁹⁷ L.A. Owen, *op. cit.*, 304.

⁹⁸ T.M. Jones, *Cofiant y Parch. Roger Edwards, yr Wyddgrug* (Gwrecsam, 1908), 195.

⁹⁹ L.A. Owen, *op. cit.*, 304.

¹⁰⁰ John Thomas, *op. cit.*, 80-81.

The rapid advance of the Movement was further enhanced by Temperance periodicals, some of which were published in north-east Wales and Liverpool. Titles such as *Cronicl yr Oes*,¹⁰¹ *Y Cerbyd Dirwestol*,¹⁰² *Yr Athraw*¹⁰³ and *Y Dirwestydd*¹⁰⁴ were published from Llanidloes and Liverpool respectively, while the short-lived *Y Seren Ddirwestol* (1837) was printed at Chester.¹⁰⁵ Locally-published editions of Welsh Temperance hymns such as those of John Hughes of Mold began to appear between 1836 and 1838 and he explains in the foreword to *Caniadau Dirwestaidd* (1836) that the hymns were written at the request of the Mold Teetotal Society.¹⁰⁶ Although familiar hymn-tunes proved to be an effective carrier of the Temperance message, they nevertheless blurred the lines between sacred and secular music. Furthermore, the Movement had provoked the prejudice of the established denominations by using musical accompaniment in the same manner as the taverns which they were intent on closing. While the Presbyterians dogmatically opposed the introduction of musical instruments in the chapel, other denominations, such as the Primitive Methodists welcomed vernacular musicians to their fold.

For example, in the Primitive Methodist stronghold of Buckley, full use was made of the reed and brass band that struck its first note in c.1822 by accompanying religious services¹⁰⁷ and there is every possibility that the same band would have led the Temperance processions.¹⁰⁸ There were similar developments in Penycae as Owen *Cantwr* disregarded criticism from the minister and elders of Salem Chapel

¹⁰¹ *Cronicl yr Oes* [The Chronicle of the Times] was edited by Roger Edwards and published in Mold from 1836 until 1839. It was the first weekly paper to be established after the reduction in Stamp Duty in 1836 and also described as 'the first political newspaper in Welsh', the fore-runner of *Yr Amserau*. See Bangor University Archives, GB 0222, BEL, Belmont Manuscripts, Context: Administrative and biographical history.

¹⁰² *Y Cerbyd Dirwestol* [The Temperance Chariot] was also a Mold publication, in circulation between November 1837 and October 1838.

¹⁰³ *Yr Athraw* [The Teacher, 1836-1844] was a monthly religious magazine with a strong temperance influence and published in Llanidloes. It included many temperance hymns and festival reports.

¹⁰⁴ *Y Dirwestydd* [The Abstainer] was an undenominational periodical, published in Liverpool from August 1836 until August 1839.

¹⁰⁵ *Y Seren Ddirwestol* [The Temperance Star] was published at Chester and in circulation from January to May 1837, mainly in north Wales.

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Callestr, *Caniadau Dirwestaidd: Emynau i'w canu ynghyfarfodydd Y Gymdeithas Llwyrymattaliad* (Wyddgrug, 1836), Rhagair.

¹⁰⁷ History of the Royal Buckley Town Band, <http://www.royalbuckleytownband.org.uk/>, accessed 20 December 2010; Dennis Griffiths, *Out of This Clay* (Denbigh, 1960), 79.

¹⁰⁸ Dennis Griffiths, *Out of This Clay* (Denbigh, 1960), 79.

and formed a Temperance band in the 1830s, despite the anxieties of those who felt that processions associated with the Friendly Society clubs¹⁰⁹ compromised the dignity of sacred music.¹¹⁰ Harsh Presbyterian attitudes had banished traditional music to the taverns, but under the Temperance banner¹¹¹ *eisteddfodau*, marching bands, choral societies and a wide range of other pursuits were organised, although there were complaints that meetings often consisted merely of entertainment.¹¹² Despite such criticism, the non-partisan Movement breached the divide between chapel and the working classes and John Davies observes: 'With its emphasis upon the nurturing of moral and self-reliant individuals, Temperance was remarkably well-suited to form part of the ethos of nineteenth-century Nonconformity as it was the ministers who led the societies and the methods of revivalism were used to spread the message'.¹¹³

Temperance crusades were convened during Christian Festivals to avoid disrupting the working week and the distraction from less wholesome secular activities encouraged a sober work-force so that the movement garnered support from employers who were aggrieved at the level of drink-related absenteeism. Many workers were drawn to this democratic ideal with its vibrant melodies and although many were in contrast to the solemn style of Welsh hymnody, they nevertheless stimulated an interest in music and moral awareness. The movement often adapted the words of temperate ideals to hymn-tunes which had a positive effect on chapel music and one of the first to be influenced by the Temperance Movement¹¹⁴ was Chester bookseller and Calvinistic Methodist minister, John Parry (1775-1846) who published *Peroriaeth Hyfryd*.¹¹⁵ This collection of a hundred hymn-tunes¹¹⁶ included familiar English melodies, such as 'Derby', 'Devizes', 'Job', 'Duke St' and 'Lydia', but in order to balance the content of the hymnal he also included a

¹⁰⁹ Friendly Societies were benevolent organisations that provided financial and social relief to individuals of mutual interest in their religious and political affiliations.

¹¹⁰ John Owen Jones, *op. cit.*, 17.

¹¹¹ W.R.Lambert (1983), *op. cit.*, 13.

¹¹² R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff, 2004), 398.

¹¹³ John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994), 374.

¹¹⁴ Huw Williams, 'Adolygiad o *Welsh Hymns and their Tunes: Their Background and Place in Welsh History and Culture* gan Alan Luff', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynau Cymru*, Cyfrol 3, Rhif 2 (1989/90), 76.

¹¹⁵ John Parry, *Peroriaeth Hyfryd* (Caerlleon, 1837).

¹¹⁶ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), 'Roberts, John, Henllan', *Yr Attodiad yn John Parry* (gol.), *Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig*, Cyfrol X (Dinbych, 1879), 703.

number of Welsh hymn-tunes, such as 'Aberhonddu', 'Bethel', 'Hyder', 'Pen Calfaria' and 'Paradwys' drawn from the collection of John Roberts, Henllan (1807-1876).¹¹⁷

Two years later, John Roberts, Henllan, published *Caniadau y Cyssegr* [Songs of Praise],¹¹⁸ which, according to its title, contains 55 'old and new tunes, mostly of Welsh composition',¹¹⁹ of which 500 copies were printed.¹²⁰ This hymnal was more melodic than previous collections and broke new ground in Welsh hymnody in that the majority of tunes were composed by Welsh musicians of the late 18th and early 19th century, including John Williams [*Dolgellau, Cemaes*] and John Jeffreys [*Glan Dyfrdwy*], all of which were harmonised by John Roberts.¹²¹ A number of the tunes in this collection are of indeterminate origin, although titles such as *Caergwrle, Coedllai, Llangollen, Llanrwst, Prion* and *Rhiwabon*, suggest a strong association with Denbighshire. John Roberts collected hymn-tunes that were used in the heat of religious awakening and composed by musicians under the influence of such revivals,¹²² and he is acknowledged as having harmonised the tunes that appear in *Caniadau y Cyssegr*.¹²³ A number of the tunes included in this work were those which he recalled being sung by the old folk, foremost among whom was John Peters (1754-1835) the faithful Henllan CM Chapel precentor of almost fifty years.¹²⁴

The hymnals of both John Parry and John Roberts were compiled at the height of Temperance enthusiasm and these timely publications coincided with the musical societies that placed hymn-singing at the heart of worship by stipulating that a

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 705; M.O. Jones, op. cit., 110. Aged 15, John Roberts started 'noting' congregational tunes under the aegis of a Thomas Daniel. He furthered his musical studies by studying the books of J.F. Burrowes, *Thorough-base Primer* (London, 1819) and Thomas Busby, *A Grammar of Music* (London, 1818). In 1833, he was appointed precentor of the CM chapel at Henllan. See J.Ogwen Jones, op. cit., 705.

¹¹⁸ John Roberts, *Caniadau y Cyssegr, neu Gasgliad o Donau Hen a Diweddar, gan mwyaf o gyfansoddiad Gymreig* (Dinbych, 1839).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), 'Roberts, John, Henllan', in John Parry (gol.), op. cit., 705; M.O. Jones, op. cit., 111. See Appendix 1.

¹²¹ Huw Williams, *Taro Tant* (Dinbych, 1994), 125.

¹²² J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), op. cit., 705; R.D.Griffiths op. cit., 143-144.

¹²³ John Roberts, *Caniadau y Cyssegr* (Dinbych, 1839), Rhagymadrodd (Preface)

¹²⁴ John Roberts quoted in J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), op. cit., 705.

singing meeting was to be held once a week for two hours.¹²⁵ Choirmaster Samuel Nuttall (1833-1925)¹²⁶ of Holywell recalls how as a curious five-year old child he had listened to the Welsh Congregational Chapel Temperance choir, formed after 'a meeting of Teetotallers' some time in 1838 as they practised in preparation for 'a grand Temperance Meeting', at Moel-y-Gaer, Rhosesmor, to celebrate the coronation of Queen Victoria on 28 June 1838.¹²⁷ This movement of social reform had a profound effect on the working classes of north-east Wales and the Welsh communities on Merseyside,¹²⁸ and W. R. Lambert observes that Nonconformists: 'deprived of social status ... saw in a progressive cause like temperance a means of confirming their separateness from the world'.¹²⁹ The Temperance mission was accessible to every class of society and conformed to the ideals of denominations that were encouraging self-improvement through singing classes and competitive meetings that soon developed into Temperance *eisteddfodau* in the Nonconformist chapels.¹³⁰

According to the annual statistics of the Temperance Movement in 1837, there were 4,000 members in Flintshire with the greatest concentration of adherents in Holywell [1,023] and Mold [830], which included Leeswood (Coedllai), a village renowned for its chapel and Temperance choirs.¹³¹ The influence of the Movement surged across north-east Wales, from the fifteen reformers in the tiny hamlet of Llong, near Holywell, to the more populated area of Wrexham, where it had conscripted 4,260 converts of whom 2,500 were in the Ruabon district and 903 in Adwy'r Clawdd.¹³² The chapels at Rhosllannerchrugog pledged their conviction to Temperance reform at the inauguration of the local branch on 19 September 1836

¹²⁵ 'Cymdeithas Gerddorawl Tabernacl, Bangor', *Y Gwladgarwr*, Cyfrol VI, Rhif LXII, Chwefror (1838), 54.

¹²⁶ In 1855, twenty-one year old Samuel Nuttall from Ysceifiog won the competition for a Temperance song, 'Tiriondeb', in Brynford, Holywell Literary Society. See Bangor University Archives, X/MC 399 NUT, 'Y don fuddugol yng nghyfarfod llenyddol Brynffordd, Treffynon, yr hwn a gynhaliwyd Medi 27ain, 1855: ynghyd â thôn ddirwestol / gan Samuel Nuttall, Ysceifiog'.

¹²⁷ Flintshire Record Office, D/DM/742/1, Samuel Nuttall, *My Recollections and Life* (1860), 3; T.M. Jones, *op. cit.*, 195.

¹²⁸ E. Griffiths, *The Presbyterian Church of Wales Historical Hand-Book 1735-1905* (Wrexham, 1905), 131.

¹²⁹ W.R. Lambert (1983), *op. cit.*, 252.

¹³⁰ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Welsh Society 1840-1914* (Cardiff, 2003), 21.

¹³¹ Robert Roberts, *Coed Talon*, *op. cit.*, 9.

¹³² 'Cyfres fisol o Aelodaeth Cymdeithasau Dirwestol Swydd Fflint', *Y Cerbyd Dirwestol* (Wyddgrug, 1838), 15. See John Thomas, *Jubili y Diwygiad Dirwestol yn Nghymru* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1885), 76-91 for a detailed account of Temperance activities in north-east Wales.

that began with a large procession in the afternoon, followed by an evening meeting in Capel Mawr.¹³³ On Merseyside, the first festival held on 14 July 1835, concluded with an evening meeting attended by 800 people,¹³⁴ and by 1838, it had grown to such an extent that the Liverpool Temperance Festival became a week-long affair, with a grand procession, 'such was its extent that it was seven hours and a half on the road'.¹³⁵ W.R.Lambert summarises the relevance of the Temperance movement to the Welsh diaspora of Liverpool:

Like the urban chapels to which they were so often physically attached in Liverpool and Manchester, Welsh temperance societies were 'havens of refuge in an utterly strange and alien landscape'. Here, and here only, could the old links with home be maintained, the familiar forms of worship be recovered'.¹³⁶

Unfettered by the politics of denominationalism, the Temperance Movement introduced a new dimension to the cultural life of the region that was founded on the belief that music, regardless of genre, was the most effective form of conveying the message of social reform. This was a fellowship that thrived on the ideal of participation, and it was inevitable that the music of the social reformers would find popularity in the Sunday schools as the few hymns composed for children in the early decades of the nineteenth century were considered to be of an inferior nature.¹³⁷ There is no doubt that the affiliation between Temperance and the Welsh Nonconformist chapels had a positive outcome, and according to D.M.Griffith, the Sunday schools 'played their part in re-introducing music into the national life in a form which was safe from the disapproval of the religious leaders ...'.¹³⁸ The tune 'Hyfryd'(Joyful), published in *Y Drysorfa* in February 1835,¹³⁹ was acceptable to the Sunday schools,¹⁴⁰ and the vibrant melody and lively chorus proved so popular that 2,500 copies, printed in Welsh and English, were sold in three months.¹⁴¹ (See Fig. 2.1 over).

¹³³ Edward Hooson, *Cofnodion Capel Mawr, Rhosllannerchrugog (1885-1889)*, 20 Medi 1886, 27.

¹³⁴ 'Temperance Festival', *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 July 1835, 8.

¹³⁵ 'Liverpool Temperance Festival', *Livesey's Moral Reformer*, 1 August 1838, 153.

¹³⁶ Quoted in W.R.Lambert (1983), *op. cit.*, 60.

¹³⁷ R.D. Griffith, 'Yr Ysgol Sul a Chaniadaeth', yn G. Wynne Griffith, *Yr Ysgol Sul – Penodau ar Hanes yr Ysgol Sul yn bennafymhlith y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd* (Caernarfon, 1936), 211.

¹³⁸ D. M. Griffith, *Nationality in the Sunday School Movement* (Bangor, 1925), 154.

¹³⁹ 'Peroriaeth: Hyfryd-Joyful', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif LI, Llyfr V, Chwefror (1835), 64.

¹⁴⁰ R.D.Griffith yn G. Wynne Griffith, *op. cit.*, 211.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Fig 2.1

EMYN I BLANT YR YSGOL SABBATHOL.

Pia. *Y Dôn—Hyfryd (Joyful).* *Byrdwn (Chorus);*

Here we suffer grief and pain;
 Here we meet to part again,—
 In Heaven we part no more.
 O! that will be joyful!
 Joyful! joyful! joyful!
 O that will be joyful!
 When we meet to part no more.

All who love the Lord below,
 When they die to heaven will go,
 And sing with saints above.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

Little children will be there,
 Who have sought the Lord by pray'r,
 From every Sunday School.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

Friends and Parents then will meet,
 Friends and Parents then will meet,
 Will meet to part no more.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

Teachers too, shall meet above,
 And our Pastors, whom we love,
 Shall meet to part no more.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

Oh! how happy we shall be,
 For our Saviour we shall see,
 Exalted on his throne.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

There we all shall sing with joy,
 And eternity employ,
 In praising Christ the Lord.
 O! that will be joyful! &c.

Yma cur a blinder cawn,
 Yma c'wrdd i mado wnawn,
 Nid felly yn y Nef.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd!
 Hyfryd, hyfryd, hyfryd,
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd!
 C'wrdd heb byth ymadael mwy.

Pawb sydd yma'n caru Duw,
 Gwedi marw hwy gant fwy,
 A chanu yn y Nef.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Pawb brofasant ras a hedd,
 Iesu, hwy gant wel'd ei wedd,
 A chanu iddo byth.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Duwiol a sancteiddiol blant,
 Sy'n gweddio, yno'r ant,
 O'r holl Ysgolion Sul.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Ein hathrawon rhad a rhydd,
 A'n rhieni yno fydd,
 Dros byth yn llawenâu:
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Ein bugeiliaid gyda hwy,
 Yno fydd heb oïd mwy,
 A'u bronau 'n llawn o hedd.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Cawn gyfarfod uwch y llawr,
 Apostolion Iesu mawr,
 Yn ei addoli Ef.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

O! mor ddedwydd y cawn fyw,
 Gweled y Gwardwr gwiw,
 Ar ei orseddfaine fry.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

Yno ni gawn ganu byth,
 Mewn llawenydd pur dilyth,
 I Grist yr Arglwydd Ior.
 O! hyn fydd yn hyfryd! &c.

* * Mae plant yr Ysgolion Sabbathol yn canu yr Emyu uchod ddydd a nos! Ac mae eu hyfryd sain ynghlustiau eu hathrawon i ba le bynag yr elont.
 Mae y Dôn ar Emyu uchod yn argraffedig (yn Gymraeg neu Saesoneg) ar Gerdyn 2d. yr un.—ar bapur ¼d. neu 2s. 6c. y 100.

Congregational singing had much to gain from the ideal of an inter-denominational approach and one convert, Hugh Evans (1790-1853), a gifted cello player and precentor at Betws Gwerfyl Goch Church, who founded the Cerrig-y-Drudion Musical Society (*Cymdeithas Gantorawl*) in 1838, stipulated that the association was 'to embrace every denomination'.¹⁴² He held singing meetings in the area every two months on a rotational basis,¹⁴³ and in 1838,¹⁴⁴ under the auspices of this Society, he published a series of pamphlets *Egwyddorion Peroriaeth* [The Principles of Music],¹⁴⁵ for the purpose of furthering the musical knowledge of his choir members. Many other musical societies followed his example and bridged the denominational divide with the common aim of teaching congregations to sing songs of praise 'with regularity and organisation',¹⁴⁶ and the publication of *Egwyddorion Peroriaeth* enabled chapel precentors and singers in the *Ysgol Gân* to acquire a better understanding of sacred music.

Perhaps the greatest contribution to the advancement of musical literacy came in 1838 when Rev. John Mills (*Ieuan Glan Alarch*, 1812-1873), grandson of Henry Mills, published *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* [The Grammar of Music],¹⁴⁷ that signified 'a turning-point' in the standard of congregational singing in Wales, as Mills attempted to distinguish between sacred and secular music.¹⁴⁸ Described as the 'first complete musical handbook published in Wales', the affordable text-book achieved a sale of c. 40,000 copies.¹⁴⁹ In the preface, the author refers to the poor state of Church music in the principality and chastises the *blaenoriaid y gân* (precentors), not only for their ignorance of the rudiments of music, but for introducing unworthy madrigals into worship.¹⁵⁰ By far the most common criticism in Wales was that early 19th century congregational singing tended to imitate the

¹⁴² Owen Humphrey Davies (*Eos Llechid*), 'Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol a Beirmiadol o Gerddorion Ymadawedig: Huw Evans', *Yr Haul*, Cyfrol V, Rhif 57, Medi (1889), 202. Both Richard and John Mills are known to have visited this society.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ M.O. Jones, *op. cit.*, 27.

¹⁴⁵ Hugh Evans, *Egwyddorion Peroriaeth ar ddull Holwyddoreg, wedi eu dethol o weithiau amrywiol awdwyr, a'u trefnu yn rheolaidd ac eglur, i'r dyben o hyfforddi ieuencid yn y gelfyddyd fuddiol hon* (Llanrwst, 1838). The two shilling pamphlets were published in preparation for the quarterly meeting of the society. See M.O. Jones, *op. cit.*, 27.

¹⁴⁶ R.D. Griffith (1948), *op. cit.*, 63.

¹⁴⁷ John Mills, *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* (Llanidloes, 1838).

¹⁴⁸ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Welsh Chapel Music: The Making of a Tradition', *The Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 6 (Cardiff, 1989), 37.

¹⁴⁹ 'John Mills', *The Welsh Weekly*, 22 July 1892, 11.

¹⁵⁰ John Mills (1838), *op. cit.*, 220-1.

English style of slurring notes¹⁵¹ which was unacceptable to Mills who felt that the distinction between sacred and secular music was being blurred, and the sole purpose of his new musical grammar was 'to restore and enhance true church music in Wales'.¹⁵² He later became a minister in Ruthin in 1841, a locality with which he was familiar as he passed through the town on his journey to Denbigh where he had instructed classes on the rudiments of music at Prion Calvinistic Methodist Chapel (built in 1792).¹⁵³

For the Mills', the 1840s was a productive decade during which Richard and John,¹⁵⁴ set the agenda for a 'musical reformation' that was primed by economic circumstance, motivated by the passion for knowledge and enlivened by the Temperance Movement.¹⁵⁵ The interest in musical literacy was gathering pace when John Mills appealed for a musical revival and encouraged choral societies to unite in a *cymanfa gerddorol* [hymn-singing festival] once or twice a year on a rotational basis between north and south Wales.¹⁵⁶ Rhidian Griffiths maintains that Mills was probably the first to use the phrase 'cymanfa' in a *musical* context as a reference to a 'senate of musicians' presiding over a combination of lectures on music and singing.¹⁵⁷ John Mills' work had enabled chapel choirs to develop, but *Ioan Glan y Môr* writing in *Y Drysorfa* in 1840 was critical of the fact that congregational singing had not progressed significantly, despite the influence of Sunday schools in improving education and organisation.¹⁵⁸ Two years after John Mills' popular text-book there followed Richard Mills' *Caniadau Seion* (1840),¹⁵⁹ that included hymn-tunes by Richard Mills, John Ambrose Lloyd and a selection of anthems by Handel and Haydn.

¹⁵¹ J.Ogwen Jones (gol.), op. cit., 705.

¹⁵² John Mills (1838), op. cit., Rhagymadrodd (Preface).

¹⁵³ W.H.Roberts, Prion, *Hynafiaethau Plwyf Llanrhaiadr-yng-Nghinmeirch* (Prion, 1914), 15.

¹⁵⁴ Richard Mills, *Caniadau Seion* (Llanidloes, 1840), *Atodiad i'r Caniadau Seion* (Llanidloes, 1842), *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* I, II a III (Llanidloes, 1842, 1843, 1845), John a Richard Mills, *Y Cerddor Eglwysig* (Llanidloes, 1846), John Mills, *Y Salmydd Eglwysig* (Llanidloes, 1847), *Elfennau Cerddoriaeth* (Llanidloes, 1848).

¹⁵⁵ R. D. Griffith (1948), op. cit., 78.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 224.

¹⁵⁷ Rhidian Griffiths (1986-87), op. cit., 276. Religious *Cymanfa* meetings were first introduced by Thomas Charles of Bala in 1808 to boost the popularity of his Sunday Schools. See Edward Jones, *Y Gymdeithasfa: yn cynwys Gweithrediadau Cymdeithasfa Chwarterol y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Ngogledd Cymru a'r Gymanfa Gyffredinol* (Caernarfon, 1891), 100-1.

¹⁵⁸ *Ioan Glan y Mor*, 'Canu Mawl', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CXI, Mawrth (1840), 71.

¹⁵⁹ Richard Mills, *Caniadau Seion, sef casgliad o donau i'w canu yn yr addoliad dwysol* (Llanidloes, 1840-2).

By 1840, the combined effect of musical grammars and informed commentaries pertaining to music that appeared regularly in the denominational journals had stimulated a renewed interest in Welsh choral and congregational singing.¹⁶⁰ In Liverpool, for instance, John Ambrose Lloyd, by now precentor at Salem Congregational Chapel, Brownlow Hill, was teaching the rudiments of music to a youth choir so that every member could read at first sight.¹⁶¹ Frustrated at the paucity of suitable hymns, in 1843 he published *Casgliad o Donau* [A Collection of Hymn-tunes],¹⁶² a compilation of 229 hymn-tunes and 8 anthems, of which 27 hymns and two anthems were of his own composition.¹⁶³ As the hymn-tunes of Ambrose Lloyd, Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*, 1823-1904) of Nannerch and the Mills' became popular, a correspondent to *Yr Athraw* in 1843 bemoaned that the tunes of John Ellis were no longer sung as they were generally intended by Welsh congregations.¹⁶⁴ The view of the complainant conflicted with that of Thomas Williams (*Hafrenydd*, 1807-1894) writing under the style of 'Sigma', who opined that the hymn-tunes of John Ellis, Llanrwst were losing their appeal by the end of the 1830s and being replaced by a new generation of hymnists.¹⁶⁵

Hafrenydd's dismissive commentary on Ellis' hymns may have been prejudiced by self-interest as he was in the process of compiling *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol* [The National Psalmist]¹⁶⁶ which was published in 1846 for use in the Anglican Church in Wales. Both John Ellis and Henry Mills had defected to the Calvinistic Methodists unlike *Hafrenydd* who had remained loyal to the Anglican Church and his views may have been biased by denominational rivalry. Thomas Williams probably regarded himself as a contributor to the new generation of hymnists, although it is open to question as to whether *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol* achieved the success of Richard Mills' *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* [The Musical Leader] which

¹⁶⁰ 'Canu Mawl', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CXI, Llyfr X, Mawrth (1840), 71.

¹⁶¹ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, op. cit., 38.

¹⁶² J.A. Lloyd, *Casgliad o Donau ar y gwahanol fesurau arferedig ymhlith y Cymry* (Liverpool, 1843).

¹⁶³ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, op. cit., 41-2.

¹⁶⁴ 'Sigma' (Thomas Williams, *Hafrenydd*), 'Canu Mawl', *Yr Athraw*, Hydref (1843), 309.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas Williams, *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol: neu gerddoriaeth eglwysig; yn cynwys crynôad helaeth o donau, anthemau, darnau corawl cysegredig ... / y cwbl wedi eu casglu a'u trefnu gan Thomas Williams, Llanidloes* (Llanidloes, 1846).

was written for musicians, rather than a particular denomination.¹⁶⁷ Mills' textbook for *codwyr canu* included hymn-tunes, anthems and advisory notes on singing that were arranged in lesson-form for use throughout the three-month winter term of the *Ysgol Gân*, which explains why tutorials were divided into twelve weekly lessons. He introduced the amateur musician to the works of the great masters, and it was in *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* that J.S.Bach's 'Mannheim' first appeared in a Welsh collection.¹⁶⁸

The final contribution of Richard Mills (*Rhydderch Hael*) written between 1842 and 1845 was widely circulated,¹⁶⁹ and coincided with the heightened interest in singing that was being encouraged in the *Ysgol Gân* and *Ysgolion Sul*. To the labouring classes, the *Ysgol Sul* was a resource that freely provided learning opportunities for both children and adults, and such was the affinity between the populace and the Sunday school movement that the Children's Employment Commission (1842) makes specific reference to the growth of the Nonconformist chapels and their moral relevance to the working class communities.

There is now in North Wales no village however remote or obscure, where sectarian places of worship have not been built even to the number of three or four, some on a large and expensive scale; the money to build them has been raised by small and long-continued subscriptions from the lower and middle classes of the people, among whom dissent in North Wales is almost universal.¹⁷⁰

In the introduction to his report, Herbert Jones, the sub-commissioner of the Children's Employment Commission of 1842, commented: 'The evidence I have taken will throughout demonstrate that everywhere the Sabbath is decently and indeed religiously observed, that there are few children who do not attend Divine worship very constantly, and that most of them go early to Sunday-school'.¹⁷¹ He visited 25 fellowships and conducted 199 interviews throughout the coal, iron, lead

¹⁶⁷ Richard Mills, *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* was published in three parts. The first appeared in 1842, followed by part 2 in 1844, both published in Llanidloes by J.M. Jones, but the third was published posthumously in 1845. See R.D. Griffith (1948), op. cit., 149.

¹⁶⁸ R.D. Griffith (1948), op. cit., 149.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 150. Griffith states that over nine thousand copies of the parts were sold within a short space of time.

¹⁷⁰ *The Employment of Children and Young Persons in the Mines and Mineral Works in North Wales, 1842*, later referred to as '*Children's Employment Commission, 1842, North Wales*', 14.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

and other works in Denbighshire and Flintshire and concluded: 'The moral and religious condition of the children employed in the coal pits and mines, you will be gratified to learn, is much improved of late years; I have the opinion of all classes to confirm this assertion'.¹⁷²

The purpose of the report was to assess the working and social conditions that prevailed in the factories and mines, and as such the finite detail of cultural activity did not fall within the remit of this survey. That Herbert Jones had visited so many fellowships and was liberal in his praise of the Sunday Schools was sufficient to imply that 'educational and recreation' included cultural development as music was embodied in the curriculum of the *Ysgol Gân* and *Ysgolion Sul*. It was widely acknowledged that the chapel had stimulated the ambition of the working classes and Edward Lloyd, JP of Cefn, St. Asaph, claimed that the valuable contribution of the Sunday Schools contributed to the moral and social fabric of the community:

Without recreation and education children must become mere working machines, and remain in a state of ignorance ... I think the great exertions made of late years in instructing them in Sunday-schools both by Churchmen and Dissenters have had a beneficial tendency, and there is an evident improvement in the morals and intelligence of the working classes.¹⁷³

Sunday Schools and singing classes enabled the scholars to participate in chapel services and a new confidence began to emerge as the aspiration for leadership and respectability became a characteristic of Nonconformist education.¹⁷⁴ W.T.R.Pryce records that 'nearly a quarter of the population in north-east Wales was registered in Sunday Schools during 1846,¹⁷⁵ and D.M.Griffith observes: 'In Wales, the Sunday School came to be a gymnasium for man as a political animal ... man learnt to exercise the functions of government, from the mechanical details of administration to the art of controlling opinion'.¹⁷⁶ Geraint Jenkins concurs: 'Sunday schools not only strengthened the Welsh language by encouraging oral

¹⁷² Ibid., 13.

¹⁷³ Evidence given by Edward Jones, *ibid.*, 134.

¹⁷⁴ K.O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford and Cardiff, 1982), 18.

¹⁷⁵ W.T.R.Pryce, 'Industrialism, urbanization and the maintenance of culture areas: north-east Wales in the mid-nineteenth century', *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 7, June (1975), 320.

¹⁷⁶ D. M. Griffith, *Nationality in the Sunday School Movement* (Bangor, 1925), 153.

participation by children and adults alike, but also by developing the reading habit and a taste for doctrinal disputation'.¹⁷⁷

R.D. Griffith believes that the Sunday school did more for singing in Wales than any other movement by introducing music and laying the foundations for the nation's musical tradition,¹⁷⁸ even though efforts to improve the standards of congregational singing were often frustrated. For example, in a letter dated 2nd April 1844, Ellis Evans, the Baptist minister of Seion Cefn Mawr, refers to the rumpus created by chapel deacons when they entered the building on a Saturday evening in the late 1830s and dismantled the choir pews, in order to extend the *sêf fawr*.¹⁷⁹ It was the Independent minister William Williams *Y Wern* who brought the term *cythraul canu* into common usage when he depicted the three devils in the chapels - namely 'the devil of singing, the devil of the allocation of pews and the devil of electing deacons'.¹⁸⁰ The troubles at *Capel Seion Cefn Mawr* perfectly illustrate this term, and Emlyn Davies describes the ructions that prompted Job Francis, *arweinydd y gân*, to form a breakaway cause in a loft above the Golden Lion tavern, and although *Capel y Lloffî* became popular with the singers, they eventually returned to Seion, on better terms.¹⁸¹ Having resolved the conflict, the singing in *Capel Seion* improved, particularly when interdenominational meetings were arranged in order to extend the scope of the *Ysgol Gân*.¹⁸²

The positive outcome of these meetings was that scholars of the singing schools were encouraged to perform in public and Thomas Thomas refers to a *cymansa ganu* at Llangernyw on New Year's Day 1845, when the *Ysgolion Sul* singing schools assembled for the *cyfarfod cynorthwyol* [supplementary meeting].¹⁸³ The event at Llangernyw was a contest with no prizes other than the commendation for

¹⁷⁷ Geraint H. Jenkins, (ed.), 'Wales, the Welsh and its Welsh Language: Introduction' in *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 2000), 18.

¹⁷⁸ R.D. Griffith in G. Wynne Griffith (1936), op. cit., 207, 212.

¹⁷⁹ Emlyn Davies, 'Seion', *Cefn Chronicle*, 19 February 1916, 2. Papers in the private collection of Rhiannon Grey-Davies, Garth, near Ruabon, relating to the family of Davies *Y Cantwr* of Cefn Mawr and District.

¹⁸⁰ 'Y mae tri chythraul ..., sef cythraul canu - cythraul gosod eisteddleoedd - a chythraul dewis swyddogion'. See W. Rees, *Cofiant Y Parch W. Williams, Wern* (Llanelli, 1842), 133.

¹⁸¹ Emlyn Davies, op. cit., 2.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Thomas Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif', yn J. Morgan Jones (gol.), *Trem ar y Ganrif*, op. cit., 280-286.

good singing and the honour of participating which was sufficient reward. Three classes were arranged to learn the same tunes in a competition for the most refined singing, so that the best style could be adopted by the *Cymanfa* and sung by congregations in the area.¹⁸⁴ Following the afternoon session, a procession marched through the village singing tunes, such as *Lili*, *Cadernid* and *Jiwbili*.¹⁸⁵ The organisers stipulated that hymns were to be taken from *Y Salmydd Cymreig* [The Welsh Psalmist],¹⁸⁶ a hymnal compiled by Rev. Roger Edwards (1811-1886) of Mold.¹⁸⁷ T.M.Jones claims that this collection, in which there was no musical notation, was probably the first attempt at persuading the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales to adopt a standard hymnal for use in their songs of praise and by 1849 it was in common use throughout north Wales.¹⁸⁸ In the preface to *Y Salmydd Cymreig*, the author calls for further improvement to ensure 'intelligent and praiseworthy' singing and the ability to sing a hymn or psalm straight through without the endless repetition of a single verse.¹⁸⁹ During his ministry at Bethesda Chapel, Mold, Rev. Roger Edwards encouraged a succession of *codwyr canu* to improve the standard of sung worship and his request that the page number for each hymn should be announced implies that the congregation were in possession of *Y Salmydd Cymreig*.¹⁹⁰

Of equal significance to the *cymanfa ganu* at Llangernyw was the gathering later that year when Bersham-born Rev. John Parry (1812-1874) presided over the Bala *Cymanfa* of April 1845.¹⁹¹ This was a meeting specifically convened 'for the purpose of discussing with friends from various areas the state of singing, and to consider the complaints from certain parts of the country which referred to the lack of co-operation from the deacons that led to inferior singing'.¹⁹² It was during this *Cymanfa* that the Calvinistic Methodists and Congregationalists united in songs of

¹⁸⁴ 'Cylchwyn Gerddorol Llangerniew', *Y Beirniadur Cymreig*, Cyfrol 1, Rhif 5, Mai (1845), 238-239. *Y Beirniadur Cymreig* [The Welsh Critic] was edited by John Mills and printed in St. Asaph.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Roger Edwards (gol.), *Y Salmydd Cymreig. Casgliad o Salmau a Hymnau, addas i addoliad cyhoeddus a neillduedig* (Dinbych, 1840).

¹⁸⁷ R.D. Griffith (1948), op. cit., 64.

¹⁸⁸ T.M. Jones, op. cit., 235-36.

¹⁸⁹ Roger Edwards (ed.), op. cit., Preface.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Thomas Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif', yn J.M.Jones (gol.), *Trem ar y Ganrif*, op.cit., 284-5.

¹⁹² Ibid.

praise before being addressed by the Rev. John Parry, Lewis Jones, J. Griffith, Lewis Edwards and John Mills,¹⁹³ a discussion that would undoubtedly have touched on the role of music in worship.¹⁹⁴ During the evening meeting, a selection of hymn-tunes were sung, one of which was 'Huddersfield' by John Newton (1802-1886), which was included in William Jacob's *Eos Cymru* [The Nightingale of Wales],¹⁹⁵ and the anthem *Duw sydd Noddfa*, composed by Richard Mills.¹⁹⁶ It is unclear whether these works were sung by the congregation or a choir, although the complexity of the repertoire suggests the latter as being more likely. When he addressed the evening meeting, Lewis Edwards strongly encouraged the singers 'to raise the old Welsh tunes',¹⁹⁷ which may have been a subtle reference to the complexity of Newton's tune, the inner parts of which went beyond the musical understanding of untrained singers. Traditional Welsh hymn-tunes were written in a modal style in order to enable congregations to fully appreciate the hymn text, and John Mills would no doubt have stressed this point in the concluding lecture on the principles of music in the context of worship.¹⁹⁸ The *Cymanfa* was a salutary reminder that congregational singing was not a performing art, but rather a means of conveying the Christian Gospel.

The importance of John Mills' *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* cannot be overstated as it enabled chapel precentors in Wales to become musically literate. One exemplar of Mills' text was J. D. Jones (1827-1870), a young Wesleyan Methodist who moved from Montgomeryshire to Ruthin in 1851, where he changed his allegiance to the Congregationalists.¹⁹⁹ During his youth, he was forbidden by his father to spend money on music books, but such was his dedication to music that he learned to play the 'bass-viol',²⁰⁰ and continued to attend Dolanog singing school when he

¹⁹³ Emlyn Evans, 'Cerddoriaeth Gymreig yn y Ganrif Ddiwethaf', *Y Cerddor*, Gorffennaf (1901), 73.

¹⁹⁴ Thomas Thomas, op.cit., 285. Mills, had been invited to give a lecture on music.

¹⁹⁵ William Jacob, *Eos Cymru: sef, casgliad o donau, erddyganau gwreiddiol, ac anthemau, addas i'w canu mewn addoliad dwysfol / y casgliad wedi ei gymeryd allan o waith yr awduron enwocaf ...* (Llanidloes, 1844).

¹⁹⁶ 'Cymanfa Gerddorol y Bala', *Y Beirniadur Cymreig*, op. cit., 239.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ T. Thomas, op. cit., 285.

¹⁹⁹ 'J.D. Jones o Ruthyn', *Y Beirniad*, Rhif 78, Hydref (1878), 467; D.Emlyn Evans, 'J.D. Jones, Rhuthyn', *Y Cerddor*, 1 Mawrth 1893, 27.

²⁰⁰ Denbighshire Record Office, DD/DM/1044/4, ibid., 6.

was about 14 years of age, c.1841.²⁰¹ He borrowed Mills' *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth*, from sympathetic friends,²⁰² and it was through the study of this text-book that he became fluent in Old Notation and achieved a basic understanding of harmony.²⁰³ Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Mills' family was that they educated working-class musicians and while there were other musical dynasties, such as the Jacob family of Holywell, Jonathan Jones at Adwy'r Clawdd and Owen *Cantwr* at Penycae, all prominent in their respective communities, it was the Mills' who set the musical agenda in the north-east Wales region.

In many chapels, the position of *codwr canu* was dynastic in that musical talent was passed to successive generations, as illustrated by the families of Davies y *Cantwr* at Cefn Mawr, the Owen Jones' of Penycae, John Jones of Mold and Seth Roberts (1826-1888) of Brymbo.²⁰⁴ In Coedpoeth, near Wrexham, 'the father of musicians' was Jonathan Jones, a lead miner, who raised the standard of singing at Adwy'r Clawdd with the formation of a 50-strong choir²⁰⁵ and created such enthusiasm for singing that many of the congregation attended the Sunday afternoon practices as regularly as the singers.²⁰⁶ He was succeeded by his nephew, John Jones (1823-89), who was chapel precentor from 1840 until 1844 during which time he became headmaster of Minera School before moving to Brymbo in 1845.²⁰⁷ It was through the Mechanics Institute²⁰⁸ at Brymbo that John Jones came to the notice of the Darby brothers, Charles and William Henry, the directors of Brymbo Ironworks, who urged him to pursue a teacher training course and funded his studies at the Normal College, London for a year.²⁰⁹ He later moved to

²⁰¹ M.O. Jones, op. cit., 53.

²⁰² Denbighshire Record Office, DD/DM/1044/17, J.D. Jones 1827-1870, Musician and Schoolmaster, 4.

²⁰³ Denbighshire Record Office, DD/DM/1044/4, op. cit., 6; Alun Davies, 'Joseph David Jones, 1827-1870', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynau Cymru*, Cyf. 1, Rhif 7, Gorffennaf (1974), 182.

²⁰⁴ E.K. Jones, *Harwt a Bryn Seion* (Llandysul, 1941), 92.

²⁰⁵ H. Llewelyn Williams, *Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Adwy'r Clawdd (1747-1947)* (Wrexham, 1947), 60.

²⁰⁶ R. T. Hughes, 'Hen Arweinwyr Canu Coedpoeth a'r Ardal', *Y Cerddor*, Cyf. VII, Rhif 76 (Ebrill 1895), 35.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ The Mechanics Institute was an adult education establishment and the Liverpool Institute was founded in 1825. See *Liverpool Mercury*, 28 September 1832, 307. The Chester Mechanics Institute was inaugurated in 1835, and by 1850, an institute began in Brymbo through the efforts of W.H. Darby, the Temperance advocate, when it claimed that 100 members had enrolled. See 'University Tutorial Classes for Working People', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion 1914-15* (London, 1916), 119.

²⁰⁹ R. T. Hughes, op. cit., 35.

Liverpool where he spent ten years as precentor with the Presbyterian Free Church of Scotland and a further six years with the Sailors' Bethel in Salthouse Dock, Liverpool. On leaving the Adwy district he was succeeded by his brother Robert Jones (1824-1858), a gifted musician who led the singing at Adwy'r Clawdd for eight years, before moving to Bwlchgwyn, near Wrexham, where he served as precentor until his death by accident in the Minera lead mines.²¹⁰

Adwy'r Clawdd chapel had built a formidable reputation in the district and choir members were able to learn major oratorios such as Handel's *Messiah* which they performed under the direction of John Jones (Adwy) in 1844 at Wrexham Town Hall, and at a later concert, they sang Mozart's *Twelfth Mass*, unaccompanied.²¹¹ The founding Calvinistic cause at Adwy'r Clawdd provided a thorough musical training for young members such as John Foulkes Jones (1801-1875) who moved to Machynlleth as precentor of Capel Maengwyn and held singing meetings every Sunday afternoon to practise the hymns for the evening service.²¹² Preachers from both north and south Wales acknowledged his skill as *blaenor y gân*, and during the first quarter of the 19th century, chapel musicians who were trained at Adwy'r Clawdd became highly regarded throughout the denomination.²¹³ That same characteristic was apparent in Holywell where the standard of choral singing in the Wesleyan Pendref Chapel had improved under the leadership of William Jacob, who expected choristers to be musically literate and of exemplary character.²¹⁴

William Jacob was one of the first to address the need for a collection of hymn-tunes with *Eos Cymru*, a compilation which was produced in part form and the first 1s. instalment, consisting of eighteen tunes, was issued in 1843 with the promise of a further nine parts to follow.²¹⁵ This was the first tune-book to include a Welsh translation of the chorus 'Worthy is the Lamb' from Handel's *Messiah*²¹⁶ and a review of Jacob's hymnal in *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd* begins: 'It is futile to make

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid., 35; H. Llewelyn Williams, op. cit., 60.

²¹² 'Bywgraffiaeth : John Foulkes Jones', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif 575, Medi (1878), 355.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Lot Hughes, 'Treffynnon: Trem ar yr achos Wesleyaidd yn y lle', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Mai (1863), 199.

²¹⁵ Huw Williams, 'Miwsig Llanidloes', *Y Casglwr*, Rhif 14, Awst (1981), 8.

²¹⁶ R.D. Griffith (1948), op. cit., 154; Alan Luff, op. cit., 180.

many comments on the book, as the name of the author is enough to guarantee its worthiness'.²¹⁷ Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*), a well-respected musician,²¹⁸ and sufficiently qualified to offer an informed opinion on *Eos Cymru*, did not share that enthusiasm as he recognised the imperfections of the hymnal; he began his musical career at the age of twelve,²¹⁹ and was precentor at the Wesleyan chapel in his home village of Nannerch at the age of 16.²²⁰ Like Ambrose Lloyd, he had studied Dr. Callcott's *A Musical Grammar, in four parts*²²¹ and Dr. Arnold's instructions in Harmony, and his scholarly grasp of music theory and harmony was beyond doubt.²²² This was his area of expertise and he taught musical grammar to pupils in Conwy, Abergele, Rhyl and Ruthin as well as in the rural Denbighshire villages of Llanrhaeadr, Llandyrnog and Gellifor:

It is natural to assume that an excellent choirmaster can be a talented author or composer – and a careful and tasteful compiler – but in this respect we are disappointed. As the reputation of Pendref's singing grew, W. Jacob was persuaded to publish a book of hymn-tunes, not doubting his ability to accomplish that. After much hesitation and persuasion by his sons who promised to shoulder the responsibility for most the work, W. Jacob yielded to their pleas.²²³

Canrhawdfardd was in great demand as a tutor, and his first book of tunes, *Y Symbal*,²²⁴ published in 1844 contained two anthems and twenty-one hymns of his own composition,²²⁵ and the hymn-tune 'Rhinwedd', composed when he was eighteen years of age, was included in Ambrose Lloyd's compilation *Casgliad o Donau*.²²⁶ He continued as precentor of the Wesleyan chapel at Nannerch until 1852 after which time he devoted his efforts to his main interests of composing, publishing and adjudicating.²²⁷

²¹⁷ Editor (William Rowlands), 'Eos Cymru', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Hydref (1842), 311.

²¹⁸ T.O.Jones, *Ceninen Gwyl Dewi*, Supplement, March (1905), 12.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ M.O. Jones, op. cit., 58; Huw Williams, 'Cyfansoddwyr a Golygyddion Casgliadau Emyndonau Sir Fflint', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynwyr Cymru*, Cyfrol 1, Rhif 3, Gorffennaf (1970), 54.

²²¹ Dr. Callcott, *A Musical Grammar: in four parts* (Boston, 1810).

²²² Bangor University Archives, GB222/GAB, Gabriel Hughes Papers, 'William Jacob, Treffynnon', 65; R. T. Hughes, 'Y Diweddar Thomas Jones', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XVII, Rhif 193, Ionawr (1905), 6. Dr. Arnold, *Instructions in Harmony* (n.d.).

²²³ Bangor University Archives, GB222/GAB, op. cit., 64.

²²⁴ Thomas Jones, *Y Symbal: a new Welsh and English anthem and hymn tune-book: Y Symbal yn cynnwys tonau ac anthemau newyddion yn Cymraeg a Saesoneg* (Llanrwst, 1844).

²²⁵ T.O.Jones, op. cit., 12.

²²⁶ J.A. Lloyd, *Casgliad o Donau ar y Gwahanol Fesurau Arferedig ymhlith y Cymry* (Liverpool, 1843).

²²⁷ R. T. Hughes, op. cit., 5.

Canrhawdfardd was not the only musician to criticise *Eos Cymru*. Richard Mills was equally disparaging, and writing in *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* (Mills' Welsh Musical Guide),²²⁸ he singled out William Jacob's hymn-tune 'Incarnation' as the worst possible example.²²⁹ *Eos Cymru* showed a lack of understanding of the rules of harmony and William Jacob's compositions were recognised as the main weakness, to the extent that a number of people threatened not to purchase further copies until the musical arrangements were improved.²³⁰ Ultimately, it was Thomas Jones, *Canrhawdfardd*, who resolved the issue by tutoring Jacob's sons, Levi and Simeon in music theory, with particular emphasis on the rules of harmony which made a noticeable improvement to the subsequent issues of *Eos Cymru*.²³¹ The later parts included four hymn-tunes, a short anthem by William Jacob, and a number of tunes by his son, Simeon. Notwithstanding the initial failings of *Eos Cymru*, the Jacobs were a family of very capable musicians; Dinah Jacob (1808-1860) became a noted singer, Rev. Levi Jacob (1819-1865) a musician and curate at Rhosymedre, near Ruabon, while Simeon Jacob (1820-1870), composed a number of hymn-tunes, several of which were published in *Eos Cymru*.²³²

The second book of hymn-tunes for the Welsh Wesleyan Methodists, *Cydymaith yr Addolydd* [The Worshipper's Companion],²³³ was compiled by Robert Williams (1804-1855), the Wesleyan minister of Bodfari who was one of four ministers appointed in 1844 to revise the denominational hymn-book which was published by *Canrhawdfardd*.²³⁴ The hymnal included over 150 tunes in addition to a 34-page section *Hyfforddiadau rhwydd i ddysgu darllen cerddoriaeth* ['Easy lessons

²²⁸ Richard Mills, *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol, sef Eglurhad cyflawn ar holl Elfenau y Gelfyddyd o Gerddoriaeth mewn Deuddeg o Wersi, ar Ddull o Ymddyddan rhwng Dysgybl ac Athraw* (Llanidloes, 1843).

²²⁹ Bangor University Archives, GB222/GAB, op. cit., 69.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 64.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 69.

²³² Huw Williams, 'Cyfansoddwyr a Golygyddion Casgliadau Emyndonau Sir Fflint', in *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emyndonau Cymru*, Cyfrol 1, Rhif 3, Gorffennaf (1970), 52.

²³³ Robert Williams, *Cydymaith yr Addolydd; yn cynwys tros gant a haner o donau, detholedig a gwreiddiol ar y gwahanol fesurau, salmau a hymnau, yn llyfr hymnau y Trefnyddion Wesleyaidd Cymreig* (Llanidloes, 1852). Thomas Jones of Nannerch was responsible for scrutinising and editing the work. Primarily intended as handbook for singers, its preface contains a detailed treatise on how to read music, the first section dealing with intervals and the second part with timing.

²³⁴ W.A. Griffiths, *Hanes Emyndonau Cymru* (Caernarfon, 1892), 232. *Casgliad o Emyndonau Cymraeg* [A Collection of Welsh Hymns, 1844] was published by Wesleyan ministers David Evans and Rowland Hughes, Holywell, and reviewed by Robert Williams, and Isaac Jenkins of Cardiganshire.

on how to learn to read music'] by John Mendus Jones.²³⁵ In the preface, Robert Williams advises chorus masters to select girls and boys with sweet clear voices to sing the melody; the boys to sing alto, and the men divided between tenor and bass.²³⁶ He also acknowledges the assistance of Ruthin schoolmaster and musician J.D.Jones (1827-1870), Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*), John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt, 1822-1877) and John Morgan (1813-1877), Gwyllt's music teacher at Aberystwyth.²³⁷ Prior to this, J. D. Jones had published *Y Pêrganiedydd* [The Sweet Singer],²³⁸ a collection of 80 hymn-tunes based on 27 different metres when he was twenty years of age,²³⁹ although this was a private publishing venture and not specific to any denomination. That Ieuan Gwyllt, a prominent Calvinistic Methodist, and J.D.Jones, a member of the Congregationalists at Ruthin had co-operated in the publication of a Wesleyan hymnal implies that the cause of congregational singing was not constrained by factionalism.

The Temperance Movement shared the same ideals of social reform as the chapels, and it was this powerful coalition that compelled change in what was probably the most religious region of the British Isles.²⁴⁰ The effort to introduce the working classes to meaningful pursuits was timely as it coincided with the new found interest in musical literacy that took hold in north-east Wales and Liverpool during the 1840s.²⁴¹ Percy Scholes describes 'the sight singing mania' as an expression of self-improvement: 'Historically considered, the sight singing movement was really but part of a larger movement for the general intellectual, moral and religious betterment of the working classes'.²⁴² It was the same movement, according to Scholes, 'that sprinkled the country with 'Mechanics Institutes' and started 'Night Classes everywhere'.²⁴³ David Russell refers to the moral overtones that inspired the passion for self-improvement and suggests that music was encouraged as a

²³⁵ Robert Williams, op. cit., Rhagfynegiad (Preface). J. Mendus Jones' contribution contains a detailed treatise on how to read music, the first section dealing with intervals and the second part with timing.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ M.O. Jones, op. cit., 78.

²³⁸ J.D.Jones, *Y Pêrganiedydd* (private publication, 1846). The hymn-tune 'Capel -y-Ddôl' was included in this collection.

²³⁹ Ruthin Archives, DD/DM/1044/4, Autobiography – Joseph David Jones, 5.

²⁴⁰ I. G. Jones, *Communities - Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1987), 357.

²⁴¹ Percy A. Scholes, *The Mirror of Music 1844-1944*, Vol. I (London, 1947), 14.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Percy A. Scholes, 'The Musical Times Century', *The Musical Times*, June (1844), 173.

means of tempering the lower orders: 'Sight singing mania, at least from the view of its propertied supporters, was one of the early Victorian responses to the problems of crime, intemperance, irreligion and political extremism'.²⁴⁴

In the industrialised areas, Temperance activity and voluntary Sunday school education was manifest, but not so apparent to the *Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* whose condemnatory report was made public in 1847.²⁴⁵ The pernicious tome, bound in blue cloth and referred to as the 'Blue Books', and more cynically in Wales as *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* (The Treason of the Blue Books) denounced the curriculum of Welsh Nonconformist Sunday schools, particularly in the industrial settlements of Rhosllannerchrugog, Bagillt and Buckley.²⁴⁶ This report also criticised the social degradation and one inspector observed: 'In Bagillt and the adjoining town of Flint the old Welsh custom of keeping a merry night (*nosweith-lawen*) is still prevalent, and being generally reserved for a Saturday, is protracted to the following Sunday, during which drinking never ceases'.²⁴⁷

The lowest form of social degradation and moral depravity is met with in the mining districts, and is found to grow worse on approaching the English border. These districts extend from Llangollen, through the parishes of Ruabon and Wrexham, to the point of Air, at the northern extremity of Flintshire ... As the influence of the Welsh Sunday schools decreases, the moral degradation of the inhabitants is more apparent and observable on approaching the English border.²⁴⁸

Having acerbically dismissed the Nonconformists as a detriment to the state of education, the report concluded that, 'The Sunday schools had determined the character of the language, literature and general intelligence of the inhabitants'.²⁴⁹ Although Commissioner H.Vaughan Johnson accepted that the influence of the Sunday Schools was 'the main instrument of civilisation in North Wales',²⁵⁰ he portrayed the Welsh language as an impediment to educational advancement and

²⁴⁴ D. Russell, *The Popular Music Societies of the Yorkshire Textile District, 1850-1914*, Ph.D. thesis (University of York, 1979), 46.

²⁴⁵ *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* (London, 1847).

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Part III, North Wales, 59.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Appendix A, 97.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 64, 66.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.

blamed language and Nonconformity as the twin disadvantages that stultified progress.²⁵¹ The report made only a passing reference to religious musical activity, 'Almost at every church and Dissenting chapel in Wales they have a company or band of singers, who are taught by their leaders, on the Sabbaths, and at other times'.²⁵² Reference was also made to music text books such as *Caniadau Seion* (John Mills), *Eos Cymru* (William Jacob), *Casgliad o Donau* (J.A. Lloyd), *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol* (Thomas Williams), *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* and *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* (John Mills).²⁵³

Aside from the criticisms of language and social behaviour, the Report showed little enthusiasm for the teaching of singing which was surprising as Dr. James Kay-Shuttleworth who headed the Enquiry, had previously expressed his opinions 'in the form of a Minute of the Committee of Council issued in 1840'.²⁵⁴ Kay-Shuttleworth felt that music had a place in the schools' curriculum on account of the moral influence of singing in public worship and Bernarr Rainbow quotes Kay as saying: 'One of the chief characteristics of the church service should be the extent to which the whole congregation is united in song'.²⁵⁵ Ironically, the report indicates that the British schools placed a greater emphasis on teaching music than the 'National schools' that were under the jurisdiction of the Established Church. For example, at the British schools in Llangollen and the neighbouring hamlet of Pentrefelin,²⁵⁶ music was a taught subject, whereas the Llangollen National School made no such provision,²⁵⁷ and neither did the Llanrwst Church School, despite the fact that the British School had 'a class of 12 scholars learning vocal music'.²⁵⁸ In the British School and Church Schools at Ruthin it was reported that 'all pupils [170 on the books] receive instruction in music',²⁵⁹ and at the British School in

²⁵¹ Robert Smith, *Schools, Politics and Society-Elementary Education in Wales, 1870-1902* (Cardiff, 1999), 4.

²⁵² Appendix H, *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, Part III, North Wales* (London, 1847), 338.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, Appendix F, 330.

²⁵⁴ Bernarr Rainbow, *The Land Without Music: Musical Education in England 1800-1860 and its continental antecedents* (London, 1967), 118.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

²⁵⁶ *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales: Part Three: Denbighshire* (London, 1847), 67.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 77-8.

Mold 313 pupils were enrolled.²⁶⁰ Marchwiel Church School and the Rhosymedre Church School considered singing as an essential part of the curriculum²⁶¹ which is not surprising as they were both in the pastoral care of Rev. J.D.Edwards (1805-1885), of Rhosymedre, a musician and composer. What emerges from this inconsistency is that singing lessons were enshrined in the curriculum of the British schools and supplemented the work of the chapel Sunday school, whereas music as a taught subject was optional in the Church schools.

The initial anger that followed the scathing attack on language and culture did have a positive outcome and Hoppen takes the view that the defamatory invective of the Education Report prompted a reaction as 'language, religion and ethnicity began to take on that mutually supportive colouring so characteristic of modern Wales'.²⁶² Perhaps the most vexatious aspect of this review was that the three English Commissioners had relied too heavily on the biased evidence of Anglican clerics which further inflamed the tension between the Established Church and Nonconformists. Gwyneth Tyson Roberts observes: 'The major divide in mid-nineteenth century Wales lay between the Established Church and Nonconformity; the former had the power and status, but the latter had the numbers',²⁶³ a fact substantiated by the Religious Census of 1851.²⁶⁴ Contrary to the perceived outcome, the Report had the opposite effect as it summoned a change in the sensibility of the Welsh working classes, and according to David Smith: 'The stressed values became those of community, religion, material progress and respectability, bound together by language and nationality'.²⁶⁵ Those shared ideals formed the bedrock of Welsh Nonconformist chapel culture and from the mid-nineteenth century, self-education became the expression that would invalidate the iniquitous findings of the education commissioners.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Part Three: *Flintshire*, 102.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Part Three: *Denbighshire*, 71, 74.

²⁶² K. T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998), 533.

²⁶³ Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books – The Perfect Instrument of Empire* (Cardiff, 1998), 170.

²⁶⁴ Ieuan Gwynedd Jones (ed.), *The Religious Census of 1851 – A Calendar of the Returns relating to Wales*, Vol. II, North Wales (Cardiff, 1981).

²⁶⁵ David Smith (ed.), *A People and A Proletariat: Essays in the History of Wales 1780-1980* (London, 1980), 8.

Frequent references to drunken behaviour in the *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* were a further cause for offence to the Welsh denominations:

‘From 1847, Nonconformists in Wales, aggrieved at the vilification they had received from the education commissioners in their report of that year, felt that they had to maintain that, from the seventeenth century, Dissent had rescued Wales from moral laxity, drunkenness and religious infidelity, evils about which the Church in Wales had done very little’.²⁶⁶

This social slight had, however, cast doubt on the effectiveness of the campaign for social reform, and according to John Thomas, the zeal for Temperance in north Wales waned during 1840-1850.²⁶⁷ Hywel Teifi Edwards maintains that the implications of the controversial report went further: ‘Not only did Welsh nonconformity try to take over Welsh culture and Welsh patriotism, for example institutions like the eisteddfod, it began to try to take over the whole of Welsh society’.²⁶⁸ Much had changed since the ignominy of this Inquiry, and at the quarterly Calvinistic Methodist Associations in April 1850 at Mold, and a later meeting at Bala in June 1850, it was concluded that the genial songs of the Temperance Movement were unsuitable for worship.²⁶⁹

Although the meeting conceded that singing had been an expedient means of promoting the Temperance ideal, the superficial songs performed by young people at festivities militated against the simplicity of the Gospel and were frowned upon as a corrupting influence on congregations.²⁷⁰ There was even disquiet among teetotallers about singing hymns in Assembly rooms – songs of praise without the spirit of praise and frivolous tunes that popularised secular music but contributed little to the development of Welsh hymnody. Furthermore, the Calvinistic Methodists were concerned that a number of spiritually meaningless Temperance songs had entered the Sunday school curriculum through periodicals, such as *Trysorfa y Plant* which published the American Gospel tune, ‘Rock of Ages’, to the words ‘Dim ond dŵr i mi’.²⁷¹ (See Fig. 2.2 over)

²⁶⁶ W.R. Lambert (1983), op. cit., 131.

²⁶⁷ John Thomas, op. cit., 211.

²⁶⁸ P. Morgan & D. Thomas, (eds.), op. cit., 144.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 190.

²⁷¹ ‘Dim ond dŵr i mi’, *Trysorfa y Plant*, (1891), 237.

Fig. 2.2

Dim ond dŵr i ni.

Y Geiriau gan W. MORGAN, Aberdâr.

O TELYN Y PLANT.

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Os yw meddwon yn cael blas
 I draflyneu gwirod cas,
 Fynwn ni mo 'r sothach gwael
 Yn y dafarn sydd i'w cael.
 Yfwn ni mo 'r lleidiog li',
 Dim ond dŵr, y dŵr i ni.

Ni chaiff meddwdod roddi clwy'
 Byth i un o honom mwy;
 A phan ddown yn ddynion mawr
 Mynwn wel'd ei dori lawr.
 Yfwn ni mo 'r lleidiog li',
 Dim ond dŵr, y dŵr i ni.

With the formation of the North Wales Temperance Association, the once proactive movement adopted a more formal approach which had a negative effect and in an attempt to regain popularity, they prevailed on the local Temperance choirs for support.²⁷² After the Temperance festival at Denbigh in 1851, the Association meeting in Bangor c.1852 commended the efforts to revive interest in the Movement through music, but issued a cautionary addendum to choir leaders advising them to take greater care in their choice of words and songs for use in Society meetings, particularly on Sundays.²⁷³ The decision to put music back at the centre of their campaigns was a success and after the 1855 Temperance festival at Wrexham, a bilingual affair with musical contributions from English and Welsh choirs, a press report concluded: 'Singing is certainly gaining ground in North Wales'.²⁷⁴ That the Temperance choirs had revived their cause through music was sufficient to invoke resentment from the Nonconformists, and *Yr Amserau* [The Times], the first independent Welsh language newspaper, claimed that the prejudice against choral singing was that it had contributed to the popularity of the Temperance festivals.²⁷⁵

Concurrent with the revival in Temperance activity was the appointment in 1852 of Ieuan Gwyllt as the sub-editor of *Yr Amserau*, launched in 1843 by William Rees (*Gwilym Hiraethog*, 1802-1883),²⁷⁶ and published from the Liverpool printing office of John Jones (1790-1855).²⁷⁷ Effectively, Rees had abandoned the day-to-day running of the newspaper when John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), a Calvinistic Methodist with an obsessive interest in congregational music, joined the company,

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 213.

²⁷³ John Thomas, *op. cit.*, 223.

²⁷⁴ 'Annual Meeting of the North Wales Temperance Association', *Wrexham Advertiser and North Wales Chronicle*, 21 July 1855, 3; This report makes no mention of the choirs that took part

²⁷⁵ John Thomas, *Jubili y Diwygiad Dirwestol yn Nghymru* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1885), 223.

²⁷⁶ John Hughes Morris (1929), *op. cit.*, 308-9. Williams Rees (*Gwilym Hiraethog*, 1802-1883) was a Calvinistic Methodist, but joined the Independents at Llansannan in 1828. He began preaching and was appointed to the ministry at Mostyn in 1831, and Swan Lane, Denbigh in 1837 before the calling to the Tabernacle Liverpool in 1843. He was the founding editor of *Yr Amserau*. See 'Y Parch. William Rees', *Enwogion y Ffydd*, Cyf. II (Llundain, 1880), 492; D. Adams, 'The Rev. W. Rees, D.D. (Hiraethog)', in J. Vyrnwy Morgan (ed.), *Welsh Religious Leaders in the Victorian Era* (London, 1905), 212.

²⁷⁷ John Jones, the proprietor of *Yr Amserau*, the first Welsh language newspaper, was a disaffected Presbyterian who joined the Congregationalist Tabernacle chapel under the ministry of *Gwilym Hiraethog*, who was the first editor of the newspaper.

after which time he was virtually in sole charge of the radical broadsheet.²⁷⁸ Gwyllt frequently travelled to London to report on classical music performances,²⁷⁹ and under the *nom-de-plume* 'Arthur Llwyd' and 'Tŷ Arthur Llwyd', readers were introduced to the higher forms of choral art, while amateur musicians gleaned further knowledge from detailed critiques of hymn-tunes and anthems.²⁸⁰ The office of *Yr Amserau* also became a meeting point for cultural activists such as Eleazar Roberts (1825-1912), the Pwllheli-born *codwr canu* of Netherfield Road C.M. Chapel, Liverpool who was an editorial contributor, and John Ambrose Lloyd who acted for a short while, as the Company Secretary.²⁸¹

In Liverpool, Ieuan Gwyllt extended his knowledge of sacred music and became a member of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society through which he was able to meet well-known musicians whose opinions he canvassed.²⁸² He also presented a series of lectures on music which he illustrated with examples of good and bad hymn-singing, the first of which took place in January 1854 in Rose Place Chapel, Liverpool²⁸³ where he served for a time as precentor.²⁸⁴ His early musical experience as a pupil of the Mills' Singing School gave him an appreciation of the finer art of congregational singing and the defining characteristic of a true ecclesiastical hymn-tune,²⁸⁵ and so passionate was his belief in the importance of teaching music to young people, that he joined Eleazar Roberts as a Sunday school teacher. He used the relevance of music to extend the religious awareness of the scholars under his care and held a singing class in Cropper's Hall which provided temporary accommodation for the Sunday schools of Rose Place and Burlington Street Chapels.²⁸⁶ Gwyllt used Waite's numerical method of teaching the staff

²⁷⁸ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 50 J. Eiddon Jones, *Ieuan Gwyllt: ei Fywyd, ei Lafur, ei Athrylith, ei Nodweddion, a'i Ddylanad ar Gymru* (Treffynnon, 1881), 38.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

²⁸⁰ 'Arthur Llwyd yn y Palas Grisial', *Yr Amserau*, 1 Gorffennaf 1857, 8; 'Ty Arthur Llwyd', *ibid.*, 22 Gorffennaf 1857, 8. Gwyllt also adopted the *non-de-plume* 'Semiquaver' when responding to reader questions *viz.*, 'Llythyr at Semiquaver', *Yr Amserau*, 16 Chwefror 1853, 3.

²⁸¹ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, op. cit., 61.

²⁸² Eleazar Roberts, 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Sol-ffaydd', *Y Geninen*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 2 (Ebrill, 1905), 88; J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 45.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 80.

²⁸⁴ Eleazar Roberts (1897), 53; J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 43; T.J. Davies, *Ieuan Gwyllt 1822-1877* (Llandysul, 1977), 65.

²⁸⁵ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 17.

²⁸⁶ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 43.

notation²⁸⁷ and also used these classes to practise his own arrangements of hymn-tunes although many refused to be led by him²⁸⁸ as his frequent outbursts on the standards of singing created tension with the church hierarchy.²⁸⁹

Gwyllt came to Liverpool in the same year that John Ambrose Lloyd published his anthem, *Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear*²⁹⁰ through the office of the Bethesda printer Robert Jones,²⁹¹ and although Lloyd had written a number of hymn-tunes, it was his anthems that began to exert an influence on choral singing.²⁹² According to Robert Nicholls, 1852 was a significant year in that it marked the beginning of the Welsh anthem²⁹³ and the year in which Rev. Edward Stephen (*Tanymarian*, 1822-1885) completed *Ystorm Tiberias*, the first oratorio to be written by a Welshman although the complete version of the seven-part work was not published until 1855.²⁹⁴ Emllyn Evans would later comment: 'It is impossible to withhold astonishment at the promise of the work. What was the art environment of this minister of a country chapel? What music had he heard that enabled him to catch the spirit of the musical classicists'?²⁹⁵ Perhaps that could have been asked of Emllyn Evans, a self-taught musician who composed some of the finest hymn-tunes of the nineteenth century and Nicholls observes: 'Oddly, it was those composers with little music education who appealed most to the musical taste of the Welsh'.²⁹⁶

²⁸⁷ Rev. J. J. Waite (1808-1868), a blind cleric-musician who devised a unique numerical system to denote the intervals that combined the Old Notation with the moveable tonic. J. J. Waite, 'Essay on Congregational Psamody', *Hallelujah; or Devotional Psalmody: being a selection of classical and congregational tunes of the most useful metres* (London, 1842), vi. This book was produced in collaboration with Dr. H.J. Gauntlett who harmonised the melodies.

²⁸⁸ Stephen Roberts, *Hanes Eglwys Fitzclarence Street, Liverpool* (Liverpool, 1915), 22.

²⁸⁹ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 17.

²⁹⁰ J. Ambrose Lloyd won the composition for best anthem at the 1852 Bethesda Eisteddfod. This anthem was published not only in Wales, but also in Rome and New York in 1857 by R.R. Meredith. See Robert G. Nicholls, 'Hanes yr Anthem gysegredig yng Nghymru, 1850-1950', *Seren Cymru*, 22 Awst 1997, 3.

²⁹¹ Huw Williams, *Taro Tant – Detholiad o ysgrifau ac erthyglau* (Dinbych, 1994), 21.

²⁹² Robert G. Nicholls, op. cit., 3.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Rev. Edward Stephen was a Congregational minister and amateur musician and composer of *Ystorm Tiberias* [The Storm of Tiberias], the first Welsh oratorio, which he began writing in 1851. See D. Emllyn Evans, 'Yr Oratorio – *Ystorm Tiberias*' in W.J. Parry (gol.), *Cofiant Tanymarian* (Dolgellau, 1886), 113-19.

²⁹⁵ Mr. D. Emllyn Evans, *Musical Herald*, 1 April 1892, 99.

²⁹⁶ Robert G. Nicholls, op. cit., 3.

John Owen (*Owain Alaw*, 1821-1883),²⁹⁷ probably the only Welsh professional musician in the north-east Wales and Liverpool region, was the exception to Nicholls' observation. He first came to public attention when he took the prize for the anthem *Debora a Barac* at the Rhuddlan *eisteddfod* of 1851 and in the same year, shared the honours for his cantata *Gweddi Habacuc* with John Ambrose Lloyd at the Tremadoc Eisteddfod.²⁹⁸ *Owain Alaw* was one of the first musicians to focus on the sacred anthem and he undoubtedly prepared the ground for self-taught composers such as John Ambrose Lloyd and *Tanymarian* who brought the genre to prominence in the Nonconformist chapels.²⁹⁹ It was through the provincial *eisteddfodau* that the sacred anthem entered the repertoire of chapel choirs, as evidenced by the London Eisteddfod of 1855 when Ieuan Gwyllt and Samuel Wesley, one of the finest English church musicians of that era, adjudicated at the contest for the composition of an anthem.³⁰⁰ As the larger provincial *eisteddfodau* were becoming more inclusive, a transition was taking shape in Nonconformist chapel schoolrooms in north-east Wales as literary competitions graduated to denominational *eisteddfodau*.

One of the first chapels in the north-east to address this issue was Adwy'r Clawdd and their first *eisteddfod* took place on Good Friday 1855 under the supervision of William Lewis (*Llew Llwyfo*, 1831–1901).³⁰¹ In December of that year, the united literary institutions of Wrexham, Brymbo and Rhosllannerchrugog held their first *eisteddfod*, although the musical contribution consisted only of *Llew Llwyfo*'s rendition of 'Morfa Rhuddlan' which concluded the day's proceedings.³⁰² By the following year, Adwy'r Clawdd Eisteddfod had expanded its prospectus to include choral and compositional contests³⁰³ that became a showcase for the well-trained

²⁹⁷ *Owain Alaw* was a fine baritone singer, organist, accompanist, composer and choirmaster who had abandoned his trade as a cutler for a full-time career in music and from the age of 23 he became a professional musician.

²⁹⁸ Robert G. Nicholls, op. cit., 3. Dr. S. S. Wesley adjudicated *Owain Alaw*'s composition as the best, but his fellow adjudicators, Revs. John Mills and J.D. Edwards favoured J. Ambrose Lloyd.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Advertisements & Notices, *North Wales Chronicle*, 3 March 1855, 1.

³⁰¹ 'Adwy'r Clawdd', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 14 April 1855, 3. William Lewis (*Llew Llwyfo*) was synonymous with *eisteddfodau* after the 1850s.

³⁰² 'Meeting of the Welsh Literary Institutes in Wrexham', *ibid.*, 29 December 1855, 4.

³⁰³ H. Llewelyn Williams, *Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Adwy'r Clawdd (1747-1947)* (Wrecsam, 1947), 61.

choir of James Beckett (1830-1876).³⁰⁴ A tribute to this choir appeared in *Cymru*: 'What gave Adwy'r Clawdd choir its dignity was its commitment to learn classical pieces such as Ambrose Lloyd's *Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear* (1852), *Gweddi Habaccuc* (1851), *Y Ddaeargryn* (1856) and *Handel's Messiah*'.³⁰⁵ So popular was Handel's *Messiah* in Liverpool and north-east Wales, that by 1855 Ieuan Gwyllt had written a Welsh translation of the 'Hallelujah Chorus',³⁰⁶ while Vincent Novello, publisher of *The Musical Times*, responded with affordable editions of oratorios by the German masters.³⁰⁷ (See Fig 2.3 below)

Fig. 2.3

CHEAP ORATORIOS:

NOVELLO'S CENTENARY EDITIONS of the ORATORIOS
(complete). THE WHOLE SERIES NOW REDUCED to
1s. 6d. or 2s. each. *Messiah*, *Creation*, *Judas*, *Israel in Egypt*,
Samson, *Solomon*, *Jephtha*, *Joshua*, *Deborah*, *Saul*, *Alexander's*
Feast, all 2s. each. *Dettingen and Zadock* (in one), *Acis*, and
Ode to St. Cecilia's Day, 1s. 6d. each. *Mendelssohn's St. Paul*,
2s., *Hymn of Praise*, 2s., *42nd Psalm*, 1s. *Mozart's Twelfth* and
Requiem Mass, *Haydn's Third Mass* (with E. Holmes' *Critical*
Essays), and *Beethoven's Mass in C*, 2s. each. *Beethoven's*
Engedi (*Mount of Olives*), *Rossini's Stabat Mater* and *Romberg's*
Lay of the Bell, 1s. 6d. each. All in Vocal Score, with Accom-
paniment by VINCENT NOVELLO. The above works may be had,
bound in cloth, from 3s. to 4s. each. Prospectuses and specimen
pages gratis.
J. A. NOVELLO, 69, Dean-street, Soho, London (W.)

Advertisements & Notices, *North Wales Chronicle*, 2 May 1857, 1

By the late 1850s, Novello had swamped the market with 'cheap' editions, and so great was the demand that Handel's *Messiah* sold over 20,000 copies in a few weeks, a success which prompted other publishers to reduce their prices.³⁰⁸ Sets of glees and part-songs were available through Novello at half-pence a song, a concession that was aggressively promoted through the *Musical Times*.³⁰⁹ The ready access to affordable music extended the competitive repertoire of choirs and glee parties and transformed the syllabus of *eisteddfodau* that were no longer exclusive to the literary arts. Throughout north-east Wales and Merseyside, chapel *eisteddfodau* and literary meetings were convened on high days and holidays and while Hoppen claims that the *volte-face* by the chapelocracy came as a reaction to

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ D. Ivor Jones, 'Hen Ddechreuwr Canu yr Oes o'r Blaen' in O.M. Edwards (gol.), *Cymru XIV*, Mawrth (1898), 105.

³⁰⁶ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 17.

³⁰⁷ D. Russell, op. cit., 173.

³⁰⁸ 'The Novello Centenary', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, June (1911), 11.

³⁰⁹ D. Russell, op. cit., 173.

the condemnatory findings of the Education Report commissioners,³¹⁰ the process of reform had taken root a decade earlier when the Temperance Movement took the *eisteddfod* out of the public house and into the chapel.³¹¹

Regardless of the unrelenting tension between the Established Church and the Nonconformists, Adwy'r Clawdd, the embodiment of Welsh Calvinism in north-east Wales, invited John Owen (*Owain Alaw*), the organist of St Bride's Church, Chester, and one of the most versatile Welsh musicians of his generation, to adjudicate on the 'tunes' at the 1856 *eisteddfod*.³¹² From a dozen hymn-tunes submitted, only two were correctly written and *Alaw* awarded the prize to 'Gwyddon', the *nom-de-plume* of Benjamin Morris Williams, a printer of music at Bethesda who would later become pivotal to *Owain Alaw's* future plans. In the concluding remarks to his adjudication, *Alaw* states:

Our tunes should be characterised by a plain air, and one which is likely to catch the ear of people who sing without notes, and the harmonies should be without violent modulations but bold and simple. I am glad to say that I have shewn (*sic*) the tunes to Mr. J.A.Lloyd, and he agrees with me entirely in the above adjudication.³¹³

Music transcended denominational rivalry and Ambrose Lloyd, once a churchman and later a Congregationalist, had written hymn-tunes specifically for *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol*, a hymnal for the Established Church,³¹⁴ while Rev. J.D.Edwards who compose the hymn-tune 'Rhosymedre', was happy to share his expertise with Thomas Davies *Y Cantwr*, the precentor at the Baptist Tabernacle, Cefn-Mawr.³¹⁵ J.D.Edwards was one of the most highly revered *eisteddfod* adjudicators of the mid-nineteenth century and together with Edward Stephen (*Tanymarian*) he had awarded the prize to John Ambrose Lloyd at the 1852 Bethesda *eisteddfod* for his anthem, *Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear*.³¹⁶

³¹⁰ K. T. Hoppen., *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998), 535.

³¹¹ Gareth Williams, *op. cit.*, 20.

³¹² 'Adwy'r Clawdd', *op. cit.*, 29 March 1856, 4.

³¹³ 'Adwy'r Clawdd Eisteddfod', *ibid.*, 5 April 1856, 4.

³¹⁴ Thomas Williams, *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol; neu Gerddoriaeth Eglwysig yn cynnwys crynhoad helaeth o Donau, Anthemau, darnau Corawl Cysegredig* (Llanidloes, 1846).

³¹⁵ Emllyn Davies, 'Seion', *Cefn Chronicle*, 19 February 1916, 2. Papers relating to the family of Davies *Y Cantwr* of Cefn Mawr and District in the private collection of Rhiannon Grey-Davies, Garth, near Ruabon.

³¹⁶ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, *op. cit.*, 69.

Owain Alaw, a church organist, was equally indifferent to the hostilities of denominationalism and happy to share his knowledge of sacred music with young people, as evidenced by his lecture to the Young Men's Christian Association at Aldergate Street, London, presided over by Rev. John Mills for the benefit of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel Fund.³¹⁷ His text encompassed anthems and hymn-tunes which he illustrated to great effect 'by a very numerous choir, consisting of members of three Welsh congregations in the metropolis'.³¹⁸ During a similar lecture at the Hope Hall, Liverpool, *Owain Alaw* offered advice on congregational singing 'which it would be well if adopted by conductors of choirs generally'.³¹⁹ On this occasion, he demonstrated the salient aspects of his lecture with the assistance of St David's Welsh Church Choir, augmented by other denominations that sang several pieces in Welsh and English which *Alaw* accompanied on the harmonium.³²⁰ Competent in all aspects of Welsh music, both religious and secular, *Owain Alaw* revived the interest in popular music and brought the once stigmatised genus to the concert-hall and *eisteddfod* stage to prepare the ground for a lighter form of choral singing that extended the repertoire of the glee parties.³²¹

Much of the success of nineteenth century *eisteddfodau* can be attributed to local weekly newspapers that reported every facet of cultural activity and championed the reforming principles of the Nonconformist chapels. One such paper was the *Wrexham Advertiser* that was launched in March 1854 and gradually extended its coverage to include many of the communities in north-east Wales.³²² Shortly after, the first edition of *The Cheshire Observer and General Advertiser for Cheshire & North Wales* appeared in May 1854 to challenge the partisan *Chester Chronicle*, a long established weekly paper that promulgated the views of the Established Church and the landowning classes.³²³ By contrast, the *Wrexham Advertiser* was unapologetically Nonconformist and did much to promote the ideals of Welsh

³¹⁷ 'Lecture on Music', *North Wales Chronicle*, 10 January 1857, 8.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ 'Hope Hall, Liverpool', *ibid.*, 3 April 1858, 8.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

³²¹ Robert G. Nicholls, *op. cit.*, 3.

³²² British Library Newspapers, Part II, website, *Wrexham Weekly Advertiser* publication notes, [www. http://0-find.galegroup.com.unicat.bangor.ac.uk/bncn/publicationByLocation.do](http://0-find.galegroup.com.unicat.bangor.ac.uk/bncn/publicationByLocation.do), accessed 21 March 2011.

³²³ British Library Newspapers, Part II, website, *op. cit.*, publication detail re *Cheshire Observer*.

Nonconformity and Temperance throughout the district,³²⁴ as did the *Cheshire Observer* which became popular in the Welsh communities of Cheshire and neighbouring Flintshire.³²⁵ In addition to the aforementioned local papers, the *Liverpool Mercury* gave extensive coverage to *eisteddfodau*, concerts, and other cultural activity with notices of forthcoming events that had a positive effect on attendances. The importance of local media in the formation of a religious and cultural identity is emphasised by Aled Jones: 'The press acted as a social integrator that fostered a sense of belonging which encouraged participation in municipal, party and denominational affairs'.³²⁶

Yr Amserau, on the other hand, was not as forthcoming in its support of the Nonconformist denominations and Gwyllt's radical views had irritated the Presbyterian establishment who in turn, rejected his application to become a Calvinistic Methodist minister in Liverpool.³²⁷ That he failed to work in harmony with *Gwilym Hiraethog*³²⁸ did little to endear him to the Congregationalists and without the support of the two most powerful Welsh denominations, the future of *Yr Amserau* was bleak.³²⁹ Sensing the demise of the troubled newspaper, Edward Morgan (1817-1871) of Dyffryn Ardudwy petitioned Thomas Gee (1815-1898) of Denbigh to publish a Welsh language weekly newspaper³³⁰ and responding to the proposal in a letter of 28 October 1856, Gee states:

Your letter has taken me so unexpectedly... Supposing Mr. John Hughes of Borth, Mr. W. Rees (or some Methodist if considered better) and yourself to be editors ... I have been solicited repeatedly and afraid to start. Still the country requires something of a *railway and steam* character than the monthlies. What think you of John Hughes and yourself as Editors in chief, and I could get someone to translate matter for it, and pay Mr. Rees for his contribution.³³¹

Gwyllt had already tendered his resignation in November 1856³³² when he heard that *Gwilym Hiraethog* had agreed to become the political editor of the new weekly

³²⁴ 'To Our Readers', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 8 March 1856, 4.

³²⁵ *The Cheshire Observer and General Advertiser for Cheshire and North Wales*, 13 May 1854, 1.

³²⁶ Aled Jones, *Press, Politics and Society - A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff, 1993), 199

³²⁷ Gareth Williams, *op. cit.*, 26.

³²⁸ J. Hughes Morris (1929), *op. cit.*, 308.

³²⁹ J. Eiddon Jones, *op. cit.*, 50.

³³⁰ Thomas Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, Cyfrol I (Dinbych, 1913), 161.

³³¹ *Ibid.*

³³² J. Eiddon Jones, *op. cit.*, 41.

paper which Gee was intending to launch on 4 March 1857.³³³ Thomas Gee, an ordained Calvinistic minister and staunch Temperance advocate, had endeared himself to the hierarchy of his denomination in 1845 when he began to publish *Y Traethodydd* [The Essayist], a quarterly periodical edited by Lewis Edwards of Bala (1809-1887), Principal of the Bala Calvinistic Methodist College.³³⁴ By engaging the influential minister, *Hiraethog* as the political editor³³⁵ of *Baner Cymru*, [The Welsh Standard] Gee had effectively garnered the support of the Congregationalists in Liverpool and north-east Wales which provided a solid footing for the venture. According to K.O.Morgan: 'The growth of the Welsh press and its early association with the outlook of nonconformists was a fundamental factor in shaping the attitude and sensibilities of people throughout Wales'.³³⁶

A new confidence emerged after the mid-nineteenth century that prepared the way for cultural activists, one of whom was the Anglican cleric and antiquary John Williams (*Ab Ithel*, 1811-1862),³³⁷ editor of *The Cambrian Journal*.³³⁸ In May 1857, some two months before the commencement of the Llangollen local *eisteddfod*, the *Wrexham Advertiser* confided, 'We are informed, there is some probability of a more general one (*eisteddfod*) taking place in the summer of 1858'.³³⁹ This revelation was an understatement, as what should have been a traditional local festival was transformed into an historical event of some significance when it was announced that the first proceeding of the *eisteddfod* in July 1857 was to proclaim a National Eisteddfod for the following year.³⁴⁰

Only the chapel choirs of the Wesleyan Methodists, Congregationalists and a Corwen choir competed at the 1857 Llangollen *eisteddfod* for the best rendition of Handel's *Let their celestial Concerts* and John Ambrose Lloyd's anthem, *The*

³³³ T. M. Jones (Gwenallt), *Llenyddiaeth Fy Ngwlad* (Treffynnon, 1893), 24; T.Gwynn Jones, op. cit., 165; *Baner Cymru* (Denbigh), 4 Mawrth 1857, 1.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

³³⁵ T. M. Jones (Gwenallt), op. cit., 21; Thomas Gwynn Jones, op. cit., 161.

³³⁶ K.O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922* (Cardiff, 1970), 9.

³³⁷ John Williams was born in Llangynhafal, near Ruthin and educated at Ruthin Grammar School before graduating from Oxford in 1835 when he was made a deacon by the Bishop of Bangor. From 1843 until 1849, he was curate at Nercwys. See J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), 'John Williams', *Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig, Yr Attodiad* (Dinbych, 1979), 175-6.

³³⁸ J. Ogwen Jones (gol.), 'John Williams', *Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig, Yr Attodiad* (Dinbych, 1979), 176.

³³⁹ 'Llangollen', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 23 May 1857, 4.

³⁴⁰ 'Llangollen', *ibid.*, 18 July 1857, 3.

Kingdom of the Earth which was adjudicated by Rev. J.D.Edwards and the Congregationalist musician J.D.Jones of Ruthin.³⁴¹ This was a secular event over which the Nonconformists, particularly *Yr Hen Gorff*,³⁴² had no influence and furthermore, it may well have been perceived as a potential threat to the success of chapel *eisteddfodau*. That the choirs of the Calvinistic Methodist chapels were absent was wholly predictable as the leading characters in the organisation of this eisteddfod were the Anglican curate *Ab Ithel* and *Owain Alaw*, a fellow churchman and professional musician who was elected as the musical director of the forthcoming 'National' Eisteddfod.³⁴³

The 'Great Llangollen Eisteddfod' of 1858 was the forerunner of the National Eisteddfod and such was the feeling of nationhood that local committees were established in Liverpool, Manchester and north-east Wales.³⁴⁴ A prize was to be offered for the composition of a National Anthem³⁴⁵ as the Principality lacked a nationally recognised patriotic song, but despite the numerous entries, none were considered worthy of the prize.³⁴⁶ Far more successful was the category for the most numerous collection of previously unpublished Welsh airs in which there were three challengers: 'Caradog', a collection consisting of eight tunes; 'Orpheus' with 80 tunes and finally, 'Enillwr os Cyll' a compilation of 125 songs.³⁴⁷ The latter entrant was Aberdare harpist, Thomas David Llewelyn (*Llewelyn Alaw*, 1828-1879), who won the prize of ten pounds and a gold medal, although the adjudicator, *Owain Alaw*, was keen to preserve the compilation of 80 tunes and awarded a second prize of £5 to 'Orpheus'.³⁴⁸ In an article in *Welsh Music History*, Meredydd Evans claims that 'Orpheus' was the *nom-de-plume* of James James (*Iago ap Ieuan*, 1833-1902), composer of the tune 'Glan Rhondda',³⁴⁹ and the two larger collections also included this tune. James James was son of Pontypridd mill-

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² *Yr Hen Gorff* translates literally as 'the Old Body', and is an alternative term for the Calvinistic Methodist denomination.

³⁴³ Advertisements & Notices, *North Wales Chronicle*, 2 May 1857, 1.

³⁴⁴ 'The National Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 17 July 1858, 3

³⁴⁵ Oswald Edwards, *A Gem of Welsh Melody* (Ruthin, 1989), 9.

³⁴⁶ 'Llangollen Grand National Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 25 September 1858, 4.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Oswald Edwards, op. cit., 32.

³⁴⁹ Meredydd Evans, 'Who was 'Orpheus' of the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod?', *Welsh Music History* 5 (Cardiff, 2002), 7.

owner, Evan James (*Ieuan ap Iago*, 1809-1878), and the tune 'Glan Rhondda' was first sung in public in 1856 at the Tabor Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Maesteg, by sixteen-year old Elizabeth John.³⁵⁰ During the following year, James James, accompanying himself on the harp, sang 'Glan Rhondda' at the Pontypridd Eisteddfod, and although the tune was familiar to the people in that locality it did not cross the borders into north-east Wales until the 1858 competition at the Llangollen Eisteddfod.³⁵¹

Such was the enthusiasm for the Llangollen Eisteddfod in the Cefn Mawr locality that a committee was formed to procure several boats that would convey passengers by canal to Llangollen – an enterprising venture contrived to profit the fund for the enlargement of the Seion Baptist Chapel.³⁵² The Vale of Clwyd Railway Company was similarly inclined and for those travelling from other regions of north Wales, they announced that the line would be opened for traffic on 14 September 1858, 'just in time to run cheap trains to the Llangollen Eisteddfod'.³⁵³ What further swelled the attendances was the announcement by the Great Western Railway that they would be running trains from Birmingham, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Chester and Shrewsbury 'at very low fares', and such was the response that Llangollen was inundated with visitors attracted by the reasonably-priced excursions.³⁵⁴ Gwyn A. Williams maintains that the *eisteddfod* became, 'not only an academy of poets and historians but a mass popular entertainment',³⁵⁵ and therefore, the Great Eisteddfod at Llangollen was a watershed in the history of the Welsh choral culture.

Equally successful was the Adwy'r Clawdd Eisteddfod that had changed the entrenched attitudes of the Calvinistic Methodist hierarchy. They saw in choirs and *eisteddfodau* the potential to raise the denominational profile and as such, they were complicit to the growth of competitive singing while congregational worship had still to develop. Hymnals carried only the literary texts and congregational

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² 'Multiple News Items: Llangollen', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 7 August 1858, 3.

³⁵³ 'District News: Great Western Railway', *ibid.*, 28 August 1858, 3.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁵ Gwyn A. Williams, *When was Wales? A History of the Welsh* (London, 1985), 209.

tune-books had yet to come into common usage, an inequity of which Ieuan Gwyllt was clearly aware. Gareth Williams observes: 'To Ieuan Gwyllt Nonconformity and temperance were the engines of musical education and growth'³⁵⁶ and in the seclusion of his office at St. Anne Street, Liverpool he began to compile a collection of hymn-tunes, *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* [A Book of Congregational Tunes].³⁵⁷ From December 1852 to October 1858, he had involved himself in almost every aspect of chapel music, and in a letter c.1857 to Thomas Levi (1825-1916), the Calvinistic minister and author, Gwyllt tells him that the book is progressing and an advertisement was soon to appear in *Yr Amserau*.³⁵⁸

Shortly before Gwyllt's departure in October 1858 came reports that the American religious revival had finished its course in Ireland and was heading towards Liverpool. The *Liverpool Mercury* reported that the Young Men's Christian Association of Liverpool intended to hold mid-day prayer meetings at Hackin's-hey Hall on a twice-weekly basis in anticipation of a spiritual renewal³⁵⁹ that would take Chester and north-east Wales in its stride.³⁶⁰ In the heat of the Great Revival, Ieuan Gwyllt, described by R.D.Griffith as the 'apostle of Welsh congregational singing',³⁶¹ published *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* a compilation of hymn-tunes that would change the course of Welsh congregational music.³⁶² Gwyllt's timely publication put a book of sacred music into the hands of the masses and transformed the evangelical awakening into a singing revival.

³⁵⁶ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 13.

³⁵⁷ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1859).

³⁵⁸ Quoted in J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 46.

³⁵⁹ 'Semi-weekly Summary', *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 August 1858, 6.

³⁶⁰ 'Summary', *ibid.*, 12 April 1858, 4.

³⁶¹ R.D. Griffith, op. cit., 166.

³⁶² Eleazar Roberts, op. cit., 88.

Chapter Three

Gwyllt and Alaw - the authors of change

Wherever you go in Wales all you hear is *singing*: at work, without end in chapel, in the streets, and nothing but singing at the Eisteddfodau ... Few receive, let alone read, our quarterly publications. A shilling book containing some worthwhile knowledge is scorned, but the author of a book of tunes, glees and anthems can ask a fortune and retire before his hair starts greying.

(*Y Gerddorfa*)

Ieuan Gwyllt severed his connection with *Yr Amserau* in October 1858, regretting that he had not done so sooner and left Liverpool for Aberdare¹ to take up the post as editor of *Y Gwladgarwr*,² after which he was welcomed into the Calvinistic Methodist fold and accepted into the ministry in 1861.³ He was already known to the Nonconformist community of Aberdare as he had conducted the Gwent and Glamorgan Temperance Singing Festival in July 1858,⁴ and it was in this more welcoming atmosphere that he began to prepare his compilation of 450 hymn-tunes, chants and anthems for publication.⁵ The Congregationalists, Anglicans and Wesleyans had published their respective hymnals in the 1830s and 1840s, and the procrastination of the Calvinistic Methodists in addressing this issue suggests that congregational music was a lesser priority than the concerts and *eisteddfodau* that kept the adherents entertained. When Novello published cheap editions of popular oratorios, musical scores became available to chapel choirs while congregations were limited to repeating the sung lines of the *codwyr canu*, which impeded the development of congregational singing.

While Novello had addressed the demand for oratorio, chapel congregations still lacked an affordable tune-book despite the growing interest in music literacy which was sufficient motivation for Gwyllt to prevail, not to mention the denominational advantage of publishing a new hymnal during the Great Awakening. Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*), the Nannerch printer-musician had already published *Cydymaith yr Addolydd* [The Worshipper's Companion]⁶ c.1852, a substantial tune-book compiled by Robert Williams that gave the Welsh Wesleyans a distinct gain over other denominations. Gareth Williams refers to 'sixty collections of tunes and

¹ J. Eiddon Jones *Ieuan Gwyllt: Ei Fywyd, ei Lafur, ei Athrylith, ei Nodweddion, a'i Ddylanwad ar Gymru* (Treffynnon, 1881), 41. Denbigh Station opened eighteen months after the launch of *Baner Cymru*. See 'Newyddion Cymreig: Agoriad ffordd haiarn Dyffryn Clwyd', *Baner Cymru*, 20 Hydref 1858, 664.

² *Y Gwladgarwr* [The Patriot] was a weekly paper in existence from May 1858 until October 1882. It attracted criticism for including too many reports of *eisteddfodau* and literary events. See 'Newspaper Publishing in Wales – Newsplan Wales', <http://www.newsplanwales.info/s005.htm>, accessed 7 March 2011.

³ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 52-3; T.J.Davies, *Ieuan Gwyllt (Y Parchedig John Roberts) 1822-1877* (Llandysul, 1977), 77.

⁴ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 46.

⁵ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Aberdare, 1859).

⁶ Robert Williams, *Cydymaith yr Addolydd; yn cynwys tros gant a haner o donau, detholedig a gwreiddiol ar y gwahanol fesurau, salmau a hymnau, yn llyfr hymnau y Trefnyddion Wesleyaidd Cymreig* (Llanidloes, 1852).. See Chapter 2, 86.

anthems that were published in Wales between *Mawl yr Arglwydd*,⁷ by John Ellis (Llanrwst) in 1816, and Ieuan Gwyllt's *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*.⁸ Robert Williams' *Cydymaith yr Addolydd* was timely as it coincided with the new-found passion for musical literacy that stirred the ambition of chapel choirs, while Gwyllt was committed to the cause of re-instating the priority of congregational singing. He realised that the endorsement of 'Yr Hen Gorff' was a critical factor in the distribution of the tune-book, and in that sense, the alliance was of mutual benefit as it enabled the Calvinistic Methodists to challenge the growth of secular musical activity. By convening a *cymanfa ganu* which he conducted on 10 January 1859 using proofed copies of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, he brought the subject to the fore of public awareness.⁹

Gwyllt published his compilation at Aberdare in April 1859,¹⁰ and formed a Congregational Singing Union (*Undeb Canu Cynulleidfaol*) to sing from *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* in Aberdare Temperance Hall.¹¹ It is quite likely that the singing union was a conglomerate of several chapel choirs as a degree of literacy would have been required to sing the new hymn-tunes, many of which were of European origin, and in that sense, the term '*cymanfa ganu*' is idiomatic of any gathering that convenes to sing hymns and anthems. It was the thorny issue of denominational identity that brought a number of different terms into common usage, such as 'Psalmody Festival' and 'Choral Festival' both of which can be interpreted as a *Cymanfa Ganu*. What made Gwyllt's 1859 *cymanfa* unique, however, was that it extended the repertoire of hymnody with the introduction of the German chorale, which in his opinion, exuded a dignity that was lacking in Welsh hymnody. Although his bias towards European tunes raised the question as to why tunes of European origin had taken preference over well-known Welsh

⁷ John Ellis, *Mawl yr Arglwydd, sef Casgliad o Rannau o'r Psalmiau a'r Hymnau, yn Atebion Lleisiol, a rhai Penillion, at yr hwn a Chwanegwyd Cyfarwyddiadau i osod allan y synnwyr wrth ddarllen* (Trefriw, 1816), John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Aberdare, 1859)

⁸ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Welsh Society 1840-1914* (Cardiff, 2003), 23.

See list of hymnals in Appendix 1.

⁹ W.T. Rees (*Alaw Ddu*), 'Y Diweddar Barch. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt)', *Y Cylchgrawn*, Cyfres IX, Rhif 193, Ionawr (1878), 7.

¹⁰ J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 56; Rhidian Griffiths, 'Ieuan Gwyllt a Chanu'r Cymry', *Ceredigion: Cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hynafiaethwyr Sir Aberteifi*, Cyfrol 11, Rhif 3 (1991), 265

¹¹ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 27.

hymns by local composers,¹² with the exception of course, of the hymn-tunes composed by Gwyllt that appeared with those of John Ambrose Lloyd and *Owain Alaw*, the Chester church musician.¹³ For lesser-known composers such as *codwr canu* Robert Edwards, there was only disappointment, and the omission of his hymn-tune, 'Caersalem', from the first edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* was so vexatious that he would have nothing to do with Ieuan Gwyllt or his hymnal.¹⁴ He resigned as precentor in 1859 having faithfully served Bedford Street Chapel, Liverpool, for twenty-three years.¹⁵

Notwithstanding the commitments of overseeing the publication of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, and the responsibility of editing *Y Gwladgarwr*, Gwyllt found time to assist Thomas Levi with *Telyn y Plant* [The Children's Harp], a monthly series of booklets that included lessons on Temperance ideals and hymn-tunes for use in the Band of Hope.¹⁶ By 1862, Thomas Levi, after having developed *Telyn y Plant* with Gwyllt, launched *Trysorfa y Plant* [The Children's Treasury], and although this booklet was published under the patronage of the Calvinistic Methodists, it became popular in the Sunday schools of most Welsh denominations.¹⁷ That *Trysorfa y Plant* had achieved an average monthly sale of 19,000 copies by 1864 was largely due to the distribution network of the Calvinistic Methodist chapels, a facility that had proved critical to the success of Gwyllt's tune-book.¹⁸ The endorsement of the Calvinistic Methodists aligned *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* to the heart of the 'Great Awakening' and thrust Ieuan Gwyllt to national recognition as the author of the *Cymanfa Ganu*.

That Gwyllt may have capitalized on the Calvinistic alliance and launched *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* during the heat of revival in order to achieve the maximum

¹² 'Roberts, John (*Ieuan Gwyllt*)', yn J.Ogwen Jones (gol.), *Yr Attodiad – Y Gwyddoniadur Cymreig*, Cyfrol X (Dinbych, 1879), 702.

¹³ John Roberts (*Ieuan Gwyllt*) *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Aberdare, 1859). Included in Gwyllt's hymnal were the hymn-tunes, 'Trefaldwyn' and 'Caerlleon' by John Parry (*Owain Alaw*).

¹⁴ Isaac Foulkes, 'Cymry Lerpwl a Llenyddiaeth Gymreig: Cyfnod hyd 1860', *Transactions of the Liverpool Welsh National Society 1895-96* (Liverpool, 1896), 36.

¹⁵ 'Anrheg i Mr. Robert Edwards, Liverpool', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 30 Tachwedd 1859, 137; John Hughes-Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol 1 (Liverpool, 1929), 232.

¹⁶ Advertisement, *Baner Cymru*, 30 March 1859, 16.

¹⁷ Online Dictionary of Welsh Biography, National Library of Wales, 'Levi, Thomas', <http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-LEVI-THO-1825.html>, accessed 18 June 2010.

¹⁸ Quoted in Huw Walters, 'The Welsh Language and the Periodical Press', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains* (Cardiff, 2000), 376.

effect cannot be dismissed. As author and publisher, Gwyllt was liable for all costs incurred in printing the tune-book and the appropriate time of publication was a decisive factor in the success of the venture. While much has been written on Gwyllt's influence on congregational singing, his astuteness and sense of place has been somewhat overshadowed by his other accomplishments. In addition to the concurrence of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* with the religious awakening was its relevance to self-education, an aspirational activity which met the ideals of social reform and self-betterment that came to characterise the Welsh Nonconformist psyche. Gwyllt's hymnal included hymn-tunes written in four-part harmony that provided a text for aspiring musicians and encouraged greater participation by the congregation thus enabling *codwyr canu* to set new standards of sung worship, as Rhidian Griffiths observes:

The publication in 1859 of the *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* [Congregational Tune Book] was in many respects an important milestone. This was the formalization of the development of the Welsh hymn tune, and the laying of a foundation for the growth of the four-part congregational singing which was to be such a notable feature of the Welsh musical tradition over several generations.¹⁹

Undoubtedly, the most successful publishing ventures were those that met the needs of congregations and chapel choirs, a notion which had not eluded Gwyllt, but irrefutable is the fact that he changed the direction of Welsh congregational singing and set the course on which the choral tradition was built. The sequel to his achievement was that Welsh Calvinistic Methodists were perceived as having gained a cultural advantage over the Anglicans to such an extent that one Churchman commented: 'The leading musicians of Wales are Nonconformists; I cannot think of half a dozen living Welsh composers who have been trained in the incomparable nursery of a cathedral'.²⁰ Inasmuch as the mid-century marked the beginning of the most remarkable period in the history of Welsh religious music, it was the spiritual power of the Great Revival that filled the chapels, and in that respect, the publication of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* was masterfully timed as it gave congregations a voice.

¹⁹ Rhidian Griffiths, '“The Best Composer”: Ieuan Gwyllt and the Welsh Melody', in Sally Harper and Wyn Thomas (eds.), *Bearer of Song* (Cardiff, 2007), 3.

²⁰ John Graham, *A Century of Welsh Music* (London, 1923), 36.

Characteristic of the Revival was the powerful preaching and the manner in which unordained evangelists exposed the spiritual apathy of a chapelocracy that placed greater emphasis on secular values and outward appearance than evangelical duty. That the established denominations of Welsh Nonconformity were well supported is evidenced by the findings of the 1851 census which showed that 20,285 people of Welsh origin resided in Liverpool, many of whom had migrated from north Wales,²¹ and Colin Pooley claims that around sixty per cent of the diaspora 'attended Welsh Calvinistic chapels in the city'.²² By the mid-nineteenth century, the character of the once dissenting chapels had changed to a settled conformity, and the prospect of a disturbance to the *status quo* was discouraged. For example, when the revivalist preacher Rev. James Caughey returned from America, after witnessing the spiritual conversion of over 12,000 people,²³ he was dismissed as a heretic and the Wesleyan Conference of August 1857 denied him access to the chapel pulpits of the 'parent body'.²⁴ It was the Methodist Free Church in Liverpool that received the eminent preacher²⁵ into their midst with the same expectancy of Grace as the Pepper Street Chapel, Chester when that other Wesleyan dissident William Booth (1829-1912) conducted a series of revival services to a congregation that consisted of many other denominations.²⁶

The Great Revival in north-east Wales was led by lay-people, such as those who evangelized in the community of Brymbo where people of all denominations gathered in such large numbers that the *Wrexham Advertiser* reported: 'The chapels very often are crowded with earnest men, fired with the zeal for God's glory, and when the meetings are in the open air, large crowds of people may be seen coming down from different parts and flocking to the same spot'.²⁷ In Denbigh, the effect of revival was confirmed by the decline of drunkenness and the dramatic increase

²¹ Emrys Jones, 'The Welsh Language in England c. 1800-1914', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff, 1998), 253. The total population of Liverpool, as per the 1851 Census was 375,955. See Colin G. Pooley, 'Living in Liverpool: The Modern City' in John Belchem (ed.), *Liverpool 800* (Liverpool, 2006), 184; J. Belchem & Donald M. MacRaild, 'Cosmopolitan Liverpool' in *ibid.*, 344. Pooley quotes 21,232 people in Liverpool in 1871 that were born in Wales, 193.

²² Colin G. Pooley, *ibid.*, 242.

²³ Brian H. Edwards, *Revival! A people saturated with God* (Co. Durham, 1990), 179.

²⁴ 'Mulum in Parvo', *Liverpool Mercury*, 21 August 1857, 10.

²⁵ Advertisements and Notices, *ibid.*, 13 July 1859, 1.

²⁶ 'Revival on Religion', *Cheshire Observer*, 31 January 1857, 6.

²⁷ 'Brymbo: The Great Revival', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 10 September 1859, 3.

in chapel attendances as each denomination received new converts into their fellowship.²⁸ Calvinistic Methodists welcomed 71 new adherents; Independents, 60; Wesleyans 44; and the Baptists 10, making a total of 185, all of whom succumbed during the last week of November 1859.²⁹ In Holywell, denominational creeds were set aside as nightly prayer meetings took place in different chapels, and so intense were the young people in Rehoboth (Holywell) Calvinistic cause that they worshipped until eleven o'clock one Saturday evening.³⁰

Every corner of north-east Wales felt the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and in the tiny hamlet of Glyn Ceiriog on Sunday, 19 February 1860, before a congregation of 600, Rev. D. Jones baptized 13 new converts in the River Ceiriog with many more awaiting baptism the following month.³¹ The town of Corwen was similarly blessed and it was said that hundreds of new members had been added to the churches as the movement increased and showed little signs of abating.³² Such was the spiritual power of the revival that 29 members of Adwy'r Clawdd fellowship led by Aaron Francis and *codwr canu* Thomas Evans (father of Holywell printer P. M. Evans) founded a new cause at Bethel Chapel Coedpoeth,³³ and within ten years the Sunday school had increased to 200 members.³⁴

The rapid spread of the Great Awakening owed much to the growth of the English language press in Liverpool, Wrexham and Chester and the Denbigh-based Welsh medium *Baner* that had acquired *Yr Amserau* to become *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, the voice of Welsh Nonconformity.³⁵ The latter title was a National newspaper that circulated throughout the Principality and into the Welsh settlements that had built their tabernacles of Welsh Nonconformity in the English counties, and it was in this *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* that the following advertisement for *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* appeared in June 1859. (See Fig. 3.1 over).

²⁸ 'Denbigh: Religious Revival', *ibid.*, 10 December 1859, 4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ 'Holywell: The Revival', *ibid.*, 14 January 1860, 3.

³¹ 'Glyn Ceiriog: The Revivals', *ibid.*, 25 February 1860, 3.

³² 'Corwen: Revival', *ibid.*, 28 April 1860, 3.

³³ *Eglwys M.C. Bethel, Coedpoeth - Canmlwyddiant yr Achos*, Hydref (1959), 3

³⁴ Griffith Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir Fflint* (Dolgellau, 1914), 118.

³⁵ Thomas Gwynn Jones, *Cofiant Thomas Gee*, Cyfrol I (Dinbych, 1913), 168. *Baner* acquired *Yr Amserau* in October 1859 after which time it became *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (The Banner and Times of Wales).

Fig. 3.1:

YN AWR YN BAROD, Pris 3s. 6c. wedi ei rwymo
ynghardd mewn llan,

Y LLYFR TONAU CYNNULLEIDFAOL.

Gan ISUAN GWYLLT. Caiff y neb a dderbynio 6
chopi y 7fed am ei lafur; a gwneir gostyngiad i gynnull-
eidfaoedd neu glybiau a gymmerant nifer o gopiau.

Pob archebion, &c., i'w hanfon fel y canlyn:—*John
Roberts, Highland Place, Aberdare.*

Advertisements & Notices, *Baner Cymru*, 29 June 1859, 16.

Predictably, the Established Church responded to what was clearly a triumph for the Calvinistic Methodists, and concurrent with the publication of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (1859), Canon Thomas Jones of Pwllheli,³⁶ published the *Welsh Church Tune and Chant Book* which was written in the English language for use in Welsh churches.³⁷ He criticised ‘dumb congregations’ and impressed on all, including ministers, ‘that it is the duty and privilege of every member of the Church to take an audible part in the service’,³⁸ while Gwyllt apportioned blame on ministers and chapel officials for their lack of appreciation of the importance of singing in worship.³⁹ That such comments did not go unheeded is confirmed in a later edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, in which Gwyllt notes that since the first publication, there had been a marked resurgence in interest in congregational singing, although there was much room for further improvement.⁴⁰ Once ostracized by the Calvinistic Methodists and Congregationalists of Liverpool,⁴¹ Gwyllt was now the authoritative voice of Welsh congregational singing and hailed as a maestro by a Presbyterian hierarchy that had once rejected him.

He had published the first edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* on his own account, and while there is no evidence of financial support from the Calvinistic Methodists, their tacit endorsement was sufficient to guarantee the success of the venture. It transpired that demand for the tune-book had far exceeded Gwyllt’s expectations,

³⁶ Thomas Jones, *Welsh Church Tune and Chant Book* (London, 1959). This was a collection of over 150 psalm and hymn tunes with 50 chants harmonised for four voices, selected and arranged by Canon Thomas Jones, Rector of Llanengan, Pwllheli, who worked to improve congregational singing in the Established Church and conducted numerous singing festivals in Lleyn.

³⁷ R. D. Griffith, *Hanes Canu Cynulleidfaol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1948), 82.

³⁸ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 82-3.

³⁹ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *op. cit.*, iii.

⁴⁰ See Huw Llewellyn Williams, *Lle yr Emyrn yn y Gwasanaeth Crefyddol—Darlith Davies 1972*; (Caernarfon, 1973), 21; The later edition to which Williams refers was the revised volume of 1876.

⁴¹ J. Eiddon Jones, *op. cit.*, 50.

and when it became clear that his personal resources were not sufficiently robust, he reached agreement with Hughes and Son of Wrexham who became the official publishers. That the Hughes concern had the capacity to typeset music is evidenced by the Temperance tune, 'Cân Ddirwestol', which appeared in *Y Seren Ddirwestol* in 1837 with the imprint of 'R. Hughes, Gwreccsam',⁴² although music publishing contributed little to the revenues of the Wrexham firm. Because of the restrictive cost of printed music before the mid-19th century,⁴³ *codwyr canu* became adept copyists and laboriously 'pricked' music scores which reduced sales and explains why music publishing formed only a small subsidiary of the Wrexham firm. That situation changed towards the late 1840s when the mechanization of the printing industry reduced the prohibitive cost of printed music, and in 1848 Hughes and Son published the patriotic song *Emyn Cenedlaethol* [National Anthem] by J.D Jones.⁴⁴ Such assignments would have been typical of the low volume music publishing output and during the following decade, the growth of this sector was measured until Gwyllt's tune-book entered the portfolio of the Wrexham publisher.

Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol transformed the music publishing department of Hughes and Son, especially as the high print-run of the tune-book made it affordable to chapel congregations, which enabled Gwyllt to set the pace for the development of the *cymanfa ganu* and the choral renaissance that followed. This publishing triumph elevated the Wrexham publisher from that of a successful regional concern to one of national significance as Welsh Calvinistic Methodist congregations throughout the United Kingdom and beyond became familiar with the imprint of 'Hughes a'i Fab', and within a decade, north-east Wales had become a major book and music publishing centre. Philip Henry Jones maintains that: 'From the 1860s onwards Hughes rapidly became the most important publisher of Welsh music',⁴⁵ but it was in the field of Welsh religious music that the firm was predominant, and as such the majority of its output was relative to denominational demand.

⁴² 'Cân Ddirwestol', *Y Seren Ddirwestol*, Rhif 5, Mai (1837).

⁴³ Dave Russell, *Popular Music in England 1840-1914*, Second edition (Manchester, 1997), 192. *Codwyr canu* copied musical scores and hymns into *Llyfrau Pricio*.

⁴⁴ Oswald Edwards, *A Gem of Welsh Melody* (Ruthin, 1989), 13.

⁴⁵ Philip Henry Jones, 'Printing and Publishing in the Welsh Language 1800-1914', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *op. cit.*, 322.

Coinciding as it did with the Great Revival, *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* connected with the changes in the musical structure of the chapels as a new generation of musicians built on the success of the stalwarts of the 1820s and 30s. In Coedpoeth, Jonathan Jones, *arweinydd y gân* of Adwy chapel, had been succeeded by James Beckett (1829-1876), who was appointed in c.1856⁴⁶ and commonly referred to as 'the best in the area',⁴⁷ although he had inherited a trained congregation that was already well-versed in singing.⁴⁸ A tribute to Beckett in O.M.Edwards' *Cymru* observed: 'What gave Adwy'r choir dignity was its commitment to learn classical pieces such as Ambrose Lloyd's *Teyrnasoedd y Ddaear*, and Handel's *Messiah*'.⁴⁹ There was similar activity in Cefn Mawr, where the young coal-miner Thomas Davies '*Cantwr*' (1842-1900), became precentor of Tabernacle Baptist Chapel, Cefn Mawr, in 1860 at the age of eighteen,⁵⁰ while William Evans (*Alaw Mabon*, 1835-1903) also of that village, succeeded *Owain Cantwr* as precentor at Salem, Penycae, in 1862.⁵¹ William Evans had studied Emlyn Jones' Welsh translation⁵² of Hamilton's *Musical Dictionary*,⁵³ and under his tutelage, the *Ysgol Gân* at Penycae flourished with such zeal that members contributed 12s.8d. towards the lighting, at a time when the cost of candles varied between 8s. and 12s. a month.⁵⁴

The impact of Gwyllt's hymnal, denominational journals, and the day-to-day printing needs of the Nonconformist denominations in north-east Wales and Liverpool, underpinned the expansion of the printing and publishing sector in north-east Wales and it is therefore not surprising that those publishers and printers approved by the Calvinistic Methodists were the more successful. John Davies observes: 'Little was published in Welsh from the mid-century which was not

⁴⁶ James Beckett was enumerated in the 1871 Census as a local joiner.

⁴⁷ H. Llewelyn Williams, (gol.), *Hanes y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn Adwy'r Clawdd* (Wrecsam, 1947), 62; Griffith Owen, op. cit., 36.

⁴⁸ R. T. Hughes, 'Hen Arweinwyr Canu Coedpoeth a'r Ardal', *Y Cerddor*, Ebrill (1895), 35

⁴⁹ D. Ivor Jones, 'Hen Ddechreuwyr Canu yr Oes o'r Blaen: James Beckett, Adwy'r Clawdd', yn O.M.Edwards (gol.), *Cymru*, XIV (1898), 105.

⁵⁰ R. Emlyn Davies, 'Yr Wyf yn Cofio', *Seren Gomer*, Cyf. XLVI, Rhif 3 (Hydref 1954), 101.

⁵¹ Ben Davies, deacon at Salem Chapel Penycae, Personal notebook, accessed at home of his daughter Mrs. Winifred Rees, 6.

⁵² J. Emlyn Jones, *Gramadeg Cerddorol yn ol Rheolau Hamilton* (Caerfyrddin, 1860).

⁵³ J.A. Hamilton, *Musical Dictionary: comprising an explanation of 3,500 Italian, French, German and English and other Musical Terms and Abbreviations* (Edward J. Jaques, New York, 1842). John Owen Jones, *Hen Arweinyddion y Canu yn Salem, Penycae* (Colwyn Bay, 1911), 28.

⁵⁴ J. A. Hamilton (1785-1845) educated himself in the theory of music. See also Percy A. Scholes, *The Mirror of Music 1844-1944*, Vol. 1 (London, 1947), 323 for Hamilton.

⁵⁴ Ben Davies, op. cit., 12.

acceptable to the denominations'.⁵⁵ For example, Peter Maelor Evans (1817-1878),⁵⁶ along with Richard Hughes of Hughes and Son (Wrexham) and Thomas Gee of Denbigh, were all prominent Calvinistic Methodists, and the output of Welsh literature from their presses was compatible with the ideology of the denomination.⁵⁷ A.H. Dodd maintains that during the greater part of the nineteenth century the production of Welsh books by Hughes and Son and other north-east Wales publishers 'was the most effective educational force in the life of Wales'.⁵⁸

When the printing of *Y Traethodydd*⁵⁹ moved to the Holywell firm of P.M.Evans, it transformed what was primarily a local jobbing printer into one of regional importance, particularly when Evans was assigned to print *Y Drysorfa* [The Treasury], the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist denominational journal in 1852.⁶⁰ When *Y Drysorfa* began to publish the musical score of hymn-tunes it opened a career path for amateur musicians, and it is beyond coincidence that many found employment in the printing industry. One example was Holywell musician, Samuel Nuttall (1833-1925), described as a 'melodious alto',⁶¹ who was apprenticed for two years in the 1850s to printer-musician, Thomas Jones (*Canrhawdfardd*), in Lixwm.⁶² Nuttall resigned on a sudden and sour note when he discovered that Thomas Jones had contributed to his dismissal as leader of the neighbouring Brynford Church choir. In October 1860, he moved to the printing works of P.M.Evans where musical literacy was an essential skill in the proof-reading of

⁵⁵ John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994), 421.

⁵⁶ Peter Maelor Evans was born in Adwy'r Clawdd, son of *codwr canu* and schoolmaster Thomas Evans. P. M. Evans became a partner in printer and publisher Lloyd & Evans of Mold, and moved to Holywell in 1838. (John Lloyd moved to Liverpool where he published *Yr Amserau*.) Evans was a deacon at Rehoboth M.C. Chapel, Holywell. His second son, James Kerfoot Evans, joined the business in the early 1850s and the company name was changed to P.M. Evans and Son. See 'Y Diweddar Mr. P.M. Evans', *Y Drysorfa*, Awst (1878), 297; Griffith Owen, op. cit., 184.

⁵⁷ Hughes and Son and Gee of Denbigh published the majority of Welsh Nonconformist literary interest, including religious works, denominational magazines, hymnals and music journals from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

⁵⁸ A.H.Dodd, *History of Wrexham* (Bridge Books, Wrexham, reprint 1989), 256.

⁵⁹ *Y Traethodydd* [The Essayist] was established by Calvinistic Methodist minister, Lewis Edwards, in partnership with Roger Edwards and Thomas Gee in 1845 'to serve religion, divinity, philosophy and literature'. [*I wasanaethu crefydd, diwinyddiaeth, athroniaeth a llenyddiaeth*.]

⁶⁰ Huw Walters, *A Bibliography of Welsh Periodicals 1735-1850* (Aberystwyth, 1993), 27. A 'Readership' figure in 1850 for this periodical is quoted at 2,300. See Thomas Stephens, 'Agwedd bresennol llenyddiaeth yn Nghymru', *Y Wawr*, Cyfrol 2, Rhif 14 (1851), 38. This compares with *Yr Amserau*'s stated readership of 2,000. See Dot Jones, *Statistical Evidence relating to the Welsh Language 1801-1911* (Cardiff, 1998), 513.

⁶¹ 'Cyngerdd yn Fflint', *Yr Amserau*, 10 Mawrth 1858, 3

⁶² Flintshire Record Office, D/DM/742/1, Samuel Nuttall, 'My Recollections and Life' (n.d.), 25.

hymn-tunes for inclusion in *Y Drysorfa*, and indicative of his musical ability is that Ieuan Gwyllt included one Nuttall's compositions, 'Galwad Croesawus' in the first issue of *Y Cerddor Cymreig* in 1861.⁶³

That there was also a lively market in secular music is evidenced by the regular advertisements that appeared in local newspapers, one example being 'Davidson's *Musical Treasury*' which was published in London and sold through Charles G. Bayley, the Oswestry printer.⁶⁴ Many local printers and publishers were beholden to the denominations which had a restrictive effect on the publishing of Welsh secular music, although the Ruthin-based churchman and printer, Isaac Clarke (1824-1875),⁶⁵ operated outside of this alliance. He is described by Huw Williams as 'the forgotten publisher' who would later address the demand for secular music after establishing a general printing business in the town c.1850.⁶⁶ One of the first books published by Clarke was *Ceinion Alun*⁶⁷ [Beauties of Alun; the life and literary remains of the late Rev. John Blackwell (*Alun*, 1797-1840)].⁶⁸ On the cover sheet of this volume appears a commercial announcement procuring work 'from ministers of religion and others',⁶⁹ although no mention is made of music publishing. Notwithstanding the fact that Ruthin musician, J.D. Jones, was on friendly terms with Clarke, he entrusted the production of his original songs on Welsh words, *Cydymaith y Cerddor* (1857),⁷⁰ to the Llanidloes press of John Mendus Jones that thrived on the support of the Welsh Wesleyans.⁷¹

⁶³ Samuel Nuttall, *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Ebrill (1861), 6.

⁶⁴ Advertisements & Notices, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 13 September 1856, 1.

⁶⁵ Isaac Foulkes, 'Argraphwyr, Cyhoeddwyr, a Llyfrwerthwyr Cymru', *The Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (London, 1900), 97. Born in Pontblyddyn, near Mold, Clarke was apprenticed to Hugh Jones (1811-1874) at Mold. He moved to Ruthin to a printing-house owned by Mrs. Jane Maddock, widow of a local printer, before establishing his own business in the town c.1850.

⁶⁶ Huw Williams, 'Y Cyhoeddwr a anghofiwyd', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 6, Nadolig (1978), 7.

⁶⁷ G. Edwards (gol.), *Ceinion Alun: sef barddoniaeth, traethodau, ac areithiau, ynghyd a detholiad o lythyrau o gohebiaethau y diweddar Barch. John Blackwell .. (Alun) .. yn rhagflaenedig a bywgraffiad*, a beirniadaeth ar ei ysgrifeniadau / dan olygiad G. Edwards, M.A. (Gutyn Padarn) (Rhuthyn, 1851).

⁶⁸ Cleric and lyrical poet, John Blackwell (*Alun*), born in Mold, came to prominence with his prizewinning ode, 'Maes Garmon', at Mold Eisteddfod in 1823. An Oxford graduate, he served as curate in Holywell from 1829 to 1833. See Mari Ellis, 'Y Bardd a'r Cylchgrawn', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 62, Pasg (1998), 3.

⁶⁹ Huw Williams (1978), op. cit., 7.

⁷⁰ J.D. Jones, *Cydymaith y Cerddor: yn cynwys tonau moesol a difyrus, at wasanaeth teuluoedd, cyfarfodydd llenyddol &c. &c. &c. / cyfansoddedig gan J. D. Jones* (Llanidloes, 1857).

⁷¹ S. Davies, 'Colofn y Jubili', *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, Gorphenaf (1890), 288.

Regardless of the fact that he was marginalized by the denominations, Isaac Clarke began to build a reputation as a publisher of literary work, and it was he who discovered John Hughes (*Ceiriog*, 1832-1887), whose shilling publications proved a profitable venture that became 'a source of envy for Hughes and Son'.⁷² The Ceiriog Valley poet was the nephew of Richard Hughes, the Wrexham publisher,⁷³ who may not have appreciated the literary potential of his relative until he won the competition for the best poem for a Welsh song at the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod with 'Myfanwy Fychan' [Little Myfanwy], a triumph that vindicated Clarke's faith in the young poet.⁷⁴ Inasmuch as the success at Llangollen lifted the young poet to prominence, it had an equally profound effect on the future of Clarke's business as he found a kindred spirit in John Owen (*Owain Alaw*, 1821-1883), a church musician and composer who would kindle the renaissance in traditional music at the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod .

When *Alaw* began to compile a volume of the previously unpublished Welsh airs that he had adjudicated at Llangollen, it was Isaac Clarke, as yet unknown as a music publisher, whom he approached with a view to producing the work.⁷⁵ Ellis Roberts (*Eos Meirion*, 1819-1873)⁷⁶ who won the competition at the Llangollen Eisteddfod for the best instructional manual for playing the Triple Harp had also prevailed on Clarke to publish his text, albeit with little success, as the market for such a publication was limited,⁷⁷ but *Alaw's* proposal was a different matter. He was a prominent figure in *eisteddfodic* circles and ideally placed to promote the work,⁷⁸ particularly in light of the proposals to create a National Eisteddfod. As to

⁷² Stan Wicklen, 'Hawlfraint a gwerthiant cerddi Ceiriog', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 32, Awst (1987), 5

⁷³ Hughes Family Tree, <http://jevanshughes.users.btopenworld.com/maps/sarphle.pdf>, accessed 21 March 2011.

⁷⁴ 'Multiple News Items', *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 25 September 1858, 4.

⁷⁵ Oswald Edwards, *op. cit.*, 19.

⁷⁶ Dolgellau-born, Ellis Roberts was an accomplished harpist and won many eisteddfodic prizes in north Wales, one of which was a harp won at the 1840 Liverpool Eisteddfod. In 1849 he was appointed harpist to the Prince of Wales. See M.O.Jones (D.Emlyn Evans, *gol.*), *Bywgraffiaeth Cerddorion Cymreig* (Caerdydd, 1890), 109; Robert Griffith, Manchester, *Llyfr Cerdd Dannau – Ymchwiliad i Hanes Hen Gerddoriaeth a'r Dulliau Hynaf o Ganu* (Caernarfon, n.d.), 291; 'The Chronicle', *North Wales Chronicle*, 4 September 1849, 3.

⁷⁷ Ellis Roberts, *Manual or Method of Instruction for playing the Welsh Harp*. (London and USA, 1903). See Robert Griffith, Manchester, *op. cit.*, 293.

⁷⁸ D. Emlyn Evans, 'John Owen (*Owain Alaw*), *Y Cerddor*, Gorphenaf (1892), 76; C. Francis Lloyd, Elfed (cyfieithydd a golygydd.), *John Ambrose Lloyd, Hanes ei Fywyd a'i Weithiau* (Wrecsam, 1921), 64. For list of National Eisteddfodau see Appendix 3.

why *Owain Alaw* preferred Clarke rather than the well-established Hughes and Son who had published a number of his compositions, including *Cân Mair*, the Magnificat that won first prize at the London *Eisteddfod* of 1855, must be left to conjecture.⁷⁹

That Clarke needed to buy new fonts of type specifically for this prestigious work,⁸⁰ implies that he was not fully equipped for the task and his skills as a music compositor were probably suspect, hence his decision to appoint the printer musician Benjamin Morris Williams (1832-1903), who prepared the work for press.⁸¹ Little is known of Clarke's musicianship except that he had played the trumpet in the cavalry,⁸² but Isaac Foulkes (1836-1904), the Liverpool book printer and an apprentice at the Ruthin printing shop until 1854,⁸³ maintained that it was Clarke who typeset *Owain Alaw's Gems of Welsh Melody*,⁸⁴ while M.O. Jones claims that it was Benjamin Williams who carried out the work.⁸⁵ The latter is probably the more credible as B.M. Williams had established a reputation both as a musician and staff notation compositor after type-setting Tanymarian's oratorio, *Ystorm Tiberias*⁸⁶ while in the employ of Robert Jones, at the Cambrian Music Office, Bethesda.⁸⁷ This complex work extended to 123 pages, and its completion in a small town printing office is a tribute to B.M. Williams, the compositor and musician who was so critical to Clarke's music publishing business.⁸⁸

Some time before the compilation of secular songs was published, *Alaw* was actively promoting its content, and it was he who brought the once-stigmatised

⁷⁹ Bangor Archive X/MC 374 OWA, *Cân Mair (magnificat)... / gan John Owen (Owain Alaw, Pencerdd)*, buddugol yn Eisteddfod Llundain, 1855 (Wrexham, 1855).

⁸⁰ Isaac Foulkes (1900), op. cit., 98.

⁸¹ M.O. Jones (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 135.

⁸² Isaac Foulkes (1900), op. cit., 98.

⁸³ E. Vincent Evans, 'Isaac Foulkes', *Y Geninen*, Rhif 1, Cyfrol XXIII, Ionawr (1905), 32. Foulkes left Clarke's office in 1854 for Liverpool, where he became a compositor at the printing office of *Yr Amserau*, and in 1862, set up in business on his own account in King Street, Liverpool.

⁸⁴ Isaac Foulkes (1900), op. cit., 98.

⁸⁵ M.O. Jones, (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 135.

⁸⁶ Edward Stephen composed *Ystorm Tiberias* [The Storm of Tiberias], the first Welsh oratorio, which he started writing in 1851 and completed in 1855. See D. Emlyn Evans, 'Yr Oratorio - *Ystorm Tiberias*' in W.J. Parry (gol.), *Cofiant Tanymarian* (Dolgellau, 1886), 113-19. Samuel Sebastian Wesley revised *Ystorm Tiberias* and wrote the pianoforte accompaniment for which he was paid £80. See D. Emlyn Evans, *The Musical Herald*, 1 April 1892, 99.

⁸⁷ M.O. Jones, (D. Emlyn Evans, gol.), op. cit., 135.

⁸⁸ Huw Williams, 'Robert David Griffith (1877-1958): Cerddor y Cysegr', *Y Traethodydd*, Cyfrol 157 (2002), 241.

genre to the concert-hall and the *eisteddfod* stage that cleared the way for a lighter form of choral singing that extended the repertoire of glee parties.⁸⁹ By 1859, he had teamed up with the poet, John Jones (*Talhaiarn*, 1810-1869),⁹⁰ who wrote the lyrics for many of *Owain Alaw*'s songs as well as those of Brinley Richards and J.D.Jones, and the duo toured north Wales presenting poetical and musical evenings of entertainment, under the guise of 'A night with Tal and Alaw'.⁹¹ The bard and minstrel presented an evening of entertainment at Chirk, and the combination of *Owain Alaw*'s new Welsh songs, 'Noswaith o garu' and 'Y Trên', coupled with *Talhaiarn*'s translation of 'Tam O'Shanter' was considered to be the best entertainment of its kind ever given in Chirk.⁹² (See Fig.3.2 below)

Fig. 3.2:

TALHAIARN AND OWAIN ALAW
RESPECTFULLY announce that they intend to visit the principal Towns in NORTH and SOUTH WALES, during the ensuing Summer, to give an ENTERTAINMENT, entitled,
A Night with Tal and Alaw.
 It will consist of an OPENING ADDRESS, RECITATIONS, SONGS with PIANO ACCOMPANIMENTS, PENILLION SINGING, &c.
 For particulars see the Programmes.
 Parties wishing to contract for the Entertainment will apply by letter to Mr. JOHN OWAIN (Owain Alaw), Professor of Music, Chester.

Advertisements & Notices, *North Wales Chronicle*, 14 May 1859, 1.

Shortly after this public announcement, *Alaw* and *Talhaiarn* entertained a capacity audience at the National Schoolrooms in Rhos,⁹³ and two weeks later, they presented a similar programme at the Assembly Rooms, Denbigh.⁹⁴ While Gwyllt focussed his efforts on the task of improving congregational singing in the chapels of Aberdare and Merthyr, *Owain Alaw* was entertaining *eisteddfod* and concert audiences in north-east Wales. Prior to the publication of *Alaw*'s song-book of Welsh traditional melodies, 'Glan Rhondda', the tune of James James (*Iago ap Ieuan*) was sung as a duet by Iolo Trefaldwyn and Seth Roberts of Brymbo at the Seion Baptist Chapel *eisteddfod*, Cefn Mawr in 1859, and this was the first public

⁸⁹ Robert G. Nicholls, 'Hanes yr Anthem gysegredig yng Nghymru, 1850-1950', *Seren Cymru*, 22 Awst 1997, 3.

⁹⁰ John Jones, born at the Harp Inn, Llanfairtalhaearn, Denbighshire was an ecclesiastical architect and poet who wrote the Welsh words for the cantata *Llywelyn* (1864) and *The Bride of Neath Valley* (1867) and the lyrics for Welsh airs in *Welsh Melodies by Pencerdd Gwalia*.

⁹¹ 'Chirk', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 9 June 1859, 4.

⁹² Advertisements & Notices, *North Wales Chronicle*, 14 May 1859, 1.

⁹³ 'Rhosllannerchrugog', *ibid.*, 16 July 1859, 8.

⁹⁴ 'St. Asaph Union', *ibid.*, 30 July, 1859, 5.

performance of the song in north Wales.⁹⁵ Dr.A.Jones-Parry, the minister of Seion, recalled the event and described the astonishing effect on the crowds who joined in the chorus of this rousing tune, as it began its traverse to popularity.⁹⁶ Patriotic song it may have been, but it nevertheless illustrates how secular music was pervading the sanctuaries of Nonconformity as the renewed interest in traditional music ran in parallel with Gwyllt's efforts to improve congregational singing.

Alaw's compilation of traditional songs, *Gems of Welsh Melody*, appeared in the autumn of 1860, and the decision to publish the work in a bilingual format corresponded with the linguistic structure of north-east Wales and Liverpool. What further endeared the volume to the general public was that it was competitively priced at 2s.6d,⁹⁷ and a favourable review in the *Wrexham Advertiser* commended the author and publisher: 'Owain Alaw deserves well of his country and the general lovers of real music, by this first attempt to popularize old Welsh melodies'.⁹⁸ In the same issue, the literary critic also reviewed *Ceiriog's* work and paid tribute to Isaac Clarke for the low-priced and elegant form in which he had presented the poet's work: '*Oriau'r Hwyr* will, without doubt, obtain a large circulation - one of its poems, '*Myfanwy Fychan*' – the prize love song at Llangollen – is alone worth treble the price of the whole book'.⁹⁹

That *Owain Alaw* had written accompaniments in an uncomplicated style for harp or piano gave the volume an added appeal as pianos were becoming a fashionable accessory. For the aspiring classes, a piano was regarded as a status symbol, and J. Edgar, the Liverpool piano retailer, was advertising a range of instruments in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* in 1860 which suggests that there was a demand, albeit for the few who were able to afford 25 guineas for an English piano.¹⁰⁰ By November 1860, Clarke was concertedly advertising the first series of *Gems of Welsh Melody*

⁹⁵ E.K. Jones, *Harwt a Bryn Seion – Hanes Eglwys Annibynnol Brymbo 1892-1940* (Llandysul, 1941), 93.

⁹⁶ Oswald Edwards, *op. cit.*, 18.

⁹⁷ Griffith Jones (*Glan Menai*), 'Bywyd ac Athrylith y diweddar dri Cherddor, Owain Alaw, Tanymarian a Brinley Richards', *Traethawd buddugol yn Cofnodion a Chyfansoddiadau Buddugol Eisteddfod Caernarfon, 1886* (Liverpool, 1888), 236.

⁹⁸ 'Review', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 29 September 1860, 4 'New Music', *North Wales Chronicle*, 2 March 1861, 2.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Advertisements & Notices, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 3 October 1860, 1; Hywel Teifi Edwards, *Gŵyl Gwalia: Yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yn Oes Aur Victoria* (Llandysul, 1980), 215.

and promising a second edition by Christmas of that year, which would include a new song and chorus by J.D.Jones, 'Riflemen Form', in English and Welsh.¹⁰¹ (See Fig.3.3, below)

Fig. 3.3:

NEW MUSIC.
Now ready, the 2nd Edition, (3rd thousand.)
FIRST SERIES of GEMS of WELSH MELODY,
by Owain Alaw ; price 2s. 6d.
The Second Series will be published at Christmas, uniform in size and price.
RIFLEMEN FORM! New Song and Chorus, by
J. D. Jones, English and Welsh words; price 6d.—I.
Clarke, Publisher, Ruthin.

Advertisements and Notices, *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser*, 10 November 1860, 1

As the railway opened a path to every corner of the Principality,¹⁰² *eisteddfod* attendances soared, as did the demand for Welsh sheet music, which Huw Williams believed was pioneered by Isaac Clarke.¹⁰³ *Gems of Welsh Melody* had greatly enhanced Clarke's reputation as a music publisher,¹⁰⁴ and advertisements in the early 1860s for 'Clarke's series of popular songs for the million'¹⁰⁵ concur with Huw Williams' opinion that this period was 'the big awakening' in the history of Welsh music publishing.¹⁰⁶ Gwyn A. Williams describes the dramatic expansion of the printing and publishing sector in north Wales as: 'an explosion into print and its strongholds were on the borders of industrial and rural Wales - Wrexham, Denbigh, Caernarfon and Liverpool'.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Multiple Advertisements and Notices, *ibid.*, 10 November 1860, 1.

¹⁰² 'History of Welsh Eisteddfodau', www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/290/, accessed 15 January 2007

¹⁰³ Huw Williams (1978), *op. cit.*, 7.

¹⁰⁴ John Owen (Owain Alaw), *Gems of Welsh Melody A selection of popular Welsh songs, with English and Welsh words; specimens of pennillion singing, after the manner of North Wales; and Welsh national airs, ancient and modern. With symphonies and accompaniments for piano or harp* (Ruthin, 1860). The first printed copy of the Welsh national anthem, 'Hen Wlad fy Nhadau', appeared in this publication, printed by Isaac Clarke in Ruthin. See Huw Williams (1978), *op. cit.*, 7.

¹⁰⁵ W. Rhidian M.Griffiths, 'Cyhoeddi cerddoriaeth yng Nghymru yn y cyfnod 1860-1914: astudiaeth lyfryddol ynghyd â llyfryddiaeth o gyhoeddiadau rhai cyhoeddwr', *Cyf. 1, Ph.D.*, Prifysgol Cymru (Aberystwyth, 1991) Atodiad, 260.

¹⁰⁶ Huw Williams (1994), *op. cit.*, 21.

¹⁰⁷ Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh* (London, 1985), 215.

Owain Alaw was highly influential as a conductor, performer and adjudicator, and his interest in the revival of old Welsh airs no doubt influenced the selection of competitive and concert pieces at *eisteddfodau*. For instance, at the opening concert of the Denbigh Eisteddfod in 1860, 'the music was selected principally from the national airs of Wales and performed by native *artistes*',¹⁰⁸ not least being the Holywell-born soprano, Edith Wynne (*Eos Cymru*, 1842-1897),¹⁰⁹ one of the finest vocalists in the United Kingdom in the 1860s, who sang *Clychau Aberdyfi* and *Y Deryn Pur*, to the harp accompaniment of Ellis Roberts.¹¹⁰ A further inducement to purchase the first series of *Gems of Welsh Melody* was the prize of ten guineas for the best rendition of Welsh airs 'by any brass band connected to the principality', that included the Welsh communities of Merseyside, and this marketing tactic added a further dimension to the appeal of *Owain Alaw*'s song-book.¹¹¹

Ambivalent towards *Alaw*'s masterly compilation, and even more so towards an eisteddfod over which they had no control, the Calvinistic Methodists, Baptists and Congregationalists were noticeable by their absence and the choral competition at the Llangollen Eisteddfod of 1858 attracted only two Llangollen choirs.¹¹² The Wrexham Eisteddfod of 1859 was a far more successful affair which had attracted chapel choirs from Ruabon, Adwy, Rhosllannerchrugog and Gwersyllt in the competition for the best rendition of Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus'.¹¹³ Flintshire choirs were similarly disinterested even though the Holywell Choral Society in 1860 were sufficiently competent to perform the works of J.D.Jones and *Owain Alaw* as well as selected excerpts from the oratorio, *Bethlehem*, composed by John Williams (*Ab Alaw*), the conductor.¹¹⁴ This was in the year of the Denbigh Eisteddfod when only three contenders entered the competition for mixed choirs, two of which were local while the third, the Birkenhead Cambrian Choir, was

¹⁰⁸ 'The Denbigh Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 11 August 1860, 3.

¹⁰⁹ Holywell-born soprano Edith Wynne became a renowned operatic and concert singer. Aged 9, she joined the Holywell Choral Society, and aged 14, her singing talent was noticed by Llew Llwyfo at a Wrexham *eisteddfod*. She moved to Liverpool to receive tuition from the Scarisbricks, and later studied in Italy. She first sang on the London stage in 1862 in concerts arranged by Ellis Roberts and John Thomas. See Frederic Griffith, *Notable Welsh Musicians*, 4th Edition (London, 1896), 90; 'The late Madame Edith Wynne', *Cheshire Observer*, 30 January 1897, 2.

¹¹⁰ 'The Denbigh Eisteddfod', op. cit.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² 'Eisteddfod Llangollen', *Baner Cymru*, 18 Awst 1858, 516. The local choirs were Glan yr Afon choir of 40 voices and the Wesleyan choir of 38 voices, was adjudged the winner.

¹¹³ 'Wrexham Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 7 May 1859, 4.

¹¹⁴ 'District News', *ibid.*, 6 October 1860, 3.

making its first appearance at a National Eisteddfod.¹¹⁵ A more positive outcome of the Llangollen Eisteddfod was the appearance of *Taliesin*,¹¹⁶ a quarterly journal of the winning entries and adjudications from *eisteddfod* and literary meetings that was published by Isaac Clarke and edited by *Ab Ithel* from 1859 to 1861.¹¹⁷

The perennial call for the composition of a national anthem attracted the best efforts of 27 contenders at the Denbigh Eisteddfod of 1860, but failed to impress the adjudicator, *Owain Alaw*, who withheld the £5 prize and left the expression of patriotism to the Rhyl Silver Band that performed *Gwŷr Harlech* (Men of Harlech).¹¹⁸ Arguably, the least obvious contender for a patriotic song was the tune 'Glan Rhondda' which *Alaw* had re-configured before including it in *Gems of Welsh Melody*. Percy Scholes comments: 'It will be seen that the harmonisation is by *Owain Alaw* himself, and it is quite possible that the composer never wrote out any harmonization, simply accompanying the song by ear on his harp'.¹¹⁹ Ironically, *Owain Alaw* had adjudicated at numerous *eisteddfodau* where the call for a national anthem had been made since 1840, seemingly oblivious to the suitability of 'Glan Rhondda', the tune which he had harmonised.¹²⁰

Owain Alaw, promoted *Gems of Welsh Melody* during concerts and *eisteddfodau* and his most ambitious efforts were the two grand concerts in Liverpool, when a showcase of Welsh talent performed a range of traditional Welsh music at the St. George's Hall, which was considered to be the most prestigious venue in the north west of England.¹²¹ The Liverpool concert gave *Alaw* the opportunity to promote *Gems of Welsh Melody* with a fine array of Welsh professional artistes to a sophisticated audience, albeit as part of a wider agenda. Gwyn A. Williams maintains: 'Around an often near-monoglot Welsh core an expatriate *bourgeoisie* and working population began to form in Liverpool which in effect took over

¹¹⁵ 'Brief Chronicle of the Month: Denbigh', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 1 September 1860, 336. At the 1860 Denbigh National Eisteddfod, three choirs from the Denbigh area (Denbigh Choral Society, Dyserth Wesleyan Choir and 'a choir from the vicinity of Denbigh') competed for the ten guinea prize, which was won by the Denbigh Choral Society.

¹¹⁶ *Taliesin: sef cylchgrawn chwarterol at wasanaeth y cymdeithasau llenyddol, yr eisteddfodau a'r Orsedd yng Nghymru* (Rhuthyn, 1859-61).

¹¹⁷ Hywel Teifi Edwards, 'Angau yr Eisteddfod', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 2, Awst (1977), 10.

¹¹⁸ 'The Denbigh Eisteddfod', op. cit., 3.

¹¹⁹ Oswald Edwards, op. cit., 19.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Advertisements & Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 December 1861, 1.

regionally the old role of the London-Welsh'.¹²² To all intents, this was a concert for the benefit of the Liverpool Welsh community, although there may have been an ulterior motive as the inclusion of iconic Welsh musicians such as Brinley Richards (1817-1885)¹²³ and John Thomas (*Pencerdd Gwalia*, 1826-1913),¹²⁴ both of whom were central to the musical establishment of London, suggests that *Owain Alaw* may have been testing the cultural primacy of the capital.

Brinley Richards arranged 'Classical and Modern Pianoforte Music' concerts at the Hanover Square Rooms, London, to large audiences and the *Musical World* claimed that he had done more than any other concert-giver of the present day to render classic music acceptable to the aristocracy.¹²⁵ As an *eisteddfod* adjudicator he was in demand throughout Wales and his widely reported lectures on the music of Wales had placed London at the centre of Welsh classical music.¹²⁶ The same was true of *Pencerdd Gwalia*, a student of the Royal Academy, who studied harmony under Cipriani Potter, a former pupil of Beethoven, and harp with J.B.Chatterton. In 1862, he gave his first London concert of Welsh music at St. James's Hall, and in 1871, the year in which he was appointed as harpist to Queen Victoria, Thomas returned to the Academy as a harp tutor and formed the London Welsh Choral Union.¹²⁷ *Pencerdd Gwalia*, like his compatriot Brinley Richards, reflected the cultural status of the London Welsh community and by inviting these two iconic musicians to the Liverpool stage, *Owain Alaw* made clear his intention to make Liverpool the northern capital of Welsh music. (See Fig.3.4 over). In addition to the Liverpool concerts, he continued to tour north-east Wales giving concerts at Rhos and Brymbo, where he performed 'Mae Hen Wlad fy Nhadau'.¹²⁸

¹²² Gwyn A. Williams, op. cit., 201.

¹²³ Brinley Richards first came to public notice at the Gwent and Morgannwg *eisteddfod* of 1834 where he secured the patronage of the Duke of Newcastle which enabled him to attend the Royal Academy of Music, London. He studied in Paris, and became a pupil of Chopin, after which he returned to London, and became a director of the Royal Academy. He was regarded as one of the finest pianists of his generation. See A.J.Heward Rees, 'Henry Brinley Richards (1817-1885): A Nineteenth-Century Propagandist for Welsh Music', *Welsh Music History*, Vol. 2 (1997), 173-190.

¹²⁴ John Thomas, harpist to Queen Victoria, published 4 volumes of Welsh airs and lectured widely on the music of Wales. One of the greatest exponents of the triple harp, he was a Royal Academy examiner and teacher of the harp at the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music.

¹²⁵ 'Mr. Brinley Richards' Concert', *Musical World*, 19 June 1852, 392.

¹²⁶ 'Mr Brinley Richards, "At Home"', *The Musical Standard*, 5 July 1873, 5.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Multiple News Items, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 21 November 1863, 9.

CYMRU FU, CYMRU FYDD.
ST. GEORGE'S HALL.

MR. JOHN OWEN (Owain Alaw, Pen-
cerdd), Musical Director of the Grand National
Festivals held at Llangollen, Denbigh, Conway, and Aberdare,
Editor of "Gems of Welsh Melody," &c., begs to announce

TWO GRAND CONCERTS

OF
WELSH NATIONAL MUSIC
IN THE LARGE HALL,
ON FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 27TH;
AND ON
SATURDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 28TH,
AT HALF-PAST TWO O'CLOCK,
IN THE SMALL CONCERT ROOM;

When he will be assisted by the most distinguished Artists of
the Principality.

VOCALISTS.

MISS SARAH EDITH WYNNE

(the celebrated Welsh Songstress, pupil of Mr. Scarisbrick,
Liverpool), and her sister,

MISS KATE WYNNE,

Of Holywell, who will sing in Welsh Costume.

MR. LEWIS THOMAS

(The popular Bass Singer of London), and

MR. JOHN OWEN

(Owain Alaw).

INSTRUMENTALISTS.

MR. BRINLEY RICHARDS

(Composer and Pianist), and

MR. JOHN THOMAS

(Harplist).

During the Evening

TALHAIARN

WILL RECITE TWO FAVOURITE PIECES.

Accompanist MR. H. V. LEWIS.

Conductor..... MR. J. OWEN (Owain Alaw).

Admission to the Afternoon Concert will be 2s. 6d. to all
parts of the Small Hall.

Admission to the Evening Concert as follow :-

Reserved Seats (Numbered) 2s. 6d.
Body of the Hall..... 1s. 6d.
Gallery 0s. 6d.

Tickets to all parts of the Hall, and places secured for
Reserved Seats only, may be had at Messrs. HIME & SON'S
Music Warehouse, 57, Church-street.

Robert Nicholls states: 'Alaw's real contribution to congregational singing was as a composer of anthems and he was one of the few churchmen to do so in the face of strong denominational influence',¹²⁹ although there is little evidence of sectarian tension within the informal network of musicians. Respecting Ieuan Gwyllt's arduous efforts to improve congregational singing, *Owain Alaw* had turned his attention to the demand for traditional music while both continued to adjudicate on almost every musical aspect at *eisteddfodau*. At the Aberdare in 1861, generally regarded as the first 'official' National Eisteddfod, John Ambrose Lloyd and Ieuan Gwyllt adjudicated on the best congregational hymn, while *Owain Alaw* and Ambrose Lloyd adjudged the winning brass band,¹³⁰ in a unity devoid of denominational prejudice. Presbyterian attitudes that had suppressed the growth of secular music were beginning to adopt a more lenient stance by the early 1860s, not least on account of the fund-raising concerts and *eisteddfodau* that benefited chapel funds. Furthermore, there was the more pressing anxiety that music halls and assembly rooms were offering an alternative to the chapels that had once enjoyed a monopoly of suitable concert venues.

Owain Alaw was not alone in championing popular music, as the minister-musician Rev. Edward Stephen (*Tanymarian*) had apportioned his talent between sacred and secular music,¹³¹ as did J.D. Jones of Ruthin who published a collection of songs, *Y Delyn Gymreig* (1859) and *Alawon y Bryniau* (1866), which included the first original songs to be published in Wales.¹³² Convinced of the growing demand for a wider variety of printed music and intent on challenging the success of *Gems of Welsh Melody*, Hughes and Son engaged *Owain Alaw* and J.D.Jones as joint editors of *Y Gyfres Gerddorol Gymraeg*, which first appeared in 1861.¹³³ This series of Welsh songs in 32 parts¹³⁴ was a commercial response to the success of Clarke's *Gems of Welsh Melody*, although at this stage the Ruthin printer had the advantage of Benjamin Williams' expertise, while Hughes and Son were yet to appoint a

¹²⁹ Robert G. Nicholls, op. cit., 3.

¹³⁰ 'Grand National Eisteddfod at Aberdare', *North Wales Chronicle*, 24 August 1861, 5.

¹³¹ *Llew Llwyfo*, 'Fel Dadganydd', yn W.J.Parry (gol.), *Cofiant Tanymarian* (Dolgellau, 1886), 76.

¹³² Idris Lewis, *Cerddoriaeth yng Nghymru* (Lerpwl, 1945), 40.

¹³³ John Owen a J.D. Jones, *Y Gyfres Gerddorol Gymraeg: yn cynnwys cerddoriaeth wreiddiol a detholedig ... / wedi eu cyfansoddi a'u trefnu gan John Owen (Owain Alaw ... J.D.Jones ... ac eraill* (Wrexham, 1861). See Rhidian Griffiths, 'Benjamin Parry, Music Publisher', *Welsh Music History*, Vol. 6, November (Cardiff, 2004), 206.

¹³⁴ R. D. Griffiths, op. cit., 176.

music composer of comparable ability. The matter was resolved when Holywell-born printer musician, Benjamin Parry (1836-1910), returned from America and Rhidian Griffiths observes: 'It seems likely that it was to the service of Hughes and Son that Parry came on his return to Wales' in the 1860s.¹³⁵

It was *Alaw*, says Gareth Williams, who first introduced cantata to the National Eisteddfod,¹³⁶ when he took the prize at the Caernarfon Eisteddfod of 1862 with 'Tywysog Cymru' [The Prince of Wales], with a libretto by the poet *Ceiriog*,¹³⁷ who took the opportunity to approach Brinley Richards, one of the adjudicators, with a request to compose music to his poetry.¹³⁸ Rumours of a Royal marriage between the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandrina of Prussia were rife and the subject of much newspaper speculation in 1860,¹³⁹ and the prospect of national jubilation was sufficient to inspire both poets and musicians. Richards wrote the music to the poetry of Ceiriog and English words were written by George Linley, under the title of 'The Prince of our Brave Land'. This was later changed by Richards to 'God Bless the Prince of Wales', the copyright of which was sold to Messrs. Robert Cocks & Co., who released the work to public notice through the London music publishers, Sims Reeves, on 14 February 1863.¹⁴⁰ The tune was an instant success and found even greater popularity when the communities joined in celebrating the Royal Wedding on 10 March 1863 with processions marching to 'God Bless the Prince of Wales'.¹⁴¹

Publishers were quick to recognise the commercial potential of *eisteddfodau*, concerts, and competitive meetings, all of which increased the demand for secular music.¹⁴² Music publishers soon realised that prize money was a cost-effective method of ensuring the performance of their songs and the sale of sheet music, to the extent that the National Eisteddfod became as much a business opportunity as a

¹³⁵ Rhidian Griffiths (2004), op. cit., 206; Huw Williams, 'Y Drych yn dathlu', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 73, Gaeaf (2001), 7.

¹³⁶ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 10.

¹³⁷ 'News', *North Wales Chronicle*, 30 August 1862, 4.

¹³⁸ A.J. Heward Rees, op. cit., 183; 'God Bless the Prince of Wales', *The Orchestra*, 5 January 1872, 219.

¹³⁹ 'Domestic', *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 February 1860, 8.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ 'Marriage of the Prince of Wales', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 14 March 1863, 7.

¹⁴² 'Choral Competitions at the Crystal Palace', *The Orchestra*, 26 January 1872, 269.

celebration of Welsh culture. The growing anxiety at the extent to which commercial interests were pervading *eisteddfodau* prompted the music critic of the *Morning Post*'s to point out: 'The commercial views of music-publishers must no longer be permitted to influence the proceedings of managers who must bear in mind that a work may be very attractive to the public without being made, like the barbour's razors, 'to sell'.¹⁴³ There was also criticism of the adjudicators at Welsh *eisteddfodau* who, according to a reader of the *Musical Standard*, 'tended to push forward their own music for competition; by this an extensive sale was effected of music not worth the paper on which it was written'.¹⁴⁴ *Owain Alaw* was no stranger to this promotional tactic as he had undoubtedly stimulated the sales of *Gems of Welsh Melody* through his *eisteddfod* connections. Possessed as he was with a fine baritone voice, he often entertained *eisteddfod* audiences with a rendition of the comic glee song, 'Mae Robin yn Swil' [Robin is Shy] which he had included in the volume.¹⁴⁵

Essentially, the Welsh music publishing infrastructure was in place by 1860, although it lacked a dedicated music journal, and buoyed by the outstanding success of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, Gwyllt re-visited his earlier ambition to establish a Welsh-language music periodical. This was his second attempt as he had published *Blodau Cerdd* in 1852 which collapsed after six editions, as did *Yr Athraw Cerddorol*, edited by John Mills and Thomas Williams (*Hafrenydd*, 1807-94)¹⁴⁶ of Llanidloes, which appeared in 1854 and folded in the same year.¹⁴⁷ Although music publishers were entering a period of outstanding growth, the demand for Welsh language publications of specific interest had yet to be proved especially as the well-established *Musical Times* had built such a loyal following. Denominational journals circulating through an efficient chapel network carried items of musical interest while the immediacy of local newspapers was better suited to announcements of forthcoming events and as such they reaped the greater share of advertising revenue. Undoubtedly, this was a difficult market in which periodicals of no specific relevance to the needs of the Nonconformist causes were

¹⁴³ 'The Progress and Influence of Music', *Musical World*, 19 January 1850, 39.

¹⁴⁴ 'Perfect Fifth, the National Music Meetings', *Musical Standard*, 19 October 1872, 241.

¹⁴⁵ 'Wrexham Eisteddfod', op. cit., 7 May 1859, 4.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas Williams compiled *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol* [The National Psalmist] in 1846.

¹⁴⁷ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Welsh chapel music: the making of a tradition', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 6 (1989), 38.

hindered by poor distribution arrangements, and in order to survive, titles required the added stimulus of religion or politics (inseparable categories in nineteenth-century Wales).¹⁴⁸ Thomas Stephens of Merthyr Tydfil noted in 1851: 'It is not to the nation's credit that it is unable or unwilling to maintain its publications unless they are associated with religious denominations, but such is the case'.¹⁴⁹

Concomitant to the failure of the majority of Welsh music journals was the fact that demand was assumed rather than determined and authors were often blinded by the vanity of seeing their work in print. Ieuan Gwyllt recalled the feeling of elation when his hymn-tune, *Hafilah* appeared in *Yr Athraw* in November 1839: 'We well know the child-like desire to see something of our belonging in print; and we remember how the blood coursed in our veins on opening the monthly periodical which included our first Tune'.¹⁵⁰ A printed hymn-tune usually signified its acceptance for publication, an achievement that may have influenced the career choices of the many self-taught musicians who became publishers, printers and composers. Ieuan Gwyllt had greater ambitions, and following the outstanding success of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* he looked to a project that would extend his profile as the foremost authority on Welsh musical affairs. In 1861, Gwyllt launched *Y Cerddor Cymreig* [The Welsh Musician, 1861-1873],¹⁵¹ of which he was both editor and publisher, and he elected to print the journal at the Ruthin works of Isaac Clarke. It is doubtful that Hughes and Son had the capacity to cope with a monthly journal at that time as the volume of work at the Wrexham publishing house was such that the company was out-sourcing to publishers in London and Scotland,¹⁵² and Gwyllt's venture was not without risk.

¹⁴⁸ Aled G. Jones, *Press, Politics and Society* (Cardiff, 1993), 69.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Stephens, 'Agwedd bresennol llenyddiaeth yng Nghymru', *Y Wawr*, Rhif 2 (1851), 35, quoted in Huw Walters, *A Bibliography of Welsh Periodicals 1735-1850* (Aberystwyth, 1993), xxvii.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Parch. J. Eiddon Jones, op cit., 18. Schools Inspector and keen musician, Lewis J. Roberts, claims that Gwyllt's first published tune (on a Temperance theme), named 'Victoria', and appeared in *Y Drysorfa* in 1837. See L.J. Roberts, 'Ieuan Gwyllt' in Ifan ab Owen Edwards (gol.), *Cymru, Cyfrol LXII* (Gwrecsam 1922), 36.

¹⁵¹ Ieuan Gwyllt was wholly responsible for editing and publishing *Y Cerddor Cymreig* for four years (1861-1865) until Hughes and Son acquired the publication, but Ieuan Gwyllt continued as editor until 1873.

¹⁵² Thomas Bassett, *Braslun o Hanes Hughes a'i Fab Cyhoeddwyr Wrecsam* (Croesoswallt, 1946), 17.

Shortly after the launch of *Y Cerddor Cymreig* in 1861, Thomas Gee entered the market with *Greal y Corau* [The Choirs' Treasury, 1861-3], a monthly publication edited by Edward Stephen (*Tanymarian*) with a fulsome content that ranged from lessons in voice production to analytical notes on the works of great composers, and the added incentive of a choral music score in each issue.¹⁵³ The prime aim of *Greal y Corau* was to serve the members of the choral societies that united to form the Cambrian Welsh Choral Union, the innovative concept of John Ambrose Lloyd who proposed the formation of a chorus, 'for the purpose of uniting the different choirs, and practicing them in pieces composed by Welsh musicians'.¹⁵⁴ At the second meeting of the Choral Union Committee, Lloyd was tasked with composing a Welsh National Anthem on the lines of *God Save the Queen* to be included in the first issue of *Greal y Corau*,¹⁵⁵ but the grand scheme failed and the demise of the choir prompted Gee to close the magazine in 1863.¹⁵⁶

Meanwhile, Hughes and Son had re-equipped and in 1863, following a tender process which included Clarke and Isaac Foulkes, they were elected to print the quarterly journal of the National Eisteddfod.¹⁵⁷ Clarke had further cause for concern as *Y Cerddor Cymreig* was trading at a loss due to a number of distributors that were up to three years overdue in settling their accounts.¹⁵⁸ Ieuan Gwyllt gave serious consideration to closing the publication, before making one last appeal for a wider circulation, particularly among choirs,¹⁵⁹ but notwithstanding the high quality of the periodical, his pleas for support were met with a poor response and faced with financial ruin he made a desperate bid to reduce production costs. Gwyllt approached Hughes and Son, but in a letter dated 7 April 1864, Charles Hughes,¹⁶⁰ voices his displeasure at the comparative pricing between printer, Isaac Clarke of Ruthin, and his company, Hughes and Son:

¹⁵³ Gareth H. Lewis, 'The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact an Myth', *Welsh Music History*, Vol. 5, No.4 (1976-7), 63.

¹⁵⁴ 'The Cambrian Choral Union', *North Wales Chronicle*, 1 June 1861, 2.

¹⁵⁵ 'Yr Undeb Corawl', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 13 Chwefror 1861, 108.

¹⁵⁶ W. Rhidian M. Griffiths (1991), *op.cit.*, 90.

¹⁵⁷ 'The National Eisteddfod', *North Wales Chronicle*, 8 August 1863, 5.

¹⁵⁸ Golygyddol, *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, 2 (1863-4), 104.

¹⁵⁹ W. Rhidian M. Griffiths (1991), *op. cit.*, 69.

¹⁶⁰ Charles Hughes was proprietor and son of founder, Richard Hughes (1794-1871), born in Adwy'r Clawdd.

We have strained a point to meet your wishes to publish *Y Cerddor* for you. As publishers we dislike the small periodical, because there is so much attention and labour to get over, and so little to see for it. We may be higher in our estimate than Mr. Clarke, and this will arise because wages in Wrexham area are higher by 20 or 25 per cent than Ruthin ...¹⁶¹

Gwyllt had persevered to near bankruptcy in order to sustain *Y Cerddor Cymreig*,¹⁶² which had made an immense contribution to the growth and development of both secular and sacred music by introducing readers to anthems and part-songs composed by the rising generation of Welsh musicians. The likes of Joseph Parry, John Thomas and D.Emlyn Evans were indebted to Gwyllt as it was through *Y Cerddor Cymreig* that their compositions came to public notice: 'At all times they had perfect confidence in his ability and conscientiousness to criticise their productions, and often have they submitted compositions for competition to his hands'.¹⁶³ Furthermore, he was committed to the furtherance of music literacy and published detailed commentaries on the more complex subjects of harmony and counterpoint that did much to promote the Tonic Sol-fa system through the medium of the Welsh language. Gwyllt averted financial ruin when Hughes and Son acquired the title of *Y Cerddor Cymreig* in 1864 and retained him as editor. Ieuan Gwyllt's mission was to educate, while *Owain Alaw* chose to entertain, and his opportunistic renderings of traditional songs from *Gems of Welsh Melody* at *eisteddfodau* and concerts were probably more lucrative than Gwyllt's strenuous efforts that were fraught with financial risk.

At the National Eisteddfod of Caernarfon in 1862, *Alaw* entertained the crowd when he sang 'Mae Hen Wlad fy Nhadau' from *Gems of Welsh Melody*,¹⁶⁴ and at the Rhyl Grand Eisteddfod of 1863, *Llew Llwyfo* sang the same patriotic song to great effect.¹⁶⁵ Despite its growing popularity, when the *Corn Hirlas* (Horn of Plenty) was presented to the conductor *Gwrgant* at the Rhyl Eisteddfod committee in 1864, the proceedings concluded with *Llew Llwyfo* singing 'God Bless the Prince of Wales', that was later described in a press report as 'the Welsh National

¹⁶¹ Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 23.

¹⁶² David Jenkins, 'Ieuan Gwyllt', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXI, Mawrth (1909), 28.

¹⁶³ 'The Late Rev. J. Roberts', *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 June 1877, 129.

¹⁶⁴ 'Carnarvon Grand National Eisteddfod', *North Wales Chronicle*, 30 August 1862, 2.

¹⁶⁵ 'Rhyl Royal Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 29 August 1863, 6.

Anthem'¹⁶⁶ a plaudit that may well have prevailed had it not been for *Alaw's* frequent performances of 'Glan Rhondda'. It was at the National Eisteddfod in 1866 at Chester that the potential of the tune as a patriotic anthem was first realised with the President's opening remarks: 'I cannot give better expression to my feelings than by quoting one line from the beautiful song, 'The Land of my Fathers' which will probably be sung today'.¹⁶⁷ The tune 'Glan Rhondda' was sung as a solo item by T.J.Hughes of Liverpool and by the audience at the close of the day's events. Two years later, at the Ruthin Eisteddfod, it was sung as the finale of every day, and despite the continued popularity of Brinley Richards' tribute to the Prince of Wales, the search for *yr anthem genedlaethol* appeared to be over.

Owain Alaw was convinced that his compilation of previously un-published airs were of unknown provenance until he was informed by James and Evan James that the words and music of 'Glan Rhondda', which had already appeared in print in *Gems of Welsh Melody*, were of their hand.¹⁶⁸ *Owain Alaw* apologized to the James' who gave their consent for the tune to be included in the second edition on condition that it was printed by permission of the copyright holders and this was duly acknowledged. Taliesin James, son of James James, was in possession of the original manuscript of the melody 'Glan Rhondda' which is dated January 1856, and he refers to the fact that *Owain Alaw* had offered £15 worth of copies of his composition, *Mae Robin yn Swil*, in exchange for the copyright of 'Mae Hen Wlad fy Nhadau'.¹⁶⁹ Had the tune not been reconfigured and included in *Gems of Welsh Melody* it may never have come to public notice and without the ceaseless of promotion by *Alaw* it is unlikely that its potential as a national anthem would ever have been realised. The patriotic song of Brinley Richards, 'God Bless the Prince of Wales', was a strong contender and could easily have been adopted as the signifier of national identity had *Alaw* not championed the work of James and Evan James.

¹⁶⁶ 'Rhyl: Grand Eisteddfod', *ibid.*, 20 February 1864, 8. 'God Bless the Prince of Wales' was later included in *Caneuon Cymru* [The Songs of Wales] with words by Sir Walter Scott and Welsh words by *Ceiriog*. See Brinley Richards (ed.), *Caneuon Cymru, A collection of Welsh Melodies*, (London, 1873).

¹⁶⁷ 'The National Eisteddfod in Chester', *Cheshire Observer*, 8 September 1866, 8.

¹⁶⁸ Oswald Edwards, *op. cit.*, 27.

¹⁶⁹ Oswald Edwards, *op. cit.*, 13.

Equally irrefutable is that *Alaw* transformed the small business of Isaac Clarke into one of national significance when he entrusted the production of *Gems of Welsh Melody* to the Ruthin publishing house. The adoption of 'Glan Rhondda' as the Welsh national anthem created such demand that the volume extended to four editions, and probably a fifth had Clarke consolidated his success, instead of which he announced in 1864 that he had become a licensed auctioneer and valuer.¹⁷⁰ Certainly, the loss of *Y Cerddor Cymreig* in 1865 made his business vulnerable to competitors, particularly Hughes and Son who had resolved the production difficulties that had stultified their progress in the early 1860s.¹⁷¹ *Ceiriog's* shilling publications were 'a source of envy for Hughes and Son', and they bought the copyright of his work in 1870,¹⁷² although Huw Williams claims that by 1870, Clarke was publishing a more diverse range of sacred and secular music¹⁷³ than any other printer in Wales prior to the music department at Hughes and Son being put on secure footing.¹⁷⁴ This is debatable as the Clarke concern was in decline by 1870, and in August of that year, he had lost the most valuable asset of his music publishing business when Benjamin Williams left for London.

Isaac Clarke's publishing business was undoubtedly enhanced by B.M. Williams' musicianship and his departure had a detrimental effect from which Clarke never fully recovered. The competitive pressure on Clarke's ailing business increased, especially so after Hughes and Son re-equipped the press-room with new steam-powered printing machinery in the Spring of 1869¹⁷⁵ and employed Richard Mills (1840-1903), son of *Rhydderch Hael*, 'to meet the technical aspects of music publishing'.¹⁷⁶ Mills was an accomplished musician and his promotion to the position of musical director indicates the resolve of Hughes and Son to take this aspect of the business forward.¹⁷⁷ In January 1870, the company entered into a

¹⁷⁰ Advertisements & Notices, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 12 November 1864, 1.

¹⁷¹ Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 17-18.

¹⁷² Stan Wicklen, op. cit., 5.

¹⁷³ Clarke was publishing collections of traditional music, hymn-tune collections, solos and a musical grammar, namely David Roberts' (*Alawydd*) *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth* (Bala, 1848), which was printed by Isaac Clarke in 1862 and sold for 2s.6d. See Rhidian Griffiths (1991), op. cit., 16.

¹⁷⁴ Huw Williams (1978), op. cit., 7.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 18. Charles Hughes' steam-driven cylinder printing press was described as one of the first machines in Wales and 'it certainly will be the beginning of a new trade'.

¹⁷⁶ S.I. Wicklen, 'The Growth and Development of Printing in Wrexham', *Denbighshire Historical Transactions*, Vol. 35 (1986), 57.

¹⁷⁷ D. Jones, 'Hen Gerddorion Llanidloes', *Y Cerddor*, Rhagfyr (1914), 132.

financial agreement with J.D.Jones of Ruthin to publish *Llyfr Tonau ac Emytau*,¹⁷⁸ by which time the business had 40 employees and a portfolio of clients that included Joseph Parry and D.Emlyn Evans, who were among the most influential musicians of the day.¹⁷⁹ Such was the extent to which the music publishing activity had expanded, that Benjamin Parry, who was initially employed by Hughes as a music compositor, was by 1870, the firm's travelling representative, a duty that enabled him to make the acquaintance of musicians throughout Wales.¹⁸⁰

By 1872, the Ruthin publisher who had produced what would be the first printed version of the Welsh national anthem, 'Mae Hen Wlad fy Nhadau' was declared insolvent,¹⁸¹ and the copyrights of Isaac Clarke's business were bought from the trustees in bankruptcy by Charles Hughes of Wrexham for £100.¹⁸² However, before Charles Hughes could collect his gains, Clarke had entered the press room and destroyed the printing plates of *Gems of Welsh Melody* and justified his actions on the basis that Hughes and Son were already printers of means and the re-setting of the music would provide a needy printer with employment.¹⁸³ Despite the inconvenience, not to mention the cost of new printing plates, Hughes and Son re-published *Gems of Welsh Melody*¹⁸⁴ in conjunction with the London publishers, Simpkin, Marshall & Co. In a gesture of support, Brinley Richards wrote to *Owain Alaw*, 'If my name can in any way be of service in promoting the success of your publication, do not hesitate to avail yourself of it'.¹⁸⁵ With the acquisition of Clarke's copyrights, the Wrexham firm of Hughes and Son became the largest publisher of music in the Principality with a wide portfolio of notable composers. David Russell rightly points out that: 'Music publishers by no means caused the growth of musical life; rather, their businesses grew alongside it, reinforcing but at the same time reflecting its expansion'.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁸ Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 24; E. Stephen a J.D. Jones, *Llyfr Tonau ac Emytau* (Wrexham, 1878).

¹⁷⁹ 'The Late Mr. Richard Hughes', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 21 January 1871, 5.

¹⁸⁰ Rhidian Griffiths (2004), op. cit., 206.

¹⁸¹ 'Birkenhead', *Cheshire Observer*, 29 June 1872, 7.

¹⁸² Isaac Foulkes (1900), op. cit., 102.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁸⁴ *Gems of Welsh Melody. Arranged by John Owen (Owain Alaw)* (London, 1873).

¹⁸⁵ 'Multiple News Items', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 5 April 1873, 3.

¹⁸⁶ D. Russell, 'The Popular Musical Societies of the Yorkshire Textile District, 1850-1914: A Study of the Relationship between Music and Society', D.Phil., University of York (1979), 137.

Arguably, there were two revivals in the history of Welsh musical culture and the Nonconformist chapels were at the centre of both. The religious revival of 1859 was a triumph for the once-persecuted Welsh Dissenters, while the resurgence of interest in traditional music was a triumph against the bigotry of a chapelocracy that had become obsessed with denominationalism. Having demonized the performance of secular music during the first half of the nineteenth century, many chapels began to utilise their tabernacles as concert auditoria in an effort to compete with the music halls and assembly rooms that were being built by public demand. The Adwy'r Clawdd C.M. Chapel extended the scope of literary meetings, described by the local press as 'a working man's useful and entertaining knowledge association' that included musical performances, and the chapel *eisteddfod* of 1855 was probably the first of its kind in north-east Wales.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, the chapels were consentient to the obsession with competitive singing that came to characterise Welsh choral music, as Bishop Thirlwall of St. David's, observed: 'In the history of any people, and such as could be said of no other people than the Welsh, that they have centred their national recreation in literature and musical competitions'.¹⁸⁸

During the decade that followed the 1858 Llangollen Eisteddfod, the social and cultural scope of north-east Wales and Liverpool was transformed, firstly by the spiritual dynamic of the Great Revival and secondly by the parallel development of traditional music that enriched the repertoire of the choral societies. No longer exclusive to poets and literatures, the *eisteddfod* embraced almost every performing art and choral competitions became fundamental to the success and viability of the festival. In terms of music publishing, north-east Wales was now self-sufficient, and Hywel Teifi Edwards describes the decade between 1860 and 1870 as the period when the Welsh believed in their musical ability, as a result of the Temperance Movement, the campaign for better congregational singing, and the National Eisteddfod.¹⁸⁹ In the cultural history of north-east Wales and Liverpool the first half of the nineteenth century it was Welsh Nonconformity in its various denominational cloaks that shaped the lives of the chapel communities, although

¹⁸⁷ 'District News: Adwy'r Clawdd Eisteddfod', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 30 April 1859, 3.

¹⁸⁸ Edward F Rimbault, 'Wales and the Welsh', *Leisure Hour*, 28 August 1875, 553.

¹⁸⁹ H. Teifi Edwards (1980), *op. cit.*, 191.

music was not their first consideration. That changed dramatically in the decade that began with the Great Revival and Gwyllt's *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* which laid the foundations of what would become a cultural renaissance. Paramount to the future direction of Welsh congregational and choral singing were two Welsh chapel precentors, Eleazar Roberts and John Edwards, who attended a lecture by John Curwen on a revolutionary notation that would encourage and enable Welsh singers to become musically literate.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Eleazar Roberts, 'Hen Ddechreuwy'r Canu: John Edwards, Lerpwl', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol VIII, Rhif 86, Chwefror (1896), 11.

Chapter Four

Tonic Sol-fa – Easy, Cheap and True

‘If singing became the national preoccupation of the Welsh in the second half of the nineteenth century, sol-fa was the hinge on which the door to so much musical experience swung open, it attached itself to so much social life, especially the life of the chapels where it was learned in *ysgol gân* (singing practice)’.

(Gareth Williams)

That there were variations of 'Solfege'¹ in place some time before the mid-nineteenth century is confirmed in an unpublished account of the early Methodist cause in Buckley in which chapel deacon, Joseph Griffiths (1828-1911), refers to Thomas Mathers 'who taught singing in the old chapel from those syllables, only they were pronounced by him *fa, sol, la, si*'.² While there is no evidence of the particular method used by Mathers, the syllables of this vocal tablature suggest that it was a variant of the *Gamut*, the most commonly-used text and often described as 'the ancestor of the Tonic Sol-fa modulator'.³ John Ambrose Lloyd had also adapted a similar form of Solfege to teach music to the young, enthusiastic choir of the Tabernacle Chapel in Liverpool, following his appointment as precentor in 1835.⁴ A valiant attempt to establish a nationally acceptable pedagogy was made by the German musician, Joseph Mainzer (1801-1851), who arrived in London in 1841 to establish singing schools before turning his attention to Scotland during which time he began to publish, *The National Singing Circular*.⁵ By the late 1840s, the sight-singing mania, impelled by Mainzer's 'Singing for the Million',⁶ had swept the United Kingdom.⁷

The first announcement of Mainzer's lectures in the Nelson Assembly Rooms, Liverpool on December 5th and 6th appeared in the *Liverpool Mercury* on 2 December 1842, and the admission charge of 2s.6d reflects the enthusiasm for self-improvement that typified that period.⁸ In *The Musical Times* of August 1847, the Chester Literary Improvement Society announced 'Mainzerian Classes in Chester are progressing favourably under the direction of Mr. Evans to the extent that the

¹ Solfege in music and sight-singing is a method of assigning syllables to differentiate the degrees of a diatonic scale. In order, they are: *Do* (or *Ut*), *Re*, *Mi*, *Fa*, *So* (l), *La*, *Ti* (or *Si*), and *Do* (for the octave). The two main types of solfage use a *moveable doh*, in which each syllable corresponds with a degree of the scale, and *fixed doh*, where the syllables correspond to fixed pitches.

² Flintshire Record Office, FRO/D/DG/53, Joseph Griffiths MS, A History of Buckley Congregational Church (1894), 29.

³ Footnote, *The School Music Review*, 15 January 1926, 281.

⁴ Elfed (trans. & ed.), C. Francis Lloyd, *John Ambrose Lloyd, Hanes ei Fywyd a'i Weithiau* (Wrecsam, 1921), 22-38.

⁵ Mainzer published *Singing for the Million* in 1841 and began publishing *The National Singing Circular* and later *Mainzer's Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* in 1842. The journal was acquired by music publisher J. Alfred Novello in 1844 and published as the *Musical Times*. See Percy A. Scholes, 'The 'Musical Times' Century', *The Musical Times and Singing-class Circular*, June (1944), 173.

⁶ 'Singing for the Million' became Mainzer's mantra as he crossed from France to set up singing classes in England and Scotland. He issued a text-book of sight-singing bearing the same title, *Singing for the Million - A Practical Course of Musical Instruction* (London, 1841). See Percy A. Scholes, 'The Mainzer Movement', *The Mirror of Music 1844-1944*, Vol. I (London, 1947), 3-10.

⁷ Percy A. Scholes, *ibid.*, Vol. I, 7.

⁸ Announcement, *Liverpool Mercury*, 2 December 1842, 1.

Committee of the Society propose to open additional classes in the month of September',⁹ although little mention is made of musical activity in the north-east Wales region. The intention to widen the circulation of *The Musical Times* was confirmed in 1849 by the decision of the publishers to promote the readership by distributing 300 free copies to the reading rooms of the Literary and Mechanics' Institutions throughout Liverpool, Chester and north-east Wales.¹⁰ The Chester Mechanics Institute was inaugurated in 1835,¹¹ and by 1850, a similar initiative, established in Brymbo through the efforts of W.H.Darby the Temperance advocate, announced that 100 members had enrolled.¹²

Concurrent with Mainzer's efforts was the pedagogy devised by organist and opera composer, John Pyke Hullah (1812-1884), who had adapted the notation of the French music teacher, Guillaume Louis Bocquillon Wilhem (1782-1842) to the English language.¹³ The Music Academy of a Mr. Crowe at Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, advertised private tuition in the Wilhem method and classes were convened in Birkenhead as Hullah made plans to establish a Northern Singing School.¹⁴ That the Wilhem method extended into north-east Wales is evidenced by the singing classes in Mold, c.1840, where Edward Jones was using the method,¹⁵ as was the newly-formed Wrexham Choral Society that stated at the first public meeting in 1843 that its members would be 'instructed by the Wilhem System' in a variety of sacred and secular music.¹⁶ The Baptists in Llangollen were also instructed in the Wilhem method by Glyn Ceiriog-born weaver, Samuel Morris (1816-1877),¹⁷ *codwr canu* of the Welsh Baptist chapel in Llangollen.¹⁸

⁹ 'Brief Chronicle of the last Month', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 2, August (1847), 114.

¹⁰ 'Notice', *ibid*, Vol. 3, February (1849), 107. The Liverpool Mechanics Institute established in 1825 was an institution that provided adult education, including musical training, for all classes of society.

¹¹ 'Death of Mr. William Brown', *Cheshire Observer*, 10 March 1900, 5.

¹² 'University Tutorial Classes for Working People', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion 1914-15* (London, 1916), 119.

¹³ Guillaume Wilhem was director-general of music in the schools of Paris where he developed a structural monitorial method to teach sight-singing to the working classes of France. His school musical primer, *Manuel Musical* (1841) was adapted by John Hullah. See Bernarr Rainbow, *The Land Without Music: Musical Education in England 1800-1860 and its continental antecedents* (London, 1967), 95-103.

¹⁴ Advertisements & Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 29 April 1842, 1.

¹⁵ Owen H. Davies (*Eos Llechid*), 'Geiriadur Bywgraffyddol a Beirniadol o Gerddorion Ymadawedig Cymru', *Yr Haul*, Cyfrol X, Rhif 115, Gorphenaf (1894), 209.

¹⁶ 'Wrexham', *Chester Chronicle*, 12 January 1844, 3.

¹⁷ Samuel Morris served for 22 years as precentor in Llangollen before moving to Newtown in 1866, but returned to Glyn Ceiriog. Aged 17, he composed a simple hymn-tune, 'Phebe', which was published in *Seren Gomer*, Medi (1833), 279.

¹⁸ NLW MS 22549iD, *Eos Llechid*, Hanes Bywgraffyddol a Beirniadol o Gerddorion Cymreig; hyd Ganol y Ganrif Bresennol, 1887-1917 (1887), 217.

Hullah, who became the first Inspector of Music for England and Wales,¹⁹ collaborated with Thomas Williams (*Hafrenydd*) in the publication of *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol*,²⁰ a hymnal for the Established Church that included psalm-tunes and four hymn-tunes written especially by John Ambrose Lloyd, in addition to adaptations of sacred choral works by Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. *Hafrenydd* had also added a Welsh language summary of *Wilhem's Method of Singing*, 'which became the basis of John Hullah's method of teaching singing and thus an influence on the development of Solfa'.²¹ The fundamental weakness of the aforementioned methods was that they were based on the 'fixed doh' principle, and whilst the early stages were relatively easy, the later stages (with keys of increasing number of accidentals) were progressively more difficult, and students tended to become discouraged.²² (See fig 4.1 below)

Fig. 4.1: The Fixed 'Doh'

We subjoin a Tonic Sol-fa version of Mr. Hullah's example:—KEY C.

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| d | : r' | t | : d' | t | : fe | s | : — |
| r | : d | r | : m | r | : d | t | : f |
| D ^b | : D | F ^b | : D ^b | D ^c | : F ^b | D ^b | : F ^b |
| d' | : d' | — | : d' | d' | : t | d' | : — |
| r | : ta | l | : l | s | : s | d | : — |
| D ^b | : (S ^b) | D ^b | : FE ^b | D ^c | : S | D | : — |

'Mr. Hullah and the Moveable Doh', *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 15 November 1871, 346.

Arguably, the most enlightened method was that of Rev. J. J. Waite (1808-1868), a blind cleric-musician who devised a unique numerical system²³ for the purpose of addressing the poor rendering of psalmody by denoting the intervals that combined the Old Notation with the moveable tonic.²⁴ Waite was highly critical of the standard of congregational singing - 'at present (1842) the state of our psalmody is truly to be deplored',²⁵ and after retiring from the ministry in 1849 he settled in

¹⁹ Bernarr Rainbow with Gordon Cox, *Music in Educational Thought and Practice* (Woodbridge, 2006), 238.

²⁰ Thomas Williams, *Y Salmydd Cenedlaethol; neu Gerddoriaeth Eglwysig yn cynnwys crynhoed helaeth o Donau, Anthemau, darnau Corawl Cysegredig* (Llanidloes, 1846).

²¹ Alan Luff, *Welsh Hymns and their Tunes* (London, 1990), 180.

²² Percy A. Scholes (1947), op. cit., Vol. I, 10.

²³ Bernarr Rainbow (1967), op. cit., 141.

²⁴ J. J. Waite, 'Essay on Congregational Psalmody', *Hallelujah; or Devotional Psalmody: being a selection of classical and congregational tunes of the most useful metres* (London, 1842), vi. This book was produced in collaboration with Dr. H.J.Gauntlett who harmonised the melodies.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Hereford,²⁶ where he established classes based on his own tune-book²⁷ and toured England giving lectures on such topics as ‘Musical Science’ and ‘Science and the Art of Singing’.²⁸ He was enthusiastically received in Merseyside, and the *Liverpool Mercury* reported on the first of his six lectures on congregational psalmody in June 1849: ‘There were upwards of two thousand persons present, among whom were several dissenting ministers’.²⁹ The advantage of the numerical system was that it provided an easier transition from the *Gamut* which had encouraged literacy in staff notation, and for those *codwyr canu* that were familiar with the texts of Mills’ *Gramadeg Cerddoriaeth*, the Waite method was a logical progression. (See Fig 4.2 below).

Fig. 4.2:

39 ABRIDGE. C. M. *Moderate.*

Waite's numerical method: from the *Hallelujah* (1852).³⁰

Among the numerous converts to the Waite system was John H. Jones, a member of Myrtle Street Baptist chapel, Liverpool,³¹ who delivered a series of lectures at the Presbyterian chapel, Mount Pleasant, during the summer of 1851³² and at the English Congregational chapel, Hamilton Square, Birkenhead during the winter of 1851-2.³³ Admission to the course of lectures was by the purchase of J.J.Waite's *Hallelujah or Devotional Psalmody*,³⁴ and ‘upwards of 700 copies’ were sold during the course of his presentations at Mount Pleasant during 1851.³⁵ It was also

²⁶ ‘Y Parch. John James Waite’, *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol VII, Rhif 96, Chwefror (1869), 11.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ J. J. Waite, *op. cit.*, vi.

²⁹ ‘Local Intelligence’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 15 June 1849, 6.

³⁰ Bernarr Rainbow (1967), *op. cit.*, 182.

³¹ ‘Local Intelligence’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 1 August 1851, 6.

³² ‘Congregational Psalmody’, *ibid.*, 22 August 1851, 6.

³³ ‘Congregational Psalmody at Birkenhead’, *ibid.*, 13 January 1852, 5.

³⁴ J. J. Waite, *Hallelujah; or Devotional Psalmody: being a selection of classical and congregational tunes of the most useful metres* (London, 1842).

³⁵ ‘Congregational Psalmody’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 22 August 1851, 6.

well received in the Wrexham area by the late 1850s where the reverend musician had conducted a series of lectures,³⁶ and a correspondent opined: 'It is to be hoped that the ministers and other gentlemen of this town will adopt such means, as will enable Mr Waite to pay a second visit to Wrexham'.³⁷ (See Fig. 4.3 below).

Fig. 4.3:

THE REV. J. J. WAITE'S LECTURES.
 A COURSE OF
SIX LECTURES
 WITH EXERCISES,
 ON PSALMODY
 Will be delivered by
THE REV. J. J. WAITE
 IN THE
 NEW CHAPEL, CHESTER-STREET,
 On the following evenings:—
 FEB. 23RD, 24TH, MARCH 2ND, 3RD, 9TH, 10TH

Music-Books and Memoranda of Instructions
 admitting to the Lectures, price 1s. 6d., may be had
 of the Ministers of the different Places of Worship
 in the town and neighbourhood; or of Messrs
 Hughes & Son, Potter, and Bayley, Booksellers.

The Waite Lectures³⁸

The campaign to improve congregational psalmody gathered pace in north-east Wales and the north west of England through the well-publicised efforts of Joseph Mainzer's *Singing for the Million*,³⁹ and 'by the writings and labours of Hickson, Wilhem, Hullah and others, the whole nation is now invited to learn to sing'.⁴⁰ There were also the zealous efforts of Sarah Ann Glover (1786-1867) who devised the 'Norwich System', which resolved the difficulty of the 'fixed doh' with the introduction of the 'moveable doh' principle,⁴¹ although it failed to address the problem of denoting modulation, and Rainbow maintains that this aspect tested the limitations of the method:

So long as the application of her system was limited to solfa exercises sung from her *Solfa Ladder*, this material was all that was required to enable a class to sing in a major key. In the case of the minor scale, *LAH* became the Tonic, and two new syllables were introduced – *BAH* and *NE* – to indicate the chromatic alteration of the sixth and seventh degrees of the scale.⁴²

³⁶ 'Multiple News Items', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 20 March 1858, 3.

³⁷ 'Correspondence', *ibid.*, 6 March 1858, 4.

³⁸ Advertisements & Notices, *ibid.*, 7 February 1857, 1.

³⁹ J. Mainzer, *Singing for the Million* (London, 1841).

⁴⁰ John Burder, 'An Essay on Psalmody', in J. J. Waite, *op. cit.*, xxv.

⁴¹ The fixed *Doh* system relates solfa syllables permanently to the degrees of the scale of C major, whereas the moveable *Doh* related to any key in the scale, i.e. *Doh* is E flat, while modulation to another key was related to the tonic by a sub-note.

⁴² Bernarr Rainbow (1967), *op. cit.*, 48.

The weakness of Glover's method was that it extended the vocabulary of the notation, but notwithstanding this shortcoming, the unique system was a great improvement on the 'fixed doh' pedagogy of Mainzer and Hullah. It was Glover's method that John Curwen (1816-1880), a teacher and Methodist minister from Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, modified c.1842 to create 'Tonic Sol-fa' which revolutionized the teaching of singing throughout the United Kingdom.⁴³ Curwen had considered modifying Rev. John Waite's method, but his request to publish an edition of *Hallelujah or Devotional Psalmody* in the Tonic Sol-fa notation,⁴⁴ was met with an acerbic rebuttal.⁴⁵ Undaunted by Waite's rejection, Curwen travelled to London to attend Hullah's tutorials in the Exeter Hall⁴⁶ where he studied the Wilhem system.⁴⁷

Curwen realized that the teaching of music was unnecessarily complicated by the restrictive 'fixed doh', and in order to emphasize the advantage of the 'moveable doh' over other *Solfège* systems, he defined his pedagogy as 'Tonic Sol-fa'.⁴⁸ This method was a combination of Sarah Glover's 'Norwich System', the rhythmic efficacy of the 'Galin-Paris-Chevé system of 'time names',⁴⁹ and the 'mental effect' which Curwen borrowed from Edouard Jue de Berneval's *Music Simplified*, published in London in 1822.⁵⁰ According to Bernarr Rainbow: 'The very first lessons which Curwen published in the *Independent Magazine*, in January 1842 already made apparent that something utterly different from the hidebound, pedantic attitude of the traditional music teacher was to be expected'.⁵¹ He was not a trained musician, but rather a pastor and teacher and the purpose of Tonic Sol-fa was to raise the standard of singing in the Sunday schools by means of an easily understood method. In 1848, he published *The Grammar of Vocal Music*,⁵² which

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁴⁵ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), 'Y Parch. John James Waite', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Chwefror (1869), 11.

⁴⁶ Bernarr Rainbow with Gordon Cox (2006), *op. cit.*, 207.

⁴⁷ Guillaume Bocquillon-Wilhem (1781-1842), a pupil of the Paris Conservatoire, devised the Wilhem system, a fixed *Doh* method where the major scale was illustrated as a staircase.

⁴⁸ Bernarr Rainbow (1967), *op. cit.*, 146.

⁴⁹ The Chev e or Galin-Paris-Chev e system was a popular French method of teaching part-singing and sight singing, on the principal of associating sound to the tonic. Galin's method adapted the rhythmic symbols of Rousseau's numeric system. See Bernarr Rainbow (1967), *op. cit.*, 90-94.

⁵⁰ E. Jue de Berneval, *Music Simplified* (London, 1822). See Percy A. Scholes, Vol. I (1947), *op. cit.*, 14.

⁵¹ Bernarr Rainbow (1967), *op. cit.*, 146.

⁵² John Curwen, *The Grammar of Vocal Music* (London, 1848).

was followed in 1851 by the affordable periodical *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*⁵³ that virtually sealed the success of the notation.

After Curwen's visit to Manchester in 1853,⁵⁴ a Tonic Sol-fa Society was formed and several classes were established by Robert Griffiths (1824-1903)⁵⁵ during the winter months of 1854-55, to which admission was obtained by private ticket'.⁵⁶ Griffiths established classes in association with local Sunday schools and despite the initial uncertainty towards Curwen's new method⁵⁷ he formed the Tonic Sol-fa Association c. 1855.⁵⁸ He was a member of Sir Charles Hallé's choir where his preference for Tonic Sol-fa was disapproved of by certain choristers, although Mr. Hecht, the chorus master, raised no objection to Robert Griffiths sight-reading from Sol-fa.⁵⁹ Such were his organisational skills, that when he left Manchester to become secretary to John Curwen, there were over a thousand pupils of the system in that district.⁶⁰ In September 1857, a performance by 3,000 young Solfaists at the Crystal Palace, London, made national news and 'even the august *Times* came out with its first notice of tonic solfa'⁶¹ as the new movement claimed to have enrolled 30,000 members and 150 registered teachers across the United Kingdom by the mid-nineteenth century.⁶²

Gwyllt, on the other hand, preferred the Waite system because of its practical application⁶³ for the teaching of staff notation and he had yet to appreciate the advantages of Tonic Sol-fa, despite his view that Waite's *Hallelujah* collection was

⁵³ John Curwen (ed.), *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter, and Magazine of Vocal Music for the People* (1851, 1853-88). After Curwen's death, it was edited by his eldest son, J. Spencer Curwen, from 1880 until 1888 when it became *The Musical Herald and Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* (1889-91), and *The Music Herald* from 1892-1920. J.S. Curwen was editor until 1916. See H. Simon, *Song and Words – A History of the Curwen Press* (London, 1973), 28, 44, 70, 78-79; Percy A. Scholes, op. cit., 15.

⁵⁴ Advertisement, 'Singing for Congregations', *Manchester Times*, 22 September 1855, 1.

⁵⁵ 'The Tonic Sol-fa Association', *ibid.*, 3 May 1856, 6. Robert Griffiths, a non-Welsh speaker, was raised in Bristol and joined the singing classes of Waite and Hullah. In 1845, he moved to Manchester and was a fervent advocate of the Tonic Solfa system and later Secretary of the Tonic Sol-fa College, established in 1869. See David Jenkins, 'Ein Cerddorion: Mr. Robert Griffith', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XIII, Rhif 153, Medi (1901), 98-99.

⁵⁶ 'The Tonic Sol-fa Association', *ibid.*, 3 May 1856, 6.

⁵⁷ David Jenkins, op. cit., 98-99.

⁵⁸ 'The Tonic Sol-fa Association', op. cit., 3 May 1856, 6.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ David Jenkins, op. cit., 99.

⁶¹ Bernarr Rainbow (1967), op. cit., 154.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Eleazar Roberts, 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Sol-ffaydd', *Y Geninen*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 2, Ebrill (1905), 88.

a failure.⁶⁴ Regardless of the merits of other systems, there was clearly a demand for a simpler method of teaching larger classes and Curwen's Tonic Sol-fa made use of the alphabetical characters with which the working classes were already familiar.⁶⁵ Initially, the method was devised to improve congregational singing, but an article in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* in October 1860 argued that Welsh vocalists were devoting far too much attention to anthems and oratorios and not enough to congregational singing. The writer concluded with the suggestion that more people should be encouraged to learn to read music by attending singing meetings.⁶⁶ In all probability the reference to anthems relates to Handel's *Messiah*, which was unquestionably the most popular oratorio in north-east Wales, especially after Curwen published the first Tonic Sol-fa version in April 1857.⁶⁷ (See Fig. 4.4 below).

Fig. 4.4: 'Hallelujah Chorus' from Handel's *Messiah*

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| <p style="text-align: center;">"HALELIWIA." CYTYGAN O'R "MESSIAH," Doh D. Allegro. M. 84. GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.</p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad :- \quad .s' \quad \quad l', s' \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad :- \quad .s' \quad \quad f', s' \quad ; \quad \quad f', s' \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d \quad .r \quad ; \quad .n \quad .d \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad .n \quad .s \quad \quad d \quad .r \quad ; \quad .n \quad .d \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad .n \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad .n \quad .s \quad \quad d \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad s \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Ha \quad - \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Hale- \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} n' \quad :- \quad .d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad \quad n' \quad :- \quad .d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad .n \quad .n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad .d', d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad \quad .d' \quad \quad t \quad .d' \quad :- \quad .t \quad \quad d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l \quad .s \quad ; \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad \quad f \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad r \quad .r \quad \quad n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f' \quad .n' \quad ; \quad .d', d' \quad \quad f' \quad .n' \quad ; \quad \quad .d' \quad \quad r' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f \quad .d \quad ; \quad .n \quad .n \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad .n \quad \quad r \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad \quad d \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} r' \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad r' \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad s \quad :- \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Ha \quad - \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} t \quad :- \quad .r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad t \quad :- \quad .r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad .t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad s \quad :- \quad .t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .t, t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad .r', r' \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad .r' \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad \quad t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad .s \quad ; \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad :- \quad .f \quad \quad s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad .r', r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad .r' \quad \quad d' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad n' \quad .d' \quad \quad r' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad .t, t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .t \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad l \quad \quad s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad \quad l \quad : \quad t \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad .d \quad : \quad d' \quad \quad - \quad .d' \quad : \quad t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad \quad l_1 \quad : \quad t_1 \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad .d \quad : \quad d \quad \quad - \quad .d \quad : \quad t_1 \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Duw \quad - \quad - \quad Holl \quad - \quad a \quad - \quad \quad llu \quad - \quad og \quad sydd \quad \quad yn \quad teyr \quad - \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad \quad l \quad : \quad t \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad .d \quad : \quad d' \quad \quad - \quad .d' \quad : \quad t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad :- \quad \quad l \quad : \quad t \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad .d \quad : \quad d' \quad \quad - \quad .d' \quad : \quad t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> | <p style="text-align: center;">14. "HALELIWIA" (Parhad)</p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l \quad :- \quad \quad s \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l_1 \quad :- \quad \quad s_1 \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} na \quad - \quad - \quad su. \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l \quad :- \quad \quad s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l \quad :- \quad \quad s \quad ; \quad \quad .t, t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .t, t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .t, t \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad .r', r' \quad \quad n' \quad .r' \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad : \quad \quad r \quad : \quad \quad n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} s \quad .s \quad ; \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad s \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad :- \quad \quad r \quad : \quad n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Duw \quad - \quad - \quad \quad Holl \quad - \quad a \quad - \quad . \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad .r', r' \quad \quad d' \quad .t \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad :- \quad \quad r \quad : \quad n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad .t, t \quad \quad d' \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad d \quad :- \quad \quad r \quad : \quad n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f \quad .f, f \quad : \quad f \quad \quad - \quad .f \quad : \quad n \quad \quad r \quad :- \quad \quad d \quad : \quad .s \quad .s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} llu \quad - \quad og \quad sydd \quad \quad yn \quad teyr \quad - \quad \quad na \quad - \quad - \quad \quad su. \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f' \quad .f \quad : \quad f \quad \quad - \quad .f \quad : \quad n \quad \quad r \quad :- \quad \quad d \quad : \quad .d', d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f \quad .f, f \quad : \quad f \quad \quad - \quad .f \quad : \quad n \quad \quad r \quad :- \quad \quad d \quad : \quad .n \quad .n \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad .d', d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad d' \quad .d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l \quad .s \quad ; \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .s \quad .s \quad \quad l \quad .s \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f' \quad .n' \quad ; \quad .d', d' \quad \quad f' \quad .n' \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad f' \quad .n' \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad f' \quad .n' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} f \quad .d \quad ; \quad .n \quad .n \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad .n \quad .n \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \quad \quad .n \quad .n \quad \quad f \quad .d \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ </p> <p> $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} Duw \quad - \quad - \quad \quad Holl \quad - \quad a \quad - \quad \quad llu \quad - \quad og \quad sydd \quad \quad yn \quad teyr \quad - \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} . \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad t \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad .d', d' \quad \quad l \quad .l \quad ; \quad \quad .r', r' \quad \quad t \quad .s \quad ; \quad \quad d' \quad ; \end{array} \right\}$ $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} . \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \quad Ha \quad - \quad le \quad - \quad liw \quad - \quad ia, \quad \end{array} \right\}$ </p> |
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Cerddoriaeth Curwen, yn Nodiant y Tonic Sol-fa, o dan Olygiad E. Roberts, Liverpool (1 November 1875), 84.

⁶⁴ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), op. cit., 11. 'Fel casgliad o Donau at wasanaeth cynulleidfaol, ac er ei fod yn cynwys llawer o engreiffiau o gerddoriaeth grefyddol o'r dosbarth uchaf; rhaid edrych ar y gwaith fel methiant'.

⁶⁵ Gareth H. Lewis, 'The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth', *Welsh Music*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1976-7), 61.

⁶⁶ 'Digwyddiadau yr Wythnos', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 3 Hydref 1860, 836.

⁶⁷ Herbert Simon, *Song and Words - A History of the Curwen Press* (London, 1973), 33.

In a later article in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, that same critic raised the question as to why Liverpool was still lagging behind the Principality in congregational singing and suggested that in spite of the efforts of the *codwyr canu*, the *Ysgol Gân* and numerous music societies, standards of congregational singing on Merseyside were still wanting.⁶⁸

Ieuan Gwyllt had left Liverpool by the time John Curwen addressed the gathering at the Hope Hall in October 1858, where ‘the lecture was illustrated by a class of juveniles taught upon Mr. Curwen’s system by a Mr. Ryder, of this town’, although the Tonic Sol-fa method was in use some time before this visit.⁶⁹ A report in the *Liverpool Mercury* on Curwen’s lecture confirms that Tonic Sol-fa had already taken root in Liverpool: ‘His system, of which the Tonic Sol-fa Association gives the practical results, has for the last few years been too much in vogue to require much explanation’.⁷⁰ Ryder was not the only musician to expound the virtues of Sol-fa, as E. J. Eyers was also advertising Tonic Sol-fa classes at the Hibernian Schools in Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, in October 1859.⁷¹

In the history of Welsh choral and congregational music, 1860 is particularly significant, as it was on Wednesday, 26 September of that year that the Rev. John Curwen gave his second lecture in the Liverpool Mechanics Institute on the Tonic Sol-fa system ‘to a small audience that included a number of chapel precentors’.⁷² Eleazar Roberts (1825-1912), the precentor at Netherfield Road MC Chapel, and John Edwards (1819-1900),⁷³ *codwr canu* at Bedford Street were among those present,⁷⁴ even though the lecture coincided with the celebrations that marked the opening of ‘Bethlehem’, Netherfield Road, the sixth Calvinistic Methodist chapel to be built in Liverpool.⁷⁵ Eleazar Roberts, described by older members of Pall

⁶⁸ ‘Digwyddiadau yr Wythnos’, op. cit., 17 Gorffennaf 1861, 452.

⁶⁹ ‘The Tonic Sol-fa System’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 7 October 1858, 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Advertisements and Notices, ibid., 27 October 1859, 2.

⁷² ‘Oddi wrth ein Gohebydd, Liverpool’, ‘Digwyddiadau yr Wythnos’, op. cit., 3 Hydref 1860, 836.

⁷³ John Edwards, born in Rhewl, near Ruthin, in 1819, a tailor by trade, moved to Liverpool c. 1836, and was precentor of Princes Road C.M. Chapel, Liverpool, for almost fifty years. He and Eleazar Roberts conducted the first Welsh *cymansa ganu* in Liverpool in 1880.

⁷⁴ Eleazar Roberts, ‘Hen Ddechreuwyd Canu: John Edwards, Lerpwl’, *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol VIII, Rhif 86, Chwefror (1896), 11. See Appendix 4.

⁷⁵ John Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol 1 (Liverpool, 1929), 365. In September 1860, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists were served by six large chapels in Liverpool, namely Pall Mall, Bedford Street, Rose Place, Mulberry Street, Cranmer Street and Netherfield Road, in addition to a small chapel in Garston and two in Birkenhead and Seacombe.

Mall chapel as one of a group of young men 'who wanted to change things',⁷⁶ had acquired his knowledge of singing in the classes of Robert Herbert Williams (*Corfanydd*, 1805-1876) at the Mechanics' Institute in Mount Street, Liverpool.⁷⁷ John Edwards, the lesser known of the two, was a capable musician from whom Roberts frequently sought advice on the teaching new hymn-tunes to the children,⁷⁸ and was barely into his first year as precentor of Bedford Street Chapel after the resignation of Robert Edwards.⁷⁹ Curwen presented John Edwards with a copy of the *Standard Course*⁸⁰ on condition that he used the method to teach his class at Princes Road Chapel; Eleazar Roberts was persuaded to do likewise, and both taught Sol-fa through the medium of the Welsh language in their respective chapels.⁸¹

During the winter of 1860-1, the first series of Welsh Tonic Sol-fa classes for Sunday school scholars was held by the two Curwen converts in the Calvinistic Methodist chapels in Liverpool,⁸² although they faced criticism from certain quarters for 'the folly, if not 'the sin' of bringing young people together to sing something as senseless as *Doh, Re, Mi*'.⁸³ Eleazar Roberts was committed to improving congregational singing and delivered his first public lecture on the subject on 11 November 1862,⁸⁴ while John Edwards concentrated his efforts on the 700 strong congregation at Bedford Street Chapel and its thriving Sunday school⁸⁵ with the assistance of John Lewis (JP), who helped to establish the *Ysgol Gân* in that fellowship.⁸⁶ Both musicians embraced the new pedagogy, as did David Lloyd (1820-1887), who held singing classes in Pall Mall Chapel⁸⁷ and later became precentor of Stanley Road Chapel where he established Tonic Sol-fa

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 377.

⁷⁷ Eleazar Roberts (1905), *op. cit.*, 87.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁷⁹ Robert Edwards (1796-1862), a miller from Melin Gwibnant near Mostyn, succeeded John Ellis (Llanrwst) as precentor of Bedford Street Chapel, a role he undertook for 23 years.

⁸⁰ John Curwen, *Standard Course of Lessons on the Tonic Sol-fa Method of Teaching to Sing* (London, 1858).

⁸¹ Eleazar Roberts (Ebrill, 1905), *op. cit.*, 88.

⁸² Eleazar Roberts, 'Jiwibili y Sol-ffa yn Nghymru', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 39, Mawrth (1892), 36.

⁸³ J. Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol II (Liverpool, 1932), 398.

⁸⁴ 'Liverpool', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 19 Tachwedd 1862, 741; Eleazar Roberts, 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Sol-ffaydd', II, *Y Geninen*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 3, Gorffennaf (1905), 164.

⁸⁵ 'Cyfrif Aelodaeth Eglwys Bedford', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif CCXXIII, Llyfr XIX, Gorphenaf (1865), 259.

⁸⁶ Eleazar Roberts, *op. cit.*, (1896), 12.

⁸⁷ 'Lerpwl', *Y Genedl Gymreig* (Caernarfon), 30 Mawrth 1887, 8.

classes and a Band of Hope in 1861.⁸⁸ At the Seacombe Methodist chapel in Wirral, the young people were tutored in Tonic Sol-fa by a John Parry who crossed the Mersey from Liverpool on a regular basis and was honoured in 1863 with a special presentation for his services to the fellowship.⁸⁹

Throughout Merseyside, the enthusiasm for Curwen's method was remarkable and Sol-fa classes were frequently advertised in the *Liverpool Mercury* – 'Tonic Sol-fa Singing class every Tuesday evening at eight o'clock - Lecture room, Pembroke Chapel; Liverpool and Birkenhead Tonic Sol-fa Association are desirous of commencing classes on the Tonic Sol-fa which is making increasing progress throughout the country, and which *The Times* designates as the only National System at all worthy of the name'.⁹⁰ The extent to which Sol-fa notation had taken hold is perhaps best illustrated by an advertisement in the *Liverpool Mercury* in December 1863: 'Wanted, a respectable person to instruct a Singing Class, in connection with a Birkenhead Band of Hope. The Tonic Sol-fa system preferred'.⁹¹ The method was yet to make its debut in Wrexham, and it was Robert Griffiths of Manchester who first introduced Tonic Sol-fa in December 1861 in an attempt to revive interest in singing classes in the town.⁹² The *Wrexham Advertiser* reported: 'Several attempts have been made in Wrexham at different times to organise singing classes and for a season these attempts have been successful, but from some cause or other, they have been wanting in the element of continuity'.⁹³ The Tonic Sol-fa class in Wrexham was under the supervision of a Mr. W.C. Jones, who it was said, 'has perfectly mastered the system, and teaches it with tact and ability',⁹⁴ albeit to no avail as by September 1863, the Wrexham Sol-fa class had ceased.⁹⁵

Musicus, a correspondent to the *Wrexham Advertiser*, lamented at the failure of the cultural initiative in what was the largest town in north Wales and complained: 'Wrexhamites ought not to lose sight of the important fact that the Tonic Sol-fa

⁸⁸ Hugh Evans, *Camau'r Cysegr: Sef Hanes Eglwys y Methodistiaid Calфинаidd Stanley Road Bootle* (Lerpwl, 1926), 28, 63; 'Lerpwl', *Y Goleuad*, 26 Mawrth 1887, 7; *Ibid.*, 16 Ebrill 1887, 12.

⁸⁹ 'Oddi wrth ein Gohebydd yn Lerpwl', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 7 Hydref 1863, 628.

⁹⁰ Advertisements and Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 14 November 1867, 1.

⁹¹ Advertisements and Notices, *ibid.*, 21 December 1863, 2.

⁹² 'New Singing Class', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 14 December 1861, 8.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ 'Establishment of a New Singing Class', *ibid.*, 21 December 1862, 6.

⁹⁵ Letter re Tonic Sol-fa Class, *ibid.*, 5 September 1863, 8.

system of notation is the one sole and undisputedly best system'.⁹⁶ Barely a month elapsed before *Ap Curwen*, another contributor, informed readers of the *Advertiser* that a Mr. Roberts, a teacher at the Wrexham Ragged School, was in the process of establishing a new Tonic Sol-fa class.⁹⁷ During the 1850s and 1860s, there was a determined attempt by the Temperance Movement to effect moral improvement of the lower classes, and Pearsall maintains that Tonic Sol-fa 'was instituted partly to instruct the working classes in music and to keep them out of the gin-palaces'.⁹⁸ The demand for Temperance music in Sol-fa notation was fulfilled when the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* published 'The Temperance Course of Exercises on the Tonic Sol-fa Methods of teaching to sing'- a series of articles containing 90 pieces of music relevant to the Temperance theme, in paper covers for sixpence a copy.⁹⁹

Disparate to the frenetic activity in Liverpool, Tonic Sol-fa failed to make a significant impression on the musical fraternity in north-east Wales until Eleazar Roberts began his lecture tour of the region's counties, c.1861,¹⁰⁰ to promulgate the virtues of the 'moveable Doh' method.¹⁰¹ By the early 1860s, schools in the Wrexham area began using the Curwen method and during the examinations at the Minera National School pupils were assessed in singing, '... according to the Tonic Sol-fa method of John Curwen'.¹⁰² That it had extended into Mold by 1864 is confirmed by a newspaper report of a concert held in the Market Hall, Mold which referred to 'the Tonic Solfa choirs of the Mold British Schools, conducted by Mr. Jenkins, schoolmaster'.¹⁰³ The campaign to make Tonic Sol-fa available in the Welsh language gained momentum when Eleazar Roberts began writing a series of articles in *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, the Welsh music periodical launched by Ieuan Gwyllt in 1861.¹⁰⁴ He had studied Old Notation under the tutelage of Gwyllt at Croppers Hall in Netherfield Road, Liverpool and was a prolific contributor to *Yr*

⁹⁶ Letter re Tonic Sol-fa Class, *ibid.*, 19 September 1863, 8.

⁹⁷ Multiple News Items, *ibid.*, 3 October 1863, 8.

⁹⁸ Ronald Pearsall, *Victorian Popular Music* (Newton Abbot, 1973), 112.

⁹⁹ 'Register of Tonic Sol-fa Work', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, No.170, January (1865), 13.

¹⁰⁰ R. D. Griffith, *Hanes Canu Cynulleidfaol Cymru* (Caerdydd, 1948), 87.

¹⁰¹ 'Ein Cerddorion: Eleazar Roberts', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol VIII, Rhif 92, Awst (1896), 86.

¹⁰² 'Minera National Schools - Scholars Treat and Examination', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 29 September 1860, 3.

¹⁰³ 'District News: Mold', *ibid.* 12 March 1864, 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Y Cerddor Cymreig* [The Welsh Musician] a monthly publication, edited by John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) from 1861 to 1873. Though Staff Notation was used initially in the publication, from 1865 onwards, music in Sol-fa was introduced. Eleazar Roberts contributed the first of a series of lessons on the Tonic Sol-fa system in Welsh in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* in August 1861.

*Amserau*¹⁰⁵ during Gwyllt's time as deputy editor. He was only too willing to write a series of Sol-fa lessons for the new music periodical and refused payment for what he described as 'a labour of love'.¹⁰⁶ (See Fig. 4.5 below).

What followed was a reversal of roles as Eleazar Roberts, who had not sat the Tonic Sol-fa examination until March 1862, taught the rudiments of the tablature to Ieuan Gwyllt and his brother Robert Roberts, who both gained their Tonic Sol-fa certificates during the latter half of 1862.¹⁰⁷

Fig. 4.5: A Sample Lesson by Eleazar Roberts

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|------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
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| Paid | byth gwastraff - u | am - so ^r | drud Fy |
| : d | d : s ₁ d : d | d : s ₁ d : s ₁ | d : s ₁ d : s ₁ |

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| d : s m : d | s : — — : s ₁ m : r d : s ₁ | d : s ₁ d : s ₁ |
| ngbyfaill | auwyl, clyw, Mae 'n fwy o werth i | d : s ₁ d : s ₁ |
| d : m d : d | s : — — : s ₁ d : t ₁ d : s ₁ | d : s ₁ d : s ₁ |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| d : m s : s ₁ | m : r d : r d : — — | d : — — |
| ti na'r byd, Yn | wir dy fywyd yw. | d : — — |
| d : d s ₁ : s ₁ | d : t ₁ d : s ₁ d : — — | d : — — |

Fe sylwa'r efrydydd craffus yn ddiau nad yw y mesur olaf yn y nawfed wers yn gyflawn. Y mae pedwar curiad yn yr holl fesurau ereill tra nad oes ond tri yn yr olaf. Ond os cymerir y curiad cyntaf yn y wers (yr hwn sydd ar yr acen ysgafn) i mewn i'r cyfrif, a'i ddodi at y tri churiad yn y mesur olaf, bydd yr holl fesurau yn gyflawn. Hwyrach mai yn awr ydyw y cyfleusdra goreu i hyspysu i'r efrydydd y rheol ganlynol:—os dechreuir unrhyw ddarn cerddorol gyda'r acen ysgafn, y gorphenir ef gyda'r acen drom; ac felly i'r gwrthwyneb—neu *vice versa*, fel y dywed y dynion dysgedig yma.

Mae yr engreiffitiau uchod yn gynwysedig o seiniau cedyrn y *Modulator*, ond y mae y rhai canlynol yn dwyn i mewn rai o'r seiniau mwy dibynol.

E. Roberts, *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Rhif 13, Mawrth (1862), 100.

So rapid was the development of Sol-fa on Merseyside that by 1862 the choir of the Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Association presented its first concert under the baton of T.J.Young at the 'third open rehearsal of miscellaneous vocal music in Hope Hall'.¹⁰⁸ By this time, Curwen had made the decision to establish a printing business in 1862-3, and the extended repertoire printed in the less costly tablature brought music within easy reach of the working classes, albeit through the medium

¹⁰⁵ Eleazar Roberts, 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Sol-ffaydd', op. cit., Ebrill (1905), 87-8.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 'Wrth gwrs, yr oedd derbyn tâl am "lafur cariad" allan o'r cwestiwn'.

¹⁰⁷ Eleazar Roberts, 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Sol-ffaydd', op. cit., Gorffennaf (1905), 162-3.

¹⁰⁸ Advertisements and Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 12 June 1862, 1.

of the English language¹⁰⁹ and in a later autobiographical essay, he qualifies his reasons for establishing a printing company:

This business has proved to be a mighty lever for the propagation of the Tonic Sol-fa method. It has enabled me to produce some costly books great and small which must necessarily be unremunerative for many years.¹¹⁰

Curwen claimed to have published the *Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book*¹¹¹ at a considerable loss, but as it was only available to those who had taken the Tonic Sol-fa Intermediate Certificates, it served a dual purpose,¹¹² as did the later Crystal Palace competitions and choral meetings,¹¹³ all of which were astute propaganda initiatives that reveal more of John Curwen the entrepreneur.

The door to the printing of Sol-fa in the Welsh language was opened in 1861 when Eleazar Roberts published a series of hymns¹¹⁴ and tunes for children, *Hymnau a Thonau i Blant*,¹¹⁵ the first Sol-fa publication to appear in the Welsh language¹¹⁶ and one that was still in print at the turn of the 20th century.¹¹⁷ In 1862, he published *Llawlyfr y Tonic Sol-ffa - Detholedig o lyfrau y Parch. John Curwen, a chyhoeddedig ar ei gais* [Tonic Sol-fa Manual – selected from Rev. John Curwen’s books, and published at his request].¹¹⁸ This compilation of Tonic Sol-fa lessons had appeared as a regular feature in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* and was so well received that ‘the first thousand of the Manual was sold in five weeks’.¹¹⁹ There followed in

¹⁰⁹ Bernarr Rainbow, *John Curwen – A Short Critical Biography* (Sevenoaks, Kent, 1980), 37.

¹¹⁰ Herbert Simon, op. cit., 36.

¹¹¹ John Curwen, *Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book* (Plaistow, 1859).

¹¹² ‘Certificates’, *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, No. 173, April (1865), 50

¹¹³ Curwen’s Tonic Sol-fa Association held its first Juvenile Choral Concert at the Crystal Palace in September 1857 for which 3,000 children had been trained to sing Handel’s *Messiah*, first published in Tonic Sol-fa in April of that year. See Herbert Simon, op. cit., 33. Curwen held choral competitions to promote Elementary Certificates. See ‘Grand Concert and Choral Competition the Adult Tonic Sol-fa Evening Classes’, *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, June (1860), 268.

¹¹⁴ Eleazar Roberts wrote the popular hymn, *O na bawn yn fwy tebyg i Iesu Grist yn byw*, which is invariably sung to the tune ‘Eleazar’, a revivalist tune of American origin that was harmonised and re-arranged by E.T. Davies. See Bangor University Archives, GB 0222 BMSS, G.W.Hughes Papers, ‘Mr. Eleazar Roberts, Lerpwl’.

¹¹⁵ Eleazar Roberts, *Hymnau a Thonau i Blant*, Part 1 (Liverpool, 1861). As pioneer of the Tonic Sol-fa movement in Wales, he published several tutorial books on Sol-fa, *Llawlyfr y Tonic Sol-ffa* (Wrexham, 1862), *Llawlyfr Caniadaeth, sef cyfres o wersi ar drefn y Tonic Sol-ffa o ddysgu canu* (Liverpool, 1862), *Llawlyfr i ddysgu darllen cerddoriaeth yn yr Hen Nodiant* (Wrexham, 1880), *Hymnau a Thonau at wasanaeth yr Ysgol Sabbothol a'r Band of Hope* (Wrexham, 1880), and translated *Y Gyfres Safonol, Pa fodd i sylwi ar gynghanedd* (London, 1875).

¹¹⁶ Emlyn Evans, ‘Eleazar Roberts’, *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol VIII, Rhif 86, Chwefror (1896), 12.

¹¹⁷ ‘Proposed Testimonial’, *The Musical Herald*, August (1905), 239.

¹¹⁸ Eleazar Roberts, *Llawlyfr y Tonic Sol-ffa* (Wrexham, 1862).

¹¹⁹ Eleazar Roberts, ‘Tonic Sol-fa among the Welsh’, *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, No. 125, April (1863), 52.

December 1862, a further adaptation of Curwen's work,¹²⁰ *Llawlyfr Caniadaeth* [Handbook of Song],¹²¹ a six-penny book that became the standard Tonic Sol-fa lesson-book in Welsh for thirteen years,¹²² and although Curwen initially approved a Welsh translation of his *Standard Course*, he later agreed with Eleazar Roberts that the publication should be tailored to Welsh needs.¹²³

As the symbols of the Tonic Sol-fa notation were based on the letters of the alphabet, printed music was no longer confined to the specialist printers of staff notation as it came within the scope of most local jobbing printers, although the proof-reading stages did require the scrutiny of a capable musician. Furthermore, amateur composers could now afford to see their work in print while the publishers of denominational journals also benefited, and under the banner 'Easy, Cheap and True', the Tonic Sol-fa movement flourished.¹²⁴

Arguably, the most significant advance in the promulgation of Tonic Sol-fa in north-east Wales came in 1863 when Eleazar Roberts prevailed on Ieuan Gwyllt to publish a Tonic Sol-fa edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*,¹²⁵ the Calvinistic Methodist hymnal published by Hughes and Son of Wrexham. Gareth Williams claimed: 'It sold 25,000 copies almost overnight, and established the *Ysgol Gân* as the most popular and influential institution in the social, musical and religious life of Wales'.¹²⁶ Tonic Sol-fa was now the notation of the Sunday schools and *Ysgolion y Gân*, and when Bangor Normal College adopted the system as part of its teacher training programme in 1864,¹²⁷ the method was accepted as a formal subject.¹²⁸ From the mid-1860s, the Curwen 'Modulator' became a familiar sight in chapels and schools and the steady demand for this essential teaching aid continued unabated.¹²⁹ (See Fig. 4.6 over).

¹²⁰ Eleazar Roberts, 'Tonic Sol-fa in Wales', *The Musical Herald*, October (1911), 307

¹²¹ Eleazar Roberts, *Llawlyfr Caniadaeth, sef cyfres o wersi ar drefn y Tonic Sol-fa o ddysgu canu, wedi eu dethol, gan mwyaf, o amrywiol lyfrau y Parch. J. Curwen, ac wedi eu cyhoeddi ar ei gais* (Liverpool, 1862).

¹²² Eleazar Roberts, October (1911), op. cit., 307.

¹²³ Eleazar Roberts (1883), op. cit., 366.

¹²⁴ Bernarr Rainbow (1980), op. cit., 38.

¹²⁵ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Merthyr Tydfil, 1863). See Eleazar Roberts, 'John Curwen a'i Waith', *Y Traethodydd* Vol. 38 (1883), 356; 'Rhai o Adgofion Hen Solffaydd', op. cit., Ebrill (1905), 88.

¹²⁶ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Welsh Society 1840-1914* (Cardiff, 1991), 27

¹²⁷ D. W. Lewis, 'Cerddoriaeth y Ganrif ddiweddar a'r Sol-ffa yn Nghymru', *Y Cerddor*, Cyf. XIII, Rhif 149, Mai (1901), 47.

¹²⁸ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 33.

¹²⁹ Advertisement, *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, No. 138, May (1864), 249.

Fig. 4. 6: The Curwen Modulator

CURWEN'S MODULATOR
No. 7011 By John Curwen

THE POCKET MODULATOR

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|----|
| r' | s | d' | f' | l | r' | s |
| d' | ba | t | m' | se | d' | ba |
| t | f | l | ma' r' | s | f | m |
| l | m | se | r' | ba | t | m |
| se | r | s | doh' | f | l | r |
| s | d | ba | te | m | se | d |
| ba | t, | f | ta | r | s | d |
| f | m | m | lah | d | ba | f |
| m | l, | r | lo | t, | m | l, |
| r | se, | d | soh | l, | r | s, |
| d | s, | t, | ba | se, | d | ba |
| t, | f, | l, | me | s, | f, | m, |
| l, | m, | l, | ma' ray | ba | t, | m, |
| se, | r, | se, | re | f, | l, | r, |
| s, | d, | f, | doh | m, | l, | r, |
| ba | t, | m, | t, | r, | se, | d, |
| f, | m, | l, | ta | d, | s, | d, |
| m, | l, | r, | la | t, | f, | t, |
| r, | l, | r, | la | m, | l, | l, |
| se, | d, | d, | se, | d, | ba | l, |
| s, | t, | t, | f, | t, | f, | s, |
| ba | l, | l, | m, | l, | r, | s, |
| | se, | t, | | r, | s, | s, |
| | t, | | | l, | s, | s, |

Mrs. J. CURWEN A'I FEIBION, Cyf., 24, Berners Street, London, W.1.

Detholiad o gynnwys Lyfr Emynau a Thonau Eglwysi'r Methodistiaid Calfinaidd a Wesleiaidd, 36th edition (Caernarfon, 1962-63), 40.

Following the publication of Tonic Sol-fa lessons in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* and the appearance of *Llawlyfr y Tonic Sol-ffa* in 1862, Eleazar Roberts worked tirelessly to establish music classes throughout north-east Wales and divided his time between conducting congregational singing and examining pupils for the Tonic Sol-fa qualifications.¹³⁰ The meetings invariably took the form of a discussion which was followed by a singing practice, such as the lecture in Rhyl in December 1864 that preceded the congregational singing meeting.¹³¹ Supporting the work of Eleazar Roberts was the network of Tonic Sol-fa teachers who served the north-east Wales region, one of whom was Joseph Owen (1836-1910), a student at Bangor's Normal College in 1860, who had taught his colleagues to sight-read Sol-fa.¹³² In his youth, he had joined the singing classes of Robert Jones, precentor of Hill's Lane Chapel (CM), Shrewsbury, before taking further instruction from Rev. J.J. Waite, whose method combined the Old Notation with the moveable tonic and therefore, Owen had an understanding of both notations.¹³³ He began his teaching career at the British School in Talysarn, Dyffryn Nantlle where he formed a singing class and a choir before being examined for the Intermediate Sol-fa Certificate by Eleazar Roberts.¹³⁴ Joseph Owen moved to Rhosllannerchrugog in 1865 as headmaster of the new British School,¹³⁵ and during his first year he established a singing class of 67 pupils in Rhos, tutored 44 members in Groes Chapel (Penycae), and prepared both classes for the Tonic Sol-fa certificate examination.¹³⁶

When Ieuan Gwyllt lectured on the secular and sacred aspects of 'Natural songs' (opera, madrigal, cantata, glee, symphony etc.) and 'Songs of praise' (oratorio, anthem, hymn tune), in *Capel Mawr*, Rhosllannerchrugog in early 1866, it was Joseph Owen's pupils who were called upon to demonstrate the simplicity of the Sol-fa notation.¹³⁷ Owen was pivotal to the development of musical education in north-east Wales and his energy and drive heralded a new era in choral singing throughout the Wrexham district.¹³⁸ In Brymbo for instance, the tutor of a class of 25 pupils gained an Intermediate Certificate from the London-based Tonic Sol-fa

¹³⁰ Eleazar Roberts, 'Juwbili y Sol-ffa yn Nghymru', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 39, Mawrth (1892), 36.

¹³¹ 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol III, Rhif 47, Ionawr (1865), 7.

¹³² 'Ein Cerddorion: Joseph Owen, Amwythig', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XVI, Rhif 243, Mawrth (1909), 26.

¹³³ *Ibid.* For further detail on local musicians see Appendix 4.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 61, Mawrth (1866), 27.

¹³⁷ 'Cronicl Cerddorol: Rhosllannerchrugog', *ibid.*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 62, Ebrill (1866), 32.

¹³⁸ 'Ein Cerddorion: Joseph Owen, Amwythig', *Y Cerddor* (1909), op. cit., 26.

College in 1866,¹³⁹ as did the eighteen-year old precentor and choir-master of Cerney MC Chapel, William Davies (1848-1940),¹⁴⁰ both of whom were examined by Joseph Owen.¹⁴¹ John Owen Jones (1848-1940), son of *Owen Cantwr*,¹⁴² had taken lessons in Old Notation from William Evans, the precentor of Salem Penycae c.1867, but it was to Joseph Owen, one the foremost scholars of the musical pedagogy in north-east Wales, that he turned for tuition in Tonic Sol-fa.¹⁴³

In the Baptist strongholds of Llangollen, Penycae and Cefn Mawr, the cause of Tonic Sol-fa was further enhanced when, in 1864-65, the Baptist publication, *Yr Athraw*, dedicated a monthly column that took the form of short tutorials on Tonic Sol-fa.¹⁴⁴ Singing classes thrived and developed into Tonic Sol-fa choirs, such as the Adwy'r Clawdd Tonic Sol-fa choir of James Beckett c. 1866¹⁴⁵ and the Brymbo Sol-fa class of Edward Humphreys that became the Brymbo Tonic Sol-fa choir in 1866.¹⁴⁶ A similar trend was evident in Broughton where the sight-singing class evolved into a Tonic Sol-fa choir under the baton of John Jones,¹⁴⁷ while Isaac Hopwood (1827-1888), who was precentor at Buckley CM Seion Chapel at seventeen years of age and served the cause for over forty years,¹⁴⁸ had already prepared the ground for the Buckley Tonic Sol-fa Choral Society.¹⁴⁹

In the first five years of his mission to promote the Tonic Sol-fa method, Eleazar had achieved remarkable results and *Y Cerddor Cymreig* carries an account of a concert at Rhosllannerchrugog in September 1866, when two Tonic Sol-fa singing class choirs conducted by Joseph Owen performed before a capacity congregation of 1,500 in *Capel Mawr*.¹⁵⁰ During the evening, eighteen Tonic Sol-fa Elementary Certificates were presented to the successful candidates all of whom attended the classes of Joseph Owen in Penycae, Rhos and Acrefair that served the communities of Garth, Cefn Mawr and Rhosymedre, and explains why two Sol-fa classes took

¹³⁹ 'Congl y Tonic Solfa', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, op. cit., Ebrill (1866), 33.

¹⁴⁰ E. K. Jones, *The Story of Education in a Welsh Border Parish or the Schools of Cefnmawr 1786-1933* (Cefnmawr, 1934), 101.

¹⁴¹ 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', op. cit., Cyfrol IV, Rhif 67, Medi (1866), 84.

¹⁴² See Chapter 2, Reform, Resistance and Renaissance, 3; also Appendix, 4.

¹⁴³ John Owen Jones, *Hen Arweinyddion y Canu yn Salem, Penycae* (Colwyn Bay, 1911), 67.

¹⁴⁴ 'Cerddoriaeth y Sol-ffa', *Yr Athraw* (1864-1865).

¹⁴⁵ 'District News', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 18 August 1866, 6.

¹⁴⁶ 'District News', *ibid.*, 25 May 1867, 6.

¹⁴⁷ 'Multiple News Items: Concert', *ibid.*, 1 May 1869, 6.

¹⁴⁸ 'Bwcle', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 7 Gorffennaf 1888, 5.

¹⁴⁹ 'District News: Buckley', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 24 Sept 1870, 6

¹⁵⁰ 'Cronicl Cerddorol: Rhosllannerchrugog', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 69, Tachwedd (1866), 85.

part in the event.¹⁵¹ While secular items, such as *Adar Mân y Mynydd* (John Thomas) and *Y Blodeuyn Olaf* (John Ambrose Lloyd), were included in the repertoire of the chapel choir, conducted by Hugh Griffiths, the Sol-fa choirs performed only English songs, *The Foot-traveller* (Bradbury), *Soon as I careless strayed* (Festa) and *Away, away in early day* (Webb) to piano accompaniment.¹⁵²

Insofar as *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* was available in Sol-fa from 1863, the repertoire of the Sol-fa choirs suggests that the notation had yet to expand its repertoire to include secular music of Welsh origin. This apparent dearth presented an opportunity for Hugh Davies (*Pencerdd Maelor*, 1844-1907), a young labourer in the J.C. Edwards Brick Works, Ruabon, who had attended Joseph Owen's Acrefair class and later qualified through the Curwen College, to gain the G.T.C.L. (Graduate of the Tonic Sol-fa College) degree.¹⁵³ In addition to organising Tonic Sol-fa classes¹⁵⁴ and conducting music festivals, Davies became a prolific composer and his cantatas *Joseph* and *Charles of Bala* achieved popularity with children's choirs throughout Wales.¹⁵⁵ Had it not been for Eleazar Roberts' acute organisational skills in establishing the network of committed volunteers which brought musical literacy to the heart of every community, such musical talent may never have emerged.

Half-yearly figures quoted in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* estimated that 3,000 studied the new notation in Wales during 1866,¹⁵⁶ and the dynamic growth in the heavier populated industrial communities is evidenced by the 200 pupils in the Rhos, Penycae and Acrefair areas that attended the classes of Joseph Owen.¹⁵⁷ Similar enthusiasm was apparent in Brymbo under the supervision of Edward Humphreys, *codwr canu* of Brymbo CM Chapel, while Peter Welsh, leader of the Bagillt Tonic Sol-faists, was able to sustain a class of approximately 25 pupils.¹⁵⁸ In the densely populated town of Birkenhead, a Mr. W. Butterworth tutored 180 pupils through

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ 'Parch. Hugh Davies, *Pencerdd Maelor*', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XIX, Rhagfyr (1907), 136.

¹⁵⁴ Hugh Davies started Tonic Sol-fa classes in 1864 after studying Eleazar Roberts' *Llawlyfr y Tonic Sol-ffa*, and became a fervent advocate of the system. See 'Cerddoriaeth: Undeb y Tonic Sol-ffa yn Ngogledd Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 9 Tachwedd 1892, 5.

¹⁵⁵ 'Parch. Hugh Davies, *Pencerdd Maelor*', op. cit., 136.

¹⁵⁶ 'Congl y Tonic Solffa', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 64, Mehefin (1866), 51.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., Ebrill (1866), 33.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., Tachwedd (1866), 84. Coal-miner Peter Welsh gained his Intermediate Certificate in Tonic Sol-fa in 1866. He emigrated in the early 1870s to work in the coalmines of Shawnee, Ohio, where he became conductor of a chapel choir. See 'O Bapurau Cymreig America', *Y Goleuad*, 30 Awst 1884, 4.

five different classes 'irrespective of the class in his day school ... he carries on his classes through the summer and finds them quite as well attended as in the winter'.¹⁵⁹ The Birkenhead classes complemented the activity in Liverpool where E.J.Eyres, an early pioneer of the method was supervising a psalmody class of 260 in addition to the well-attended gathering which he tutored at the Liverpool Institute.¹⁶⁰ Undoubtedly, he was a keen advocate and after attending the Sol-fa conference in Manchester he was eager to comply with the stringent conditions that Curwen began to impose on Sol-fa tutors and scholars, particularly the stipulation that the Intermediate Certificate should be a pre-requisite for choir membership:

In Mr. Curwen's speech at the Conference held at Manchester, he mentioned having refused going to Bristol unless a choir could be provided whose members have the Intermediate Certificate. That fact provided me with a valuable hint. I have informed the members of a class who profess some regard for myself, that if they want my services after the next three months they will have to show me their Intermediate Certificates. "Tis acting like magic on most of them."¹⁶¹

Such organisational issues were probably of lesser importance in the smaller centres of population under the supervision of Eleazar Roberts, although he was producing outstanding results in such sparsely populated agrarian communities as the remote Ceiriog Valley where singing classes began to occupy the leisure hours of rural workers. For example, the class in Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog led by Thomas Davies (1844-1911) of Glyndyfrdwy, had 52 pupils in addition to 28 students in Rhiwlas; with the aid of his brother, Hugh Davies,¹⁶² the class in Bryneglwys, near Corwen, reached 60, and in Cricor, near Llanellidan, there were a further 42 scholars.¹⁶³ Writing in *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, Eleazar Roberts pays tribute to Thomas Davies who also tutored the classes in the tiny hamlet of Llandegla where no fewer than 95 candidates were examined in Tonic Sol-fa.¹⁶⁴

Certificates were granted, congregational tunes were sung with effect, voluntaries on the Modulator were gone through in style, two tunes were sung at once in four parts, a major and a minor without any mistake – and last, but not least, a tune was sung slowly right ahead, written down by the lads and lasses present, and sung from their papers by a large mass of voices without any mistake.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁹ 'Register of Tonic Sol-fa Work', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, January (1865), 10.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² 'Hanesion Cerddorol: Pentrecelyn', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*, Cyfrol IV (1872), 23.

¹⁶³ 'Gweithrediadau y Solffayddion: Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog', *ibid.*, Cyfrol II (1870), 20.

¹⁶⁴ Eleazar Roberts, 'Two Days in Wales', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, May (1871), 137.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 138.

These *Cymanfa* [Association] meetings were usually day-long events and the candidates from this rural community, mostly farmers, farmhands, servants and maids were examined before a capacious congregation who paid an entrance fee of sixpence.¹⁶⁶ That the acquirement of a musical skill was not restricted by age is confirmed by the proceedings of the Llandegla Cymanfa in 1871 where a seven-year old girl excelled her father at the same examination,¹⁶⁷ a fact that illustrates the demographic range of those studying the notation.

John Jones, who introduced Tonic Sol-fa to the Mold area, was the first to organise classes in the town as well as in the surrounding villages of Maeshafn, Mynydd Soughton, Nercwys and Leeswood,¹⁶⁸ while a Mr. Richards of the Deep Level Mine at Halkyn worked tirelessly as a leader and Sol-fa instructor in the Welsh and English chapels of Flint Mountain and Halkyn.¹⁶⁹ Although the classes flourished, doubt was expressed by a contributor to *Y Cerddor Cymreig* who questioned the effect of the notation on the standards of congregational singing: 'Although Eleazar Roberts continues to work hard in Liverpool with measured success, the present state of singing amongst the Welsh city dwellers is far from satisfactory'.¹⁷⁰ That same critic went on to describe the Manchester Sol-fa Choral Union, conducted by John Lloyd, as 'one of the best choirs in the city',¹⁷¹ and although the identity of the informed writer was concealed by a pseudonym, it may have been penned by the editor of the journal, Ieuan Gwyllt, who challenged the competence of the newly qualified class instructors and choirmasters in north-east Wales.

Students who succeeded at the Intermediate level were recruited as pupil-teachers, and this approach that proved most effective in promoting the use of Tonic Sol-fa, as demonstrated by the class that convened in Flint in February 1867.¹⁷² Eleazar Roberts supervised the examinations of eight candidates who were awarded Elementary Certificates,¹⁷³ among whom was Rev. Michael Jones,¹⁷⁴ along with his son, and both were successful in the Intermediate qualification for Tonic Sol-fa

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ 'Tonic Sol-fa', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 24 October 1868, 7.

¹⁶⁹ 'Mold: Presentation to Mr. Richards, of Halkyn', *ibid.*, 14 September 1867, 8.

¹⁷⁰ 'Draw ac Yma', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol VII, Rhif 106, Rhagfyr (1869), 89.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', *ibid.*, Cyfrol V, Rhif 74, Ebrill (1867), 23.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Michael Jones (1818-1887), a native of Cilcain was a pharmacist in Bagillt before moving to Flint. He began preaching in 1843. See Griffith Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir Fflint* (Dolgellau, 1914), 537-8, 553.

singing.¹⁷⁵ Michael Jones recognised the importance of songs of praise and the value of teaching young people to sing,¹⁷⁶ and was the first to adopt the system in Flint.¹⁷⁷ In a letter published in *Y Faner*, a contributor identified only as 'Esgob Rhuthyn' [Bishop of Ruthin], commended the work of Rev. Michael Jones 'for being instrumental in progressing the Sol-fa system and congregational singing in Flintshire'.¹⁷⁸

Despite the almost universal acceptance of Tonic Sol-fa, there were musicians such as J.J.Dennis, the organist and choirmaster of St Mark's Church, Wrexham, who continued to advertise singing classes using the Hullah system from October 1866 to January 1867.¹⁷⁹ This was a futile pursuit and his efforts withered as Curwen's method was well established in the Nonconformist strongholds of north-east Wales and was the preferred method of teaching sight-singing in schools, particularly so after the Education Act of 1870.¹⁸⁰ At a meeting of the North Wales Sol-fa Association in 1869, Ieuan Gwyllt presented a paper on 'The North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association – its nature and objects', one of which was the formation of a large choir representing the north Wales counties.¹⁸¹ Joseph Owen who was by now domiciled in Rhyl, agreed to undertake the task of organising the printing of a thousand membership cards, each with a copy of the modulator on its reverse.¹⁸²

Obscurant to the outstanding success of the Tonic Sol-fa notation, and in particular the 1863 edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, the Calvinistic Methodists did not formally adopt Curwen's system until the *Cyfarfod Misol* [Monthly Meeting] of the Flintshire Calvinistic Methodist Presbytery convened at Rhosllannerchrugog in March 1869.¹⁸³ The meeting resolved that Tonic Sol-fa singing classes should take place in every chapel throughout the county and a Musical Union was to be established by drawing together choirs and congregations of the MC chapels in every circuit,¹⁸⁴ and one of the first outcomes of this initiative was the Calvinistic

¹⁷⁵ 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', op. cit., 23.

¹⁷⁶ Michael Jones, 'Y Moddion mwyaf effeithiol i ennill y wlad i ymgymeryd a chyfundrefn y Tonic Sol-ffa', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*, Cyfrol III (1871), 5-9.

¹⁷⁷ Griffith Owen, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Sir Fflint* (Dolgellau, 1914), 538.

¹⁷⁸ 'Yr Achos Sol-ffa', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 2 Mawrth 1870, 11.

¹⁷⁹ Advertisements and Notices, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 20 October 1866, 1

¹⁸⁰ J. Hullah, *Wilhem's Method of Teaching Singing* (London, 1842), xii.

¹⁸¹ 'Tonic Sol-fa Work', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 February 1870, 233.

¹⁸² 'Undeb Sol-ffa Gogledd Cymru', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*, Cyfrol I (1869), 77.

¹⁸³ The Flintshire Presbytery included the districts of Rhos, Wrexham and Llangollen until 1909, when it was divided into two circuits, Flintshire and East Denbighshire.

¹⁸⁴ 'Sir Fflint', *Y Drysorfa*, Rhif 268, Llyfr 23, Ebrill (1869), 148; 'Cyfarfod Misol Sir Fflint', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Rhif 99, Mai (1869), 38.

Methodist Singing Festival in September 1869 at Cilcain, near Mold. Eleazar Roberts and John Edwards of Princes Road Chapel, Liverpool, conducted the singing meeting which followed the usual pattern of lessons and examinations,¹⁸⁵ and six candidates qualified for the Tonic Sol-fa Elementary Certificate along with the class tutor who was awarded the Intermediate qualification.¹⁸⁶ The singing of well-known hymns such as *Yr Hen Ganfed*, *Martyrdom* and the Welsh hymn-tunes, *Meirionnydd* (William Lloyd) and *Rheidol* (Ieuan Gwyllt), enabled pupils to connect sounds and intervals to the symbols of the tablature; a technique that was used to great effect by Eleazar Roberts when he conducted the singing at the first meeting of the Ceiriog Valley United Musical Society in September 1870.¹⁸⁷

The approval of Tonic Sol-fa by the Calvinistic Methodists in 1869 was timely as it coincided with a Government edict that granted equal status to the Tonic Sol-fa and Old Notation methods in schools throughout England and Wales.¹⁸⁸ A later decision by the Department of Education revoking its earlier decision, due to the lack of inspectors to examine the Tonic Sol-fa method, was challenged by Curwen and within a month, W.E. Forster¹⁸⁹ replied with the assurance: 'the Department would endeavour to act, as usual, with justice and impartiality to the authors, teachers, and students of each system'.¹⁹⁰ Sol-fa was granted equal status,¹⁹¹ and from 1871, it became the preferred method of teaching music in elementary schools and 'a key factor in the Welsh musical awakening in the late nineteenth century'.¹⁹² By 1870, most Welsh chapels held a Sol-fa class,¹⁹³ and from the industrial enclave of Bagillt to the rural hamlets of Llanarmon and Tregeiriog in the Ceiriog Valley, Tonic Sol-fa flourished,¹⁹⁴ as it did in Buckley with its distinct dialect and culture that had migrated with the Primitive Methodists from the Staffordshire Potteries.

¹⁸⁵ 'Cronici Cerddorol: Cilcain', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol VII, Rhif 103, Medi (1869), 71.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ 'Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog', *ibid.*, Cyfrol VIII, Rhif 117, Tachwedd (1870), 87.

¹⁸⁸ John Roberts, 'Dylanwadau Cerddorol yn Lloegr', *ibid.*, Cyfrol IX, Rhif 127, Medi (1871), 68. The Government offered a shilling grant for teaching music by note. By 1872, 1s. per pupil was deducted from the general grant, if singing was *not* taught, but no difference was recognised between note and ear singing. See W.G. McNaught, 'Music in Elementary Schools', *Journal of the Society of Arts*, 10 March 1893, 413-4.

¹⁸⁹ W.E. Forster, M.P., President of the Board of Education and author of the *Elementary Education Act of 1870* that established school boards that made elementary education compulsory.

¹⁹⁰ Percy A. Scholes (1947), *op. cit.*, Vol. I, 15-16.

¹⁹¹ Herbert Simon, *op. cit.*, 47.

¹⁹² Gareth Williams, *op. cit.*, 33.

¹⁹³ D. T. Morgan, *Eglwys Seion Wrecsam* (Caernarfon, 1967), 62.

¹⁹⁴ 'Congl y Tonic Sol-ffa', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 63, Mai (1866), 33.

Colliery manager, Isaac Hopwood held singing classes and established a Temperance choir in the Buckley area,¹⁹⁵ and according to Joseph Griffiths, he was the first to introduce the Tonic Sol-fa system to that locality,¹⁹⁶ probably around the mid 1860s as there is a report of him being examined by Michael Jones of Flint for the Tonic Sol-fa intermediate certificate in January 1869.¹⁹⁷ Under his leadership, the interdenominational Buckley Tonic Sol-fa Choral Society¹⁹⁸ performed Root and Bradbury's sacred cantata, 'Daniel',¹⁹⁹ in September 1874, accompanied by a harmonium,²⁰⁰ and *The Wrexham Advertiser* stated: 'It is understood that this is the first occasion a cantata has been gone through in this neighbourhood'.²⁰¹ Within a decade, Eleazar Roberts had created an assemblage of trained musicians and it was through this deputation that Tonic Sol-fa was accepted as the standard notation across north-east Wales, and *Y Goleuad*²⁰² reported that Sol-fa classes had been established 'in almost every congregation in Flintshire'.²⁰³ The success in Flintshire was further reinforced when Joseph Owen left Rhosllannerchrugog in 1868, to take up a teaching post in Rhyl where he soon formed a class of 130 solfaists.²⁰⁴

When Owen left Rhosllannerchrugog, the class at Acrefair turned to his former pupil, William H. Davies (1848-1940), who conducted the hymn-singing at the Acrefair Sunday School Competition in June 1869 under the critical eye of Ieuan Gwyllt when a selection of hymn-tunes from Eleazar Roberts' *Hymnau a Thonau* and *Y Drysorfa* were sung.²⁰⁵ Gwyllt was an authority on congregational singing and by inviting him to adjudicate, the Calvinistic Methodists of Cefn Mawr were promoting their cause in what was predominantly a Baptist stronghold with a firmly established musical structure. This was a formidable challenge for the new recruit as Thomas Davies *Cantwr* (1842-1900), a coal miner and precentor at

¹⁹⁵ Griffith Owen, op. cit., 315.

¹⁹⁶ Flintshire Record Office, D/DG/53, MSS, Joseph Griffiths, op. cit.; Griffith Owen, op. cit., 315.

¹⁹⁷ 'Tonic Sol-fa School', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 February 1869, 29.

¹⁹⁸ 'District News: Buckley', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 21 January 1871, 6.

¹⁹⁹ George F. Root (1820-1895) and W. B. Bradbury (1816-1868) were American composers. In 1841, Bradbury published his first collection of choir music and in 1856 composed the cantata *Esther*.

²⁰⁰ 'District News: Buckley', op. cit., 24 September 1870, 6.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² *Y Goleuad* [The Illuminator of Wales] was a weekly publication of Calvinistic Methodist persuasion which commenced in October 1869 and was printed in Caernarfon.

²⁰³ 'Sir Fflint: Caniadaeth y Cysegr', *Y Goleuad*, 23 Ebrill 1870, 12.

²⁰⁴ 'Ein Cerddorion: Joseph Owen, Amwythig', op. cit., 27.

²⁰⁵ 'Cystadleuaeth Ysgolion Sabbothol Dosbarth Acrefair', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol VII, Rhif 100, Mehefin (1869), 44.

Tabernacle Baptist Chapel, Cefn Mawr, had been the first in that district to adopt Tonic Sol-fa.²⁰⁶ Davies *y Cantwr* had been appointed as an eighteen-year old and faithfully served the cause for over forty years,²⁰⁷ during which time he became a well-known soloist.²⁰⁸ John Owen Jones (1848-1940), precentor at Salem Baptist Chapel at Penycae, was also tutoring classes in Acrefair, Cefn Mawr, Cefn Bychan and Penycae where he also formed a village Temperance Band,²⁰⁹ while in Wrexham, Rev. T.F. Nathan, minister of the Penybryn Baptist cause had enrolled seventy members to his Tonic Sol-fa class by November 1868.²¹⁰ A year later, Nathan's choir united with the singers of the Baptist cause in Chester to form the Wrexham and Chester Tonic Sol-fa Choir,²¹¹ which ended the 1869 season with a performance of Bradbury's cantata, *Esther, the beautiful Queen*, at Wrexham Town Hall, accompanied by members of the Royal Denbigh Militia Band.²¹²

Many local tutors had qualified through the Tonic Sol-fa Association since it was first established in 1853²¹³ and while the certificate was restricted to a proficiency in the elementary stages, it nevertheless gave the self-taught musician a tangible accreditation. It soon became apparent that a more rigorous examination was required for Tonic Sol-fa tutors and consequently, the Advanced Certificate (A.C.) was introduced in 1862²¹⁴ to distinguish those qualified to teach music through the medium of Tonic Sol-fa from students at the elementary level.²¹⁵ *The Musical Times* in March 1869 announced: 'By the calendar of the Tonic Sol-fa College which has been forwarded to us, we learn that much has been already effected towards the spread of the system by granting certificates to those who are desirous of becoming teachers'.²¹⁶ For the many that were denied by circumstance of a further education, a formal qualification was the ultimate achievement and while a certificate of competence was sufficient in the early stages, it lacked the *kudos* of a recognisable college diploma. This anomaly was resolved with the incorporation of the Tonic Sol-fa College in 1869 after which time students were able to qualify as

²⁰⁶ John Griffiths (Glöwr Tlawd), *Rhos Herald*, 28 May 1938, 8.

²⁰⁷ R. Emlyn Davies, 'Yr Wyf yn Cofio', *Seren Gomer*, Cyfrol XLVI, Rhif 3, Hydref (1954), 101.

²⁰⁸ John Griffiths (Glöwr Tlawd), op. cit., 8.

²⁰⁹ John Owen Jones, op. cit., 69.

²¹⁰ 'Penybryn Chapel', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 28 November 1868, 5. These classes were again advertised in October 1869. See 'Tonic Sol-fa Class', *ibid.*, 16 October 1869, 4.

²¹¹ 'Concert at Town Hall', *ibid.*, 3 July 1869, 5.

²¹² 'Local News', *ibid.*, 19 June 1869, 5.

²¹³ Percy A. Scholes (1947), op. cit., Vol. 1, 15.

²¹⁴ 'The Advanced Certificate', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, November (1864), 339.

²¹⁵ Percy A. Scholes (1947), op. cit., Vol. 1, 15

²¹⁶ 'Miscellaneous Intelligence', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, March (1869), 13.

A.T.S.C.(Associate),L.T.S.C. (Licentiate),G.T.S.C. (Graduate) or F.T.S.C. (Fellow of the Tonic Sol-fa College).²¹⁷ This faculty provided a musical education for generations of self-taught musicians that may never have realized their potential.²¹⁸

Around the Tonic Sol-fa pedagogy, Curwen had created an organisation that supported the Sol-fa learning process from the primary stages to college diplomas, all of which was supported by the affordable *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter and Magazine of Vocal Music for the People*.²¹⁹ Doubtless, this monthly publication was as popular in Wales as any other region of the United Kingdom, although the extent of its circulation in north-east Wales is difficult to quantify.²²⁰ Nevertheless, its success was sufficient to stir the ambition of Ieuan Gwyllt who saw the potential for a Welsh-language equivalent, and after the triumph of the Sol-fa edition of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*, and encouraged by Wrexham-based publishers, Hughes a'i Fab, Ieuan Gwyllt launched *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-Ffa* in 1869.²²¹ Publisher Charles Hughes (1823-1886), in a postscript of a letter to D.Emlyn Evans (1843-1913) in 1869, commented: 'Just now it is Tonic Solfa that seems to take the lead'.²²² The journal was intended as a Welsh-language version of the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, although Curwen had no intention of losing circulation in Liverpool or north-east Wales and any goodwill that may have existed evaporated when Gwyllt sought his permission to re-publish music from *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*.²²³

Not surprisingly, Curwen flatly refused, although the pressure to source original material created an opportunity for Welsh composers whose work would otherwise have gone unpublished. It also presented a platform for Ieuan Gwyllt to convene a *Cymanfa Ganu* that proved a useful means of increasing the circulation of the journal.²²⁴ *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa* introduced the reader to a wider repertoire of classical music and encouraged self-taught Tonic Solfaists to study the works of

²¹⁷ John Roberts, 'Dylanwadau Cerddorol yn Lloegr', *Y Cerddor Cymreig*, Cyfrol IX, Rhif 127, Medi (1871), 68.

²¹⁸ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 34.

²¹⁹ Herbert Simon, op. cit., 28.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa* (The Sol-fa Musician, 1869-1874), a monthly publication costing 1½d. a copy, promoted singing classes using the Tonic Sol-fa system. See Alan Luff, op. cit., 201.

²²² Thomas Bassett, *Braslun o Hanes Hughes a'i Fab Cyhoeddwy Wrecsam* (Croesoswallt, 1946), 23.

²²³ W.Rhidian Griffiths, 'Cyhoeddi cerddoriaeth yng Nghymru yn y cyfnod 1860-1914: Astudiaeth lyfryddol ynghyd â llyfryddiaeth o gyhoeddiadau rhai cyhoeddwy', Ph.D. thesis, Prifysgol Cymru (Aberystwyth, 1991), 72.

²²⁴ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Y Gymanfa Ganu: ei Gwreiddiau a'i Natur', *Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynuau Cymru*, 2 (1986-7), 278.

other composers, and it is hardly surprising that by the 1870s there were more Welshmen composing music than at any previous decade in history.²²⁵ North-east Wales was fertile ground for *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* and the existence of a competitive journal may have prompted its founder to pay more attention to this corner of the Principality. Furthermore, there was a lively demand for sheet music in Tonic Sol-fa that had been stimulated by the local, provincial and National *eisteddfodau*, and it was in the interest of the Curwen organisation to defend this lucrative source of revenue.

On 1 August 1870, Rev. J. Curwen was the honorary president at the Ruthin Choral Festival which gathered in the grounds of Ruthin Castle when Benjamin Williams, the printer-musician, conducted the combined choirs of the Denbigh, Flint and Merioneth Congregationalists.²²⁶ The day's proceedings began with a conference to which Tonic Sol-fa teachers and choral leaders were invited to meet John Curwen²²⁷ before a singing demonstration during which he resorted to using 'handsigns', as many of the pupils understood little English²²⁸ and Selwyn Jones maintains that this feature of Curwen's teaching method was first demonstrated in Wales.²²⁹ (See Fig. 4.7 over). Eleazar Roberts continued to press Curwen on the importance of a translation of his Standard Course for which he would require a Welsh composer,²³⁰ to which Curwen responded by engaging Benjamin Williams (1832-1903), who had type-set *Gems of Welsh Melody*.²³¹ B.M. Williams joined the London firm in 1870 and was the first Welsh composer in the printing works of John Curwen and Sons,²³² although he stayed only a year before returning to north-east Wales to edit hymn-tunes for *Caniadau y Cysegr a'r Teulu*,²³³ published by Thomas Gee at Denbigh and to conduct choirs in Ruthin and Denbigh.²³⁴

²²⁵ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 29.

²²⁶ Advertisements and Notices, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 30 July 1870, 1.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Selwyn Jones, 'Some recent developments on the Sol-fa front', *Welsh Music*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (1977-8), 68.

²²⁹ Ibid.; Bernarr Rainbow, *John Curwen – A Short Critical Biography* (Sevenoaks, Kent, 1900), 41

²³⁰ Eleazar Roberts (1883), op. cit., 359.

²³¹ John Owen (Owain Alaw), *Gems of Welsh Melody* (Ruthin, 1860); M.O. Jones (D.Emlyn Evans, gol.) *Bywgraffiaeth Cerddorion Cymreig* (Cymdeithas yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, 1890), 84. *Gems of Welsh Melody*, includes the first-ever printed copy of the Welsh National Anthem. See Huw Williams, 'Y Cyhoeddwr a anghofiwyd', *Y Casglwr*, Rhifyn 6, Nadolig (1978), 7.

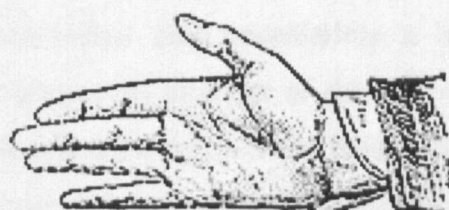
²³² D. Emlyn Evans, 'Ein Cerddorion: B.M. Williams', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXII, Awst (1903), 86

²³³ Hugh Davies, *Caniadau y Cysegr a'r Teulu* (Dinbych, 1889).

²³⁴ D.Emlyn Evans, 'Ein Cerddorion: B.M. Williams', op. cit., Awst (1903), 86.

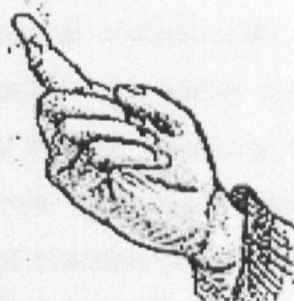
MANUAL SIGNS OF TONE IN KEY.

NOTE.—The diagrams show the hand as seen from the left of the teacher, not as seen from the front. Teachers should particularly notice this.



soh

The GRAND or *bright* tone.



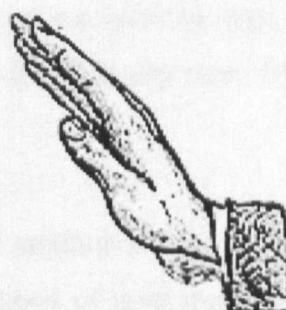
te

The PIERCING or *sensitive* tone.



me

The STEADY or *calm* tone.



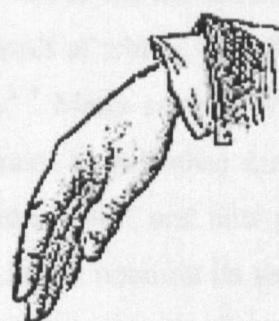
ray

The ROUSING or *hopeful* tone.



doh

The STRONG or *firm* tone.



lah

The SAD or *weeping* tone.



fah

The DESOLATE or *awe-inspiring* tone.

For *fa*, let the teacher point his first finger horizontally to the left, or *ta*, ditto to the right. To the class these positions will be reversed, and *ll* correspond with the Modulator. For *so*, let the teacher point his forefinger straight towards the class.

Tonic Sol-fa had enabled the proletariat of north-east Wales to express their nationality through the medium of music in much the same way as the Welsh language had inspired the farmer-poets of the nineteenth century, and Curwen's contribution was duly acknowledged when he was admitted to the Gorsedd of Bards at the 1873 National Eisteddfod in Mold, under the bardic title of 'Pencerdd Dyrwent'.²³⁵ Not doubting his contribution to the advancement of choral music in Wales by publishing test pieces and popular oratorios in Tonic Sol-fa, the *eisteddfod* was nevertheless a lucrative source of revenue that enhanced the commercial interests of the Curwen Press. Similarly, the widely circulated *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* (which changed its title to *The Musical Herald* in 1889) profited from the promotion of competitive events while aggressively marketing every nuance of the Curwen output, from the sale of modulators to the massed choral challenge of Nonconformist choirs at the Crystal Palace.²³⁶ Nettel takes the view: 'It would be idle to pretend that his motives were entirely altruistic: there was money to be made in the successful exploitation of the idea',²³⁷ and Curwen himself conceded: 'The Tonic Sol-fa Movement was at once a spiritual urge, a commercial adventure, and an educational triumph - had it failed in any one of these it would have failed utterly'.²³⁸

In the chapels and voluntary singing classes the notation had achieved its aims, but the long deliberations on the most suitable method of teaching music to children had hindered the advancement of Tonic Sol-fa in the schools of north-east Wales, as a result of which, says Russell, singing was largely taught by ear until the early 1880s.²³⁹ Many schools were teaching singing on a non-funded basis before an agreement to subsidise music education in the schools of north-east Wales was reached in 1883, and now purged of the Hullah débacle, the Government gave the Tonic Sol-fa notation its seal of approval. In May 1883, it was agreed that schools teaching by note would receive 1s. per pupil, while those being taught by ear were

²³⁵ Eleazar Roberts (1883), op. cit., 360.

²³⁶ A Special Reporter, 'The Nonconformist Choir Union', *Non-conformist Musical Journal*, July (1896), 103. It was at the 1872 Crystal Palace Choral Competition that the South Wales Choral Union, conducted by Griffith Jones (Caradog), won the Grand Choral Challenge. At the following year's event, Ieuan Gwyllt is listed as being among other musicians, including Henry Leslie, John Hullah, Sir John Goss and Sir Julius Benedict. See 'National Music Meetings', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 15 July 1873, 211.

²³⁷ R. Nettel, *Music in the Five Towns 1840-1914* (London, 1944), 8.

²³⁸ R. Nettel, 'The Influence of the Industrial Revolution on English Music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, No. 72, January (1945), 31.

²³⁹ Dave Russell, *Popular Music in England 1840-1914* (Manchester, 1987), 54.

awarded only 6d.²⁴⁰ This was a resounding victory for Eleazar Roberts and his compatriots who had advanced the growth of the pedagogy to widespread usage across north-east Wales and Merseyside. It is worthy of note, however, that the teaching of singing, once the prerogative of the Nonconformist chapels, was now the obligation of the State and the teaching of music and singing in schools would inevitably encroach on the territory of *Yr Ysgol Sul* and *Ysgol Gân*.

Confidence in the future of the notation was reaching its zenith when the Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Association held the first annual meeting of the Tonic Sol-fa Council,²⁴¹ in St Catharine's School, Edgehill, on the evening of May 3, 1880.²⁴² Prior to the formation of the Council, a benefit concert had taken place in the Hope Hall in aid of the building fund of the London Tonic Sol-fa College, and a sizeable chorus, conducted by Sydney Hardcastle, was accompanied by 'a band of efficient instrumentalists'.²⁴³ Three weeks after the Liverpool event, on 26 May 1880, John Curwen the founder of the movement died and was succeeded by his son, John Spencer Curwen (1847-1916).²⁴⁴ At the second annual concert of the Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Council held on 3 May 1881 in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association in Mount Pleasant, Eleazar Roberts distributed the prizes to successful Sol-faists and referred to the principles of the Tonic Sol-fa method which he had introduced into Wales, 'among whose musical people the system was now all but universal'.²⁴⁵ Sydney Hardcastle, a graduate of the Sol-fa College, reported that of the 1,040 pupils registered in various parts of the city, an aggregate of 354 pupils had passed examinations for certificates,²⁴⁶ and it was during this meeting that the prospect of a Tonic Sol-fa College for Liverpool was first aired in public.²⁴⁷

Hardcastle was the conductor of the Young Men's Christian Association Choir and the elected chairman of the Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Council,²⁴⁸ and addressing the third annual meeting, he stated that there had been 983 members in attendance at the 17 classes and proposed that: 'the council would endeavour to secure a branch

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ The Tonic Sol-fa Council differed from the Association and the College in the fact that this organisation administered the Tonic Sol-fa interests of Liverpool, independent of the headquarters at London.

²⁴² Advertisements and Notices, *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 May 1880, 1.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Herbert Simon, op. cit., 64.

²⁴⁵ 'Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Council', *Liverpool Mercury*, 4 May 1881, 6.

²⁴⁶ 'Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Council', *ibid.*, 3 May 1882, 6.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ 'Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations', *ibid.*, 3 September 1883, 6.

of the Tonic Sol-fa College in Liverpool'.²⁴⁹ This goal was achieved when the Liverpool Institute of Music opened its doors on Mount Pleasant in September 1884 and announced that it was 'in union with the Tonic Sol-fa College London'.²⁵⁰ To his credit, Hardcastle stoically maintained the original purpose of the notation and his Liverpool Christian Association (YMCA) Choir used their sight-singing skills to enhance worship by learning new hymns and anthems. In that respect, the Liverpool YMCA was fulfilling the same purpose as the *Ysgol Gân* that had once thrived in the chapels of north-east Wales. Tonic Sol-fa had undoubtedly improved congregational singing in the Welsh chapels and David Jenkins had commented in 1885: 'There was a time when ministers and deacons were apathetic about the singing, but this is no longer the case; they support it heartily everywhere'.²⁵¹ The long overdue support, such as it was, may have come too late as congregational singing was now being overshadowed by chapel choirs that would eventually succumb to the passion for competitive singing and the glory of *eisteddfod* silver.

In that same year, at the meeting of the North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Conference at Caernarfon, Eleazar Roberts expressed his concern at the progress of the Tonic Sol-fa method in Wales and hoped that the conference would be instrumental in re-kindling the zeal of former years; he also deprecated the choirs that were formed solely for the purpose of competition.²⁵² The repetitive style of competitive choral works had reduced the dependency on music literacy and E. Lloyd Jones of Wrexham expressed his regret in 1889 at the lack of enthusiasm for singing classes, particularly in north Wales.²⁵³ He felt that the interest in sight-singing could only be kept alive by the challenge of learning new pieces, while concert audiences demanded the proven favourites as did the *eisteddfodwyr*; which defeated the incentive to improve musical literacy. Caught up in the passion for competitive singing, choirs had confined their ambition to a well-practised repertoire as choral music migrated from the chapel to the *eisteddfod* field.

The extent to which Tonic Sol-fa had improved the literacy levels of competitive choirs was answered by John Graham (1860-1932), the correspondent of *The*

²⁴⁹ 'Liverpool Tonic Sol-fa Council', *ibid.*, 3 May 1882, 3.

²⁵⁰ Advertisements & Notices, *ibid.*, 29 September 1884, 3.

²⁵¹ John Graham, *A Century of Welsh Music* (London, 1923), 23.

²⁵² 'Local & District News', *North Wales Chronicle*, 21 March 1885, 5.

²⁵³ E. Lloyd Jones, 'Gohebiaethau: Dysgu Darllen Cerddoriaeth', *Y Cerddor*, Gorphenaf (1889), 74.

Musical Herald. 'It must not be supposed that everybody who bought music copies could read much, if anything more than the words',²⁵⁴ observed Graham, referring to a questionnaire issued to conductors at the 1881 National Eisteddfod of Wales in Merthyr Tydfil:

The details about the proportion of readers were instructive – in a choir which numbered 250 only 80 could read music; while very few could read difficult music. In a smaller choir of sixty members only six were musically literate... Unless sight singing conditions have improved, the Tonic Sol-fa method ought not to be praised or blamed for the manner of the music making of the Welsh.²⁵⁵

The survey claimed that there had been a vast improvement in the level of music literacy and concluded that 16 per cent of choristers were able to read music, and 'those who did read in any of these choirs were almost wholly Tonic Sol-faists'.²⁵⁶ Graham, a founder member and secretary of the Liverpool Tonic Solfa Council, was retained by the Curwen-owned *Musical Herald* as a 'Special Correspondent' at the National Eisteddfod in 1887,²⁵⁷ and therefore, his vested interest casts doubt on the validity of the survey.²⁵⁸ If the purpose of the contrived questionnaire was to silence critics of the Curwen method, it did little to persuade Joseph Parry who was of the opinion that Tonic Sol-fa should follow its first intention as an intermediary to the staff notation.²⁵⁹ Parry's view probably kindled the propagandist agenda of the Curwen organisation as they were beginning to promote Sol-fa as a viable alternative to Staff notation for instrumental music. At the Tonic Sol-fa Conference in 1885,²⁶⁰ Hugh Davies (*Pencerdd Maelor*) presented a paper on 'The Tonic Sol-fa System for Instruments' and challenged the view that Sol-fa was not suited to teaching piano and organ on the premise that solfaists could change key without the need to transpose.²⁶¹ That the debate on Sol-fa as a notation for instrumental music should have appeared on the agenda of this meeting was no coincidence as the Curwen organisation were in the process of publishing a series of song-books specifically for instrumentalists.²⁶² (See Fig. 4.8 over).

²⁵⁴ John Graham, op. cit., 39.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 39-40.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 39.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., cover page.

²⁵⁸ 'Musical Notes', *Liverpool Mercury*, 28 August 1884, 5.

²⁵⁹ Joseph Parry, 'Welsh Music and Musicians', *Western Mail*, 2 March 1893, 3. 'The old notation is the avenue through which the musician passes on to the works of the masters'.

²⁶⁰ 'Local & District News', *North Wales Chronicle*, 21 March 1885, 5.

²⁶¹ 'Cyfundrefn y Tonic Sol-ffa a'r Offerynau', *Y Genedl Gymreig*, 25 Mawrth 1885, 7.

²⁶² Advertisement, *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 July 1887, 168.

Fig 4.8:

NOTICE.
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
IN TONIC SOL-FA.

The first number of the New Series, which will contain Mendelssohn's
"Wedding March" and other popular selections will be ready on the
5th inst., price 1s.

J. CURWEN & SONS.

Printed by J. CURWEN & SONS at Plaistow, Essex, and published by them
at 8, Warwick Lane, London, E.C.—JULY 1st, 1887.

Advertisement, *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 July 1887, 168.

W.M.Roberts (1853-1923)²⁶³ viewed the adaptation of Tonic Sol-fa to instrumental music as a logical progression and presenting a paper on the subject at the 1896 Sol-fa conference at Cefn Mawr, he remarked: 'The claims of the notation in connection with singing has been acknowledged by the foremost musicians, and it was about time that this section [instrumental music] should have special attention'.²⁶⁴ Deluded by the outstanding success of Tonic Sol-fa as a vocal tablature, the Curwen organisation digressed from the original purpose of the notation and Rainbow believes that the decision to regard Sol-fa as adequate in its own right 'led many of Curwen's followers into a musical *cul-de-sac*'.²⁶⁵ Insofar as the Tonic Sol-fa College, the 'poor man's university',²⁶⁶ had raised the ambitions of self-taught musicians, it had also nourished a competitive culture that further enhanced the secular interests of the Curwen enterprise, as observed by a contributor to *The Musical Times* in June 1887:

We have, on more than one occasion, contended in opposition to views expressed elsewhere, that the attainment of a high level of executive excellence by amateurs should be regarded rather in the light of a valuable stimulus to professional talent, than in that of an unjustifiable and dangerous rivalry. Serious competition is out of the question, or, if it ever should arise, could only be due to the remissness and incompetence of professionals.²⁶⁷

²⁶³ A keen musician, Montgomeryshire-born W.M.Roberts, resided in Liverpool and Manchester for about five years and came to Wrexham in 1887 as General Secretary of the 1888 National Eisteddfod in the town and joined Hughes a'i Fab in that year. He was pivotal to the launch of *Y Cerddor* and secured the services of David Jenkins and D. Emlyn Evans as editors. W.M. Roberts was responsible for the musical content of the journal until his resignation in 1918, and during this period he composed a number of Welsh and English hymns. See L.J. Roberts, 'Ein Cerddorion: Mr. W. M. Roberts, Gwreccsam', *Y Cerddor*, Hydref (1918), 110-11.

²⁶⁴ 'North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Conference', *The Musical Herald*, 2 November 1896, 348.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 210.

²⁶⁶ P. Morgan & D. Thomas (eds.), *Wales - The Shaping of a Nation* (Newton Abbot, 1984), 198.

²⁶⁷ 'Occasional Notes', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 28, No. 532, June (1887), 339.

At a Literary Society²⁶⁸ meeting at Bala on Christmas Day 1889, Joseph Parry presided at the presentation of Elementary Tonic Sol-fa certificates and expressed his regret that similar endeavours were not being made to teach Staff Notation to young people and children.²⁶⁹ Parry claimed that Tonic Sol-fa was ‘nothing more than an introduction to the better and more perfect Old Notation; sol-faists should not profess great things until the system produced the likes of Handel, Mozart, Mendelssohn or Bach and, not until it can produce musicians of similar stature, can the best musicians acknowledge the usefulness and importance of the system’.²⁷⁰ Gareth Williams claims that Parry, ‘saw his role as that of a musical educator, with his own works as exemplars and spoke of his own compositions as if they were the work of someone else, a third person device often affected by the conceited’.²⁷¹ Parry’s use of the term ‘Old Notation’ is ironic, as it was Curwen who coined the phrase in contradistinction to the Tonic Sol-fa which he promoted as the ‘New Notation’, and it was his frequent reference to ‘Old Notation’ that brought the term into common usage.²⁷² So discouraged were the members of the Bala Literary Society at the cynical reaction of Joseph Parry that a *précis* of his speech was sent to John Curwen who responded sharply:

... the idea of sight-singing with the Old Notation had been around for over fifty years but had yet to arrive. It was tried by Dr. Hullah, Mainzer, Waite, and by Dr. Lowell Mason in America, but where are they now? The Tonic Sol-fa has maintained its ground - the survival of the fittest...great composers are not produced on the basis of which system was used ... Dr. Parry should concentrate on creating a better system, rather than humiliate and dishearten its supporters.²⁷³

Parry believed that So-fa should be a preliminary step to the understanding of the staff notation, a scheme to which Curwen had initially subscribed, but following the outstanding commercial success of the method he effectively reneged on this assurance by his failure to integrate both notations in the later textbooks.²⁷⁴ Pearsall describes Tonic Sol-fa as ‘music education on the cheap’, and maintains that choirs could cope with classical works, such as *Messiah*, as ‘the Tonic Sol-fa system was

²⁶⁸ The Literary Society was one of the many cultural developments of the chapel vestry in common with Debating Societies, Young Men’s Associations and *Seiat* (society meeting), activities that encouraged regular attendance. This became an influential weekly fellowship where Nonconformist communicants and their children met to discuss spiritual topics and share religious experiences.

²⁶⁹ Gwrtheyrn, ‘Dr. Parry a’r Tonic Sol-ffa’, *Y Tyst a’r Dydd*, 17 Ionawr 1890, 11.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ Gareth Williams, *op. cit.*, 75.

²⁷² Bernarr Rainbow with Gordon Cox (2006), *op. cit.*, 236.

²⁷³ Gwrtheyrn, *op. cit.*, 11.

²⁷⁴ Bernarr Rainbow with Gordon Cox (2006), *op. cit.*, 236.

better able to cope with the milk-and-water religious music'.²⁷⁵ The converse of this argument is that presented only with Staff notation, the interest in choral music may not have succeeded to the extent that it did in Wales,²⁷⁶ and had it not been for Tonic Sol-fa, the hymn-tunes and anthems composed by Joseph Parry may not have achieved such popularity. Sol-fa was better suited to its founding purpose which was for classroom instruction, whereas Staff notation was more appropriate for the teaching of instrumental music on a one-to-one basis. By 1891, sixty per cent of children in the elementary schools of England and Wales were singing to the required criterion to gain the full government grant,²⁷⁷ and the preference for choral music was evident by the omnipresent Curwen Modulator that hung in most Welsh Nonconformist chapels and schools in north-east Wales.

Ironically, it was the Presbyterian aversion to the use of musical instruments in chapels for the greater part of the nineteenth century that determined the preference for vocal music which inadvertently whetted the appetite for competitive singing. As chapel choirs began to put their sight-reading talent to the test at concerts and eisteddfodau, congregational singing took on a lesser significance, although David Jenkins (1848-1915), a former student of Joseph Parry, blamed precentors for being out of touch with singers and for not engaging with young people.²⁷⁸ He was a strong advocate of Tonic Sol-fa and was the first in Wales to be awarded the Advanced Certificate before graduating to Staff notation and a professional career in music,²⁷⁹ although like Parry, he was not convinced that the method was an end in itself, but rather a foundation on which to build a deeper understanding of music. Dr John Stainer (1840-1901), Professor of Music at Oxford, took a more positive view of the merits of Tonic Sol-fa when he addressed the Committee of Council on Education in July 1880 and observed: 'Those who have a talent for music soon master the Staff notation after they have learned the Tonic Sol-fa, and become in time, good musicians'.²⁸⁰

That is not to suggest that Sol-faists were not familiar with the Old Notation as examinations for the Advanced Certificate required each candidate to demonstrate

²⁷⁵ Ronald Pearsall, op. cit., 119.

²⁷⁶ Gareth H. Lewis, op. cit., 60-61.

²⁷⁷ Dave Russell, op. cit., 54.

²⁷⁸ D. Jenkins, 'Ein Cymanfaoedd Canu', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol I, Rhif 7, Gorphenaf (1889), 1.

²⁷⁹ 'Tonic Sol-fa Progress in Wales', *The Musical Herald*, February (1896), 57.

²⁸⁰ Quoted in Ronald Pearsall, op. cit., 120; 'Sir John Stainer and Tonic Sol-fa', *The Musical Herald*, May (1901), 134.

a working knowledge of both notations in order to qualify, although this condition, imposed by the Tonic Sol-fa Association, did little to stifle the debate on the merits of the respective methods. It was *Y Cerddor*, the Welsh music periodical launched in 1889 by Hughes and Son, Wrexham,²⁸¹ and jointly edited by David Jenkins and D.Emlyn Evans that resolved the issue with an enlightened editorial policy that published musical scores in Staff and Tonic Sol-fa notations. Previous attempts to publish a Welsh music periodical had failed partly for the reason that they restricted the content to one notation, but the comprehensive approach adopted by *Y Cerddor* answered the needs of staff notation readers and provided a forum for Tonic Sol-faists. By the 1890s,²⁸² north-east Wales and Liverpool had become one of the most active regions of Sol-fa activity in the United Kingdom and the success of *Y Cerddor* was a critical factor in Eleazar Roberts' campaign to persuade the Tonic Sol-fa Council to publish its handbooks and examination papers in the Welsh language.²⁸³

Untainted by denominational preference or extraneous commercial interests, *Y Cerddor* was a journal specific to the Welsh musician and was equitable in its coverage of both notations. Welsh musical activity was published unconditionally, whereas the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* refused to publish any concert or singing meeting unless everyone on the platform had taken one of the Tonic Sol-fa examinations.²⁸⁴ Initially, John Curwen envisaged the Tonic Sol-fa method as 'an indirect means of aiding worship, temperance and culture ... of reforming character, of spreading Christianity',²⁸⁵ but by the 1890s commercial interests had distorted that priority to profit from the Welsh obsession with competitive singing. Sight-singing contests and choral events proved to be the most effective way of promoting the Curwen Press, particularly as a condition of entry to the choral competitions at the Crystal Palace was that all choristers should be certificated pupils.²⁸⁶ That Dan Roberts (1871-1938), conductor of the Esclusham Choral Society, was invited to participate in the Jubilee Festival of Tonic Sol-fa at the Crystal Palace London in 1891,²⁸⁷ and again in 1893,²⁸⁸ suggests that the members

²⁸¹ W. Rhidian M. Griffiths (1991), op. cit., 76; Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 34.

²⁸² R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff, 2004), 107.

²⁸³ *Y Celt*, 20 January 1893, 7.

²⁸⁴ Eleazar Roberts (1883), op. cit., 368.

²⁸⁵ Quoted in Herbert Simon, op. cit., 15.

²⁸⁶ 'Musical Notes', *Monthly Music Record*, 1 September 1871, 123.

²⁸⁷ 'Local news: Rhostyllen', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 1 November 1890, 6.

²⁸⁸ 'Local news: Tonic Sol-fa', *ibid.*, 8 April 1893, 5.

of the combined choirs from Rhos, Bersham and Wrexham districts were all certificated pupils of the Curwen College.

At a meeting of Tonic Sol-fa tutors at Rhyl in July 1892, it was decided to re-establish a Tonic Sol-fa Association for north Wales and the inauguration of *Undeb Tonic Sol-Ffa Gogledd Cymru* [North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association] took place in Denbigh on 3 November 1892.²⁸⁹ Dominating the agenda was the directive that 'a spirited attempt is to be made to revive Tonic Sol-fa classes throughout the district',²⁹⁰ and D. Pryse Jones, secretary of the revived Association, defined its aims as being: 'to improve musical skills and to avail of lessons in the various disciplines'.²⁹¹ The state and statistics of the Tonic Sol-fa movement in north Wales were discussed and followed by a taster lesson on the higher grades by David Jenkins,²⁹² after which Rev. Cynffig Davies led a discussion on the role of Tonic Sol-fa in education²⁹³ that concluded with a resolution 'in favour of bringing out Welsh text-books for the examination of the College'.²⁹⁴ A contentious issue was aired by Hugh Davies (*Pencerdd Maelor*) who alleged that a number of candidates for the 'quarterly examinations' were successful after being examined by their tutor, 'while those tested by official examiners, but not tutored by them, were more likely to fail'.²⁹⁵ There is no evidence of the allegation having been challenged, neither is there a record of it being raised at subsequent meetings.

Clearly, little was being done to reverse the declining interest in sight-singing as this topic re-appeared on the agenda of the 1894 Association meeting when it was suggested that chapels and Sunday schools should be encouraged to establish Tonic Sol-fa classes for young people during the winter months.²⁹⁶ In his address to the Union of Ministers of Maelor, Ceiriog Valley and Llangollen, published in the Baptist journal, *Y Greal*,²⁹⁷ Rev. E. Mitchell, the minister at Ponciau, Rhos stressed the importance of singing in worship and urged ministers, deacons and officers to

²⁸⁹ 'News from all Parts', *The Musical Herald*, 1 July 1892, 206.

²⁹⁰ 'North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Conference', *ibid.*, 1 December 1892, 363.

²⁹¹ 'Undeb Tonic Sol-ffa Gogledd Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 14 Rhagfyr 1892, 5.

²⁹² 'Dinbych: Undeb y Tonic Sol-ffa yn Ngogledd Cymru', *ibid.*, 26 Hydref 1892, 4.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ 'North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Conference', *op. cit.*, 363.

²⁹⁵ 'Undeb y Tonic Sol-ffa yn Ngogledd Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 9 Tachwedd 1892, 5.

²⁹⁶ 'Undeb Sol-ffa Gogledd Cymru', *Y Cerddor*, Hydref (1894), 117.

²⁹⁷ *Y Greal* [The Grail] was a monthly literary and religious journal, published by the Welsh Baptists.

play an active role in giving music a more prominent place in the service.²⁹⁸ While Mitchell's anxiety may have pertained to the Baptist congregations in his own pastorate, that was not the case in *Capel Mawr*, Rhos, where Tonic Sol-fa classes were held from April to September in addition to the general singing classes that continued throughout the year.²⁹⁹ While it is feasible that choral societies may have adversely affected the attendance at singing classes, those that prevailed did so through the determined efforts of the *codwyr canu*, and in a series of editorials in *Y Cerddor* on the precentors of former days, David Jenkins contradicted his earlier criticisms and paid tribute to the self-taught *maestros* of the chapels.³⁰⁰ 'Welsh Notes', a regular feature in the *Liverpool Mercury*, referred to the articles in *Y Cerddor* as being 'a just tribute to the memory of men to whom Welsh Congregational singing owes its admitted excellence'.³⁰¹

Regardless of the *codwyr canu* and Tonic Sol-fa tutors who formed choirs from Sol-fa classes, Eleazar Roberts stayed true to the founding principle of the notation and stoically confined his efforts to the purpose of improving congregational worship. He refused to acknowledge that *eisteddfodau* had 'done more for the cultivation of poetry and music and general literature than anything else',³⁰² and his thoughts on competitive singing are articulated in the novel, *Owen Rees: A Story of Welsh Life and Thought*:

... I could not bear to hear you give so much credit to the *eisteddfodau* in the matter of Welsh cultivation. They have stirred up a degree of enthusiasm in favour of Welsh literature and music ... But ... we owe comparatively little of it to the *eisteddfodau* ... Wales owes nearly all that is good in it to its preaching, its religion, its Sunday schools, and the various quiet endeavours to cultivate religion and knowledge, and good morals amongst the people.³⁰³

David Jenkins concurs with Roberts' view that the Sunday Schools and Literary Meetings were the catalysts for nurturing the musical education of *y werin* and he also claimed that during the years 1870-1910, the Sol-fa method achieved more than the Eisteddfod.³⁰⁴ Eleazar Roberts had succeeded through the dedicated efforts

²⁹⁸ E. Mitchell, 'Awgrymiadau ynglyn â Chaniadaeth y Cyssegr', *Y Greal*, Awst (1893), 234.

²⁹⁹ Cofnodau Eglwysig Capel Mawr, Rhosllannerchrugog (1898-1904).

³⁰⁰ David Jenkins, 'Hen Ddechreuwyr Canu', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol IV, Rhifau 40-1, Ebrill-Mai (1892).

³⁰¹ 'Special Welsh Notes', *Liverpool Mercury*, 9 July 1896, 5.

³⁰² Eleazar Roberts, *Owen Rees: A Story of Welsh Life and Thought* (London & Liverpool, 1893), 295.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 295-6.

³⁰⁴ D. Jenkins, 'Gwir Safle yr Eisteddfod', *Y Cerddor*, Mawrth (1911), 23.

of volunteers such as Joseph Owen, who transformed cultural attitudes in the industrial villages around Wrexham,³⁰⁵ and John Owen Jones (L.T.C.L.), the precentor at Salem Penycae whose only reward was the honour of achievement.³⁰⁶ There were also those ministers who defied the views of Gwyllt who had so publicly criticised the chapel ministry and officials for their lack of commitment to congregational singing. One such exception was Rev. Gethin Davies (1846-1896), the principal of Llangollen Baptist College, who insisted that no student should leave the college without the ability to sing a hymn-tune at sight. He claimed that since adopting the Tonic Sol-fa method, he had not had a single failure in sight-singing tests,³⁰⁷ which perhaps explains why the chapels in the Baptist strongholds of Cefn Mawr and Penycae placed such importance on the standards of congregational music.

Rev. Gethin Davies did not restrict his proficiency to his own denomination, but tutored many local musicians such as W. Pencerdd Williams (*Pencerdd Berwyn*, 1856-1924), the *arweinydd y gân* at Rehoboth MC Chapel, Llangollen.³⁰⁸ Another of his former pupils was Thomas Davies of Glyndyfrdwy³⁰⁹ who taught Tonic Sol-fa every week night evening and Saturday afternoons in Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog and other villages for which he received payment as a full-time tutor.³¹⁰ It was this level of commitment that prompted John Curwen to remark in a speech at the Exeter Hall, London, in 1874.³¹¹ 'No country was so forward in tonic sol-fa work as Wales was'.³¹² Twenty years later, Rev J.C. Rees (L.T.C.L.), the minister of Tabernacle Baptist Chapel Coedpoeth, and secretary of the Wrexham and District Board of the Tonic Sol-fa College, 'succeeded in making the local committee of the Tonic Solfa Society the largest of its kind in north Wales', having personally supervised the examinations for 128 certificates from advanced level to graduation.³¹³

³⁰⁵ 'Testimonial to Mr. Joseph Owen', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 16 January 1869, 6.

³⁰⁶ John Owen Jones, op. cit., 69.

³⁰⁷ 'The Swansea Conference', *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, 1 November 1882, 252.

³⁰⁸ 'Ein Cerddorion: Wm. Pencerdd Williams', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XVIII, Rhif 214, Hydref (1906), 111. Pencerdd Williams composed the hymn-tune 'Rehoboth' to the words of Williams Pantycelyn, 'Fy enaid, at dy Dduw'. He was the father of W.S. Gwynn Williams.

³⁰⁹ Delyth Morgans, *Cydymaith Caneuon Ffydd* (Aberystwyth, 2006), 721.

³¹⁰ Eleazar Roberts, 'Gohebiaeth', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*, Cyfrol III (1871), 25.

³¹¹ Percy A. Scholes, op. cit., Vol. I, 205.

³¹² 'Choral Singing in Wales', *Liverpool Mercury*, 1 August 1895, 5.

³¹³ 'Local News: Coedpoeth and Minera', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 3 June 1893, 8.

Joseph Parry, once considered to be the greatest opponent of Curwen's method, eventually conceded in a series of articles on 'Welsh music and Musicians' in the *Western Mail*: 'It is now generally admitted that Tonic Sol-fa is more widely practised in Wales than in any other country'.³¹⁴ The *Wrexham Advertiser* went further and claimed: 'The Wrexham and District Board is one of the strongest Tonic Sol-fa societies in the kingdom',³¹⁵ which explains why Denbighshire was so well represented on the council of the north Wales Tonic Sol-fa Union. John Owen Jones of Penycyae became an examiner for the Tonic Sol-fa College, chairman of the local examination board, and vice-president of the North Wales Sol-fa Union in 1897,³¹⁶ and G.W.Hughes L.T.C.L. (1861-1941) of Cefn Mawr,³¹⁷ a former pupil of Owen Jones and Edward Hughes of Cefn Mawr,³¹⁸ was elected to represent North Wales on the Tonic Sol-fa College Council in 1900.³¹⁹

Such was the confidence of the north Wales advocates that a number of radical proposals were presented at the third annual meeting of the Tonic Sol-fa Union of North Wales in Ffestiniog during August 1895, one of which was to exert pressure on the local authority for a fair share of the Government's education grant.³²⁰ Secretary of the Association D. Pryse Jones reported that he had written to County Councils throughout the region requesting a proportion of the technical rate to finance the teaching of Tonic Sol-fa in every village - a motion that was passed unanimously.³²¹ This, however, was not the only point of contention to be raised, as a lengthy discussion ensued during which a number of members took issue with the Curwen organisation on the subject of text books being available only in the English language and the chairman, Rev E. Cynffig Davies, proposed:

that complete arrangements should be made for the preparation of text-books in Welsh to cover all the ground up to the graduate certificate; that Welsh examinations should be held for all who desire them, to be held on the same footing as the English examinations, and the college to appoint Welsh examiners; and that, in the event of the London College refusing these modest requests, measures to be taken to establish a tonic sol-fa college for Wales.³²²

³¹⁴ Joseph Parry, 'Welsh Music and Musicians', *Western Mail*, 2 March 1893, 3.

³¹⁵ 'Tonic Sol-fa College', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 18 March 1893, 8.

³¹⁶ John Owen Jones, op. cit., 69.

³¹⁷ Delyth Morgans, op. cit., 552. G.W.Hughes composed the iconic hymn-tune, 'Buddugoliaeth', to the words of the Pantycelyn hymn, 'Yn Eden, cofiaf hynny byth'.

³¹⁸ 'G.W Hughes, G & L.T.S.C', *Rhos Herald*, 25 November 1899, 5.

³¹⁹ D. Jenkins, 'Ein Cerddorion: Mr. G.W. Hughes', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XIV, Tachwedd (1902), 124; 'Etholiadau Aelodau ar Gyngor Coleg Sol-ffa', *ibid.*, Cyfrol IX, Rhif 167, Mai (1897), 54.

³²⁰ 'North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association', *North Wales Chronicle*, 7 September 1895, 7.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² *Ibid.*

This matter was settled when the Tonic Sol-fa College (London) approved Rev. Cynffig Davies' proposal that text-books and all other matters pertaining to the examinations of the college would be translated into Welsh,³²³ although Davies had already published *Y Wyddor Cerddorol*,³²⁴ a translation of John Curwen's *Musical Theory*.³²⁵ This text-book was prepared for use by Welsh candidates for the Elementary Theory Certificate of the Tonic Sol-fa College and at the time of the meeting the second part was in print, as were other translations by Cynffig Davies, such as *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol*³²⁶ and *Gwers-Lyfr*,³²⁷ a study on how to analyse harmony.³²⁸ Inasmuch as Cynffig Davies' concerted effort to persuade the Curwen organisation to print examination papers in the Welsh language was unanimously supported by the Tonic Sol-fa Union of North Wales, his self-interest in this aspect of Tonic Sol-fa cannot be dismissed. Had the Curwen organisation rejected the proposal there would have been little demand for Davies' text books, and for candidates studying theory through the medium of Welsh, *Y Wyddor Cerddorol* was essential reading.

By the time that the Association convened at Cefn Mawr in 1896, the finer points relating to the issue of Welsh language provision for examination candidates had been resolved and the meeting duly recorded its appreciation to the Tonic Sol-fa College authorities 'for allowing Welshmen to take their certificates in the Welsh language and to Messrs. Curwen and Son for publishing texts in Welsh'.³²⁹ This resolution was timely as Welshmen had gained a higher proportion of Advanced Certificates than any other region in the United Kingdom, an achievement which reflected their dedication to theoretical study.³³⁰ Between 1868 and 1892, there were 258 Higher Certificates issued in Wales which accounted for 54 per cent of the total awarded by the College during that period, and this trend continued as the Principality provided 83% of the candidates for Higher Certificates in the Tonic Sol-fa College between 1892 and 1896, and 80% between 1901 and 1906.³³¹

³²³ 'North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association', *North Wales Chronicle*, 7 September 1895, 7.

³²⁴ E. Cynffig Davies (trans.), *Y Wyddor Cerddorol (Musical Theory by John Curwen) ad-drefnwyd a Chymreigiwyd, gan E. Cynffig Davies* (Llundain, 1895).

³²⁵ John Curwen, *Musical Theory* (Plaistow, 1879).

³²⁶ Rev. E. Cynffig Davies (trans.), *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol*, I, II & III (London, 1893-97).

³²⁷ Rev. E. Cynffig Davies (trans.), *Gwers-Lyfr* (London, 1895).

³²⁸ 'Welsh Tonic Sol-fa Publications', *The Musical Herald*, 1 September 1895, 40.

³²⁹ 'North Wales Tonic Solfa Association', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 10 October 1896, 7.

³³⁰ John Graham, op. cit., 40.

³³¹ M.O. Jones, 'Meithriniaid cerddoriaeth ymhlith Gwerin Cymru', yn T. Stephens (gol.), *Cymru Heddyw ac Yforu* (Cardiff, 1908), 339.

However, in the light of Hugh Davies' unanswered question regarding the inconsistency of examiners that was raised at the 1892 Association meeting and the absence of an independent examination board, it was necessary to instil confidence in the validity of the Sol-fa qualifications.³³² As if to endorse the educational merits of the Tonic Sol-fa method L. J. Roberts, H.M. Inspector of Schools, was invited to present a paper on 'The Educational Value of the Tonic Sol-fa System' to the conference at Bangor in October 1897,³³³ and he asserted that the 'supremacy of the tonic sol-fa method in these schools was unquestioned and overwhelming'.³³⁴

In the chapels of the Nonconformist denominations Tonic Sol-fa had become the accepted notation of the *codwyr canu* and when the chapels reviewed their hymnals in the late 1890s, Tonic Sol-fa editions of the Methodist, Congregationalist and Baptists hymnals outsold the staff notation versions by a multiple of five to one. The Methodist hymnal sold 50,000 Sol-fa copies compared to 11,000 in staff notation, the Congregational *Caniedydd Cynulleidfaol* achieved sales of 58,000 Sol-fa copies and 12,700 old notation, while the Baptist hymnal, *Llawlyfr Moliant*, printed a total of 40,000 copies of which 36,000 were in Tonic Sol-fa notation.³³⁵ As a vocal tablature, the Curwen method had defeated all rival systems, although there is little evidence of it finding favour with orchestral musicians, as Tonic Sol-fa was anathema to professional instrumentalists who felt that the vocal tablature had encouraged the competitive aspects of choral and congregational singing to the detriment of instrumental music.

Frederic Griffith (1867-1917), a solo flautist at the Royal Opera House and professor of flute at the Royal Academy of Music, voiced his despondency at the lack of support for instrumental music and enquired: 'Are we to remain for ever a nation of singers and singers only, as we are justly termed? If we are not, we must give due encouragement to instrumentalists wherever they are to be found'.³³⁶ His was not the only hostile reaction as in similar despair, John Thomas (*Pencerdd Gwalia*, 1826-1913) had abandoned his campaign to promote instrumental teaching in Wales and was of the opinion that the Welsh had limited themselves to

³³² 'Undeb y Tonic Sol-ffa yn Ngogledd Cymru', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 9 Tachwedd 1892, 5.

³³³ 'Special Welsh Notes', *Liverpool Mercury*, 9 January 1897, 5.

³³⁴ 'The North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association', *North Wales Chronicle*, 23 October 1897, 5.

³³⁵ Thomas Thomas, 'Canu Cynulleidfaol y Ganrif', in J.M.Jones (ed.), *Trem ar y Ganrif* (Dolgellau, 1902), 298.

³³⁶ F. Griffith, *Notable Welsh Musicians of Today* (London, 1896), xiii.

Tonic Sol-fa and thus frustrated any musical advancement.³³⁷ John Spencer Curwen, who had succeeded his father John Curwen, stoically defended the status quo when he commented: 'I know it is the correct thing to scold the Welsh for not cultivating orchestral music ... every adjudicator does it'.³³⁸ David Jenkins was more circumspect and although he conceded that the Solfa system had done more than the Eisteddfod to nurture an interest in music among the populace,³³⁹ he was disappointed that too few scholars were able to play musical instruments.³⁴⁰ Essentially the focus of this debate centred on orchestral music which lacked the competitive appeal of choral contests and the mighty brass band challenges that so enthralled the working classes. The campaigners for orchestral music could have championed their cause by appealing to the army of supporters that followed the fortunes of the brass bands in Wales, although 'the working man's orchestra'³⁴¹ and its popular appeal was probably considered a lesser form of the art.

Joseph Parry continued to emphasise the advantages of staff notation while John Spencer Curwen stoically guarded the merits of Tonic Sol-fa, and the public exchanges between the two continued throughout 1893.³⁴² David Jenkins, who had long connections with both factions, still believed that Tonic Sol-fa was the best method of teaching vocal music, although he felt that the notation had yet to achieve the position it deserved in Wales.³⁴³ This long-running debate may have engaged the readers of the Welsh press, but it failed to attract the attention of the wider musical community in England where Tonic Sol-fa had already won the approval of eminent musicians. *The Musical Times and Singing Circular* (May 1896), reported that: 'Sir Arthur Sullivan has provided funds for a Scholarship for the Holiday Course for Choirmasters at the Tonic Sol-fa College'.³⁴⁴

A further expression of support for the Tonic Sol-fa method came during a meeting of the [Royal] Musical Association in 1899, when W.G.McNaught (1849-1918) lectured on 'The Psychology of Sight-singing' and concluded: 'The syllables used

³³⁷ D. Emlyn Evans, 'Y Tonic Sol-ffa a Datblygiad Cerddoriaeth yn Nghymru', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol X, Rhif 113, Mai (1898), 47.

³³⁸ 'English Notes and Notions', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol V, Rhif 53, Mai (1893), 56.

³³⁹ D. Jenkins, 'Gwir Safle yr Eisteddfod', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 267, Mawrth (1911), 23.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Ebrill (1911), 34.

³⁴¹ D. Russell, *op. cit.*, 239.

³⁴² J. Spencer Curwen, *Western Mail*, 4 April 1893, 6.

³⁴³ D. Jenkins, 'Gwir Safle yr Eisteddfod', *op. cit.*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 268, Ebrill (1911), 34

³⁴⁴ 'Miscellaneous Concerts, Intelligence, etc.', *The Musical Times & Singing Circular*, Vol. 37, No. 639, May (1896), 337.

as scale degree mnemonics, with all their faulty results, are apparently still on the whole the only possible method for the great majority'.³⁴⁵ Charles Villiers Stanford, Professor of Music at Cambridge University and conductor of the Bach Choir, also spoke with enthusiasm of the value of Tonic Sol-fa:

The systems of note-teaching are many, but the rivalry between them is not so serious a matter for consideration, no one is more convinced than I am of the great value of and the great services rendered by the Tonic Sol-fa notation. It has without doubt simplified vocal music in a most marked way, and has cultivated to an extraordinary extent the power of singing intervals at sight accurately and in tune. For school purposes and for vocal music it is simply invaluable.³⁴⁶

John Graham claims that Tonic Sol-fa had undoubtedly set Wales on its feet chorally and contributed to a musical revival which had several parallels in religious revivals,³⁴⁷ though David Jenkins, whilst acknowledging the usefulness of Tonic Sol-fa, emphasised the limitations of the notation and published a brief textbook in 1898 entitled, *How to Teach Old Notation using Sol-fa*.³⁴⁸ Arguably, this work had more relevance to the amateur composer, but Jenkins was dismissive of their efforts: 'Too many used their knowledge of sol-fa to try their hand at composing'.³⁴⁹ He chose not to mention those exceptions such as Griffith William Hughes who enriched the hymnody of north-east Wales and Liverpool with the hymn-tune 'Buddugoliaeth', or indeed W.Pencerdd Williams, of Llangollen, the composer of the majestic hymn-tune 'Rehoboth'. Hymnody is a spiritual rather than an artistic expression which is why so many self-taught chapel musicians were inspired by the Great Revival of 1859 to write some of the finest and most uplifting Welsh hymn-tunes.

Jenkins was equally critical of the Sol-faists who had gained high grade certificates for self-glory and condemned the vanity of those who preferred to possess certificates rather than use their knowledge to help others by forming a choir.³⁵⁰ There is little evidence to support Jenkins' sweeping comment and his caustic remarks militated against the founding principles of a method that was devised to

³⁴⁵ Bernarr Rainbow (1991), op. cit., 237.

³⁴⁶ John E. Borland, 'Musical Training through Tonic Sol-Fa', *The Musical Times & Singing Circular* Vol. 73, No.1068, February (1932), 137.

³⁴⁷ John Graham, op. cit., 28.

³⁴⁸ David Jenkins, *Sut i Ddysgu Hen Nodiant drwy y Sol-ffa* [How to Teach Old Notation using Sol-fa] (Wrexham, 1898).

³⁴⁹ D. Jenkins, 'Nodiant y Solffa', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXIV, Rhif 277, Ionawr (1912), 2.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

improve the standard of musical literacy by empowering self-taught musicians, so aptly described by Eleazar Roberts as 'lay musicians'.³⁵¹ In this category were the graduates of Tonic Sol-fa such as G.W.Hughes, conductor of Cefn Mawr Choral Society, the Cefn Male Voice Choir, and precentor at Capel Mawr (C.M.), Rhosllannerchrugog, before his appointment in 1911 as stipendiary precentor at Princes Road Welsh C.M. Chapel, Liverpool.³⁵² Another notable lay musician was Hugh Davies, a former pupil of Joseph Owen and a graduate of the Tonic Sol-fa College who tutored at music classes in north-east Wales before succeeding Ieuan Gwyllt as editor of *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*.³⁵³

Had it not been for the diligence of amateur musicians who prepared the ground for the rising generation of musicians, many young professionals would have faced the prospect of a career beyond Wales, instead of which they entered a busy musical environment. As adjudicators, composers and teachers, the new class of formally trained musicians undoubtedly raised the standards of Welsh music, but as critics they were often harsh and disparaging towards the self-taught. As if to widen the gulf between the amateur and professional musician, Professor David Evans (1874-1948),³⁵⁴ suggested: 'If the Welsh *peasantry* are to develop a higher appreciation of the art ... classes should be formed to read music and cultivate the higher forms of vocal and instrumental art'.³⁵⁵ In a later article he commended the introduction of Tonic Sol-fa as '...a system which has taught the Welsh *democracy* to sing, and has been a means of enlarging the musical knowledge of thousands who without it, would have depended entirely upon their memory of tune'.³⁵⁶

If there was self-doubt among Welsh musicians and choristers by the early part of the twentieth century, it was amplified by criticism that came from within the Principality as a number of professional musicians in Wales were too eager to blame the Tonic Sol-fa method for the lack of consideration of any cultural form beyond choral music. D. Vaughan Thomas (1873-1934), a former pupil of Joseph Parry, compared sol-fa to '*blanc-mange* or jelly – it is very palatable, but very unsatisfying, it pleases at first taste, but we very soon become aware of an aching

³⁵¹ 'The North Wales Tonic Sol-fa Association', *North Wales Chronicle*, 23 October 1897, 5.

³⁵² *Adroddiad Blynyddol Eglwys y Trefnyddion Calfinaidd Princes Road, Liverpool am y Flwyddyn 1911* (Lerpwl), 4.

³⁵³ 'Parch. Hugh Davies (*Pencerdd Maelor*)', *Y Cerddor*, Rhagfyr (1907), 136.

³⁵⁴ Professor David Evans [1874 -1948] succeeded Dr. Joseph Parry in 1908.

³⁵⁵ John Graham, op. cit., 54.

³⁵⁶ David Evans quoted in 'Correspondence: Music in Wales', *The Musical Times*, Vol. 59, No. 904, June (1918), 260.

void ... It has been injurious in the long run to the cause of music in Wales'.³⁵⁷ This acerbic analogy dismisses the vast contribution that Solfaists made to Welsh congregational and choral music and W.S.Pratt in *The History of Music* observed:

It is extraordinary with what bitterness almost every one of these efforts to popularize music was opposed by musicians. Teaching by classes doubtless involved difficulties, and each particular movement used novel methods that were somewhat debatable; but these facts do not excuse the hostility often displayed'.³⁵⁸

Writing in *Y Geninen* in 1907, Eleazar Roberts recalled the opposition to his involvement with the Tonic Sol-fa movement from 'self-doubting, uninformed people', who regarded his obsession with singing, and in particular with sol-fa, as evidence of weakness of mind and extreme zeal.³⁵⁹ In July 1910, almost fifty years after he began his campaign to establish the Tonic Sol-fa notation in Liverpool and north Wales, Roberts expressed his regret that despite the improvement in the adoption of the method, it was still far from reaching its original objective,³⁶⁰ a view shared by David Jenkins who conceded that the Tonic Sol-fa of the 1910s failed to equal that which had been achieved in the past.³⁶¹ Eleazar Roberts complained that the zeal of the Tonic Sol-fa movement had waned by the end of the 19th century³⁶² and he suggested 'less demonstration and more downright hard work and thorough good teaching, too many Welsh folk do nothing musically, except compete, and too many sing by ear'.³⁶³

By 1911, musical literacy showed little signs of improvement in the Principality,³⁶⁴ and Eleazar Roberts called for renewed energy in promoting the system not least because Curwen had suggested that Wales should hold its own Tonic Sol-fa Jubilee celebrations in that year.³⁶⁵ Lamentably, Sol-fa had now become an instrument of competitive singing and when it lost its spiritual primacy, the singing classes that were once the prerogative of the Nonconformist chapels became an obligation of the State schools and the *Ysgolion Gân* slowly disappeared. At one time, observed

³⁵⁷ Quoted in D.W. Lewis, 'Gohebiaethau', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 268, Ebrill (1911), 42.

³⁵⁸ Waldo Selden Pratt, *The History of Music* (New York, revised edition 1930), 622.

³⁵⁹ J. J. Roberts, *Cofiant y Parchedig Owen Thomas, D.D. Liverpool* (Caernarfon, 1912), 197.

³⁶⁰ Eleazar Roberts, 'Tonic Solffa', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXII, Rhif 261, Medi (1910), 101.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

³⁶² Eleazar Roberts, 'Cyfundrefn y Tonic Solffa', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XVIII, Rhif 205, Ionawr (1906), 7.

³⁶³ Eleazar Roberts, 'Tonic Sol-fa in Wales', *The Musical Herald*, October (1911), 307.

³⁶⁴ 'Hyn a'r Llall', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol XXIII, Rhif 266, Chwefror (1911), 19.

³⁶⁵ Eleazar Roberts, 'Gohebiaethau: Jiwbili y Sol-ffa yn Nghymru', *Y Cerddor*, Cyfrol IV, Rhif 39, Mawrth (1892), 36.

R.Tudur Jones, 'almost very single Welsh chapel held a sol-fa class while mastering this system became as much a part of a child's education as reciting a Bible verse in chapel'.³⁶⁶ The German musicologist, Friedrich Blume, described the Tonic Sol-fa method as 'an educational outgrowth of Nonconformity',³⁶⁷ a view shared by Gareth Williams: 'The sol-fa system taught Wales to read religious music and it is arguable that through its tendency to make the singer think in terms of chords rather than phrases it led to the emergence of a recognizably Welsh style of singing'.³⁶⁸

Rhidian Griffiths maintains that the influence of Tonic Sol-fa on the Welsh choral tradition lasted longer than elsewhere in Britain,³⁶⁹ while Barbara Saunders Davies acknowledges the critical importance of the vocal tablature that transformed congregational singing in north-east Wales, when she says '... without this simple system, Wales would be a musically illiterate nation'.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and Crisis of a Nation : Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff 2004), 107.

³⁶⁷ Friedrich Blume, *Protestant Church Music, A History* (New York, 1974), 728.

³⁶⁸ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 29.

³⁶⁹ Rhidian Griffiths (1987-87), op. cit., 277.

³⁷⁰ Barbara Saunders Davies, 'Music and the Community', in Peter Crossley-Holland (ed.), *Music in Wales* (London, 1948), 65.

Chapter Five

Moody and Sankey - Holding the Fort

“Singing the Gospel” is certainly new to the undemonstrative churches of Great Britain, or at least was so till the American revivalists first visited this country about nine years ago’.

(Liverpool Mercury)

The character and spiritual direction of Welsh Dissent changed when its priorities moved from the field preaching in the early nineteenth century to the building of cathedral-like chapels that became the outward expression of denominational status. Wesley himself had said: 'I do not find any great increase in the work of God without field preaching. If ever this is laid aside I expect the whole work will gradually die away'.¹ Aside from the established denominations, the 'camp meetings'² of the Primitive Methodists were the only remnant of Wesley's field preaching, and J. Llewellyn Davies observes that Methodism became 'altogether more respectable, too respectable, it proved, for the humbler tastes. A new society arose, of which we might say that, as the Church of England is to Wesleyan Methodism, so is Wesleyan to Primitive Methodism'.³ While the grand buildings signified the materialistic triumph of Welsh Nonconformity, they also suggest that the chapels of the four main denominations were now a settled conformity that no longer felt the need to evangelise beyond their own flock.

Along with the Calvinistic Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists, the Wesleyans had abandoned the notion of outdoor preaching before the mid-nineteenth century, so that by the 1870s the character of Welsh Nonconformity changed as sanctity became confused with respectability. For example, there was little room for the evangelistic efforts of William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, whose interest in open-air preaching in 1850 brought about his suspension from Wesleyan chapels, on the grounds that he was a reformer.⁴ Evangelising to the spiritually neglected outside of the religious institutions was no longer a priority for the respectable classes that typified the membership of the Welsh Nonconformist denominations, most of whom were unprepared for revival. Preaching the message of Salvation on the streets militated against the dignity of Welsh Nonconformists

¹ Quoted in J. Llewellyn Davies, 'Wesleyan Methodism, in Wesley's Time and After', *Contemporary Review*, December (1875), 177.

² Camp meetings were open-air events which became a regular feature of Primitive Methodism, when people travelled to a specific area to pray and listen to preachings, the first of which was held at Mow Cop in Staffordshire in May 1807. A short history of the Methodist Church in Northop Hall describes the Camp Meeting as '... one of the great events of the year, and as many as five preachers took part, an old farm wagon was used for a pulpit, and these meetings were usually held at four crosses and all the roads would be thronged with people'. See Flintshire Record Office, N/31/12, 'The Methodist Church, Northop Hall: The Story of One Hundred Years of Methodism 1837-1937', 4.

³ J. Llewellyn Davies, *op. cit.*, 190.

⁴ Glen Horridge, 'The Salvation Army in Wales, 1878-1900', *The Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 6 (1989), 52.

who were content to leave such activity to the town and city Missions and the evangelical Methodist Free Church, in much the same manner that they delegated the duty of social reform to the Temperance Movement.

John Hughes Morris describes the period between 1850 and 1870 as an unproductive period for Temperance in Liverpool and in Wales generally,⁵ although newspaper reports show a high level of Temperance activity, particularly when the Band of Hope amalgamated with the Christian Alliance Society in 1858.⁶ It was through its association with the English language churches that the Temperance Movement thrived, as did the Good Templars, another reforming initiative that landed on these shores from America.⁷ The Great Band of Hope Demonstration of 1871 had attracted 3,000 people to the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall,⁸ and when the Welsh Good Templars of Fitzclare Street, Cranmer Street, Pall Mall and Chatham Street Chapels convened the four-day Temperance Festival in March 1873, it proved to be the most successful on record.⁹ That the Liverpool Methodist Association contributed a mere £5 19s.2d to the Temperance Society in 1872¹⁰ suggests that the chapels were under financial constraint as the debts accrued by over-ambitious building programmes¹¹ were absorbing 30 percent of the public and church collections.¹²

Elaborate chapel architecture exuded pomp and middle-class respectability rather than the Gospel-focussed mission of the founding Dissenters, and at a conference of Welsh and English Congregationalist at Chester, the chairman, Mr. W. Crosfield J.P., commented that: 'his experience of Welshmen was that they were a little too apt to build chapels without counting the cost, and then came to Englishmen to help them out of their difficulties'.¹³ A prime example of the cathedral-like edifices that dominated the sky line of Liverpool to demonstrate the affluence of Welsh

⁵ John Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol II (Liverpool, 1932), 405.

⁶ 'The Band of Hope and Christian Alliance Society', *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 December 1858, 6.

⁷ John Hughes Morris, *op. cit.*, 406.

⁸ 'Great Band of Hope Demonstration', *Liverpool Mercury*, 20 January 1871, 6.

⁹ 'Gwyl Ddirwestol Liverpool', *Y Drysorfa*, Awst (1873), 314.

¹⁰ 'Cymdeithasfa Flynyddol Liverpool', *ibid.*, Gorphenaf (1873), 267.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² 'Welsh Calvinistic Methodists', *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 May 1864, 6.

¹³ 'English Congregationalism in North Wales', *Cheshire Observer*, 21 October 1876, 7.

Nonconformity¹⁴ was the Princes Road Chapel in Toxteth, designed by Liverpool architects W & G Audsley, and built in 1865 at a cost of £19,633.¹⁵ The chapel was financed by Welsh businessmen, with the exception of a £200 donation from Earl Sefton,¹⁶ and K.T.Hoppen claims: 'some chapels, were little more than extensions of local factory hierarchies; ...almost every denomination attracted wealthy businessmen. Yet the precise relationship between religion and entrepreneurial impulses is difficult to pin down'.¹⁷

Laudably, many Liverpool Welsh businessmen were generous to their respective denominations and Dolgellau-born Eliezer Pugh (1814-1903), a successful cotton merchant not only financed the building of the impressive Chatham Street Welsh Calvinistic Chapel,¹⁸ but regularly welcomed the visiting preachers from Wales to his home.¹⁹ A number of Welshmen became prominent in the Liverpool business community, particularly in the building industry,²⁰ and Gareth Miles claims that the Liverpool-Welsh were 'the only strong, self-conscious *bourgeoisie* which the Welsh had ever had'.²¹ This point is echoed by Merfyn Jones: 'If this group of urban, prosperous and confident Welsh people had come into existence within the borders of Wales, the history of the nation would have been very different'.²² Of the aspirational Liverpool Welsh, Ieuan Gwynedd Jones says: 'When a reform movement began in earnest in the mid-1850s it was launched in Liverpool by the Liverpool Welsh',²³ while Gwyn A. Williams maintains: 'Around an often near-monoglot Welsh core an expatriate *bourgeoisie* and working population began to form in Liverpool which in effect took over regionally the old role of the London-Welsh'.²⁴ As the formal structure of Nonconformity and dogma of denominational policy took precedence over the need to evangelize, the distinction between church and chapel narrowed as both lapsed into spiritual complacency.

¹⁴ R. Merfyn Jones and D. Ben Rees (ed.), *The Liverpool Welsh and their Religion* (Liverpool, 1984), 26. They describe Princes Road Chapel as 'the single largest congregation in the Calvinistic denomination, considered throughout Wales to be the Cathedral of Welsh Nonconformity'.

¹⁵ John Hughes Morris, *Hanes Methodistiaeth Liverpool*, Cyfrol I (Liverpool, 1929), 241.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ K.T. Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998), 450.

¹⁸ J. Hughes Morris (1932), *op. cit.*, 66.

¹⁹ John Williams, *Hynt Gwerinwr* (Liverpool, 1943), 22.

²⁰ J.R. Jones, *The Welsh Builder on Merseyside* (Liverpool, 1946), 6-8.

²¹ Quoted in R. Merfyn Jones and D. Ben Rees (ed.), *op. cit.*, 23-4.

²² Quoted in John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994), 443.

²³ I.G. Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed* (Cardiff, 1992), 161.

²⁴ Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh* (London, 1985), 201.

While the impressive chapel buildings of Welsh Nonconformity created an aura of well-being, the outward grandeur had the obverse effect in that it exposed the divide between the aspiring middle classes and the proletariat, particularly as the lower-paid were unable to afford the pew rents, and unwilling to suffer the indignity of the poor seats. In 1870, the Calvinistic Methodists established a 'Welsh Town Mission' to cater for the poorer Welsh families in the dockland and Toxteth areas of Liverpool,²⁵ although many found refuge in the classless, but spiritually vibrant 'camp meetings' of the Liverpool Primitive Methodists²⁶ and the Town Mission that preached the Gospel in public halls and theatres.²⁷ Inspired by the sermons of Lorenzo Dow, the American revivalist who visited Burslem, Staffordshire in 1807,²⁸ the Primitive Methodists took the Gospel to the streets and open spaces, and in the face of persecution built a strong following in Merseyside, Chester and Flintshire. There was no hint of vanity or pomp in the evangelical fellowships that brought the working classes to Grace, but compassion for the spiritually neglected and at a camp meeting at Prescot, Liverpool, in 1840, the circuit minister, Mr. Lane referred to the expansion of the movement and the success of its Sabbath schools.²⁹

Members of the Liverpool Sunday School Union were introduced to the music of American revivalism during an evening of sacred song when the evangelist Philip Phillips (1834-1895),³⁰ 'The Singing Pilgrim', addressed the fellowship at Hope Hall in November 1868.³¹ Phillips was an influential figure in the propagation of

²⁵ 'Cenhadaeth Drefol Gymreig Liverpool', *Y Goleuad*, 8 Hydref 1870, 7; John Hughes Morris (1932), op. cit., 409. It was estimated that 1,200 Welsh people were living in the docklands at that time. Support for this cause waned after the departure of the leader, John Owen, who left in 1877 for a ministry in Wigan.

²⁶ 'Primitive Methodist Camp Meeting', *Liverpool Mercury*, 28 August 1840, 2.

²⁷ 'Chester City Missions', *Cheshire Observer*, 21 November 1874, 6. The Liverpool Town Mission was formed in 1829 and one of its most noted advocates was Dr. Thomas Raffles (1788-1863), who worked tirelessly to evangelize the town. See *Liverpool Mercury*, 29 August 1863, 7.

²⁸ 'The Origin of the Primitive Methodist Connexion', *London Quarterly Review*, 1 October 1886, 18. Rev. J. C. Fowler refers to Lorenzo Dow in *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, May (1885), 340.

²⁹ 'Primitive Methodist Camp Meeting', op. cit., 2.

³⁰ Philip Phillips began his musical career as a nineteen-year old singing teacher, and in 1860, entered into a successful business partnership selling pianos and organs and publishing Sunday school singing books. See J.H. Hall, *Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers*, reprinted from 1924 edition (New York, 1971), 119.

³¹ 'Liverpool Sunday School Union', *Liverpool Mercury*, 6 November 1868, 3. In 1868, Phillips was invited by the London Sunday School Association 'to give one hundred evenings of sacred song' in London and the UK, for which he was given 'a liberal compensation'. See J.H. Hall, op. cit., 121.

gospel songs, and according to David Music and P.A. Richardson, he ‘travelled the United States and other countries giving “services of song”’,³² although it is Philip P. Bliss, author of *Gospel Songs* (1874)³³, who is credited as being the author of the descriptor ‘gospel songs’.³⁴ Phillips accompanied himself on a harmonium and in August 1872, when he sang to a large gathering at the Chester Sunday School Union in Queen Street Congregational Chapel, Chester; the programme clearly stated: ‘This hour is dedicated to the service of Christian song, not for amusement, or display in the department of classical music, but rather to cheer pilgrims on their way to the Celestial City’.³⁵ His tour of the northern regions continued, and in October 1872 he visited the Christian communities of Newcastle-upon-Tyne before returning to Chester in January 1873 where he addressed the Sunday School Union at the Methodist New Connexion Chapel³⁶ and promised an evening of sacred song to the Pepper Street chapel of the Primitive Methodists.³⁷

Phillips left a deep impression on the poorest children of the Liverpool Ragged Schools who sang the revival hymns of the ‘Singing Pilgrim’ at the ‘Children’s Church’ services, and it was said that, ‘many outsiders have been attracted who otherwise would probably never have heard that Christ yearns to save them’.³⁸ Perhaps more than any other, it was Philip Phillips who prepared the ground for the evangelical crusade of Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) and Ira D. Sankey (1840-1908) that had left a deep impression on the people of Scotland and was destined to awaken the latent spirituality of Liverpool and north-east Wales. The demand for Phillips’ hymnal, *Hallowed Songs*,³⁹ attracted the attention of the London publishers, S.W. Partridge & Co who advertised the compilation of hymns ‘as sung at Messrs Moody and Sankey meetings’, prior to their arrival at Glasgow.⁴⁰ (See Fig.5.1.over).

³² David W. Music and Paul A. Richardson, *‘I Will Sing the Wondrous Story’: A History of Baptist Hymnody in North America* (Georgia USA, 2008), 334.

³³ Philip P. Bliss, *Gospel Songs* (Cincinnati, Ohio, 1874).

³⁴ David W. Music and Paul A. Richardson, op. cit., 334.

³⁵ ‘The Chester Sunday School Union’, *Cheshire Observer*, 31 August 1872, 6.

³⁶ ‘Chester Sunday School Union’, *ibid.*, 18 January 1873, 5.

³⁷ ‘Local Intelligence’, *ibid.*, 1 February 1873, 5.

³⁸ ‘Liverpool, Ragged Schools’, *Ragged School Union Magazine*, October (1874), 223.

³⁹ Philip Phillips, *Hallowed Songs (with Melody and Words) for Religious Gatherings; containing Hymns from all Sources* (New York, 1870).

⁴⁰ Advertisements & Notices, *Glasgow Herald*, 12 January 1874, 7.

Hallowed Songs provided the musical text for Moody and Sankey's services, to which Sankey added a number of his own hymns in what would be published as Sankey's *Songs and Solos*,⁴¹ although it was Phillips who first introduced gospel music to the multitudes who attended the Liverpool evangelical convention of Moody and Sankey.

Fig. 5.1

PHILIP PHILLIPS'S HYMNS, as Sung at
Messrs MOODY and SANKEY'S MEETINGS.
HALLOWED SONGS (with Melody and Words) for Religious
Gatherings; containing Hymns from all Sources. By
PHILIP PHILLIPS. Demy 16mo. Cloth, 1s 6d.
 _____ with WORDS ONLY, 1s.
 _____ HARMONISED EDITION, 3s.
 London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 9 Paternoster Row; and
 sold at the Meetings as above.

Advertisements & Notices, *Glasgow Herald*, 12 January 1874, 7.

A number of American evangelical hymns had also appeared in Welsh Sunday school publications, such as *Y Winllan* (The Vineyard, Wesleyan, 1848-1965)⁴² and *Trysorfa y Plant* [Children's Treasury, Calvinistic Methodist] published in 1862 which was the first, and ultimately the most successful Welsh religious magazine for children.⁴³ It was in *Trysorfa y Plant* that the hymn 'Nearer my God to Thee', written by Sarah Fuller Adams (1805-1848) and sung to the tune 'Bethany' by Dr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872), found its way to the hearts of Welsh congregations as 'Yn Nes, Fy Nuw i Ti'.⁴⁴ Also included in this publication was the tune, 'Sweet Rest in Heaven', by the American composer, W.B. Bradbury (1816-1868),⁴⁵ which was taken from his *New Collection of Tunes for the Sabbath School*⁴⁶ and sung to

⁴¹ Theron Brown & Hezekiah Butterworth, *The Story of the Hymns and Tunes* (New York 1906), 421; Ira D. Sankey, *Sacred Songs and Solos sung by Mr. Sankey at Gospel Meetings conducted by D.L. Moody* (London, 1873).

⁴² For example, 'Mae Nghartref yn Hardd' was aligned to the tune, 'American Songster', and 'American' accompanied the words (*O Gristion, Bydd Ddewr*) by J. Clarke of Llangollen in *Y Winllan* (1871), 18, 138, 218.

⁴³ D. Ben Rees, 'Rhyfeddod yr Ysgol Sul Gymraeg' *Y Traethodydd*, Cyfrol CXL, 597 (1985), 209

⁴⁴ Dr. L. Mason, 'Yn Nes, Fy Nuw i Ti', *Trysorfa y Plant* (Treffynnon, 1873), 18-19; Bradbury, 'Y Baradwys sydd Fry', *ibid.*, 82-3; P. Phillips, 'Yn Galw mae'r Iesu i'r Winllan', *ibid.*, 96-7; 'Dewch i Seion' (Americanaidd), *ibid.*, 138-139.

⁴⁵ William B. Bradbury is perhaps best known for the children's hymn 'Jesus Loves Me'. See Ira D. Sankey, *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymns and of Sacred Songs and Solos* (New York, 1906), reprinted by BiblioBazaar (Charleston, SC, 2009), 201. His singing classes and annual 'Juvenile Music Festivals' in New York were renowned. See J.H. Hall, *op. cit.*, 25.

⁴⁶ *Bradbury's Golden Shower of S. S. Melodies: A New Collection of Hymns and Tunes for the Sabbath School* (New York, 1862), 103.

the words, 'O na bawn yn fwy tebyg' by Eleazar Roberts from which time the tune was known as 'Eleazar'.⁴⁷ There are numerous other examples, such as, 'Mae Nghartref yn Hardd', to the tune, 'American Songster', and the hymn 'O Gristion, Bydd Ddewr' by J. Clarke of Llangollen that appeared in *Y Winllan* (1871), and sung to a tune known only as 'American'.⁴⁸ Many such hymn-tunes were rehearsed by the young people of the Liverpool Welsh Sunday School Union,⁴⁹ who took part in the 'Great Demonstration' at the Philharmonic Hall on the evening of 14 May 1873, when the choir of a thousand children, conducted by William Parry of Birkenhead, performed before 'an immense audience, both of English and Welsh'.⁵⁰

The Moody and Sankey crusade began at York in July 1873 to a quiet reception, and Mr. Moody would later comment that both he and Sankey 'did not know a soul in the place'.⁵¹ From York, they journeyed to Newcastle-upon-Tyne and attracted great crowds in all of the towns on Tyneside.⁵² By mid-November of that year, the revivalists had reached Edinburgh,⁵³ prior to which they had requested every minister to arrange prayer meetings during the first week of January 1874 to bring about a visitation of the Holy Spirit on the whole of Scotland.⁵⁴ Welsh prayer meetings were also convened in Edinburgh in March 'to pray for a visitation of the Holy Spirit on Wales', and while only fifteen were present at the first gathering, they continued to be held every Friday evening in addition to the three Welsh language Sunday services.⁵⁵ The people of Edinburgh were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the spiritual outpouring, and as the news spread throughout Scotland a meeting was convened in the Religious Institution Rooms in Glasgow in preparation for a visit to the city.⁵⁶

⁴⁷ Delyth G. Morgans, *Cydymaith Caneuon Ffydd* (Aberystwyth, 2006), 335.

⁴⁸ 'Peroriaeth', *Y Winllan* (1871), 18, 138.

⁴⁹ 'Advertisements and Notices', *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 May 1873, 1.

⁵⁰ 'Local News', *ibid.*, 15 May 1873, 6.

⁵¹ 'The American Revivalists, Messrs, Moody & Sankey', *ibid.*, 2 February 1875, 6.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Rufus W. Clark, *The Work of God in Great Britain under Messrs. Moody and Sankey, 1873-1875: with Biographical Sketches (1875)* (London, 1875, reproduced by Kessinger Publishing Legacy Reprints: USA, 2010), 48.

⁵⁴ 'Golwg ar Grefydd yn Gyffredinol – Yr Adfywiad Crefyddol yn Scotland a Lloegr', *Y Drysorfa*, Chwefror (1874), 71.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Mai (1874), 187.

⁵⁶ 'News', *Glasgow Herald*, 24 December 1873, 4.

So great was spiritual impact of Moody and Sankey that the demand for Bibles increased to the extent that 'the orders received from the north since January last will, when completed, give a copy of the Scriptures to one in every five of the population of Scotland'.⁵⁷ Moody preached and Sankey reiterated the Gospel message with simple, unfettered melodies from *Hallowed Songs*, and when *Sacred Songs and Solos sung by Mr. Sankey at Gospel Meetings conducted by D.L.Moody*⁵⁸ was published in 1873, the orders for the hymnal corresponded with the sudden rise in demand for Bibles.⁵⁹

Prior to their success in Scotland, Moody and Sankey had accepted an invitation from the Christian community in Liverpool to host 'special mission services',⁶⁰ and a committee was formed to make the necessary arrangements with clergymen and Nonconformist ministers working together in Christian unity.⁶¹ Mindful of the thousands of people who had attended the mission services in Scotland and Newcastle, the Liverpool committee decided to erect a temporary building to accommodate up to 8,000 people, which became known as Victoria Hall.⁶² The apprehension of the English Presbyterians of Liverpool to the forthcoming visit of Moody and Sankey was expressed by Rev. A. Black of Princes Road, who presented a paper on the subject of 'Home Evangelisation', for the purpose of enabling the ministry to carry out evangelistic work among the masses.⁶³ Rev. Black assured the meeting that the Presbyterians would 'not stand aloof from any movement, as there might be elements in it with which they did not sympathise', while Rev.A.Scott-Matheson of Bootle referring to the success of Moody and Sankey suggested that ministers 'should endeavour to carry out the work in their own ministrations'.⁶⁴ After a series of lengthy debates, the English Presbyterians failed to find an answer to the Moody and Sankey crusade as there was little enthusiasm for taking the Gospel from the security of the chapel to the streets,

⁵⁷ 'Multum in Parvo', *Liverpool Mercury*, 30 April 1874, 7.

⁵⁸ Ira D. Sankey, *Sacred Songs and Solos sung by Mr. Sankey at Gospel Meetings conducted by D.L.Moody* (London, 1873).

⁵⁹ Rufus W. Clark, op. cit., 38. The initial version of *Sacred Songs and Solos* was a 16-page pamphlet containing only 23 hymns from Sankey's scrap-book. See Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), op. cit., 54.

⁶⁰ 'Golwg ar Grefydd yn Gyffredinol', *Y Drysorfa*, Ionawr (1874), 26.

⁶¹ 'Local News', *Liverpool Mercury*, 11 November 1874, 6.

⁶² 'Messrs. Moody & Sankey's Visit: Preparation Day', *ibid.*, 6 February 1875, 8.

⁶³ 'Lancashire Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church', *ibid.*, 15 December 1874, 6.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

which left them with no alternative plan of action. The eventual outcome was the decision to forward the minutes of the various meetings to a committee for ratification before printing - a procedure which conformed to the rules of the Presbyterian structure,⁶⁵ and clearly illustrates how matters denominational were taken precedence over spiritual purpose.

Similarly disposed, the Liverpool Welsh Sunday School Union met in October 1874 at the Netherfield Road Congregational Chapel with the intention of devising a method of ensuring better attendances.⁶⁶ They agreed to organise house-to-house visitations, a method favoured by the American evangelists, but after a further meeting in Princes Road Presbyterian Chapel it was decided to conduct a census of the Welsh population on Merseyside and 1,000 canvassers were recruited to assess the potential for increasing Sunday school attendance.⁶⁷ This variation was not as effective as the Moody and Sankey campaigns in Scotland that succeeded through a team of helpers who made house-to-house visitations 'for the purpose of distributing Gospel appeals' and their intention was to repeat the procedure in Liverpool.⁶⁸ When Mr. Forbes of the Wrexham Town Mission, addressed a meeting at the Wrexham Savings Bank, he referred to the success of the Moody and Sankey Revival in Glasgow,⁶⁹ and at the Chester City Mission, Thomas Fairclough of Liverpool praised the resolve of the American evangelists that if people were absent from the churches then the churches must go to the people.⁷⁰

The census organised by the Liverpool Welsh Sunday School Union revealed that 'out of a total Welsh population of 26,840, no fewer than 23,318 attended places of worship of which 16,775 attend Welsh services and 6,543 went to English churches or chapels'.⁷¹ Although the Sunday School Union had identified 2,085 people of no spiritual abode,⁷² there is no evidence of a positive response to this statistic, unlike the pro-active approach of the Moody and Sankey campaigns that took the Gospel

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ 'Lancashire Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church', op. cit., 15 December 1874, 6.

⁶⁷ 'Local News', op. cit., 7 October 1874, 6.

⁶⁸ 'District News', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 23 January 1875, 5.

⁶⁹ Advertisements and Notices, *ibid.*, 25 July 1874, 1.

⁷⁰ 'Chester City Missions', *Cheshire Observer*, 21 November 1874, 6.

⁷¹ 'The Welsh Population of Liverpool', *ibid.*, 17 December 1874, 6.

⁷² Ibid.

to the people. The crusades in Scotland and Manchester had drawn such multitudes so as to exceed the capacity of the traditional places of worship, hence the Gospel was preached in public halls and theatres which avoided denominational jealousies, although Dwight Moody, had made clear his objective to 'break up formalism and show the necessity and power of spirituality'.⁷³ When Rev.T. Rees addressed the Congregational Union at Holywell, he preached against the unwelcome influences that counteracted the spiritual power: 'The influence of the church did not depend upon the number of its adherents, nor its wealth, not the learning of its ministers, and grandeur of its temples and ritual; One element of power in the church was love towards Christ and God in Christ'.⁷⁴

As the religious community of Liverpool prepared for the spiritual outreach, Ieuan Gwyllt was making the journey to Edinburgh in 1874 to witness the public reaction to Moody and Sankey.⁷⁵ Gwyllt had resigned as editor of *Y Cerddor Cymreig*⁷⁶ in 1873, and during the following year *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*⁷⁷ ceased publication and, relieved of these commitments, his attention turned to meeting the American evangelists.⁷⁸ It was the Great Revival of 1859 that had sealed the triumph of *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol*⁷⁹, which owed as much to Gwyllt's nous in recognizing a publishing opportunity as it did to his musical ability. He was already familiar with American hymnody, as he had included the hymn-tune, 'Missionary' in *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (1859) which was sung to the words, 'O! Arglwydd Dduw Rhagluniaeth, ac iachawdwriaeth dyn'.⁸⁰ This was the first published hymn-tune of the American evangelist, Lowell Mason, 'father of American choir singing',⁸¹ composed in 1823 to the words 'From Greenland's Icy Mountains',⁸² that was written in 1819 by Reginald Heber (1783-1826), Dean of Hodnet, in the study of

⁷³ Rufus W. Clark, op. cit., 272.

⁷⁴ 'Multiple News Items', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 7 August 1875, 8.

⁷⁵ Parch. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Sŵn y Juwbili: neu Ganiadau y Diwygiad* (Wrexham, 1874), Nodiad.

⁷⁶ J. Roberts (gol.), *Y Cerddor Cymreig* (Wrexham, 1873).

⁷⁷ J. Roberts (gol.), *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa* (Wrexham, 1869-1873).

⁷⁸ Parch. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) (1874), op. cit., Nodiad.

⁷⁹ John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* (Aberdare, 1859).

⁸⁰ *Llyfr Hymnau a Thonau y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd ynghyd â Salm-donau ac Anthemau* (Caernarfon, 1897), 143.

⁸¹ Theron Brown & Hezekiah Butterworth, op. cit., 36.

⁸² Ieuan Gwyllt included his Welsh translation of this hymn in *Blodau Cerdd*. See T.J. Davies, *Ieuan Gwyllt (Y Parchedig John Roberts) 1822-1877* (Llandysul, 1977), 52.

his father-in-law, the Vicar of Wrexham.⁸³ Furthermore, Gwyllt had published a number of Gospel songs in *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-Ffa* which he translated into the Welsh language, among which were those of Philip Phillips and some of unknown origin that were merely described as 'Americanaidd'.⁸⁴

The simple ecstatic songs of American revivalism contrasted with the dignified tunes of Welsh hymnody that placed greater emphasis on harmonic construct than the easily-learned melodies of Philip Phillips which had awakened congregations to the power of singing the Gospel. With the combined effect of the *Ysgol Gân* and the Tonic Sol-fa notation, Welsh hymn-singing had advanced beyond the monodic psalmody of the early Methodists as self-taught musicians began to adopt the elaborate style of the majestic German chorales that had so inspired Ieuan Gwyllt. The composition of a hymn-tune became a regular feature at *eisteddfodau* and complex harmony would have taken precedence over the monodic gospel songs that appealed to congregations but displeased adjudicators, some of whom were critical of the simple, easily learned hymn-tunes composed by J.D.Jones of Ruthin and John Thomas, Llanwrtyd (1839-1921).⁸⁵ More likely to succeed in eisteddfod competitions were the ornate compositions of organists and professional musicians that were probably better suited to trained choirs as they had the tendency to confound congregations,⁸⁶ whereas the songs of the Moody and Sankey awakening had been written purely as carriers of the Gospel message.

Rudimentary psalmody was no longer in vogue, and poignant tunes such as 'Capel-y-Ddôl', composed by J.D.Jones of Ruthin in 1846, became extremely popular on account of the fact that it suited the musical scope of the congregation, although Emlyn Evans would later describe the hymn-tune as 'respectable ... correct and easy to sing, but often monotonous'.⁸⁷ Alan Luff observes: 'It is of course true beyond Wales that few wholly successful hymn-tunes have been composed by

⁸³ Theron Brown & Hezekiah Butterworth, op. cit., 178-179; Haddon J. Cuthbert, 'Passing Notes', *Musical Journal*, November (1910), 224. See Arthur Francis Jones, 'Some Popular Hymns and How They Were Written', *Strand Magazine*, January (1895), 581.

⁸⁴ For example, 'Dowch ato Ef', *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-Ffa*, Cyfrol I (1869), 89; 'Y Sabbath', *ibid.*, Cyfrol II (1870), 88; 'Dydd y Jiwibili', *Cyfrol III* (1871), 77.

⁸⁵ Alan Luff, *Welsh Hymns and their Tunes* (London, 1990), 206.

⁸⁶ Edward F. Rimbault, 'A few words on the music of Messrs Moody and Sankey's meetings', *Leisure Hour*, 24 July 1875, 475.

⁸⁷ D.Emlyn Evans, *Y Cerddor*, 1 Mawrth 1893, 26.

professional composers' and J.D.Jones, a self-taught amateur had devoted his efforts to composing hymn-tunes and carols and publishing hymnals⁸⁸ that fulfilled the need for simple tunes that the whole congregation could sing,⁸⁹ and his hymn-tune, 'Gwalchmai' is described by Luff as 'one of the finest of the Welsh tunes'.⁹⁰ In common with the musical activity in north-east Wales, many of the American Gospel hymns or 'songs' as they were referred to by the evangelists, were composed by amateur musicians who were inspired by the power of the words.⁹¹ Ira D. Sankey was a self-taught musician, and prior to boarding the train from Glasgow to Edinburgh, he bought a newspaper and recalls: 'My eyes fell upon a little piece of poetry in a corner of the paper. I carefully read it over and at once made up my mind that this would make a great hymn for evangelical work – if it had a tune'. The hymn was written by Elizabeth Clephane (1830-1869) of Melrose, Scotland, known locally as 'The Sunbeam' for her charitable work, and so inspired Sankey that he composed the hymn-tune, 'The Ninety and Nine', at the organ during the noon day service at the Free Assembly Hall in Edinburgh.⁹²

The regional and national press gave full coverage to the impending visit of the American evangelists and there were many among the English denominations who were singing the Sankey hymns some time before the duo arrived at Liverpool.⁹³ Speaking at the English Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in 1874, Rev. Dr. Cairns made special reference to the Sankey hymn-book, stating that even at Land's End he had found a copy of the collection,⁹⁴ and at the annual meeting of the English Calvinistic Methodists at Buckley in June 1874, the Tonic Sol-fa choir, led by Richard Roberts, were already singing from Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos*.⁹⁵ While the Sankey hymnal was popular with the English chapels it was less so in the Welsh Nonconformist fellowships as an attempt to translate the simple poetry to the Welsh language had yet to be made, apart from the hymns which

⁸⁸ J.D. Jones, *Y Cerub, yn cynwys Tonau, Anthemau, a Darnau Gosodedig, cymhwys i'w harferyd yn y gwasanaeth dwyfol* (Llanidloes, 1855), *Cydymaith y Cerddor* (Llanidloes, 1857), *Caniadau Bethlehem* (1857), *Y Delyn Gymreig* (Rhuthyn, 1859), *Alawon y Bryniau* (Wrexham, 1866), *Carolau Nadolig gyda chymdeithranau* (Wrexham, 1867).

⁸⁹ J. D. Jones, *Y Cerub* (Llanidloes, 1855), Rhagdraith.

⁹⁰ Alan Luff, op. cit., 191.

⁹¹ Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), op. cit., 305.

⁹² Ibid., 306.

⁹³ 'Buckley', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 20 June 1874, 6.

⁹⁴ 'English Synod of the United Presbyterian Church', *Liverpool Mercury*, 14 October 1874, 3

⁹⁵ 'Buckley', op. cit., 20 June 1874, 6.

Gwyllt had published in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* and *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa* in his endeavor to introduce Welsh congregations to different styles of hymn-singing. His reasons for advocating a form of hymnody that militated against the reforms he had introduced during the 1860s have long been subject to conjecture. Predisposed as he was to the German chorale-style,⁹⁶ there were few styles as diametrically opposed as the solemn dignity of Gwyllt's hymn-tune, 'Moab', and the lighter, rhythmic joy of 'Daliwch Afael' (Hold the Fort) from Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos*,⁹⁷ although Rhidian Griffiths maintains that by the 1870s, Gwyllt's 'reform programme was losing its impetus'.⁹⁸ Gareth Williams in *Valleys of Song* says that the Sankey hymnal, first published in 1873, signalled a new musical expression that favoured 'rudimentary melodies and choruses that were thought to represent precisely the meretricious elements that Ieuan Gwyllt so disliked'.⁹⁹

There can be no doubt that Gwyllt was aware of the impact of American hymnody long before the arrival of Moody and Sankey, and in 1869, he had arranged to spend six months in America and booked his passage from Liverpool, but he was taken ill with pleurisy on the night before his departure and the trip was cancelled.¹⁰⁰ Gwyllt could have compiled a volume of American Gospel songs from those that had appeared in *Y Cerddor Cymreig* and *Cerddor Y Tonic Sol-Ffa*, many of which were written by Philip Phillips¹⁰¹ had the 'Singing Pilgrim' not approved a Welsh translation of his Gospel songs, *Y Caniedydd Americanaidd* [The American Songster], compiled by an inhabitant of Merthyr, identified only as 'M.S'.¹⁰² Hughes and Son were advertising a Welsh language version of Phillips' *The American Sacred Songster*¹⁰³ for use in Sunday schools and the Band of

⁹⁶ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Welsh Society 1840-1914* (Cardiff, 2003), 31.

⁹⁷ Rufus W. Clark, op. cit., 38. Clark mentions the special friendship between Moody and Morgan Scott, the London publishers who had issued the first edition of *Songs and Solos* in 1873.

⁹⁸ Rhidian Griffiths, 'Welsh Chapel Music: The Making of a Tradition', *The Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 6 (1989), 41.

⁹⁹ Gareth Williams, op. cit., 31.

¹⁰⁰ J.Eiddon Jones, *Ieuan Gwyllt: ei Fywyd, ei Lafur, ei Athrylith, ei Nodweddion, a'i Ddylanwad ar Gymru* (Treffynnon, 1881), 67.

¹⁰¹ Phillips' tunes included in *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*, 'I will sing for Jesus' (Canu i'r Iesu), *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-Ffa*, Cyfrol II (1870), 67; 'Lord Will Provide' (Fe Ddarpar yr Iôr), *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-Ffa*, Cyfrol III (1871), 79.

¹⁰² Philip Phillips, Gan M.S., Merthyr, *Y Caniedydd Americanaidd, yn y Tonic Sol-fa* (Wrexham, 1874).

¹⁰³ Philip Phillips, *The American Sacred Songster. A Selection of Music from the Best American composers, Designed for Sunday School and Home Use* (London, 1868).

Hope¹⁰⁴ as Gwyllt made the journey to Edinburgh to witness the effect of the evangelists on the multitudes, although he was also keen to gain their permission to publish a Welsh adaptation of *Sankey's Songs and Solos*. Doubtless, he would have stressed the need to provide the Welsh-speaking Christians in Liverpool and north Wales with a text of the Gospel songs, a number of which he had included in *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol* and *Cerddor y Tonic Sol-ffa*. Gwyllt realised the potential of this publishing opportunity and Hughes and Son were equally convinced that the demand for a compact Welsh-language version of Sankey's *Songs and Solos* would follow the Liverpool crusade.

While Phillips was probably one of the first evangelists to introduce American Gospel songs to Liverpool and north-east Wales, his ministry was confined to the chapels associated with the Sunday School Union, unlike Moody and Sankey who preached and sang to the multitudes. Their prime objective was to reach the vast population that existed outside of the churches, and while the singing of Gospel songs attracted many to the meetings, it was the plain-speaking sermons of Moody that filled the columns of the local press. The spiritual awakening was redolent of the 1859 Revival that inspired Gwyllt's greatest achievement, and the purpose of meeting Moody and Sankey in Edinburgh was not merely to seek their permission, but rather their endorsement.

Dear Brother Roberts,

I have so many asking permission to publish my Hymns, &c, that I hardly know what I should do. I have as yet given no permission. But seeing that my wife is the daughter of a Welshman, who lived at Swansea many years ago, I cannot refuse you permission to translate into the Welsh language any of my Hymns which you may desire.....please send me a copy of your Book when out.....May God bless the singing of his Truth by the sweet singers of Wales.

Yours in the best of bonds,

Ira D. Sankey

Gwyllt realised that the approval of Sankey was an assurance of success, and his written blessing in a letter, dated 9 October 1874, forms the preface of *Sŵn y Juwbili*, a 32-page collection of sixteen Gospel hymns published in two parts by

¹⁰⁴ Advertisements & Notices, *Y Goleuad*, 21 Mawrth 1874, 16.

Hughes and Son (Wrexham) in 1874.¹⁰⁵ The initial print run of *Sŵn y Juwbili* was 15,000 (part one) and 10,000 (part 2),¹⁰⁶ and although the earlier publication bore the hallmarks of a hurried work with uneven adaptation of words to music,¹⁰⁷ by the time Gwyllt met Moody and Sankey at the Liverpool crusade in 1875, Hughes and Son were already preparing the first of several reprints of the hymnal. Rhidian Griffiths is of the view that Gwyllt realised other means of appealing to the popular element,¹⁰⁸ and despite the bemusement of his critics and against his own musical judgement, he brought a new energy to congregational singing and judged the mood of the Welsh people to near perfection. In the preface to *Sŵn y Juwbili* (1876), Ieuan Gwyllt criticised the fascination for learning new tunes with little heed of the meaning and stressed his resolve to improve congregational singing.¹⁰⁹

So popular were the Sankey song sheets that illicit copies were touted on the streets of Liverpool, much to the exasperation of Morgan and Scott, the London publisher, who had gained the rights to publish the authorized version of Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos* in 1873.¹¹⁰ Their reaction was hardly surprising as a letter to the editor of the *Liverpool Mercury* indicated that Morgan Scott were making a profit of £18 per thousand copies, '50,000 were sold in Birmingham alone, so that the London publishers must be reaping a golden harvest', while Moody and Sankey had abandoned all claims to profit and requested that £100 on every million copies be given to a charitable organisation.¹¹¹ *Sŵn y Juwbili*, in relation to its market size, would have been a profitable title for the publishers, Hughes and Son, and Bassett claims that 100,000 copies of Part 1 and 2 had been printed by 1877, in addition to the 30,000 copies of Part 3 and a further 6,500 of parts 4 and 5.¹¹² Gwyllt was not driven by pecuniary gain, but rather by a lifelong commitment to improve Welsh

¹⁰⁵ Parch. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) (1874), op. cit., Nodiad.

¹⁰⁶ T. Bassett, *Braslun o Hanes Hughes a'i Fab Cyhoeddwyrr Wrecsam* (Croesoswallt, 1946), 25.

¹⁰⁷ J.Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 106.

¹⁰⁸ Rhidian Griffiths interviewed re 150th anniversary of Ieuan Gwyllt's *Llyfr Tonau Cynulleidfaol, Rhaglen Dei Tomos*, broadcast on BBC Radio Cymru, 24 May 2009.

¹⁰⁹ Parch. John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt), op. cit., Nodiad.

¹¹⁰ Letters to the Editor, *Liverpool Mercury*, 15 February 1875, 3.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Thomas Bassett, op. cit., 25, 29. T.J.Davies quotes from a Hughes & Son Accounts Book that 5,000 copies of the first edition of *Sŵn y Juwbili* were printed in April 1874, and 10,000 of Part 2 in October that year. The third part appeared a year later and parts 4 (2,000 copies) and 5 (2,500) were published in September 1877 in the year of Gwyllt's death. Part 6, of which 3,000 copies were printed, was published in April 1878. See T.J.Davies, op. cit., 91-2. J. Eiddon Jones states that Ieuan Gwyllt had already prepared the six parts for publishing into one hymnal by mid-December 1876. See J. Eiddon Jones, op. cit., 106.

congregational singing – he was an innovator, and in deference to his critics, he did not lack the courage to question his own entrenched views of religious music. T.J.Davies, author of a biography on Ieuan Gwyllt, describes the complex personality of the minister who was both a musician and a businessman who recognised an opportunity, a combination that became one in Ieuan Gwyllt.¹¹³

In the week before the arrival of the two American evangelists, the *Liverpool Mercury* had commented: ‘Although this town has never been remarkable for its religious fervour, we would bespeak for these distinguished strangers the same patient and respectful hearing which has been accorded to them in all other parts of the kingdom’.¹¹⁴ The Bible-centred chapels that had laboured to bring Salvation to the people of Liverpool, had been at the forefront of the campaign to invite Moody and Sankey to their midst, although their joy was not shared by all. A letter from the Liverpool correspondent of the magazine, *Sunday at Home*, observed:

For twenty years I have been more or less mixed up with the evangelistic work of the town, but never have I met with more opposition and scorn to any movement than the present. The erection of the vast hall to hold ten thousand persons was looked on as monstrous folly. As it was being built, the talk was, to what purpose is this waste? But now, what was called Moody’s folly, is seen to be God’s wisdom. Men who wrote, spoke against, and laughed at it, now speak with bated breath, come and hear, and go with changed thoughts.¹¹⁵

Moody and Sankey had become a popular topic of discussion, and the *Liverpool Mercury* gave such generous coverage to the impending visit that the *Cheshire Observer* commented: ‘The *Liverpool Mercury* is of the opinion that Liverpool will be a gainer by the revival movement of Messrs Moody and Sankey’.¹¹⁶ During the week leading up to the crusade a press correspondent enquired: ‘The question is everywhere being asked - wherein lies the power of these men to influence vast audiences as they do’? When asked at the Manchester Free Trade Hall meeting what he had come to see, an elderly gentleman replied, ‘Simplicity and the Power of God’, while others were drawn to salvation by the inspiration of Moody’s own simple faith that was preached without need of rant and cant.¹¹⁷ He preached the

¹¹³ T.J. Davies, op. cit., 94.

¹¹⁴ ‘Messrs. Moody and Sankey’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 February 1875, 6.

¹¹⁵ ‘Monthly Religious Record’, *Sunday at Home*, 24 April 1875, 271.

¹¹⁶ ‘Notes of the Week’, *Cheshire Observer*, 20 February 1875, 5.

¹¹⁷ ‘Messrs. Moody and Sankey’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 February 1875, 6.

Gospel message to the hearts of people without resorting to theatrical display or raising 'hwyl', a style of preaching that had found popularity in nineteenth century Welsh pulpits.¹¹⁸ Thomas Fairclough summed up the God-given gift of Moody, when he said: 'There were greater preachers than Messrs. Moody and Sankey, but these gentlemen carried on a great spiritual work because they were filled with spiritual power'.¹¹⁹

In contrast to the cathedral-like edifices of the Anglican Church and the majestic tabernacles of the Welsh denominations, the auditorium for the Moody and Sankey mission was a utilitarian structure, hurriedly built to accommodate up to 8,000 people and on February 5, 1875, a 'preparation day' for 'Christian Workers' took place in the purpose-built Victoria Hall.¹²⁰ Moody and Sankey had outlined their proposals for the services some time before their arrival and were not present as they were bidding farewell to a congregation of 15,000 in the Bingley Hall, Birmingham.¹²¹ They were yet to make a spiritual impression on the people of Liverpool and the disappointing attendance at the preparatory meeting in the Victoria Hall prompted a contributor to the *Liverpool Mercury*, identified only as 'A Methodist', to comment:

There would be about 500 persons present, but the platform afforded many suggestions for reflection and humiliation, and would warrant the conclusion that the people are more earnest than their leaders. Out of all the ministers we have in this town, only five were present, and three of these belonged to the Church of England. Strange to say, there was not one Methodist minister amongst them – neither Wesleyan, Primitive, New Connexion, nor Free Church. Their denomination was formed in a revival ... after the service this morning I heard several Methodists deploring the absence of their ministers.¹²²

By the evening service it was reported that there were a considerable number of working men and women present, although it was noticeable that the majority of those in attendance were, 'as was to be expected, composed wholly of respectably-dressed, well-to-do people' and it was estimated that upwards of 2,000 people were

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ 'Chester City Missions', *Cheshire Observer*, 21 November 1874, 6.

¹²⁰ 'Messrs. Moody & Sankey's Visit: Preparation Day', *Liverpool Mercury*, 6 February 1875, 8.

¹²¹ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Farewell to Birmingham', *ibid.*, 7.

¹²² 'Messrs. Moody & Sankey's Visit: Preparation Day', *ibid.*, 8.

at the preparatory meeting.¹²³ Moody and Sankey arrived in Liverpool on Saturday 6 February, and it was their intention to hold a revivalist service every night during the month of February, with extra services on Sunday – both morning and evening – at such hours that would not interfere with the services at other places of worship in the town.¹²⁴ The meetings were extensively advertised: ‘Admission free - without tickets’, and a large contingent from Wales was expected,¹²⁵ to augment the Welsh population of Merseyside which, according to a survey conducted by the Welsh Presbyterians in 1874, prior to the arrival of Moody and Sankey, was 26,840.¹²⁶

The crusade began with a service for Christian workers on Sunday 7 February 1875 and ‘Precisely at eight o’clock the choir which seemed to be excellently trained, the voices being bright and well balanced and skillfully led, commenced with the hymn “Jesus Loves even me”.¹²⁷ This was sung unaccompanied and the congregation, evidently skilled in psalmody, joined in with fervour as they sang with rare precision and feeling, a point which was not lost on a newspaper correspondent who noted: ‘one could distinguish the skillful introduction of treble and alto voices’.¹²⁸ After a short introductory prayer, Sankey sang the favourite hymn of the collection, ‘Hold the Fort’, and at the conclusion of the service he rendered a solo item, ‘Let us gather up the Sunbeams’ before the meeting closed with the doxology, sung to the well-known tune ‘Old Hundredth’.

Unlike the more traditional places of worship, there was no ‘order of service’ as Moody and Sankey had abandoned such formalities, preferring instead to take part as the Spirit guided them and the afternoon service on that first day of the crusade provides a splendid illustration of the unceremonious manner in which the services were conducted. Sankey, opened the meeting with a solo, ‘When Jesus of Nazareth passeth by’, which was followed by Moody reading a passage of scripture before Sankey sang the first verse of ‘I Hear the voice of Jesus say’ and invited the

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ ‘Visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to Liverpool’, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 9 January 1875, 6.

¹²⁵ ‘Oddi wrth ein Gohebydd o Liverpool’, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 10 Chwefror 1875, 4.

¹²⁶ ‘The Welsh Population of Liverpool’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 December 1874, 6.

¹²⁷ ‘The American Revivalists in Liverpool’, *ibid.*, 8 February 1875, 6.

¹²⁸ Ibid

congregation to join in at the start of the second verse before Moody began a short extempore discourse which he interrupted mid-way to ask the congregation to sing the hymn, 'Rock of Ages'.¹²⁹

As the congregation assembled for the 'Day Prayer Meeting' the next morning, the ladies of the choir began an unaccompanied rendition of the hymns, 'Safe in the arms of Jesus', 'Ho my comrades' and 'I am so glad that our Father', and when Moody and Sankey entered the building at mid-day the whole congregation sang 'Sweet Hour of Prayer' accompanied by Mr. Sankey on the harmonium.¹³⁰ In reality, the purpose of the harmonium was merely to set the tempo for the choir and solo items as Sankey's powerful voice and the volume of the choir were the only audible accompaniment in the vast auditorium. The 'song and chorus' structure of American Gospel music suited the large gatherings where Sankey would sing the solo before inviting the congregation to sing the chorus in an outpouring of Christian praise. Sankey's first priority was to fulfill the spiritual needs of his congregation by giving everyone a voice, and the simple melodies that carried the Gospel message were perfectly suited to the great awakening. In a further departure from tradition, the honorary secretary, Mr Drysdale, came to the platform to read the requests for prayer¹³¹ in contrast to the 'announcements' that so preoccupied the *deaconiaid* of the Welsh chapels.

Rufus Wheelwright Clark affirms that meetings were 'thrown open for any who desired to speak, and a good many responded to the invitation', as they made their way to the enquirer's room at the close of the service where new converts were brought to Grace.¹³² Among those who committed their lives to Christ were many young people, and as they took their first steps to salvation the congregation appropriately sang the hymn, 'I hear Thy welcome voice That calls me, Lord to Thee'.¹³³ Equally, there were those who were moved by the powerful message of the hymns and when the congregation sang 'Just as I am', great numbers of people

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 9 February 1875, 6.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Rufus Wheelwright Clark, *op. cit.*, 277.

¹³³ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Liverpool', *op. cit.*, 6.

went into the retiring rooms.¹³⁴ An observer from the *Liverpool Mercury* commented: 'Although most of Moody's sermons are thoroughly realistic, his desire seems to be to draw men to accept Salvation by the loving attractions in which he presents it, rather than to drive them to it by anything like fear'.¹³⁵ At the noonday service during the third week of the crusade, the congregation comprised a number of working men 'attired in working clothes and rough coats',¹³⁶ which demonstrated the classless appeal of Moody and Sankey.

Notwithstanding the contrast between the stately music of Welsh hymnody and the vibrant American melodies, their purpose was the same, and the meeting of both musical cultures was expressed in the unending appeal of the 'Old Hundredth',¹³⁷ that lay in the simple prayer, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow', that was sung at the close of the Moody and Sankey meetings. In that respect, the American evangelists were merely reviving a simple musical form that was renascent of the early Welsh Methodist chapels such as Bedford Street Chapel, Liverpool, where the first part of the psalm-tunes from John Roberts of Henllan's collection¹³⁸ would be sung as a solo, and the second section in harmony before the entire congregation joined in the final section.¹³⁹ This more simplified musical form had been the rock on which Welsh congregational singing was founded, but chapel choirs and sophisticated pipe organs had become the latest expression of denominational conceit and R.Tudur Jones rightly observes that chapels were 'adopting more and more of the sentiment and spirit of the established churches'.¹⁴⁰ Fundamental to the remarkable success of the Moody and Sankey crusade was that it gave the spiritual power of congregational singing back to the people.

Ironically, the *Cheshire Observer*, which had questioned the editorial judgment of the *Liverpool Mercury* as to the likely effect of a spiritual revival, was taken aback

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey', *ibid.*, 3 February 1875, 6.

¹³⁶ 'The American Evangelists in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 27 February 1875, 3.

¹³⁷ The melody 'Old Hundredth' is attributed to Louis Bourgeois from the Geneva Psalter 1551 and invariably sung to the words of Thomas Ken (1637-1711).

¹³⁸ John Roberts, *Caniadau y Cyssegr neu gasgliad o donau hen a diweddar: gan mwyaf o gyfansoddiad Cymreig / wedi eu cynganeddu i bedwar o leisiau, gan John Roberts, Henllan* (Dinbych, 1839).

¹³⁹ 'Sylwadau Cyffredinol ar ein Hordinhadau Crefyddol ac Addoliadol', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 7 Mawrth 1877, 5.

¹⁴⁰ R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation: Wales 1890-1914* (Cardiff, 2004), 36.

by the public reaction to the American evangelists, and by the second week of the crusade they revoked their initial cynicism in a lengthy report:

Chester has felt very distinctly the “overflow” from the revival meetings at Liverpool. For a whole week the crowded Town Hall, and during the present week the rush to the Music Hall bear ample testimony to the fact that something more than usually attractive has taken a deep hold of the minds of the people.¹⁴¹

According to the *Wrexham Advertiser*, Moody and Sankey had become, ‘the chief theme of conversation in most circles, and of discussion in most newspapers’.¹⁴² If the response by the Liverpool Methodists had been tepid, the opposite was the case in north-east Wales where the news of the American preachers brought great numbers of people from towns across north Wales to the Victoria Hall.¹⁴³ For those who made the pilgrimage from north-east Wales to Liverpool there were special railway arrangements, and on one occasion, there were so many Welshmen present in the congregation that a Welsh hymn was sung.¹⁴⁴ At one service, Moody had remarked that he was ‘glad to see so many ministers and people from Wales. Let them hope they would go back with their hearts on fire, and let good tidings go throughout Wales of the great and mighty work’.¹⁴⁵

The effect of the Moody and Sankey revival in the Wrexham district is evidenced by a report of a united prayer meeting at Adwy’r Clawdd on 15 February 1875, when congregations from that locality came together and sang a selection of Sankey’s hymns to such great effect, that it was decided to hold twice-weekly meetings in the various chapels.¹⁴⁶ At the opening of the new Vron Board School in Brymbo, the Penygelli School Juvenile Choir from the neighbouring village of Coedpoeth were encored after their schoolmaster, W.G. Jones, led them in a rendering of Sankey’s ‘Hold the Fort’,¹⁴⁷ which suggests that they had acquired Sankey’s song book some time before the Liverpool campaign. (See Fig. 5.2 over).

¹⁴¹ ‘Notes of the Week’, *Cheshire Observer*, 20 March 1875, 4.

¹⁴² ‘The Moody and Sankey Movement’, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 3 April 1875, 4.

¹⁴³ ‘Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Liverpool’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 February 1875, 3.

¹⁴⁴ ‘District News: Moody and Sankey’, *ibid.*, 27 February 1875, 8.

¹⁴⁵ Rufus Wheelwright Clark, *op. cit.*, 281.

¹⁴⁶ ‘District News’, *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 20 February 1875, 6.

¹⁴⁷ ‘Brymbo - Opening of the Vron Board School’, *ibid.*

Fig. 5.2

No. 669. ^(S.S.) Hold the Fort.

P. P. B.

"That which ye have hold fast till I come."—Rev. ii. 25.

F. F. Bliss.

Doh is D.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|-------|-----------|----|-----------|---|---|---|
| s | „l :s | M | d' | „r' :d' l | s | „l :s | M | r | : |
| M | „f :M | d | M | „f :M f | M | „f :M | d | t | : |
| 1. Ho, my comrades! see the sig-nal Wa-ving in the sky! | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. See the mighty host ad-van-cing, Sa-tan lead-ing on: | | | | | | | | | |
| d' | „d' :d' s | s | „s :s | d' | d' | „d' :d' s | s | : | : |
| d | „d :d | d | d | „d :d | d | „d :d | d | s | : |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---|-------|-----------|---|--------|----|---|----|---|----|
| s | „l :s | M | d' | „r' :d' l | t | „d' :t | l | s | :- | | |
| M | „f :M | d | M | „f :M M | r | „M :r | r | t | :- | | |
| Re-in-force-ments now ap-pear-ing, Vic-to-ry is nigh! | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Migh-ty men a-round us fall-ing, Cour-ageal-most gone! | | | | | | | | | | | |
| d' | „d' :d' s | s | „s :s | l | s | „s :s | fe | s | :- | | |
| d | „d :d | d | d | „d :d | d | r | r | r | r | s | :- |

CHORUS.

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----|----|----|-----|----|-------|---------|---|----|----|
| d' | „d' :d' „d' | d' | s | :M | s | l | „l :l | d' | t | :- | |
| M | „M :M | „M | M | M | :d | M | f | „f :f | f | r | :- |
| "Hold the fort, for I am coming!" Je-sus sig-nals still; | | | | | | | | | | | |
| s | „s :s | „s | d' | d' | :d' | d' | d' | „d' :d' | l | s | :- |
| d | „d :d | „d | d | d | :a | d | f | „f :f | f | s | :- |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| d' | „d' :d' | d' | r' | d' | :t | l | s | s | :l | „t | d' | :- |
| M | „M :M | M | f | f | :f | f | M | M | :f | „f | M | :- |
| Wave the an-swer back to hea-ven, "By Thy grace we will!" | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| s | „s :s | s | l | l | :t | d' | d' | d' | :t | „r' | d' | :- |
| d | „d :d | d | f | f | :f | f | s | s | :s | „s | d | :- |

3. See the glorious banner waving!
Hear the trumpet blow!
In our Leader's name we'll triumph
Over every foe!

4. Fierce and long the battle rages,
But our help is near:
Onward comes our great Commander,
Cheer, my comrades, cheer!

A correspondent to the *Wrexham Advertiser* who attended the Victoria Hall at eleven o'clock in good time for the daily prayer meeting, reported that when the doors opened at eleven thirty, about five thousand settled into their places among whom 'I noticed a great many persons from Wrexham and district, and other parts of Denbighshire and Flintshire and I had little doubt that many who attended the services had come from a distance'.¹⁴⁸ Sankey's hymns also found great popularity in the Congregational chapel at Mold after the minister, Rev. D. Burford Hooke, attended the Moody and Sankey services in Liverpool where he acquired a copy of Sankey's *Songs and Solos*.¹⁴⁹ The *Liverpool Mercury* claimed: 'Nothing in hymnology has for years past ever, so caught the popular taste as the words and tunes sung by Mr. Sankey at these revival services'.¹⁵⁰

When disaster struck and flooded the underground workings at the Argoed Colliery in Mold a prayer meeting in the brick shed was attended by hundreds of local inhabitants, and Rev. Hooke opened the service with the Sankey hymn, 'Hold the Fort', while Rev. Roger Edwards brought forth great emotion amongst the Welsh speaking crowd with the hymn, 'O Arglwydd Dduw Rhagluniaeth'.¹⁵¹ In other districts of Flintshire there were reports of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit being felt in a little room amongst miners, and more than a dozen converts came to faith one Sunday, simply by singing the glorious hymn, 'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by', and on the following Monday morning, deep in the lead mine, one could hear the hymn, 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus' sung by the miners.¹⁵² The logogenic melodies of the American Gospel songs were easily recognized by the first line of the verse, and hymns such as 'Rock of Ages', 'I hear thy Welcome Voice' (*Mi Glywaf Dynner Lais*) and 'Blessed Assurance', became so popular that a Manchester journalist commented: 'Walking through the streets of Manchester you heard boys

¹⁴⁸ 'Moody and Sankey's Work in Liverpool', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 20 February 1875, 8.

¹⁴⁹ 'District News', *ibid.*, 27 February 1875, 6.

¹⁵⁰ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Services', *Liverpool Mercury*, 19 February 1875, 6.

¹⁵¹ 'Flooding of Argoed Colliery', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 13 March 1875, 8.

¹⁵² 'The American Evangelists in Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 February 1875, 3. The words to that comforting hymn were written in 1868 by blind author, Francis Jane (Fanny) Crosby (1820-1915), a member of John Street Methodist Church in New York City, and one of the most prolific hymn-writers in history with over 5,000 hymns to her name. See Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), *op. cit.*, 270. One of Crosby's best known hymns, 'Blessed Assurance', written in 1873 to a tune by Phoebe Palmer Knapp (1839-1908), is a perfect example of the religious songs of this period that were written in the form of verse and chorus. See Albert Christ-Janer, Charles W. Hughes & Carleton Sprague Smith, *American Hymns Old and New* (New York, 1980), 400.

whistling, 'Ho, my comrades, see the signal' to the tune 'Hold the Fort'.¹⁵³ Both the words and music of this hymn were written in 1870 by Phillip Paul Bliss (1838-1876), and at the farewell meeting in London, Lord Shaftesbury remarked: 'If Mr. Sankey has done no more than teach the people to sing 'Hold the Fort', he has conferred an inestimable blessing on the British Empire'.¹⁵⁴

By the time the spiritual phenomenon had reached its third week, it was attracting upwards of 5,000 people to the noon-day services, and at the special afternoon service for school children, Newsome's Circus, Liverpool, was filled to capacity with 12,000 school-children.¹⁵⁵ Inclement weather on the evening of Wednesday, 24 February, failed to deter the crowds that flocked to the service, and it was estimated that the Wednesday meetings had attracted a total of 30,000 – 'a magnificent testimony to the unrivalled character of the enthusiasm and earnestness which have been evoked in this neighbourhood'.¹⁵⁶ When Alexander Balfour of Rossett laid the foundation stone at the new Primitive Methodist chapel at Buckley he referred to the fact that the Primitive Methodists had encouraged the lay ministry to spread the Gospel news, whereas the Presbyterians had neglected this vital responsibility.¹⁵⁷ The spiritual intention of the new chapel, said Balfour, was 'not to challenge the place of other denominations, or indeed the Established Church, neither was it to proselytize, but rather to convert those who neglected every place of worship', and in that respect they were in accord with the biblical principles upheld by the two American evangelists.¹⁵⁸

To illustrate his point, Balfour reminded those present that while Mr. Moody was not an ordained minister, 'He had done what no person in our day had done in proclaiming the truths of the Gospel, nor perhaps had such a movement been carried on since the days of Whitfield and Wesley'.¹⁵⁹ The evangelistic campaign touched the whole of Merseyside and north-east Wales, and special services were called for parents and children, services for men and services for women so that no

¹⁵³ 'The American Evangelists in Liverpool', op. cit., 23 February 1875, 3.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), op. cit., 170.

¹⁵⁵ 'The American Evangelists in Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 25 February 1875, 8.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ 'New Primitive Methodist Chapel', *ibid.*, 1 May 1875, 6.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

sector of the community was excluded.¹⁶⁰ Revivalism had a profound effect on the working classes, as evidenced by the Liverpool Carters Association, 'a very numerous and hard-working body of men, some of whom afterwards formed themselves into a Carters Christian Association ... in which the masters take a lively interest'.¹⁶¹

Many of the songs used by Sankey were ridiculed by the musical establishment as being musically weak and *The Orchestra* magazine was eager to point out: 'The harmonies are bald, and violate any and every grammatical rule; and the tunes would at first sight seem only appropriate for very young children'.¹⁶² The writer, although well informed in a musical sense, did not attempt to explain the phenomenon of how a massed assembly could sing with such gusto without first having rehearsed a tune.¹⁶³ This intrigued many contemporary musicians who were amazed at how the singing was made more impressive by the spontaneity and belief in the words of the hymn: 'No puerility in the words - no consecutive fifth or solecisms - in the music affect those who sing; and the infantine tune becomes magnificent in the surging roll of ten thousand voices. Is nothing to be learned from this fact by the makers of Church Hymn-Books?'¹⁶⁴ Music is a means by which praise is expressed, although this aspect may have been overlooked by church musicians and a critic in the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* suggested: 'Let all interested in the praise of the sanctuary learn the lessons which have been taught to us by our transatlantic brethren'.¹⁶⁵

Unlike other revivalists, Moody and Sankey gave singing an unusual prominence and incorporated it in a way that was both striking and novel,¹⁶⁶ and the renowned English organist and composer, Edward Francis Rimbault (1816-1876), to whom the chorus of *O Happy Day* is attributed, commented: 'The singing of a simple melody by large numbers of untutored voices, guided by a skillful leader, has an effect more powerful than the most elaborate music performed by ordinary trained

¹⁶⁰ 'The American Evangelists in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 15 February 1875, 8.

¹⁶¹ 'The Liverpool Carters Christian Association', *ibid.*, 6 September 1875, 7.

¹⁶² 'Moody and Sankey Music', *The Orchestra*, April (1875), 261.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ 'Mr. Sankey's Music and Singing', *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, April (1874), 104.

¹⁶⁶ 'Moody and Sankey', *After Work*, May (1875), 74.

choirs'.¹⁶⁷ The American evangelists communicated the Gospel message, in a simple but inclusive musical language, and while there were critics who dismissed the rudimentary compositions, their views were annulled by the thousands who took the tunes to their hearts. Sankey regarded music as an act of praise and therefore, the meaning of the hymn rose above musical structure; of greater significance was that the Gospel message of the song was easily remembered. Had the composers observed every grammatical nuance and written music in a stricter and more formal harmonic style, the effectiveness of the hymns may have been lost, a point observed by a columnist in the *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*:

Those interested in harmony will notice that the most marked feature of the piece is that they change the chord for the most part in but once in each measure, the other notes being treated as a passing note. The three principal chords of the key, tonic, dominant, and subdominant are almost exclusively used. The result of all this is a very monotonous bass; but it makes the music go easily and lightly, and it would be unwise to harmonize these melodies in any other way.¹⁶⁸

American church musicians worked to a different tolerance than Welsh hymn-tune composers who were adjudged on harmonic structure rather than the criteria of conveying the Gospel message to the masses and Luff observes: 'Here were songs that the Sunday school would be able to sing and to sing easily'.¹⁶⁹ The simplicity of the American Gospel songs that brought such joy to the congregations in Liverpool's Victoria Hall disguised the fact that they were written by competent musicians such as Charles Crozat Converse (1834-1918), who had studied in Germany under Plaidy, Richter, and Hauptman.¹⁷⁰ In 1868, he composed what would become one of the best known tunes in modern hymnody to the words, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus',¹⁷¹ of which Ira D. Sankey would later remark, 'Thousands have been cheered in time of trouble, and so led nearer to Christ, by this sweet and simple hymn; for very few hymns have been more widely published or more frequently sung'.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷ Edward F. Rimbault, op. cit., 475.

¹⁶⁸ 'Mr. Sankey's Tunes', *Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, June (1876), 171.

¹⁶⁹ Alan Luff, op. cit., 202.

¹⁷⁰ Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), op. cit., 54.

¹⁷¹ The hymn, 'What a Friend We have in Jesus' was published anonymously and thirty years later was acknowledged as the work of by Joseph M. Scriven who wrote the words in 1855 to comfort his mother in Ireland.

¹⁷² Ira D. Sankey (1906, 2009), op. cit., 333.

Parallels can be drawn between the resolve of Moody and Sankey and that of the eighteenth century revivalists who took the Word of God to the people and braved persecution to sing His praise. Equally so, the spiritually inspired *codwyr canu* who had felt the power of revival were inclined to stress the full meaning of the hymn in the same manner as Sankey's rendition of 'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by', a song for the sinner's redemption. That Sankey referred to revivalist hymns as 'Christian songs',¹⁷³ invoked disdain from J. Evans of Garston who derided the lack of divinity in their mission in the literary journal, *Y Traethodydd* [The Essayist].¹⁷⁴ A better informed observation was made by the *Musical World* that commended the Sankey songs for succeeding in their mission of spreading the truth: 'where Cathedral music fails ... the Revivalists, in their melody, avoid the errors alike of the Methodists and the lovers of an ornate ritual'.¹⁷⁵ Again, Alan Luff captures the spiritual essence of the Sankey hymns with the following observation: 'Here, however, in the work of Sankey and Moody, was a ministry that gave a full place to music that people really wanted to sing ... Here were songs that sang the Gospel, simply and directly'.¹⁷⁶ Liverpool had been awakened to the joys of sung worship and a more enlightened correspondent in *Y Traethodydd* had reason to ask whether the church had yet recognised the power of music in spreading the Gospel.¹⁷⁷

In the final week of the outreach in Liverpool and mindful of the need to continue God's work in this community, Moody spoke at a convention in March 1875 in the Victoria Hall on the subject of 'How to get at the masses' to a capacity audience.¹⁷⁸ During this meeting, Rev. Dr. Bonar of Edinburgh addressed clergymen, merchants and other representatives of the Merseyside communities and testified that the revival in Scotland had 'truly been a work of the Lord – a work which had stood the test of criticism, the test of prejudice and the test of time'.¹⁷⁹ Further support came from Rev. Alexander McAulay of Liverpool who referred to the vital role of the laity in mission work before and during the Moody and Sankey Crusade.

¹⁷³ 'Moody and Sankey in London' *Western Mail*, 11 March 1875, 6.

¹⁷⁴ J. Evans, Garston, 'Meistri Moody a Sankey', *Y Traethodydd*, Llyfr XXIX (Treffynnon, 1875), 311.

¹⁷⁵ 'The American Revivalists', *Musical World*, 1 August 1875, 550.

¹⁷⁶ Alan Luff, op. cit., 202.

¹⁷⁷ J. Evans, Garston, op. cit., 317. 'Nid yw yn ymddangos fod yr eglwys eto, wedi deall yn briodol y fath offeryn grymus er llwyddiant teyrnas y Gwardedwr ydyw cerddoriaeth'.

¹⁷⁸ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 5 March 1875, 8.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

Following McAulay's commendation of lay preachers an anonymous letter in the press pointed out: 'This whole movement in Liverpool has been born of the lay agency', and the writer warned of the dangers of excluding lay preachers, citing the exclusion of the laity as having caused the divisions in the Wesleyan movement.¹⁸⁰

The valedictory service, scheduled to commence at 8 a.m. on Sunday, 7 March 1875, was intended for men only, but when the doors opened at six o'clock over ten thousand people crowded the vast hall, while the thousands who failed to gain admission moved to Newsome's Circus where an overflow meeting was conducted by Mr. Sterling of Glasgow.¹⁸¹ Thomas Fairclough, who had worked tirelessly for the evangelical missions of Liverpool and Chester, took part in the final meeting and prayed that the power of the Word might be carried home that night to every heart before the vast chorus of ten thousand voices sang the hymn-tune 'Evan'¹⁸² to the words, 'I Heard the voice of Jesus say'.¹⁸³ Moody and Sankey had enriched the region through the work of the Liverpool Young Men's Christian Association of which Alexander Balfour of Rossett near Wrexham was the President, and the foundation stone of the new purpose-built meeting place in Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, was laid by D.L. Moody on Tuesday 2 March 1875.¹⁸⁴

Moody and Sankey were *en route* to London when the announcement was made that a Welsh revival had broken out in Liverpool and services were to be held at the Victoria Hall in the afternoon and evening of Friday 19 March 1875, 'for the special benefit of the Welsh population of Liverpool and the surrounding district'.¹⁸⁵ It was estimated that 5,000 people attended the mid-day meeting, while the evening gathering attracted so many that 'the entire hall was thrown open and it was nearly as crowded as when Messrs. Moody and Sankey were present at the services'.¹⁸⁶ Steeped in competitive rivalry, the Welsh denominations could not

¹⁸⁰ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey', *ibid.*, 8 March 1875, 6.

¹⁸¹ 'The Evangelical Services in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 8 March 1875, 3.

¹⁸² Theron Brown & Hezekiah Butterworth, *op. cit.*, 227. Lowell Mason adapted this hymn-tune from a song written by William Henry Havergal (1793-1870), Vicar of Shreshill and Hon. Canon of Worcester Cathedral and father of hymnist, Francis Havergal.

¹⁸³ 'The Evangelical Services in Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 8 March 1875, 3.

¹⁸⁴ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Liverpool: New Premises in Mount Pleasant - Laying of the memorial stone by Mr. Moody', *Liverpool Mercury*, 3 March 1875, 3.

¹⁸⁵ 'District News', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 27 March 1875, 6.

¹⁸⁶ 'Latest and Telegraphic News', *Liverpool Mercury*, 20 March 1875, 7.

resist the temptation of comparing their contrived effort to the revival meetings of the American evangelists, from which many Welsh ministers had absented. On the premise that Moody had pleaded for the continuity of the meetings, the timely response of the Welsh denominations was a blessing in that it inspired a transient denominational unity that enabled the chapels to fill the Victoria Hall. Scant reference was made to Moody and Sankey's work other than the comparison to the success of the Welsh gathering:

The addresses were vigorous in tone, and produced a visible effect, judging by the number of persons who appeared to be weeping. Either Welsh ministers have a more ready way of touching the hearts of their congregations, or the Welsh people are more impressionable than the ordinary run of congregations, for no fewer than 200 persons were found in the inquiry room at the close of the evening's service, which we believe is a larger number than was attracted there in one night by the efforts of Messrs Moody and Sankey.¹⁸⁷

The Welsh Sunday School Union had canvassed in the manner of the Moody and Sankey campaigns and distributed leaflets and hymn-sheets to Welsh-speaking families within the Merseyside circuit, and prayer meetings were held during the two weeks prior to the event.¹⁸⁸ Inspired by the recent awakening, the services were well-attended and the local press observed: 'Welsh Revivalism in Liverpool did not make itself very apparent until the great revival meetings held at Victoria Hall on the 19 March 1875'.¹⁸⁹ In order to differentiate from the Moody and Sankey mode, the after-meetings became a *seiat* [experience meeting] while the 'enquiry room' concept was retained and attracted almost 200 converts.¹⁹⁰

Although Ieuan Gwyllt's translation of the Sankey songs, *Sŵn y Juwbili*, was readily available, the hymns at the inter-denominational Victoria Hall services were selected from the Welsh Presbyterian hymn-book,¹⁹¹ and the Congregational hymnal, *Aberth Moliant*.¹⁹² In a concerted effort to mark the distinction between

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ 'Cyfarfod Mawr Cymreig yn y Victoria Hall, Liverpool', *Y Goleuad*, 27 Mawrth 1875, 7.

¹⁸⁹ 'Liverpool Notes: The Welsh Revivalism', *North Wales Chronicle*, 27 March 1875, 5.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ 'District News', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 27 March 1875, 6.

¹⁹² *Aberth Moliant: casgliad o Emynau a Thonau a Salm-donau, yr emynau dan olygiaeth William Rees a William Ambrose a'r tonau a'r salm-odlau dan olygiaeth gan J. Ambrose Lloyd a E. Rees* (Llundain, 1873); 'The Welsh Revival Meetings in Liverpool', *North Wales Chronicle*, 27 March 1875, 3.

the Welsh revival and that of the American evangelists, the singing was confined to traditional tunes, such as 'Dymuniad', 'Diniweidrwydd', 'Bangor', 'Joanna', 'Cysur', 'Moriah', 'Malvern' and 'Eifionydd'.¹⁹³ Welsh congregations were familiar with these hymn-tunes and were attuned to four-part singing rather than the monodic settings of the Sankey songs, and when Eleazar Roberts conducted the Merseyside Union of Welsh chapel choirs, the combined effect of both choir and congregation was said to have been a magnificent act of praise.¹⁹⁴ With the exception of the hymns and Welsh language text, the format of the services was similar to those held by Moody and Sankey, in that the dialogue and prayers were interspersed with song.¹⁹⁵ At a Calvinistic Methodist meeting in Holywell in April 1875, it was reported that 250 converts had joined the Liverpool churches, 200 at Rhosllanerchrugog and 60 at Mold,¹⁹⁶ and with such success, it is surprising that the mission did not continue beyond that first gathering.¹⁹⁷ In contrast to the brief awakening of the Welsh Nonconformist denominations, the spiritual intervention of Moody and Sankey produced a lasting effect, and according to the *Wrexham Advertiser*: 'Most of the congregations in the town have been largely increased directly and indirectly by the work of these evangelists'.¹⁹⁸

Among the ministers of religion in Liverpool who were inspired to continue the evangelical mission was the Rev. John Evans (*Eglwysbach*, 1840-1897), minister of the Liverpool Chester Street Welsh Wesleyan cause until 1875, when he moved to become pastor of the English Wesleyan Shaw Street Chapel in the city.¹⁹⁹ *Eglwysbach*, an eloquent preacher with an oratorical talent that earned him the epithet, 'The Welsh Spurgeon',²⁰⁰ was a committed evangelist who admired the work of Moody and Sankey and 'attended as many of their meetings as possible',²⁰¹ which inspired him to rise above sectarian dogma and promote the truth of the Gospel. He was held in the highest esteem for his tireless efforts with the Liverpool Young Men's Christian Association and he was instrumental in

¹⁹³ 'Cyfarfod Mawr Cymreig yn y Victoria Hall, Liverpool', *Y Goleuad*, 27 Mawrth 1875, 7.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Welsh Revival Meetings in Liverpool', *North Wales Chronicle*, 27 March 1875, 3.

¹⁹⁵ 'Cyfarfod Mawr Cymreig yn y Victoria Hall, Liverpool', op. cit., 7.

¹⁹⁶ 'The North Wales Calvinistic Methodists', *ibid.*, 17 April 1875, 5.

¹⁹⁷ 'Local Events in 1875', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 1 January 1876, 7.

¹⁹⁸ 'The Moody and Sankey Movement', *ibid.*, 3 April 1875, 4.

¹⁹⁹ 'Death of Rev. J. Evans (Eglwysbach)', *Liverpool Mercury*, 25 October 1897, 7.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ Price Roberts a Thomas Hughes, *Cofiant y Parch. John Evans Eglwysbach* (Bangor, 1903), 350.

establishing the Shaw Street Young Men's Society.²⁰² When John Evans preached a sermon on the 'Prodigal Son' at Coedpoeth in May 1875, 'dozens' were converted, one of whom was John Carrington of Gwynfryn who also attended the three-day Whitsuntide service at Llanarmon-yn-Iâl where Evans preached in the open-air to a vast congregation.²⁰³ His missionary zeal also enlightened the Christian community in Brymbo and in July of that year, the local press observed: 'Mr Evans, of Liverpool, has imbibed of the spirit and to some extent of the manner of the American evangelists'.²⁰⁴

That the effects of the Liverpool outreach were being felt in other districts of north-east Wales is evidenced by the service in the Wrexham Public Hall, where over a thousand people had attended a Sunday evening prayer meeting in March 1875.²⁰⁵ Addressing a meeting of the Congregational Union of Wales at Holywell in 1875, Rev T. Johns of Llanelli alluded to the great work of Moody and Sankey and the response from the established denominations: 'Wales has often been visited with great revivals, but in the present day Wales was an exception to the general religious excitement; during the last five years there had been great reform in their chapels and outward circumstances, but the spiritual progress was not equal to their expectations'.²⁰⁶ He was perhaps, referring to the lack of commitment of the Welsh denominational hierarchy that preached to the so-called converted but failed to reach the abandoned souls who found salvation in the outreach meetings of Moody and Sankey. Although the direct influence of the American evangelists was not felt as strongly in Wales as in the cities of England, the extensive publicity given to their crusades in national, regional²⁰⁷ and local press was sufficient to arouse Welsh denominations from their apathy.

Moody and Sankey were beginning their London crusade when Dean David Howell, the Vicar of Wrexham, urged Alexander Balfour to prevail on Mr. Moody

²⁰² 'Shaw Street Welsh Young Men's Society', *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 November 1876, 6.

²⁰³ J. Price Roberts a Thomas Hughes, op. cit., 371.

²⁰⁴ 'Llanarmon-yn-Iâl-Religious Revival', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 22 May 1875, 8.

²⁰⁵ 'The Moody and Sankey Movement', *ibid.*, 3 April 1875, 4.

²⁰⁶ 'Congregational Union of Wales', *ibid.*, 7 August 1875, 8.

²⁰⁷ The *Liverpool Mercury* consistently reported the activities of Moody and Sankey on an almost weekly basis over a twenty-year period.

to visit the town on his way to Liverpool before he began his journey home.²⁰⁸ Balfour had generously donated a parcel of land for the building of a new Presbyterian chapel at Rossett, and Moody, his guest at Mount Alyn, had promised to lay the foundation stone in August 1875.²⁰⁹ Indebted to Balfour who had worked tirelessly during the Liverpool crusade, Moody agreed to preach to the people of Wrexham on Sunday 1 August 1875 from the Beast Market, which was the only open space in the town that was suitable for such a large gathering.²¹⁰ Thousands flocked to Wrexham from the surrounding districts, and stage carts from Rhos and Brymbo trundled into the town throughout the day to hear Moody and the Rev. W.H.Aitken preach.²¹¹

Rarely had such a multitude gathered in the town and the local press reported: 'Perhaps not in the memory of anyone living has there been so striking and so general a stir amongst the religious circles of this part of Wales as there was on Sunday and Monday last, when D.L.Moody, the American evangelist addressed vast audiences at Wrexham'.²¹² It was estimated that almost 30,000 people crowded into the Beast Market, and the singing of hymns, such as 'Tell me the old, old Story', that were familiar to the majority present, was uninspired on account of Sankey's absence.²¹³ A correspondent of the *Wrexham Advertiser* believed that Mr. Sankey had contributed in no slight measure to the effectiveness of the revival services, while Rev.C.H.Spurgeon, the most revered preacher in nineteenth century Britain, believed that Moody and Sankey succeeded 'because they were not regarded with a spirit of jealous rivalry and suspicion'.²¹⁴

Sankey's gospel songs had enraptured the masses and the evangelist's legacy of song continued through *Sŵn y Juwbili*, which was widely used in the Sunday Schools and Band of Hope meetings throughout Wales. For example, in August 1877, Thomas Gee presided at the annual gathering of the Calvinistic Methodist Sunday Schools at Bodfari where the children of the Dyffryn district sang melodies

²⁰⁸ 'Mr. D.L.Moody in Wrexham', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 31 July 1875, 5.

²⁰⁹ 'Revival Services in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 7 August 1875, 5.

²¹⁰ 'Mr. D.L.Moody in Wrexham', *ibid.*, 31 July 1875, 5.

²¹¹ 'Revival Services in Wrexham', *ibid.*, 7 August 1875, 5.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ 'District News', *ibid.*, 18 August 1877, 5.

from *Sŵn y Juwbili*.²¹⁵ Other published collections followed, such as *Deugain emynau Mr. I. D. Sankey yn Gymraeg : wedi eu cyfaddasu at y miwsig arferedig*,²¹⁶ published by Isaac Foulkes in 1874, and two years later, Gee & Son published *Caniadau Diweddaraf Mr. Ira D. Sankey*²¹⁷ by Rev. Samuel Roberts, who also translated the hymns in *Yr Emynau a'r Tonau 'Chwanegol Mr. Sankey*.²¹⁸ It is doubtful that Gwylt intended to alter the course of Welsh hymnody, but rather to supplement it, and when he conducted the Denbighshire Calvinistic Methodist Musical Festival at Rhyl in 1876, he commented that though anthems and set pieces were all very well in their place, 'the grand but plain hymn-tunes must ever be the staple of our religious service'.²¹⁹ Congregational singing, said Gwylt, 'is a power in the land and it was difficult to tell which did most good, the plain addresses of Mr. Moody or the sweet singing of Mr. Sankey'.²²⁰

Notwithstanding the popularity of American gospel songs, only the stately hymn tunes of Lowell Mason and George Hews (1806-1873)²²¹ were included in the hymnals of the four Welsh denominations, although the easily learned melodies were well-received in the Sunday schools. M.O. Jones maintains that prior to the introduction of the Tonic Sol-fa system there were no special hymns or songs for children,²²² and therefore, *Sŵn y Juwbili* addressed a long-standing need and imprinted the Sankey songs on a rising generation that would perpetuate the joy of singing the Gospel. At the annual Sunday School outing in Brymbo,²²³ the children sang several of Sankey's songs as did the combined schools that constituted the Wrexham and district Sunday School Union when the choir sang 'Come to Jesus'

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ira David Sankey, *Deugain emynau Mr. I. D. Sankey yn Gymraeg : wedi eu cyfaddasu at y miwsig arferedig* (Liverpool, 1874).

²¹⁷ Parch. Samuel Roberts, *Caniadau Diweddaraf Mr. Ira D. Sankey* (Dinbych, 1876).

²¹⁸ Parch. Samuel Roberts, *Yr Emynau a'r Tonau Chwanegol; sef, yr "Additional Sacred Songs and Solos" a ganwyd yn y cyfarfodydd diweddaraf gan Ira D. Sankey* (Dinbych, 1878).

²¹⁹ 'Denbighshire Calvinistic Methodist Musical Festival at Rhyl', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 17 June 1876, 8.

²²⁰ Ibid. This statement applied equally to the crusades of the Dissenting evangelists, as William Williams Pantycelyn was often accompanied by his wife, Mary Francis, a singer of power and ability who sang his Gospel tributes to the uninitiated, and hearers 'were often more moved by her sweet hymnody than by his exhortations'. See Theron Brown & Hezekiah Butterworth, op. cit., 384.

²²¹ George Hews composed the hymn-tune 'Holly' that was included in *Llyfr Hymnau a Thonau y Methodistiaid Calfniaidd 1897* (Caernarfon, 1897), Rhif 7.

²²² 'Welsh Nonconformists and Music', *Musical Herald*, 1 August 1908, 239.

²²³ 'Mold', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales Register*, 18 September 1875, 8.

as they returned from the field to their respective classes.²²⁴ The popularity of *Sŵn y Juwbili* was a tribute to the perception of Ieuan Gwyllt who was committed to the cause of reforming Welsh congregational singing through the chapels rather than the competitive route. This was his last great effort. He passed away in 1877 having enriched Welsh congregational singing with a joyous hymnal that sold half a million copies and was still in vogue a century later.

Having secured its place in the glossary of the region's hymnody, Sankey's songs continued to be sung long after the evangelists had returned to America, as *Sŵn y Juwbili* found popularity in the Welsh Sunday Schools and Temperance meetings. At the open session of the Good Templars in the industrial hamlet of Ffrwd, near Brymbo in 1877, the meeting concluded with a hymn from the Sankey collection, 'Yield not to Temptation',²²⁵ while the choir that performed at the Temperance meeting in the Corwen area three years later, concluded with 'appropriate verses from Sankey's hymns'.²²⁶ The songs of the American revivalists touched every sector of society from the children in the Board schools at Hope and Mold who sang hymns from Moody and Sankey's Gospel meetings at their daily services,²²⁷ to a competitive meeting at Penybryn Chapel, Wrexham, where two young soloists competed on the Sankey hymn, 'Knocking'.²²⁸ By February 1877, the Church Mission in Chester had formed committees to canvass the city and invited all to attend services, a method which took its inspiration from the Moody and Sankey crusade.²²⁹ 'Enquiry' meetings at the close of each service concluded with a hymn, and the local press observed, 'that the mode of conducting these services somewhat resembles that adopted by the American Evangelists, Messrs. Moody and Sankey'.²³⁰

By the end of the 1870s attitudes towards the melodies of American Gospel music were changing and at the Calvinistic Choral Festival at Mold in 1881 Sankey's

²²⁴ 'Mold', *ibid.*, 17 July 1875, 6.

²²⁵ 'District News', *ibid.*, 3 February 1877, 6.

²²⁶ 'Corwen Temperance Meeting', *ibid.*, 13 March 1880, 5.

²²⁷ 'District News', *ibid.*, 5 May 1877, 6.

²²⁸ 'Multiple News Item', *ibid.*, 13 March 1880, 5.

²²⁹ 'The Church Mission in Chester', *Cheshire Observer*, 3 February 1877, 5.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

tunes were sung at the afternoon and evening events.²³¹ Coincidentally, this festival clashed with a competitive meeting at the Baptist chapel in Mold where the test piece for the children's choir of no less than 20 in number was Sankey's song, 'When Jesus of Nazareth passeth by'.²³² In the Sunday schools at Flint, Holywell, Mostyn and Bagillt,²³³ competitions for singing solo items from the *Sankey's Songs and Solos* became the staple test-pieces for literary meetings, while an *eisteddfod* at Bethel Welsh Independent Chapel in Mold attracted two Sunday school scholars who shared the prize for the best rendition of the Sankey song, 'Even Me' (Bradbury), on the harmonium.²³⁴ Similarly, in Broughton, near Wrexham, at the Pisgah Wesleyan Chapel literary meeting, the congregation sang 'When Jesus of Nazareth passeth by',²³⁵ and the same text was chosen at the Calvinistic Methodists *eisteddfod* at Treuddyn, near Mold as the test-piece for children under fifteen.²³⁶ In a region so divided by denominational tension it is truly remarkable that Sankey's songs were adopted by every creed and Edward Rimbault encapsulated the effect of the gospel music when he said:

Messrs Moody and Sankey's tunes must become popular; nothing can prevent their extensive use. The secular origin of many of them is of no importance, and certainly no argument against them. What we want are tunes that will convey the sense of the words to which they are adapted.²³⁷

Rimbault's prediction was accurate, and it is remarkable how, in a matter of months, Moody and Sankey had expanded and enriched the repertoire of Sunday school music in the chapels of north-east Wales and Liverpool to leave an indelible mark on the spiritual direction of the region. The evangelistic mission in Liverpool, Cheshire and north-east Wales would continue after their departure, and while they journeyed home to America, Philip Phillips, the 'Singing Pilgrim' arrived in Liverpool in 1876 at the invitation of the Sunday School Union.²³⁸ According to the *Liverpool Mercury*, he needed no introduction: 'Mr. Phillips is too well known

²³¹ 'District News: Mold', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 25 June 1881, 6.

²³² 'Mold: Competitive Meeting', *ibid.*, 2 July 1881, 6.

²³³ 'Gwaenysgor', *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, 9 Rhagfyr 1876, 5.

²³⁴ 'District News: Mold', *op.cit.*, 16 March 1878, 6.

²³⁵ 'Brymbo & Broughton', *ibid.*, 2 December 1882, 8.

²³⁶ 'Tryddyn Eisteddfod', *ibid.*, 3 January 1885, 2.

²³⁷ Edward F. Rimbault, *op. cit.*, 475.

²³⁸ 'Local News', *Liverpool Mercury*, 9 October 1876, 6.

in Liverpool to need one word of recommendation to public favour'.²³⁹ While the 'Singing Pilgrim' helped to sustain the influence of Moody and Sankey, another evangelical force emerged when General Booth brought the Salvation Army to Wales in 1878.²⁴⁰ In a statement that appeared on the front page of the first issue of the Salvation Army news-sheet, *The War Cry*, Booth authorises the General Secretary, George Railton, 'to raise a special force for the Salvation Army upon the terms you propose by seizing the counties of Flint and Denbigh as soon as possible'.²⁴¹ Railton rose to the challenge and in October 1881, the Salvation Army with its band, and a repertoire that included many of the rousing Sankey songs that were already well-known to the people of the region, marched into Wrexham.²⁴²

When Moody and Sankey returned to Liverpool in 1883, it was to a better-prepared community that had formed a 'very large committee, composed of clergy and laity representative of Churchmen, Wesleyans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Independents etc'.²⁴³ The Victoria Hall, built specifically for the crusade of 1875, had been demolished to make way for the new County Court buildings, and the only available venue for the crusade was Hengler's Circus with a capacity of 5,000,²⁴⁴ - and their meetings were probably the largest gatherings that had ever been held there.²⁴⁵ Moody's preaching and Sankey's hymns had crossed denominational boundaries and the easily learned melodies that carried the Gospel message enabled all social classes to express Christian praise.²⁴⁶ An editorial in the *Liverpool Mercury* commended the simplicity of Moody's preaching thus:

There are hundreds among us who would not understand the very words of some of our popular preachers, who will readily grasp Mr. Moody's meaning. There are hundreds also on whom the anthems of Chester Cathedral would be lost who will be melted into tears by Mr Sankey's pathetic songs. 'Singing the Gospel' is certainly new to the undemonstrative churches of Great Britain, or at least was so till the American revivalists first visited this country about nine years ago.²⁴⁷

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ *The Salvation Army Cefn Mawr 1883-1983 Centenary Brochure* (Cefn Mawr, 1983), 6.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² 'The Salvation Army in Wrexham', *Wrexham Advertiser & North Wales News*, 15 October 1881, 5.

²⁴³ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Visit to Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 26 March 1883, 6.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey's in Liverpool', *ibid.*, 3 April 1883, 6.

²⁴⁶ A. Luff, *op. cit.*, 202.

²⁴⁷ Editorial, *Liverpool Mercury*, 2 April 1883, 5.

Coinciding with Moody and Sankey's second visit was the Psalmody Festival of the Liverpool Calvinistic Methodist chapels, held at Fitzclarence Street, on 16 April 1883, and conducted by David Jenkins, Mus.Bac for the purpose of uniting congregations to learn a number of tunes.²⁴⁸ Eleazar Roberts, a familiar figure at these gatherings, began to address the meeting when his remarks were interrupted by the arrival of Ira D. Sankey, 'who expressed much pleasure at being present to hear Welsh singing of which, he said, he had heard much'.²⁴⁹ He was invited to the front where he sang 'She touched the hem of His garment' with 'wondrous effect',²⁵⁰ after which he requested to hear the massed congregation sing 'Hold the Fort' and asked for singers to assist the choir in services at Hengler's Circus.²⁵¹ In response to his invitation, 'a large number of those present held up their hands expressive of their willingness to assist the choir during his forthcoming services at the services in Hengler's Circus'.²⁵² A choir of about 300 voices was organised for the Moody and Sankey crusade, and the fact that many of the singers present at the Psalmody Festival agreed to assist, suggests that a fair proportion of the Sankey choir in 1883 consisted of Welsh voices.²⁵³

Clearly, the second visit by Moody and Sankey was conducted in a better spirit of Christian co-operation, although a core of disapproving clerics continued to question the appropriateness of the revivalist Gospel songs. The Royal College of Music was at the forefront of the critical throng and caustically opined:

It is almost unnecessary to repeat our assertion that such music does harm to the advance of the higher forms of the art and as we have the authority of the Bishop of Manchester for asserting that it also does harm to the higher forms of Christian worship; it would be difficult indeed to say what good can be effected by the presence of these evangelists in our midst.²⁵⁴

Sankey's first solo to the vast congregation at Hengler's Hall was aptly entitled, 'Master the Tempest is Raging', while Moody expressed the hope that 'they would all get a great deal of good from his visit, and that they would all try more and

²⁴⁸ 'Welsh Psalmody Festival', *ibid.*, 17 April 1883, 5.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ John Hughes Morris (1929), *op. cit.*, 328.

²⁵¹ 'Welsh Psalmody Festival', *op. cit.*, 5.

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Visit to Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 26 March 1883, 6.

²⁵⁴ 'The Royal College of Music', *Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, February (1882), 76.

more to stick to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ'.²⁵⁵ Although the Bishop of Manchester was apparently unmoved by those who found salvation through the Moody and Sankey ministry, Bishop J.C. Ryle of Liverpool took a more enlightened view and thanked God for 'any man who could get the ear of the people in the way Mr. Moody did – he simply told in very simple language the story of the Cross'.²⁵⁶ The Gospel songs that reiterated Moody's sermons, were not written for the glory of art, but as carriers of the Christian message, a relevance that was not lost on the *Liverpool Mercury* reporter who noted: 'Our moral and social reformers also may learn from this movement that there is an auxiliary to their labours in sacred song, which they have not yet fully understood'.²⁵⁷

As for Ieuan Gwyllt, it was rumoured that profit motivated his urge to publish *Sŵn y Juwbili*, but Emlyn Evans, writing in *Y Cerddor*, October 1892, defended Gwyllt's *volte-face*: 'We are aware of certain insinuations that only love of money could influence a man who had purged so many old Welsh tunes to swallow such sugary American offering. We do not for a moment believe this, but rather that he was stirred by strong religious feelings – in other words, his heart ruled his head on this occasion'.²⁵⁸ Emlyn Evans composed many fine hymn-tunes, not least being 'Trewen' c.1890,²⁵⁹ a powerful masterpiece of four-part harmony that was ideally suited to *cymanfaoedd canu*, while his later hymn-tune 'Neuadd-lwyd' which first appeared in *Y Caniedydd Cynnulleidfaol* in 1895²⁶⁰ is probably more appropriate for general congregational use. Reminiscent of the Sankey songs, the appeal of 'Neuadd-lwyd' lies in the melody rather than its harmonic structure, hence Delyth Morgans describes the tenor line moving from A to G sharp at the beginning of the tune as 'rather monotonous and completely uninspiring'.²⁶¹ Sankey's songs typify this monodic style, but their appeal lay in the simple ecstatic melodies that were easily learned by congregations, an attribute that Gwyllt had recognised some time

²⁵⁵ 'Welsh Psalmody Festival', *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 April 1883, 5.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ 'Local News', *ibid.*, 2 April 1883, 5.

²⁵⁸ D. Emlyn Evans, 'Parch. J. Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) 1822-1877', *Y Cerddor*, Hydref (1892), 113.

²⁵⁹ Alan Luff, *op. cit.*, 208. Luff refers to the strength of 'Trewen' and 'the problem in using this tune outside Wales is in finding words strong enough to sing to it'.

²⁶⁰ Delyth G. Morgans, *Cydymaith Caneuon Ffydd* (Aberystwyth, 2006), 393.

²⁶¹ Delyth G. Morgans, 'Mi wn fod fy Mhrynwr yn Fyw' - Agweddau ar Grefft a Chelfyddyd D. Emlyn Evans - Cerddor Trewen', Traethawd M.A. (Prifysgol Bangor, 2001), 115.

before his critics and culminated in the publication of *Sŵn y Juwbili*. This hymnal crossed denominational boundaries into the Sunday schools and Band of Hope meetings of every chapel and it was through this primary academy that the following generations were introduced to a simpler and more vibrant hymnody.

In the schoolrooms of the *Ysgol Sul*, the simple Gospel songs, so different in style and structure than the traditional Welsh hymn-tune, had a powerful effect on Welsh composers who began to answer the call for a more ecstatic mode of singing the Gospel. That the well known hymn by Hiraethog, 'Dyma Gariad Fel y Moroedd', and the verses of Eben Fardd, 'O Fy Iesu Bendigedig' were commonly sung to the tune 'Jesus Only', by the American composer, Robert Lowry (1826-1899) was testimony to the impact of Sankey's *Songs and Solos*. The hymn-tune 'Sychu'r Dagrau' [Drying the Tears] by L.J.Roberts (1866-1931), written to the words of Pedr Hir, 'Bydd Canu yn y Nefoedd, and published in *Trysorfa y Plant* in 1889,²⁶² encapsulates the style that popularized the hymns of the American revivalist composers. Perhaps the clearest example of how Welsh hymn composers followed the logogenic style of American hymnody is the inspired hymn-tune 'Calon Lân' ['Pure Heart'], composed by John Hughes (1872-1914) to the words of Daniel James (*Gwryosydd*, 1847-1920).²⁶³ 'Calon Lân' first appeared in *Seren yr Ysgol Sul* [Sunday School Star] in 1899, and took the message of the hymn as a title that would become emblematic of Welsh congregational singing.

Many amateur composers and hymnists in Liverpool and north-east Wales were inspired by the Gospel songs of Moody and Sankey and the more adventurous musicians, such as W.J.Parry (1842-1927), embraced many of the features of the American evangelists and published *Telyn Sankey*,²⁶⁴ for use in Sunday schools, Temperance societies and Band of Hope meetings, which combined the works of famous American composers with a number of notable Welsh musicians. For instance, Parry re-worked the famous hymn 'Onward Christian Soldiers' written in 1865 by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), to a Temperance message and replaced

²⁶² Delyth G. Morgans, *Cydymaith Caneuon Ffydd* (Aberystwyth, 2006), 431.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 302.

²⁶⁴ W.J.Parry, *Telyn Sankey* (Caernarfon, 1901).

Arthur Sullivan's famous melody 'St Gertrude' (1871)²⁶⁵ with 'Milwr Sobrwydd', composed by D. Emlyn Evans in January 1901.²⁶⁶ *Telyn Sankey* also included the tune, 'Heulwen', by Caradog Roberts of Rhos, sung to Parry's hymn 'Hapus Deulu Iesu' and written in the same song and chorus form that made many of the American revivalist songs so popular.²⁶⁷ Notwithstanding Parry's enthusiasm, Caradog Roberts believed that the Sankey tunes were too light and superficial in character for the Welsh taste: 'We are fond of German chorale and our hymns have been based on that style. Breadth and dignity ran through our tunes',²⁶⁸ a view which found accord with Emlyn Evans.²⁶⁹

Although the opinion of such distinguished composers cannot be dismissed, they were predisposed to a conventional style of hymn-tune composition that was adjudged on complex harmonic structure rather than a simple melody that appealed to the heart of congregations. The prolific output of Welsh hymnists was an outgrowth of Tonic Sol-fa and the National Eisteddfod to the extent that the emphasis of hymnody changed from spiritual purpose to that of a competitive art. While the Welsh denominations debated the creative merits of their respective hymnals, Sankey's *Songs and Solos* and Gwyllt's inspired *Sŵn y Juwbili* gave congregations a new voice and reasserted the fundamental intention of hymnody as a carrier of the Gospel message. In similar fashion, Moody had challenged the spiritual complacency of the chapels in Liverpool and north-east Wales, and when asked during a Christian Convention in Hengler's Circus, 'How is a minister to rouse a sleepy church', he replied tersely: 'Get roused himself'.²⁷⁰

Moody demonstrated how Gospel preaching appealed to the masses while Sankey had shown how they could be reached through song, and Gwyllt challenged the preconceived styles of Welsh hymnody when he published *Sŵn y Juwbili*. That critics misunderstood the motive did not obstruct his mission to bring a new

²⁶⁵ Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1842-1900) wrote the tune 'St Gertrude' that is synonymous with the words, 'Onward Christian Soldiers', although the Welsh translation found greater affinity with the tune 'Rachie' by Caradog Roberts of Rhosllannerchrugog.

²⁶⁶ W.J.Parry, op. cit., 80.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ 'Mr. Caradog Roberts, Mus.D', *Musical Herald*, 1 January 1912, 4.

²⁶⁹ D. Emlyn Evans, 'Parch. J. Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) 1822-1877', op. cit., 113.

²⁷⁰ 'Messrs. Moody and Sankey', *Liverpool Mercury*, 27 April 1883, 5.

meaning to sung worship in the Welsh Sunday schools that would so enrich Welsh congregational hymn-singing in north-east Wales and Liverpool. When Gwyllt translated the plaintive poem of Annie Sherwood Hawks (1835-1918) 'I need thee every Hour', and harmonised the tune of Robert Lowry,²⁷¹ 'Mae d'eisiau di bob awr' it reached the hearts of Welsh congregations and choirs. Similarly, the words and tune, 'I hear thy Tender Voice', by American composer Lewis Hartsough (1828-1919) was encrypted into Welsh hymnody when it became 'Mi Glywaf Dynyr Lais',²⁷² which is a lasting testimony to Gwyllt's profound understanding of Welsh congregational singing.

Moody, Sankey and Ieuan Gwyllt were a blessed alliance that brought joy and spiritual insight to every denomination in north-east Wales and Liverpool, and gave the congregations a voice, while Sankey's use of a harmonium challenged the long-held prejudice that had denuded many chapels of instrumental accompaniment.

²⁷¹ Theron Brown and Hezekiah Butterworth, *op. cit.*, 153.

²⁷² Delyth G. Morgans, *op. cit.*, 542 refers to this tune as 'Gwahoddiad', whereas Ieuan Gwyllt, *Sŵn y Juwbili* (Wrexham, 1876), 14, lists the tune as 'Arglwydd, Dyma Fi'.