

**To what extent did women in South Wales conform to the idealised
image of the 'Welsh Mam' during the period 1840-1914?**

EMA for A329: The making of Welsh history

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Introduction

The nature of work in industrial South Wales during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was incredibly laborious and given the long-established view of females being of the 'weaker sex', industrial factories quickly became dominated by the male workforce. As a result of these factors, one of the most prominent social values to emerge from this new way of industrial life in Wales was the idealised image of the 'Welsh Mam'. The image itself was popularised during the mid-nineteenth century industrial period in Wales and stereotyped Welsh married women as the 'home maker'. A 'Welsh Mam's' sole responsibilities were to tend to the home and the people who lived there; typically, her husband, children, and any lodgers she may have had. Her daily activities would include financial budgeting, shopping, cleaning, washing, and cooking to name a few.¹ A family's personal image was a significant factor of social respectability during this period in Wales and the responsibility of upholding this image was often placed on the woman of the house. Although the image of the 'Welsh Mam' has often been described as archaic, it has also been argued that the image has continued to be portrayed in media from its origins and through to the modern day, with the portrayal often being confined to mothers of the South Wales valleys in particular.²

¹ Deirdre Beddoe (2000). 'Good Wives and Respectable Rebels, 1900-1914' in *Out of the Shadows*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, p.8.

² Gwenno Ffrancon (2010). 'The Angel in the Home? Rachel Thomas, Sian Philips and the On-Screen Embodiment of the Welsh Mam' in *The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, vol.16, pp.115-16. [Online] Available at: <https://www.cymmrodorion.org/the-transaction/angel-home-rachel-thomas-sian-philips-screen-embodiment-welsh-mam/> (Accessed: 11 May 2024).

Although the idealised image of the 'Welsh Mam' originated during the mid-nineteenth century period at a time in which South Wales had become heavily industrialised, it is important to note that the term itself was adopted later as a way for historians to understand its roots and the Welsh family matriarch herself. Women have often been overlooked in the historiography of Wales and the study of Welsh women has only taken off in the last forty years or so.³ Deirdre Beddoe is one of the most prominent historians of Wales and has conducted extensive research into the lives of women during the industrial period as well as the two world wars and the interwar period. *Out of the Shadows* covers the lives of both working class and middle-class women during the twentieth century period, focusing on principal factors such as home life, education, health, and politics.⁴ Furthermore, Beddoe's *Discovering Women's History: A practical manual* is an instrumental guide in supporting people with an interest in exploring the history of women in Britain. The book provides readers with background information on the most prominent factors of women's lives in Britain during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well as a guide on how to conduct focused research, however, it only touches upon Wales in certain sections throughout.⁵ Angela V. John has also provided indispensable contributions to the study of women's lives in Wales. John's edited collection *Our Mothers Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History, 1830-1939* provides focused studies on key aspects of Welsh life for women during the intended period and covers working-, middle- and upper-class women. John is also the author of several extensive biographies of prominent Welsh women during the industrial period, however, the biographies focus on women of the upper classes of

³ Deirdre Beddoe (2000). 'Introduction' in *Out of the Shadows*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, p.6.

⁴ Deirdre Beddoe (2000). *Out of the Shadows*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

⁵ Deirdre Beddoe (1983). *Discovering Women's History: A practical manual*. London: Pandora Press.

society including Margaret Haig Thomas, 2nd Viscountess of Rhondda and Lady Charlotte Guest of the Dowlais Ironworks.⁶

This dissertation intends to contribute to the study of Welsh industrial women and discuss the ways in which the women of South Wales inserted themselves into the public sphere through their employment contributions and political activities, thus challenging the idealised image of the ‘Welsh Mam’. Although there are several recent studies surrounding Wales and the women who lived there, we are still faced with an incomplete historiography surrounding their contributions to Welsh industrial life. It is often argued that historical accounts relay the story of Wales and England as a whole, particularly in the historiography of women’s suffrage which is often portrayed as a predominantly English movement.⁷ This dissertation will aim to provide a focused study on the most prominent and populous industrial areas of South Wales such as Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff, and Aberdare. Beddoe and John are just two examples of the prominent historians who have produced works intended to place women back into the history of Wales. As these new studies are emerging, we are learning that Welsh women did in fact embark on activities that often pushed the boundaries of their social image and respectability. The perception that Welsh industrial women remained in the private sphere, tending to her home and family is continuously being challenged by modern historians of Wales.

⁶ Angela V. John (2014). *Turning the Tide: The Life of Lady Rhondda*. Cardigan: Parthian Books. & Angela V. John & Revel Guest (2007). *Lady Charlotte Guest: An Extraordinary Life*. Gloucestershire: Tempus The History Press.

⁷ Kirsti Bohata (2002). “For Wales, See England’? Suffrage and the New Woman’ in Wales in *Women’s History Review*, p.643. [Online] Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09612020200200342?needAccess=true> (Accessed: 13 May 2024).

This dissertation will analyse two of the most significant factors of Welsh women's lives that went against the grain of what was expected of them in industrialised South Wales. Firstly, there will be an in-depth study into the ways in which women contributed to the financial stability and upkeep of their households. This will be achieved by looking at the ways in which women viewed the work that they completed and whether it was deemed as significant by local and governmental authorities. There will be a particular focus on whether women had embarked on paid work outside of the private sphere of their home. The information that will be gathered to achieve this will be drawn from the censuses of 1851-1911 with a particular focus on women between the ages of 20-50 years old and who were in most cases married, as this is the typical demographic for whom the image of the 'Welsh Mam' would have been assigned to. There will also be a discussion surrounding legislations and policies that emerged during the industrial period that limited the amount of paid work a woman could do and whether this deterred them from the industrial workforce. Two notable legislations that will be considered include the 1844 Factory Bill and the Mines Act of 1842.

Secondly, there will be a discussion surrounding women's political activity. Politics was solely a man's world during the period in question, however, this certainly did not deter some women from attempting to insert themselves into the political matters of the country. This section will analyse the political endeavours that women embarked on within the public sphere. The suffragette movement of Britain is a subject that has been explored in great depth by historians, however, there remains a gap in the historiography of the movement in

Wales. Prominent figures have been explored many times over, but there is room here to discover the ways in which working class women in industrial South Wales contributed to the fight for equal rights within Britain. Wales played a significant role in the suffragette movement and was oftentimes subject to militant activities. This subject will be explored with the use of British newspaper articles and an analysis on how the behaviours of suffragettes were portrayed in local media and how they were received by the public in Wales. This section will also focus on women in South Wales of a working-class background who contributed significantly to the suffrage movement, most notably Rachel Barrett, Mary Keating-Hill and Elizabeth Andrews.

Chapter One: Women at work

The nineteenth century image of the 'Welsh Mam' depicted a wife and mother who stayed at home in the private sphere whilst her husband worked long strenuous hours in the public workplace. The ideology of 'separate spheres' for men and women came into fruition during the Victorian period in Britain and established a set of boundaries for the sexes. Men were accepted into the public sphere of business and politics whilst women were condemned to the private sphere of home and religion.⁸ Looking at idealised images can give us an indispensable insight into what was expected from specific groups of people contemporarily. Images often provide people with a set of rules to live by and they are often made to feel inadequate should they not live up to the expectations of those around them.⁹

The image of the Victorian 'home maker' is most notably reflected in the 1854-62 poem *The Angel in the House* by Coventry Patmore. The heroine of the poem, Honoria, is referred to as a 'maid' in various sections throughout the poem, with the leading male praying for 'some hard thing to do, some work of fame or labour immense' in order to work hard and provide for his future wife.¹⁰ This portrayal establishes the Victorian ideal of a male's place in the public sphere, working to financially provide for his family whilst the female tends to the

⁸ Tam May (2019). *A Dissatisfying Ideology: Separate Spheres in the 19th Century*. The Dream Book Blog: Psychological insights on history, mystery, and the arts. Available at: <https://thedreambookblog.wordpress.com/2019/01/06/a-dissatisfying-ideology-separate-spheres-in-the-19th-century/> (Accessed: 14 May 2024).

⁹ Deirdre Beddoe (1983). *Discovering Women's History: A practical manual*. London: Pandora Press, p.18.

¹⁰ Coventry Patmore (1854-62). *The Angel in the House*. [Kindle edition] (2011) p.14. Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B004TS595A/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_d_asin_title_351_o00?ie=UTF8&psc=1 (Accessed: 14 May 2024).

private matters of the home and children. Although *The Angel in the House* was published in the mid-nineteenth century, it was unable to gain significant popularity until the latter years of the century and remained popular into the beginning of the twentieth century, when the views of 'separate spheres' had taken significant roots in Victorian Britain.¹¹ Patmore goes on to describe Honoria as 'simply, subtly sweet', a woman with the 'chiefest grace'.¹² The poem certainly romanticised the life of a British Victorian woman. The image of the 'Welsh Mam' often depicts a hardworking, religious woman who takes great pride in cleanliness and raising a good family, she gains a degree of respectability upon achieving and maintaining this image.¹³ In reality however, there was a stark contrast between this angelic image and the real day to day lives of the mothers and wives in industrialised areas, especially the South Wales valleys.

it was no easy task maintaining a well-kept home in South Wales during the industrial period and a woman's work was often never ending. Housing conditions were typically poor in terms of overcrowding, water supply, and disposal of waste; all of which hindered a woman's ability to achieve the ultimate goal of cleanliness and a well looked after family.¹⁴ In a tour of South Wales in 1850, author and historian, Thomas Carlyle, described the iron town of Merthyr Tydfil as 'one of the sootiest, squalidest, and ugliest' towns in the world.

¹¹ Anon (2011) 'The Angel in the House'. *Cuny.edu*. [Online] Available at: http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/novel_19c/thackeray/angel.html (Accessed: 14 May 2024).

¹² Coventry Patmore (1854-62). *The Angel in the House*. [Kindle edition] (2011), pp.10-18. Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B004TS595A/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_d_asin_title_351_o00?ie=UTF8&psc=1 (Accessed: 14 May 2024).

¹³ Siobhan Denton (2017). 'New Series | Beddoe's Women: Being Mam' *Wales Arts Review*, 03 Sep. [Online] Available at: https://www.walesartsreview.org/new-series-beddoes-women-being-mam/#google_vignette (Accessed: 14 May 2024).

¹⁴ Dot Jones (2011) 'Counting the Cost of Coal: Women's Lives in the Rhondda, 1881-1911 in Angela V. John (2011) *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History, 1830-1939*. University of Wales Press, p.116.

Carlyle's shock at the state of a town that was once one of the 'prettiest places' suggests that industrial towns and cities in South Wales were subject to an uncommon amount of dirt and grime.¹⁵ As can be seen from this depiction of Merthyr Tydfil, women in South Wales were fighting a constant battle against the most unsanitary of environments in order to maintain the respectable image that was held in such high priority during the nineteenth century.

In an oral interview conducted by the St Fagans National Museum of History, a Mrs Gwen Davies who was born in Dowlais in 1896 discusses the chore of cleaning the men's work clothes. The men in her family worked as coal miners and the clothes would need to be 'boiled every night' after they were brought home 'soaking with sweat'.¹⁶ Another oral account discussing early twentieth century housework is given by a Mrs May Jenkins of Swansea who was born in 1905. Mrs Jenkins explains that her mother's weekly routine involved a great deal of scrubbing, washing, and shopping. The shopping would need to be carried out on a regular basis during the industrial period as there were limited ways to keep food fresh. Mrs Jenkins discussed her mother's commitment to keep a clean and tidy home and expressed that her mother would 'scrub her toilet ever day of her life' no matter the circumstances.¹⁷ As we can see from these oral accounts, a considerable amount of stamina and strength would have been required to keep up with the daily grind of housework in the industrial towns and cities of South Wales. Women here were required to

¹⁵ Thomas Carlyle (1850) In James Anthony Froude (1885) *Thomas Carlyle: A History of his Life in London, 1834-1881*. Vol.1. Franklin Square: Harper & Brothers, p.31.

¹⁶ Mrs Gwen Davies (no date) Interview 8. *Cleanliness is Next to Godliness (Welsh audio)* Museum Wales. [Online] Available at: https://museum.wales/welsh_womans_history/8_cleanliness/ (Accessed: 15 May 2024).

¹⁷ Mrs May Jenkins (no date) Interview 9. *The Weekly Routine*. Museum Wales. [Online] Available at: https://museum.wales/welsh_womans_history/9_weekly_routine/ (Accessed: 15 May 2024).

battle against the harshest of living conditions and poor hygiene in order to keep a clean home and a respectable family, this is far out of reach of the romanticised image of Patmore's *Angel in the House*. Furthermore, there were no days off or annual leave in which women could take respite from their duties, so it is fair to assume that the Victorian ideology of women being of the weaker sex was out of touch with reality.

Although much of the existing historiography surrounding the women of Wales discusses their contributions to society in terms of household chores and childcare, their history is certainly not confined to the private sphere.¹⁸ Many married working-class women did in fact push the boundaries of the 'separate spheres' ideology to embark on business ventures. For example, the *Pearse's Commercial Directory to Swansea* that was published in 1854 lists a number of married women who were considered to be business owners during that year. A Mrs Elizabeth Brooks was listed as a 'gun maker and toy dealer' and a Mrs Hughes and Mrs Kneath, both of Oxford Street in Swansea, were listed as an 'ironmonger' and a 'wheelwright' respectively.¹⁹ Each of which were not job roles that would have necessarily been deemed as respectable for a woman to engage with. Further on in the century in the 1869 *Pearse & Brown's Swansea Directory*, female names make a greater appearance than that of the 1854 directory. In 1869, there are 297 search results for 'Mrs' and the majority are listed under occupations such as milliner, dress maker, grocer, lodging house keeper, and dealing in various goods; all of which would have been viewed contemporarily as suitable jobs for women. Furthermore, A Mrs W. Evans was listed as a 'block maker' and

¹⁸ Deirdre Beddoe (1983). *Discovering Women's History: A practical manual*. Pandora Press, p.8.

¹⁹ E. Pearce (1854). *Pearse's Commercial Directory to Swansea* [Online] Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.30136286> (Accessed: 16 May 2024) p.12-26.

there was a surprising number of results for married women listed as ‘tobacconist’, a product that would not have typically been associated with women at this time.²⁰ It is important to note that not all women listed on the two directories mentioned were entered with their marital title and therefore it is difficult to gain an accurate result for how many married women were officially business owners when studying local directories for this period. The findings do however show that not all married women in South Wales remained in the private sphere tending to home and family, some did in fact pursue work in the public sphere and in a few cases, even undertook work that was not considered as acceptable for women in the Victorian era.

The case of women’s work can also be studied by looking at the census returns for the period. This gives us a better understanding of the ways in which women viewed their work in terms of the occupation title that they gave to census collectors at the time that the data was compiled, as well as a change in women’s working patterns over the period in question. The following census data has been collected from the *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)* system that provides a digitised version of the original Census Enumerator’s Books from 1851-1911.²¹ It was common practice during the nineteenth century census’ for a married woman’s employment status to be entered as ‘occupation’s wife’ if she was considered to be assisting her husband in his occupation.²² It was certainly not a new concept for women

²⁰ Pearse & Brown (1869). *Pearse & Brown’s Swansea Directory* [Online] Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.30136287> (Accessed: 16 May 2024) pp. 1-125.

²¹ *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)* icem.data-archive.ac.uk. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024).

²² Xuesheng You (2020) ‘Working with Husband? “Occupation’s Wife” and Married Women’s Employment in the Censuses in England and Wales between 1851 and 1911’, *Social Science History*, 44(4), p.587 [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2020.32> (Accessed: 20 May 2024).

to be working alongside their husbands, this had been common practice for people working in agriculture before it was succeeded by industrialisation and oftentimes, the entire family was expected to contribute to farming tasks. In the 1851 census data for Swansea, there are only sixteen entries for married women between the ages of 20-50 years old considered to be working alongside her husband, with just a slight increase to eighteen in 1861.²³ This shows that as industrialisation was rapidly occupying the majority of the workforce, there was a dramatic decrease in the amount of wives that were assisting in their husband's occupation. This is mostly given to the nature of work that was available, the majority of men in South Wales had shifted from agricultural work to industrial labour away from the home and the harsh conditions of the new workplace were deemed unsuitable for a woman to occupy. The typical occupations included in these two census' are the wives of craftsmen dealing in various goods, most commonly cabinets and baskets, as well as the wives of bakers and grocers. The occupations listed here would have required a fair amount of manual labour and it is likely that the wife's involvement, although she was not directly paid for her labour, was instrumental to the completion of workloads and subsequently the financial survival of her family. Furthermore, these job roles would have been carried out either in the home or close by, making it far more accessible for the wife to assist her husband.

²³ Data return for 'married women, Swansea, 20-50 years, 1851'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024). & Data return for 'married women, Swansea, 20-50 years, 1861'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024).

Moving along to the 1881 census for Swansea, there are over seventy married women whose employment is entered under 'occupation's wife'.²⁴ The occupations entered here however, vary much more widely than the census' of the preceding years. In this census we see the emergence of clerical and skilled labour and contrary to the suggestion that working-class women in Wales were 'generally inferior in intelligence and education to the men', some were in fact listed as assisting their husbands in various skilled roles including accountants, clerks and commercial agents.²⁵ From the data of the 1881 census, we can see that some married women in Swansea, did contribute to the family's income through assisting their husbands in skilled roles and that their contribution was deemed important enough to be entered into the census records. The practice of listing a married woman under the occupation of her husband was eradicated in the census of 1901 onwards. From here, women who assisted their husbands in their occupation were now considered 'unoccupied'²⁶. As a result of this, the most common occupation listed in the 1901 census for married women in Swansea is different variations of 'household duties'.²⁷ It is therefore difficult to decipher from the 1901 census onwards whether or not a married woman was assisting her husband in his occupation or whether she felt that her 'household duties' were worthy of being considered as an occupation. It is important to note that there has been much debate between historians regarding the reliability of using census data to record

²⁴ Data return for 'married women, Swansea, 20-50 years, 1881'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024).

²⁵ Parliament. House of Commons (1847). *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* (Command Papers, 870 871 872) p.486. [Online] Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/parlipapers/result/pgpresultpage?accountid=14697&groupid=95579&pgId=6661c20d-27dd-4328-aec3-7c9c7e659e90&rsId=18EFB9E2690> (Accessed 20 May 2024).

²⁶ Xuesheng You (2020) 'Working with Husband? "Occupation's Wife" and Married Women's Employment in the Censuses in England and Wales between 1851 and 1911', *Social Science History*, 44(4), p.590 [Online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2020.32> (Accessed: 20 May 2024).

²⁷ Data return for 'married women, Swansea, 20-50 years, 1901'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024).

women's work as oftentimes, casual and part-time labour was left unaccounted for by the enumerators.²⁸

Although much of the work available in industrialised South Wales was incredibly laborious and considered to be exclusively suitable for men, there are many women who pushed the boundaries of the private and public spheres ideology to participate in paid manual labour outside of the home. In line with the 'weaker sex' ideology, a number of governmental legislations were set in place during the mid-nineteenth century in order to limit a woman's participation in manual labour. *The Mines Act (1842)* for example, prohibited any female or girl from being employed in any form by a mine or colliery owner.²⁹ This would be severely consequential for women in certain areas of the South Wales valleys where coal was one of the very few opportunities for outside employment. In Aberdare for example, the mines and collieries, along with the ironworks, provided the only source of paid income for the working-class community. This legislation did however fail to deter a small number of women from seeking employment opportunities in the coal mining workforce. In the 1851 census data for Aberdare, out of the 34 married women enlisted in manual labour employment, 21 of them were employed by a mine or colliery and in the census for 1861, 14

²⁸ Deirdre Beddoe (2000). *Out of the Shadows*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, p.7.

²⁹ Parliament. Bills and Acts (1842). *An Act to prohibit the Employment of Women and Girls in Mines and Collieries, to regulate the Employment of Boys, and to make other Provisions relating to Persons working therein*. (19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 298) p.1. [Online] Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/parlipapers/result/pgpdocumentview?accountid=14697&groupid=95579&pgId=f3fcc2e2-7776-4e2d-b3c4-bb5671660733&rsId=18EFFF0B3EC#414> (Accessed: 21 May 2024).

were employed in the industry³⁰. Furthermore, *The Factory Bill (1847)* prohibited women and children from working more than ten hours a day, subsequently hindering a woman's employability in comparison to that of a man.³¹ Furthermore, women were often placed in the same category as children in terms of governmental legislation, this highlights the fact that women were deemed as the inferior sex and that they had no more legal rights than that of a child.

Parliamentary legislations were not the only practice that actively deterred women from the workforce, aside from the disparity in wages between men and women, repressive policies were often adopted in different industries and one of the most widely used policies that affected women in Wales during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the 'marriage bar' for teachers. The 'marriage bar' allowed educational employers to end a female's employment contract upon her marriage. Despite the common belief that married women should not work in the teaching profession, some women were able to seek educational employment despite their marital status. In the *Pearse & Brown's Swansea Directory (1869)*, a Mrs Matthews, Mrs Smith and Mrs Morris were all listed with the title of 'schoolmistress', while a Mrs Davies is entered as a 'mistress of national schools'.³² This

³⁰ Data return for 'married women, Aberdare, 20-50 years, 1851'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024). & Data return for 'married women, Aberdare, 20-50 years, 1861'. *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM)*. Available at: <https://icem.data-archive.ac.uk/#step1> (Accessed: 10 May 2024).

³¹ Parliament. Bills and Acts (1847). *Factories. A bill to limit the hours of labour of young persons and females in factories*. (19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 13) p.2. [Online] Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/parlipapers/result/pgpdocumentview?accountid=14697&groupid=95579&pgId=6d13a8ad-1480-4986-93f5-098e736991c3&rsId=18F00418C0C#0> (Accessed: 21 May 2024).

³² Pearse & Brown (1869). *Pearse & Brown's Swansea Directory*, p.51-96. [Online] Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.30136287> (Accessed: 21 May 2024)

shows that despite the Victorian ideology that married women should not work in certain professions, some women did in fact challenge this image by either remaining in the teaching profession or embarking on school employment once married.

This chapter has aimed to contribute to the study of women's employment in nineteenth and early twentieth century South Wales, with a particular focus on the ways in which women challenged what was expected of them by participating in outside paid work. Although women's employment can be difficult to track due to the oftentimes casual nature of their work, the common misconception that married women remained at home and did not financially contribute to the household income, needs to be explored. We have often been led to believe that women dutifully remained in the private sphere and that it was generally unheard of for a woman to insert herself into the world of business and employment. Census records for this period show that some married women did in fact participate in outside paid employment and, in a few cases, worked in laborious industries that were not considered suitable places for a female to occupy. The directories of Swansea show that in the more urbanised areas of South Wales, some women seized the opportunity to become business owners and again, in a few cases, traded in goods and services that were not considered respectable for a woman to associate with. Census records have also shown that despite legislations and policies that were put in place with the potential to hinder a woman's employability, some women pushed the boundaries placed upon them by working in industries that were not deemed as respectable for them to occupy.

Chapter Two: Women in Politics

Given the ideology of the 'separate spheres', women were excluded from the law-making practices of the country during the entirety of the nineteenth century and through to the beginning of the twentieth century, with politics being considered a public sphere in which women were not capable of navigating. This, however, did not deter some women and many did in fact push the boundaries of what was expected of them to insert themselves into the world of politics. The suffrage movement has often been portrayed as a predominantly English movement in which Wales played very little part.³³ When we think of the British suffragettes, we often see the faces of the middle-class English women who were at the forefront of the movement, however, suffragism was in fact active in Wales and some working-class women there were involved in the fight for female emancipation.³⁴

The first known women's suffrage meeting held in Wales was the 1870 meeting at Temperance Hall located in the industrialised South Wales town of Merthyr Tydfil.³⁵ This shows that attempts to foster support for the movement amongst working-class industrialised towns began fairly early on in the movement. The meeting was addressed by the industrialist Rose Mary Crawshay, despite the fact that it was usually left to the

³³ Kirsti Bohata (2002). 'For Wales, See England'? Suffrage and the New Woman' in Wales in *Women's History Review*, p.643. [Online] Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/09612020200200342?needAccess=true> (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

³⁴ Lisa Tippings (2019). *Women's Suffrage in Wales*. [Kindle Edition] Pen & Sword History, p.6. Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Womens-Suffrage-Wales-Lisa-Tippings/dp/1526723999#detailBullets_feature_div (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

³⁵ Ryland Wallace (2021). *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales*. [Online] Available at: <https://senedd.wales/visit/exhibitions/past-exhibitions/women-wales-and-politics/the-women-s-suffrage-movement-in-wales/#> (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

‘stronger sex to wield the spectre of authority’ that was public speaking. At this time, it was unfathomable for a woman to insert herself into the public sphere and engage with a crowd in such a way, however, Crawshay was welcomed to the stage by ‘loud cheers’ from her ‘large and respectable audience’.³⁶ This suggests, that in the case of the working-class town of Merthyr Tydfil at least, introduction to the idea of a Welsh suffrage movement was well received by some members of the community. It is important to note that well known figures such as Crawshay, were instrumental in fostering localised support for the movement and their attendance at these events typically gathered a ‘more than ordinary interest’. Crawshay’s speech at the meeting was aimed primarily at gathering support from men and women of all classes as she urged her listeners not ‘to throw aside the help of at least half the human intellect’ when it came to making governmental decisions.³⁷ It is clear here, that Crawshay’s aim was to achieve total emancipation for all women, regardless of their class or marital status, an aim that could potentially resonate with the working-class people of the industrial town with which she was so closely interlinked.

In the years following the first suffrage meeting in Merthyr, the movement began to gain significant ground and by 1878, seven local committees had been established in Wales, all of which were based in the South.³⁸ There had been little support for the suffrage movement

³⁶ ‘Mrs Crawshay on Women’s Suffrage and Women’s Ignorance’ (1870). *The Merthyr Telegraph*. 11 June, p.2. [Online] Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3075184/3075186/8/mrs%20crawshay%20women%20suffrage> (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

³⁷ ‘Mrs Robert Crawshay on Women’s Suffrage’ (1870). *The Western Mail*. 6 June, p.2. [Online] Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/4467470/4467472/13/mrs%20crawshay%20women%20suffrage> (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

³⁸ Lisa Tippings (2019). *Women’s Suffrage in Wales*. [Kindle Edition] Pen & Sword History, p.6. Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Womens-Suffrage-Wales-Lisa-Tippings/dp/1526723999#detailBullets_feature_div (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

in North Wales at this time and one of the contributing factors to this could be due to the fact that much of the area had remained rural. Women in South Wales were subject to the harsh consequences of industrialisation and had viable reasons to be displeased with the current issues affecting the country, including poor housing conditions, lack of healthcare and low income.³⁹ For much of the nineteenth century, the women involved in the suffrage movement would foster support across England and Wales by handing out literature, holding meetings or addressing people in places of interest and busy street corners. At the turn of the century, however, militant action became common practice amongst the newly formed Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) which was established out of frustration by the lack of progress that had been made thus far in the movement. At this point, the only change to law that had been beneficial to women was *The Married Women's Property Act* (1882) which allowed a married woman to own her own property without the involvement of her husband, however, this was virtually only relevant to people in higher financial thresholds.⁴⁰

The suffrage supporters in Wales were largely hesitant to participate in militant activity and the majority of the public there were outraged by the violent acts being carried out in the name of female emancipation. Despite this reception, Wales was subject to much militant action during the time that the WSPU was most active. The Welsh politician who was

³⁹ Lisa Tippings (2019). *Women's Suffrage in Wales*. [Kindle Edition] Pen & Sword History, p.104. Available at: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Womens-Suffrage-Wales-Lisa-Tippings/dp/1526723999#detailBullets_feature_div (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

⁴⁰ Parliament. Bills & Acts (1882). *Bill, intituled, Act to consolidate and amend Acts relating to Property of Married Women* (19th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers, 191) pp.2-10. [Online] Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/parlipapers/result/pgpdocumentview?accountid=14697&groupid=95579&pgId=0273f91d-30a3-4bde-9629-88ffef07d650&rsId=18F063E1751#0> (Accessed: 22 May 2024).

Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, David Lloyd George, was a frequent target of militant action during the height of activity. Lloyd George was repeatedly heckled at public engagements, most notably, the 1912 Eisteddfod in Wrexham, where he was continuously interrupted by women demanding the right to vote. The women at these events, however, had often travelled from England, with one woman at the event exclaiming 'Justice to English women'.⁴¹ Although the majority of women actively targeting Lloyd George were English, it would be inaccurate to assume that Welsh women did not participate in this disruption in some way, especially when some events in Wales were reported to have been attended by up to seventy suffragettes.⁴² Lloyd George was likely a target due to his inconsistent support for female suffrage and frequently attacking him on his home turf in North Wales was the suffragettes opportunity to make an impactful statement. Militant action in Wales could often become more violent than the practice of interrupting a politician's speech. Multiple news articles reported on violent attacks in South Wales during the height of the WSPU's activity. Letter boxes were attacked with liquid in both Cardiff and Newport during November 1912 in an attempt to damage unsent letters, this was a known method of militancy carried out by WSPU members.⁴³ In 1913, militancy went a step further with suffragettes attempting to set fire to Ely Racecourse in Cardiff and two ricks were attempted to be set alight on a farm also in the Cardiff area, both were suspected to be

⁴¹ 'Mr. Lloyd George at the Eisteddfod' (1912). *The Times*, 06 Sep, p.6. Available at: <https://link-gale-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS100990758/TTDA?u=tou&sid=bookmark-TTDA&xid=a2ddfa09> (Accessed: 23 May 2024).

⁴² 'Mr Lloyd-George and Women's Suffrage' (1908). *The Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria*, 10 Dec, p.3. Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3836195/3836198/15/Lloyd%20George%20suffrage> (Accessed: 23 May 2024).

⁴³ 'More Pillar-Box Outrages: Cardiff and Newport Cases' (1912). *The Manchester Guardian*, 26 Nov, p.18. Available at: <http://libezproxy.open.ac.uk/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/more-pillar-box-outrages/docview/475474213/se-2?accountid=14697> (Accessed: 23 May 2024).

criminal activity carried out by suffragettes.⁴⁴ Oftentimes, no arrests were made for these attacks as they were deliberately carried out late at night when there would be no witnesses. Welsh media outlets continued to yield responsibility for militant suffragettes and consistently portrayed them as outsiders visiting from another land to cause disruption, however, as Angela V. John argues, some of the women involved had closer connections to Wales than many people wished to believe.⁴⁵

In terms of the WSPU, there were a number of working-class women from South Wales who were involved in the organisation. One of the most notable was Rachel Barrett who had briefly worked as a teacher before securing a full-time post with the organisation. Barrett was born in Carmarthen in 1875 to a road surveyor and his wife.⁴⁶ Barrett joined the organisation in 1906 working alongside the prominent English born member, Adela Pankhurst.⁴⁷ Barrett was heavily involved in the movement from the very beginning of her career and often worked closely with Pankhurst during her visits to South Wales. It is reported that Barrett assisted many meetings that were led by Pankhurst, including an unsuccessful meeting in Grangetown in May 1907, that ended with Barrett covered in flour from a bag that had been thrown at the organisers by an angry male member of the

⁴⁴ 'Ely Racecourse: Suffragettes Attempt to Burn Down the Stand' (1913). *The Cambria Daily Leader*, 7 Apr, p.3. Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/4424598/4424601/69/ely%20racecourde> (Accessed 23 May 2024). & 'Farm Ricks Set on Fire by Suffragettes' (1913). *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 Dec, p.4. Available at: <http://libezproxy.open.ac.uk/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/farm-ricks-set-on-fire-suffragettes/docview/475708051/se-2?accountid=14697> (Accessed: 23 May 2024).

⁴⁵ Angela V. John (1994). 'Run Like Blazes': The Suffragettes and Welshness', *Llafur*. Vol.6, 3, p.35.

⁴⁶ 'Rachel Barrett' (1881). *Census return for Morley Street, St Peter, Carmarthenshire*. Archive Reference: RG11, folio 29, p.9 (1881). Available at: <https://www.findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/transcript?id=GBC/1881/0025227169> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁴⁷ Mary Thorley (2021). BARRETT, RACHEL (1874-1953), suffragette. *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Available at: <https://biography.wales/article/s12-BARR-RAC-1874> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

crowd.⁴⁸ Suffragettes were often victim to violent acts from disagreeable members of the public, however, the WSPU were adamant in their agenda to cause damage to property not people. Causing public damage certainly went against the grain of the respectable image that women in this period were expected to maintain and the Welsh media consistently reported on ‘pandemonium’ and ‘uproarious scenes’ caused by ‘the hands of “suffragettes”’.⁴⁹ Later on in May 1907, Barrett attended a further two meetings alongside Pankhurst in Cardiff, one in Llandaff Fields and a second in Adamsdown Square, the latter being terminated early due to an unruly crowd.⁵⁰ Further on in her career Barrett would go on to engage in public speaking and at a largely attended meeting at Cardiff Park Hall in February 1911, she addressed the crowd, creating excitement amongst the attendees as she announced that the new ‘Chairman of the Welsh party had identified himself with their great movement’.⁵¹ In September 1910, Barrett met with David Lloyd George, at his home where she engaged in a heated debate with him that lasted two and a half hours. Barrett repeatedly questioned Lloyd George’s support for female suffrage after he had voted against a conciliation bill that would have extended ‘the vote to a million women’.⁵² Lloyd George had been inconsistent in his support for female suffrage during the course of his career, so it is likely that Barrett’s interrogation of him had been well received by the

⁴⁸ ‘Besprinkled with Flour’ (1907). *Western Mail*, 11 May, p.27. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁴⁹ ‘Mr S. T. Evans & Women’s Votes’ (1906). *The Glamorgan Gazette*, 12 Oct, p.7. Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3879085/3879092/74/> (Accessed: 28 May 2024).

⁵⁰ ‘Suffragettes Meet at the Fountain: Some More Lively Scenes in Cardiff’ (1907). *Western Mail*, 18 May, p.38-9. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁵¹ ‘Mrs Pankhurst at Cardiff: Militant Methods Defended’ (1911). *South Wales Daily News*, 11 Feb, p.162. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁵² ‘Women’s Suffrage: Mr Lloyd George and a Deputation’ (1910). *The Manchester Guardian*, 29 Sep, p.8. Available at: <http://libezproxy.open.ac.uk/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-suffrage/docview/475111379/se-2?accountid=14697> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

majority of suffrage supporters. By 1911, Barrett had secured the position of organiser for South Wales and Monmouthshire and in November of that year she led a meeting with the Liberal MP for North Monmouthshire, Reginald McKenna, in which she attempted to convince McKenna to support the idea of a women's suffrage bill being passed through the House of Commons, despite his belief that the majority of parliament were against it. Barrett was unsuccessful on this occasion given McKenna's unwavering anti suffrage views and as a direct consequence, the WSPU vowed to 'institute a special campaign in his constituency'.⁵³ In 1912, Barrett went on to become the assistant editor for *The Suffragette* Newspaper and in 1913 she was arrested for 'conspiracy to do wilful damage' during a police raid of their London headquarters.⁵⁴ She was arrested alongside four other members of the organisation and in June of that year was sentenced to 9 months imprisonment.⁵⁵ During her so far short career, Barrett continuously broke the mould of what was expected of working-class Welsh women by inserting herself into the public sphere of politics.

Another notable working-class member of the WSPU organisation was Mary Keating-Hill who was born in Mountain Ash in 1863 to a Labourer and his wife. The family had seven children and six lodgers at the time of the 1881 census; all lodgers were listed as

⁵³ 'The Cabinet and Women's Suffrage' (1911). *The Manchester Guardian*, 25 Nov, p.6. Available at: <http://libezproxy.open.ac.uk/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/cabinet-womens-suffrage/docview/475334783/se-2?accountid=14697> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁵⁴ 'Raided by the Police: Five Arrests' (1913). *The Suffragette*, 2 May, p.493. Available at: <https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1wr030100020019-uklse-dl1-wr03-010-002-0019-0001-pdf> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁵⁵ 'A Review of the Week: Vindictive Sentences' (1913). *The Suffragette*, 20 Jun, p.591. Available at: <https://lse-atom.arkivum.net/uklse-dl1wr030100020026-uklse-dl1-wr03-010-002-0026-0001-pdf> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

labourers.⁵⁶ Upon marrying her husband George Hill in 1894, Keating-Hill moved to Cardiff and became an active member of the WSPU across South Wales.⁵⁷ She was arrested in 1906 along with ten other members of the organisation for 'disorderly behaviour and destruction' after taking part in a protest near the House of Commons.⁵⁸ Keating-Hill was the first Welsh suffragette prisoner and she was incarcerated at the infamous Holloway Prison in which many prominent members of the organisation had been detained. In a statement published during her time in prison, Keating-Hill expressed her desire to not have 'gallant little Wales ... left out in the cold regarding this movement'.⁵⁹ This suggests that she saw Wales as instrumental in the fight for female emancipation and hoped that other Welsh women would follow in her footsteps should the need arise. At the time of her imprisonment, Keating-Hill was married with children, it was reported by her brother that she was feeling somewhat unsettled at the prospect of spending Christmas away from her family.⁶⁰ Keating-Hill's imprisonment as a wife and mother would have been an unprecedented occurrence at the time and certainly broke the mould of the idealised image of the 'Welsh Mam'. Like Rachel Barrett, Keating-Hill also worked closely alongside Adela Pankhurst, she too was present at both of the Cardiff meetings mentioned above, however, Keating-Hill's role during the earlier period of the organisation was far more front line than that of Barrett's. Keating-Hill would often open meetings ahead of Pankhurst and was reported to have

⁵⁶ 'Mary Keating' (1881). *Census return for Cardiff Road, Pontypridd, Glamorganshire*. Archive Reference: RG11, folio 139, p.12. Available at: <https://www-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/transcript?id=GBC/1881/0024741653&expand=true> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁵⁷ Anon (2018). 'Women Fight for the Vote' in *Haines: Newsletter of the Cynon Valley History Society*, issue no: 82, p.4. Available at: https://www.cvhs.org.uk/hanesarchive/2018_Hanes_82.pdf (Accessed: 26 May 2024).

⁵⁸ 'The Police Courts: The Suffragists Campaign' (1906). *The Times*, Dec 19, p.15. Available at: <https://link-gale-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS252375955/TTDA?u=tou&sid=bookmark-TTDA&xid=75255669> (Accessed: 26 May 2024).

⁵⁹ 'The Cardiff Suffragette' (1906). *Evening Express*, 29 Dec, p.2. Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/4171231/4171233/34/> (Accessed: 26 May 2024).

⁶⁰ 'Mrs Hill, The Suffragist: A Mountain Ash Lady' (1906). *The Aberdare Leader*, 29 Dec, p.6. Available at: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3577179/3577185/62/> (Accessed: 26 May 2024).

addressed a crowd that had grown to 'a thousand people' at an attempted meeting outside Cardiff Workhouse in May 1907.⁶¹ It is likely that Keating-Hill had gained a favourable reputation amongst fellow WSPU members following her imprisonment at Holloway and was therefore catapulted into the limelight of the organisation in an attempt to foster Welsh support for the cause. In April 1911, in a bid to boycott the census, Keating-Hill along with over fifty other women, including Rachel Barrett, had successfully avoided enumerators by gathering in a large premises on Albany Road, Cardiff.⁶² It is likely that the women of the Albany Road boycott were from Cardiff and the surrounding areas as many other suffrage groups had participated in the boycott in their own localities across Britain. In a newspaper interview following the boycott, Rachel Barrett had suggested that several of the women present were married.⁶³ A woman spending the night away from her husband and children would certainly have been frowned upon at this time as it pushed the limits of what was expected of a working-class wife and mother in South Wales.

Another avid supporter of women's suffrage who made considerable headway for the cause in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Elizabeth Andrews. Andrews was born in Hirwaun in 1882 to a coal miner and his wife and at the time of the 1891 census, her twelve-year-old brother William was also a coal miner.⁶⁴ The family went on to have eleven children in total, and Andrews being the oldest daughter was required to leave school at the

⁶¹ 'Suffragettes at Cardiff' (1907). *South Wales Daily News*, 17 May, p.38. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁶² 'Password of the Ladies' (1911). *Western Mail*, 04 Apr, p.1. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 24 May 2024).

⁶³ 'Scheme a Complete Success' (1911). *Western Mail*, 4 Apr, p.1. Available at: <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/collection/indexes-and-transcriptions/emancipation/> (Accessed: 28 May 2024).

⁶⁴ 'Elizabeth Smith' (1891). *Census return for Station Road, Breconshire, Aberdare*. Archive Reference: RG12, folio 22, p.2. Available at: <https://www.findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/transcript?id=GBC/1891/0030400502> (Accessed: 27 May 2024).

age of twelve to help raise the family.⁶⁵ Andrews gained an interest in political knowledge from an early age by translating English newspapers to her father who could only read Welsh.⁶⁶ Political interest to any degree was incredibly uncommon for a young girl in the South Wales valleys at this time. Although Andrews began her career in dressmaking at the age of seventeen, she quickly turned her interests to politics upon meeting Thomas T. Andrews, whom she married in 1910. It was still widely unacceptable for a woman to be engaging in politics during the early twentieth century, however, despite this, Andrews began to attend political meetings alongside her husband, later recalling that she was often the only woman in attendance. From here, Andrews began assisting her husband in his work for the Independent Labour Party as well as joining the co-operative movement and subsequently turning her interests to women's suffrage.⁶⁷ Andrews is considered to have been a non-militant suffragette who worked tirelessly throughout her life to change laws and improve the lives for working-class women and children. One of her greatest successes was securing pit head baths for miners after she presented evidence at the House of Commons in 1919, arguing that the physical strain of washing and drying workmen's uniforms at home was partly responsible for the notorious bad health of women in South Wales and the high rates of infant death that occurred there.⁶⁸ Andrews' self-insertion into

⁶⁵ Elizabeth Andrews and Ursula Masson (2006). *A Woman's Work is Never Done: and political articles*. Dinas Powys: Honno Classics, pp.8-10.

⁶⁶ Dot Jones (2011). 'Andrews [nee Smith], Elizabeth (1882-1960)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.oxforddnb.com/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-55090?rskey=suufE4&result=1> (Accessed: 27 May 2024).

⁶⁷ Elizabeth Andrews and Ursula Masson (2006). *A Woman's Work is Never Done: and political articles*. Dinas Powys: Honno Classics, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁸ Parliament. Command Papers (1919). *Coal Industry Commission. Vol. II. Reports and minutes of evidence on the second stage of the enquiry*. (20th Century House of Commons Sessional Paper, vol: 12) pp.1019-20. [Online] Available at: <https://parlipapers-proquest-com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1919-022686?accountid=14697> (Accessed: 28 May 2024).

the political matters of the country that affected women and children were incredibly impressive considering her humble beginnings and the abrupt end of her education when she was still a young girl.

Although much of the historiography surrounding the suffrage movement has portrayed the cause to be predominantly English, recent studies have shown that it was in fact active in Wales during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rachel Barrett, Mary Keating-Hill and Elizabeth Andrews are all examples of working-class women from South Wales who worked tirelessly in their efforts for female emancipation and improving the lives of women, oftentimes sacrificing their own personal respectability in a society that was so dependent on it. These three women are just a small fraction of the working-class women who had strong associations with Wales and who played an instrumental role in the eventual successes of the suffrage movement. Others include the Swansea based headteachers Emily Phipps and Clara Neal, Rose Davies of Aberdare and Jennies Rose from Swansea, to name a few. Welsh attitudes towards female suffrage, particularly in the years that the WSPU were most active in their militancy, were oftentimes hostile and Welsh media outlets continuously refused to take ownership of the suffragettes who used militancy to fight for the cause, despite evidence suggesting that they oftentimes had stronger connections to Wales than many wished to believe.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this dissertation has contributed to the study of industrial women in South Wales through an in-depth analysis of their employment and political contributions. Chapter one intended to challenge the idealised image of the 'Welsh Mam' through the study of married women's financial contributions and the daily tasks that a wife and mother faced in the private sphere of the home. The idealised image of the 'Welsh Mam' is a romanticised image that depicts the perfect wife and mother in industrialised South Wales who prioritised respectability and cleanliness above all else. First-hand accounts have provided indispensable evidence that suggests a woman's work within the home was incredibly strenuous and oftentimes, never ending. Women in South Wales were battling against the poorest of conditions in order to uphold a level of social respectability and the harsh reality of her daily chores in this period is a stark contrast to the delicate angelic image that is perceived to be the 'Welsh Mam'. Census records for this period have evidenced that women oftentimes financially contributed to the family's income by assisting her husband in his occupation, despite the common misconception that a woman's work was solely confined to childcare and household duties. Furthermore, the nature of this work was deemed as somewhat important enough to be included in the census data and the woman's assistance was more than likely crucial to the financial stability of the home. The census' that were explored in this dissertation also evidence that some married women participated in outside employment. Although the majority of the women who were listed as 'occupied' in the census' discussed were employed in industries that were deemed as socially respectable for women, this was not the case for a number of them. Despite government

legislations put in place with the potential to hinder a woman's employability in laborious industries, some married women did in fact push the boundaries of these limitations and sacrificed their respectable image by pursuing industrial employment. A number of married women in South Wales also embarked on teaching careers despite the 'marriage bar' policy that was so widely practiced in the Victorian era of Britain. A study of the local trade directories for Swansea in the mid nineteenth century has evidenced that some married women in the more urbanised areas of South Wales were in fact registered as business owners. In some cases, even dealing in trades and goods that were not contemporarily viewed as acceptable for a woman to associate with.

Chapter two of this dissertation has intended to challenge the image of the 'Welsh Mam' and the notion that women's suffrage was predominantly an upper-class English movement. This was explored through the study of militant activity in Wales and an in-depth discussion surrounding working-class women from South Wales who were heavily involved in the movement during the height of the campaign in the early twentieth century. An exploration of British newspapers has evidenced that support for women's suffrage amongst the working-class citizens of South Wales began as early on in the movement as 1870. Early twentieth century newspapers have also revealed that South Wales was subject to much militant activity during the height of the WSPU's campaign. A study of Welsh media outlets in particular, has shown that local attitudes towards militant suffragettes was hostile and that the local media was insistent on their disassociation with Wales, despite a lack of evidence to prove otherwise. Rachel Barrett and Mary Keating-Hill are two examples of working-class women from South Wales who were in fact heavily involved in the movement.

Both women challenged the boundaries of the 'Welsh Mam' image to publicly associate with a campaign that used militant action in their fight for the cause. Newspaper articles attest to Rachel Barret's ability to hold intellectual conversations with government officials and confidentially challenge their lack of support for female emancipation. Both women were subsequently imprisoned as a direct consequence of their activities for the cause, and both went on to successfully boycott the census of 1911; all of which were actions that would not have been deemed as acceptable for a woman to participate in at this time. Despite her humble beginnings, Elizabeth Andrews gained considerable headway in her political endeavours and went on to address the House of Commons with evidence of the poor living conditions that families in the South Wales valleys faced. Although she was unwaveringly supported by her husband, Andrews' self-insertion into the exclusively male sphere of politics would have been socially frowned upon at this time. Despite the tireless political efforts of Barrett, Keating-Hill, Andrews, and the many other working-class Welsh women who were involved in the suffrage movement, its eventual success is still widely attributed to England and the middle- and upper- class English women who faced the campaign.

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