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Abertillery: a case of urbanisation in the south Wales coalfield

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Abbreviations:

In this paper, references to the terms below, where appearing in the main body of this paper or in the Appendices, have the meaning given to them.

Abbreviation	Meaning
Abertillery USD	Abertillery Urban Sanitary District established pursuant to the Public Health Act 1872.
Abertillery UDC	Abertillery Urban District Council established pursuant to the Local Government Act 1894.
A Vision of Britain through Time	The website hosted by GB Historical GIS of the University of Portsmouth. URL: http://www.visionofBritain.org
MOH	The person appointed, pursuant to the Public Health Act 1872, to act as Medical Officer of Health for the Abertillery USD and the successor authority, the Abertillery UDC.
MOH Report	The annual report drawn up by the Medical Officer of Health and submitted to the Abertillery USD or the Abertillery UDC. 'The MOH Report 1875' or 'The 1875 MOH Report' means that MOH Report dealing with matters arising during 1875.
OS 1876 Map	The Ordnance Survey 25-inch set comprising Monmouthshire XVII.8 and Monmouthshire XVII.12 surveyed ca.1873 and published ca. 1876.
OS 1902 Map	The Ordnance Survey 25-inch revised set comprising Monmouthshire XVII.8 and Monmouthshire XVII.12, revised in ca. 1900 and published ca. 1902.
Trade Directories:	
Kelly's 1895 Directory	Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6 Accessed 19 May 2022.
Slater's 1859 Directory	I. Slater., *Slater's (Late Pigot & Co.) Royal, National and Commercial Directory and Topography of the counties of Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Shropshire and North and Wales, and a classified directory of the town of Liverpool* (Manchester, 1859). Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/182715/rec/15. Accessed 19 May 2022)
Slater's 1868 Directory	I.Slater, *Slater's (Late Pigot & Co.) Royal National Commercial Directory and Topography of the Counties of Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Shropshire, and North and South Wales, and the City of Chester* (Manchester, 1868). Available at:

	http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/90408/rec/11. Accessed 19 May 2022
Slater's 1880 Directory	Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6 Accessed 18 May 2022

Chapter 1:   Introduction

Much ground has been made up in the study of nineteenth-century Welsh towns since their omission from the key works of Briggs and Dyos and Wolff.[1] Apart from the multi-focus volume of Harold Carter,[2] there has been a focussed attention on the cities of Cardiff and Swansea[3] as well as the smaller towns of Bridgend, Pontypool and Penarth (in the work of Julie Light[4]) and Bangor;[5] whilst there has been a significant amount of writing published on various aspects of Merthyr Tydfil[6] and the colliery settlements of the Rhondda. However, in their introduction to a collection of papers published in the journal 'Urban History'in 2005,[7] Borsay, Miskell and Roberts asserted that there remained large and important gaps in the historiography of modern Welsh towns. That essay identified the towns of north-east Wales, the slate-quarrying towns of Gwynedd and the coastal resorts of Wales as having been the subjects of undeserved neglect. The subject of this paper is Abertillery, a colliery settlement in the lower reaches of the Ebbw Fach Valley, one of the eastern coalfield valleys of Gwent, 'its steep streets clinging to the hillside, ….dramatically sited above the confluence of the Ebbw Fach and Tyleri rivers'[8]. It is one of the areas that became industrialised (and urbanised) later than the ironworking regions higher up the valley complexes, such as Nantyglo and Dowlais, and Merthyr Tydfil.[9] As Harold

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[1] A. Briggs. *Victorian cities*. (Harmondsworth, 1990) H. J. Dyos, and M. Wolff, M. *The Victorian city: images and realities*. (London, 1999).

[2] H. Carter, *The Towns of Wales A study in Urban Geography* (Cardiff, 1965)

[3] For example, in M. Daunton, *Coal Metropolis: Cardiff 1870-1914*, (Leicester, 1977), N. Evans (2007), 'Welsh Victorian City and Civil and National Consciousness in Cardiff, 1850-1914, *Welsh history Review* 1. 12 (2007) pp.350-386; L. Miskell, '*Intelligent town': An Urban History of Swansea 1780-1855* (Cardiff, 2006))

[4] J. Light, J. 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites in Nineteenth-century South Wales', *Welsh history review*, 24.3., (2009) pp. 29–55; and J. Light, '"….mere seekers of fame?": personalities, power and politics in the small own: Pontypool and Bridgend, c.1860-95', *Urban History*, 32.1 (2005), pp.88-99.

[5] P.E. Jones *Bangor 1883-1983. A Study in Municipal Government* (Cardiff 1986).

[6] Examples being the following – J.England, 'Unitarians, Freemasons, Chartists: The Middle Class in Victorian Merthyr', *Welsh history review*, 23.4 (2007), pp. 35–58; Jones B., 'Inspecting the "extraordinary drain:" emigration and the urban experience in Merthyr Tydfil in the 1860s' *Urban History* 32 1 (2005) pp.100-113; A. Croll A, *Civilising the Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870-1914* (Cardiff, 2000); Ieuan Gwynedd Jones's essays collected in his three volumes, I.G. Jones, *Explanations and Explorations* (Llandysul, 1981); I.G. Jones *Communities* (Llandysul, 1987); and I.G. Jones, Mid-Victorian Wales: *The Observers and the Observed* (Cardiff, 1992) H. Carter and S. Wheatley *Merthyr Tydfil in 1851: A Study of the spatial Structure of a Welsh Industrial Town* (Cardiff, 1982)

[7] P. Borsay, L. Miskell and O. Roberts, 'Introduction: Wales, a new agenda for urban history', *Urban History,* 32. 1 (220) 5-16

[8] J. Davies, N. Jenkins, M.Baines and P. Lynch, *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales,* (Cardiff, 2008), p.9.

[9] Carter distinguished two phases of the general industrial development of south Wales: the first dominated by the iron industry of the northern outcrop of the coalfield and beginning about 1750; and the second

Carter has stated: "The actual process of settlement growth (on the south Wales coalfield) has received scant attention, whilst even the process by which mining camps have been transformed into functioning urban communities has scarcely been touched on."[10] The aim of this paper is to play some part in addressing this lack, studying the development of Abertillery over the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Does Abertillery qualify for or merit this attention? One of the reasons for the lacuna in the historiography of Welsh towns, historically, appears to be concerns over size. Formerly, size did appear to matter.[11] Smith, Bennet and Radicic, in their grouping and classification of towns, use parishes of towns with a population greater than 10,000 for their recent work but acknowledged that this was not to deny urban status or nature to smaller settlements.[12] Assessing population numbers for Abertillery is fraught with difficulty, however. The administrative boundaries of the district within which Abertillery was located changed with local government reorganisations - starting off as a village within the rural parish of Aberystruth, it then morphed into the Abertillery USD following the Public Health Act 1872 and lastly into the Urban District Council of Abertillery following the Local Government Act 1894. Each of these entities, which reported population numbers, had different geographical boundaries: the parish extended up the valley to Blaina and Nantyglo, the Abertillery USD extended south to Aberbeeg (and changed when Llanhilleth was brought within its jurisdiction in 1891[13]). Further, the relative populations as between the constituent elements changed: for example, as mentioned above the ironworking regions of Nantyglo and Blaina developed earlier than Abertillery.[14] In any event, during the period under consideration - the last quarter of the nineteenth

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dominated by coalmining, beginning about 1850 (Carter, *The Towns of Wales*, pp. 308-309). The sinking of the first coal shaft in the Abertillery area took place in 1850 at the Tir Nicholas colliery in Cwmtillery

[10] Carter, *The Towns of Wales,* p.308.

[11] For example, as recounted by Nia Powell, populations of 10,000 (Jan de Vries) or 5,000 (Paul Bairoch) up to the middle of the nineteenth century were required to justify certain studies (N. Powell, 'Do numbers count? Towns in early modern Wales', *Urban History*. 32. 1, (2005) pp. 46–67.)

[12] J. Smith, R. Bennett, and D. Radicic, 'Towns in Victorian England and Wales: a new classification', *Urban History*, 45.4.(2018), pp. 568–594. Rather oddly, however, in their study based on the 1891 census, they include Abertillery, but only as part of a grouping together with Nantyglo and Blaina. As indicated in Appendix 2, in 1891 the Urban Sanitary District of Abertillery had a population of 9,138 – not quite enough to qualify on its own for inclusion – however it is difficult to understand the reason behind the yoking together of these three settlements.

[13] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1891*'

[14] The description of Blaina in Worrall's Directory of South Wales of 1875 indicates a burgeoning population: 'BLAINA is an important village, rapidly assuming the proportions of a town…….The Nant y Glo & Blaina Co.'s ironworks and collieries are here situated, and furnish employment for a large portion of the population..'(Worrall's Directory of South Wales, comprising the counties of Glamorgan, Carmarthen, Pembroke, Cardigan, Brecknock, and Radnor, with Newport, Monmouthshire. (Oldham, 1875). Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/348517/rec/19. Accessed 19 May 2022)

century - it is reasonable to infer that Abertillery satisfied any population requirement, given a population of 21,945 within the district covered by the Abertillery UDC in 1901.[15]

Whilst size might not be a disqualifying factor for a study of Abertillery, are there other pre-conditions? Closely related to size and perhaps implicit as a criterion would be population density: whether there needs to be a critical mass of population in a given geographical area for a settlement to be considered a town or an urban area. This is one of the criteria advanced by Law-Robson in their system (see further below). Given the continued problems of overcrowding raised by the Medical Officer of Health to the Abertillery USD, referred to later in this paper, unsurprisingly any density requirement does not present a qualification problem.

When Borsay, Miskell and Roberts argue that the 'crude measure of population size to determine what is to be classified as 'urban'…………..is no longer valid', whilst on the one hand this has the effect of lowering the bar in terms of size, they also imply that towns require to fulfil certain basic functions to be considered as urban.[16] In discussing attempts to classify towns using criteria other than simply size, Smith, Bennet and Radicic refer to the Law-Robson system.[17] This model constructed population estimates for all towns with populations larger than 2,500 between 1801 to 1911 and applied three criteria to define a town. First, the settlement's population had to be greater than 2,500; secondly, the population density had to be greater than one person per acre; and, third, there had to be sufficient nucleation.[18] The third criterion 'was used to remove locations with high populations and densities but without any strong nucleus around which an urban way of life could develop develop (sic); mining regions often contained this kind of settlement.'[19]As will be made clear later in the paper, Abertillery had, it is contended, the necessary degree of nucleation.

Lastly, in terms of pre-conditions, there is the question of the condition of being urban. When Carter noted that the urban communities of south Wales had been under-researched he conjectured[20] that this was because the areas lacked a municipal tradition: the valley settlements could be dismissed as

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[15] See Appendix 2

[16] P. Borsay, L. Miskell and O. Roberts, 'Introduction: Wales, a new agenda for urban history', *Urban History,* 32, 1 (2005) p.9

[17] C.M. Law, The growth of urban population in England and Wales, 1801-1911', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 41 (1967), 125-43; B. Robson, *Urban Growth: An Approach* (London, 1973)

[18] Smith, Bennett and Radicic *Towns in Victorian England and Wales*, p.574

[19] Smith, Bennett and Radicic *Towns in Victorian England and Wales*, p.575

[20] Carter, *The Towns of Wales,* p.308.

mere rows of terraced houses upon the hillsides – 'ribbons which tied up at no social focus'.[21] A key distinguishing feature of urbanisation in Wales in the industrial era was what Neil Evans refers to as 'primary urbanisation' – urbanisation springing up from effectively green field sites rather than development from pre-existing urban cores. Evans considers that the 'primary urbanisation' model produced industrial settlements of what he terms a 'quasi-urban' nature.[22] This echoes the questioning of Williams who wondered about the extent to which Wales in the nineteenth century was urbanised at all.[23] One way to address this has been to distinguish between 'civic' communities from 'urban' ones.[24] These qualms about the urban status of Welsh towns has, Evans suggests, resulted in a dearth of urban biographies. Rather than doubt whether the settlements could be termed urbanised, Evans expresses the need for comparative studies that may have to utilise different measures or criteria.[25] This paper will not undertake a classification exercise as a comparative study is beyond its scope. However, it will attempt in an impressionistic manner to convey aspects of life in the town that establish a baseline of urban interaction.

Evans identified five separate strands which have made up urban studies in Wales resulting in disparate studies and he called for a broad interdisciplinary approach.[26] Time and space precludes such a comprehensive approach in this dissertation: this paper will look, principally, at the process of urbanisation, analysing it terms used by the urban geographers cited by Evans[27]; and, secondly, will consider the urban state of Abertillery, principally as evidenced by the facilities and amenities it enjoyed. Chapter 2 will assess the development of Abertillery in the urban geographical terms of population and spatial growth. The research will use the primary resources of census records, the two sets of Ordinance Survey 25-inch survey maps covering the area issued during the period and trade directories. Because of some paucity and incompleteness of records[28], the approach is to look at sources that can be broadly corroborated. Therefore, the paper will be looking at 1876 OS Map in conjunction with the 1881 census data and Slater's 1880 Directory for one review and 1891 and 1901 census data, together with Kelly's 1895 Directory and 1902 OS Map for other data point.

Having studied the growth of the settlement to urban status, Chapter 3 will proceed to build a picture of the town, testing it against the generalisations made in connection with nineteenth-century

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[21] Citing H.J. Fleure in the preface to E.G. Bowen, (1941) *Wales: A Study in Geography and History,* Cardiff

[22] N. Evans,) 'Rethinking urban Wales', *Urban History*, 32.1, (2005) p. 126.

[23] Williams, J. (1995) *Was Wales Industrialised? Essays in Modern Welsh History*. Llandysul: Gomer – as recounted by Preston (OU module A329), 2022.

[24] Jones, *Explanations and Explorations*, cited by Evans at p.126

[25] Evans 'Rethinking urban Wales', pp.126-7.

[26] Evans 'Rethinking urban Wales', p.126.

[27] Principally Harold Carter and Philip Jones (Evans 'Rethinking urban Wales', p.115-116).

[28] For example, the 1881 census indicates individuals living at Cross Street in Abertillery; however, there is no Cross street on the OS 1876 map.

industrial Welsh towns. Urban status is conferred and inferred by the presence of certain amenities and characteristics of town life. In determining whether Abertillery possesses the necessary faculties, use will again be made principally of trade directories, and also of press reports.

Chapter 2: Charting the Growth

In his *locus classicus* on Welsh towns, Carter only mentions Abertillery once in the text[29] - as an example of a mining town and urban area where mining is dominant, that is, where mining employs over 20% of the gainfully occupied population and the number employed in mining is at least twice that employed in commerce and finance.[30] Jones, in his significant work on colliery settlements in the south Wales coalfield,[31] notes that Carter is more concerned with establishing generalities of the internal structure of all industrial towns and makes little direct comment on Welsh colliery settlement.[32] For his part, Jones, seeks to establish guiding principles and methods of research relating to the coalfield, in the expectation that these will contribute to geographical generalisations and prove capable of application to some degree to other British coalfields.[33] It does not purport to be an exhaustive documentation of colliery settlement in the entire coalfield; and the Ebbw Fach valley in which Abertillery is situated is one of the areas that do not receive close study in the work. Accordingly, the aim broadly of this chapter is to test the generalities of Carter and model of development generated by Jones against the actual experience and development of Abertillery.

A town with a past?

Of the five categories of urban settlement identified by Carter in his work 'The Towns of Wales', the development of Abertillery would fall within the category entitled 'new settlements created by industry'.[34] In his general introduction to this category he talks of the settlements growing up around ironworks and coalmines, where terraces of workers houses grew to form a large agglomeration of buildings which, too big to be called villages, were given the designation 'town' and bundled together as 'urban districts'. Carter develops the category by dividing it into two groups:[35] towns that grew around or in relation to a pre-urban nucleus;[36] and, secondly, towns that evolved without a definite pre-existing nucleus, namely, the creations of industry and mining. The second category concerned

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[29] Carter, *The Towns of* Wales, p.82 - although the town features in a figure (Figure 12) illustrating the grading models adopted by other urban geographers.

[30] This was around the time of publication of the work – 1965 - though no doubt the same held true (if no more so) during the period reviewed in this paper.

[31] Philip Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales Coalfield 1850-1926.* (Hull, 1969). The work is a part of his 'path-breaking' studies of settlement patterns and migration in the south Wales valleys (Evans, 'Rethinking urban Wales', p.116.)

[32] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales Coalfield* p.6.

[33] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales Coalfield* pp.6-7.

[34] Carter, *The Towns of Wales*, p.71.

[35] Carter, *The Towns of Wales* p.72

[36] Merthyr Tydfil being the classic example given.

settlements that grew from virtually nothing, taking their names from local farmsteads or physical features, with the industrial site (the entrance, for example, to a coal seam), not geographical position, initially being the controlling factor of location (the settlements of Rhondda valleys being the best examples).

In which sub-category can we place Abertillery? Slater's 1859 Directory[37] records the following:

> "Abertelery[38] is a small village, in the parish of Aberystruth, about 4 miles from Blaina, on the Western Valleys Railway. The principal business of the place, is the tin-plate works, while in the neighbourhood are several collieries. And a fire-brick manufactory. The church is a very handsome building, situated on a gentle elevation above the village….There are also places of worship for Baptists, Wesleyans and Calvinists. There is a very superior British school, and one on the National Plan.."

Whilst in Carter's terms Abertillery grew from nothing, was named after a geographical feature (situated on the river Tylery) and the initial controlling factor was the establishment of the iron works (the predecessor of the tin works),[39] the description in the trade directory would indicate that Abertillery had a pre-existing nucleus. This would accord with Carter's observation that the towns in the first category are 'generally' creations of earlier phases of industry[40].

Growth

In Chapter 15 of Towns of Wales[41], Carter turns his attention to the industrial town, focussing on the visible pattern of settlement and setting out to isolate major features of the settlement pattern rather than to describe a series of towns in detail. He identifies two phases – the iron industry from 1750

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[37] *Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities]*(London, 1895) Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 19 May 2022.

[38] One of the besetting problems of researching places like Abertillery is orthographic instability. Abertillery is spelled in about three ways and Aberystruth is worse: apart from the vagaries of spelling (see, for example, the Mercer & Crocket 1876 directory for the spellings "Aberstrugh" and "Aberyswith" (*Mercer & Crocker's General, Topographical, and Historical Directory for the Counties of Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and the Principal Towns and Places in Glamorganshire and Radnorshire*. (Leicester, 1876). Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/88990/rec/25. Accessed 18 May 2022) it is sometimes confused with the coastal resort of Aberystwyth in what was formerly Cardiganshire.

[39] Anon., 'Abertillery Tinworks & Foundry', *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (no date). Available at:
https://outofthebluateartifacts.com/abertillery-tin-works-foundry/. Accessed 9 March 2022.

[40] Carter H. *The Towns of Wales* p.72.

[41] Carter H. *The Towns of Wales* pp.308-335.

onwards and the coal industry from 1850 onwards, but attributes common characteristics to both groups. Amongst these characteristics were the following: the initial period of development was characterised by the growth of a nucleus around the ironworks or mine, similar to early mining camps of the American West. He cites the example of Nantyglo higher up the Ebbw Fach valley, with the erection of a furnace, then the construction of workmen's houses, then company shops at the end. He then discusses the morphology of towns: the construction of lines of communication, at first tramways or roads, along which shops gather and convert it into a commercial area. Again, he cites Nantyglo as an example, as well as Ebbw Vale in the neighbouring valley. Ebbw Vale is a particularly good example - a ribbon development with three industrial suburbs (Newtown, Ebbw Vale and Victoria) eventually united into one settlement, the galvanising agent being the main road.[42]

In his model of colliery settlement, Jones is emphatic that, within the central and eastern valley coalfield, the only appropriate unit of areal analysis is the valley. His theme is colliery settlement rather than urbanisation; and his focus, as a consequence, centres on patterns of housing. In his model there are three phases in what he calls his morphogenetic approach.[43] The first phase involves housing development of poor quality around the colliery site. The second phase comprises two settlement forms: first, growth where the railway system has extended up the tributary valley (that is, a valley whose stream flows into a greater stream or river) to service another colliery that has been sunk, so that the settlement is concentrated in two locations; and, secondly, the growth of 'adjunctive settlements'- that is, new blocks of settlement linked to the existing units only by virtue of relative proximity and through serving the same colliery group or groups. The third phase sees the prosperity of the labour force reaching its peak with new collieries at this point being sunk down-valley generally; it is associated with greatest settlement flexibility. Being a model, it is not strictly tied to time periods,[44] and for the purposes of this paper we are looking at the first two phases leading up to the achievement of urban status.

The traditional classification – a Procrustean Bed?
How does the development of Abertillery fit the above classification systems? It has already been shown that the town was not really a greenfield site in the terms discussed by either Carter or Jones: there was a pre-existing nucleus at the start of the second half of the nineteenth century associated

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[42] Carter, *The Towns of Wales* p.318.
[43] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales Coalfield*, p.36-37.
[44] Although certain characteristics in settlement growth are attributable to specific events, such as the Public Health Act 1875 enabling Urban Sanitary Districts to make by-laws regarding the provision of sewage and drainage in any new housing developments.

with the tinplate works. Not only that: there was a railway service for both coal transportation and passengers.[45] Further, as Jones concedes, different technical factors operating with regard to slant mining (that is the excavation of the mineral from coal levels) – such as the fewer employees required, the smaller exploitation costs and shorter operating life – resulted in a different settlement response. There were several coal levels being worked at Abertillery before the sinking of the Cwmtillery mine.[46] Jones does not elaborate but it may be that the consequence of the operation of these technical factors was that neither the colliery owners nor the private land speculators were sufficiently incentivised to build developments, with the result that the Abertillery nucleus was home to the coal miners, the iron foundry workers and the tinplate factory workers, together with the butchers, bakers and drapers (see below).

Certainly various photographs of the town[47] (albeit taken at a later time, around 1905) give a clear indication of how the settlement grew up around the industrial sites – the example provided showing the waste tips from the Rhiw Parc coal levels (to the right of the photo)[48] (Rhiw Parc levels were amongst the oldest levels in Abertillery[49]), another showing the tin works in the foreground and the chimney stacks of an iron foundry in the centre[50]. A glance at the OS 1876 Map indicates a relatively coherent centre, laid out on a plan but subject to the topographical restrictions prevailing in the case of villages and towns located on the sides of valleys. Apart from social infrastructure such as a number of places of worship, a police station and schools, the names 'High Street' and 'Commercial Street' close to the railway station and Anglican church indicate a centre of activity.[51] Taking the years 1880

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[45] The passenger railway service had started in 1850. Abertillery and District Museum Society, *Abertillery and District History 2000: From Prehistoric Times to the Present Day* (Peterborough, 2000), p.42

[46] Davies J., Jenkins N., Baines M. and Lynch P., *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales,* (Cardiff, 2008), p.9.

[47] See, for example, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. 'Abertillery', *People's Collection Wales* (1932) Available at:
https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1364176#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=610%2C256%2C8155%2C6303 Accessed 11 May 2022.

[48] Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. 'Abertillery', *People's Collection Wales* (1932) Available at:
https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1364176#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=610%2C256%2C8155%2C6303 Accessed 11 May 2022

[49] Anon, 'Sycpant Rhiw Parc – Rhiw Park Levels', Out of the Blue Artifacts (no date). Available at:
https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/category/local-collieries/coal-levels/rhiw-park-level/. Accessed 12 May

[50] Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. 'Abertillery', *People's Collection Wales* (1932) Available at:
https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1411361#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&r=0&xywh=673%2C406%2C7160%2C5355. Accessed 11 May 2022

[51] '…'"Commercial Street" is a name which occurs frequently in South Wales and symbolises the process by which these early main communication lines became the centres for shopping and business'. (Carter, *The Towns of Wales*, p.324)

and 1881 as our data point (when Slater's 1880 Directory still calls Abertillery a "small village"[52]), a study of the 1881 census returns and Slater's 1880 Directory[53] trade shows a burgeoning urban nucleus. The directory shows that Abertillery had a representative in almost all classes in the directory;[54] and a study of the census returns[55] for Market Street, High Street, Church Street and Commercial Street - the streets at the heart of the nucleus – yields a different composition. A tabulation of the occupations indicated by census returns for those streets is set out at Appendix 2. Amongst the employees at collieries, iron foundry and the tin works (of which there are thirty-four), there also number a different of different commercial enterprises.[56] Slater's 1880 Directory does not give addresses: accordingly, one has to make an inference as to where the businesses were located. At this point, it is fair to assume that businesses were operated out of those addresses given that the streets in the settlements away from the nucleus and nearer the industrial sites housed the workers in the mines or tin-plate works. (Jones makes the point that, during the second stage of his colliery settlement model (approximately 1870-1880), in the main commercial street a lot of house conversion took place.[57]) An example of this is the Clyn-Mawr housing development associated with the Rose Heyworth colliery (sunk in 1874)[58]. The 1881 census forms completed in respect of the Clyn-Mawr (also known as Blaenau Gwent) development yielded partial results (a very small sample) but show most heads of household residents to be colliers.[59] As the cottages were built by the colliery company, however, it is safe to assume that the heads of the household were company employees. More instructive are the census returns relating to Duffryn Row where, with one exception only (a commission agent), everyone was a coalminer or worker in the tinplate works.[60]

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[52] I. Slater, *Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory of North and South Wales, 1880, Part 1* Manchester, 1880), pp.53-70 Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/89784/rec/7. Accessed 9 March 2022

[53] I. Slater, *Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory of North and South Wales, 1880, Part 1* Manchester, 1880), pp.53-70 Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/89784/rec/7. Accessed 9 March 2022

[54] And it may be that the directory missed some traders. For example, the 1881 census shows a William Hill plying the trade of carpenter in Church Street - although, of course the census return was dated a year later.

[55] Links to a sample of forms for these streets are given in Appendix 2.

[56] Making allowances for illegibility.

[57] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.68.

[58] Anon., 'Rose Heyworth Colliery – A History 1874 to 1986', *Out of the Blue Artifacts,* (no date). Available at: https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/roseheyworth-colliery-1890s/. Accessed 6 March 2022.

[59] 'William Powell' (1881) *Census return for Blaenau Gwent, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5421 https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00073&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024468503. Accessed May 15 2022. Interestingly both the OS map and the form show there to be a hotel associated with the development; this might perhaps be temporary lodging for those working and/or visiting the site?

[60] 'Thomas Phillips'(1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.116 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00216&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471575. (Accessed: 17 May 2022).

The general principle of the industrial towns, according to Carter, is that they come into being not about a single focus, but about a number of industrial foci; whereas the older towns show something of a concentric scheme of development, the industrial towns develop essentially in a series of patches or multiple nuclei. As the towns develop so the independent nuclei coalesce around the connecting lines of communication into the enormous contiguous mass of settlement that is Jones's description of the development of the Rhondda and lower Taff valley. As we have seen, for Jones, the emergence of a second nucleus in the 'valley-unit' comes at the second stage. In the Ebbw Fach valley, there was another nucleus – the settlement at Cwmtillery further up the tributary valley. As referred to above, the first deep mine was sunk there in 1850. Cwmtillery in due course comes under the jurisdiction of the local board of Abertillery and the Abertillery UDC. The sinking of the deep pit at Cwmtillery was a climacteric: as noted in 'Abertillery and District History 2000',[61] a second shaft was sunk in 1858 and 1860 saw the opening of the Penybont Pit further down the valley between Cwmtillery and Abertillery and "Nothing would ever be the same again."

A study of the OS 1876 Map, Slater's 1880 Directory and census returns in relation to Cwmtillery yields the following straightforward observations. First, the site comprises the mine, associated works and one or more terraces of housing. The map also shows the existence of a chapel, which is not mentioned in the trade directory; however, in the census return for Palace Row (marked on the map) a curate is recorded as resident. Secondly, in the trade directory there are only three entries in the section listing 'Grocers & Tea Dealers'; and one public house[62] and one retailer of beer are also listed. A sampling of the census forms available[63] for Palace Row, Cwmtillery Road and Woodland Terrace indicate that the majority involved with the colliery, some with the railway and a few other labourers. Other traders are listed that do not appear in the trade directory – such as two grocers and a shoemaker (Thomas Blandford).

'Lewis Lewis' (1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.117 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00216&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471575. (Accessed: 17 May 2022)

'Adam Lewis' (1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.118 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00217&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471589. (Accessed: 17 May 2022)

[61] Abertillery and District Museum Society, *Abertillery and District History 2000*, p.9

[62] Although the directory refers to the Fountain Inn, with 'Joseph Chivvers' as Innkeeper and the map refers to the South Wales Inn which sounds like a Company establishment (the Colliery Owners being the London and South Wales Coal Co. Ltd). On the census return Joseph Chivers resides at Cwmtillery Road which it is assumed is the main road leading up to the site.

[63] See Appendix 2. Palace Row is the only named street indicated on the OS 1876 map. Apart from the assumption relating to Cwmtillery Road (see the preceding footnote) the data on the census form for Woodland Terrace has been included.

 Cwmtillery then appears to be very much a greenfield site where the housing is associated with the coalmine and there is very little in the way of services or trades. At this juncture then – the 1880s, thirty years after the sinking of the first mine shaft in Cwmtillery – the sources would yield a different analysis from the paradigm put forward by Carter, with urban development very much weighted towards Abertillery and within that nucleus rather than spreading finger-like along the lines of communication between the two sites. In terms of how the development of Abertillery itself fits into the Jones model, there are similarities with his description of a second stage of development comprising the new colliery opening up higher up the valley, the growth of settlement now concentrated in two locations. This assumes that we can view the emergence of Cwmtillery as the second location given that it was the site of the first sunk mine that changed everything. This seems a not unfair characterisation given that Cwmtillery was, as stated above, a greenfield site. In further correspondences with the model, it developed concomitant with the extension of the railway system and was, unsurprisingly, accompanied in both locations by an expansion of the labour force: as shown by the MOH Reports in Appendix 2 the population grows from 1000-2000 in 1850 to 7000 in 1880 (according to the calculations of the Medical Officer of Health).

Three points concerning the Cwmtillery development are of interest when considering the accuracy of the Jones observations at this phase of colliery settlement. First, in the model, Jones asserts[64] that the new settlement would have a nucleus of company-built housing but that the bulk of the streets making up the grid plan would be composed of private speculative housing. He quotes the finding of the 1873 Royal Commission on Coal that housing in the coalfield involved the coal-owners to only a very minor degree.[65] This does not seem to be the case, certainly as far as Cwmtillery is concerned. At the 1874 Annual General Meeting ('AGM') of the London and South Wales Coal Co Ltd, the shareholders were given an update on the company housing building programme: it referred to 124 cottages having been built (given the date - early 1874 – this was probably a combination of cottages at Cwmtillery and the Rose Heyworth cottages with nine cottages recently completed at Cwmtillery[66]). This would suggest that the overwhelming percentage of housebuilding at Cwmtillery was for the company's account.[67] Secondly, on the other hand, Jones notes that in the main commercial street of

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[64] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.14.
[65] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.12.
[66] Anon., 'South Wales Colliery Company', *Monmouthshire Merlin* 6 March 1974, p.6 Available at: https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3405161/3405166/46/Rose%20Hill
Accessed 19 May 2022
[67] The only way of establishing this is by looking at plans deposited by builders in the local council offices, something required after 1878 (Carter, *The Towns of* Wales, pp.327-328), something undertaken by Jones for the purpose of building his model, but which is beyond the scope of this paper.

the nucleus of 'composite settlements' such as Abertillery (for which see, further, below) apart from house conversion into retail premises, there also took place the construction of specialised buildings, such as workmen's institutes. It is indeed the case that towards the end of the century a workmen's institute was built in Abertillery;[68] however, of more significance is that a similar facility was built at Cwmtillery, as shown on the OS 1876 map. The AGM referred to above mentions a proposal to build a hall by private subscription and there is an appeal to the shareholders to subscribe. If indeed the hall was bult as a result of this appeal, it is an interesting contrast with the institute built at Oakdale, which was built by the workers with a loan from the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company.[69] The foregoing indicates the concern of the colliery owner to provide facilities for the workers at its site. As reported at the AGM:

> "[The Cwmtillery property] has its difficulties like most properties, one of them being its isolated position. It has been our endeavour to overcome the first difficulty by providing the best possible accommodation for our workmen, and also by endeavouring to obtain money by private subscription to erect a Collier's Hall, and this I would still recommend to your notice as being of vital importance to the Company. At present there is no inducement for a man to remain at Cwmtillery, but if we had the Collier's Hall it would be a very great inducement."

The third observation made by Jones with regard to this second phase relates to the growth of what he terms "adjunctive settlements" – that is, settlements that are not organic additions to the existing outline but completely new blocks of settlement linked to existing units only by virtue of relative proximity and through serving the same colliery group or group of collieries.[70]A good example of this would appear to be the Clyn-Mawr development referred to above, a development built to service the Rose Heyworth colliery and some distance from Cwmtillery and the main nucleus of Abertillery.

Becoming Urban

As stated above, Abertillery was referred to as a village in 1880, which, although the absolute population numbers are not available, would seem surprising given the physical social infrastructure then in place. In any event, the population growth of the district (in the form of Abertillery USD and then Abertillery UDC) over the last two decades (see Appendix 2) would permit an inference that its status as an urbanised area on population alone was beyond doubt.

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[68] The Powell Tillery Workmen's Hall and Institute. Source: Anon., 'Powell's Tillery Institute, *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (no date). Available at https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/category/abertillery-history/powells-tillery-institute/ Accessed 19 May 2022

[69] Anon, 'Oakdale Workmen's Institute', Museum of Wales website. Available at: https://museum.wales/stfagans/buildings/oakdale/. Accessed 19 May 2022

[70] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.73.

Taking the data points of the census returns for 1901, Kelly's 1895 Directory[71] and the OS map of 1902, several observations can be made. Kelly's 1895 Directory refers to Abertillery as a town and cites the population of the town as being 9,189 (although this may be incorrect given that a similar number is given for the district governed by Abertillery UDC by the MOH Report for 1891 and the Vision of Britain through time website (see Appendix 1)). Appendix 3 sets out occupations listed in the 1895 directory over and above those listed in the Appendix 2 and the presence of businesses in the sense of commercial enterprises that may be assumed to comprise more than a sole trader. These businesses are located overwhelmingly in the centre of Abertillery: a review of the directory shows that of around one hundred and forty-four businesses listed with an address, over one hundred are located within what was the centre in the 1880s. Of the new locations, there are fifteen businesses listed for Cwm Street, a street not shown on the OS 1876 map but depicted at the southern edge of the nucleus on the 1902 map; this would indicate an example of gradual accretion[72]. On the other hand, there are now twelve businesses listed for Tillery Street, six for Oak Street and four for Alma Street. These can be seen as examples of commercial enterprises setting up along the lines of communication described by Carter: the roads link up with industrial sites further to the north of the centre of Abertillery.

Other collieries have been opened in the intervening period, one of which is the Gray colliery, sunk in 1885[73]. Housing developments took place around the Gray colliery which are visible on the OS 1902 Map. A search of 1891 census forms for the nearby Powell, Gray, and Newall streets did not yield results; this is similarly the case for the streets the other side of the railway tracks. Given the proximity of the pit to the nucleus, it is assumed that the housing needs had to be met largely by existing stock. It appears, however, that this need was not, in fact, met: according to the MOH 1890 Report: "[t]he overcrowded condition of dwellings is a perfect scandal."[74] The reference to overcrowding is a reference in effect to a lack of housing:[75] the MOH reports refer to construction of new houses (for example in MOH Reports of 1892 and 1893) but continues by saying that overcrowding still exists or 'home accommodation is very insufficient' (MOH 1893 Report). Overcrowding continues to be a

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[71] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6 Accessed 9 March 2022
[72] There are 1881 census forms available for Cwm street, but no town or parish is stated on the form and so difficult to rely on them without further research.
[73] Abertillery and District Museum Society, *Abertillery and District History 2000* p.33
[74] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1890'.* File No. MH 12/8026 : Sanitary Papers: Abertillery Urban. Accessed 14 May 2022.
[75] Overcrowding through lack of housing provision had been reported on in the 1885 Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, the report noting that 'among the minng population of south Wales families usually occupy two- oomed cottages, though they generally all sleep in one room' (Carter, *The Towns of Wales* p.313.

theme throughout the 1890s: the MOH 1895 Report, which recorded a large jump in population, noted that overcrowding continued to be a great defect, one which was likely to be even more serious in the immediate future.[76]

This problem was attended to in the remaining years of the century[77], as evidenced by the appearance of a number of streets on both sides of the railway line stretching north out of the centre up to the Gray colliery. Sample returns for each of Gray Street[78] and Powell Street[79] for 1901 to the east of the railway line indicate that this was housing for coalminers. On the Powell Street forms amongst the heads of household there were three exceptions only – a house painter, assurance agent and theatrical manager. On the Gray Street forms there appear to be no exceptions. On the other side of the railway line, sample forms from Preston Street (three)[80], and Edward Street (two)[81] paint a similar picture: the exceptions being a district council labourer, housekeeper and painter. Forms from Ashfield Street[82] show more variety. The conclusion, then, is that this housing was overwhelmingly if not exclusively[83] residential.

As referred to earlier in this paper, Jones's model assumes that in the second phase housing construction is undertaken largely as a result of speculative investment. It has been seen that this was not, in fact, the case with the Cwmtillery and Rose Heyworth developments. No comprehensive research has been done to establish the basis for the construction of the 1890s for this paper. However, one example of speculative housing construction can be referred to – that of the developments undertaken by the Abertillery Land and Investment Company, a company formed to acquire land and build houses.[84] Preston Street, Oxford Street and Edward Street opposite the Gray Colliery[85] were one of the results of this exercise, construction beginning in 1892, with eighty-four

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[76] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year, 1895'.* (Abertillery, 1896)*.*

[77] Aided by the depsarture of many families during the coal strike of 1898 – as reported in the MOH Report for that year (W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1898'* (Abertillery, 1899)) .

[78] See Appendix 2.

[79] See Appendix 2.

[80] See Appendix 2.

[81] See Appendix 2.

[82] See Appendix 2

[83] Conceivably, the self-employed baker at No. 2 Ashfield Street could have run his business out of the address. The carpenter at No. 20 Ashfield street is listed as a worker so, it is suggested, this would be unikely in his case.

[84] Anon., 'The Abertillery Land and Investment Company- Mr Edward Oxenford Preston Esq' (no date). Available at https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/category/abertillery-history/powells-tillery-institute/ Accessed 19 May 2022

[85] As shown on the OS Map.

houses built by February, 1893. It is perhaps significant that this construction took place when there was a desperate housing shortage as noted above.

Accordingly, it can be concluded, further, that the manner of the growth of Abertillery continues as before – that is, a nucleus containing the commercial centre with growth on the outskirts, the accretions being largely residential, and some adjunctive settlements. This characterisation would appear to differ from the Carter model which does not appear to account for hierarchies as between colliery settlements. The variance from the Carter model is perhaps best illustrated by the fairly static development at Cwmtillery. Cwmtillery still bears the label of 'a hamlet' in the Kelly's 1895 Directory, which notes as follows: 'The population of this hamlet is employed in the contiguous collieries'. Having said which, the directory lists a small number of commercial retail enterprises but the inference from the listing is that they comprise retailers of necessities – there are a number of grocers and butchers recorded, and other 'shopkeepers'.[86]

If the Carter model is less than wholly satisfactory as a description of Abertillery in the last decade of the nineteenth century, does the Jones approach yield better results? Having discussed the morphogenesis of the colliery settlement in terms of phases (see earlier in the paper), he then presents a classification of the 'total settlement distribution' in the model.[87] In this classification system, Jones gives Abertillery as an example of a 'composite settlement', the most important form of colliery settlement.[88] Although he refers to Abertillery in his preamble to the classification system he again re-iterates that he is looking at a valley-unit. One can infer, therefore, that he is including Cwmtillery (and maybe Six Bells, a settlement further down the valley but outside the scope of this paper) in his description of the developed valley-unit. The essential components of a composite colliery settlement include, first, a nucleus of early, first-phase development as seen in the initial stage of the model (the initial mining colonisation). This would often include colliery company housing. It normally contains the present commercial centre, but not inevitably so. The second component comprises large, compact and regular blocks of settlement, which are constructed in the second and third phases. Third, a considerable amount of accretive expansion occurs in all phases, containing many variations in house-type and characteristic periods of slower growth. The above classification

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[86] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities]
(London, 1895), p.21. Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 19 May 2022.
[87] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, pp.92-103.
[88] Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.93.

whilst not a perfect fit does seem to correspond to Abertillery and its satellite settlement, Cwmtillery. It seems to give appropriate differential weighting to the respective settlement centres or nuclei.

Chapter 3: On being urban

As has been discussed earlier in this paper, Jones's concern is with the morphogenesis and classification of colliery settlements as physical, spatial phenomena. He is less concerned with the characterisation of the settlement or any nucleus in terms of its urban condition or status, save to say that in the composite settlement the original nucleus of the valley-unit will normally contain the commercial centre. In a sort of coda, he discusses the relationship between his classification and service and social facilities, but it is a contemporary analysis aimed at urban planning concerns for the future and as such it is difficult to read across to the characteristics of the urban condition at the end of the nineteenth century.[89] So, what does Abertillery look like in the last decade of the nineteenth century? Can it be characterised as an 'urban area'? Attempting to deal with this question feels like having to confront a checklist; accordingly, it is proposed to take an impressionistic approach to various aspects of the settlement in order to construct a baseline of urban characteristics.

Before dealing with the amenities at the disposal of the townsfolk, it is worth considering the social structure. Julie Light quotes R.J. Morris as saying that the towns and cities were 'substantially the creation of their middle class'.[90] It follows therefore that, in order to demonstrate urban status one has to show the imprint of the middle class on the town's activities; and a claim made by Light in that essay is that the middle class may have been smaller in number in towns such as those the subject of her study, nevertheless 'they performed the same functions of an urban elite'.[91] It is difficult to assess the presence of the middle classes in Abertillery: the only occupational breakdown available on the Vision of Britain through Time website is for the parish of Aberystruth for 1881.[92] Taking that data, on a very rough calculation, the ratio of those working as manual labourers to the 'shopocracy', local government workers can be very roughly calculated as yielding a 3% middle class participation. This is an unreliable guide, and it is notable that Light was happy to consider the middle class acting as an elite based on the smaller percentages of 1.8% (Pontypool) and 2.2% (Bridgend) (based on the 1861 census).[93] Later on in the article Light tries to derive a middle class through the circumstantial evidence

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[89] An 'urban area' was only one – and the most advanced - of the five types of relationships and is relatively rare in the coalfield. (Jones, *Colliery Settlement in the South Wales* Coalfield, p.106.)

[90] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites', p.31 quoting R.J. Morris, 'The middle class and British towns and cities of the Industrial Revolution, 1780-1870' in *The Pursuit of Urban History*, ed. By D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (London, 1983), p.287

[91] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites', p.39.

[92] GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Aberystruth SubD through time | Industry Statistics | Occupation data classified into the 24 1881 'Orders', plus sex, *A Vision of Britain through Time*. URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10549231/cube/OCC_ORDER1881. Accessed 23 May 20.

[93] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites', p.39.

of certain public facilities (see below). It is beyond the scope of this paper to undertake research on the participation of the middle classes in the affairs of the town and so we must rely on any conclusions on urban status based not on such an analysis but by looking at the facilities and amenities of the town. Suffice it to say that for Croll, one of the badges of middle-class participation in urban affairs in Merthyr was evidenced by the formation of a Chamber of Trade and a Ratepayers' Protection Society.[94] Kelly's 1895 Directory shows the presence of both at that point in Abertillery[95].

Turning, then, to matters of urban geography: Evans comments that Welsh towns seemed to outside observers not to be towns, to the extent that they lacked 'recognisable cores', the ribbon development of the Rhondda Valleys – 'the longest street in the world' – being the most obvious example.[96] However, from an early stage, Abertillery had a nucleus of streets in which were housed commercial enterprises, public houses, a nearby railway station (housing the Post Office), Anglican church and National school, and Roman Catholic Church. In his discussion of the relationship between his classification of colliery settlements and services and social facilities referred to above, Jones divides the settlements in five types, only two of which were in any way urban. For a settlement to classify as urban it was required to have businesses over and above the basic provision of shops providing the necessities (which more basic level is the case with Cwmtillery; and would have obviously been, at an earlier stage, the case with Abertillery also). In Kelly's 1895 Directory, there are listed a firm of solicitors (George Bishop, perhaps a sole practitioner), a chemists, the Blaina Industrial and Provident Society[97], (importantly) the offices of the local newspaper the South Wales Gazette, the offices of the Starr-Bowkett Building Society, and the office of an 'accountant, insurance, emigration & financial agent &loan office' (Thomas William Price). One badge of urbanity or near urbanity for Jones is the presence of commercial retail chains: it is interesting to note, therefore, the presence of a branch of Hepworth & Co, the Leeds clothing chain, on Commercial Street.[98]

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[94] Andy Croll, *Civilising the Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870-1914* (Cardiff, 2000), p.41.
[95] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities London, 1895) p.21-22 Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 20 May 2022
[96] Evans, *Rethinking Urban Wales*, p.127
[97] The branch was opened on 6th October 1890 in Church Street. 'The building is very extensive and well-appointed…….The rejoicings on the occasion were general.' (Anon., ABERTILLERY. CO-OPERATION', *South Wales Daily News,* 8 October1890, p.5 Available at
https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3718596/3718601/85/Abertillery, Accessed 25 May 2022)
[98] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) p.22 Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 20 May 2022

In her discussion of the middle classes in Bridgend, Penarth and Pontypool[99], Julie Light talks about the presence of certain facilities as circumstantial evidence of the presence of the middle classes, namely, a town hall, a bank and a mechanics' institute.[100] Kelly's 1895 Directory lists the presence of a branch of the Blaina Gwent Capital & Counties Bank Lim. at Cwm Street;[101] and there was also the Post Office Savings Bank. As for Workmen's institutes: Thomas Powell, the owner of the Penybont Tillery Colliery paid for the construction and fitting out of the Tillery Street Workmen's Hall and Reading Rooms, which opened in Janaury 1884: 'The workmen employed in the collieries of the Tillery Coal Company, Limited, have just been the recipients of a handsome present, made by Mr T. H. Powell, chairman of the company. This consists of large hall or reading-room, with gallery, fitted with chairs, and complete in every detail. It is capable of accommodating 300 persons, and when needed for a concert or lecture, or other public entertainment, the tables are convertible into a platform.'[102] This was replaced by the Tillery Workmen's Institute - built in 1897 and containing a library of 3,000 volumes, reading, billiard and committee rooms. A large gymnasium was added in 1901.[103] There were council offices at King Street[104] but no town hall as such. What Abertillery did have as a public space, however, was the Metropole Theatre and Dance Hall (originally named the New Market Hall), a large four-story building erected in 1892, on the site of Abertillery's market, with a market hall on the ground floor.[105] According to the 'Out of the Blue Artifacts' website: 'The Market Hall Company said the contractor Mr A.P. Williams performed in a thorough manner and that it was gratifying to know that there was no need to go out of town for a builder, to erect the largest and most important building in the Western Valleys.'[106] It was obviously, a popular amenity for the public and the 'Out of

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[99] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites, pp. 29–55. 2

[100] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites', pp.40-42

[101] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) p.22 Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 20 May 2022

[102] Anon., 'THE TILLERY COLLIERY CO. AND THEIR EMPLOYEES. OPENING OF A HALL AT ABERTILLERY', *South Wales Daily News,* 10 January 1884, p.3 Available at:
https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000919/18840110/042/0003, Accessed 25 May 2022.

[103] Anon., 'Powell's Tillery Miner's Institute', *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (no date). Available at:
https://outofthebueartifacts.com/powells-tillery-miners-institute-a-history/. Accessed 6 March 2022

[104] Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire and South Wales, 1895. [Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities] (London, 1895) p.22 Available at:
http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/337093/rec/6
Accessed 20 May 2022

[105] National Monuments Record or Wales, 'Metropole Theatre And Dance Hall; market hall; Abertillery and District Museum, Market Street, Abertillery'. Coflein (2022) Available at https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/410819 (Information only; no image)

[106] Anon., 'The Market Hall – The Metropole Theatre', *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (September 15 2016). Available at https://outofthebueartifacts.com/the-market-hall-the-metropole-theatre/ Accessed 23 May 2022

the Blue Artifacts' website mentions a number of performers who performed there.[107] The South Wales Daily News gives an account of an evening in December 1893: 'On Tuesday evening the spacious New Public Hall was crammed to its utmost capacity by an audience who included all classes to hear the Welsh Ladies' Choir, under the conductorship of Madam Clara Novello Davies. The event was certainly the greatest success ever achieved in the neighbourhood.'[108]And a few years later, the same paper reports that a 'large and fashionable crowd' attended a concert given at the hall by the Royal Treorky choir.[109]

According to Andy Croll, by the later years of the nineteenth century there was a highly developed idea of what a town should look like, what facilities it should possess, and the kind of governmental and administrative structures should oversee its affairs.[110] He gives as examples of facilities parks, free libraries, swimming pools and publicly owned brass bands, noting that Merthyr Tydfil of the 1880s and 1890s fell short of these criteria, which called into question its very status as a town.[111] By 1900, Abertillery had both a park and, within it, a public swimming bath, the latter being opened on 4th September 1900.[112]

In terms of facilities for the enjoyment of the inhabitants, Kelly's 1895 Directory notes that there are two reading rooms (one other apart from the facility in the Tillery Street Workmen's Hall and Reading Rooms and its successor the Tillery Workmen's Institute). (In fact, a reading room was established in Abertillery as early as 1856, set up at the instigation of Sir Thomas Phillips, the owner of coal levels in the vicinity, the Penybont Colliery owners and the owner of the Tinplate Works.[113]) A curious addition in Kelly's 1895 Directory is the listing of coffee rooms at Church Street (proprietor, Mrs Challenger) and refreshment rooms at Oak Street (Proprietor, a Mr Jordan). These, together with the appearance of two temperance hotels, one in Oak Street and the other in Somerset Street, suggest an attempt to act as a counter to the prodigious number of beer retailers and public houses.

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[107] Anon., 'The Market Hall – The Metropole Theatre', *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (September 15 2016). Available at https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/the-market-hall-the-metropole-theatre/ Accessed 23 May 2022
[108] Anon., 'Visit of the Welsh Ladies' Choir', *South Wales Daily News,* p.6. Available at https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3730419/3730425/137/Abertillery. Accessed 24 May 2022
[109] Anon., 'The Royal Treorky Choir', *South Wales Daily News,* 8 January 1896, p.6 Available at: https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3736332/3736338/157/Abertillery. Accessed 23 May 2022
[110] Croll, *Civilising the Urban*, p.45-46
[111] Croll, *Civilising the Urban*, p.45-46
[112] Anon., 'Abertillery. Public Bath Opened' *South Wales Daily News*, 4 September 1900, p.6. Available at https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3746534/3746540/165/Abertillery
Accessed 25 May 2022
[113] Anon., 'Powell's Tillery Miner's Institute – A History', *Out of the Blue Artifacts* (no date). Available at https://outoftheblueartifacts.com/powells-tillery-miners-institute-a-history/. Accessed 23 May 2022

It has been sought to demonstrate here, then, that Abertillery, at the end of the century, possessed the physical markers of a town and the urban space.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This paper has sought to throw some more light on the manner of urbanisation that was experienced in the nineteenth century in the south Wales coalfield ('the journey') and what the urban condition looked like ('the destination'). The Ebbw Fach valley and Abertillery, in particular, have not received the attention that has been lavished on other industrial sites such as Merthyr Tydfil or the rest of the south Wales coalfield, in particular the Rhondda. In terms of colliery settlement growth, the infamous 'ribbon development' of the Rhondda has long held sway in the imagination. Equally the Carter model of an urban area coalescing around lines of communication between multiple nuclei does not correspond to the growth of Abertillery. It has been contended that the town's development follows more closely the model developed by Jones. The points at variance - such as who undertook house-building schemes – have been minor.

Jones elaborated a model of colliery settlement development and a classification system for the colliery settlement that emerges; and whilst he identifies Abertillery as an example of the composite settlement, he does so without providing the detailed analysis to substantiate it. This paper has attempted to put some flesh on Jones's bones. Having analysed the growth of the settlement and its arrival at a sort of steady state Jones is not much concerned with the urban condition that has resulted. Accordingly, this paper has sought to address what is considered to be another lacuna, and thereby to chip away in part at the generalisations that prevail when considering the urban environment of towns in the south Wales coalfield; in particular it has sought to show that at the end of the century, Abertillery was not an example of the 'quasi-urban' settlement that Evans referred to; and to show that it benefitted from some at least of the facilities and services that Jones places as a condition to 'urban centre' status and that Borsay, Miskell and Roberts implicitly require a town to possess. The approach that has been taken to address this has been by taking the examples of urban markers (such as commercial or leisure facilities) and demonstrating that Abertillery, too, possessed them.

As noted at the outset, time and space combine to prevent an attempt to undertake, in this urban study, the comprehensive cross-boundary approach advocated by Neil Evans. In particular, it would be rewarding to have been able to include a study of the town's administrative bodies, of the prominent or public individuals who played a part in the town's growth such as undertaken by Croll and Light.

Such an analysis might seek to see where on the spectrum where we can place Abertillery on the spectrum between 'civic' and 'urban'. Or should it? Carter depredated the cliché 'urban not civic': the dismissal of the valley settlements as mere rows of terraced houses upon the hillsides with no social focus did them a great disservice, he wrote, 'and is a poor reward for the effort and determination by which the population of these areas have met the difficulties presented by the physical nature of the deeply incised valleys, by the mores of a society which put profit above social responsibility and by the drab and grim environment which exploitation created.'[114]

(7,428 words)

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[114] Carter, *The Towns of Wales*, p.308

Appendix 1: Population Statistics

Note on Population Statistics:

The MOH Reports of population statistics make assumptions based on occupied housing multiplied by an assumed number of inhabitants. For example, for the year 1896, the report lists a number of houses in the four wards that then comprised Abertillery (Abertillery, Penybont, Cwmtylery (sic) and Llanhilleth[115]) and an estimate of the population as being 17,658. The Report states as follows: "The above interesting information has been supplied to me by your Inspector of Nuisances, who has taken much trouble to acquire the particulars from the rate and other books in the Council's possession. It may be inferred that the figures are as nearly accurate as possible, though perhaps the estimated population – based, as it is, upon the assumption of every house *containing six persons* may be slightly in excess of the actual [population]."[116]

Year	Entity/area reported	Population	Source
1851	(1) Aberystruth parish - 14,383 (2) Abertillery	14,383 1,000- 2,000	Slater's 1859 Directory[117] Price[118]
1861	Aberystruth parish	17,000	Slater's 1868 Directory[119]
1871	Aberystruth parish	15,468	(1) Slater's 1880 Directory;[120] and (2) Vision of Britain[121]
1880	Abertillery	7000	1880 MOH Report[122]
1881	(1) Aberystruth	18,672	Vision of Britain

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[115] Abertillery UDC had been extended to include Llanhilleth in 1891 (see the MOH report for that year).

[116] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1880*'

[117] I. Slater., Slater's (Late Pigot & Co.) Royal, National and Commercial Directory and Topography of the counties of Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Shropshire and North and Wales, and a classified directory of the town of Liverpool ... [1859] (Manchester, 1859). Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/182715/rec/15. Accessed 19 May 2022

[118] J. Price, 'Education in Abertillery' *Abertillery and District History 2000*. (Peterborough, 2000) pp 62-67.

[119] Slater's (Late Pigot & Co.) Royal National Commercial Directory and Topography of the Counties of Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Shropshire, and North and South Wales, and the City of Chester ... [1868] (Manchester, 1868), p.41. Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/90408/rec/11. Accessed 19 May 2022

[120] Slater, I. *Slater's Royal National Commercial Directory of North and South Wales, 1880, Part 1* Manchester, 1880) Available at: http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/89784/rec/7. Accessed 9 March 2022

[121] GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Aberystruth SubD through time | Population Statistics | Total Population, *A Vision of Britain through Time*. URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10549231/cube/TOT_POP. Accessed 15 May 2022

[122] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1880*'.

	(2) Abertillery	5,997	1881 MOH Report[123]
1882	Abertillery Urban Sanitary District (USD)	6,000	1882 MOH Report[124]
1883	Abertillery USD	6,000	1883 MOH Report[125]
1884	Abertillery USD	6,000	1884 MOH Report[126]
1885	Abertillery USD	6,500	1885 MOH Report[127]
1886	Abertillery USD	6,500	1886 MOH Report[128]
1887	Abertillery USD	6,700	1887 MOH Report[129]
1888	Abertillery USD	7,300	1888 MOH Report[130]
1889	Abertillery USD	7,580	1889 MOH Report[131]
1890	Abertillery USD	8,000	1890 MOH Report[132]
1891	Abertillery USD	9,138[133] 9,189	(1) 1891 MOH Report[134] and (2) Vision of Britain[135] Kelly's 1895 directory[136]
1892	Abertillery USD	9,138	1892 MOH Report[137]
1893	Abertillery USD	11,850[138]	1893 MOH Report[139]
1894	Abertillery USD	12,975	1894 MOH Report[140]
1895	Abertillery Urban District Council (UDC)	14,245	1895 MOH Report[141]
1896	Abertillery UDC	17,658	1896 MOH Report [142]
1897	Abertillery UDC	17,297	1897 MOH Report[143]
1898	Abertillery UDC	16,190[144]	1898 MOH Report[145]

[123] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1881'*.

[124] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1882'*.

[125] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1883'*.

[126] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1884.*

[127] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1885'*.

[128] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1886'*.

[129] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1887'*.

[130] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1888'*.

[131] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1889'*.

[132] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1890'*.

[133] The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales gives a figure of 6,003 but does not indicate the source.

[134] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report, 1891'*.

[135] GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Abertillery USD through time | Census tables with data for the Sanitary District, *A Vision of Britain through Time*. URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/12826953 Date accessed: 15th May 2022

[136] This is reported as a figure for the town, but must be incorrect

[137] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report'*, (Abertillery, 1893).

[138] Area covered by the report increased from 4,500 to 6,346 acres as the inclusion of Llanhilleth (a nearby settlement lower down the valley) within the Sanitary District

[139] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1893'*, (Abertillery, 1894).

[140] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1894'*. (Abertillery, 1895).

[141] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year, 1895'*. (Abertillery, 1896).

[142] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1896'*. (Abertillery, 1897).

[143] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1897'*. (Abertillery, 1898)

[144] The population decreased because a number of young families left the district during the "prolonged and disastrous" strike during the Summer of 1898 (source – MOH 1899 Report, p.4)

[145] W. Williams, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1898'* (Abertillery, 1899)

1899	Abertillery UDC	18,590	1899MOH Report[146]
1900	Abertillery UDC	23,922	1900 MOH Report[147]
1901	Abertillery UDC	21,945	Vision of Britain[148]

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[146] D. Muir, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1899'.*(Abertillery, 1900)

[147] D. Muir, '*Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1900'* (Abertillery, 1901)

[148] GB Historical GIS / University of Portsmouth, Abertillery USD through time | Census tables with data for the Sanitary District, *A Vision of Britain through Time*.
URL: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/12826953 Date accessed: 15th May 2022

Appendix 2: Census Data

Notes on Census data:

- As observed in the main text of this paper, most settlements will have a High Street, Commercial Street and Church Street. Searches on Abertillery in the www.Findmypast.com website can yield results also for Blaina and Ebbw Vale. Where the 'town or village or hamlet' box on the census form is not completed, it is sometimes necessary to infer the location of the street from other information on the form. For example, for the 1881 census Abertillery was in the parish of St. Michael's, whilst Blaina was in the parish of St. Peter.

- Searches on the www.Findmypast.com website sometimes do not yield results for a particular street. For example, a search on Somerset Street does not throw up results but the OS 1876 map shows the existence of a Somerset Street, and a search on Commercial Street in Abertillery yielded three addresses on Somerset Street on one form.[149] Similarly, the map shows a Mill Street in the centre of Abertillery, but a search on that street only yields results for Mill Street in Blaina.

Clearly, greater research would yield more reliable results.

1881 Census returns for Church Street, Commercial Street, High Street and Market Street – Rank, Profession or Occupation[150]	
Cordwainer	1
Coal miner/collier	18
Grocer	7
Domestic Servant	8
Master Bootmaker, shoemaker	4
Puddler, Ironworker	2
Labourer	2
Dressmaker	5
Grocer's Assistant	4
Pupil teacher	2
Baker	3
Saleswoman	1
Tin washer	1
Tin works operator	2
Watchmaker	1
Greengrocer	2
Tinplate worker	1
Ironfounder	1
Iron moulder	1
Machine clerk	1

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[149] 'William Jordan

[150] Not including schoolchildren. There is one example in the forms of someone carrying on two occupations-that of coalminer and innkeeper.

Colliery Engineer	1
Carpenter	2
Tinplate Works Engineer	1
Labourer (in Blacksmith's forge)	1
Master tailor	1
Ironworker	1
Apprentice (?) Tailor	1
Innkeeper	4
Barmaid	1
Roll turner (?) in Iron forge	1
Labourer at Iron forge	1
Switchman (Great Western Railway)	1
Nurse	1
Timber merchant	1
Draper's Assistant	1
Milliner	1
Colliery Clerk	1
Furniture Dealer	1
Wine merchant	1
Butcher	2
Hairdresser	1
Millman Tinworks	1
Office Clerk	1
Annealer Tin works	1
Box Boy Tin Works	1
Draper	2
Insurance Agent	1
Tinplate roller	1
General Servant	4
Millwright	1
Telegraphist	1
Housekeeper	1
Auctioneer, hawker	1

Sample forms:

Commercial Street:

'Sarah Hacker' (1881). *Census return for Commercial Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00164&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470350
(Accessed 17 May 2022)

'William Morgan' (1881). *Census return for Commercial Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:

https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00165&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470394
(Accessed 17 May 2022)

'William Jordan' (1881) *Census return for Commercial Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00163&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470344
(Accessed 17 May 2022)

High Street
'George Hollander'(1881) *Census return for High Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00111&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024469234
(Accessed 16 May 2022)

Market Street
'Dick Stockton' (1881) *Census return for Market Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00160&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470267
(Accessed 16 May 2022)

Church Street
'George Jones' (1881) *Census return for Church Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00183&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470811
(Accessed 16 May 2022)

'John Carter' (1881) *Census return for Church Street, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00182&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470780

Blaenau Gwent
William Powell' (1881) *Census return for Blaenau Gwent, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 11/5421 https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00073&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024468503. Accessed May 15 2022.

Duffryn Row
'Thomas Phillips'(1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.116 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-

uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00216&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471575. (Accessed: 17 May 2022);

'Lewis Lewis' (1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.117 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00216&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471575. (Accessed: 17 May 2022); '

Adam Lewis' (1881). *Census return for Duffryn Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 p.118 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00217&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471589. (Accessed: 17 May 2022)

Palace Row
'Albert Wellington' (1881) *Census return for Palace Row, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00260&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024472338
(Accessed 18 May 2022)

Cwmtillery Road
'Edward Chivers' (1881) *Census return for Cwmtillery Road, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00226&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471667
(Accessed 18 May 2022)

'Joseph Chivers'(1881) *Census return for Cwmtillery Road, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00227&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471690
(Accessed 18 May 2022)

Woodland Terrace
'Isaac West' (1881) *Census return for woodland Terrace, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00240&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471982
(Accessed 18 May 2022)

'Thomas Blandford' *Census return for Woodland Terrace, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at:https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00239&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471979
(Accessed 18 May 2022)

'Charles Barfield' 1881) *Census return for woodland Terrace, Abertillery, Bedwelty Registration District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG11/5241 (1881) Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00237&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024471926
RG 11/5241

1901 Census Forms

Gray Street
'William Coles' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0535&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032024054
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'Thomas Bool' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0534&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032024017
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'Samuel Hogg' (1901)) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District..* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at: https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0537&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032024116
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

Powell Street
'Edward Winston' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0525&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032023727
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'Alfred Short' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0519&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032023564
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'George Brewer' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4936 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0518&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032023527

Preston Street
'Thomas Watkins' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:

https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0302&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032018035
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'Frederick Box' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0303&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032018068
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'Edward Cott' (1901) *Census return for Gray Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0300&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032017971

Edward Street
'George Pugh' (1901) *Census return for Edward Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0306&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032018176
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

'George Button' (1901) *Census return for Edward Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0307&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032018198
(Accessed 23 May 2022)

Ashfield Street
'Joseph Boots' (1901) *Census return for Ashfield Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1901%2F4935-4936%2F0283&parentid=GBC%2F1901%2F0032017446
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'Edwin Jones' (1901) *Census return for Ashfield Street, Abertillery, Abertillery Urban District.* Public Record Office: PRO RG 13/4935 Available at:
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Appendix 3 - Information from Kelly's 1895 Directory

Note on Trade Directory data:
Light says that caution needs to be exercised when using trade directory data because of errors of counting and problems in establishing the exact nature and function of commercial premises.[151]

Occupations additional to those listed in Slater's 1880 Directory	
Fishmonger	3
Painter	2
Registrar of marriages for Aberystruth district	1
Solicitor	2
Photographer	1
Pawnbroker	1
Undertaker	2
Plumber	1
Toy dealer	1
Confectioner	1
Dealer in pianofortes	1
Mining and Civil Engineer, architect, surveyor & estate agent	1
Stationer	2
Fruiterer	1
Saddler	1
Sanitary Inspector	1
Chimney Sweep	1
Haulage Contractor	1
Attendance officer	1
Auctioneer	1
Surveyor and engineer to Abertillery UDC	1

The following table lists businesses or professions where two or more persons might be engaged:

Businesses and Professional practices
Blaina Industrial and Provident Society (branch)
Blaina Gwent Capital & Counties Bank Lim.
Hepworth & Co clothiers
Music Warehouse
Williams and Sargeant, physicians and surgeons
W. R. Haylings, printer and publisher (South Wales Gazette)
Starr-Bowkett Building Society
Two practising solicitors
Thomas Price: accountant, insurance, emigration & financial agent and loan office
A number of building contractors: Gaen Bros., Henry William Hall, Alfred Williams

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[151] Light, 'The Middle Classes as Urban Elites', p.39

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https://search-findmypast-co-uk.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/record?id=GBC%2F1881%2F4297396%2F00165&parentid=GBC%2F1881%2F0024470394
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