
**Depraved or deprived? What was the legacy of the 1847
Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales
on Welsh politics, its culture and educational reform in Wales?**

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Abbreviations:

1847 Reports or Reports

= *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*

HMI = Her Majesty's Inspector

Introduction

This dissertation will investigate the legacy of the 1847 *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* by exploring the responses and their effect on Welsh politics, culture and educational reform in Wales. The *Reports*, published in three volumes, which subsequently became known as the 'Blue Books' due to their presentation in blue hardback covers, are well known for their assault on the character and morality of the Welsh people. As a result of this assault the *Reports* had unintended effects and gained considerable notoriety. In Wales the books were commonly referred to as *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision* (the treachery of the Blue Books),¹ the result of a satirical play written by Robert Jones Derfel in 1854, who parodied a play written by Iorwerth Glan Aled, *Brad y Cyllill Hirion* (Treason of the Long Knives) in 1853, based on a well-known Welsh legend where the Saxons overcame the treacherous Vikings.² Derfel was almost certainly responsible for the so-called Blue Books' notoriety. This assault on the Welsh people stimulated Welsh political consciousness and much discussion, by activists and historians, both at the time and subsequently.³

Historians agree that during the first half of the nineteenth century and the lead up to the 1847 *Reports* being commissioned there had been considerable unrest in Wales which the government wished to quell. Wales had undergone a huge transformation which resulted in a doubling of its population, chiefly caused by industrialisation and an influx of people looking for work in the newly industrialised areas. In 1770 Wales had approximately 500,000 inhabitants and by 1851 it had 1,163,000. It had gone from a mainly rural society to an industrial one in the space of two generations.⁴ Local parishes were largely unable to cope with these increases in population, and conditions in both rural and industrial communities became unbearable. This resulted in sporadic outbreaks of rioting and disorder, leading to the Merthyr Rising (1831) described as 'the most ferocious and bloody event in the history

¹ John Davies, *A History of Wales*, (2007), p. 380.

² Prys Morgan, 'From Long Knives to Blue Books', *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical Essays Presented to Glanmor Williams*, eds. R. R. Davies, Ralph A. Griffiths, Ieuan Gwynedd Jones and Kenneth O. Morgan (1984), p. 199 & p. 203.

³ Geraint H. Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales*, (2008), p. 220.

⁴ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 311.

of industrial Britain',⁵ the Newport Rising (1839) and the Rebecca Riots (1839-43).⁶ In addition, the *Morning Chronicle* in 1839 reported division between the upper classes, who largely spoke English, and the lower classes who largely spoke Welsh. The Welsh language was still being vilified in 1844 when the Rebecca Commission argued that the Welsh language hindered the Law and the Established Church from civilising the Welsh.⁷ William Williams, MP for Coventry, a self-made man from Carmarthenshire, and best remembered for his part in commissioning the *1847 Reports*, addressed parliament in 1846 to afford 'the labouring classes of acquiring a knowledge of the English language'.⁸ He believed knowledge of English had helped him progress in his own career and would thus enable the Welsh people in general to improve their situation.⁹

Much has been written about the assault on the Welsh character depicted in the *1847 Reports*. However, John Davies in his *A History of Wales* reports that out of 1,252 pages, fewer than ten discussed the depravity of the Welsh people, but those pages were seized by London journals to 'vilify the Welsh and aroused the anger of Welsh patriots'.¹⁰ Those pages seem to have touched a nerve and as Gwyneth Tyson Roberts stated: 'The *1847 Report* did not create a new negative image of what it meant to be Welsh, but it sharpened and deepened immeasurably the negative images that were already current'.¹¹ Tyson Roberts' comprehensive book, *The Language of the Blue Books*, focuses on the language of empire used in the *1847 Reports* and the commissioners' unbridled belief in their own competence and objectivity. Focusing on the linguistic features of the *Reports* and examining the inconsistencies and assumptions made by the commissioners, she concludes that the *Reports* provide important documentation of the relationship between England and Wales and the history of the Welsh people.¹²

⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 356.

⁶ H. G. Williams, 'Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 2, (2000), p. 148.

⁷ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 376.

⁸ Hansard (10 March 1846) Vol. 84. Available at [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1846-03-10/debates/e975b64f-bdbf-4b9c-80b2-c06b4b5f6c1a/EducationInWales Column 860](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1846-03-10/debates/e975b64f-bdbf-4b9c-80b2-c06b4b5f6c1a/EducationInWales%20Column%20860). (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁹ David Williams, 'Williams, William (1788-1865), Member of Parliament', *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, (1959). Available at <https://biography.wales/article/s-WILL-WIL-1788> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

¹⁰ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 380.

¹¹ Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books: The Perfect Instrument of Empire*, (1998), p. 238.

¹² Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 238.

Education was already on the agenda of the government even before the publication of the *1847 Reports*, as evidenced by H. G. Williams' article on Hugh Owen's (1804-1891) promotion of state aided, non-denominational British schools in Wales which he publicised in the Methodist journal *Y Drysorfa* in 1843.¹³ Hugh Owen, like William Williams, both committed Welshmen, felt that the promotion of the English language in Wales would bring prosperity to Wales and the Welsh people. Historiography around the Blue Books has largely focused on key figures associated with them: H. G. Williams on Harry Longueville Jones¹⁴, W. J. Probert on Evan Jones¹⁵, and Tyson Roberts on Jane Williams¹⁶, all of which have given insight into the personalities of respondents to the Blue Books and exposed the weaknesses of the *1847 Reports*. This dissertation will complement existing research, with the intention to further our understanding of their legacy on a nation.

Chapter One will argue the commissioners had an agenda to promote the English language and dismiss the Welsh language as subversive and outdated. In their attempts to do this they unintentionally promoted a nationalist agenda which ultimately encouraged the Welsh people to conserve their language and culture. To illustrate this point I will set out some of the key findings in the *1847 Reports* and the responses to them from Jane Williams and Evan Jones.

Chapter Two will explore the validity of what was presented regarding the education being provided in Wales at the time of the *1847 Reports*. This will focus on how Harry Longueville Jones (Her Majesty's Inspector) aimed to improve the state of education in Wales whilst also maintaining the language and culture of the Welsh people. James Kay-Shuttleworth (Assistant Secretary to the Committee of the Privy Council on Education), as a patron of, and who appointed Longueville Jones to Her Majesty's Inspector, was more aligned with

¹³ H. G. Williams, 'Sir Hugh Owen (1804-1881) – a Reassessment', *The Welsh History Review*, Vol 23, No. 3, (2007), p. 136.

¹⁴ H. G. Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education: The neglected case of a Victorian HMI', *The Welsh History Review*, Issue 91, Vol. 15, (1990), pp. 146-442.

¹⁵ W. J. Probert, 'The Blue Books of 1847 and a Tredegar Minister', *Gwent Local History Council*, Issue. 59, (1985), pp. 10-22.

¹⁶ Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, "'At Once Illogical and Unfair": Jane Williams (Ysgafell) and the Government Report on Education in Mid Nineteenth-Century Wales', *Women's Writing*, Vol. 24, Issue 4, (2017), pp. 451-465.

Longueville Jones' view of Welsh educational needs.¹⁷ It will discuss how, when Ralph Robert Wheeler Lingen became permanent secretary from 1849, after Kay-Shuttleworth's resignation, matters became more difficult for Longueville Jones. The two men had diametrically opposing views on how education in Wales should be managed, and during the twenty years that Lingen was in post their relationship went from mutual dislike to mutual abhorrence, which no doubt frustrated Longueville Jones' efforts.¹⁸

The conclusion will bring together the information I have found, and answer the dissertation question on the legacy of the Blue Books and the effect the *Reports* had on policy, cultural and educational reform in Wales. I plan to express that, although the *Reports* had a negative effect on the use of the Welsh language in education, politically and culturally the Blue Books were unintentionally a catalyst for the promotion of the Welsh language and culture in Wales. In addition, Lingen's appointment after Kay-Shuttleworth's resignation was detrimental for Wales, and frustrated Longueville Jones's attempts at reforming Welsh education.

¹⁷ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 416.

¹⁸ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education'. p. 432.

Chapter One:

‘Blue without, black within’

Evan Jones [Ieuan Gwynedd], *Facts, Figures and Statements, in illustration of the Dissent and Morality of Wales: An Appeal to the English People*, (1849), p. 13.

This chapter will argue that the commissioners had an agenda to promote the English language and dismiss the Welsh language and religion as subversive and outdated. Arguably the three commissioners, all barristers chosen by James Kay-Shuttleworth for their supposed ability to be objective, were a product of a society permeated with Victorian imperialism, and a superiority over cultures other than their own. This undoubtedly impacted how the three men carried out their instructions to report on education in Wales and its political, cultural and educational effect.

James Kay-Shuttleworth, in his role as Assistant Secretary to the Council on Education (set up to administer annual education grants from the government in 1833) was responsible for organising the *1847 Reports*, originally proposed by Member of Parliament for Coventry, William Williams. Kay-Shuttleworth, born in Rochdale, and educated in the Dissenting tradition, had trained as a physician at the University of Edinburgh. Whilst working as a physician in Manchester he developed an interest in the social and educational needs of the poor, and in 1835 was appointed Assistant Poor Law Commissioner. His experience in this role convinced him of the need for a national education system and trained teachers. When he was appointed Assistant Secretary in 1839, he helped set up the first training college for schoolteachers, as well as a system of inspection for schools in receipt of government grants.¹⁹ Kay-Shuttleworth was a talented civil servant and had a genuine interest in educating the poor, and his experience as a physician and Poor Law Commissioner should not be understated and suggests a real ability to empathise. Although Tyson Roberts argues he was a man from the same mould as the commissioners he appointed, as he had noted that pauper children demonstrated a ‘lack of energy in work and [were] cunning in evasion

¹⁹ R. J. W. Selleck, ‘Shuttleworth, Sir James Phillips Kay, first baronet (1804-1877), civil servant and educationist’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2004). Available at <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-15199?rskey=20vo1x&result=2> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

of labour',²⁰ it is conceivable that as a man brought up in the Dissenting tradition, and not necessarily accepting prevailing opinion, he genuinely believed educating the working classes would be beneficial to society as a whole. His experience as a doctor having seen first hand the conditions in which the poor lived made him very different to the commissioners.

Kay-Shuttleworth's instructions to the commissioners, at the beginning of Lingen's Report, set out what information was to be collected and reminded the commissioners to be polite, 'not to operate as a discouragement to humble but deserving men who may have had few opportunities of education'.²¹ This suggests that he intended the commissioners were not to be high-handed or adversarial. Towards the end of the two pages of instructions it stated that they would be enabled 'to form some estimate of the general state of intelligence', and 'general condition of society and its moral and religious progress'.²² In *The Language of the Blue Books*, Tyson Roberts points to some debate around whether these words were added later by an unknown hand, although she rightly makes the point that it was still signed off by Kay-Shuttleworth.²³ Nevertheless, despite Kay-Shuttleworth signing off the instructions, it is feasible that these words were not his. It seems unlikely that, as a Dissenter himself, he would be advocating the commissioners form an opinion on religion. His guidance memorandum specifically required 'respect for the religious scruples of all classes'.²⁴ In the event it was these four lines to which the commissioners paid much attention.

The three commissioners of the *1847 Reports*, Robert Ralph Wheeler Lingen,²⁵ Henry Robert Vaughan Johnson and Jelinger Cookson Symons,²⁶ were from the upper middle classes.

²⁰ Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue books*, p. 75-6.

²¹ James Kay-Shuttleworth, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, Part 1: Carmarthen, Glamorgan and Pembroke*, (1847), p. iv. Available at <https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/printed-material/the-blue-books-of-1847/carmarthen-glamorgan-and-pembroke> (Accessed 15 April 2024).

²² Kay-Shuttleworth, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry*, p. iv.

²³ Frank Smith in Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 76.

²⁴ Frank Smith, *The Life and Work of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth*, (1923), p. 202.

²⁵ Gillian Sutherland, 'Lingen, Ralph Robert Wheeler, Baron Lingen (1819-1905), civil servant', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2008). Available at <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34548?rskey=WHawmy&result=2> (Accessed 18 April 2024).

²⁶ John Shepherd, 'Symons, Jelinger Cookson (1809-1860), barrister and inspector of schools', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2008). Available at <https://www-oxforddnb-com>

Lingen graduated from Oxford, Johnson and Symons from Cambridge, and all were called to the Bar (Lingen and Johnson after the *Reports*). Lingen and Johnson were in their mid-twenties and Symons was 37 at the time of the *Reports*, which suggests certainly in the case of Lingen and Johnson that they were starting out on their careers and keen to impress. In addition, Lingen was a competitive individual and keen collector of honours, eventually raised to the peerage in 1885 as Baron Lingen of Lingen.²⁷ Even if the commissioners were not quite aristocracy they certainly would have aspired to it, and their Oxbridge education is likely to have fostered their imperialistic attitudes when writing their reports. As Bernard Porter writes: 'It is [the upper middle] class that provided the bulk of the empire's rulers, both in Whitehall and in the colonies'.²⁸ The upper classes felt themselves 'born to rule, and [were] trained in their public schools to feel superior, [...] the political elite of the day looked down on almost everyone'.²⁹ It seems likely that the similar backgrounds and Oxbridge education of the commissioners influenced their views of the Welsh as alien, even before the inquiry began, and motivated them to promote the Anglican Church and English language, dismissing the Welsh language as subversive and something to be discarded.

The Welsh initially welcomed the report on education, because for the poorer classes in Wales education had been haphazard as it was provided by different bodies: national schools tied to the Church of England, British schools which were secular, denominational schools (Catholic, Jewish, Nonconformist) and a few endowed schools run by local landowners, factory owners or clergy.³⁰ When the *1847 Reports* were published the Welsh felt their trust in the government had been betrayed.³¹ Tyson Roberts opines that the political aims of the *Reports* were clear and quotes from William Williams' address in Parliament that if the Welsh had been 'acquainted with the English language [...] instead of [...] with religion on their lips and wickedness in their hearts',³² civil unrest may never have developed. However, it is probable that William Williams was aware of his audience, and

com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-26897?rskey=Jkl0TY&result=1 (Accessed 18 April 2024).

²⁷ Sutherland, 'Lingen, Ralph Robert Wheeler (1819-1905).

²⁸ Bernard Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists: Empire, Society, and Culture in Britain*, (2004), p. 40.

²⁹ Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p. 48.

³⁰ Tyson Roberts, 'At Once Illogical and Unfair', p. 453.

³¹ Tyson Roberts, 'At Once Illogical and Unfair', p. 454.

³² William Williams in Tyson Roberts, 'At Once Illogical and Unfair', p. 453.

those words quoted by him in his address to Parliament which were in fact from an 'extract in one of the leading Welsh newspapers',³³ were intended ultimately to persuade MPs that an investigation into education in Wales, as had been done in Scotland, England and Ireland, was warranted. Hansard is a reliable source of Williams' words, and it could be argued that his motives for quoting those words were to persuade Parliament to act. Nevertheless, it is hardly surprising that, when the *Reports* were published and the commissioners had made comments on religion and language, the ire of the Welsh was raised.

Evan Jones, known in Wales as Ieuan Gwynedd, in his *Dissent and Morality of Wales: An Appeal to the English People*,³⁴ one of many indignant respondents to the *1847 Reports*, demonstrated that the commissioners' agenda was to denigrate the Welsh at every opportunity. His pamphlet was an appeal directly to the English people for their support against the *1847 Reports*. As an independent minister and Voluntaryist (a supporter of education funded by voluntary contributions), Jones was utterly opposed to state interference in education which will have influenced his view of the *Reports* in any case.³⁵ Born at Bryn Tynoriad, near Dolgelly, ill-health forced him to give up his ministry at Tredegar in 1847, and he became a journalist editing various magazines and periodicals until his untimely death in 1852.³⁶ Jones accompanied Symons for some of his inspections, so had first hand knowledge of them, and declared that Symons had 'no wish to visit neat and orderly houses [only] the worst parts of the town',³⁷ which betrayed an objective by Symons of portraying the worst scenario in his report. In his pamphlet, Jones ridiculed the conduct of Symons and described it as 'burlesque' or ridiculous. When he scolded the children at Blackwood school, Jones wrote:

'commenting on the remarkable dullness of one girl, he said that children in London were much more intelligent than in that school; and was informed that the very child

³³ Hansard (1846) Vol. 84, Col. 853.

³⁴ Evan Jones [Ieuan Gwynedd], *Facts, Figures and Statements, in illustration of the Dissent and Morality of Wales: An Appeal to the English People*, (1849).

³⁵ Probert, 'The Blue Books of 1847 and a Tredegar Minister', p. 13.

³⁶ Frank Price Jones, 'Jones, Evan [pseud. Ieuan Gwynedd] 1820-1852, Independent Minister and journalist', *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* (1959). Available at <https://biography.wales/article/s-JONE-EVA-1820>

³⁷ Probert, 'The Blue Books of 1847 and a Tredegar Minister', p. 18.

whose dullness he deplored, had lived all her days in London, with the exception of the fortnight previous to his visit'.³⁸

The assumption by Symons that girls from London were more intelligent than those in Wales demonstrated his preconceived prejudice against the Welsh and the standard of education they were giving. In addition, as was Jones' intention, it made Symons look foolish.

Jones reported that, as well as the commissioners having no knowledge of Wales, the language, or any respect for its religion, they consulted with the Bishop of St. Davids and Principal of St. David's College in their choice for assistants. Out of ten assistants only three were Dissenters and only one of those remained throughout the inquiry.³⁹ Jones accused the commissioners of intentionally seeking information from wholly inappropriate witnesses. Mr. Lingen, for example, sought information from Rev. John Griffith of Aberdare, an Anglican who had only resided in the parish for one month, yet neglected to speak with ministers in the area who had been there some thirty-five years.⁴⁰ As Jones pointed out, 'the clergy could hardly be expected to give a fair description of a nation of Dissenters',⁴¹ which demonstrates Lingen's objectivity from those whom he sought information was flawed, certainly as far as Jones was concerned. However, it is noteworthy that Jones had history with the Rev. John Griffith (who had written under the pseudonym *Cambro Sacerdos*) in which they had corresponded via the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* and *Cardiff Advertiser* on education in Wales before the publication of the *1847 Reports*. The dispute had prompted Jones to publish an article refuting Rev. Griffith's accusations that 'vice of every mortal description, are but synonyms for Dissent'.⁴² Despite Jones' dispute with Rev. Griffiths, which obviously darkened his personal opinion of him, it demonstrates that Anglican clergy were conflicted and as a result there was a large degree of religious bias in the *1847 Reports* which contained opinion from mainly Anglican clergy.

³⁸ Jones, *Dissent and Morality of Wales*, p. 13.

³⁹ Jones, *Dissent and Morality of Wales*, p. 12.

⁴⁰ Jones, *Dissent and Morality of Wales*, p. 19.

⁴¹ Jones, *Dissent and Morality of Wales*, p. 20.

⁴² Evan Jones, *The Dissent and Morality of Wales: with Two Letters to the Right Hon. Lord John Russell, on the Minutes of Council in their bearing on Wales*, (1847), p. 5.

Jane Williams, known as Jane Williams Ysgafell, was another respondent to the *1847 Reports*. Born in London, she was a writer and historian descended from Henry Williams of Ysgafell, from where she takes the epithet that accompanies her name. Much of her childhood was spent in Wales (for the fresh country air) where she acquired a knowledge of the Welsh language, literature and history, and developed a passion for Welsh culture and women's lives.⁴³ Her response to the *1847 Reports*, titled *Artegall, Remarks on the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, directly defended Welsh women and Welsh culture, and is described by Gwyneth Tyson Roberts as 'one of the most effective' responses.⁴⁴

Jane Williams, in a similar vein to Jones, took apart the *1847 Reports* line by line, citing examples of errors in both fact and grammar. Williams' method of attack in *Artegall* was mainly mockery, at which she was adept: she mocked their prejudices and their intelligence. Like Jones, she also referenced the Rev. John Griffith of Aberdare's evidence, directly comparing it to that of T. W. Booker, Esq. She wrote that in answer to the question of 'Providence and Economy', Rev. Griffith responded: 'Nothing can be more improvident than the Welsh miners and colliers', directly comparing Mr. Booker's response: 'Habits of Providence and Economy are, in my opinion, as well observed by the population of Glamorganshire as by that of any part of the United Kingdom'.⁴⁵ It transpired that the Rev. Griffith had only been incumbent in the parish for a few weeks, whereas Mr. Booker had been there for thirty years.⁴⁶ Williams cited other examples where the opinion of Anglican clergy had been sought even though they were relative newcomers to Wales, which demonstrated a willingness by Lingen of attaching great importance to the word of the Anglican clergy despite their short tenure in the parish, and showed his religious bias and lack of objectivity. Jane Williams' direct comparisons highlighting contradictions in the *Reports* also had the calculated effect of making the commissioners look foolish and ill-

⁴³ Deidre Beddoe, 'Williams, Jane [known as Jane Williams Ysgafell] (1806-1885), historian and writer, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2004). Available at <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-29513?rskey=pCohqZ&result=3> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁴⁴ Tyson Roberts, 'At Once Illogical and Unfair', p. 451.

⁴⁵ Jane Williams Ysgafell, *Artegall or, Remarks on the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, (1848), p. 9. Available at <https://viewer.library.wales/4810407#?xywh=54%2C270%2C2324%2C2563&cv=12> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁴⁶ Williams, *Artegall*, pp.8-9.

informed. Both Williams and Jones were in agreement that the commissioners favoured Anglican opinion.

Williams observed in her pamphlet that the *1847 Reports* had ‘multitudinous ill effects [...] attributed to the Welsh language’, and quoted commissioner Symons, who declared the Welsh language as a ‘vast drawback to Wales’, and that ‘there is no Welsh literature worthy of the name’.⁴⁷ Williams’ response was that this was such a ‘tirade as scarcely to deserve a comment’,⁴⁸ and she left no comment, which resulted in belittling his authority. His words showed a lack of knowledge of Wales or empathy with its culture and further emphasised his desire to exert his English ideals on Wales.

For the commissioners, the issue of language, as Tyson Roberts affirms, was a practical problem which, despite their interpreters, interfered with their ability to carry out their investigation; as Lingen complained, ‘not one could understand a syllable of what I said’.⁴⁹ In many ways this practical problem over the several months of the investigation probably confirmed their opinion that it would be better if the Welsh spoke English. However, the vocabulary used by Johnson, for example, regarding Welsh speakers, such as ‘defects’, ‘imperfect’, ‘trivial’, ‘inferior’, ‘ignorance’, and ‘prejudice’, demonstrated in him a pre-determined view of the Welsh language and a negativity towards it and the people who spoke it.⁵⁰

Lingen held the view that the influx of English-speaking labourers would eventually ensure that the English language would supplant the Welsh language, and stated in his report that ‘to supersede it [would] be the most important part of their education’.⁵¹ Lingen recognised that the school books provided were in English, yet most of the children spoke Welsh, therefore if the teacher spoke to the children in English they would not understand, and if

⁴⁷ Williams, *Artegall*, p. 52-53.

⁴⁸ Williams, *Artegall*, p. 53.

⁴⁹ Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 192.

⁵⁰ Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 197.

⁵¹ Robert Ralph Wheeler Lingen, *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, Part 1: Carmarthen, Glamorgan and Pembroke*, (1847), p. 7. Available at <https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/printed-material/the-blue-books-of-1847/carmarthen-glamorgan-and-pembroke> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

the teacher spoke in Welsh he would be 'superseding the most important part of the child's instruction', that is of learning English. His solution was to use the Welsh language as a scaffold for the purpose of learning English and then to either leave no trace of Welsh or have it 'at least stowed away'.⁵² It is clear that Lingen held no regard for the Welsh language, or its culture, and saw it as beneficial to be discarded.

It is apparent from the reaction to the *1847 Reports* when they were published that for the Welsh a nerve had been touched. Both Evan Jones' and Jane Williams' responses, as well as responses by others, ensured that the *Reports* would galvanise the Welsh to preserve their language and culture in the long term. William Williams, who initiated the *1847 Reports*, felt a knowledge of the English language had afforded him opportunities and it would do the same for his compatriots; it was not his intention to obliterate the Welsh language. In the same way Kay-Shuttleworth saw education as a way of improving the lives of the poor and thus society in general, and assumed barristers would take a more objective view. The commissioners were undoubtedly a product of their time, Oxbridge educated and as Porter observed, 'trained in their public schools to feel superior'⁵³. Certainly Lingen and Johnson were young and keen to impress with perhaps an inflated sense of their own abilities. It seems clear that the commissioners approached the Inquiry with a prejudiced idea of both what they would find and the solution they were to promote.

⁵² Lingen, *The 1847 Report*, p. 31.

⁵³ Porter, *The Absent-Minded Imperialists*, p. 48

Chapter Two:

‘The case for the prosecution’ and the case for the defence

Frank Smith, *The Life of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth*, p. 204.

Despite the furore the *1847 Reports* caused, there were parts of it that had some credence. This chapter will explore any validity of the *1847 Reports*, and the relationship that developed between Harry Longueville Jones and Ralph Lingen and its effect on education. Evan Jones had admitted that there were educational deficiencies in Wales as well as moral and social defects but that the Blue Books gave a distorted view of Wales. Jones was an advocate of a Nonconformist Voluntary system of education which in the end did not have the resources to sustain it and did not survive for long.⁵⁴ It was also true that many Welsh parents regarded learning English as important, so that opportunities would be opened up for their children for jobs and social advancement. Even though some teachers’ knowledge of English was imperfect, there were severe punishments for children who were caught speaking Welsh both in the day schools and outside them.⁵⁵ Unsurprisingly, after the *1847 Reports* were published there was considerable resentment towards the government and Kay-Shuttleworth which temporarily strengthened the Voluntaryist movement.⁵⁶ However, Kay-Shuttleworth’s grand vision for a state-supervised education system throughout England and Wales, with both trained and monitored teaching staff, and financial grants, had not been quashed. Education and religion had always been closely associated in Wales. The Nonconformists were alarmed at the possibility of state intervention that the *1847 Reports* foreshadowed and clung to their preferred system of Voluntaryism. The Anglican Church were equally alarmed at the evidence submitted in the *1847 Reports* by parish clergy denigrating the Welsh.⁵⁷ Thus, a deputation of three churchmen, Bishop Thirlwall, Bishop Short and Sir Thomas Phillips, committed to the Church of England, and seeking to enhance its tarnished reputation after the *1847 Reports*, called on Kay-Shuttleworth for Welsh speaking inspectors to be appointed to Wales, one for the north and one for the south. Kay-Shuttleworth, unable to justify two posts, appointed Harry Longueville Jones as Her

⁵⁴ Probert, ‘Blue Books of 1847 and a Tredegar Minister’, p. 20.

⁵⁵ Tyson Roberts, ‘At Once Illogical and Unfair’, p. 454.

⁵⁶ Smith, *The Life and Works of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth*, p. 205.

⁵⁷ Williams, ‘Longueville Jones and Welsh education’, p. 418.

Majesty's Inspector of Church schools in 1848, for the whole of Wales.⁵⁸ Kay-Shuttleworth, as Longueville Jones' patron, clearly felt Longueville Jones, who was as passionate about education as himself, together with his ability to speak Welsh and interest in Welsh culture, would calm the situation. The deputation also requested that the government assist in creating teacher training colleges within the Principality, again one in north and one in south Wales, with temporarily lower entry standards, and a grant towards the salaries of certified teachers who took up posts in Welsh schools. Favouring Wales in this way would show that the Church were sensitive to the needs of the peculiarly distinctive needs of the Welsh.⁵⁹

Longueville Jones was born in Piccadilly, London. After his marriage he lived in Paris for ten years (where his mother had connections), and worked as a journalist which led him to the study of contemporary social problems and an interest in education. On his return from Paris in 1846 he settled in Anglesey and shortly afterwards was appointed HMI. In this post he promoted the Welsh language and culture and the Principality's distinctive needs.⁶⁰ He was aware that the schools he was inspecting were controlled by a religious minority but that most of the children attending them were Nonconformist – in 1857 only 6,130 of 19,949 pupils had Anglican parents. It seems incomprehensible now but at that time denominational rivalry in education was constant, which Longueville Jones found difficult to deal with.⁶¹

Only two years after the *1847 Reports*, Longueville Jones inspected 190 Welsh schools in less than twelve months. His inspections garnered quite different results from the commissioners'. His reports described the teachers as 'well informed' and 'remarkably intelligent'. He found some teachers encouraged the use of both English and Welsh to facilitate bi-lingualism in their pupils, which was something Longueville Jones advocated and saw as a huge benefit and advantage to Welsh children.⁶² He considered the language as

⁵⁸ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 418.

⁵⁹ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 419.

⁶⁰ H. G. Williams, 'Jones, Harry Longueville (1806-1870), inspector of schools and antiquary, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2008). Available at <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-15009?rskey=iIQS5m&result=1> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁶¹ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 424.

⁶² Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 426.

part of the culture of Wales which should be preserved, improved and refined.⁶³ It was in direct opposition to Lingen's idea of using Welsh only as a 'scaffold' in the short term as a means of eventually eradicating it and replacing it with English.⁶⁴ This confirms Lingen's lack of awareness of Welsh culture and the diametrically opposed views Lingen and Longueville Jones held. As Tyson Roberts observed: 'Longueville Jones [...] produced the report that Kay-Shuttleworth must have hoped for'.⁶⁵ However, by the time Longueville Jones had written and submitted his report Kay-Shuttleworth had resigned due to ill-health, and Lingen was appointed as his successor. Unfortunately, the wildly different approaches that Lingen and Longueville Jones took over education ensured a difficult relationship that went from mutual dislike to mutual abhorrence.⁶⁶ Lingen was described as bureaucratic and authoritarian but his hostility towards Longueville Jones may have derived from feeling defensive that his own work of inspecting schools in Wales was being re-visited.⁶⁷ If this was true then Lingen's defensiveness over the *1847 Reports* soured his relationship with Longueville Jones and other inspectors, affecting policy for the next twenty years.

Nevertheless, there were some areas in which Longueville Jones and Lingen agreed. Longueville Jones had noted in his report that many schools lacked teaching aids and even blackboards, and teachers were often compelled to use walls as a substitute.⁶⁸ Lingen had noted: 'how little attention had been paid to apparatus', and that only 62 of 698 schools were deemed to be sufficiently supplied.⁶⁹ However, his supposed objectivity was certainly absent when he reported in highly subjective language: 'the school is held in a ruinous hovel', and 'the school is held in the mistress's house [...] I shall never forget the hot, sickening smell', when describing the conditions in which children were taught.⁷⁰ Where Longueville Jones saw it as creditable that teachers were able to teach at all with so few aids and poor conditions, Lingen saw it as a failing and showed no empathy with the poverty he encountered in Wales, which demonstrates their very different perspectives. In H. G.

⁶³ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 427.

⁶⁴ Lingen, *The 1847 Report*, p. 31.

⁶⁵ Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 225.

⁶⁶ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 432.

⁶⁷ Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books*, p. 225.

⁶⁸ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 427.

⁶⁹ Lingen, *The 1847 Report*, p. 18.

⁷⁰ Lingen, *The 1847 Report*, p. 16.

Williams' 'Longueville Jones and Welsh Education', Longueville Jones described teachers who he found to be 'inadequate' as 'well meaning', and blamed either their youth and inexperience, or their age and infirmity for their failings.⁷¹ Longueville Jones believed in Kay-Shuttleworth's vision and felt that with resources, and a trained teaching force, education in Wales could be improved.⁷² It is possible of course that Longueville Jones was an optimist and saw the best in people, but it is credible that Lingen was, as Bishop describes him, a victim of his own upbringing who knew virtually nothing of poverty, hunger, disease and squalor.⁷³ What was evident from both Lingen and Longueville Jones' reports was that there was abject poverty in Wales.

Although Lingen was appointed in to Kay-Shuttleworth's role it was not without some hesitation from the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, who described Lingen as: 'clever and industrious [...] his manner of communications would I suspect be found less conciliatory,'⁷⁴ Even Kay-Shuttleworth only described Lingen as 'doing very well' in his position.⁷⁵ Even though Lingen was not paid at the same level as Kay-Shuttleworth had been, which may have caused some resentment, he had the ability to influence and determine educational policy.⁷⁶ By the time of his resignation, Kay-Shuttleworth had created a cordial working partnership with both professional educators, and their employers and advisers.

Regrettably, under Lingen the atmosphere became one of hostility, when one MP described Lingen as treating educators like 'begging imposters and dishonest knaves'.⁷⁷ The *Saturday Review* described Lingen as 'quite as powerful [as Mr. Lowe⁷⁸] and a good deal more offensive'.⁷⁹ These sentiments show that Lingen was a difficult man to like and a difficult man with whom to work. Longueville Jones continued to promote the distinctive needs of

⁷¹ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 428.

⁷² Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 429.

⁷³ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 160.

⁷⁴ Lord John Russell, in A. S. Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', *British Journal of Education Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, (1968), p. 140.

⁷⁵ Kay-Shuttleworth in Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 140.

⁷⁶ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 141.

⁷⁷ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 142-3.

⁷⁸ Robert Lowe was a politician given the non-cabinet post with responsibility to the Committee of Council on Education. Jonathan Parry, 'Lowe, Robert, Viscount Sherbrooke (1811-1892), politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2021). Available at <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-17088> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁷⁹ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 148.

Wales and proposed that bilingual methods of education were the answer to the language problem in Wales. He wrote in his reports that the Welsh accepted that English was the language of business, industry and commerce but at the same time were very attached to their own language, which showed a good deal more empathy for the Welsh than Lingen possessed.

Another area with which Longueville Jones was concerned was establishing support for schools in remote areas of Wales, of which there were many. He pressed for more elasticity in the system so that areas that consisted of scattered homesteads and farms, and had no hopes of raising school buildings, would still qualify for government grants. His idea was akin to the Griffith Jones circulating schools, a peripatetic system of travelling school teachers who would visit twice or three times weekly, setting the children tasks to be completed by the next visit, in buildings made available by local farmers.⁸⁰ He also suggested that he should be consulted on decisions for grant applications as he had visited each school and knew their situations and would be better placed to make a decision. This suggestion by Longueville Jones seemed a sensible way of ensuring education for all, even in remote areas that could not afford to build a school. The final suggestion by Longueville Jones was that Wales should receive a grant of £10-£12,000 per year to meet Wales' distinctive needs. This would be used to support requests for building grants for poor and remote areas, support more bilingual teacher training and to subsidise new curriculum developments in Welsh schools. However, not one of Longueville Jones' suggestions were ever considered by Lingen who was more interested in standardising education and reducing expenditure.⁸¹ In reality Lingen was not really interested in education or in enriching the lives of the poor, but more, as Bishop suggests, of only educating the poor in so far as was appropriate to their station in life.⁸² Longueville Jones' reports had the effect of antagonising Lingen which he felt undermined the Department's authority. Had Kay-Shuttleworth still been in post, there is the strong likelihood that Longueville Jones' suggestions may well have been taken up.⁸³

⁸⁰ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 436.

⁸¹ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 437.

⁸² Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 160.

⁸³ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 439.

Two types of report were written by inspectors, the first known as the special report, written after each school visit, and sent off to the Privy Council Office at monthly intervals to be copied and returned. These became costly to print and, after 1861, amendments were made of style or grammar, without major objections from inspectors. The second type of report was an annual, more reflective report which was often long and contained inspectors' views on the state of education, which Kay-Shuttleworth himself often criticised and suggested amendments in style and matter before they were printed.⁸⁴ Over time, however, it seems that Lingen and Robert Lowe became more extreme and if a report did not conform to the Department's policy it was suppressed. Robert Lowe was a politician given the non-cabinet post with responsibility to the Committee of Council on Education.⁸⁵ Lingen and Lowe's collaboration, in preventing money being wasted on inefficient teaching by over-sympathetic inspectors, resulted in opposition among inspectors and in Parliament. Throughout the 1860s Robert Lowe treated the inspectorate as subordinate which resulted in HMIs carrying out Department policy as both he and Lingen interpreted it.⁸⁶ This culminated in Lingen suppressing Longueville Jones' report of 1863-64, in which Lingen objected to what he called opinion and not fact when Longueville Jones had described the excellent instruction given by an uncertificated school teacher: 'the schoolmistress is the best infant teacher in my district, admirably fitted for her duties in every respect, and deserving of the greater credit because she is not certificated'.⁸⁷ This clearly was quite the opposite of what Lingen wanted to demonstrate, as Longueville Jones told the Select Committee: 'it told against their side of the question and in favour of mine'.⁸⁸ Lingen had been so incensed about the report he reported him to Earl Granville, the Lord President, who in turn rebuked Longueville Jones for 'insubordination and disloyalty'. The resulting crisis ended in Longueville Jones' virtual dismissal and forced resignation, and Lowe's resignation from office after Parliament formally reprimanded the Committee of Council of

⁸⁴ J. E. Dunford, 'Robert Lowe and Inspectors' Reports', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 25., No. 2., (1977), p. 157.

⁸⁵ Parry, 'Lowe, Robert, Viscount Sherbrooke'

⁸⁶ Dunford, 'Robert Lowe and Inspectors' Reports', p. 166; Parry, 'Lowe, Robert, Viscount Sherbrooke'.

⁸⁷ Hansard, Volume 176: Monday 25 July 1864, Col. 2076. Available at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1864-07-25/debates/f71a185a-6114-4380-88b7-6af22c935c95/Resolution?highlight=education%20wales#contribution-5757c949-c89e-4265-ad00-a4b400f78ed8> (Accessed 30 May 2024).

⁸⁸ Hansard, Vol. 176: Monday 25 July 1864, Col. 2077.

Education.⁸⁹ This indicates the animosity that had developed between Longueville Jones and Lingen.

As Bishop argues, it would be unfair to suggest Lingen's influence as wholly malevolent. He felt that education should be non-denominational, part of the reason in 1861 he attached the grant to only the 'three Rs', which undermined the emphasis on religious education. He also took an interest in the movement for university reform and lent his support to the campaign for some of the nation's charitable endowments to the education of girls.⁹⁰ However, on balance he probably held back education rather than drove it forward. He was not a team player, and had a policy of keeping Whitehall officials separated from teachers and inspectors which proved to be detrimental to education in the long term. Their advice was seldom asked for and, if it was offered, it was frequently ignored.⁹¹ During Lingen's tenure the Education Department became increasingly unpopular. His dogged determination to impose his regulations ensured its unpopularity with teachers and inspectors, much of it aimed at the disliked Revised Code (a payment by results system which paid a grant on attendance as well as the successful completion of an examination in the three Rs).⁹² Lingen's default was to act within the letter of the law, supervising the application of grants made by Parliament for the education of the poor, affirming his previous occupation as barrister, and his Oxbridge education which gave him an inflated feeling of self.⁹³ This was in contrast to Kay-Shuttleworth and indeed Longueville Jones who both had a genuine interest in education and were far more open-minded, forward thinking and philanthropic.

Politically, Lingen's tenure of twenty years in office damaged the reputation of the Education Department, so much so that politicians declined to put secondary education under its charge and public schools refused to have anything to do with it.⁹⁴ The workplace culture he had created in the Department had had a serious effect on how it was perceived

⁸⁹ Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh education', p. 440; Parry, 'Lowe, Robert, Viscount Sherbrooke'.

⁹⁰ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 160.

⁹¹ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 161.

⁹² Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 145.

⁹³ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 158.

⁹⁴ Bishop, 'Ralph Lingen, Secretary to the Education Department 1849-1870', p. 162.

by others, and almost certainly hampered education in Wales. In the long term despite Lingen's pursuit of eradicating the Welsh language, his efforts probably galvanised nationalism and ensured the language survived.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the legacy of the 1847 *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* on Welsh politics, its culture and educational reform in Wales was longer lasting than most government inquiries of the time.

Politically, Lingen's twenty year tenure in the Education Department did little to enhance its reputation. The authoritarian, unbending culture he created affected how the Department was perceived by others which resulted in politicians refusing to put secondary education under its charge. In addition, public schools wanted no connection with it either, neither of which were ringing endorsements of its success. It was very far removed from the atmosphere that had been fostered by Kay-Shuttleworth of a cordial working partnership with both teaching staff and the inspectorate. Moreover, Lingen and Lowe's attempts to promote their policies by manipulating or suppressing inspector's reports only succeeded in embarrassing the Department which resulted in a Select Committee Inquiry and in Lowe's resignation.

Culturally, the 1847 Reports had a negative effect on the Welsh language initially. Surprisingly, and probably much to Lingen's chagrin, his hostility to the Welsh language ensured its survival in the long term, unintentionally promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture by galvanising Welsh nationalism. The tone of the 1847 Reports, and the attitudes of the Education Department, meant that educated and enthusiastic people like Evan Jones and Jane Williams were highly motivated to successfully defend the Welsh people, language and culture. In terms of religion, the commissioners, as Anglicans, showed a great deal of religious bias, which was at odds with Kay-Shuttleworth's advice of: 'respect of the religious scruples of all classes'.⁹⁵ This is evidenced in their consulting with the Bishop of St. Davids and Principal of St. David's College when appointing assistants – only three of

⁹⁵ Frank Smith, *The Life and Work of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth*, p. 202.

whom were Dissenters and the rest Anglicans, and the weight which was attributed to the opinions of Anglican clerics in the *1847 Reports*.

In terms of education, initially under Kay-Shuttleworth, and after the appointment of Longueville Jones to dilute the reviled *1847 Reports*, there was a shadow of hope that perhaps education in Wales would be strengthened. Longueville Jones' ideas of a nation of bi-lingual people, rich in the culture of their homeland, with support for remote rural areas, had much merit, and if Kay-Shuttleworth had been heading the Department, they may even have been acted upon. However, the single-minded focus of Lingen on saving money, and his lack of vision where education was concerned, held back elementary education. Lingen's appointment frustrated Longueville Jones' heroic efforts to reform Welsh education, which was to Wales' detriment. Education did improve, slowly, but, for instance, it was not until 1893 that Wales had its own university.

It seems that the commissioners, as barristers with no knowledge of education, the Welsh language, or Nonconformity, were the wrong people, speaking in the wrong language and asking the wrong questions when they took on the job of investigating education in Wales. Trained in their public schools to feel superior, they showed very little empathy with the problems facing Wales at that time, and let their prejudices overtake them.

Perhaps one of the lasting legacies of the *1847 Reports*, certainly for historians, is the insight into how people lived and worked in Wales in mid-Victorian Britain. Lingen's description of the school being held in a 'ruinous hovel' and the 'hot sickening smell' in the mistress's house, show the poverty experienced by many inhabitants of Wales at that time. The *1847 Reports* highlighted the poverty in Wales and perhaps if the commissioners had stuck to education, instead of giving their opinions on morals and religion, and Longueville Jones had been one of the commissioners, matters would have been different. The language would not have declined in the short term and bi-lingual education in Wales might have been celebrated as a cultural and political asset.

The most striking legacy of the *1847 Reports* is that it is quite possibly the only government report given its own alias of the Blue Books, which is still known and remembered throughout Wales, although not fondly, after almost 200 years.

(6,714 words)

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