A Comparative Study of the Societal Norms of Nineteenth Century Women in the Elite Tier of Society with Particular Reference to Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn

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DECLARATION
This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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Date 11.6.24

STATEMENT 1
This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s). Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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Abstract

The events of the nineteenth century brought societal upheaval to the norms of the social class structure which had existed largely unchanged in Britain for many centuries. Urbanisation due to the Industrial Revolution brought the working class together living in proximity, which had not been the case during the previous generally rural patterns of population location. This brought the demand for rights from the newly urbanised working class sharply into focus, as the power of paternalism as a method of controlling the lower classes declined. Furthermore, the rapid increase in the size of the middle class largely due to fortunes made in manufacturing changed the structure of society. The elite tier of society was also impacted. Previously the preserve of the landed gentry who had inherited wealth, titles and deference, the elite tier expanded to include the manufacturers who were the most successful. The more minor manufacturers remained firmly in the middle class.

This study conducted through research in various South Wales archives, looks at the lives of three women from the elite tier, who were all resident in South Wales for varying periods during the nineteenth century. Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn all belonged to families whose male relatives were engaged in metallurgical manufacturing. Sarah Vivian's husband John Henry Vivian owned the Hafod Copper Works in Swansea. Lady Charlotte Guest's husband Sir Josiah John Guest owned the Dowlais Iron Works near Merthyr. Amy Dillwyn's father owned Dillwyn and Co., a spelter works in Swansea. All three women also were connected to parliament as their male relatives were Members of Parliament. Accordingly, their lives were split between living in London when Parliament was sitting and then returning to South Wales for the remainder of the year. Their London residence allowed them access to the social events of 'the Season'.

The role of Women in the elite tier during this period is widely regarded as living in 'separate spheres', being responsible for running the home and being a good wife and mother. Their role sometimes referred to as being the 'Angel in the House.' This study aimed to determine if this is truly reflected in the lives of the three women being studied. Their journals and notebooks still available in the archives, allowed a view of their actual rather than theoretical lives reflected through their own words. As a Swansea resident my interest stemmed from Sarah Vivian whose son Henry Hussey Vivian was created the first Lord Swansea. If this study had only referred to Sarah Vivian, this would have resulted in a simple retelling of events in her life. Therefore, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn have provided a suitable foil to provide a wider comparison to other nineteenth century women in the elite tier. Accordingly, the findings of the study partly disprove the 'Angel in the House' epithet and reveal striking individual differences as to how the three women chose to conduct their lives.

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Chapter One - Literature Review and Methodology

Literature

This research considered the lives of three nineteenth century women: Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest, and Amy Dillwyn. Whilst there are many sources of evidence about the lives of the male relatives of these three women particularly their historical and parliamentary achievements, there is comparatively little primary or secondary material available regarding the women of the three families, particularly Sarah Vivian. The paucity of information made the archival evidence of the lives of these women of prime importance in challenging the research question.

In the first chapter the historical background of Swansea, which was the home town of both Sarah Vivian and Amy Dillwyn, was studied. Chapter two concerned a broader view of the lives of women of the elite tier during the nineteenth century to enable the provision of a means of comparison. The final section of the review referenced in chapter three, concerned both secondary sources and archival evidence relevant to the actual lives of the three women. Thus, this review notes the importance of the available archival evidence. However, interestingly the primary evidence did not entirely agree with the information contained in the secondary sources, particularly concerning the assertion that nineteenth century women's lives were spent confined to the sphere of the home and child rearing.

Currently, the most notable and relevant work concerned with the history of Swansea is Stephen Hughes' highly detailed work *Copperopolis.*[1] Hughes' work was used in this study as

[1] Stephen Hughes, *Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: Royal Commission of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2000).

a seminal text to underpin the understanding of the changes to Swansea through time although Hughes as the title suggests, concentrates on the development of the copper industry. However, this text also provides wider historical context. Gerald Gabb's work produced as a series of booklets covers a wide range of topics regarding Swansea's industry, but importantly refers to the diversification of the metallurgical industry once the market for copper waned later in the nineteenth century.[2]

To enable a balanced historiography of Swansea's past it was important to study the period prior to the domination of copper manufacture in the Lower Tawe Valley. A feature of Swansea's history is its role as a sea bathing resort which is often forgotten. Louise Miskell provides us with an insight into this aspect of life in Swansea during the early nineteenth century, citing the key urban facilities developed to accommodate visitors.[3] Harold Pollins concurs with the view put forward by Miskell, that for a period Swansea was as much a tourist destination as it was a copper producing town.[4] H. V. Bowen also stresses the duality of roles performed by Swansea during the early part of the nineteenth century.[5] Ronald Rees cites the air borne pollution from the copper works as being the reason why Swansea was unable to continue fulfilling both roles.[6]

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[2] Gerald Gabb, *Swansea before Industry; Preindustrial Swansea: Siting and Development; The Morris Family; Early Copper Works; The Copper Men: Later Copper Works; The Rise and Fall of the Copper Industry; Tinplate; The Grenfells* (Swansea: Swansea Museum, undated).

[3]Louise Miskell, 'The Making of a New Welsh Metropolis: Science, Leisure and Industry in Early Nineteenth Century Swansea', *History*, 88.1 (January 2003), 32-52 (p.33).

[4] Harold Pollins, 'The Swansea Canal', *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol 1 Issue 2 (November 1953), 135-154 (p.135).

[5] H. V. Bowen. Ed. *A New History of Wales: Myths and Realities in Welsh History* (Llandysul: Gomer,2011), p.108.

[6] Ronald Rees, 'The Great Copper Trials', *History Today*, Vol. 43 (December 1993) 39 -45 (p.39). <https://www.proquest.com/printview?accountid=130472> [accessed 22 September 2022].

The Morris Family established the early pattern of copper production in the Tawe Valley. This is detailed in a letter book written by Robert Morris during the eighteenth century.[7] This is the only remaining letter book in his own hand. The summary of the remaining, lost pocket books produced by Robert Morris Junior gives us some further details of copper production during this period.[8] Chris Evans helpfully points out that this summary was written over forty years after the events described and arguably shows Robert Morris in rather an overly favourable light.[9]

The establishment of the Hafod Works in 1810 brought about vast wealth for the Vivian Family as outlined by a booklet produced by Swansea Council.[10] Their financial success bought the Family access to the elite tier of society. It was the Reform Act 1832 which created new parliamentary constituencies including Swansea and Merthyr to which the male relatives of all three women were elected. This then gave all of them them access to the London social scene and 'the Season'.

G.E. Mingay in his work *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* outlines the changes in the type of people allowed to be included in the elite tier of society.[11] He stresses how the most successful industrialists were allowed entry to this small coterie of people as the nineteenth century progressed. The exact number of people in the elite tier at the start of the

[7] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris, *Letter book*, LAC/81/6.
[8] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris junior, *A History of the Copper Concern,1717 – 1730*, historical notes and memoranda by Robert Morris junior, relating to Robert Morris senior's copper smelting works in Swansea (1774), LAC/81/1.
[9] Chris Evans, *The Origins of an Industrial Region – Robert Morris and the First Copperworks, c.1727 – 1730* (Newport: South Wales Record Society, 2010), p.30.
[10] *A Short History of the Hafod Copperworks, 1810 – 1924* (Swansea: City and County of Swansea, 2010).
[11] G.E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century (*London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963*),* p.3.

nineteenth century is contentious. Pamela Horn asserts that there were about four hundred people.[12] Leonore Davidoff however, states that there were between three and four hundred members of the landed gentry in this tier of society.[13] The wider acceptance of the wives, daughters, and sons of successful industrialists such as Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn greatly increased these numbers. There is no common consensus as to exactly how many members of the elite tier there were by the end of the nineteenth century as estimates vary between four and six thousand.

The interconnectivity of historical events from the period from the end of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth century brought about wide-ranging changes to the structure of British society. Dorothy K. G. Thompson's work *British Women in the Nineteenth Century* points out that these changes had huge impacts on the lives of women in all every *stratum* of society.[14] Frank Prochaska stresses the fear felt particularly amongst the upper classes, over the events of the French Revolution in 1793.[15] Lilian Lewis Shiman concurs with this and further illustrates the fear felt, by pointing out the ban on all working-class gatherings.[16] These events coincided with the ongoing Industrial Revolution which resulted in mass movement from the countryside to the towns and cities. Thompson comments that the lives of middle-class and upper-class women were carried out in separate spheres to those of their husbands.[17] Suzanne Fagence Cooper further develops this concept by pointing out that

[12] Pamela Horn, *High Society – The English Social Elite, 1880 – 1914* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992), p.8.
[13] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), p.20.
[14] Dorothy K. G. Thompson, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century (London: The Historical Association, 1992),* p.10.
[15] Frank Prochaska, 'Women in English Philanthropy, 1790 – 1830', *International Review of Social History*, Vol XIX part 3 (1974), 424 - 439 <https://doi.org/10.1017/soo20859000004740>.
[16] Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Women and Leadership in Nineteenth Century England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p.36.
[17] Thompson.

Coventry Patmore used the term 'Angel in the House' to describe the lives of middle and upper-class women.[18] Margaret Hewitt agrees with this view and further states that the home was the province of women.[19]

Frank Prochaska's work *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* provides a seminal text detailing the importance of philanthropy to nineteenth century women.[20] His detailed and at times critical review of the nature and reasons for women engaging in philanthropic activities provides a wide-ranging view of the activities which provided a means for women to use their talents outside the home environment. Dorice Williams Elliot reiterates Prochaska's contention that philanthropy had a greater importance to the cause of women's equality than simply 'being seen to do good'.[21] Prochaska does however, state that the role of 'doer of good deeds' was one that was attractive to some women.[22]

The parliamentary links which all three women had, allowed them access to London and particularly the events of 'The Season'. Horn stresses the importance of attending most of the events not least because it gave families the best chance of introducing their offspring to the elite class. The main intention of this being the hope of finding a suitable spouse.[23] To be in London for several months each year the elite had to rent or buy a suitable residence. Horn

[18] Suzanne Fagence Cooper, *The Victorian Women* (London: V and A Publications, 2001), p.10.
[19] Margaret Hewitt, *Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry* (London: Rockcliff, 1958), p.3.
[20] Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980*).
[21]Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel Out of the House* (Charlottsville: The University Press of Virginia, 2002), p.15.
[22] Frank Prochaska, 'Women in English Philanthropy 1790 – 1830'*, International Review of Social History*, Vol XIX, part 3 (1974) 424 – 439 (p.435) <https://doi.org/10.1017/soo20859000004740>
[23]Horn, p.8.

outlines the area of London which was considered suitable for this purpose.[24] This exemplifies the importance of being seen to behave in a particular way to be accepted into the elite tier.

There is historiographical agreement that as the nineteenth century progressed, women were increasingly unwilling to stay within the narrow strictures of the 'Angel in the House' mode of behaviour. Engagement in politics despite the absence of universal suffrage, was seen as of utmost importance in the fight for equal rights. David Rubenstein stresses the importance of women's membership of the Primrose League and Women's Liberal Federation in allowing women to partake in political discussion at a time when they were denied the vote.[25] Richard J. Evans concurs with this time frame as reflecting women's desire for an equal place in society.[26] Shiman argues that the Primrose League's overreliance on recruitment from the upper class almost turned its membership into a pseudo upper class social club.[27] Alternatively Shiman notes the attempts by the Women's Liberal Federation to be more inclusive of all social strata in society.[28]

The primary evidence contained in journals and notebooks written by Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn show agreement with some but not all, of the assertions regarding lives of women in the elite tier given above. For example, the notion of separate spheres whereby wives conducted their lives largely at home whilst their husbands went out to work is contradicted in Lady Charlotte Guest's journals. They reveal her close involvement

[24] Horn, p.13.
[25] David Rubinstein, *Before the Suffragettes – Women's Emancipation in the 1890s* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986), p.149.
[26] Richard J. Evans, *The Feminists* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p.23.
[27] Shiman, p.178.
[28] *Ibid.*

with her husband John Guest's iron works.[29] During the period 1836 – 1838, Lady Charlotte had been appointed her husband's secretary responsible for drafting and writing most of his business correspondence.[30] During her father's lifetime, Amy Dillwyn largely conformed to the 'separate spheres' rhetoric. She filled her time with activities such as teaching in the local Sunday school which she clearly found unstimulating.[31] The death of her father in 1892 and the discovery of the near bankruptcy in the spelter works which he owned, provided Amy Dillwyn with the opportunity to fully engage in business which had been denied her during his lifetime.[32] Sarah Vivian in contrast seemingly took little interest or part in running the Hafod Copper Works belonging to her husband John Henry Vivian.[33] Any mention of the Works in Sarah Vivian's notes is fleeting. The content of the archival evidence being largely concerned with family, houses, and trips both abroad and in Britain.

All three women have written of a philanthropic interest in education. Both Lady Charlotte and Sarah Vivian commissioned schools to provide for the workers' children. Amy Dillwyn's father seemingly lacked the funds to undertake this level of philanthropic provision. However, Amy Dillwyn undertook actual teaching of Sunday school classes.[34] There are fleeting mentions of Sarah Vivian's involvement in educational philanthropy in Hughes work, *Copperopolis*.[35] There is scant evidence of hands-on involvement beyond occasional visits to see the pupils reading.[36] Lady Charlotte's educational endeavours seemingly involved no

[29] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, MSXIV.
[30] *Ibid*, MSX.
[31] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, University of Wales, Swansea Archive, Dillwyn, notebooks, 1872 – 1917, DC/6/1/7.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[34] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, University of Wales, Swansea Archive, Dillwyn, notebooks, 1872 – 1917, DC/6/1/7.
[35] Hughes.
[36] *Ibid.*

hands-on work at all. Although she held the belief that education was the means by which people could better themselves and financially provided for some of the earliest adult education classes in South Wales.[37]

Regarding attendance in London for 'the Season', all three women write of attendance at Buckingham Palace which guaranteed them access to the elite tier. They also noted attendance at other varying elite events. Both Lady Charlotte and Sarah Vivian's husbands purchased property within the desired area of London. Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn's journal records that on 6th February 1856 he moved into lodgings in 5 Charles Street, St. James, one year after his election to parliament.[38] Additionally, the journal notes that on 8th July 1856 he moved lodgings to 19 Regent Street.[39] It is therefore reasonable to assume that Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn was taking several short term lets during his early days as a Member of Parliament. By 1863 the family had secured a house in Prince's Terrace, Knightsbridge. David Painting states that on 28th February in that year, it was from number 10 Prince's Terrace that Amy and her family travelled to St James' Palace for her first presentation at court.[40] A distinction must be drawn between the London homes of Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte whose houses were situated on garden squares. By comparison Prince's Terrace is thus described 'The building up of the east side of Ennismore Gardens ('Princes Terrace' and 'Ennismore Place') was carried out between 1846 and 1854. The houses are inferior to those in Prince's Gate, being smaller and having neither park views nor access to communal

[37] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, MSXIV.
[38] Journal of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn 1st January – 25th July, LAC/26/D/52.
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] David Painting, *Amy Dillwyn* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013) p.20.

gardens'.[41] Further information given describes how 'the smaller houses of Prince's Terrace, where professional men such as barristers, and officers of the armed services, were more likely to be found'.[42] Accordingly, the London home of Amy Dillwyn was seen as being of lower standing than those of Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte, although it was in the area preferred by the elite class.

Of the three women Amy Dillwyn was the most strident and active supporter of women's rights.[43] She fervently believed in votes for women, to such an extent that she became the President of the Swansea branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies.[44] She did not however agree with the more violent protests of other women such as was advocated by the Women's Social and Political Union led by Emmeline Pankhurst. As an experienced public speaker who had given sermons in church on Christmas Day 1872 and also on the 29th December in the same year, this experience probably helped her to make speeches in support of 'votes for women' in her role as President of the Swansea branch of the National Union of Women's suffrage.[45] By contrast neither Lady Charlotte nor Sarah Vivian appeared to show any particular support for the Rights For Women campaign as neither have mentioned this specifically in their journal or notebook. It should be noted that the Suffragette Movement was active after the deaths of Sarah Vivian in 1886 and Lady Charlotte Guest in 1895. However, the exclusion for women from voting under the Reform Act 1832 draws no comment from either women.

[41] British History Online <https://www.british-history-.ac.uk/survey-london/vol45/pp160-170> 'Princes Gate and Ennismore Gardens: The Kingston House Estate, Development by Elger, Kelk and Mayhew from 1845' [accessed 7 January 2025].
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Swansea University Archive, Dillwyn, notebooks, 1872 – 1917, DC/6/1/7.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.*

One of the limitations to providing a fuller comparison regarding the lives of the three women was Sarah Vivian's deliberate destruction of her pocket books to ensure that they did not get into the wrong hands. Fortunately, she did however leave extended notes regarding the major events of her life as she perceived them to be. It is reasonable to believe that these notes were compiled as she reviewed the journals, picking out the points of note which she wished to leave for the perusal of ancestors after she had gone. The notes certainly indicate the issues for which she had little regard such as the Chartist Riots and the Suffragette Movement.

This research aims to challenge the view that nineteenth century women's lives were largely confined to the domestic sphere and whose allotted role was to provide a haven of peace for their male relatives, as Shiman asserts.[46] This view is also stated by Thompson.[47] The events of the nineteenth century affected the women of the different strata of society in different ways and the oft repeated view as outlined by both Thompson and Shiman, would appear to be widely accepted. In considering the women of the elite tier, this research aimed to challenge this view. To enable this to be carried out, use of the archives was vital providing primary evidence written by all three women who were firmly situated in the elite tier. Shiman strongly asserts that the upper classes were largely untouched by the growth of feminism, women's rights, and involvement in politics.[48]

Through this study, it has been possible to challenge the views expressed above by Shiman and Thompson amongst others. Although Sarah Vivian would appear to largely conform to

[46] Shiman, p.125.
[47] Thompson, p.18.
[48] Shiman, p.5.

the ‘Angel in the House’ rhetoric both Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn cannot be said to be primarily remembered as a wife, mother, or daughter. This research has challenged the existing dogma regarding the lives of elite women during the nineteenth century. This challenge could be further expanded through additional study of several other women whose lives were contiguous with the three women included in this research, to enable further comparison.

Methodology

Sarah Stickney Ellis writing in the early years of Queen Victoria's reign, summarises the attitude that she believes women in the nineteenth century must adopt to be able to fulfil their domestic destiny 'I have said before, that the sphere of a domestic woman's observation is microscopic. She is therefore sensible of defects within that sphere, which, to a more extended vision, would be imperceptible.'[49] Stickney Ellis does not define a 'more extended vision' but this appears to refer to men's lives outside the home. Stickney Ellis firmly places the entirety of women's lives within the domestic sphere and does not contemplate that they would in any way involve themselves in a world beyond their home. This belief is in common with, and is endorsed by the work of Coventry Patmore who additionally emphasises the importance of men in comparison to women.

Coventry Patmore's much revised poem *The Angel in the House* initially written in 1854, ultimately took on a much more important role than that of a mere work of literature.[50] Owing to its popularity in both America and Britain the portrayal of a woman's role in nineteenth century Britain as demonstrated in the poem, became an expression of the blueprint for women's lives during this era. The quotation given below taken from Patmore's work, amply demonstrates his view of women's lives during the nineteenth century:

> 'Man must be pleased; but him to please
> Is woman's pleasure; down the gulf
> Of his condoled necessities
> She casts her best, she flings herself.'[51]

[49] Mrs. Ellis, *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (London: Fisher, 1839), p.13.
[50] Coventry Kersey Dighton Patmore, *The Angel in the House* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1863).
[51] *Ibid.*

There is no doubt that in Coventry Patmore's view, a woman's whole life revolved around the needs and wants of men. It was in his view a woman's role to provide a domestic haven of peace for her husband to return to, the men having worked away from the house during the day. Patmore's full text amply emphasises the place of women in the domestic sphere whilst advocating that men's lives were destined to be largely spent outside the home.

Many women in the nineteenth century looked up to the portrayal of family life demonstrated by Queen Victoria as the ideal situation to aspire to. Ellis' confinement of women firmly within the domestic sphere is effectively the basis for the concept of separate spheres, as outlined by Dorice Williams Elliott.[52] Elliott cites 'an ideology that confined all women's activities and desires to a home, husband and family.'[53] Ellis further contends that women should not seek to go beyond the home in their interests but confine their thoughts to minute examination of everything within the domestic sphere. Ellis does not mention the role of single women and similarly Patmore seemingly disregarded those women who did not marry, for there is no mention of their purpose in life. In contrast Elliott addresses this issue. She states that philanthropy provided an outlet for women's abilities and energies.[54] Frank Prochaska agrees with Elliott's assertion regarding unmarried women and further contends that owing to their circumstances, single women were able to devote more time to philanthropic endeavours as they were not confined to the 'Angel in the House' role.[55] Furthermore, Prochaska strongly argues that both married and single women used philanthropy as an outlet for their energy. Philanthropy was a role which society saw as

[52] Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel Out of the House* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002), p.9.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid*, p.10.
[55] Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p.41.

‘doing good works’ and was therefore desirable. Fulfilling this role allowed women to be respected and admired.

It was against this background that this study was conducted. The seemingly accepted view that women’s lives in the nineteenth century were largely confined to the house and effectively spent in a separate sphere as outlined by Patmore and Ellis, was taken as a backdrop to this research. Effectively women’s lives spent in a separate sphere to that of their husbands, who went out to work. This notion therefore became the base line for this research against which a comparison was made. This study used a wide range of both primary and secondary sources concerned with a variety of relevant issues. Initially the emphasis was on secondary sources for the first two chapters to allow creation of the aforementioned base line for a comparison to be established. The final chapter relied heavily on primary sources accessed in three archives: The West Glamorgan Archive in County Hall Swansea, The Richard Burton Archive located in Swansea University and the National Library of Wales Archive which is situated in Aberystwyth. The research looked at three different but interlinking areas: the history of Swansea, secondly an overview of the lives of women in the elite tier during the nineteenth century provided by a wide range of historians and finally the reality of the lives of three South Wales elite women provided by their own journals, letters, notes, and notebooks. This research can be seen as a revision regarding the lives of nineteenth century women as the primary evidence conflicts with the base line assertion that women’s lives were confined to the domestic sphere. The research discovered that the lives of elite tier women often had much wider concerns than the minutiae of domestic issues as suggested specifically by Ellis. Their lives broadened to encompass the world of work and business which was formerly supposed to be the sphere solely inhabited by men.

The views of other scholars regarding the history of Swansea, particularly its industrial development was an essential component in establishing the reasons why English industrialists relocated to the town as it then was, to develop the copper industry. In so doing, they made fortunes which allowed them and their families access to the upper tiers of society. The conflict in the dual roles of sea bathing destination and the location as the world's largest producer of copper as Louise Miskell states, demonstrates how profitable copper producing was, as its growth brought about the demise of the fledgling tourist industry.[56] R. Toomey's work clearly outlines the reason why the owners of the copper works were entirely English.[57] The single most important reason was the cost of works 'start up', which Toomey states was £50,000, a sum beyond the finances of most Welsh industrialists. The huge amount required indicates the pre-existing wealth of the industrial families which relocated to Swansea. The establishment of these facts regarding Swansea's past both industrial and pre industrial laid important foundations for the study of elite society during the nineteenth century. The diversity of this aspect of the research necessitated study of a wide range of secondary sources to understand the changes throughout the history of the development of Swansea.

The importance of the Reform Act 1832 also played a part in the lives of all three women studied in this research. The creation of the Swansea District and Merthyr constituencies in 1832 resulting from the passing of the Act, helped to cement their place in the elite tier of society. Their residency, to support their male relatives, was in London for the part of the year

[56] Louise Miskell, *Intelligent Town – An Urban History of Swansea (*Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), p.70.
[57] R. Toomey, *Vivian and Sons 1809 – 1924, A Study of the Firm in the Copper and Related* Industries (London: Garland, 1979), p.13.

whilst parliament was in session. This period was deliberately contiguous with the main events of the London social season. As indicated by Leonore Davidoff, attendance for many of the events was considered a necessity for members of the upper tier of society.[58] Pamela Horn's work outlines both the social expectations of the elite tier and also outlines the nuances of behaviour and possessions which helped to rank people of this tier.[59] For example, ownership of a suitable London residence in the desired area of London bestowed higher regard than those families who rented property.

To support and challenge the ideas outlined above, it was necessary to study and refer to the notebooks of Amy Dillwyn. These notebooks and others left by Sarah Vivian, alongside the journals of Lady Charlotte Guest were extensively used to build a more accurate picture of the lives of women in the nineteenth century elite tier. Their personal letters were also available to give additional context. It should be noted that in this study the entirety of the available journals and notebooks of Amy Dillwyn were viewed. These dated from the period 1863 to 1875, although sporadic entries were added up until 1917. However, for the purposes of this study the journal dated 28th August 1868 to 5th May 1870 was used to illustrate various relevant points including the philanthropic visiting of the sick and injured, teaching in Sunday school, attendance at a cottage lecture conducted in Welsh, attendance at a 'drawing room' in Buckingham Palace, social connections to other South Wales elite families and Amy Dillwyn's summary of her domestic life on 3rd October 1868 as, 'idling, idling, idling'. The latter journal entry provided the strongest evidence of Amy Dillwyn's rebuttal of the 'Angel in the

[58] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing,1992), p.21.
[59] Pamela Horn, *High Society – The English Social Elite, 1880 – 1914* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992), p.10.

House' rhetoric. The notebook dated 1872 – 1917 provided a sharp contrast to the formerly stated journal as this encompassed the period after her father had died in 1892 leaving her homeless and having to take lodgings in West Cross, Swansea. The notebook reflects not simply her change of circumstances, but also the period when she was engaged in trying to resurrect the near bankrupt spelter works which her father had left her in his will.[60] Her business plan is clearly outlined in a letter to her sister Minnie dated the 26th February 1894.[61] The contents of this plan are detailed in chapter four on pages 109 and 110 of this study. These two examples from a larger archive catalogue were deemed adequately illustrative in consideration to the scale of the study. The journals of Lady Charlotte Guest from 1833 – 1852 which were studied, covered the period of her marriage to John Guest. For the purposes of this study, later journals written during her second marriage were deemed irrelevant as she had left Wales.

The wider historiography provided an overall view of women's lives in the elite tier during the nineteenth century with the phrase 'Angel in the House' being repeatedly utilised to describe their lives. One such example being the work of Suzanne Fagence Cooper who leads us to believe that this was an ideal to which women of this period were expected to conform to.[62] It is this ideal that has been challenged in this study. Through studying primary evidence, it has been possible to contradict this image to a certain extent. Sarah Vivian would appear to have generally conformed to the 'Angel in the House' epithet, whereas Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn's lives do not. Arguably, Amy Dillwyn's life shows the greatest conflict to the idealised Victorian image of women, having conformed to society's expectation of

[61] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Swansea University Archive, letter DC6/3/2.
[62] Suzanne Fagence Cooper, *The Victorian Woman* (London: V and A Publications, 2001), p.10.

domesticity until her father died in 1892. Thereafter she resurrected the near bankrupt spelter works left to her by her father although having been left homeless under the terms of his will. The letter which Amy Dillwyn send to her sister Minnie on 26th February 1894 which outlined her determination and how she was going to save the spelter works, provides the strongest possible rebuttal of the 'Angel in the House' caricature.[63] The detailed contents of this letter are referred to in chapter four of this study on pages 103 and 104.

Leonore Davidoff's work *The Best Circles – Society Etiquette and the Season,* helped to provide comprehensive details of the standards and behaviour to which women in the elite were expected to conform during the nineteenth century.[64] The subtle nuances of London life during 'The Season' and the necessity of presentation to the Queen at an afternoon drawing room are highlighted as necessary to gain the 'passport to society'.[65] The changing nature of 'society' specifically the elite tier during the nineteenth century is dealt with. This work stresses and encompasses the subtle changes of acceptance into this group during this period. Specifically, the change of power base from the landed gentry to the newly rich industrialists which gained traction as the century progressed.

Pamela Horn's work *High Society – The English Social Elite 1880 – 1914* was of use in providing additional details regarding the later period of the nineteenth century. This work sometimes provided a counter argument to that given in Davidoff's study. For example, as stated on page 53 of this dissertation, there was disagreement between Horn and Davidoff as to how many members comprised the elite tier of society. Horn's work provided very specific details of

[63] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, University of Wales, Swansea Archive, letter DC6/3/2.
[64] Davidoff, *The Best Circles*.
[65] *Ibid,* p.25.

where the accepted area of London was located as outlined on page 59 of this study. This delineation was useful in comparing the London residences of all three women studied to be able to confirm that their families were conforming to the expected norm as outlined by Horn. The importance of presentation at court for social acceptance into the elite tier, is stressed in both texts. Accordingly, Horn's work was of benefit to this study as a means of confirmation as well as contrast.

David Painting's study of Amy Dillwyn largely written as a chronological study of her life provided a detailed background to the life of a remarkable woman.[66] It was of great use to this study in challenging the 'Angel in the House' model with which this dissertation was concerned. The details of Amy Dillwyn's life before and after her father's death in 1892 reveal a stark contrast in circumstances. Before his death her life was spent living in both Swansea and London. Following her mother's death in 1866 her role changed to that of female companion to her father, which necessitated attendance in London during parliamentary sessions. Painting details her life subsequent to the death of her father, having been made homeless and willed the near bankrupt spelter works. Her life thereafter does not conform to society's expectations but Painter's work outlines that the change whilst enforced, allowed Amy Dillwyn the freedom to exercise her considerable talents in the world of business.

Revel Guest and Angela John's biography of Lady Charlotte Guest is also largely written in chronological order.[67] There are however, chapters which refer to specific topics which were of use in challenging the 'Angel in the House' concept. Chapter six entitled 'The

[66] David Painting, *Amy Dillwyn* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013).
[67] Revel Guest and Angela Horn, Lady Charlotte – A Biography of the Nineteenth Century (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989).

Businesswoman' was particularly useful in providing a counterfoil to the business activities of Amy Dillwyn after her father's death. As a descendant of Lady Charlotte Guest, her great grandmother, it would be reasonable to expect this biography to be written in an overly favourable manner. This was not the case as the biography presents the facts of her life whilst acknowledging that Lady Charlotte sometimes courted controversy, as was the case in her second marriage to Charles Schreiber. Having previously been a tutor to her children, society regarded him as being of considerably lower social standing than his wife.

Apart from a brief mention in Hughes' work, there were no significant secondary texts regarding Sarah Vivian. Her deliberate destruction of her journals gave the extracts from the pocket books that she left, great importance for this research.[68] The journals of Lady Charlotte and Amy Dillwyn as primary evidence, were supported by several secondary sources of information.[69] However, none of the secondary works studied sought to directly challenge the 'Angel in the House' rhetoric.

The legacy of all three women varies. All three women left archived material which benefitted this research. Singleton Abbey in Swansea, the home of Sarah Vivian survives as a lasting testament to the wealth accumulated by the Vivian Family through their involvement in the copper trade. The gardens which surrounded the Abbey became the home of University College Swansea in 1920 following the purchase of the house and grounds in

[68] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.

[69] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing,1992). Pamela Horn, High Society – The English Social Elite, 1880 – 1914 (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992). Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Women and Leadership in Nineteenth Century England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991). Dorothy K.G. Thompson, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century* (London: The Historical Association,1992). Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel Out of the House* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002).

1919 by Swansea Corporation. Gradually through time the grounds were built on to provide both student accommodation and lecture buildings for the University. There has been sympathetic development of the immediate area around the abbey in order to retain some of the features built during Sarah Vivian's tenure 'The Abbey's Grade II listed terrace dates from the era of Sarah Vivian, John Henry Vivian's wife (1830s). A talented gardener, much of her work is still in evidence today and continues to influence the restoration work conducted by the University.'[70] Further detail of the University's efforts to recognise the importance of Sarah Vivian's work are given

> 'The grounds surrounding the Abbey are intrinsically linked to the University's heritage, contributing to the biodiversity of the parkland in which they are set. This stunning open space offers views over the Abbey meadow and Swansea Bay itself and is open for the local community to visit and enjoy. The landscaping and planting is designed to be sympathetic to how the gardens would have been laid out in the Abbey's prime'.[71]

The University's acknowledgement of the Abbey's importance as tangible evidence of the industrial and financial success of the Vivian Family would seem to be recognised in their efforts to preserve the building and much of the gardens whilst repurposing some of the area for the buildings of the University. The remaining parkland is open for the public to enjoy open, green space.

Similarly, Clyne Castle along with its parkland, leaves us in little doubt as to the financial and business success of the Vivians having been owned by the Family from 1860 to 1952 when it

[70] 'Singleton Abbey', *Swansea University* <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/life-on-campus/our-grounds/singleton-abbey/> [accessed 13.5.24].
[71] *Ibid.*

was sold to Swansea City Council.[72] Clyne Castle was subsequently bought by Swansea University for use as student accommodation. The extensive grounds were then opened as a park for public use in 1954.[73] The council have been at pains to retain the appearance of park as it would have been during the Vivian's ownership. Clyne Castle itself was subsequently sold in 2003 and converted into flats sympathetic to its II* listed building status.

Dowlais House no longer exists but Lady Charlotte Guest's memorial hall, built in Dowlais as a tribute to her husband after his death in 1852 does. It reflects the huge industrial and commercial success of the Guests in the iron industry. A grade II* listed building it has been used for a variety of community uses since its construction between 1856 and 1863.[74] Aside from built tangible heritage, the English translation of the Mabinogion completed by Lady Charlotte remains as a testimony to her intelligence and love of her adopted country and language.

Hendrefoilan House, the home of Amy Dillwyn for much of her childhood and younger adulthood, still exists. The smaller scale of the property reflects the lesser fortune of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn in comparison to the Vivian Family. Having been used as the adult education section of Swansea University from the 1960s, it was later left abandoned until 2020 when it was sold.[75] As a reflection of its grade II* listed building status, conversion will

[72]'Clyne Castle; Neuadd Gilbertson; Woodlands, Mumbles', *Coflein* <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/18354/> [accessed 14 May 2024].
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] 'British Listed buildings – Listed Buildings in Dowlais', *History in Structure* <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/wales/dowlais-merthyr-tydfi> [accessed14 May 2024].
[75] 'Hendrefoilan House, Sketty, Swansea', *The Victorian Society* <https://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/news/hendrefoilan-house-sketty-swansea. [accessed 14 May 2024].

have to be carefully carried out to retain the character and heritage of the building. The work is still ongoing. Amy Dillwyn's contribution to women's rights, notably women's suffrage is remembered as a reflection of her determination to better the lives of women. Her involvement forms part of her social legacy. This alongside her success in saving the spelter works Dillwyn and Co., from bankruptcy, added to the evidence against the 'Angel in the House' image portrayed by several of the secondary sources. My work largely through primary archival evidence, is challenging the domestic based image of the lives of nineteenth century women belonging to the elite tier in society.

Chapter 2 - The Development of Industry in Swansea in consideration of the lives of Sarah Vivian and Amy Dillwyn

In order to give context for the lives of the two Swansea resident women from the elite tier who are referenced in the chapter title, it is crucial to this research to provide an overview of the development of Swansea. Sarah Vivian and Amy Dillwyn were both resident in Swansea during the nineteenth century. The industrial development of Swansea during the nineteenth century was strongly linked to the copper industry and is of particular importance to the life of Sarah Vivian whose husband John Henry Vivian owned the Hafod Copper Works. Acknowledging the wider range of heavy industry linked to metal production in Swansea, provides context for the life of Amy Dillwyn as her father owned and later willed a spelter works to his daughter. Lady Charlotte Guest was the wife of John Guest who owned and ran the Dowlais Iron works near Merthyr. Although not resident in Swansea, many of the features of her life ran in tandem with those of Sarah Vivian and she has thus been included in this research as a means of comparison. All three women's lives impacted the areas in which they lived and consideration is given to the effect they had on their communities.

Swansea's history up until the early years of the Industrial Revolution could be described as unremarkable. Its origins are shrouded in mystery as there are no available recorded primary sources of information for this period. The Norman Conquest of South Wales led to the construction of a stone-built castle in Swansea during the thirteenth century. This construction marked the beginning of a period of slow population growth up until the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century. It could be argued that

Abraham Darby's use of coal in 1709 for smelting iron was the single most important factor leading to the rapid growth of Swansea in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The easy availability of coal deposits in the Tawe Valley allied to proximity to water transport via river, provided the ideal conditions for the establishment of the copper industry. Ores brought across the Bristol Channel, from Ireland and Anglesey allowed Swansea to become the world's greatest producer of copper. Copper smelting was responsible for the transformation in Swansea's fortunes.

Copper attracted huge wealth to the town. The set-up costs for a copper works were many times that for setting up subsequent industry such as coal mining, zinc, tin plate and nickel manufacture.[76] The mostly English industrialists notably the Vivians, Grenfells and Morris family made vast fortunes and became part of British elite society. The Vivians in particular rose to be a part of royal social circles and maintained a house in Belgrave Square where they spent 'the season'. The rapid decline in copper production in Swansea during the second half of the nineteenth century was superseded by tin plate, zinc, nickel, cobalt, and silver manufacture. However, by the early part of the twentieth century Swansea's fortunes waned for a variety of reasons. The English families whose fortunes had been made in Swansea returned across the border, their legacy being unwanted mansions, gardens, and millions of tons of toxic debris in the Tawe Valley.

[76] R. Toomey, *Vivian and Sons 1809 – 1924, A Study of the Firm in the Copper and Related* Industries (London: Garland, 1985), p.13.

In considering Swansea's origins, Gerald Gabb claims that there is no definitive idea of why the settlement developed as it did or how its location was decided.[77] Catherine A. M. Clarke claims that 'the medieval legacy of Swansea is almost invisible.'[78] Clarke attributes this belief to 'wartime bombing and later redevelopment'.[79] Swansea was subject to heavy bombing over three nights from 19th to 21st February 1941, which removed virtually all traces of Swansea's medieval street pattern. In addition, Gabb further points out that the derivation of Swansea's name is unclear, although it is believed to have come from the name Swein or Sweyn. This name might have been that of a Viking leader.[80] Seemingly the origin of the settlement of Swansea is shrouded in mystery as no records exist to confirm or deny the beliefs expressed by historians. Glanmor Williams states that unlike other settlements such as Caerleon or Neath, Swansea had no basis as a settlement in the Roman era.[81] Accordingly no fort or at least remains of such a construction can determine the date of the commencement of Swansea's existence. Williams asserts that a trading post was established by Norsemen, which would seemingly concur with the view taken by Gabb concerning the original name given to Swansea.[82]

There is seemingly no certainty regarding Swansea's history until the twelfth century when a Norman castle was built on the west bank of the River Tawe.[83] Williams takes the view that the Norman conquest of South Wales in the early twelfth century effectively represents the

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[77] Gerald Gabb, 'Preindustrial Swansea Siting and Development', *Transactions of The Society of Cymmrodorion*, (2007), 34-55 (p.36) <https://www.cymmrodorion.org> [accessed 24 July 2022].
[78] Catherine A. M. Clarke, 'Witnessing History: Perspectives on Medieval Swansea and its Cultural Contexts', *Journal of Medieval History*, 41.3, 249-255 (p.249) <DOI:10.1080/03044181.2015.1048086>.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] Gerald Gabb, *Swansea Before Industry: The Town and its Surroundings* (Swansea: 4Site Education, 1998), p.3.
[81] Glanmor Williams, 'Before the Industrial Revolution', in *Swansea*, ed. by Glanmor Williams (Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1992), p.1.
[82] *Ibid*, p.3.
[83] Gerald Gabb, *Swansea Before Industry,* p.3.

second wave of development in Swansea's history. He states that the pattern of settlement was established by the Normans who built a stone castle in the thirteenth century and further enlarged this structure in the fourteenth century. Williams estimates that Swansea's population was about 1000 – 1500 towards the end of this period.[84] Gabb provides further detail and states that Henry Beaumont, the Earl of Warwick was responsible for the initial castle construction in about 1100.[85] The first charter was granted to Swansea prior to 1185.[86]

Williams states that in common with many settlements during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries prior to the Tudor dynasty, Swansea's fortunes declined.[87] He further asserts that the Tudors brought about an upturn in Swansea's population. In support of this view, Gabb surmises that Swansea's population in 1546 was about 1000.[88] The Act of Union 1536 – 1543 brought into law by Henry VIII, altered forever the structure of governance in Britain. In direct reference to Swansea, Williams emphasises that 'The economic functions fulfilled by Swansea since its inception as market town, regional centre and port, heavily outweighed the loss of its former position as caput of a lordship.'[89] By this stage in its development Swansea was already noted as a coal exporting port taking coal to Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and the south coast of England.[90] K. J. Hilton further states that coal was also transported to the Channel Islands and Ireland.[91] The reasons for Swansea's existence increasingly broadened during the

[84] Glanmor Williams, 'Before the Industrial Revolution', p.3.
[85] Gerald Gabb, *Swansea Before Industry,* p.3.
[86] Gerald Gabb, 'Preindustrial Swansea Siting and Development', p.39.
[87] Glanmor Williams, 'Before the Industrial Revolution', p.11.
[88] Gerald Gabb, *Swansea Before Industry,* p.5.
[89] Williams, p.12.
[90] *Ibid.*
[91] K. J. Hilton, 'An Outline of the Industrial History of the Lower Swansea Valley', in *The Lower Swansea Valley Project,* ed. by K.J. Hilton (London: Longmans,1967), p.15.

period prior to the industrial revolution 'Swansea was to evolve as a centre of defence, administration, religion, trade by land and sea, and communication.'[92]

Despite the widening functions of Swansea, there was seemingly little population growth until the coming of the Industrial Revolution. Metal smelting was present in the vicinity as early as 1584 in Aberdulais in the Neath Valley, where Ulrich Frosse established a copper smelting works.[93] It was not until 1717 that the first copper smelter was established in the Swansea Valley.[94] The presence of easily accessible coal which could be transported by water was the main reason for the relocation of copper smelting to the Swansea Valley. The use of trees reduced via part burning to charcoal, became increasingly untenable during the seventeenth century as the supply of wood became exhausted.[95] Asa Briggs emphasises the importance of coal during this period 'Coal was the fuel of the Industrial Revolution both metaphorically and literally.'[96] In support of this view Williams strongly argues that the presence of easily accessible coal was to lay the foundations of Swansea's role as a major world producer of metals, especially copper.[97]

Hilton comments that the discovery of the use of coke by Abraham Darby in Shropshire in 1709 rather than charcoal, then drove the demand for coal.[98] Coal which was located close to a water source was particularly sought after as overland transport using pack horses was slow

[92] Gerald Gabb, 'Preindustrial Swansea Siting and Development', p.41.
[93] Stephen Hughes, *Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: Royal Commission of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2000), p.16.
[94] *Ibid.*
[95] K. J. Hilton, 'An Outline of the Industrial History of the Lower Swansea Valley', p.15.
[96] Asa Briggs, *A Social History of England* (London: Penguin, 1983), p.18.
[97] Williams, p.24.
[98] Hilton, p.17.

and expensive.[99] There were several reasons for Swansea's suitability for the initial development of the copper industry: the presence of easily accessible coal reserves close to the port; copper ores available from Devon and Cornwall; the Tawe river was navigable for at least two and a half miles inland and the river provided the opportunity for developing water power via a series of weirs. Later factors included the availability of a skilled workforce, acceptance of high levels of pollution and the presence of fire clays within the vicinity with which to line the furnaces.[100] However, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a conflict of interests regarding the role of Swansea.

At the same time as the infancy of the copper industry, Swansea had also become notable as a sea bathing resort. Its seven mile long, gently sloping sandy beach afforded the ideal environment for this activity. Regarding Swansea's role as a sea bathing centre J. H. Skrine took the view that '…..mildness of climate and the singular beauty of the bay it commands. These advantages, together with a commodious shore for sea bathing, have made it the resort of that gay tribe of company which embellishes the public places of the coast of England.'[101] Louise Miskell details the encouragement given to the role of Swansea as a resort 'The development of key urban facilities such as assembly rooms, libraries, outdoor recreational space and a theatre – all of which were important in attracting fashionable visitors'.[102] Miskell further states that 'By the late eighteenth century Swansea has established itself as a fashionable sea-bathing resort rivalling Brighton and Weymouth. The corporation invested in

[99] *Ibid.*
[100] Hilton, p.18.
[101] J. H. Skrine, *Two Successive Tours Through the Whole of Wales* (Emsley and Brennan, 1797), p.68.
[102] Louise Miskell, 'The Making of a New Welsh Metropolis: Science, Leisure and Industry in Early Nineteenth Century Swansea', *History*, 88.1 (January 2003) 32-52 (p.33). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1468-229X.00250> [accessed 26 July 2022].

the latest bathing machines…'.[103] Harold Pollins remarks on the dual roles which Swansea was attempting to fulfil '….in 1801 Swansea had only six thousand inhabitants and was looked upon as a tourist resort as much as an industrial centre.'[104]

During this period, Swansea's role was seemingly undecided. The choice was between a fashionable resort or a major metallurgical centre. Ronald Rees outlines the conflict between the two roles 'For a few decades at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Swansea was a town divided in body and spirit.'[105] H.V. Bowen concurs with this view and described Swansea as '.. both a fashionable seaside resort and a burgeoning industrial centre.'[106] Ultimately the high levels of air pollution created during copper smelting effectively ended Swansea's role as a fashionable sea bathing centre. The seasonal benefit gleaned from tourism could not match the greater financial benefit gained from the copper industry.

The first copper smelting works to be set up in the Swansea Valley unsurprisingly came only a few years after Abraham Darby's discovery of the use of coke as opposed to charcoal in the production of pig iron. This discovery was then applied successfully to copper smelting. Hilton states that Dr Lane's Llangyfelach works was set up in 1717.[107] Hughes agrees with and elaborates on this assertion. He states that Dr Lane had previously smelted copper in the

[103] *Ibid*, p.37.
[104]Harold Pollins, 'The Swansea Canal', *The Journal of Transport History*, Vol 1 Issue 2 (November 1953), 135-154 (p.135).
[105]Ronald Rees, *King Copper - South Wales and The Copper Trade, 1584 – 1895* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p.19.
[106] H. V. Bowen, ed. *A New History of Wales: Myths and Realities in Welsh History* (Llandysul: Gomer, 2011), p.108.
[107] Hilton, p.17.

Neath Abbey area and had deliberately moved his works to the Swansea Valley to enable access to easily available coal seams and water transport via the use of the River Tawe.[108] Hughes further notes that Dr Lane employed Robert Morris from Shropshire, a person who was to later become very important in the history of copper making in Swansea.[109] The proximity of the five foot and six foot coal seams was to provide the impetus for setting up the Llangyfelach Works.[110]

The required ratio of coal to ore in copper production amply illustrates the importance in locating a copper works near to the coal supply. Rees states that in order to produce one ton of copper, thirty tons of coal were needed and twelve tons of ore.[111] This represents a ratio of 5:2. Williams however, claims that the ratio required in copper production varied from that stated by Rees. Williams asserts that three tons of coal were required to one ton of ore (3:1) in the early period of copper production in Swansea.[112] Williams further claims that this ratio was improved to 2:1 as technological development occurred.[113] Edmund Newell concurs with the ratio of coal to ore suggested by Williams. Newell extends this contention by stating that 'coal accounted for about forty five percent of the total smelting costs.'[114] Irrespective of the absolute ratio, the importance of the presence of coal which was easily accessible adjacent to a means of transport by water, was the key issue of importance in Swansea's development as 'the undisputed copper capital of Britain.'[115] H.V. Bowen quantifies Swansea's importance

[108] Hughes, p.17.
[109] *Ibid*, p.18.
[110] *Ibid.*
[111] Rees, p.23.
[112] Williams, p.31.
[113] *Ibid.*
[114] Edmund Newell, 'Copperopolis: The Rise and Fall of the Copper Industry in the Swansea District, 1826 – 1921', *Business History*, XXXII, No. 3 (1990), 75-94 (p.75).
[115] Rees, p.19.

as a copper producer during the nineteenth century 'It is estimated that as early as 1800 Swansea smelted ninety percent of Britain's total copper, and by the 1860s it was producing around sixty five percent of the total world output.'[116]

Although Dr Lane indisputably opened the first copper works in the Swansea Valley, his influence was limited by the relatively short period of production. As previously stated, his Llangyfelach works began production in 1717 but by 1726, nine years later, he was declared bankrupt. The importance of the subsequent takeover of the works by Robert Morris cannot be underestimated as this laid a blue print for the production methods of many subsequent copper works in Swansea. Chris Evans supports this view 'It is also the case that Robert Morris's achievements have been overshadowed by the more visible financial success and public status enjoyed by the later generation of Swansea copper smelters.'[117] Gabb similarly gives great importance to the contribution of Robert Morris and his son to Swansea industry 'The Morris Family was one which played an important part in the industrial history of Wales ….within two generations created an industrial enterprise which made Swansea the copper centre of the World.'[118] By 1748 Morris senior was in partnership as a co-owner of Lockwood, Morris and Co. The company opened an additional works in Fforest in 1749.

Robert Morris senior gives us an insight into the history of copper smelting prior to the mass expansion into the Swansea Valley. He states that the Welsh copper company was set up in

[116] H. V. Bowen, 'Copperopolis: Swansea's Heyday, Decline and Regeneration', *History of Capitalism Series*, Lecture given on 16 March 2016, 1 – 13 (p.2). <https://www.academia.edu/25423245/copperopolis_swansea_s_heyday_decline_and_regeneration> [accessed 24 July 2022].
[117] Chris Evans, *The Origins of an Industrial Region – Robert Morris and the First Swansea Copperworks*, c.1727 – 1730 (Newport: South Wales Record Society,2010), p.30.
[118] Gerald Gabb, 'The Morris Family', *Lower Swansea Valley – Factsheet 10 (*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.55.

1720 'their smelting works were at Neath'.[119] Morris points out that Mr Collins was the manager of the works. He died in 1774. The landlord of the works was Sir Humphrey Mackworth from whom Morris later took a lease on the Trewydda Colliery. A dispute, which Morris does not detail led to the setting up of the works at Penclawdd on a seventy-one-year lease.[120] The use of Neath and Penclawdd as primary locations for copper production was later superseded by Swansea, specifically the Lower Tawe Valley.

The availability of easily mined coal was the key issue in the choice of Swansea as a copper producer. It is fortunate that Robert Morris who had been employed by Dr Lane in the first copper works in the Swansea Valley, chose to record this fact alongside other industrial issues in a series of letter books. Only one of these books still survives which is undated.[121] However, his son Robert Morris junior had fortuitously revisited all the letter books six years after his father's death in 1768, to enable production of a separate summary of all their contents.[122] The first entry in the initial letter book was dated 25th May 1727 and the final entry dated 30th April 1730. Accordingly, Morris Junior summarised the letter books and added events which happened after his father's death. This was over forty years after the letter books were originally written by his father. Whilst this period of forty years might be considered too long a period to determine the veracity of the original letter books, they do however provide a unique insight into the history of the copper industry in Swansea in the eighteenth century. Evans is however, somewhat scathing as regards Morris Junior's attempts to summarise his

[119] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris, *Letter book,* LAC/81/6.
[120] *Ibid.*
[121] *Ibid.*
[122] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris junior*, A History of the Copper Concern, 1717-1730,* historical notes and memoranda by Robert Morris Junior, relating to Robert Morris senior's copper smelting works in Swansea (1774), LAC/81/1.

father's letter books and strongly argues that Morris Senior is painted in an extremely favourable light. He further asserts that a certain amount of editing of events has occurred in order to achieve this end.[123]

It could also be said that irrespective of any alleged bias the summary is still of use in determining the events occurring in Swansea during the mid and late eighteenth century. Robert Morris junior notes that his father took over the 'old copperworks at Landore' in 1727.[124] He further states that this was the same works which Dr Lane had used in 1717, the lease being taken over from Thomas Popkin at a rent of £13 per annum. The term of this lease was thirty-one years.[125] In 1727 Morris senior reported that the works employed forty men and two boys. The boys were paid two shillings and sixpence a week.[126] This level of workers concurs with Rees' statement 'The copper works of the eighteenth century were small scale, employing up to seventy men.'[127] As stated above in November 1726 Dr Lane was declared bankrupt and Morris was appointed by the receiver to run the works. This led to the opportunity for Morris senior's takeover of the works in partnership the following year in 1727.[128] Morris senior's concern regarding a reliable coal supply is noted in the 1774 summary by his son 'Popkin was unable to supply coal, sufficient in quality or quantity'.[129] The 'Popkin' referred to is Thomas Popkin, a local industrialist whom Morris Senior relied on to provide coal, which was essential to smelt copper. Hilton appears to provide the reason for the desire to use Swansea coal as he states 'Swansea coal was cheap'. Hilton further argues that the

[123] Evans, *The Origins of an Industrial Region,* p.30.
[124] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris junior*, A History of the Copper Concern, 1717-1730, p.3.*
[125] *Ibid.*
[126] *Ibid*, p.12.
[127] Rees, p.21.
[128] *Ibid*, p.3.
[129] *Ibid, p.6.*

reason for the price discrepancy was the comparative distance of transport overland, being much greater at Holywell.[130] Robert Morris in 1727, claimed that the coal at Landore was a third of the price of coal at Holywell.'[131] Morris quantifies the actual cost benefit of smelting in Swansea. He states that the cost of making copper was £100 in Swansea compared to £160 in Hayle, in Cornwall.[132] He translates this into a numerical benefit 'forty per cent cheaper than can be done in Cornwall.'[133]

Morris senior's concern regarding coal provision ultimately led him to seek his own supply to ensure reliability of quantity and quality. Hughes comments that Lockwood, Morris and Co. were the first copper company to begin mining their own coal. He further states that the company leased the Trewydda Colliery from Sir Humphrey Mackworth in 1728.[134] Morris senior's letter book confirms this as he alludes to 'our own Trewddva (sic) coal valued at £124 19 shillings.'[135] He does not clarify the length of time spent, and therefore the quantity mined to reach this valuation. Morris further states that 'want of carriage prevents more coal from being shipped from Trewydda'.[136] Although the mine was a short distance from the Tawe, it would have been necessary to transport the coal a short distance from the mine to the banks of the river. It is possible that the carriages mentioned by Morris were needed to make the short transfer from mine to river. The journey to the Llangyfelach copper works in Landore from the mine near Morristown, was approximately a mile downriver. Morris senior provides a comparative cost for transport overland as opposed to by sea. He states that copper carried

[130] Hilton, p.18.
[131] *Ibid.*
[132] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris, *Letter book.*
[133] *Ibid.*
[134] Hughes, p.4.
[135] Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris, *Letter book.*
[136] *Ibid.*

overland to London would cost £3 a ton compared to ten shillings if transported by sea. Sea or water transport of goods was therefore six times cheaper than overland transport.[137] The benefit of water transport to increase profitability is undisputed and reinforces the importance and attraction of siting copperworks in the lower valley of the River Tawe to enable access to cheaper transport.

Following Robert Morris' death in 1768, his son John Morris took over the family business. The original works at Landore had been abandoned after a second works was built at Fforest near to what was to later become known as Morriston. Work on the Fforest copper works began in 1748. John Morris was responsible for building the original workers' houses which formed the beginnings of Morriston. In 1813 John's brother Robert records that 'Morriston ground rents now after the rate of £8 per acre'.[138] The period over which this sum was collected is not detailed. Eventually, the Fforest works also failed and having been sold several times was eventually bought by John Henry Vivian in 1851.[139] Although ultimately ending in business failure, the importance of the Morris Family regarding the copper industry through two generations, cannot be underestimated.

The Vivian Family were arguably the greatest 'copper family' to reside in Swansea. Their success brought public acclamation. Notably a member of the third generation of copper industrialists within the family, Henry Hussey Vivian (1821 – 1894) was given a baronetcy, becoming the first Lord Swansea. The family's standing within society was at the elite level confirmed through a private stay by royalty at Singleton Abbey in 1881 when It was Sarah

[137]Swansea University Archive, Robert Morris junior*, A History of the Copper Concern,* p.107.
[138] *Ibid.*
[139] Gerald Gabb, 'Early Copper Works', *Lower Swansea Valley Factsheet 5 (*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.16.

Vivian's home, having been willed lifetime occupation on the death of her husband John Henry Vivian in 1855. On 18th October 1881 Edward, Prince of Wales came to Swansea to officially open the Prince of Wales dock. As was common amongst families of the elite level in the nineteenth century who had made their fortune in industry, they were paternalistic employers and in a similar fashion to the Morris family noted above, the Vivians also built houses for their workers. Trevivian or Vivianstown was built in the Hafod area, near to the Hafod works.[140] The 'Vivian' houses still stand today, now inhabited as private residences. In a further example of their paternalism, the Vivians built a school which opened in 1847 to serve the area.[141] The school housed five hundred boys, girls, and infants. The provision was free for workers' children but non-employees' children could attend at a cost of 2d a week.[142] As an intrinsic part of paternalism, some of the Vivian women were active philanthropists. John Henry Vivian's wife, Sarah Vivian (1798 – 1886) showed a particular interest in education.

John Henry Vivian (1785 – 1855) was the second generation of the Vivian family in Swansea. His father John Vivian (1750 – 1826) made the original decision to manufacture copper in Swansea having previously done so in the family's home county of Cornwall. Hughes details John Vivian's origins in the copper smelting industry. He states that he was involved in the setting up of the Carn Entral and Hayle copper smelters in Cornwall.[143] By 1800 John Vivian was managing a copper smelter in Penclawdd. Hughes alleges that he was unhappy with the location and sought out a better placed works in the Lower Tawe Valley as this provided the opportunity for both water transport and a supply of vital coal.[144] Gabb clarifies the decision

[140] Gabb, 'The Coppermen', *Lower Swansea Valley Factsheet* 11 *(*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.17.
[141] *Ibid.*
[142] Gabb, 'Later Copper Works', *Lower Swansea Valley Factsheet* 6 *(*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.27.
[143] Hughes, p.3.
[144] *Ibid.*

made by John Vivian to move production to the Swansea Valley in 1810. He states that land was leased from the Duke of Beaufort on which John Vivian had the Hafod Works constructed. Gabb further states that this works was much larger than those which had preceded it.[145] This increase in size refutes Rees' earlier statement regarding worker numbers.[146] From the beginning of production in 1810, the Hafod Works, employed three hundred workers.[147] This number was later overshadowed by the number of workers in the adjacent Morfa Works which opened in 1834. The Morfa works employed six hundred workers from its inception.[148]

After a technical education in Germany John Henry Vivian, the son of John Vivian, became a director of the Hafod Copper Works in 1812.[149] In 1810 the total capital belonging to the Vivian Family was £50,000. By 1831 the total capital was £142,000. By 1887 this amount had again vastly increased to £1,200,000.[150] Even this vast sum which would be worth many tens if not hundreds of millions today, was dwarfed by the fortune made by the Guests in Merthyr. The Guests' purchase of Canford Park and estate in Dorset for more than £335,000 in 1846 should be compared to the value of the Vivians equivalent home, Singleton Abbey. Singleton Abbey was sold in July 1919 for £115,000.[151] The outstanding success of the Hafod Works under John Henry Vivian's directorship is reflected in the figures given above. Seemingly Miskell's assertion that 'Before 1850, a small number of relatively large firms dominated metal smelting in the region' is borne out if one studies the success of the Hafod and adjoining

[145] Gabb, 'Later Copper Works', *Lower Swansea Valley – Factsheet 6 (*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.10
[146] Rees, p.21.
[147] Bowen, 'Copperopolis: Swansea's Heyday, Decline and Regeneration', p.4.
[148] *Ibid.*
[149] Gabb, 'Later Copper Works', p.20.
[150] *A Short History of the Hafod Copperworks*, 1810 – 1924 (Swansea: City and County of Swansea, 2010), p.9.
[151] 'Singleton Abbey', *House and Heritage* <https://houseandheritage.org/2019/06/04/singleton-abbey> [accessed 14 May 2024].

Morfa works.[152] Similarly, the growth in population of Swansea reflects the success of all the copper concerns in the Lower Tawe Valley. In 1801 the population was recorded as being 10,117. By 1851 this had grown to 31,139.[153] Ultimately John Henry Vivian had sole control of the Hafod Works and oversaw successful growth in production.

Subsequently, control of the Company passed to John Henry's son, Henry Hussey Vivian (1821 – 1894). He represented the third generation of the Vivian family to own the Hafod works. Having studied metallurgy in both Germany and France from 1838 – 1840, Henry Hussey was well placed to seek out new products which could be produced in Swansea.[154] He took out several patents connected to his work as a metallurgist and was one of the first to try to alleviate the air pollution caused by copper smoke.[155] Under his guidance the product range was extended to include spelter, gold, silver, nickel and cobalt.[156] His extensive knowledge of metallurgy was demonstrated during a talk he delivered in 1880 as President of the Royal Institution of South Wales.[157] The transcription of his talk demonstrated Henry Hussey Vivian's widespread knowledge of the history of metal working and outlined his decision to use reverberatory furnaces in the Hafod works to improve output and efficiency.

It is important to note however, that irrespective of Henry Hussey Vivian's knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, by the end of the nineteenth century the copper smelting industry in the Lower Swansea Valley was in terminal decline. Henry Hussey's death in 1894 could

[152] Miskell, 'The Making of a New Welsh Metropolis', p.40.
[153] *Ibid.*
[154] Swansea University Archive, Yorkshire Imperial Metals Records, 1740 – 1956: Vivian Papers.
[155] *Ibid.*
[156] *Ibid.*
[157] West Glamorgan Archive, Thomas Davies Collection, Notebook containing an article published in *The Cambrian* dated December 24th 1880, entitled 'Mr H. H. Vivian MP on Copper Smelting 1880',D/DTDN/54.

arguably be seen as the beginning of the final death throes of the Hafod works. His successors arguably did not have the knowledge and business acumen to enable the company to continue 'his successors took profits from the business without making adequate provision for renewal of plant or for innovation.'[158] Briggs counteracts this argument asserting that the belief that the sons of industrialists were not as 'driven' as their fathers was a false narrative.[159] However, by 1924 the Hafod Works had been amalgamated with the adjacent Morfa Works to form the British Copper Company.[160] By this date copper smelting had ceased at both works and by 1928 this newly formed company was sold to the Imperial Chemical Industries.[161] It would be incorrect to lay the entire blame for the failure of the business on the poor business ability of the fourth generation of Vivians to own the Hafod works. Outside factors seemingly played just as important part in this failure which affected all copper works in the Swansea valley. The removal of trade barriers and the poorer quality of imported ores played their part in the industry's decline.[162] Allied to these factors Gabb cites local labour struggles, the failure of copper works owners to embrace new technology and avaricious local landowners demanding ever higher prices for coal.[163]

Whilst the discussion in the preceding paragraph outlines the decline and ultimate failure of the copper industry in Swansea, it should be noted that concurrent with the decline was the expansion of other metal production in the Swansea area. Tin plate production in particular became a major employer in Swansea. In a similar fashion to the rapid rise of the copper

[158] Williams, p.52.
[159] Briggs, p.196.
[160] *Ibid.*
[161] *Ibid.*
[162] Gerald Gabb, 'The Rise and Fall of the Copper Industry', *Lower Swansea Valley Factsheet* 7 *(*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.30.
[163] *Ibid.*

industry, tin plate production rapidly rose in the area close to Swansea. Philip Jenkins states that in 1805 four thousand tons of tinplate was produced in South Wales. By 1850 this figure has risen to thirty-seven thousand tons.[164] In a similar fashion to copper production in Britain, Swansea and the surrounding area became dominant in tin plate production. By 1891 there were five hundred and twenty-five tinplate mills in Britain of which five hundred and two were located within twenty miles of Swansea.[165] The first tinplate works in the Swansea area was established at Clydach in 1747.[166] It was not however, until 1845 that the first Swansea works was established at Upper Forest.[167] By 1881 there were a further ten tinplate works in the Swansea Valley.[168] By 1915 there were eighty-two works.[169] Heavy industry, specifically metal working and production continued to be a major employer in the area.

Tinplate production in Swansea shared some of the locational factors which had attracted copper smelting to the area. A pre-existing workforce experienced in metal working allied to coastal access to deliver the ore which was largely from Cornwall up until 1860, attracted tinplate works to the area.[170] Allied to these factors the availability of coal and a water supply to initially provide power but later an intrinsic part in the cleaning process, also drew the industry to Swansea.[171] America became the premier market for Welsh tinplate for use in cans and petrol containers. In 1880 over three hundred and thirty-six thousand tons was exported to this country. By comparison nearly ninety-three thousand tons was exported to

[164] Philip Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales, 1536 – 1990* (Harlow: Longman, 1992), p.229.
[165] Williams, p.40.
[166] Hughes, p.57.
[167] Gerald Gabb, 'Tinplate', *Lower Swansea Valley – Factsheet 8 (*Swansea: Swansea Museum), p.6.
[168] *Ibid*, p.1.
[169] *Ibid*, p.30.
[170] Williams, p.41.
[171] *Ibid.*

the rest of the World.[172] John Davies contends that tinplate was first used to can food in 1825 and further asserts that this led to a huge upsurge in demand.[173] Hughes strongly argues that the increase in tinplate production in South Wales can be attributed to changes in technology.[174] He further cites the example shown by the unsuitability of coal from the Swansea area prior to 1837. Post 1837, changing technology allowed Swansea coal to be used in the manufacture of tinplate.[175] To set up a tinplate works was much cheaper than setting up a copper smelting works. Unlike copper owners who were universally from outside Wales as they had the capital to do so, the cheaper cost of tinplate set up allowed many owners to be Welsh. John Jones Jenkins (1835 – 1915) and Daniel Edwards (1835 – 1915) were two examples of Welsh tinplate owners.[176] Hughes emphasises the pre-eminence of Swansea in tinplate production by the end of the nineteenth century 'Swansea had established itself as the centre for world tinplate production.'[177]

Whilst technological developments greatly increased the growth of tinplate manufacturing in South Wales, the downturn in production came about rapidly as the result of American tariffs. The McKinley Act passed in 1890 placed high import tariffs on Welsh tinplate and rapidly decreased export as the higher price made purchase uneconomic.[178] America had passed the act to protect its own tinplate industry.[179] Emigration of many tinplate workers from Wales to America helped to support and develop their industry.[180] The downturn in the industry

[172] Gabb, 'Tinplate', p.32.
[173] John Davies, *A History of Wales*, (London: Penguin, 1983), p.353.
[174] Hughes, p.56.
[175] *Ibid.*
[176] Williams, p.44.
[177] *Hughes,* p.58.
[178] Williams, p.43.
[179] *Ibid.*
[180] *Ibid.*

was short lived as the outbreak of World War One in 1914 and subsequently World War Two again drove up the demand for Welsh tinplate.[181] The damage done by the McKinley Tariff was rapidly wiped out. In 1890 five hundred and eighty-six thousand tons of tinplate was produced in South Wales. By 1912 production had reached eight hundred and forty-eight thousand tons.[182] Gabb strongly argues that events which started in America were responsible for the final demise of virtually all the tinplate works in South Wales.[183] The Wall Street Crash in 1929 started a world depression which resulted in the closure of most Welsh tinplate works.[184]

Whilst the decline of both the copper and tinplate industries generally reduced the number of workers employed in metallurgical industries in the Swansea Valley, as Bowen states 'the portfolio industrial capitalists had run multiple enterprises.'[185] He cites the example of the Vivian Family who, alongside copper smelting also produced iron, cobalt, nickel, phosphate, silver, and lead.[186] Accordingly, through diversification Swansea still produced metal and other products in the same area which had previously been dominated by copper smelting. Bowen claims that the diversification 'represented a second wave of industrialisation.'[187] He further illustrates this point by outlining the extent of industry present in 1883 within five miles of Swansea 'thirty-six collieries, eight iron works, six tin works, three steel works six spelter or zinc works, five fuel works and thirteen miscellaneous works.'[188] Hughes agrees with Bowen's comments regarding the diversification of the Vivians' portfolio. He states that

[181] Jenkins, p.229.
[182] Kenneth O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.64.
[183] Gabb, 'Tinplate', p.36.
[184] *Ibid.*
[185] Bowen, 'Copperopolis: Swansea's Heyday', p.7.
[186] *Ibid.*
[187] *Ibid.*
[188] *Ibid.*

Henry Hussey Vivian took note of the need to diversify, initially setting up lead and silver production by 1854. Later zinc, brass, nickel, and cobalt were also produced at the Hafod Works.[189] Hughes also asserts that by 1842 half of the Hafod's annual profit of £56,000 was attributable to metals other than copper.[190]

In a similar fashion to copper and tinplate production, Swansea also became 'the principal base for zinc production in the United Kingdom.'[191] Coal once again was an important factor in locating the zinc works in Swansea. Hughes contends that twenty-five tons of coal was required to smelt one ton of ore.[192] Williams however, disagrees with this figure stating that twenty-seven tons of coal was required.[193] Williams comments that zinc production began at the Upper Bank works in 1757.[194] Hughes claims that production at the Upper Bank Works began in 1754.[195] Hughes maintains that following the initial phase of zinc production at the Upper Bank Works, the industry declined until Vivian and Son bought the disused Birmingham Copper Works in1841 solely for the purpose of producing zinc.[196] Technological advances meant that the quantity of coal required was vastly reduced.[197] Hughes agrees and qualifies the reduction, stating that eventually only six tons of coal were required to smelt one ton of ore.[198] Amy Dillwyn's father, Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn's spelter works was set up in 1858. Spelter is usually a zinc/ lead alloy, but can also be a copper/zinc alloy. It was this works which was willed to Amy Dillwyn on the death of her father in 1892. The works by that time was

[189] Hughes, p.61.
[190] *Ibid.*
[191] *Ibid.*
[192] *Ibid.*
[193] Williams, p.39.
[194] Williams, p.37.
[195] Hughes, p.61.
[196] Hughes, p.62.
[197] Williams, p.39.
[198] Hughes, p.62.

bankrupt but under Amy Dillwyn's direction soon became profitable again.[199] Nineteenth century women running a heavy industry works was truly remarkable at this time and somewhat debunks the concept of women remaining solely in the domestic sphere.

Concurrently with Amy Dillwyn's resurrection of the bankrupt spelter firm Dillwyn and Co., she was also heavily interested and involved in the fight for women's rights. The time she spent in London accompanying her father's attendance at Parliament until his death in 1892, would likely have given her greater access to knowledge of the growing demand of 'Votes For Women'. Amy Dillwyn brought this desire for universal franchise back to Swansea when she was no longer spending months in London during the period when Parliament was sitting, owing to the death of her father. Ursula Masson notes that not only was Amy Dillwyn a vocal supporter of the cause but was prepared to donate considerable sums of money to ensure its success.[200] The Women's Freedom League was set up in 1907. The Swansea branch was inaugurated in 1909. Masson states that 'Amy Dillwyn headed the subscription list'.[201] The significance of this act is heightened when Masson adds 'In Swansea – perhaps uniquely amongst the large towns and cities of Wales – the WFL seems to have been the leading organisation'.[202] In contrast Sarah Vivian makes no mention of the demand for equality. She too would have had access to the greater knowledge of such matters that the capital could provide. But no mention is made of women's rights in her notes.

[199] 'Llansamlet Spelter Works', *Coflein* <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/424032/> [accessed 14 May 2024].
[200] Ursula Masson, 'Votes for Women – the Campaign in Swansea', *Minerva – Transactions of the Royal Institution of South Wales*, Vol.1 (1993) 34 – 38 (p.34) <https://journals.library.wales/view/125327/1225328/#?xywh=-1761%2C65%2C5951%2C3819&cv>[accessed 12 May 2024].
[201] *Ibid.*
[202] *Ibid.*

Subsequently the decline in Swansea's industry came about for a variety of reasons. Miskell claims that by 1880 'developments elsewhere in South Wales meant that the urban initiative shifted away from Swansea.'[203] This statement appears to lead us to believe that other South Wales centres of population grew at Swansea's expense. This idea is not common to all arguments. Hilton places the blame on the lack of technical innovation in Swansea.[204] He does temper his argument by adding that the higher price of ore imported from much further afield as the availability of British ores declined, also hastened the demise of Swansea's copper smelting industry.[205] Newell agrees with the view expressed by Hilton but also claims that 'overseas producers significantly altered the pattern of trade in ore and led to a relative and then absolute decline in copper production in Swansea.'[206] Newell further contends that:

> 'In spite of the criticism that smelters failed to adopt to new technology or the suggestion that entrepreneurship within at least one smelting dynasty had waned by the third or fourth generation, it appears that the South Wales smelter's loss…. was largely the consequence of economic factors beyond the control of management.'[207]

Williams takes the view that the availability of coal became scarce in the Swansea district as all easily accessed deposits had been worked out.[208] From the above views concerning the reasons for industrial decline in the Swansea district, it is clear that no one reason covers the failure of the metallurgical industries. The reasons vary metal to metal and there is no

[203] Miskell, 'The Making of a New Welsh Metropolis', p.51.
[204] Hilton, p.23.
[205] *Ibid.*
[206] Newell, p.94.
[207] *Ibid.*
[208] Williams, p.55.

consensus as to why the decline occurred, as a variety of possible explanations are put forward.

In conclusion, Swansea's rise to prominence was relatively rapid at the end of the eighteenth century. Similarly, its decline at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century was equally sudden. Economic opportunity brought families from 'across the border' whose fortunes were largely made through involvement with metallurgical industries in the Lower Tawe Valley. Copper was the first metal which made fortunes for several families. The set-up costs of a copper works in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, largely debarred Welsh involvement as Welsh industrialists could not afford these costs. Arguably, the greatest of the copper families were the Vivians whose descendants still bear the title Lord Swansea. Their ancestor Henry Hussey Vivian was given the title in 1893 having been made a baron in 1882. Their place in elite society was affirmed through having royal guests staying in their largest home, Singleton Abbey in October 1881.[209] Their presence in London society during 'the season' was facilitated through maintaining a house in Belgrave Square.

Subsequent metallurgical industries, notably tin plate and zinc smelting had lower set up costs. Coal mining which was essential to support all these industries was a further activity within the economic portfolio of Welsh industrialists. The largely English families who had made great fortunes from copper, left Swansea entirely once the copper industry declined.

[209] 'The Royal Visit to Swansea', *The Graphic,* 22nd October 1881.

They left the city a legacy of large mansions with associated gardens. All except one, Maesteg House in St. Thomas were situated in the Sketty area of Swansea 'The industrial wealth of Swansea created an extensive landscape of leisure around Swansea Bay for its main entrepreneurs.'[210] Today, Swansea West benefits from public access to two of these extensive gardens, Singleton Park and Clyne Gardens. What were once the private pleasure grounds of a hugely wealthy Swansea based Cornish industrial family the Vivians, now benefits all the people of Swansea. The will of Dulcie Vivian (1839 – 1921) who resided at Clyne Castle reveals the extent of the gardens now freely open to the people of Swansea. Dulcie was the daughter of John Henry Vivian. Her will details an area of 7.509 acres directly around the castle buildings valued at £9,800.[211] Listed is a further area of 40.381 acres which comprised the gardens and which are today known as Clyne Park. These were valued at £2650.[212] Home Farm comprised a further 199.281 acres valued at £2500.[213] In total Dulcie Vivian's estate was valued at £80,796.[214] This is likely to be the equivalent of several million pounds today. Singleton Abbey became part of the Singleton Campus of Swansea University in the 1920s. Clyne Castle having also been part of the University from the 1950s, was subdivided as flats and sold to private buyers in the early years of the twenty first century.

Two hundred years of heavy industry mainly based in the lower Swansea valley also left behind a lasting legacy. Bowen succinctly summarises the effect of metallurgical production in the Swansea valley '… the Lower Swansea Valley became the largest post-industrial

[210] Hughes, p.227.
[211] Swansea University Archive, Will of Dulcie Vivian, 1921, LAC/116/E3.
[212] *Ibid.*
[213] *Ibid.*
[214] *Ibid.*

landscape in Western Europe.'[215] He further maintains that by the middle of the twentieth century the Swansea Valley had '….mile after mile of dereliction, desolation, and despoilation created by more than two hundred years of industrial activity conducted in an environment that was largely unregulated at a time when notions of corporate responsibility were almost non-existent.'[216] Accordingly, whilst Swansea West benefitted from the mansions and gardens of the wealthy, the same families having deserted Swansea left behind a landscape piled high with the toxic spoil of their trade in Swansea East. Millions of tons of industrial by products covered the entire Lower Swansea Valley '….there are acres of noxious land that bear no vegetation at all.'[217] Hughes supports this view 'For nearly one hundred years the copper industry centered in Swansea was one element in a picturesque landscape. For another hundred the copper smoke consumed Lower Swansea Valley.'[218] Effectively all attempts to establish Swansea as a sea bathing resort were abandoned as the profits from copper manufacture completely overwhelmed this possibility.

It was not until the 1960s that discussions began regarding the need to address the extensive industrial dereliction so obviously present in the Swansea Valley. The overall vision of reclamation was planned to remove most traces of the copper industry in terms of both toxic waste and the then derelict works littering the valley. The almost entire removal of the industrial archaeology in the Valley might arguably not be carried out today as value is placed on all structures as demonstrators of heritage. Bowen outlines the clearance work in the Valley '…. There was extensive land clearance and soil remediation, which provided the

[215] Bowen, 'Copperopolis: Swansea's Heyday, Decline and Regeneration', p.7.
[216] *Ibid.*
[217] *Ibid.*
[218] Hughes, p326.

necessary preconditions for the development of housing, leisure and sporting activity, and the end product was a Valley that was not only green again but capable of sustaining new forms of economic enterprise.'[219] Swansea's function as a tourist destination has once again returned attracting visitors for the same reason that people came in the eighteenth century. Swansea still stands adjacent to a seven-mile sandy beach and the attraction of this location is seemingly timeless.

The information given above puts the lives of these two women into geographical, historical, and economic context. Sarah Vivian and Amy Dillwyn were both related to industrialists concerned with the metallurgical industry who were also members of parliament, and all resided in Swansea. The research will now consider the lives of elite women within the context of wider events occurring during the nineteenth century with reference to the approach set out in chapter one, but with specific reference to the lives of Sarah Vivian, Amy Dillwyn, and Lady Charlotte Guest.

[219] Bowen, p.9.

Chapter 3 - The Lives of Nineteenth Century Women of the Elite Tier – 'Angel in the House'?

During the period which encompassed the eighteenth century and extended into the early part of the nineteenth century, the ownership of land in the form of estates usually bestowed power and social status. However, during the nineteenth century the pattern of power and status changed as the Industrial Revolution progressed, 'The superior quality of other forms of capital for infinite multiplication and endless variety of application' effectively spelt the end of the domination of landowners.[220] In support of this view, Pamela Horn's *High Society – The English Social Elite* asserts that 'Money was the key to social acceptance by the latter years of the nineteenth century'.[221] If one accepts that money became synonymous with power, it would appear that the newly wealthy industrialists rapidly displaced the landowners as the sole elite of society. Furthermore, they effectively usurped the power held for centuries by the landed gentry 'It was indeed indicative of the changing balance of economic power within the nation that whereas up to about 1880 over half of all the millionaires in Britain had been landowners, after that date businessmen and financiers held the leading position.'[222]

Consequently, the increase in the members of the elite tier occasioned via industrial wealth, brought about an overall numerical increase in the members of the upper tier of society, although the exact number is a matter of conjecture. Horn claims that in the early nineteenth century the elite tier consisted of about four hundred people.[223] Leonora Davidoff in her work *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and the Season* largely concurs with this view as she states

[220] G. E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul,1963), p.3.
[221] Pamela Horn, *High Society – The English Social Elite, 1880 – 1914* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992),p.1.
[222] *Ibid*, p.6.
[223] *Ibid*, p.8.

that the elite comprised between three and four hundred people, who were mostly landowners.[224] However, there is disagreement between these two historians regarding the number of people included in the elite tier by the end of the nineteenth century as Davidoff claims that there were about four thousand members.[225] Horn alternatively suggests that there were about six thousand members.[226] It might be argued that the inclusion of industrialists and financiers brought about a blurring of the criteria for acceptance into the elite tier leading to the differing figures given above. In addition to these changes affecting a relatively small group in society, the growth in 'power and confidence' of the middle class as a direct result of the Industrial Revolution brought about profound changes to society.[227]

Accordingly, the changes to society in its entirety in the nineteenth century were reflected in changes to the lives of women. Dorothy K. G. Thompson succinctly outlines these changes in her work *British Women in the Nineteenth Century*, 'A century opening in the total subjugation of women and gradually moving towards the daylight of liberation in the very last years.'[228] Frank Prochaska stresses the effect upon English society brought about by the French Revolution which culminated in the execution of Louis XVI in 1793. He states that 'English middle and upper-class women were as apprehensive as men after 1793'.[229] The status quo of long-established patterns of deferential behaviour towards the elite class was challenged. Jessica Gerrard sums up the *modus operandi* of the elite tier at the start of the nineteenth

[224] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), p.20.
[225] *Ibid,* p.61.
[226] Horn, p.8.
[227] *British Library* <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-middle-classes-etiquette-and-upward-mobility> [accessed 22 January 2023].
[228] Dorothy K.G. Thompson, *British Women in the Nineteenth Century* (London: The Historical Association, 1992), p.1.
[229] Frank Prochaska, 'Women in English Philanthropy 1790 – 1830', *International Review of Social History*, Vol XIX, part 3 (1974), 424 – 439 (p.439) <https://doi.org/10.1017/soo20859000004740>.

century 'The landed classes had long justified their position by *noblesse oblige* and paternalism. The right to rule and the enjoyment of rank, privilege, and wealth carried moral obligations of public service and benevolence towards their dependents, whose gratitude, deference, and submission legitimized the existing social order.'[230] Lilian Lewis Shiman supports the view put forward by Prochaska. She asserts that the French Revolution brought about great disquiet and fear to members of the upper class in Britain.[231] In illustration of this point she notes that 'all working-class gatherings' were made illegal at a time when politics became the primary concern of all classes of Englishmen.[232] The French Revolution could be seen as the catalyst for change, as the compliance of the rural estate workers might no longer be guaranteed.

In addition to this, the changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution also changed the role of women in society. Unsurprisingly, the different strata of society were impacted in different ways. Working class women increasingly left the home to work in industry. Previously these women would have worked at home in a rural setting. However, by contrast, the women of the middle and upper classes were expected to remain in the home whilst the men left the home to work elsewhere. Thompson summarises the changes occurring during this period '…. A social profile for the nineteenth century in which changes of tempo, location and reward of work affected all classes.'[233] Here Thompson is referencing the population

[230] Gerard, Jessica, 'Lady Bountiful: Women of the Landed Classes and Rural Philanthropy', *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Winter, 1987), 183-210 (p.185).
[231] Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Women and Leadership in Nineteenth Century England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), p.36.
[232] *Ibid.*
[233] Thompson, p.12.

movement away from the countryside to the towns and cities. Urbanisation provided jobs in mills, mines and factories for working class women.

The wives of the newly created middle-class industrialists and financiers were expected to stay at home in the suburbs. The idea of 'separate spheres' of existence for wives and husbands in the middle class was regarded as the ideal. The men left the home to work and the women stayed at home creating a well-run haven of peace for the men to return to.[234] Shiman concurs with this view 'Victorian society was spilt into two spheres: the public one for the males, which encompassed work, politics, clubs, sports and many other activities, and the private one or domestic one for the women, which revolved around the family and home'.[235] The term 'Angel in the House' was coined by Coventry Patmore to describe the role carried out by middle class women.[236] Suzanne Fagence Cooper further contends that Queen Victoria played a major role in popularising this concept 'It was the Queen who established the ideal figure of the Victorian wife and mother.'[237] Margaret Hewitt concurs with the view expressed above '…the philosophy of the Victorians with its deification of the home.'[238]

For the women of the elite tier, the expectation of how to conduct their lives was very clearly defined. Georgie Broad summarises their role 'Their allotted goal in life was to marry, have children and raise them in an appropriate and respectful manner. This in itself was seen to be sufficient fulfilment for an upper-class woman and the role of devoted wife and mother was

[234] *Ibid,* p.8.
[235] Shiman, p59.
[236] Suzanne Fagence Cooper, *The Victorian Women* (London: V and A Publications, 2001), p.10.
[237] *Ibid*, p.14.
[238] Margaret Hewitt, *Wives and Mothers in Victorian Industry* (London: Rockcliff, 1958), p.3.

highly idealised in Victorian Britain.'[239] As described previously in relation to the 'separate spheres' philosophy, it was Queen Victoria who provided the role model for other women to follow '… Victoria became an icon of late nineteenth century middle class femininity and domesticity.'[240] Despite being the Queen, she deferred to her husband Prince Albert in making all decisions. Shiman in her outstanding work *Women and Leadership in Nineteenth Century England,* makes a very pertinent point regarding the effect of the Industrial revolution.[241] She states that upper class women continued to maintain a way of life which was largely pre–Industrial Revolution as 'they gave primary allegiance to family and class rather than gender.' Effectively Shiman is saying that the upper class remained largely untouched by the growth of feminism and women's rights and took little part in new political movements which emerged as the nineteenth century progressed.

Hence, the expectation that a woman of the elite tier should marry meant that the social lives of these women was structured to enable them to meet a husband of the acceptable background. The Season involved the movement of elite families from all over the country, to London for several months each year. Horn conveniently outlines a suggested timing for the Season. She states that it began in April or May and concluded prior to the end of July.[242] Davidoff comments that the timing of the Season was based around parliamentary sessions and agrees with Horn's assertion that this period concluded prior to August.[243] The journals of Amy Dillwyn (1845 – 1935) written between 1863 – 1917 demonstrate that this seemingly

[239] Georgie Broad, 'How the Other Half Lived: Rich and Poor Women in Victorian Britain', *History is Now,* (2014) <http://www.historyisnowmagazine.com/blog/2014/4/21/how-the-otherhalf-lived-rich-and-poor-women-in-victorian-britain#.YPnBrEAo_cs> [accessed 10 March 2023].
[240] Lynn Abrams, 'Ideals of Womanhood in Victorian Britain', *BBC* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/victorian_britain/women_hood_0.5.shtml> [accessed 31 March 2023].
[241] Shiman, p.5.
[242] Horn, p.9.
[243] Davidoff, p.21.

rigid timetable was not entirely adhered to.[244] Amy Dillwyn was the daughter of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn, a Liberal politician who served as Member of Parliament for Swansea for thirty seven years. Father and daughter both resided in Hendrefoilan House in Sketty, Swansea. Her journal entry for 13th February 1869 notes that she left for London.[245] This timing does not comply with that given above by Horn. There cannot be any doubt that Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn and his daughter were part of the elite tier as Amy Dillwyn's journal entry for 10th March 1869 notes that they attended a drawing room event in Buckingham Palace at which Queen Victoria was present.[246] Such events would have been limited to the members at the very top of the elite tier. Horn's assertion that the Season began in April or May would appear to be contradicted by the primary evidence given in Amy Dillwyn's journal.

Throughout the Season there was a carefully planned calendar of social events which members of the elite tier were expected to attend.[247] Undoubtedly, not all the elite tier would attend all the events, but regular attendance would give families the best chance for their offspring to meet their future spouse. Certain events such as Royal Ascot, held in June would have gained the highest levels of attendance. The calendar after July lists events which generally take place outside of London. This would appear to agree with Horn and Davidoff's assertion that the London season terminated at the end of July.

Amy Dillwyn attended the Vivians' Ball on 14th May 1869 in their London townhouse. This Swansea family, the subject of this dissertation was also part of the elite tier. Arguably they

[244] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Journal, 28th August 1868 – 5th May 1870, DC6/1/5.
[245] *Ibid.*
[246] *Ibid.*
[247] Horn, p.13.

were at the very pinnacle of society as they maintained a London house, 7 Belgrave Square. Horn provides us with a guide indicating the area of Central London which was regarded as most fashionable, desirable, and therefore expensive. The area was bounded by Oxford Street to the north, the House of Commons to the south, Alexandra Gate also to the south, Kensington Museum to the west and Regent Street to the east.[248] The Vivians' house in Belgrave Square was within this area. The addresses which were included on the letters sent by Amy Dillwyn, are generally sent from addresses within the desired area. For example, a letter sent on 26th February 1894 was addressed Bina Gardens, Kensington.[249] This is in the desired area as outlined by Horn. However, a letter Amy Dillwyn sent to her sister Minnie on 12th June 1890 was addressed from 3 Crowley Street, South West London.[250] This address was not in the most fashionable area. Furthermore, the changing locations shows that these properties were not owned by the Dillwyn Family, unlike the Belgrave Square address of the Vivians.

Although both the Vivian and Dillwyn families from Swansea and were clearly part of the elite tier, neither family would have been regarded as such prior to the nineteenth century. They belonged to the newer elite as neither had a background in the landed gentry. They would not have been part of the 'four hundred' as previously stated by Horn.[251] Both families would however have been included in the 'four thousand' referenced by Davidoff.[252] It is unlikely that the Dillwyn Family would have been included in the *Ton.*[253] This term was reserved for

[248] Horn, p. 8.
[249] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, correspondence between Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn and her sister Minnie, DC6/3/2.
[250] *Ibid.*
[251] Horn, p.8.
[252] Davidoff, p.61.
[253] Regina Jeffers, 'Who Were the Ton and the Beau Monde?' <https://reginajeffers.blog/2016/03/24/who-were-the-ton-and-the-beau-monde/> [accessed 24 February 2023].

'aristocrats and upper-level gentry who attended the London Season'.[254] The Vivians would have been included in this group as their royal connections elevated them to a higher level than the Dillwyn Family. Wealth was not enough to be considered part of the *Ton* as manners and a sense of style were also of importance.[255] Acquaintance with the members of the *Ton* did not automatically gain entry to this most exclusive group.

It should be noted that the South Wales elite families were socially interactive with each other. Amy Dillwyn in her journal notes that on 27th November 1868 she had lunch with the Talbots at Margam.[256] In addition, whilst in London for the Season in 1873 on the 18th June she notes that 'Mrs Vivian and Dulcie came to dinner'.[257] The Mrs Vivian referred to here is Sarah Vivian (1798 – 1886) the widow of John Henry Vivian (1785 – 1855). Dulcie (1839 – 1929) was their daughter.

The impact of the changes to society during the nineteenth century on each tier of society were very different. The women of the elite tier relied on familial ties and largely socialised within a narrow band of similar people, their lives revolving around the demands of the London Season for several months each year. The women of the newly established middle class were bounded by the philosophy of separate spheres. They had fewer familial ties and were expected to represent the 'Angel in the House' presiding over the domestic management to enable her husband to return to a haven of peace at the end of the working day. The women of the working class, largely residing in an urban setting were often expected

[254] *Ibid.*
[255] *Ibid.*
[256] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Journal, 28th August 1868 – 5th May 1870, D6/1/5.
[257] *Ibid.*

to run the house and go out to work. Thompson makes the point that during the nineteenth century there was very little 'gender solidarity' as the different social classes all had different emphases.[258] It was the middle-class women with looser familial ties and more time on their hands, who were to become the group to emerge as the ones who fought for women's rights in the latter half on the nineteenth century despite being 'forced back into operating in a more narrowly personal and private sphere.'[259] Peter N. Stearns summarises a change of emphasis at the end of the nineteenth century as a direct result of the efforts of middle class women 'A new concern for freedom and dignity was developing among young women at the turn of the century.'[260]

As we have seen the lives of middle-class women were largely confined to the home and the domestic sphere. Prochaska in his seminal book *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* stresses that the increase in domestic service bought more free time for middle class women.[261] He further contends that at the start of the nineteenth century middle-class women had few job opportunities and the lack of a formal, academic education made it impossible for them to compete with men for suitable jobs. Furthermore, it was deemed unsuitable for middle-class women to earn their own money.[262] Concurrently there was a massive expansion of available printed material 'The nineteenth century saw an unprecedented expansion in the volume of all kinds of printed matter in Britain. Books,

[258] Thompson, p.18.
[259] Davidoff, p.92.
[260] Peter N. Stearns, 'Working Class Women in Britain', in *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age,* ed. by Martha Vinicus (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p.112.
[261] Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980) p.5.
[262] *Ibid.*

journals, newspapers and pamphlets poured from the presses. Much of this material was written by women.'[263]

The importance of journals which were largely bought by middle class women during the nineteenth century, should be considered. The expectation that middle-class women should remain largely in the home brought about isolation for them.[264] Journals were a means by which women could keep abreast of current issues. Through reading the journals women were able to learn of campaigns such as the need for academic education for girls whom had thus far been taught a restricted curriculum which only served to prepare them for the domestic role that they were expected to follow. It would be likely that women of the elite tier would also be aware of, and have read these journals. The Langham Place group were responsible for the publication of the *Woman's Journal* which ran from 1858 – 1864. Laura Schwartz asserts the importance of this journal in campaigning 'on a cross section of women's rights'.[265] The Langham Place group was founded in the late 1840s by Elizabeth Rayner Parkes (1829 – 1925) and Barbara Leigh Smith (1827 – 1891).[266] These two women shared 'a deep frustration at the restraints imposed by social convention'.[267] Sudesh Vaid stresses the importance of the *Women's Journal* which was founded by Parkes and Smith. She states that 'it became the official organ of the women's movement.'[268] This publication was to be the

[263] Thompson, p.7.
[264] Shiman, p.125.
[265] Laura Schwartz, 'Feminist Thinking on Education in Victorian England', *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 37, No. 5 (2011) 669-682 (p.670) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23119462> [accessed 5 March 2023].
[266] Jane Rendall, 'The Langham Place Group', <https://www.oxforddnb.com/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/97801986.14128.0001/odnb-9780198614128 > [accessed 12 January 2023].
[267] *Ibid.*
[268] Sudesh Vaid, 'Ideologies on Women in Nineteenth Century Britain, 1850s – 70s', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 20, No. 43 (October 26, 1985) 63 – 67 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4374971> [accessed 1 March 2023].

forerunner of other women's magazines, such as the Victoria Magazine. Through these publications political movements were started and information about them, disseminated.

The Langham Place group led on political campaigns which directly affected women's rights. In 1856 they 'collected no less than 26,000 signatures for a petition demanding reform of the Married Women's Property Act.'[269] The Act stated that upon marriage any property owned by a woman became her husband's property. Schwartz points out that education became 'a central campaigning issue' for the *English Women's Journal.*[270] Their concern was borne out of the frustration brought about by the limited curriculum offered to girls in comparison to boys. This was another way by which women were held back as they were not as fully educated as boys. Sarah Stickney Ellis writing in 1839 clearly outlines her concerns regarding the education afforded to middle-class women 'Women of this class should be educated not simply for being ladies, but for useful and active members of society and for this purpose, that they should consider it no degradation to render their activity conducive to the purposes of trade.'[271] Ellis seems to make the connection between women's education and the limited opportunities afforded them in life due to the restricted nature of the curriculum which was designed for a very narrowly defined domestic role. Richard J. Evans further outlines the effect of a limited curriculum for girls '…the inadequacies of primary education for girls ensured that illiteracy was far more common among women than men.'[272]

[269] *Ibid.*
[270] Schwartz, p.670.
[271] Sarah Stickney Ellis, *The Women of England: Their Social Duties and Domestic Habits* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1839), p.171.
[272] Richard J. Evans, *The Feminists* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p.23.

By the latter years of the nineteenth century women of all classes were becoming more politically aware. The lack of opportunities afforded women in male dominated politics led to setting up of women specific organisations. David Rubenstein outlines the creation of the Primrose League in 1883 and the Women's Liberal Federation in 1886.[273] Whilst the Primrose League was not in favour of female suffrage, the Women's Liberal Federation was strongly in favour. Rubenstein asserts that women having been allowed to canvass in elections, they then allowed 'to enter into the heart of party politics and to demand the vote from within.'[274] Evans concurs with Rubenstein's suggested time frame for women's growing desire for a full place in society ' … it was only in the nineteenth century that women began to combine in organisations created in order to fight for the emancipation of the female sex as a whole.'[275]

Unlike the Women's Liberal Federation which welcomed members from all strata of society, the Primrose League was initially strongly biased towards membership from within the upper tiers of society. Shiman stresses this point 'The Primrose League was a social club that took advantage of the snobbishness of English life. To join an organisation with so many titled members ….was considered by many English men and women to be the height of respectability.'[276] Founded after the Tory loss in the 1880 election, the Ladies Grand council created in 1887, included women from the upper classes: the Marchioness of Salisbury, the Duchess of Marlborough and Countess Iddesleigh were three of the founding members.[277] The Women's Liberal Federation wanted members from the working class from the outset,

[273] David Rubenstein, *Before the Suffragettes - Women's Emancipation in the 1890s (*Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986), p.149.
[274] Rubenstein, p.177.
[275] Evans, p.13.
[276] Shiman, p.178.
[277] Shiman, p.174.

but still managed to attract women from the elite tier. Successively the role of vice president of the Federation was held by the Countess of Aberdeen, Countess Schack and the Countess of Carlisle.[278] It is unconceivable that the female members of the elite tier families from South Wales would be unaware of these political movements, although they were not noted as prominent supporters or members.

In comparison to their political endeavours, the women of the elite tier were effectively leaders chronologically, as regards philanthropy. Their efforts predated those of the women of the newly developing middle class by several centuries. Hugh Cunningham asserts that from the late fifteenth century charity was linked to poor relief for which there was no legal recourse.[279] Visiting the poor was a long-held tradition in pre-industrial Britain. It was expected that the lady of the manor and her daughters, would visit the estate tenants in their homes to provide advice, food, and other necessities dependant on the situation. These visits were personified by the Lady Bountiful character bestowing largesse on grateful recipients. This philanthropic character was taken from an eighteenth-century play written by George Farquhar entitled *The Beaux Stratagem*. Although seen as a benevolent giver of charity, her attentions were not always welcomed as her motives were sometimes questionable 'Benevolence as a part of human nature was much celebrated in the eighteenth century, but did it … spring from self-love?'[280] Here Cunningham is suggesting that some of the 'good works' were not carried out as selfless acts of giving. Dorice Williams Elliott offers us a more pragmatic and less condemnatory view point. She asserts that the landed gentry had long

[278] Shiman, p.182.
[279] Hugh Cunningham, 'Philanthropy and its Critics', in *New Philanthropy and Social Justice*, ed. by Behrooz Morvaridi (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2015), pp. 17 – 31 (p.18).
[280] Hugh Cunningham, p.19.

overseen the welfare of their estate workers and families and this was seen as 'Part of the wealthier classes' duties to those who supplied their income.'[281] Elliott does however, state that in carrying out philanthropic work 'upper class women were supposed to reinforce the reciprocal obligations of a paternal hierarchical society by conferring obligations on the poor that would be reciprocated with gratitude and deference.'[282]

Elliott further discusses the role of philanthropy in the lives of nineteenth century women 'It is surprising how many historians and literary critics, including feminists, have written off women's philanthropic work as do-gooding, a parochial collusion without recognising the crucial role it played in redefining both gender and class roles in eighteenth and nineteenth century Britain.'[283] Elliott maintains that philanthropy provided women with a 'legitimate' reason to leave the home based sphere in which they were expected to stay. Good works were seen as an extension of their domestic role.[284] Prochaska concurs with this view as he states that women were seen as being more caring and the skills learnt in running a home and having children were needed to carry out their philanthropic purpose.[285] He further asserts that women were compliant in allowing this view to be taken.[286]

Anne Summers agrees with the view expressed by Elliott.[287] Whilst acknowledging the use of the Lady Bountiful epithet she asserts that 'Nevertheless, her work deserves rescuing from its

[281]Dorice Williams Elliott, *The Angel Out of the House* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia,2002) p.15.
[282] *Ibid*, p.23.
[283] *Ibid*, p.5.
[284] *Ibid*, p.26.
[285] Prochaska, p.8.
[286] *Ibid.*
[287] Anne Summers, 'A Home from Home – Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century', in *A Home from Home – Women's Philanthropic Work in the Nineteenth Century* ed. by Sandra Burman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013) pp.33-63.

invasive and condescending stereotype.'[288] Kay Cook and Neil Evans also stress the importance of philanthropy for both the providers and the receivers of the charitable works of nineteenth century women 'Charity was one possible way out of the house for women.'[289] Cook and Evans state that the notion of doing good created a 'bridgehead' into a sphere outside the domestic role expected of women.[290] Prochaska goes further in stressing the importance of 'escape' from the domestic sphere 'Philanthropy, in short, was the taproot of female emancipation in the nineteenth century.'[291] It is as if he sees philanthropy as being the foundation for later attempts for women to gain a measure of equality, such as the demands for universal suffrage. Cunningham notes that the changes in society, particularly the movement from rural life to the urban setting which was brought about by the Industrial Revolution brought a greater need than ever for support for the poor.[292] The traditional method of visiting the poor was no longer relevant or effective 'By the late nineteenth century, philanthropy was facing a new challenge from those who argued that it was simply incapable of coping with the problems of an urban and industrial society.'[293] Stickney Ellis recognised the changing needs of a now largely urban society 'The measure of charity which is our duty to bestow upon the poor, is a point of very difficult adjustment, as well as the manner we may choose to adopt in the distribution of our means.'[294]

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[288] *Ibid*, p.33.
[289] Kay Cook and Neil Evans, ''The Petty Antics of the Bell Ringing, Boisterous Band'? The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales 1890 – 1918' in *Our Mother's Land – Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830 – 1939.ed. by Angela V. John* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991), pp.159-188 (p.160).
[290] *Ibid.*
[291]Frank Prochaska, 'Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England', *Philanthropy Impact*, (23rd August 2010) <https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/article/women-and-philanthropy>
[accessed 4 March 2023].
[292] Cunningham, p.25.
[293] *Ibid.*
[294] Stickney Ellis, p.162.

Amy Dillwyn's journal written between 1868 - 1870 details several instances of the philanthropic work which she undertook.[295] Similarly her notebook 1872 – 1917 also details the continuation of these activities.[296] A regular entry in her journal notes that she took Sunday School classes when she was not away in London for the Season, or on holiday. Her entry for 13th September 1868 details that forty-seven children attended Sunday School and her group was eight. Interestingly on the same date she went to the Commercial Inn in Killay to visit a child who was dying of an illness 'between bronchitis and whooping cough'.[297] The following day she travelled to Penyrheol to visit a woman whose baby was ill and returned to Hendrefoilan House via the Commercial Inn to check on the sickly child.[298] The next day she returned to the Commercial Inn and later visited Davy Jones in Three Crosses whose leg had been 'smashed' in a colliery accident.[299] These entries illustrate how seriously Amy Dillwyn took her duties to those less fortunate than herself. Four years after this time, Amy Dillwyn was still carrying out visits as her notebook entry for 10th October 1872 states 'Went to see some poor people'.[300] Williams Elliot provides a possible explanation for Amy Dillwyn's apparently extensive philanthropic work as she points out that single women did not fit the mould of home maker and therefore for some philanthropy fulfilled that caring role.[301] Amy Dillwyn never married.

The organisational skills, courage and self-belief gained from philanthropic work helped women living in the later years of the nineteenth century in their campaign for universal

[295] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Journal, 28th August 1868 – 5th May 1870, D6/1/5.
[296] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Notebook, 1872 – 1917, D6/1/7.
[297] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn Journal, 13th September 1868, DC6/1/5.
[298] *Ibid,* 14th September 1868.
[299] Ibid, 15th September 1868.
[300] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn notebook, 10th October 1872, DC6/1/7.
[301] Williams Elliott, p.9.

suffrage. Had women remained living their lives entirely within the domestic sphere to which they were allotted, it is dubious if they could have made the transition to running and taking part in campaigns which intended gaining women the right to vote. Shiman outlines a time frame for the demand for universal suffrage. She believes that up until the middle of the nineteenth century there was little demand for female suffrage.[302] She links this lack of demand prior to the middle of the century, to the 1832 Reform Act which left women and working-class men with no vote.[303] Women were left feeling as if they were second class citizens. Martin Pugh agrees with this time frame. He states that the desire for women's right to vote was largely in the second half of the nineteenth century.[304] By 1867 working class men had been given the vote, but not women. It was in 1865 that the Kensington Society was formed. One of their agreed purposes was to gain votes for women.[305] Ordinary women were exposed to peer pressure 'All women had to take sides, and those who refused to support the demand for suffrage found themselves increasingly isolated from the mainstream of women's activities.'[306]

The Kensington Society had been formed as a discussion group based in Phillimore Gardens, Kensington. One of the founder members Alice Westlake in writing to Helen Taylor inviting her to join the group made it plain what type of women were to be included 'None but intellectual women are admitted and therefore it is not likely to become a merely puerile and gossiping Society.'[307] They lobbied both M.P.s Henry Fawcett and John Stuart Mill prior to the

[302] Shiman, p.122.
[303] *Ibid*, p.123.
[304] Martin Pugh, *The March of Women – A Revisionist Analysis of the Campaign for Women's* Suffrage (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.7.
[305] *Ibid.*
[306] *Ibid*, p.125.
[307] John Simkin, 'The Kensington Society' < https://spartacus-educational.com/Wkensington.htm> [accessed 12 January 2023].

vote which passed the 1867 Reform Act. Mill spoke in parliament on 17th July 1866 regarding a petition produced by the Kensington Society demanding votes for women. On 20th May 1867 Mill attempted to get an amendment passed which would have given women the vote. Mill's amendment was defeated by 196 votes to 73. [308] Jessica Brain links the failure to gain votes for women as part of the 1867 Reform Act, to the creation of the National Society for Women's suffrage in 1872.[309] This Society was the precursor to twenty similar groups which amalgamated into the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1897.[310] The Union's president was Millicent Fawcett who favoured peaceful demonstrations.[311] Cook and Evans dispute this number and maintain that the National Union was comprised of seventeen smaller groups.[312] Later militant action was enacted by the Women's Social and Political Union, which was a splinter group set up in 1903.[313]

Women's suffrage was largely a middle class driven campaign. There were however, several upper-class female supporters. It is inconceivable that the women of the elite families of South Wales would have been unaware of the increasing clamour demanding the right to vote for all, irrespective of their gender. Women were allowed to stand as candidates in local elections and as members of school boards set up as a result of the 1870 Education Act.[314] Rubenstein stresses that women were empowered to fight for equal educational provision for girls through being elected a member of the school board.[315] Amy Dillwyn was elected to

[308] 'Presenting the 1866 petition', *UK Parliament* <https://www.parliament.uk/g/print?/page=112618> [accessed 17 May 2023].
[309] Jessica Brain <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/Votes-For-Women/> [accessed 23 February 2023].
[310] *Ibid.*
[311] *Ibid.*
[312] Cook and Evans, p.166.
[313] Brain.
[314] Rubenstein, p.165.
[315] *Ibid.*

the Swansea School board in 1899.[316] She states that there were twenty-one candidates for fifteen seats. She was fourth from the top of the list with 11,411 votes. She stood as an independent at a cost of £56-13-1d.[317] Amy Dillwyn adds that on 12 December she was elected Chairman of the Truant School Committee.[318] This fact demonstrates the high regard that she was held in by her fellow board members. She later recounts that she held her board membership for ten years until the 1902 Education Act which disbanded school boards in favour of Education Authorities.[319] She was then offered a place on the new education authority but declined, instead She took up the post of guardian for the electoral sub district, the Brynmelyn Ward in Swansea.[320] In her notebook Amy Dillwyn states that 'Last year an Act of Parliament made women eligible for election on county councils, so I stood for Castle Ward last November and got beaten.'[321] Unthwarted she successfully got elected to Oystermouth, part of the Gower Union.[322] She notably states that she had become President of the Swansea branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. But she qualifies her beliefs 'I don't smash windows and throw bombs and adopt the violent methods of the militants.'[323] In view of Amy Dillwyn's political activity, it is virtually certain that the other notable families of South Wales, including the Vivians with whom she regularly socialised were fully aware of these events.

Although the leaders of the suffrage movement were largely middle class, regionally there was support from working class women. Cook and Evans state that very few Welsh working-

[316] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn notebook, 29th November 1899, D6/1/7.
[317] *Ibid.*
[318] *Ibid,* 12th December 1899.
[319] *Ibid,* 31st December 1904.
[320] *Ibid.*
[321] *Ibid*, January 1908.
[322] *Ibid*, 1913.
[323] *Ibid.*

class women engaged with the suffrage movement as so few of them worked outside the home.[324] By way of explanation they reason that 'If women did not enter waged work in large numbers, they did not join trade unions and achieve the organizational coherence necessary to support a working-class suffrage movement.'[325] This was not true of the North West of England where 'Mill workers in Lancashire … were organising their own trade unions to lobby for better conditions and political representation.'[326] The working class women working in the textile mills of the North West of England sent a petition to parliament demanding the vote.[327] The petition was signed by sixty seven thousand women.[328] The Women's Cooperative Guild was set up in the North West to support women's rights. The general secretary, Margaret Llewelyn Davies was a member of the middle class. However, the Guild had mainly working-class members. Although the Guild was not set up to fight for the right to vote for women, by 1894 it supported this demand.[329] Eva Gore Booth writing in 1890, expresses the frustration of women at not having the right to vote 'Here you see the doctrine of the inferiority of women pushed to its last logical extremity to cover the politician's natural and constitutional desire to help the voters in the industrial struggle at the expense of the voteless. The present masculine monopoly of representation is making the position of women workers intolerable.'[330] She wrote this on behalf of the working-class women of the North West.

[324] Cook and Evans, p.159.
[325] *Ibid.*
[326]<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/womens-history/suffrage/the- road to-suffrage/> [accessed 22 January 2023].
[327] Joan Perkin, *Victorian Women* (London: John Murray,1994), p.215.
[328] *Ibid.*
[329] Rubenstein, p.149.
[330] Eva Gore Booth, *Women's Right to Work* (Manchester: Manchester and Salford Women's Trade and Labour Council, 1890).

In the final analysis it is clear that the nineteenth century was a period of great change for women as well as for society as a whole. The mass movement from the countryside to the towns and cities as the Industrial Revolution progressed, brought about the loss of old community bonds, and brought people especially the working class into much closer proximity. It is also clear that the experiences of women from the elite, middle and working classes were all quite different. The elite tier continued to live their lives in very much the same manner as previously, relying on extended family to provide social activities. Attendance at the events of The Season were also an integral part of their lives. It was considered essential for the daughters of the elite tier to attend to ensure that they met future husbands who were also part of the same level in society. Women of the newly formed middle class saw great changes in their lives. Conforming to society's belief that a woman's role was to provide a peaceful haven for her husband to come home to, led to isolation and boredom for many. They had ample time as domestics did all the housework. Being confined to such a narrow existence arguably drove middle class women to undertake various philanthropic activities. This was seen as an extension of their home-based caring role and was therefore acceptable to a male dominated society. Experience gained carrying out a wide variety of charitable work developed organisational skills and confidence which proved invaluable in the campaign to fight for universal suffrage. Working class women left behind the domestic sphere which they had previously inhabited in their rural homes, when moving to towns and cities. Working largely in factories, mines and as domestics they were initially less politically active compared to middle-class women. However, as was the case of the female mill workers once union membership became more commonplace in the workplace, they too took up feminism and the demand for equality.

Shiman asserts that a series of events during the nineteenth century acted as triggers to empower women into demanding equality as the feminist movement gathered pace throughout the century. She takes the view that evangelical preaching, which women were allowed to practise acted as a foundation in leading the way towards demands for equality.[331] The cause was furthered by Quaker women concerned with the anti-slavery movement and temperance reform. Both of these activities gave women the confidence to speak out in public, a role to which they were not accustomed and which was not in line with their allotted role as 'Angel in the House.' Shiman argues that the Anti-Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864 and 1866 acted as a trigger for greater calls for women's rights.[332] The blatantly anti-feminist nature of these acts effectively politicised women who were denied a vote. As a result of all these events, universal suffrage became the overwhelming issue during the latter years of the nineteenth century. Although there were women who initially disagreed with universal suffrage, as time progressed more and more women joined the cause especially those affiliated to the Liberal party. A mass meeting held in 1894 was led by eleven women's associations all of whom called for the vote for women.[333]

It is clear that as the century progressed the differing responses to feminist issues demonstrated by the different levels of social strata began to change. Middle class women undoubtedly led the way in the decades approaching the middle part of the century. Possibly this was due to them having more time to recognise and act upon the frustration they felt at being pigeon holed within the domestic sphere. As the century drew to a close both the elite tier and working-class women had taken a far greater interest in political

[331] Shiman, p.202.
[332] *Ibid.*
[333] *Ibid,* p.203.

matters. Whilst the elite tier comparatively lacked numbers, they did hold considerable power. The working-class women had little power but were numerous and increasingly politicised though union membership. This association led to a coherent front for their suffrage and equality demands. Whilst women of the elite tier often led women's organisations, the members were increasingly working - class. Suffrage was the singular most unifying issue for women of all classes. The failure of the 1867 Reform Act to grant women the vote served to antagonise most women and unified them in the determination to gain the vote. Although it was 1928 before all women over the age of twenty-one were given the vote, ultimately the protests whether peaceful or violent achieved the desired result.

Chapter 4 - Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn – their lives

During the nineteenth century there was a considerable expansion in the number of people considered to be members of the elite tier of society. For most of the eighteenth century the landed gentry with inherited titles, had comprised most of a much smaller elite tier. Kathryn Hughes outlines the changes in society which took place prior to the nineteenth century '.. From the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the middle classes began to grow in power and confidence. Land was no longer the only source of wealth. Thanks to the Industrial Revolution, it was now possible to make a fortune from manufacturing and trading goods'.[334] As was shown in the previous chapter there is disagreement as to exactly how many individuals were included in the highest tier of society in the early years of the nineteenth century. The total United Kingdom population was nine million in 1800. By 1914 the population had grown to thirty-six million.[335] The social effects of the Industrial Revolution not only saw the expansion of the middle class, but produced many individuals whose wealth allowed them entry into the elite tier of society. Leonore Davidoff provides us with a convenient guide to show us how the newly rich industrialist families were accepted into the elite tier 'The court should be seen as the highest level of acceptance in society during the nineteenth century. To be introduced to the monarch affirmed your position in the elite'.[336] The absence of a court introduction therefore debarred the middle classes from being included in the elite tier.

[334] Kathryn Hughes, 'The Middle Classes: Etiquette and Upward Mobility', *British Library Online Archive* <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-middle-classes-etiquette-and-upward-mobility> [accessed 29 October 2023].
[335] Joan Perkin, *Victorian Women (*London: John Murray, 1994), p.217.
[336] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), p.24.

The London based court led to the city becoming the centre of the elite tier's social life for some of the year, but especially during 'The Season' which ran from April or May until the end of July.[337] For the members of this tier of society, a London address became a social necessity. In addition, they were expected to have a family home, often in the countryside for the remainder of the year. For the wealthiest this would occasion purchase of a suitable address within the desired area of London as outlined in the previous chapter. For the less well-off, renting was necessary to meet the need of being present for the Season. The timing of parliamentary sessions in the nineteenth century played an integral role in the notional timetable of the London season. Many of the male members of the elite tier were members of parliament a fact which necessitated their presence in London during parliamentary sessions. J. Fisher Murray clearly demonstrates the influence of parliament over the commencement and end of the Season 'Grouse shooting …. terminates Parliament and the season; the surplus talk of both houses is bottled up for another session.'[338] The grouse shooting season begins on The Glorious Twelfth, the twelfth of August. There were variations to this seemingly fixed timetable depending on major political events such as the Boer War (1880 – 1881) which brought about the need for additional parliamentary time.

The influence of parliamentary sessions was important to all three women whose lives form the basis of this comparative study. Sarah Vivian (1798 – 1886) and Lady Charlotte Guest (1812 – 1895) were both married to members of parliament. In Sarah Vivian's case her husband John Henry Vivian (1785 – 1855) was Liberal Member of Parliament for Swansea from 1832 until his death in 1855. Amy Dillwyn (1845 – 1935) was the unmarried daughter of

[337] Pamela Horn, *High Society – The English Social Elite, 1880 – 1914* (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1992), p.13.
[338] J. Fisher Murray, 'The Physiology of London Life', *Bentley's Miscellany*, XV (1844), 507.

Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn (1814 – 1892) the Liberal Member of Parliament for Swansea from 1855 – 1885. He succeeded John Henry Vivian. The relatively short life of Amy Dillwyn's mother Elizabeth (1819 – 1866), necessitated Amy Dillwyn accompanying her father during the London season. Lady Charlotte Guest was married to John Guest (1785 – 1852) the Liberal Member of Parliament for Merthyr from 1832 until his death in 1852. All three women were related to industrialists involved in the metallurgical industry.

Although Sarah Vivian deliberately destroyed all her pocket books written between 1817 and 1838, she left behind substantial notes covering the period. Sarah explains her reasons for this destruction 'Having a great dread of leaving old pocket books to fall into the hand(sic) of others, I have determined on destroying all I possess but they no doubt may contain some notices of events of interest to our children in after life'.[339] Amy Dillwyn left behind several journals including one dated 1868 – 1870. [340] She also kept detailed notebooks over a long period from 1872 – 1917.[341] Lady Charlotte Guest similarly kept detailed journals throughout her life. Of relevance to this study are those written between 1833 – 1852 the years to which she was married to John Guest. [342] From these archived primary sources, it is clear that all three women were members of the elite tier as they fulfil Davidoff's criteria for acceptance into this level of society through being introduced to the monarch, Queen Victoria.[343]

[339] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from the pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[340] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Swansea University Archive, journal dated 28th August 1868 – 5th May 1870, DC6/1/5.
[341]Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Swansea University Archive, Dillwyn, notebook 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[342] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852 <https://archives.library.wales/index.php/charlotte-guest-journals> Charlotte Guest MSIX, MSX, MSXI, MSXII, MSXIII, MSXIV, MSXV.
[343] Davidoff, p.24.

Sarah Vivian was the daughter of Arthur and Sarah Jones of Reigate.[344] Her husband John Henry Vivian moved to Swansea, from Cornwall in 1806.[345] His ancestor Averil Stewart in her book *Family Tapestry* clearly states that the reason for the move was linked to copper production. The Vivians had noted that Swansea was the best location for creating a successful industrial base. Stewart highlights the importance of this decision 'he began a connection with Swansea which was to last for a hundred and twenty years.'[346] Today there are no members of the Vivian family living in Swansea, they left once copper production came to an end in the twentieth century.

Comparing the backgrounds of the three elite women being studied in this chapter, Amy Dillwyn was the only one born in Wales, specifically in Sketty, Swansea.[347] She was born into 'a wealthy and distinguished family, the daughter of Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn and Elizabeth Dillwyn'.[348] She was engaged but her fiancé Llewelyn Thomas died in February 1864, shortly before they were due to be married. She never subsequently married.[349] As outlined previously the death of her mother in 1866 necessitated her role as her father's companion in both Swansea and London. Sarah Vivian was born in Reigate. Her maiden name was Jones. There is scant evidence of great wealth in the Jones family. Her husband's family, the Vivians were a family of some note in Cornwall. Her husband John Henry Vivian benefitted from a

[344] '1817 – 1830', *Singleton Abbey - The History of the Singleton Estate Swansea* <https://singletonabbey.co.uk/1817-1830-marino-to-singleton-abbey/> [accessed 3 November 2023].
[345] Averil Stewart, *Family Tapestry* (London: John Murray, 1961) p.119.
[346] *Ibid*.
[347] Kirsti Bohata, 'Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn 1845 – 1935', Dictionary of Welsh Biography <https://biography.wales/article/s12-DILL AMY1845#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=24&manifest=https%3A%2F%2Fdamsssl.llgc.org.uk%2Fiii%2F2.0%2F4716756%2Fmanifest.json&xywh=1904%2C2247%2C496%2C428> [accessed 14 November 2023}
[348] *Ibid.*
[349] *Ibid.*

post sixteen education in Germany.[350] The education he received in Germany was deliberately aimed at the study of metallurgy and the processes attached to this subject.[351] The importance and relevance of this education became apparent in John Henry's success in running the Hafod Copper Works which created huge wealth. It was this success which brought about Sarah Vivian's inclusion into the elite tier.

Lady Charlotte Guest started life with the greatest social advantage of the three women. The daughter of the ninth Earl of Lindsey, she was born and brought up in Uffington House near Stamford in Lincolnshire.[352] Her Maiden name was Bertie.[353] However the death of her father when she was six and her mother's subsequent remarriage brought her great unhappiness. This might explain the extreme rapidity of her meeting and marriage to John Guest. Charlotte met John Guest on 17th June 1833 in London. He was in London to take up his seat as the first Member of Parliament for Merthyr following the 1832 Reform Act. They were married on 29th July 1833 at St George's, Hanover Square.[354] Subsequently, the success of the Dowlais Ironworks in a similar fashion to that of the Hafod Copper Works in Swansea, placed the Guests firmly in the elite tier their financial success surpassing that of the Vivians.

The members of the elite tier were expected to own a house in the country as well as have a London address which might be rented or owned. The grandeur of the houses both country home and London address, was seen as a measure of their status. In considering the three

[350] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from the pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[351] *Ibid.*
[352] Revel Guest and Angela V. John*, Lady Charlotte: A Biography of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1989), p.XV.
[353] *Ibid.*
[354] *Ibid*, p.21.

elite women in this study, there is little doubt that Amy Dillwyn could be seen as the 'poor relation' in comparison to Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte Guest. Although living in Hendrefoilan House in Sketty, Swansea which was built in 1852 at a cost of £14,000, for most of her childhood and part of her adult life, Amy Dillwyn did not own the house. Upon the death of her father on 19th June 1892, she effectively became homeless. The property had been entailed to her nephew, John Nicholl under the terms of her brother Henry's will.[355] Her brother Henry had died in 1890 and Hendrefoilan House passed to his and Amy Dillwyn's nephew. Amy Dillwyn had to leave.[356] Her brother had left her a sum of money in his will and this is what she had to live off 'By Henry's will I have £6000'.[357] Amy Dillwyn was the residuary legatee of her father's will. But her father had left nothing as his spelter firm was heavily in debt.[358] Amy Dillwyn's circumstances were reduced to renting rooms in West Cross, Swansea using the money left to her by her brother.[359]

In contrast the death of John Henry Vivian in 1855 did not necessitate a compromise in Sarah Vivian's accommodation arrangements. Sarah remained living in Singleton Abbey until her death in 1886 as the house had been entailed to her in John Henry's will. Singleton Abbey was not the first house built on this plot near the sea in Sketty, Swansea. The original house, Marino was purchased by John Henry Vivian in 1817 for £2000. They took up residence on 10th February 1817.[360] The property had been purchased from Mr King. The success of the Hafod Copper Works provided funds to completely transform and enlarge the original house

[355] Swansea University Archive, Eizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebook, 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[356] Kirsti Bohata, 'Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn 1845 – 1935'.
[357] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebook 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[358] *Ibid.*
[359] *Ibid.*
[360] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from the pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.

'In 1817, John Henry Vivian had bought a small neoclassical villa and started to extend it: in 1823 he contacted P.F. Robinson, an architect well known for his neo-Gothic work, and thus began an amazing fifteen-year transformation'.[361] Averil Stewart a descendant of Sarah and John Henry Vivian describes the changes made to the original house '…The little house in which he began life in Swansea, grew in time into the great house, Singleton, to which he was to welcome so many distinguished people in all walks of life'.[362]

To illustrate this assertion Stewart outlines a visit made to Singleton in spring 1833 by the Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria.[363] Hersart de La Villemarqué, a Breton viscount who was staying with Lady Charlotte Guest gives his opinion of Singleton Abbey in a letter to his sister in 1837 'At last the room opens to reveal everything you can imagine that is sumptuous, elegant and in the best possible taste – flowered sofas in green satin, armchairs in the same material, furniture in exotic wood'.[364] This letter dated twenty years after the purchase of Marino gives the impression that a great deal of money had been spent on the transformation of the original house into the renamed Singleton Abbey. An undated document catalogued as being from between 1850 and 1880 provides us with a valuation of £40,000 for the completed Abbey.[365] The widowed Sarah Vivian remained at Singleton Abbey while some of her children lived nearby in other large mansions.

[361] Mary – Ann Constantine, 'Impertinent Structures: A Breton's Adventures in Neo – Gothic Wales', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 18.2 (2014) 134 – 147, DOI <10.1080/13645145.2014.896076>.
[362] Averil Stewart, p.119.
[363] *Ibid.*
[364]Mary – Ann Constantine.
[365] Vivian, ?, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, (exact author unknown), note calculating valuation of the Vivian Estate, GB0210Vivian, C3606 (attributed to the period 1850 – 1880).

There are striking similarities between the rise to power and wealth of the Vivian family of Swansea and the Guest family of Merthyr as both families were English and both families were involved in metallurgical enterprises. John Guest (1722 – 1785) had left Shropshire in 1767 to establish the Plymouth Works in Merthyr and take over the management of the Dowlais Works. His son Thomas (1748 – 1807) continued working at the Dowlais Works. It was John Guest's grandson John Josiah Guest to whom Charlotte Bertie was married and became Lady Charlotte Guest. Revel Guest, a descendant of Lady Charlotte states that 'The Guest Family …. was an object lesson in how, within a couple of generations, a family's fortunes could be realised'.[366] This statement could equally be applied to the Vivian Family whose fortunes flourished in two generations. By 1833 Dowlais was one of four great ironworks all located in the Merthyr area. Dowlais was responsible for forty percent of Britain's pig iron.[367]

Success in trade did not always bring about acceptance into the elite tier. Lady Greville declared that such people were 'a disgrace'.[368] John Guest's elevation to a baronet in 1838 would have gone some way to appeasing the negative attitude of the 'old money'.[369] It might be that this dismissive attitude drove the Guests' purchase of a country house and estate in Dorset. Canford House in Dorset was bought in 1838 from Lord de Mauley. The purchase price was £335,000 plus £19,000 paid for additional land, taking the size of the estate to eleven thousand acres.[370] A large amount of money, £30,000 was spent on remodelling and

[366] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.25.
[367] *Ibid*, p.26.
[368] *Ibid*, p.28.
[369] *Ibid*.
[370] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest XI.

refurbishing the property between 1848 and 1852, which subsequently became twice as big as the original house.[371] The Guests then owned Dowlais House, Canford House and Estate, and a house set in one thousand acres in Sully near Cardiff bought for £3,500 in April 1836. At this stage accommodation was rented in London.[372] The money to pay for this vast expense came from the success of the Dowlais Works where the wages bill for the seven thousand workers employed in 1846 was £250,000.[373] There can be little doubt that the Guests were extremely wealthy. In 1839 Lady Holland commented that Lady Charlotte was '…. nobly born, married to an immensely rich man. ….They seem perfectly happy, his riches are in Wales'.[374] But this statement made by Lady Holland belies the amount of time spent in and links to London society held by all three women involved in this study.

The three main properties in Wales alluded to in the previous paragraph have all met somewhat different fates. Dowlais House which was so closely linked to Lady Charlotte Guest, was demolished in the early 1970s.[375] Once the Guests finally vacated the house to move to their new much altered and extended estate in Dorset, Dowlais House passed through various owners. Prior to demolition its final purpose was as an employment exchange. All that remains of the property is several photographs as a reminder of the house built by John Guest around 1818. Its location was unusual in that it was adjacent to the Dowlais Works.[376] Rich industrialists generally preferred their homes to be some distance from the manufactories which supplied their wealth. Hendrefoilan House very nearly followed the same fate as

[371] *Ibid.*
[372] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.141.
[373] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXIV
[374]David Jones, 'Lady Charlotte Guest: Victorian Businesswomen', *History Today*, 23.1 (1973) 38 – 45 (p.38).
[375] Alan George, 'Dowlais House', Old Merthyr Tydfil <http://www.alangeorge.co.uk/dowlaishouse.htm> [accessed 26 November 2023].
[376] *Ibid.*

Dowlais House. Having been neglected by its owners Swansea University, the theft of lead from the roof left it in a perilous state. Swansea University took over the house in 1964 as a home for the Miner's Library and to provide teaching space for courses including those leading to the Teacher of the Deaf and Teacher of Visually Impaired Pupils mandatory qualifications.[377]

By 2012 the House was included on the Victorian Society's list of the ten most endangered Victorian buildings in Britain. Following an extensive fire in 2022, the structure was saved. It has been bought with the intention of developing it into flats. Its future now seems assured and it remains as an example of tangible heritage. Similarly, Singleton Abbey also remains. This building is owned by Swansea University. The University has been developed in the original two hundred- and fifty-acre grounds. Much of the parkland adjacent to the Abbey has been built on to house various departments. Singleton Abbey was sold in 1919 to the University as the Vivian's fortune was much reduced and the family could no longer afford its upkeep. The University has kept the Abbey in a serviceable condition and it too is an example of tangible heritage.[378] The Canford Estate in Dorset is also well maintained and was sold and repurposed as a school in 1923.[379] Parts of the estate have been sold off to become a nature reserve and a holiday cottage destination.

The previously mentioned links of all three women to politics and the parliamentary timetable, necessitated their presence in London for several months each year. The ending of

[377] 'Hendrefolian House', *Coflein* <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/301415/> [accessed 26 November 2023].
[378] 'Singleton Abbey', *House and Heritage* <https://houseandheritage.org/2019/06/04/singleton-abbey/> [accessed 26 November 2023].
[379] Canford House, Canford Magna, Dorset, *Historic England* <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/educational-images/canford-house-canford-magna-10547> [accessed 26 November 2023].

a session of parliament via prorogation coincided with the end of the London Season. It was a social expectation that members of the elite tier would be present for the season. The parliamentary Reform Act 1832 bought about the creation of several new constituencies. Both John Guest representing Merthyr and John Henry Vivian representing Swansea were Members of Parliament for two of these newly created constituencies. Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn as previously stated succeeded John Henry Vivian in 1855 as Member of Parliament for Swansea. Sarah Vivian leaves us in no doubt about her enthusiasm for the passing of the Reform Bill 1832 which led to her husband's election as Member of Parliament for Swansea. She notes on 4th June 1832 'Reform bill passed. Great rejoicing.'[380] She subsequently notes on 24th September 'J. H. began his canvass, a member (sic) being granted to Swansea and met with the kindest reception everywhere'.[381]

Whilst John Guest was undeniably extremely wealthy, Lady Charlotte found acceptance into the elite tier was sometimes difficult. Although Lady Charlotte had 'come out' into society before William VI in 1831, this was insufficient to quell the lack of acceptance because of John Guest's lack of a title.[382] Upon marriage a woman had to be presented at court again and to do this you needed someone to sponsor you. As Lady Charlotte had married 'trade' rather than a 'title' getting someone to agree to be a sponsor was not easy. She was turned down by Lady Stuart de Rothsay for this reason.[383] Initially the Guests' London circle was 'mainly

[380] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from the pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[381] *Ibid.*
[382] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.77.
[383] *Ibid*, p.78.

business contacts'.[384] Lady Charlotte decided that this situation needed to be remedied and the way forward was to become a noted hostess having taken advice from Lady Stepney and Lady Stuart.[385]

To enable this plan to succeed a notable London residence had to be obtained to provide an appropriate setting for her events. Initially for the first seven years of their marriage, the Guests rented various houses on short term lets in London.[386] It was essential to have a London base of some note to enable a rise through the social strata and 'entertainment in the home was crucial'.[387] On April 29th 1837 the Guests bought the lease of 13, Grosvenor Square for £10,000 from Lord Wilton.[388] Lady Charlotte noted that during this year the price of iron was rising. This might be due in no small part to the development of the railways and the subsequent need for iron rails. She notes that the 'first slice' of the Taff Vale Railway was laid on 16th August 1837.[389] On 6th September 1837 she states that the Dowlais Works had an order to provide rails for the Leipzig Railway and was to provide two thousand tons of rails at a cost of £10.7.6d a ton.[390] By 24th September1837 discussions were taking place between John Guest and his wife regarding the purchase of a suitable 'country house', much to the Lady Charlotte's dismay.[391] Clearly the iron works was making a great profit.

[384] David Jones, p.40.
[385] *Ibid.*
[386] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.77.
[387] *Ibid*, p.82.
[388] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSX.
[389] *Ibid.*
[390] *Ibid.*
[391] *Ibid.*

This was proving to be period of great social elevation for the Guests. On April 5th 1838 Lady Charlotte was presented to the court for her first appearance before Queen Victoria. She was presented by Lady Lansdowne.[392] This presentation was made at what was termed a 'drawing room' which were held at three in the afternoon.[393] Despite being held in the afternoon, full formal attire was expected. On 28th June 1838 Sir John and Lady Charlotte attended the coronation of Queen Victoria.[394] By the 3rd August 1838 John Guest received a letter informing him that he was to be made a baronet.[395] This was swiftly followed on 19th August by a first visit by Sir John and Lady Charlotte to Buckingham Palace to attend the Queen's Ball.[396] The rise through society seemingly made their house in Grosvenor Square inadequate to accommodate the increased number of 'at home' entertainments. In December 1839 the house was sold for £19,000 and a new much larger house was leased on a ten-and-a-half-year lease from the Duke of Bedford.[397] The Guests moved to 8, Spring Gardens paying the Duke of Bedford £800 a year.[398] The location of Spring Gardens was in the desired area of London 'the high society in which Lady Charlotte lived and moved was geographically confined to one small area within the West End'.[399] This remained Lady Charlotte's London base until 1856 following lease extensions.

[392] *Ibid.*
[393] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.83.
[394] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXI.
[395] *Ibid.*
[396] *Ibid.*
[397] *Ibid.*
[398] *Ibid.*
[399] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, p.88.

The Vivians in a similar fashion to that of the Guest Family rented property in London. On 5th February 1833 Sarah Vivian notes that 'We engaged 24, Duke Street, Westminster as our residence'.[400] This rented property was necessary as John Henry Vivian had taken up his seat in Parliament. On 21st November 1833 Sarah was presented at court to William VI. By 10th February 1834 the Vivians were renting 28, St James' Place. On 23rd February 1834 John Henry Vivian had an interview with Princess Victoria and the Duchess of Kent to discuss a visit to Swansea.[401] This meeting must be seen as a measure of how quickly the Vivians were climbing in social status. Their wealth to enable this to happen derived from the coppering of ships' wooden hulls to prevent damage by 'teredo navalis, a voracious wood eating tropical worm.'[402] By 1780 all naval ships were coppered. The navies of France, Spain and the Netherlands also carried out coppering, largely using Welsh copper.[403]

Sarah Vivian noted on 17th March 1835 there was another house move 'Took possession of the house we had taken, No. 24 St. James' Place, a very curious but handsome house belonging to Mr. Beaumont. Here we remained, I think for nine years.' In common with the Guests, the Vivians were present for the coronation of Queen Victoria on 28th June 1838 'Went to Westminster Abbey at a little after five o'clock in the morning. Saw the ceremony of the coronation of Queen Victoria perfectly, saw the Procession return.'[404] Sarah Vivian notes that on 8th July 1852 John Henry Vivian was to elected as Member of Parliament for Swansea for the sixth time.[405] Decades after the death of John Henry Vivian his son Henry Hussey Vivian

[400] Sarah Vivian, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Extracts from the pocket books, 1817 – 1838, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[401] *Ibid.*
[402] Ronald Rees, King Copper*: South Wales and the Copper Trade 1584 – 1895* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p.19.
[403] *Ibid.*
[404] *Ibid.*
[405] *Ibid.*

(1821 – 1894) did purchase a leasehold property in London. In 1885 the family took possession of 27 Belgrave Square; the mortgage was dated 27th December 1884.[406] Henry Hussey Vivian also served as a Member of Parliament and was created the first Baron Swansea in 1882.

There is no evidence to confirm that Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn ever owned a London residence despite having been elected Member of Parliament for Swansea District in 1855. His journal dated 1856 noted three different lodgings rented in London during that year.[407] On 31st January 1856 his London address was given as 10, Great Ryder Street.[408] By February 16th 1856 he stated that he had moved lodgings to 5, Charles Street, St James.[409] On July 8th he noted a third change of lodgings to 19, Regent Street.[410] The parliamentary summer recess would have taken place shortly after this third change of address and it is possible that no London address was maintained during the recess.

In Amy Dillwyn's notebooks dated from 1872 – 1917, there is a note concerning the Familys' London property, 10 Prince's Terrace.[411] However, Amy Dillwyn's correspondence from London contains several London addresses. This possibly indicates that the addresses shown on the letters were likely to be short term lets. On 12th June 1890 she sent a letter from 3 Cowley Street in South West London.[412] On the 24th June 1891 Amy Dillwyn wrote to her sister

[406] Averil Stewart, p.150.
[407] Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn, Journal dated 1856, LAC/26/D/52.
[408] *Ibid.*
[409] *Ibid.*
[410] *Ibid.*
[411] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn notebook, 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[412] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Letter dated 12th June 1890, DC6/3/2.

Minnie from 6, Smith Square, London.[413] On 19th July 1896 Amy Dillwyn again wrote to her sister Minnie from 8, Bina Gardens, London.[414] At the time of her father's death on 19th June 1892 Amy Dillwyn noted that his address was given as North Street, London whilst she was staying at Smith Square.[415] However, Amy Dillwyn should still be considered as part of the elite tier. On 10th March 1869 she noted that she attended a 'drawing room' at Buckingham Palace at which Queen Victoria was in attendance.[416] It is reasonable to conclude that although in the elite tier, Amy Dillwyn was not seen as being at the very top of that social group.

Having been born in Wales, unlike both Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte there can be little doubt that Amy Dillwyn held the land of her birth in high regard. It is possible although unsubstantiated, that Amy Dillwyn spoke Welsh as did most of the population of Wales in the mid nineteenth century. On 18th November 1868 Amy Dillwyn attended a cottage lecture in Killay, Swansea which was conducted through the medium of Welsh.[417] When the National *Eisteddfod* was held in Swansea in 1907, Amy Dillwyn again demonstrating her commitment to Welsh language and culture, was on the organising committee.[418] Lady Charlotte took her adopted home in Merthyr to her heart. She immersed herself in the life, language, and culture of Wales. Constantine leaves us in no doubt about the veracity of this statement 'Lady Llanover (1802 – 1896) and Lady Charlotte Guest, both moving forces in the second Welsh

[413] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Letter from Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn to her sister Minnie, 19th July 1896, DC6/3/2.
[414] *Ibid.*
[415] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebooks, 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[416] *Ibid.*
[417] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Journal 28th August 1868 – 5th May 1870, DC/6/1/5.
[418] Kirsti Bohata, 'Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn 1845 – 1935'.

cultural revival'.[419] Kenneth Morgan in his seminal work *Wales – Rebirth of a Nation 1880 – 1980,* in outlining the revival in the South Wales industrial belt provides us a description of how the revival was spread 'It was here in the towns that the chapels, the newspapers, the *eisteddfodau*, and the choral festivals helped to give an awareness of being Welsh a new depth during the industrial era'.[420] Lady Charlotte undertook a 'considerable intellectual feat. It involved a mastery of the Welsh Language and of medieval text.'[421] She translated the *Mabinogion* and published her translation in three volumes in 1846.[422] Guest and John disagree with the publication date stating that the final volume was not finished until 1849.[423] There is no evidence that the Vivians had made similar linguistic efforts. During a strike in 1843, John Henry Vivian went to address a meeting of his workers who were on strike. It is recorded that he had to use a translator to address the crowd who were largely monoglot Welsh, as he did not speak the language at all.[424]

Lady Charlotte was not only concerned with Welsh culture but was also determined to provide education and leisure facilities for the Dowlais workers.[425] She firmly believed that education could be the agent to overall improvement in people's lives.[426] Furthermore, it was widely believed that schools were 'successful antidotes to political unrest'.[427] This viewpoint can be validated against the chartist uprisings which were increasingly common during this

[419] Constantine, p.135.
[420] Kenneth Morgan, *Wales – Rebirth of a Nation 1880 – 1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1990), p.90.
[421] Jones, p.41.
[422] *Ibid.*
[423] Guest and John, p.XVI.
[424] Ronald Rees, p.58.
[425]Guest and John, p.63.
[426] *Ibid.*
[427] *Ibid.*

period and directly affected Merthyr and district. The schools set up by Lady Charlotte were regarded as having an 'innovatory approach'.[428] They used trained teachers, separate rooms and were architect designed by Sir Charles Barry.[429] Possibly her most forward-thinking idea was the provision of education from infancy through to adulthood.[430] Lady Charlotte made available the first adult education provision in Wales.[431] In October 1848 she opened a school for 'girls belonging to the works'. One hundred and fifty girls attended split into seven classes.[432] Her enthusiasm brought in others to support this educational provision. Other ironmaster's families provided support for adult education including Mrs Crawshay, Lady Megan of Tredegar Park, Richard Fothergill, Alderman Thompson, and Anthony Hill.[433]

It would be wrong to believe that Lady Charlotte was alone in supporting education for workers' families. Sarah Vivian and her husband John Henry Vivian also had a particular interest in building schools 'Vivian started his own schools on a small scale with his wife as a tireless supporter'.[434] Sarah started a small school for forty girls in the parish of St. John and she opened a dame school for twenty-five children in the Swiss Cottage in Singleton Park, Swansea.[435] The Hafod schools in Swansea were built in the area known as Trevivian, and were opened in 1847.[436] The cost of the first phase of the Hafod schools was between £2000

[428] Angela V. John, 'Beyond Paternalism – The Ironmaster's Wife in the Industrial Community', in *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History*, ed. by Angle V. John (Cardiff: University of Wales Press,1991), pp.43 – 68 (p.48).
[429] *Ibid.*
[430] *Ibid.*
[431] Guest and John, p.66.
[432] Horn, p.48.
[433] John, p.48.
[434] Leslie Wynne Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales 1700 – 1900* (Cardiff: Avalon Books, 1971), p.125.
[435] Stephen Hughes, *Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, 2001), p.252.
[436] *Ibid.*

and £3000.[437] Eventually there were three Hafod schools. By comparison the Dowlais schools cost John Guest £20,000.[438] Eventually the Hafod schools had one thousand, one hundred and fourteen pupils on roll.[439]

Evidently travelling was an important aspect in the lives of all three women. Archive evidence of journeys can be divided into travel within Britain and secondly travel abroad. As an example of travel in Britain, Sarah Vivian wrote about travelling to Truro to stay with family. On 10th December 1817 she stated 'Set off on our long journey to Truro, which we reached on the 15th having slept at Cowbridge, the Passage, Cross, Exeter and Launceston'.[440] This journey of two hundred and thirty-five miles took five days. Subsequent notebook entries however, refer to a shorter time taken to travel from Swansea to Truro. Commencing on 3rd April 1819 the journey from Truro was completed in three days 'Arrived at home, Marino. Thursday 6th'. This journey was hastened through sailing from Swansea to Ilfracombe, reducing the journey time by two days. Even though the sea journey across the Bristol channel was a relatively short one, it was not without its dangers. On September 25th 1820 Sarah Vivian recorded 'Sailed from Ilfracombe with J. H. on his way to Truro with Harriet Webber … and Alfred in the Henry, her first voyage, but in no time a storm came on and we were driven into Minehead and too glad to get there'.[441] The J. H. referred to in the quotation is Sarah's husband John Henry Vivian. These journeys were taken prior to the building of the railways which started in the

[437] *Ibid.*
[438] *Ibid.*
[439] Evans, p.128.
[440] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[441] *Ibid.*

1830s and rapidly spread throughout Britain during that decade and into the 1840s. The speed of travel once the railways had been built was many times faster.

On October 1833 Sarah Vivian remarked 'Made our first railway journey from Manchester to Liverpool "at a tremendous rate".'[442] Lady Charlotte comments that she took the inaugural journey on the Taff Vale Railway on the 8th October 1840 to Cardiff and back.[443] Travelling across Britain was revolutionised by the coming of the railways and for those associated with parliament, travelling to London became much more convenient and comfortable. Amy Dillwyn noted that on 30th January 1873 she travelled with her father to London by train.[444] She remained in London for the parliamentary session but on doctor's orders travelled to Brighton on 7th June 1873.[445] The return journey was made to London on 13th June. The railways provided increased opportunities for travel including being used for social events. Having attended Lord Bute's 'coming of age' party in Cardiff on 17th June 1868, Amy Dillwyn noted that she travelled back home by train and travelled with Mr Penrice the next day.[446] Amy Dillwyn noted that she undertook a trip around Mid and North Wales to undertake sketching between 31st August and 5th September 1868.[447] It is coincidental that the Heart of Wales Railway line which runs from Swansea to Shrewsbury, was fully open by this date although different sections were owned by different companies, unlike today.

[442] *Ibid.*
[443] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXI.
[444] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebook, 1872 – 1917, DC6/1/7.
[445] *Ibid.*
[446] *Ibid.*
[447] *Ibid.*

Travelling abroad was seemingly not unusual for the elite class of society. All three women undertook journeys, generally but not elusively in Europe. Jones outlines Lady Charlotte's first introduction to travel abroad 'Her first taste of foreign travel with Merthyr, a three-month tour of the continent following the Coronation festivities of 1838'.[448] Merthyr was the name that Lady Charlotte used for her husband. In 1842 Lady Charlotte travelled to Germany. In her journal she describes the fourteen-hour journey from London Bridge to Ostend in Belgium.[449] This was not a sight-seeing tour but an information gathering trip to bench mark the progress of metallurgical industry in Germany. Visits to coal mines in Lautenberg with additional visits to view lead, silver and arsenic works were also undertaken.[450] Sarah Vivian outlined an extensive European trip which commenced on 8th August 1835 'We went to Ostend, Ghent, Brussels, the Rhine, Heidelberg, Carlsruhe, Switzerland, and then proceeded to the South of France and the Pyrenees, returning to Paris by Bordeaux and the Loire. Remained there from the 13th of October to the 23rd. London on the 29th and home on the 2nd of November.'[451] No reason for this trip was given unlike that undertaken by Lady Charlotte.

Arguably the most surprising journeys were undertaken by Amy Dillwyn. Although she too did undertake some European trips. She outlined a trip taken to France, Switzerland and Italy which lasted from 22nd September until 20th October 1869.[452] A further journey was outlined in Amy Dillwyn's notebook dated 1891.[453] In January of that year she travelled with Lily Campbell to the West Indies for eleven weeks visiting Jamaica, Domenica, Barbados, and

[448] Jones, p.42.
[449] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXII.
[450] *Ibid.*
[451] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[452] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Journal, DC6/1/5.
[453] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebook, DC6/1/7.

Trinidad.[454] She did not explain who her travelling companion was for the trip. In a letter sent from Cuidad Bolivar, Venezuela dated 8th February 1892, she outlined parts of another journey.[455] She mentioned a thirty-eight-hour journey by steamer from Trinidad going to see the Orinoco before returning to Trinidad. From there she visited Tobago and Barbados. Return to England was on 9th March 1892 sailing on the Atrato.[456] This vessel was a steamship built in 1888 as a Royal Mail Ship and ocean liner. In common with Amy Dillwyn's fearless reputation, it was she who undertook the longest and most unusual journeys made by all three women.

All archive items relating to Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn contain references to notable events of the period. For example, Sarah Vivian refers to the death of 'Princess Charlotte in childbed' on 6th November 1817.[457] Both Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte make reference to political uprisings and Chartism. Guest and John stress the interest that Lady Charlotte held in politics from an early age.[458] They allude to her comments on wage riots and machine destruction close to Uffington where she was brought up.[459] They further assert that she was concerned with the inequality within the voting system and the existence of rotten boroughs such as Stamford in Lincolnshire.[460]

[454] *Ibid.*
[455] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, Letter, DC6/3/2.
[456] *Ibid.*
[457] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[458] Guest and John, p.6.
[459] *Ibid.*
[460] *Ibid.*

Both Sarah Vivian and Amy Dillwyn refer to earthquakes in their archived records. Sarah Vivian's entries are dated the 26th, 27th, 29th and 30th December 1832. The initial earthquake on 26th December was seemingly followed by several aftershocks. There was considerable fear and damage 'In Swansea, the alarm was great, several chimneys were injured and people ran into the streets'.[461] Sarah Vivian also comments on the wide area affected by the initial quake and aftershocks 'from Aberavon to Penrice in our county from east to west, and to Llanelly, Carmarthen, Tenby, Llandovery ……North of us was felt at Wexford in Ireland'.[462] Amy Dillwyn also refers to a 'slight' earthquake on the 30th October 1868. She described 'a short rumble and a cracking sound and a shake through the whole house like a fall of some heavy weight'.[463]

The period from around 1820 for the next fifty years or so was a period of considerable social unrest. The working class had found their voice and the old established system of paternalism no longer held sway in a society subject to rapid urbanisation. Both Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte were fully aware of events during this period as South Wales was subject to uprisings in common with many other areas across the border. On 28th August 1820 Sarah Vivian noted that there was a 'Great rising of Grenfell's men, the 16th Lancers arrived from Brecon and with them Captain Penrice'.[464] The Grenfell works were situated at Upper Bank on the opposite side of the Tawe Valley less than half a mile from the Hafod Works. This

[461] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[462] *Ibid.*
[463] Swansea University Archive, j Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, ournal, DC6/1/5.
[464] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.

unrest must have caused Sarah considerable concern owing to the proximity of the events described.

1831 was a year of considerable unrest leading up to the passing of the Reform Act 1832. The resistance shown by parliament to widen the franchise led to riots in Bristol with several buildings attacked.[465] On 2nd June 1831 mass insurrection broke out in Merthyr. The rioters were led by workers employed by the iron master, William Crawshay.[466] The Merthyr area was affected to a much greater extent by civil unrest in comparison to Swansea. An entry in Lady Charlotte's journal dated 18th June 1834 refers to 'Scotch Cattle'.[467] These were coal miners who in disguise visited the homes of other workers who they deemed to be on the side of the employers. The following day 19th June 1834, Lady Charlotte noted a possible threat to Dowlais House from the Scotch Cattle.[468] The memory of previous riots must have been recalled and reflected upon with fear. Constantine describes this as 'an acute underlying anxiety about the possibility of demonstrations and riots amongst the workers.'[469]

[465] 'The Reform Riots in Bristol', *Bristol's Free Museums and Historic Houses* <https://museums.bristol.gov.uk/narratives.php?irn=3064> [accessed 12 September 2023].
[466] Gwyn A Williams, *National Library of Wales Journal*, (1959), Winter volume X1/2. <https://www.library.wales/discover-learn/digital-exhibitions/printed-material/national-library-of-wales-journal> [accessed 12 September 2023].
[467] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSIX.
[468] *Ibid.*
[469] Constantine, p.139.

The Chartist uprisings were not well received by Lady Charlotte. In her journal on the 7th May 1839, she voiced her opposition to their cause.[470] Her concern was such that the Guests returned from London on the 11th May 1839, as they feared Chartist riots in Merthyr.[471] Their concerns proved to be correct as there was a gathering of two thousand Chartists in Merthyr on 11th May 1839.[472] On the 28th August of the same year Lady Charlotte travelled to Birmingham to view the damage caused by Chartist demonstrations in that city.[473] However, later in 1839 events moved much closer to Merthyr. Lady Charlotte remarks on the Chartist rising in Merthyr on the 3rd October and recorded the march to Monmouth to release a prisoner from Monmouth Gaol. The journal contains details of the Chartist riot in Newport on the 4th November which resulted in the Guests' decision to send their children away as they feared that Dowlais House was going to be attacked.[474] The fear of Chartism and Chartists is very evident in the journals of Lady Charlotte during 1839. Her reaction to these events was to strive to improve the lives of workers, principally through education.

In addressing medical issues, Amy Dillwyn makes scant reference to ill health beyond minor ailments. However, a journal entry dated 7th June 1873 noted that she was sent to Brighton on doctor's orders.[475] This entry represents one of the few direct notes regarding her ill health. By comparison Lady Charlotte and Sarah Vivian frequently allude to medical matters. Lady Charotte gave birth to ten children between 1834 and 1847. Unusually every child

[470] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXI.
[471] *Ibid.*
[472] *Ibid.*
[473] *Ibid.*
[474] *Ibid.*
[475] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, journal, DC6/1/7.

survived as infant and birth mortality was comparatively high, even for the elite class. Sarah Vivian similarly gave birth to a large number of babies between 1817 and 1839. She however did suffer a stillbirth and one child who died in infancy. On the 13th May 1821 whilst staying in London, John Henry contracted measles. By 30th May Sarah had also caught the same infectious disease 'I began with the same complaint on the 30th which I had most severely and was prematurely confined of a poor little boy of five or six months'.[476] In 1824 Sarah lost another child. On the 2nd September 1824 she travelled to Bristol 'Left home for Clifton, for my confinement, engaging an excellent house in the Crescent, No. 1'.[477] On October 2nd Sarah became ill 'Taken very suddenly ill and a little girl born, she was not destined to be ours long, she died at ten months old, of croup.'[478] In addition to the loss of two unfortunate infants, Sarah gave birth to seven further children, all of whom survived.

The incidence of cholera outbreaks is referred to by both Lady Charlotte and Sarah Vivian. On the 26th July 1832 Sarah comments 'The cholera broke out at Swansea, that is two sailors who were landed at Swansea from Ireland where it was raging, died of it and after the lapse of a few days it burst out with dreadful fury and raged with more or less violence until the end of September.'[479] Sarah demonstrates the virulence of the disease as she remarked upon 'seventeen funerals in St. Mary's Churchyard in one day.'[480] St Mary's Church is located in Swansea city centre, which having been bombed in World War Two was subsequently rebuilt. Lady Charlotte charted the spread of an outbreak of cholera in 1849. On the 31st May 1849

[476] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[477] *Ibid.*
[478] *Ibid.*
[479] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[480] *Ibid.*

she noted that there were outbreaks in Cardiff and Merthyr.[481] By the 11th June it had reached Dowlais.[482] In common with Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte recorded the virulence of the disease by noting that on the 22nd July 1849 there were thirteen deaths from cholera in one day in Dowlais.[483]

The following statement made by Lady Charlotte on the 20th March 1838, summarises the attitude of many nineteenth century women to their place in society 'A woman must expect suffering and humiliation'.[484] Lady Charlotte made this statement after she was relieved of her duties in helping to manage her husband's company. Two years previously Lady Charlotte had been made her husband's secretary responsible for drafting many of his business letters.[485] This position was to give her an insight into the management of the business, a role which was strengthened by journeys made to gain technical knowledge of the iron industry. For example, on the 12th September 1837 Lady Charlotte attended a meeting in Liverpool to discuss the production of hot and cold blast iron.[486] Guest and John pertinently assert that 'At a time when even the home was divided into masculine and feminine space Lady Charlotte cheerfully breached the areas which were seen as a male preserve'.[487] They further stress that Lady Charlotte struggled to maintain the 'wife and mother' role expected of her as her

[481] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXIV.
[482] *Ibid.*
[483] *Ibid.*
[484] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXI.
[485] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSIII.
[486] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSX.
[487] Guest and John, p.32.

sole role in life. Furthermore, she feared the death of her husband as she knew that her own power would be much be much diminished as a widow.[488] Constantine strongly asserts that Lady Charlotte had a major role in her husband's business 'She took a deep interest in all aspects of running the ironworks, and kept the accounts; when her husband died in 1852, she took over as manager of the works'.[489]

By comparison Sarah Vivian seemed to take little active interest in the Hafod Works owned by her husband. Averil Stewart an ancestor of the Vivian family remarked 'Few women then knew anything of business'.[490] However, Sarah did comment on certain business issues in her pocket books. On 7th October 1819 Sarah noted 'My twenty first birthday, went with dearest J. H. to the works and saw the rolling mills start for the first time, the men had ale to drink our health'.[491] She was further aware of a strike by the Hafod workers on 3rd May 1820.[492] The contentious issue of air borne pollution produced by the Hafod Works necessitated specialist advice. Sarah was aware of this issue and on the 25th January 1821 noted 'Mr Phillips arrived to consult with and assist J. H. on the smoke question.'[493] In a similar fashion on the 9th January 1836 Sarah commented 'Mr. Vivian went to Badminton, the Duke of Beaufort's about the lease of the works, which was not good and must be settled by Act of Parliament'.[494] Sarah Vivian appears to make comment on the actions of her husband, but has no real

[488] *Ibid.*
[489] Constantine, p.138.
[490] Stewart, p.155.
[491] Vivian, pocketbooks, GB0210Vivian, B366.
[492] *Ibid.*
[493] *Ibid.*
[494] *Ibid.*

involvement in the management of the Hafod Works. This contrasts strongly to Lady Charlotte's active involvement.

Amy Dillwyn's life changed completely on the death of her father Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn on 19th June 1892. As previously outlined Amy Dillwyn had to leave Hendrefoilan House and attempt to live off the £6000 willed to her by her brother who predeceased her. Not only did Amy Dillwyn have to deal with this change of circumstances, as the legatee of her father's will, she was to quickly discover that the spelter works owned by her father was insolvent. The deficit was nearly £100,000.[495] The contrast in her life prior to her father's death and after his passing was stark in the extreme. On the 3rd October 1868 prior to her father's death, Amy Dillwyn commented 'When one looks at the day's occupation one's retrospective view gives one as foreground, distance, and middle distance. Idling, idling, idling. One does not exactly do nothing but one does every possible trivial and easy thing that may make one imagine oneself to be employed'.[496] In complete contrast her father's death almost appeared to have awakened a determination and purpose in her life which had previously been absent or in abeyance. In a letter to her sister Minnie dated the 26th February 1894, Amy Dillwyn outlined her plans to save the spelter works,

> 'The suggestion I had made for these works to be purchased by a company practically representing the creditors, would be carried out. My idea is to give debentures to the creditors for the amount of their claims and hold all the ordinary shares myself, paying 4% interest on the existing mortgage on the debenture and paying off *pro rata* out of profits at the end of each year till all paid off. Till then the ordinary shares would

[495] Lizzie Broadbent, 'Amy Dillwyn 1845 – 1935', *Women Who Meant Business* <https://womenwhomeantbusiness.com?2023/03/29/amy-dillwyn-1845-1935/> [accessed 15 November 2023].
[496] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, journal DC6/1/5.

> receive nothing, but then – the debentures being all paid – the works would come absolutely to me.'[497]

Building on the experience she had gained running the Hendrefoilan Farm, she executed the plan outlined above. This being a much greater undertaking than running the farm she retained the services of John Corfield to manage the three hundred employees.[498] On the 7th April 1896 Amy Dillwyn noted 'I managed to find money to satisfy Papa's creditors and thus get out of chancery the estate he left to me. In fact, I purchased my own estate and in this way became Dillwyn and Co.'.[499] The company through her efforts was a complete success. She recognised the need for outside investment to turn Dillwyn and Co. into a limited company. She remained as a director but sold the company in 1905 to Metallgesellschaft retaining only a few ordinary and preferential shares.[500] Amy Dillwyn's assertion made in 1894 proved to be entirely correct 'Altogether I am becoming a man of business I think'.[501]

It can be seen from the above analysis and comparison, the primary feature which Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn had in common was that they all belonged to the elite tier of society. Furthermore, they were all linked to parliament and all resided in Wales during the period studied. Aside from these commonalities the three women all followed differing paths through life and left different legacies because of their choices. All three women were actively involved in educational philanthropy but they chose to express this is differing ways. Amy Dillwyn demonstrated the most 'hands on' approach by taking

[497] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, letter DC6/3/2.
[498] Lizzie Broadbent, 'Amy Dillwyn 1845 – 1935', *Women Who Meant Business.*
[499] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, notebook DC6/1/7.
[500] *Ibid.*
[501] *Ibid.*

Sunday school classes for many years which she noted in her journal.[502] Furthermore she took an active interest in the changes that the Education Act 1870 were likely to entail. On the 8th March 1869 she recorded in her journal that she 'Looked through the new revised code for education'.[503]

Sarah Vivian made weekly visits to the schools she set up with her husband John Henry Vivian. It appears that hers was less a less 'hands on' and took a more inspection capacity approach. Undoubtedly the money to establish and build the schools with which she was associated was earned by her husband via the Hafod Copper Works. Amy Dillwyn is unlikely have had access to the amount of funding needed to set up a school particularly in the light of the Dillwyn company insolvency, discovered after Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn's death. There is no indication in her journal that she desired to follow the example set by other wealthy families in establishing schools.

Lady Charlotte was the planner and provider of school buildings and set up the first adult education system in Wales. The extent of school provision by Lady Charlotte in the Dowlais area leaves little doubt as to her interest in education which she saw as the means to improve the lives of working-class people. There is little evidence that she undertook the teaching role to which Amy Dillwyn gave her time or the inspectorial role which Sarah Vivian gave her time. However, the passing of the 1870 Education Act removed the need for all their efforts as educational provision was effectively subsumed into government provision. It difficult to

[502] Swansea University Archive, Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn journal DC6/1/5.
[503] *Ibid.*

quantify and therefore state, the longer-term effects of the educational philanthropy of all three women as the 1870 Act then provided universal education and the oversight of this provision was taken under a more formalised system of school boards.

Had Sarah Vivian not deliberately destroyed her journals for fear of them falling into the 'wrong hands', it might have been better possible to deduce her understanding of and views concerning political events of the time. The remaining archival evidence seems to make note of events rather than giving her personal view about them. Irrespective of this, it is reasonable to assume that those matters that she did comment on must have seemed particularly important to her. We do know that she was aware of civil unrest in relation to Swansea metal workers but mentions it with little seeming concern. This contrasts strongly with the journals of Lady Charlotte Guest. Merthyr was directly affected by the Chartist uprisings and the concern felt by events led the Guests to send their children away accompanied by Lady Charlotte to stay at their estate, Canford Park in Dorset.[504] We know that Lady Charlotte was against the Chartist cause as she states this in her journal.[505] We cannot deduce any view taken by Sarah Vivian as she merely mentions the events.

Regarding the attitudes shown to Wales and the Welsh there is again a divergence of attitudes between the three women. Amy Dillwyn possibly spoke Welsh and was born in Wales. She was a member of the organising committee for the National Eisteddfod when it was held in Swansea in 1906. This should be seen as an affirmation of her belief and love for Wales and

[504] Guest and John, p.62.
[505] Lady Charlotte Guest, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth Archive, Journals, 1833 – 1852, Charlotte Guest MSXI.

Welsh culture. Having written and published several books prior to her father's death, it should be noted that one of the books was entitled *A Rebecca Rioter – The Story of Killay Life.*[506] Although a fictional title the text refers directly to the events concerning the riot at the Pontardulais toll gate.[507] Lady Charlotte undertook the translation of the Mabinogion having learnt Welsh. The translations were published in seven volumes from 1838 to 1845. She had to be fluent in Middle Welsh to be able to carry out this translation. Her journals contain many references to her love of Dowlais and its people. She was very upset at having to go and live in Canford Park in Dorset, but seemingly understood the need to be closer to London for her husband to access parliament more easily. Having a 'country seat' and estate was also a seeming necessity to access the upper ranks of the elite tier. In contrast to Amy Dillwyn and Lady Charlotte, Sarah Vivian makes no comment on living in Swansea or Wales. Although creating a beautiful large mansion with outstanding sea views, her attitude to Wales could almost be seen as ambivalent. It should be noted that once the family fortunes began to fail, the Vivians increasingly moved their place of residence to England. Today none of the family live in Swansea.

The Vivians left Swansea the legacy of several of their mansions, including Singleton Abbey and Clyne Castle which were sold to Swansea University. In the area in the Lower Tawe Valley where their fortunes were made, particularly in copper production in the Hafod Works, some ruined industrial remains of the works are currently being renovated and repurposed as a

[506] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn, A Rebecca Rioter – The Story of Killay Life (London: Macmillan and Company, 1880).
[507] Elizabeth Amy Dillwyn between 1880 and 1892 wrote seven novels as well as short stories and poems. Notably her works, *A Burglary*; or *Unconscious Influence* (1883), *Jill* (1884) and *Jill and Jack* (1887) contain references to unrequited love between women. As a result they have been noted by the LGBT community.

whisky distillery. The worker's houses lining several streets in the Hafod area constructed by the family to house their workers, still exist, now as private residences. Apart from these examples of tangible heritage, this appears to be their primary legacy for Swansea. Lady Charlotte's primary legacy remains in the seven volumes of the translated Mabinogion. In addition to this Lady Charlotte oversaw the construction of the Guest Memorial Hall in memory of her husband in Merthyr. Started in 1855 it was finally finished in 1863. The Hall remains today but not for its original purpose as a library and reading room. The Guest's residence Dowlais house was demolished in 1973. Amy Dillwyn's home for most of her childhood and adulthood, Hendrefoilan House still exists and is currently being converted into flats. Ty Glyn, the house overlooking the sea front in West Cross which she bought following her success in resurrecting her father's spelter works still exists, although today it is a nursing home. It is marked with a blue plaque dedicated to Amy Dillwyn. It should be noted in contrast that Sarah Vivian's home Singleton Abbey, does not merit a similar commemoration.

The philanthropic work and causes supported by all three women clearly influenced the working classes in Swansea and Dowlais. It is however, impossible to unpick their individual contributions from those that others were also carrying out at the same time. For example, acknowledging that Amy Dillwyn felt so strongly about women's votes that she became the President of the Swansea branch of the of the National Union of Women's *Suffrage* Societies is important. But to what extent she, as one individual amongst many supporting this cause effected the final success in gaining votes for women? It is not possible to deduce this. In conclusion when one studies all aspects of these women's lives in the elite tier of society, one gains the impression that Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn were ground breaking in refusing to adhere to the traditional role of wife and mother society allocated to women in

the nineteenth century. Sarah Vivian on the other hand from the archive material available appears to conform to that societal expectation.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

This research aimed to use a comparative study of the lives of nineteenth century women to establish whether the 'Angel in the House' epithet was an accurate portrayal of the lives of elite tier women during this era. It also sought to establish if their lives left us with a notable and long-lasting legacy. This necessitated the use of primary archival material to determine via comparison, whether the image of nineteenth century women which several secondary sources purported was an accurate one. It was determined that a comparison of three women living within the same geographical area of South Wales, although only one was Welsh, would provide the most apposite comparison. Accordingly, the lives and archival material relating to Sarah Vivian, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn provided the underpinning for this study which concluded that the domestically based home life was not always a true reflection of the lives of elite tier women during the century being considered.

The life of Sarah Vivian, the wife of John Henry Vivian was studied in depth. This family originally from Cornwall, are regarded as the greatest and most successful of the copper manufacturing families of Swansea as outlined in some detail by Hughes.[508] They were undoubtedly the wealthiest of the Swansea based copper manufacturers and it was Sarah Vivian's son Henry Hussey Vivian (1821 – 1894) who was created the first Lord Swansea in recognition of the family's position in society. As a Swansea resident I was in no doubt of the high regard this family, none of whom still reside locally, were held in. The Vivian family name still retains some cachet amongst the local residents to this day. The tangible heritage of their time spent in Swansea remains via their mansion houses and gardens, specifically Singleton

[508] Stephen Hughes, *Copperopolis: Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: Royal Commission of the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2000).

Abbey on whose grounds Swansea University was built and Clyne Castle whose gardens are now council owned and open to the public.

Sarah Vivian remained living in Swansea until her death in 1886 by which time the family were firmly established as part of the elite tier having made their fortune though the copper industry. The history of Swansea, although somewhat obscure owing to lack of primary evidence prior to its nineteenth century population explosion, merited detailed study to establish context. Swansea's use as a sea bathing resort if continued, would have probably created a very different history and city layout had its choice as a centre for heavy industry not predominated. Its coastal proximity, so attractive for sea bathing was to also to provide a highly suitable location for the import of copper ore. The Tawe Valley, transformed to allow ore delivery and movement of coal down the valley from the nearby collieries became a desolate wasteland of spoil heaps. The lack of any corporate responsibility during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries allowed companies to leave behind millions of tons of copper waste in the Valley, which was recognised in the twentieth century as the largest area of industrial desolation in Europe.[509] The Hafod Works from which the Vivians made their fortune contributed to this pollution which poisoned the soil so that no plants would grow there.

The Industrial Revolution which commenced in the mid part of the eighteenth century brought about huge changes in society. Increasing urbanisation necessitated by the development of industry carried out largely in factories and large-scale works, brought people

[509] K. J. Hilton, 'An Outline of the Industrial History of the Lower Swansea Valley', in *The Lower Swansea Valley Project,* ed. by K.J. Hilton (London: Longman,1967), pp.15-37.

to live in towns and cities. The industrial owners made fortunes, thereby 'qualifying' them for inclusion in the elite tier of society which had previously been the preserve of the landed gentry. The elite tier grew from a few hundred members at the start of the nineteenth century into thousands.[510] Despite the social superiority initially felt by some of the original elite tier, once presented at court usually in an afternoon drawing room, there could be no denying the newly accepted elite tier members their place in the upper ranks. All three women included in this research earned their court introduction and therefore their elite tier acceptance and a place in the social events of the London Season. This acceptance necessitated acquisition of London accommodation for the duration of the summer months. For the exceptionally wealthy this meant purchasing a property in the accepted area of London. Both Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte Guest came into this category. The lesser wealth of the Dillwyn family determined that short term rental was necessary which may or may not have been within the narrow confines of the most acceptable area of London.

All three of the women studied had direct links to parliament via their male relatives. In the cases of both Sarah Vivian and Lady Charlotte Guest, their husbands became Members of Parliament for Swansea District and Merthyr Tydfil respectively. Both constituencies were newly created following the 1832 Reform Act. Amy Dillwyn's father was the subsequent Member of Parliament for Swansea district following the death of John Henry Vivian in 1855. This parliamentary link necessitated relocation to London once parliament was in session. It was no coincidence that the London Season was allied with the parliamentary timetable. Other notable Welsh women of the period also had parliamentary links via their male

[510] Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles – Society, Etiquette and The Season* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), p.61.

relatives. Lady Llanover's (1802 – 1896) husband Benjamin Hall was Member of Parliament for Monmouth. She was deeply interested in the history of Welsh culture and was mentioned in Lady Charlotte Guest's journals as a fellow enthusiast. Emily Talbot (1840 – 1918) was the daughter of Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot, the Member of Parliament for Glamorgan. Emily became the richest heiress in Britain upon the death of her father in 1890. Neither Lady Llanover nor Emily Talbot were included in this research. They would however be most suitable as subjects for further studies to broaden the knowledge base regarding the lives of Welsh resident nineteenth century elite tier women.

Having read widely as part of the research process for this study, whilst several texts provided information, none of them took a comparative standpoint. Two of the texts studied have been written by direct descendants possibly allowing a greater sense of authenticity to their work. *Lady Charlotte – A Biography of the Nineteenth Century* was written by her great granddaughter Revel Guest alongside Angela V. John.[511] Dealing commendably with the details of Lady Charlotte's life, it does not attempt any comparison to other women of the era. Similarly, Averil Stewart wrote *Family Tapestry* which includes details of her grandmother's life.[512] Her grandmother was Sarah Vivian. Again, there is no attempt at comparison and both books, in common with several other texts concentrate on 'telling the story' of these women's lives.

Accordingly, the use of archival evidence to broaden and verify the presumed facts contained in a wide variety of secondary texts became of prime importance. Use of archival material

[511] Revel Guest and Angela V. John, *Lady Charlotte – A Biography of the Nineteenth Century* (London: George Weidenfeld and Nicholson Ltd., 1989).
[512] Averil Stewart, *Family Tapestry* (London: John Murray, 1961).

was vital to establish the presumed reality of their lives using journals, notebooks, notes and the letters produced by each of the three women. Although Sarah Vivian deliberately destroyed her journals not wishing them to fall into the wrong hands, she left behind an abridged version of those journals. These copious notes detail what are in her opinion the most important events of her life. They were intended to be available to her descendants. Thus, the archival material allowed a comprehensive view of the lives of these three nineteenth century women. It was possible to conclude that generally Sarah Vivian's life was largely a domestic one and conformed to the concept of the 'Angel in the House'. By comparison both the lives of Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn did not conform to the domestic idyll which was generally held to be the role of women. Both women successfully stepped boldly into the world of heavy industry. The death of Lady Charlotte's husband in 1852, saw her take over the running of Dowlais, the largest ironworks in the world. The death of Amy Dillwyn's father in 1892 and subsequent discovery of his bankruptcy galvanised her into taking over the spelter works and resurrecting its fortunes. This research has effectively disproved the commonly held view of domesticity ruling all elite women's lives in the nineteenth century.

As stated above two further Welsh women with parliamentary links merit consideration for additional study. Lady Llanover was a leading figure in the ninetieth century Welsh cultural revival a passion shared by Lady Charlotte Guest. Emily Talbot was like her father a strong believer in temperance. She was a leading figure in this movement. Both the Welsh cultural revival and the temperance movement allied to the involvement of these two women merit further study. Rose Mary Crawshay (1828 – 1907) had no familial parliamentary links but held a strong belief in female suffrage. She in a similar fashion to Amy Dillwyn was engaged in a

regional organisational role for this movement, being Vice President of the Bristol and West of England National Society for Women's Suffrage. It should be noted from the research already undertaken, all these women knew of each other and moved in the same social circles. It is highly likely that socially their paths often crossed.

The role of philanthropy in the lives of nineteenth century women also merits further detailed research. Historians assert that the paternalistic role played by the upper classes was diminishing, possibly as a result of urbanisation which broke centuries old bonds between landowners and their tenants. Upper and increasingly middle-class social obligation was however still firmly entrenched and provided women with opportunities for activities outside the domestic sphere. As outlined in Frank Prochaska's seminal text *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England,* philanthropy played its part in allowing women to lead a life outside the home whilst concurrently being seen to do good.[513] New skills such as public speaking, account keeping and organisational skills all developed from philanthropic endeavour. Many middle-class women took full opportunity to engage in philanthropic activity. Amy Dillwyn engaged in educational activities through teaching Sunday school classes. Emily Talbot similarly undertook 'work' connected to her belief in temperance.

Thus, this research has provided a comparative picture which is not generally provided by other studies of the era. Whilst other works contain separate chapters of detail about various elite nineteenth century women's lives, that is not the methodology adopted in this study. This has enabled certain themes to emerge. Specifically, the wealth created by ownership of

[513] Frank Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

metallurgical enterprises in South Wales allowed these women and their families the consideration of access to the elite tier initially. Also, the newly created constituencies resulting from the 1832 Reform Act for which these women's male relatives were voted as sitting Members of Parliament. Linked to this was the importance of parliamentary attendance by male relatives of these elite women which necessitated their residence in London for several months each year. The timing of the London Season coinciding with the parliamentary sessions allowed these women access to the social events which confirmed their place in the elite tier. Their position in society allowed them opportunities to make a place in society which was beyond the domestic sphere. Whilst Sarah Vivian's life was largely confined to the home and family, Lady Charlotte Guest and Amy Dillwyn took up that challenge leaving behind a legacy which is still remembered and remarked upon today.

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