Revolt and Revival in the Valleys:

The Influence of Religion and Revivalism on the Politics and Labour Relations of the Taff Vale Railway, South Wales, 1878-1914

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of PhD

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October 2012

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis considers the social, political and religious changes affecting south Wales in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods through a holistic study of the lives of the men employed by the Taff Vale Railway (TVR). Its importance derives from four novel features. At its core are the employees of an entire railway company, not just a single centre or grade, and it has been informed by a wide range of disciplines from anthropology to theology. It has provided a closely observed examination of east Glamorgan society over the period, and it is emphasised that religion and politics were inextricably entwined in much of Welsh society. A contribution is made to the ongoing debate on the nature of community and its usefulness as a concept, and from this a 'Network Community' is proposed as a concept or investigative tool for use by social historians.

The management's treatment of its workforce and the control strategies employed by companies through paternalism, welfarism and discipline are analysed. The Taff Vale dispute of 1900 is set in the context of the company's industrial relations history, and Ammon Beasley, General Manager 1891-1917, is shown to have been of greater importance to labour history than has been recognised.

The fault lines in the realms of religion and politics, their influence on the company and the communities it served, and the denominational involvement of the TVR workmen are investigated. It draws attention to the fact that religion still played a ubiquitous role in the mores and culture of late-Victorian and Edwardian society. In south Wales this was dramatically enhanced by the phenomenon of religious revival; that of 1904-05 is shown to have been facilitated by the technology of the period, including the Taff Vale Railway, but without much impact on the railwaymen.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AbLib	Aberdare Library
ADR	Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway
ALdr	*Aberdare Leader*
ASE	Amalgamated Society of Engineers
ASLEF	Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
ASRS	Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants [NUR from 1913]
BoT	Board of Trade
BR	Barry Dock and Railway Company
c [with date]	Circa
CLC	Central Labour College
CM	Calvinistic Methodist
DES	Date Entered Service
EC	Executive Committee
ELM	External Labour Market
FA	First Aid
GFP	*Glamorgan Free Press*
GlamRO	Glamorgan County Record Office, Cardiff
GNR	Great Northern Railway
GRWU	General Railway Workers' Union [NUR from 1913]
GWR	Great Western Railway
GWRJ	*Great Western Railway Journal*
GWRM	*Great Western Railway Magazine*
ILM	Internal Labour Market
IOGT	Independent Order of Good Templars
LNWR	London and North Western Railway
LRC	Labour Representation Committee
MEx	*Merthyr Express*
MPnr	*Merthyr Pioneer*
MR	Midland Railway
MRC	Modern Records Centre
MTel	*Merthyr Telegraph*
MTms	*Merthyr Times*
NA	The National Archives, Kew
NC	National Census

Abbreviations (continued)

Abbreviation	Definition
NER	North Eastern Railway
NRM	National Railway Museum, York
NSR	North Staffordshire Railway
NUR	National Union of Railwaymen
OLM	Occupational Labour Market
OS	Ordnance Survey
PC&N	Pontypridd, Caerphilly and Newport Railway [later ADR]
PDH	*Pontypridd and District Herald*
PObs	*Pontypridd Observer*
PP	Parliamentary Papers
R&SB	Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway
RCA	Railway Clerks Association
RM	Railway Mission
RMag	*Railway Magazine*
RMCA	Railwaymen's Christian Association
RNws	*Railway News*
RR	Rhymney Railway
RRvw	*Railway Review*
RSig	*Railway Signal*
RTms	*Railway Times*
SA	Salvation Army
SIC	Special Investigation Committee of the TVR shareholders
SM	Station Master
SoT	Sons of Temperance
SWMF	South Wales Miners' Federation
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TVR	Taff Vale Railway
UoWS	University of Wales, Swansea
UPSS	United Pointsmen's and Signalmen's Society [NUR from 1913]
WM	*Western Mail*
WRA	*Welsh Railway Archive*
WRRC	Welsh Railways Research Circle
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Introduction

The late Victorian and Edwardian periods spanned an era of dramatic economic, social, political and religious change, the working out of which was in part stalled by the coming of war.[1] These were changes that affected the whole of the British Isles, but some regions more intensely than others, including Merseyside, London, and south Wales. It was a period when labour relations were evolving and Liberal involvement in labour politics was being challenged. This was none more so than in south Wales and the aim of this study was to look at the impact of these upheavals in that region. This is achieved through an examination of the lives and times of one group of workers; the employees of the Taff Vale Railway (TVR). These men, and they were invariably men before 1915, lived and worked in the county of Glamorgan, principally around Cardiff and in the coalmining valleys that had become the source of the company's financial success. The start date of this project was determined by the religious revival which followed the arrival of the Salvation Army in south Wales in 1878; its close was set by the outbreak of the First World War. Its importance derives from four novel features. At its core are the employees of an entire railway company, not just a single centre or grade and it has been informed by a wide range of disciplines from anthropology to theology. It has provided a closely observed examination of east Glamorgan society over the period and from these a new type of community has been proposed.

The employees and owners of the Taff Vale Railway were selected as a case study for three reasons. Firstly the company was brought to attention through Rule 26 of the 1855 Rule Book which stated that:

> 'It is urgently requested that every person ...on Sundays and other Holy
> Days, when he is not required on duty, will attend a place of worship, as it
> will be the means of promotion when vacancies occur':[2]

Secondly, although the company was not very large it had made its mark on labour history through the so-called 'Taff Vale Judgement' pronounced by the House of Lords in July 1901. Thirdly Wales was known for outbreaks of religious fervour that culminated in the last national revival of 1904-05. These outbreaks were looked to to re-energise the churches, reform behaviour and bring prosperity to the life of the nation.[3] They might also improve men-master relations and 1904-05 happened against a background of industrial unrest.

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[1] e.g. Welsh Disestablishment was delayed until 1920, see chapter eight
[2] University of Wales, Swansea(UoWS), Archives, SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2, *Taff Vale Railway Company Rule Book* circa(c)1855
[3] See chapter nine

The feasibility of using this group of people for the study was established by identifying that there were sufficient accessible records. These fortunately were delineated by a single county, Glamorgan; see the map on figure I.1. Rule 26, see above, was probably unique in its directness, but reflected the higher level of church attendance in Wales compared with England. The significant legal battle between capital and labour that ended at the highest court in the land was to have consequences beyond the consciousness of the protagonists. Religious revivals had occurred before but that of 1904-05 was unique in that it was aided by the modernity of the railway and the mass-circulation newspaper.

The main body of the thesis is divided into four sections. The first introduces the geographical and historical setting, the company's most senior managers and the thousands who they employed. This section gives an understanding of the workforce of a small but important railway company. It encompasses the entire company, not just a single centre, but all grades, from general manager to porter. This has been possible because it was a relatively small railway, but it did have most of the features of a much larger one.

The second section explores the nature of community through a range of approaches across a number of disciplines. A contribution is made to the ongoing debate on the nature of community and its usefulness as a concept. Its main facets are identified and discussed. Following on from this the 'Network Community' is proposed as a concept or investigative tool for use by social historians in studying the employees, and owners of companies, or members and officers of non-corporate organisations. It is illustrated by various features of the TVR Company.

In the third section the relationships between the workers and managers are analysed. Firstly the management's treatment of its workmen is investigated followed by an exploration of the company's industrial relations history. An examination is made of the control strategies employed by companies through paternalism, welfarism and discipline and the specific approaches of the TVR are identified. The Taff Vale dispute of 1900 is set in the context of the company's industrial relations history throughout the thirty-seven year period. Combined with his biography in section one, Ammon Beasley, General Manager 1891-1917, is shown to have been of greater importance to labour history than has been recognised.

Finally the religion and politics of south Wales' society are considered. This section begins by reviewing the fault lines in the realms of religion and politics and continues with the discovery of the denominational involvement of the TVR people. It concludes with an investigation of the effects of religious revivals. A broad portrayal of late nineteenth-century society in Glamorgan is given in section two and in section four it is

emphasised that religion and politics were inextricably entwined in much of Welsh society. The influence of religion on the TVR and the communities it served is then investigated. Although this has most relevance to Wales, it draws attention to the wider emphasis that religion still played a ubiquitous role in the mores and culture of late-Victorian and Edwardian society. In south Wales this was dramatically enhanced by the phenomenon of religious revival in 1878 and more especially in 1904-05. The latter is shown to have been facilitated by the technology of the period, including the Taff Vale Railway, but without much impact on the railwaymen.

Figure I.1 Map of the Taff Vale Railway

RELIEF MAP OF EAST GLAMORGAN AND THE TAFF VALE RAILWAY
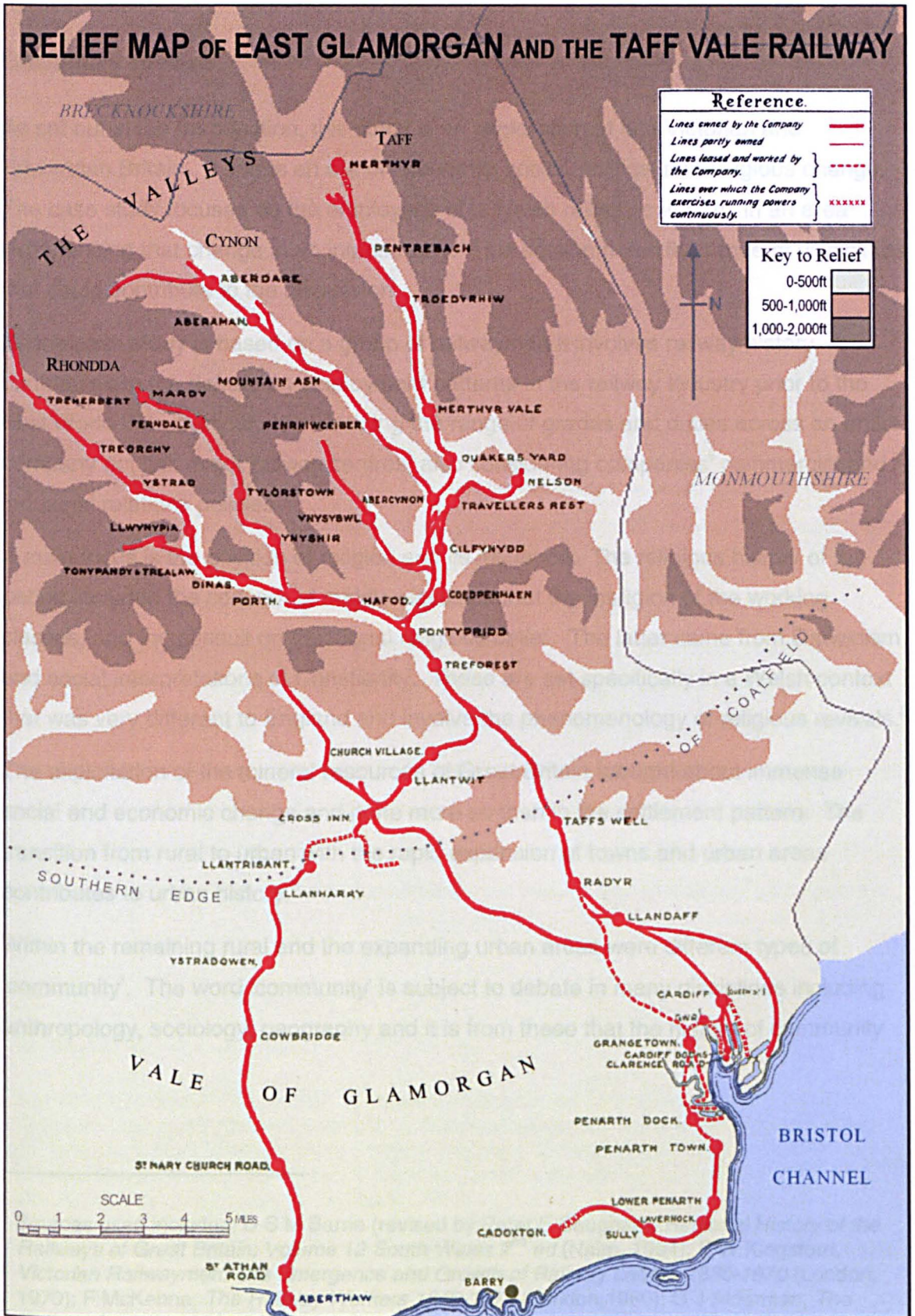
Sources: TVR System Maps 1898 &1915; Relief is from Gen Map v2.2

Note: A map of the area showing the entire railway network is in Appendix E

Sources and Methods

Disciplinary contexts

As set out in the Introduction, this study is an exploration of late Victorian and Edwardian Britain. It spans an era of economic, social, political and religious change. The case study focuses on the employees of a Welsh railway company in an area experiencing that change in an intense way. This section notes the range of disciplines that could contribute to the discussion.

As the case study is based on a group of railwaymen it involves railway history. It contributes to the debate on employment patterns in the railway industry prior to the First World War, particularly examining the range of grades and duties across an entire company not just major railway centres; also considering companies' commercial and industrial relations policies.[1]

A main focus is the position of religion and its influence. The religious history of the period included the concern of middle classes about the irreligion of the working classes, and the assault on traditional religious belief. The latter came from Darwinism and social interpretations of Christianity. These are set specifically in a Welsh context that was very different to England and involve the phenomenology of religious revivals.[2]

The exploitation of the mineral resources of Great Britain brought about immense social and economic change and none more so than in the settlement pattern. The transition from rural to urban with the rapid expansion of towns and urban areas contributes to urban history.[3]

Within the remaining rural and the expanding urban areas were different types of 'community'. The word 'community' is subject to debate in many disciplines including anthropology, sociology, geography and it is from these that the history of community

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[1] Sources used included: D S M Barrie (revised by Peter E Baughan), *Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain: Volume 12 South Wales* 2nd ed (Nairn, 1994); P W Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen: The Emergence and Growth of Railway Labour 1830-1870* (London, 1970); F McKenna, *The Railway Workers 1840-1970* (London,1980); G J Alderman, *The Railway Interest 1870-1914* (Leicester, 1973)

[2] H McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian Britain* (1984); E T Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales* (Cardiff, 1965); D Ben Rees, *Chapels in the Valley* (Merseyside, 1975); Robert Pope, *Building Jerusalem: Nonconformity, labour and social questions in Wales, 1906-1939* (Cardiff, 1998)

[3] H S Jevons, *The British Coal Trade (1915)* (Newton Abbot, 1969 1st pub.1915); Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, *Communities: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul, 1987); M J Daunton, *Coal Metropolis: Cardiff, 1870-1914* (Leicester, 1977)

and the family has borrowed. Definitions have been devised for the purposes of the study for example 'network community'.[4]

The period, as noted, experienced significant political change and it was the Labour movement and the trade unions that were intimately involved. The company at the centre of this study has with the surrounding mining industry been at the centre of labour history.[5]

Combination of areas of historical study

To explore and understand this transitional period it was necessary to employ concepts and tools from the range of disciplines noted above. Revill highlights the desirability of considering studies of the workplace from a multi-disciplinary point of view when he concludes that; 'sites of contestation in the labour process are never solely in the sphere of economics, politics or technology and cannot be understood by recourse to explanations in one sphere alone.'[6] The study had as its aim an examination of the effects of religion on a railway workplace community at a time of religious, social, economic and political upheaval. In addition to the history of railways each of these required specific attention. The nature of Welsh religion and the phenomenon of revival have been considered from studies of religious history.[7] The definition and investigation of the communities to which the railwaymen belonged has been aided by works on social history with contributions from those on anthropology and sociology.[8] This was linked with urban history to interpret the emergence of the urban environment that the railway served.[9] Finally it involved labour history and its political development

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[4] See chapter five; A.P.Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London, 1985); C J Calhoun, 'Community: toward a variable conceptualization for comparative research', *Social History*, Vol.5, No.1, January 1980; Graeme Salaman, *Community and Occupation* (Cambridge,1974); R J Dennis and S Daniels, ''Community' and the Social Geography of Victorian Cities', *Urban History Yearbook* (1981)

[5] Paul Adelman, *The Rise of the Labour Party 1880-1945* (3rd ed.) (Harlow, 1996); P S Bagwell, *The Railwaymen: The History of The National Union of Railwaymen* (London, 1963); Kenneth O Morgan, *Wales in British politics 1868-1922 (3rd ed.)* (Cardiff, 1980); R Page Arnot, *South Wales Miners (Glowyr de Cymru): A History of the South Wales Miners' Federation 1898-1914* (London, 1967)

[6] G Revill, 'Railway labour and the geography of collective bargaining: the Midland Railway strikes of 1879 and 1887', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 31 (2005) pp17-40, p34

[7] E.g. works by McLeod, J Davies, E T Davies and E Evans discussed below under '*Secondary Sources*'

[8] E.g. works by anthropologist A P Cohen and sociologists C J Calhoun and G Salaman discussed below

[9] E.g. works by R J Dennis discussed below

for their impact on labour relations but also the relationship with a religion influenced and divided by social conditions.[10]

The present study has achieved a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the Taff Vale people by being multi-disciplinary. This has required a broad understanding of the influences and pressures brought to bear on them. Any other approach that limited the range of disciplines involved could not have achieved that objective. This is in contrast to studies that have focussed on specific topics or locations or been based within a single discipline. If the study had been driven by a single discipline, for example religious history, it would have been difficult to form a clear understanding of the issues involved within the railway company. Similarly if the focus was solely railway history there would not have been the tools to interpret the communities of which the railway was part. Studies which have focussed on a single railway town have by definition largely omitted the experience of the majority of railwaymen and their families, from the same company, who did not live in such concentrations.[11]

The personal data collected for the project covered a wide range of grades and locations. This was achieved by starting the accumulation of data with the company's staff registers and was largely successful.[12] If the start point had been, for example, religious sources such as chapel registers it would have been very difficult to have identified more than a few employees as even where registers existed few would have contained employment details.[13] A possibly viable alternative might have been to start with the National Census[14], but without the date entered service (DES) and the starting grade this would have been much more time-consuming than the approach adopted. The range of sources accessed following the identification of individual employees is discussed below.

Secondary works that have influenced research

This commentary on secondary works is organised to correspond with the four sections of the thesis. However several texts are relevant to more than one section. The sections are loosely fitted under the following headings: Section one, Transport history;

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[10] E.g. works by P Joyce, K O Morgan, L Smith and R Pope discussed below
[11] E.g. D K Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town, Company and People, 1840-1914* (Aldershot, 1995)
[12] The National Archives(NA) RAIL 264, 684, 1057, see Bibliography
[13] A survey of available registers was undertaken at the commencement of the study at the Glamorgan Record Office, Cardiff(GlamRO), but because of the low number and uneven distribution spatially and by denomination they were not considered suitable even to identify denominational allegiance, see chapter nine.
[14] The National Census(NC) for Glamorgan for 1841 (HO107) to 1901 (RG13), see Bibliography

Section two, local and urban history; Section three, labour history; and Section four, religious history.

Section 1, Transport history

Whilst principally read for its trade union history Bagwell's research has proved a useful commentary on a range of aspects of nineteenth-century railways, including housing and risks.[15] Although not academic works the books of Barrie and Chapman with their well researched histories of the TVR, including the unpublished research of the latter, provided a sound starting point for this study.[16] Barrie had also researched the other railways that competed with the Taff Vale. Bonavia, with Gourvish's study of Mark Huish and Volume two of the contemporary *Modern Railway Working* edited by the General Manager of the Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (ADR); gave the basis for a discussion of the evolution of railway organisation and the development of management structures.[17] Daunton's study of Cardiff discusses the relationship between the port and the valleys that served it.[18] Many of the topics considered interact with the history of the Taff Vale including the emergence of Cardiff as the largest town in Wales with the great expansion of coal handling facilities. Daunton details the developing labour markets that affected the TVR workshops and provides accounts of housing expansion that related to where the railwaymen lived and how they commuted. He also considers prominent individuals in TVR history such as Ammon Beasley and W T Lewis.

Wales is a country with its own history and Davies' account of that history has provided a context, and contributed to an understanding of the culture, language, industry, religion and national identity of the Principality and its people.[19] This was augmented by the studies of I G Jones and K O Morgan discussed below. South Wales is known for its coal industry and Jevons provided a UK-wide exposition of the contemporary coal industry and discusses both social conditions and labour relations.[20]

Drummond's study of the railway town of Crewe was an important influence through its approach to a much larger railway community especially with reference to workshop staff and associated labour markets; also in its sympathetic handling of religious

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[15] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*
[16] e.g. Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*; C Chapman, Locomotion Papers 192 The Oakwood Press: *The Llantrisant Branches of the Taff Vale Railway* (Oxford, 1996)
[17] M Bonavia, *The Organisation of British Railways* (London, 1971); T Gourvish, *Mark Huish and the London & North Western Railway* (Leicester, 1972); J Macaulay (ed), *Modern Railway Working Vol. II* (London, 1912)
[18] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*
[19] J Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1994 1st pub.1990)
[20] Jevons, *British Coal Trade*

issues.[21] With respect to the latter and the place of religion in Welsh industrial communities, the study of the North Wales Quarrymen's Union by Merfyn Jones was a good introduction.[22] Drummond's Crewe provided a comparison between the TVR system and a large railway town, to be considered alongside Revill's study of Derby.[23] This broad-based approach helped form the concepts behind this study, but the comparison is constrained by the focus on a single railway town, rather than the wider company and its dispersed workforce.

The well known works of Kingsford and McKenna between them provide a picture of the diversity of railway employment, and set out very many of the issues linked with that employment.[24] However Kingsford's period was from 1830 to 1870, thus ending nearly a decade before the commencement of the Taff Vale study. There are many features that are relevant to both periods, but technology, labour relations and social attitudes had moved on. With respect to the history of railwaymen McKenna has assembled an array of personal accounts from a range of workers that also covered earlier and later periods than the present study, and from a variety of companies. The main drawback is an implied assumption that what was true on one railway was equally true on another, when this might well not be the case. In part this might be because McKenna relies too heavily on his own personal experience, e.g. the promotional steps for enginemen. Savage notes that writers such as Kingsford and McKenna and trade union historians 'draw indiscriminately across the companies'.[25] The relative sizes of companies and types of traffic conveyed influenced employment patterns and the treatment of staff. But these authors do provide examples for comparison with the Taff Vale.

General studies of railway employment and railway unions deal with the risks faced on the job, but Knox provides a focussed study on the statistical trends and interpretation of casualty figures over the period 1883-1913.[26] He emphasises a recurrent theme in this study; opposition by managements to any outside interference in the relationship with their employees. More's study of labour markets has proved useful in interpreting the varieties of labour market operating within and around the TVR.[27] It has provided a tool to assess recruitment and More's proposed 'occupational labour market' matched

[21] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*
[22] R Merfyn Jones, *The North Wales Quarrymen, 1874-1922* (Cardiff, 1981)
[23] Revill, 'Railway Derby'
[24] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*; McKenna, *Railway Workers*
[25] M Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career": Employment on the Great Western Railway 1833-1914', in A McKinley and K Starkey (eds), *Foucault, Management and Organization Theory* (London, 1998) p71
[26] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks: Railway Employers and Safety in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations*, No.12 (Autumn, 2001)
[27] Charles More, 'Reskilling and Labour Markets in Britain c1890-1940', *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations*, No.2 (September, 1996)

the experience of Taff Vale workshop staff and provided a comparison with Drummond's account of the Crewe workshops.[28] Savage writing from a sociological perspective discusses the role of various forms of management control, with the main premise that on the Great Western Railway (GWR) the 'career' or hope of advancement became the main form of control.[29] This provided comparative data for the TVR's larger neighbour and facilitated a comparison of the career pathways and disciplinary regimes of the two companies.

Section 2, local / urban history

Community as a term has been employed by a range of disciplines and its value as a concept is still debated. The disciplines include anthropology and sociology, geography and history. Definitions of community and arguments over the usefulness of the concept, particularly for social historians from these and other scholars and their application to this study, are discussed extensively in chapters four and five.

Cohen writes as an anthropologist covering a range of topics in his own work and the collections of essays that he has edited.[30] He claims to be writing for sociologists and anthropologists leaving the approaches of historians and geographers to those disciplines.[31] But his work has suggested theoretical approaches that are of wider application than sociology and anthropology; specifically, defining community boundaries by a symbolic approach, and considering what it means to belong to a community. Of particular relevance was his own study on the symbolic construction of community that had a resonance with wider definitions of community in the works of Benedict Anderson and Drummond. Although Anderson's thesis is not basically about community theory his ideas do have a wider application than the rise of nationalism.[32] Taken with Drummond's article on railway engineers they provide methods for considering concepts of community that embrace nations, professions and companies.[33] These assisted in the development of a specific community type that was applicable to the Taff Vale.

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[28] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*
[29] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"'
[30] E.g. A.P.Cohen (ed), *Symbolising Boundaries: identity and diversity in British cultures* (Manchester 1986)
[31] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*
[32] B Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised edition (London, 1992 1st pub 1983)
[33] D K Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers: The First Virtual Global Community?' in Stefan Herbrechter and Michael Higgins (eds), *Returning (to) Communities. Theory, Culture and Political Practice of the Communal*, (Amsterdam, 2006) and *Critical Studies*, vol.28, 2006

Whilst Tönnies' classic work from the nineteenth century has not been read, many if not most studies of community make reference to and quote extensively from it.[34] Tönnies proposed a clear distinction between community as the close-knit group and wider society. Cohen, when faced with the difficulty in arriving at a commonly accepted definition of community proposed that it is more helpful to seek for the symbols by which its members define the boundary.[35] One particular article by American sociologist Hillery in 1955 has provided material for those wishing to query the value of 'community' as an analytical tool; principally his rejection is based on the lack of a common definition.[36] Another article also widely cited is that of sociologist Margaret Stacey who directs attention away from community as an entity to the social relationships within it.[37] Alan Macfarlane in attempting to relate the use of the term by anthropologists and historians uses both Hillery and Stacey to argue for the abandoning of the concept.[38] His article has been challenged by Calhoun, who in a article arguing for continued use of the concept, defines it as a "culturally defined way of life" where its members are held to account through its rules; although it might be conceptualised differently across the disciplines.[39] A recent essay from anthropologist Toon van Meijl has provided an up to date summary of the arguments, but whilst querying the academic support for use of the term for analysis, he does find much more commonality among Hillery's list of definitions; such as 'common territory, social interaction and one or more additional ties'.[40] These discussions guided the formulation of arguments for use of the term 'community' and how it could be defined in the context of late nineteenth century Glamorgan and the Taff Vale Railway.

The geographer's approach to community studies was taken principally from the urban studies of Dennis and others. Dennis comments that 'community is not defined by who its members are but by what they do'.[41] His approach provided an understanding of techniques for measuring characteristics of community such as density and multiplexity, and the applicability of methodologies used on present day datasets to historical data. These paralleled the more descriptive work of Daunton on Cardiff and

[34] F Tönnies, Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (Germany, 1887) and in translation Community and Association (London, 1955)

[35] Cohen, Symbolic Construction of Community

[36] Hillery, Jr, 'Definitions of community: areas of agreement', Rural Sociology, 20, 2 (1955) pp111–23

[37] M Stacey, 'The myth of community studies', The British Journal of Sociology, XX, 2 (1969) pp134–47

[38] A.Macfarlane, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities', Social History, 2 (1977), pp631-52

[39] Calhoun, 'Community: toward a variable conceptualization'

[40] Toon van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy? A case study of contemporary Maori society', in Yasmine Musharbash & Marcus Barber (eds), Ethnography & the Production of Anthropological Knowledge: Essays in honour of Nicolas Peterson (Canberra, 2011) pp133-46 http://epress.anu.edu.au/ethnography/pdf/ch09.pdf (accessed 27/08/11)

[41] E.g. Richard Dennis, English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, 1984)

Pearson on the western suburbs of Leeds.[42] Salaman, a sociologist, analyses the features required for an 'occupational community' in terms of how workplace and social relationships are linked to form a specific type of community centred on the employees of one company at a particular location.[43] Railway towns can be considered as to whether or not they were occupational communities and Revill's essay on Derby concludes that Derby was.[44] His examination of its characteristics, such as sons following fathers, marriage patterns and boarding, and Salaman's study, contributed to the analysis of community on the TVR.

Understanding of the interrelated changes in politics, community and dissent in the Rhondda was in part guided by David Smith's essay on Tonypandy in which he describes the transition from class harmony to class consciousness.[45] Autobiographical accounts by Arthur Horner, and Jack Jones along with two novels by the offspring of miners were used to add first hand detail to the study of the Valleys' communities with their chronicles of everyday life and social attitudes.[46] Whilst Davies provided a broad based overview of Welsh history that gave an understanding of nationalist and religious issues in the period of this study.[47] Ieuan G Jones has published an extensive set of essays investigating political, social and religious aspects of Glamorganshire society, which have been mined to interpret the lives of TVR workmen and their neighbours.[48] Of particular value has been discussion of the founding and evolution of new settlements in the Valleys, with the impact of immigration and Welsh-English relations. Jones deals extensively with contemporary religious life and 'chapel culture', of which Brooks' history of a nonconformist chapel in the heart of the TVR area provided a valuable example. [49]

Section 3, Labour history

The relationship of the railways with Parliament and the British establishment was noted from the *Railway Interest*.[50] Alderman's subject is very relevant to the period of the study and supports the importance of the Taff Vale. Whilst Timothy Alborn's book

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[42] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*; R.Pearson, 'Knowing one's place: perceptions of community in the industrial suburb of Leeds, 1790-1890', *Journal of Social History*, 27, 2 (1993), pp221-244
[43] Salaman, *Community and Occupation*
[44] Revill, 'Railway Derby'
[45] D Smith, 'Tonypandy 1910: Definitions of Community', Past & Present, No.87 (May, 1980)
[46] A Horner, *Incorrigible Rebel* (London, 1960); Jack Jones, *Unfinished Journey* (London, 1937)
[47] Davies, *History of Wales*
[48] E.g. Jones, *Communities*
[49] Peter Brooks, *Eglwys y Bedyddwyr: Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church, Glynrhedynog/Ferndale* (Cardiff, 2008)
[50] Alderman, *Railway Interest*

was not a major source for this study, coming from a business history perspective, it added to the mix of approaches.[51] The legal and legislative aspects of the strike of 1900 were also informed by discussions such as that of McCord on the legal aspects of the case.[52]

There were contrasting attitudes by workers to their employers, as well as management treatment of their workforces. These were covered by Drummond and Revill in their studies of Crewe and Derby referred to above. Joyce and Kirk in their studies of factory culture in the mill towns of North West England aided the discussion on the origins and aims of paternalism in chapter six.[53] They agree its aim was principally control, but Kirk criticises Joyce for not acknowledging the primary role of paternalism in coercion and playing down the class struggle by focussing on the emotional ties of management-employee relations. These studies of factory towns are closer to those of a railway town, such as Crewe, than the dispersed subjects of the TVR project; although they do agree that paternalism became welfarism with the transition from family business to limited company. Fitzgerald's study in labour relations and welfare provision informed the discussion of the approach taken by the TVR management through comparisons with other railway companies.[54] He provided a detailed insight into the welfarism practised by these companies and emphasised that welfarism had the same aim as paternalism in quietening labour unrest. Savage's work on these themes has been referred to above.

Coming now to railway trade unionism, Bagwell has been mentioned in section 1 and here it is acknowledged that he had accessed a wide range of primary sources which added to the account of the Taff Vale dispute of 1900.[55] Bagwell was sponsored by the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) but wrote as an academic. Alcock was active in the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) over the period of this study and complements Bagwell's account with original information.[56] Bagwell's academic work was unlike the authors of the three sponsored descriptive histories of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF).[57] Less attention

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[51] Timothy L Alborn, *Conceiving Companies: Joint-stock politics in Victorian England* (London,1998)
[52] Norman McCord, 'Taff Vale Revisited', *History*, Vol.78, No.253, 1993, pp243-60
[53] P Joyce, *Work Society and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in later Victorian England* (London, 1980); N Kirk, *The Growth of Working Class Reformism in Mid-Victorian England* (London, 1985)
[54] Robert Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management & Industrial Welfare 1846-1939* (London, 1988)
[55] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*
[56] G W Alcock, *Fifty Years of Railway Trade Unionism* (London, 1922)
[57] J R Raynes, *Engines and Men: The History of The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen* (Leeds, 1921); N McKillop, *The Lighted Flame: A History of the*

has been paid to these works principally because there were very few TVR employees who were members of ASLEF.

The formation of the first permanent miners' trade union in south Wales is chronicled by R Page Arnot[58] in a work that shows the relationship with a society that also encompassed the TVR. It shows both a political and religious awareness illustrated by the life and actions of William Abraham (Mabon).

Section 4, Religious History

An appreciation of the religious background of the Victorian Age was taken from McLeod among a number of writers.[59] The *Journal of Welsh Religious History* has provided a Welsh perspective on the changing religious scene, for example Horridge on the advent of the Salvation Army (SA) in the Principality.[60]

K O Morgan is particularly known for his writings on Welsh political and labour history but, perhaps from his Welsh background, he is very conscious of Welsh religion and its interaction with politics.[61] Pope's *Building Jerusalem* complements Morgan but is closely focussed on the last few years of this study and beyond.[62] It is a dense study of the ideological struggles within Welsh Nonconformity. Smith argues for the strong involvement of Nonconformists in the rise of the Labour Party which, while he concentrates on the textile districts of England, provides support for and contrasts to the discussions of Pope on south Wales.[63] There were contacts between the two areas but the Welsh scene was more varied and more intense.

Ben Rees was a sociologist and Nonconformist minister and whilst writing about the 1970s, has set the Nonconformity of Aberdare and the Cynon Valley in its historical context.[64] E T Davies discusses many subjects that were relevant to this project including the relative strengths of Anglicanism and Nonconformity in south Wales, use of the Welsh language, classes of church membership and the aftermath of the 1904-05 Revival.[65] He also provides a comparison with Pope and others in discussing the changing attitudes of Nonconformists to social issues.

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (Edinburgh, 1950); Robert Griffiths, *Driven by ideals: a history of ASLEF* (London,2005)

[58] Arnot, *South Wales Miners*

[59] McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion*

[60] Glen Horridge, 'The Salvation Army in Wales, 1878-1900', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, Vol.6 (1989) pp51-69

[61] E.g. Kenneth O Morgan, *History of Wales: Vol. VI, Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford, 1981)

[62] Pope, *Building Jerusalem*

[63] Leonard Smith, *Religion and the Rise of Labour* (Keele, 1993)

[64] Rees, *Chapels in the Valley*

[65] Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*

Gitre provides a critique of the 1904-05 Revival arguing that the railways and the mass circulation newspapers were very important in its spread.[66] He describes the rapid progress of the principal revivalist Evan Roberts who claimed that his every move was led by the Holy Spirit. Gitre argues that Roberts appeared to have overcome time and space and that similar claims had been made for railways. The two apparently combined to provide the evangelist's unexpected arrivals. He also provides a balance to the uncritical works of Adams and Eifion Evans.[67]

Main and subsidiary research questions

The following hypothesis was constructed to provide a focus for the research: 'That the railway employees formed a distinct community, i.e. an entity that could be influenced by religion and revivalism, within a larger industrial society, and experienced, and contributed to, the social and political change brought about by the combination of industrial exploitation, political and labour unrest, and religious and national revival.'

That was developed into a list of questions which are summarised here. With respect to the railway workers; were they a separate community, where were they recruited from and why was the Rule Book so strict? In the workplace; what were their relationships with other workers and how did their jobs compare? Of the railway owners and shareholders; who were they and what influence did they have on how the company was run?

In the realm of trade unionism and politics; how willing were the railwaymen to organise, who were the 'black-legs' brought in to break strikes and how were they treated, how did the railwaymen vote and did they readily embrace the emerging Labour party? When Welsh Nationalism was coming to the fore; what proportion of the workforce spoke Welsh, was language an issue and what part did awakening national consciousness play in their lives?

In matters of religion; were railwaymen more or less likely to attend church or chapel than their neighbours, what effect did their beliefs have on their political persuasion and activities, and in a time of religious revival what was the impact on them?

Not all these questions were answered as some were deemed irrelevant to the main objective as the project proceeded, or it was found that the appropriate data did not

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[66] E J Gitre, 'The 1904-05 Welsh Revival: Modernization, Technologies and Techniques of the Self', *Church History*, 73 , 4 (December, 2004) pp 792-827
[67] Kevin Adams, *A Diary of Revival: The Outbreak of the 1904 Welsh Awakening* (Farnham, 2004); Eifion Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904* (London, 1974 1st pub.1969)

exist, e.g. voting patterns of individuals. Also other questions were asked when posed by the research, e.g. concerning community and paternalism.

Research Methodology

A preliminary search for sources was carried out during the preparation of the doctoral proposal to ensure that adequate data would be available. Once the project had commenced various archives were visited to confirm the availability and to search for types and quantities of sources not previously identified. It should be noted that at the start of the project in 2003 the scale and scope of web-based catalogues was less extensive than is currently the case. In practice some sources proved to be more fruitful than others. Church records such as minute books and membership rolls were available for only a minority of chapels whilst local newspapers have provided information for a wide range of places of worship. Neither have contemporary minute books been identified for local branches of political parties.

There were three main classes of source data which whilst principally from primary sources were augmented from secondary sources to broaden the coverage in the time available. These were geographical information, personal details of employees, and documentation including internal company papers and published material such as newspapers.

The geographical data was gathered from guides, maps, timetables and their appendices, and local directories.[68] This included the topography of south Wales, its railway geography, a complete list of Taff Vale locations, and details of parishes with their churches and chapels. Personal information was obtained from a range of formal and informal sources, and used to identify individual employees, officers and directors. Service records were compiled from the Staff Registers and utilised to build a database from this personal information.[69] This was augmented from the National Census, and membership records for religious, trade union and other organisations.[70]

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[68] E.g. 'Illustrated Interviews No. 13 – Mr Ammon Beasley', *Railway Magazine(RMag)*, Vol. III (July 1898), pp1-17; *Taff Vale Railway: Working Timetable from 24 September 1895 until further notice*; Ordnance Survey(OS) *Six Inches to One Statute Mile plan*, Sheet XVIII SE (1900); *Kelly's Directory of Monmouthshire & S Wales, 1895. Part 1: Monmouthshire Directory & South Wales Localities*; 'Parishes within the Episcopal Consistory of Llandaff' in J R Humphey-Smith, (ed), *The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers* (Chichester 1995),

[69] see Bibliography
E.g. The author's correspondence with descendants of TVR employees, see Bibliography for details (hereafter Correspondence); NA RAIL 684 *Staff Registers*; etc

[70] E.g. NC for Glamorgan, see above; National Railway Museum(NRM), Acc.No. 2004-8112: *Railwaymen's Christian Association(RMCA) Handbook(s)* (The Railway Mission(RM), 1884-

Documentation of company, trade union, community and religious affairs were amassed from reports in newspapers and journals, minute books, official company publications including rule books and Parliamentary Papers.[71]

This wide range of information was accessed from a number of repositories as well as on-line and other digital media. The detailed lists of sources are included in the Bibliography. The most extensively visited locations were local studies libraries and the Glamorgan County Record Office in south Wales particularly to discover sources not otherwise available as well access to local knowledge. The most extensively used sources were copies of local newspapers. Next among the visits were the National Archives at Kew, which are the main repository of railway staff records and company minutes, to mine records for data on individual employees and seek to understand corporate policy and attitudes. Two other places visited more than twice included the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University for the registers and journal of the ASRS to cross reference with company and local sources, and the National Railway Museum to examine company operational documents and the archive of the Railway Mission.

Memberships were taken out for five societies whose area of research was seen as relevant to the study, these covered religious, railway and family history. These and attendance at conferences have provided contacts, advice, and access to archives. Contact with descendants of TVR employees was judged to be an important source of information and this has proved to be true. Eleven separate appeals were made in genealogical magazines, local newspapers, railway industry and general interest periodicals.

The starting point for access to primary sources was the Staff Registers of the TVR and this was extended to the registers of the GWR that covered staff formerly employed by the Taff Vale.[72] The overall strategy was to identify a significant number of individuals from company sources, as representative of the employees, officers and directors, and then to trace these individuals in as many other sources as time and resources permitted. The objective was to discover the range of activities, and incidents in which these people were involved. The final total was in excess of 1,900, but the extent to which these were discovered in other sources was very variable.

1900); Modern Records Centre(MRC), MS127-1, *ASRS Register of Members*; see Bibliography

[71] E.g.; NA RAIL 684/8, *TVR Directors' Minutes Book No.8* (1877-82); Parliamentary Papers(PP), LXXVII, *Railway Returns: Railway Companies (Staff and Wages)*, see Bibliography

[72] NA RAIL 684/94-115; 264/96-100 and 305-307

An understanding of the topography, settlement pattern and railway geography was gained from contemporary or reproduction maps of south Wales. The company's system map from 1915 was used as the basis for presentation of geographical information throughout.[73] This depicted the maximum geographical spread of the TVR. To readily identify and cross reference locations a system of location codes was devised for TVR branches, stations and depots. The structure of the code consists of five characters, with the first two identifying the particular branch followed by three digits identifying individual places in geographical order.

The bulk of the large volume of information collected was stored in a Microsoft Access database. This holds personal, family, company, trade union, church, geographical and newspaper data. The three main keys are 'Person Identity' for company staff, 'Location Code' for railway locations, and 'Event Identity' for happenings to employees, news items, company meetings, etc. These keys were crucial for the integration of data from the wide range of primary and secondary sources. The 'Person Identity' is comprised of the first three letters of the individual's surname and a three digit number. The 'Location Code' has been described above and the 'Event Identity' is a five digit number, structured to indicate the source of the information. Microsoft Excel workbooks were developed for data capture and the pre-processing of information such as census data for loading to the database. The questionnaire supplied to descendants of employees and proformas for staff records and newspapers are included in Appendices A, B and C. Part of the process of loading data to the database was to annotate and cross-reference records to facilitate extraction of information relevant to the topic under consideration. Database queries have been developed to search for and extract information and their use is described below.

The key TVR records alongside staff registers were the minutes of the Directors' meetings from which company policy was analysed and compared with other sources such as local newspapers and Parliamentary Papers; the latter included legislation and the Railway Returns that summarised statistics provided by the TVR and other companies.

The ASRS was formed in 1872 and remained the main union covering railway employees throughout the period of the study, although at least two other unions did organise in the area. Branch minutes have survived from three Taff Vale area branches and between them they cover most of the period under consideration.[74]

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[73] C Chapman, Locomotion Papers 200 The Oakwood Press: *The Nelson and Ynysybwl Branches of the Taff Vale Railway* (Oxford, 1997) p4

[74] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1, *ASRS Llantrisant Branch, Minute Book 1874-91*; D/D NUR 1/1i, *ASRS Pontypridd Branch, Minute Book 1910-14*; UoWS, Archives, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/1, *ASRS Merthyr Tydfil Branch, Committee Meeting Minute Book (Jul. 1888 to Jan. 1896)*

These were used in conjunction with a scan of the union's newspaper, the *Railway Review*, and reports of branch and other union meetings published in the local press to build an extensive view of local trade union activity.[75]

As noted above appeals were made for contact with descendants of people who had worked for the Taff Vale. Over seventy descendents responded and much relevant data was gained from returned questionnaires and correspondence covering over one hundred individuals. The amount of information varied from family to family and depended on the descendant's own research and more especially on what narratives have been handed down, either as documents or oral tradition. These often provided family information essential to the study, not available elsewhere, such as religious and political allegiances.

The National Census provided a series of snapshots of where people lived and who with, and the residential patterns essential to understanding communities.[76] It also provided an analytical tool to provide or confirm information on subjects such as house moves and sons following a father's occupation. From 1891 details were provided of the languages spoken. Once sufficient information had been obtained for an individual, such as full name, date of birth and place of employment at a given date, it was then possible to trace a full address and other information for the complete household and neighbourhood, for example the mix of employment and origins.

The local newspapers identified were published in Aberdare, Merthyr or Pontypridd.[77] The Merthyr papers also covered Aberdare, and some in Pontypridd covered the Rhondda. The selection was chosen to achieve a political balance where possible. Besides news and editorials on a vast array of local and national topics, local papers have proved a valuable source of personal information from death notices and obituaries, and reports of a wide range of local meetings, from chapels, local boards and trade unions. These were used to review the lives of employees and revealed details of denominational, cultural, and political affiliations.

Besides newspapers, local history libraries had their own special collections or items peculiar to that repository. An example is the W W Price Collection at Aberdare which covered trades council, trade union, church history and other documents.[78] Local directories were found to contain a wide range of information from lists of places of worship to local council election results. The increasing popularity of genealogy has

[75] MRC MS127/AS/4/1/..., *Railway Review(RRvw)* (1881-2, 1889, 1895)
[76] NC HO107 to RG13
[77] E.g. *Aberdare Leader(ALdr)* (1906-1929); *Merthyr Express(MEx)* (1883-1915); *Pontypridd Observer(PObs)* (1897-1917), see Bibliography
[78] Aberdare Library(AbLib), W W Price Collection, e.g. RM14/1/1; TU7/1/1,2; TR6/1, see Bibliography

encouraged the creation of a wide variety of indexes. Of particular value have been a marriage index for Merthyr and indexes to obituaries in local newspapers. Parish Registers were also accessed at the Glamorgan Record Office to execute surveys of marriage patterns.

To build a picture on an individual's life it is helpful to know which organisations an employee might have belonged to and to provide statistical information. Membership details were extracted from a range of sources such as questionnaires, newspaper reports and obituaries. This included religious affiliation, and although not extensive, it has given an indication of the range and proportions of church and chapel membership among the Taff Vale community.

Benefits of the Database

The most important role of the database was to organise as much as possible of the information amassed to facilitate its retrieval in any way that would assist interpretation and analysis of the data. Where a range of detail for an employee has been stored it is possible to extract a working career with locations, grades and dates, to which can be added information about other members of his family. Reports can be produced for the employees working at a particular location or who are members of a trade union branch. The value is not restricted to information on employees, and the summaries of newspaper headlines and reports can be extracted by topic, individual people, organisation or thesis chapter, as well as words or phrases. As long as the information has been stored it can be extracted in almost any combination to provide answers to many of the questions raised during this study. The extracted data can also be manipulated in Excel to produce charts and tables. With information coming from a wide variety of sources in many formats and with different spellings it has been possible to extract and compare possible matches.

Where extensive extracts have been made from the National Census it was possible to survey neighbourhoods to establish the mix of employment and origins. Information extracted included the place of birth, which allowed assessments to be made of groups from different national and regional backgrounds. Surveys undertaken revealed the scale of boarding with railway families, and other patterns. For example it was possible to plot the mobility of employees by examination of the birthplace and date of birth of children.

Difficulties with sources

With the National Census for both the 1871 and 1901 Censuses facsimiles had to be used, but the access was aided by noting addresses and districts identified in other years and using this as a starting point. Whilst the 1901 Census was available online which did allow searches for individuals, at a cost, it was not possible to download digitised extracts for further processing. The 1911 Census was not available until after the data collection phase had been completed. Online genealogical websites are designed for the locating of individuals and not districts or employment and therefore unsuitable as a starting point for data collection.

Where there were gaps in sources, for example trade union branch meetings and chapel memberships, local newspapers have provided much information for a wide range of organisations and gatherings such as trade union branch meetings and church services.

Hindrances to understanding and recording the geography were the similarity and variation in spelling of place names, absence from contemporary and modern maps and names that changed over time. The vast majority of these were located from the 'station banks' of working timetables and, surprisingly, modern street maps where old names have been preserved in the names of schools or other public amenities. The system of location codes described above provided for duplicate names and changes of name over time.

Dates from the large range of sources varied in format and precision, even within the same source. For example in the staff registers some dates might be precise with day month and year, whilst others might only have month and year or just the year and even no date at all but within a sequence. The order of day month and year would also vary between sources. An additional complication was the inability of MS Office to consistently handle dates that spanned the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To cope with variety and permit the integration and comparison of date sensitive information, a standard format was developed that could be used to record, sort and compare the whole range of data. The basic pattern as held on the database is 'yyyymmdd', and the first four characters must always consist of a year between 1750 and 2020. With imprecise dates the missing day or month would be completed with zeroes, but 'wildcards' were allowed to indicate that an event occurred before or after a particular month or even year. The wildcard values were '66' for before and '99' for after and included as the 'day'.

There was no universal employee number, standard format or method of presentation for staff records in the various railway company documents accessed, so a standard

mode of presentation was devised. The 'Person Identity' described above has been used for internal cross references, but when an individual employee has been referred to in footnotes it has been by forename or initials with the surname in upper case followed by the 'date entered service'. Where an employee has come to notice solely through a non-company source the DES may not be known, but the surname is still shown in uppercase letters to indicate that the man was employed by the TVR.

The earliest surviving TVR staff registers, whilst holding details of staff that entered the service of the company from 1840, were with two known exceptions, not actually compiled until the 1890s.[79] This means that all those who left employment before commencement of the new registers are not recorded; for example the earliest register for traffic staff dates from c1893.[80] Many dates are imprecise or inaccurate and some have subsequently been amended by the company after cross checking with birth certificates, often on the approach to an individual's retirement. No staff registers have been discovered for platelayers after they were no longer recruited into the Traffic department, c1880. Some details of staff, for whom registers have not survived, have been obtained from sources such as correspondence with descendants, company minute books, newspapers and the Census.

There is a specific weakness with the registers of the Locomotive Superintendent's department which hold an incomplete record of transfers between depots. This came to attention with discrepancies between company records and those of descendants.[81] Unless other company records have been found to complete the data, the alternative was to crosscheck with the National Census.

The main ASRS registers date from 1897, when all members were allocated a fresh number.[82] The implication of this is that railwaymen who joined the union and left between 1872, when the society was founded, and 1897 will have been omitted. There are no indexes to the registers and the entries are grouped by branch within each year for entrants before 1897, and subsequently by the receipt of monthly branch returns. An additional confusion was that members frequently allowed their membership to lapse and then rejoin giving different details. Rather than attempting to find known individuals, a sample of the details for nearly five hundred members was extracted and where possible linked with data from other sources.

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[79] NA RAIL 684/109, *TVR Register of Locomotive department Maintenance staff Inc. Passed Firemen and Cleaners: 1855-1890*, was the only pre-1890 register accessed. The other register, NA RAIL 684/108, was too fragile to be presented.

[80] NA RAIL 684/94, *TVR Register of Traffic department uniform staff 1840-1882*

[81] E.g. A JENKINS, DES Dec.16, 1889, NA RAIL 684/113, *TVR Register of Locomotive department Maintenance staff Inc. Passed Firemen and Cleaners: 1866-1920*; Correspondence with Idris Jenkins (2005-7)

[82] MS127-1, *ASRS Register of Members*

There was an absence of useful data on numbers employed by grade and location, and neither has any listing been found of the numbers and locations of company houses, or a summary of traffic flows by route section. The traffic flows and distribution of staff were estimated from a range of sources, including working and public timetables and a number of secondary sources that provided accounts of traffic movements, coal production, shed allocations of locomotives and typical staff duties at engine sheds. The numbers of employees by grade used was taken from Railway Returns to the Board of Trade (BoT) for 1913.[83] In order to portray the distribution of staff and their mobility across the company the company map was divided into sixteen 'zones', see figure M.1. The principal reasons for this approach were the lack of geographical precision of some personnel data and the unwieldy nature of attempting to succinctly portray the scale of mobility of staff between four hundred different locations. Each zone consists of three to six miles of main line plus minor branches with an average of 7.7 route miles per zone. The location and numbers of company owned houses were determined from references in the company minutes, correspondence with descendants of employees and the National Census.

The membership of churches and other organisations is difficult to ascertain for a number of reasons, most especially because of the lack of survival of membership rolls. This deficiency has been made up by information from descendants by narratives handed down, either as documents or oral tradition. In addition a number of published biographies, newspaper reports and obituaries have been used to augment the questionnaires. Each often provided family information essential to the study, but which official records either did not or could not provide such as religious and political allegiances. Also with respect to denominational data the uneven survival of records could also have over emphasised one denomination as against another.

Whatever the source of personal data, there was the challenge of the extensive duplication of common names such as 'John Jones', and the interchangeability of Welsh given and surnames; for example an employee named 'Thomas David John'. This was found to make it impossible to definitely identify some employees across different sources.

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[83] PP 1914, LXXVII

Figure M.1 Division of the TVR Network into Zones
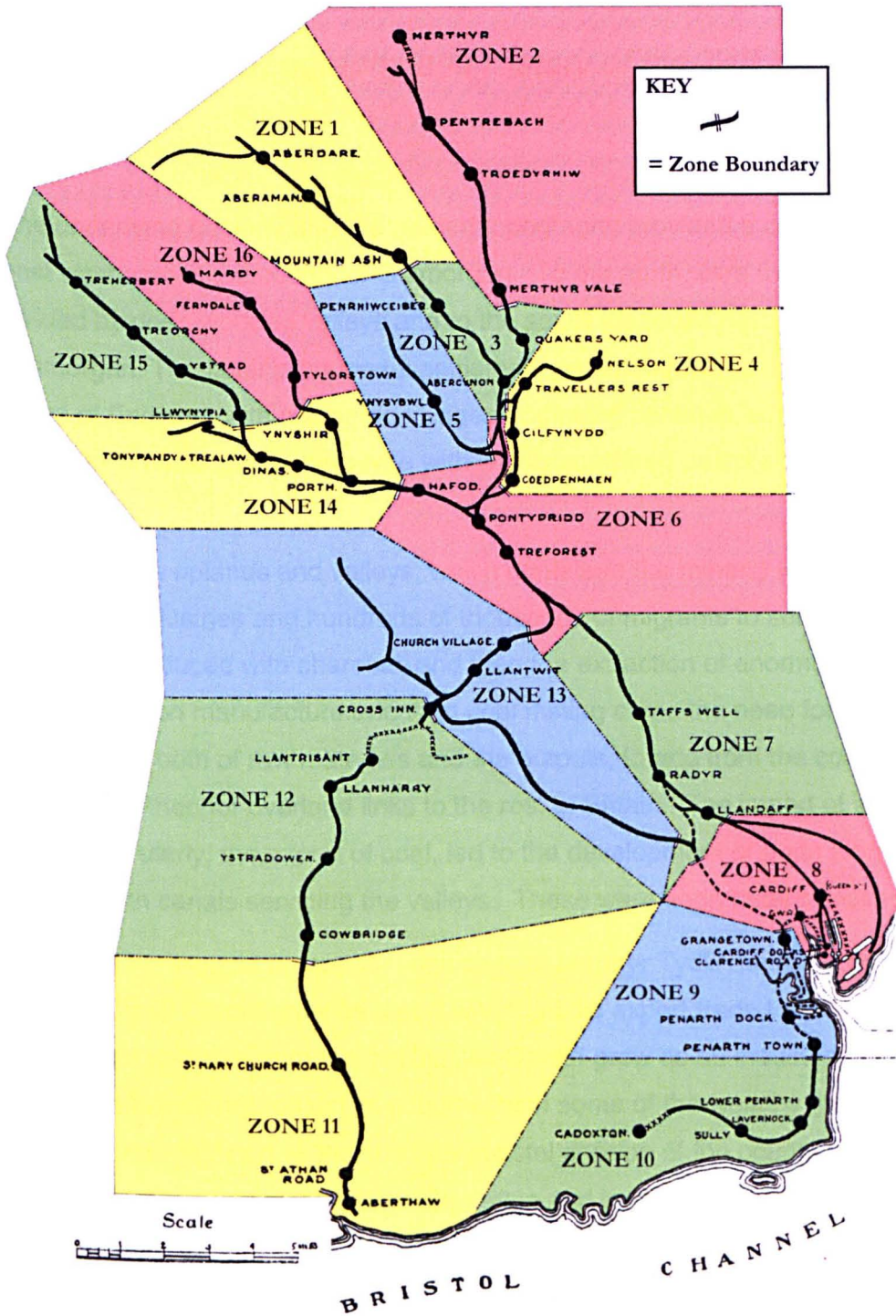
Note: See figure I.1 for a topographical map of the TVR network

Section 1:Background and TVR History

Chapter 1 The Geography and History of the Taff Vale

The Landscape

The underlying geology and the related topography provided a clear division running east west across the county of Glamorgan. To the north were the high pastures divided by deep wooded valleys and to the south the fertile plains of the Vale of Glamorgan. The latter produced a settlement pattern similar to prosperous arable areas of England, with nucleated villages and small parishes, whilst the uplands carried on a less prosperous farming type with widely scattered pastoral farms set in huge parishes.

But it was the uplands and valleys, which contained the mineral wealth that was to bring vast industries and hundreds of thousands of migrants to service them. It began with iron, produced with charcoal, and then the extraction of enormous volumes of coal. Firstly with iron manufacture and then coal mining came the need for improved modes of transport, both of raw materials and the outputs, to and from the coast for import and export, and then for overland links to the rest of Britain. The import of iron ore and, more particularly, the export of coal, led to the development of ports along the coastal margin, with canals servicing the valleys. These were soon to be replaced by railways.

Iron smelting brought prosperity principally to Merthyr Tydfil making it the largest town in Wales, until Cardiff grew as a port with the coal export trade to surpass it in importance and size from the 1860s.[1] As Cardiff grew as an industrial and administrative centre, so did its suburbs, with some of the wealthy moving to the coast. With the new rival port of Barry a new coastal division of the county emerged between Cardiff and Barry, a mix of fashionable villas and busy ports to join the Valleys, the Vale of Glamorgan, and the 'Coal Metropolis' of Cardiff.[2] These broad divisions of Glamorgan each had their principal towns, which are described below.

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[1] Brinley Thomas, 'The Migration of Labour into the Glamorganshire Coalfield (1861-1911)', *Economica*, 30, 1 (1930), pp275-294 [reprinted in W E Minchington (ed.), *Industrial South Wales 1750-1914* (London, 1969)]; Note that statistics for Wales are for Wales and Monmouthshire;
Merthyr Tydfil, http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/GLA/MerthyrTydfil/#Population (accessed 12/07/10); Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p10

[2] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*

Some Places served by the TVR (see figure I.1)[3]

Although Merthyr Tydfil was an ancient parish, its rise to fame and fortune came with the development of its iron industry in the eighteenth century, based on the discovery of the necessary raw materials. The industry innovated and flourished drawing in many migrants, with Merthyr developing as a frontier town with a bad reputation. In 1860 one elderly Christian is alleged to have misread the Bible to state that 'all the ungodly shall go to Merthyr' thus equating it with Hell.[4] It was for decades the largest town in Wales, being twice the size of Cardiff in 1851. By the 1880s it had developed into a prosperous town which belatedly acquired borough status in 1905. The manufacture of iron had prompted the development of the Glamorganshire Canal at the end of the eighteenth century, and the Taff Vale Railway in the first half of the nineteenth, but iron production declined from the 1860s to be replaced by coal extraction.

Abercynon, to give it its modern name, first came to prominence through its position on the Glamorganshire Canal to which a tramroad had been constructed to carry the products of the Iron Works at Merthyr Tydfil to the sea at Cardiff. The location was then known as Navigation House, and it was to here that Trevithick's pioneer steam railway engine hauled its load of iron and 'hitchhikers' in 1804.[5] It is situated at the confluence of the River Cynon with the River Taff at the mouth of the valley that led to the other iron-manufacturing town of Aberdare. Once the railway was established it took its name from its new function as 'Aberdare Junction'. Aberdare was an ancient parish in which its first ironworks was established in 1801, and '[p]rior to the fifties the working of coal was for the most part a mere subsidiary to the iron, tinplate and copper works.'[6] The ironworks were serviced from 1812 by the Aberdare Canal, which joined the Glamorganshire Canal at Navigation House, but its importance was reduced by the opening of the Aberdare Railway in 1846. The population was 15,000 in 1851 and grew steadily to 50,844 in 1911. This was significant but not as dramatic as in the neighbouring Rhondda Valley.

Pontypridd, was the gateway to the Rhondda valleys at the confluence of the Taff and the Rhondda rivers and important as a river crossing known in English as Newbridge. The first successful bridge, of a single span, was built in 1756, but housing only came later with the development of transport links in the Taff Valley and establishment of a chain works in the early nineteenth century. Positioned, as it was, at the meeting of the main coal-carrying transport routes it developed into the hub of the TVR network. Ferndale, like most of the villages in the Rhondda Valleys, was primarily a mining

[3] Background is from J Newman, *The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan* (London, 1995)
[4] Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, 'The Religious Frontier' in Jones, *Communities*, p222
[5] Herbert Williams, *Railways in Wales* (Swansea, 1981)
[6] Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, p102

settlement. It had grown up around the coal pits that were sunk in this part of the Rhondda Fach from 1862. The first accommodation consisted of wooden huts, but within a decade the miners, who had moved from other parts of the coalfield, displayed their shared values by organising and paying for the erection of four chapels among the newly constructed terraces of stone built cottages.[7]

The fortunes of the Valleys varied with the demand for the local products; as iron production costs rose, they lost out to more conveniently placed plants elsewhere, and the coal mines were susceptible to fluctuations in national and international demand. Industrial unrest, particularly from the 1890s, adversely affected the prosperity of large numbers of their inhabitants during protracted strikes.

Before the nineteenth century Cardiff had been involved in the local agriculture and was remote from the development of iron manufacturing at the heads of the Cynon and Taff Valleys.[8] From 1798, when the Glamorgan Canal was opened throughout from Merthyr to the sea-lock at Cardiff, it became the outlet for that production to the sea and its onward transport to domestic and international markets. Whereas it had exported agricultural produce, the emphasis switched first to iron products and then to coal, as the value of Welsh Steam Coal became internationally recognized. It then became a constant struggle to ensure adequate dock capacity at or around Cardiff. Apart from the first dock built by the Glamorganshire Canal, the docks were provided by the Marquis of Bute, from the West Dock built in 1839 to the Queen Alexandra Dock opened in 1907.

Table 1.1: Opening Dates of Cardiff Docks

Name	Builder/Operator	Date
Canal Dock	Glamorganshire Canal Company	1798
West Dock	2nd Marquis of Bute / Bute Docks Coy	1839
East Dock	Bute Trustees / Bute Docks Coy	1859
Roath Basin	Bute Trustees / Bute Docks Coy	1874
Roath Dock	Bute Trustees / Bute Docks Coy	1887
Queen Alexandra Dock	Bute Trustees / Bute Docks Coy	1907

Source: M Hale, *Steam in South Wales: Volume Three – Main Line and the Docks* (Oxford, 1982)

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[7] Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, 'The Valleys: The Making of Community' in Jones, *Communities*, p148
[8] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p1

In parallel with the rise of this 'coal metropolis'[9], with its merchants and entrepreneurs there developed a civic pride, which led to city status in 1905 and its eventual elevation to be capital of the Principality in 1955.[10] It was also here that the TVR established its head office and principal workshops.

Just north of Cardiff is the settlement of Radyr, which owes its development to the coming of the Taff Vale Railway. Radyr Junction, or Penarth Junction as it was previously known, formed an important marshalling point for trains en route to and from the coalfield. The junction was formed with a line built to serve the new dock at Penarth Tidal Harbour in 1859, and the growth of the area relied on the extensive railway sidings and locomotive shed. The company provided twelve houses that formed Junction Terrace, which was '...in effect the first "street" in the village of Radyr.'[11]

The Vale of Glamorgan continued its age-old pattern of life with the small town of Cowbridge, served by the Taff Vale, at its heart. The town of Cowbridge was established in the medieval period on the old main road from Cardiff to Swansea. Although it was bypassed by industrial development, and the South Wales Railway (SWR), it had a sense of its own importance. This led its citizens to press for and obtain its own railway to connect with the SWR mainline at its Llantrisant station, which it achieved in 1865. As to the newly developed coastal strip, it had its coal ports, but also the fashionable town of Penarth to which Cardiff's entrepreneurs and senior managers could retreat.

With the development of metal manufacturing and coal mining the population of Glamorgan grew dramatically during the nineteenth century from 317,752 in 1861 to 1,120,910 in 1911.[12] These industries generally attracted unskilled migrants, but some did bring skills with them, for example as stone masons. Some took up work in other sectors such as transport. By the years leading up to the First World War, transport workers, including railwaymen, numbered 48,739 whilst Iron and Steel workers, totalled a significant 50,618. However these figures were dwarfed by the 154,000 who worked above and below ground in the coal industry.[13] With the rising population urbanisation, in all but the Vale, grew apace, bringing with it demands for housing, schools, water supplies, and sanitation. These practical issues in turn required local government structures and institutions to oversee their provision, with the establishment of local

[9] Cardiff Journal of Commerce, Sept.15, 1908 cited in Daunton, Coal Metropolis, p1
[10] Daunton, Coal Metropolis p174; Cardiff Council Proud Capital, http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?id=1331&d1=0 (accessed 26/05/10)
[11] New Horizons History Group, Memories of Radyr and Morganstown (Cardiff, 1993) p52
[12] Thomas, 'Migration of Labour', Table E, p53
[13] T M Hodges, 'The Peopling of the Hinterland and the Port of Cardiff', Economic History Review, 17, 1, 1 (1947), pp71-72

boards, urban districts, and borough councils. Alongside these came chambers of commerce and trades councils, which provided the forums, and set the scene, for political debate.

Migration

Figure 1.1: Growth in the Population of Glamorgan 1861-1911

Trends in Place of Birth - Numbers

Legend: Born in Glamorgan / Born outside of Glamorgan

Trends in Place of Birth - Percentage
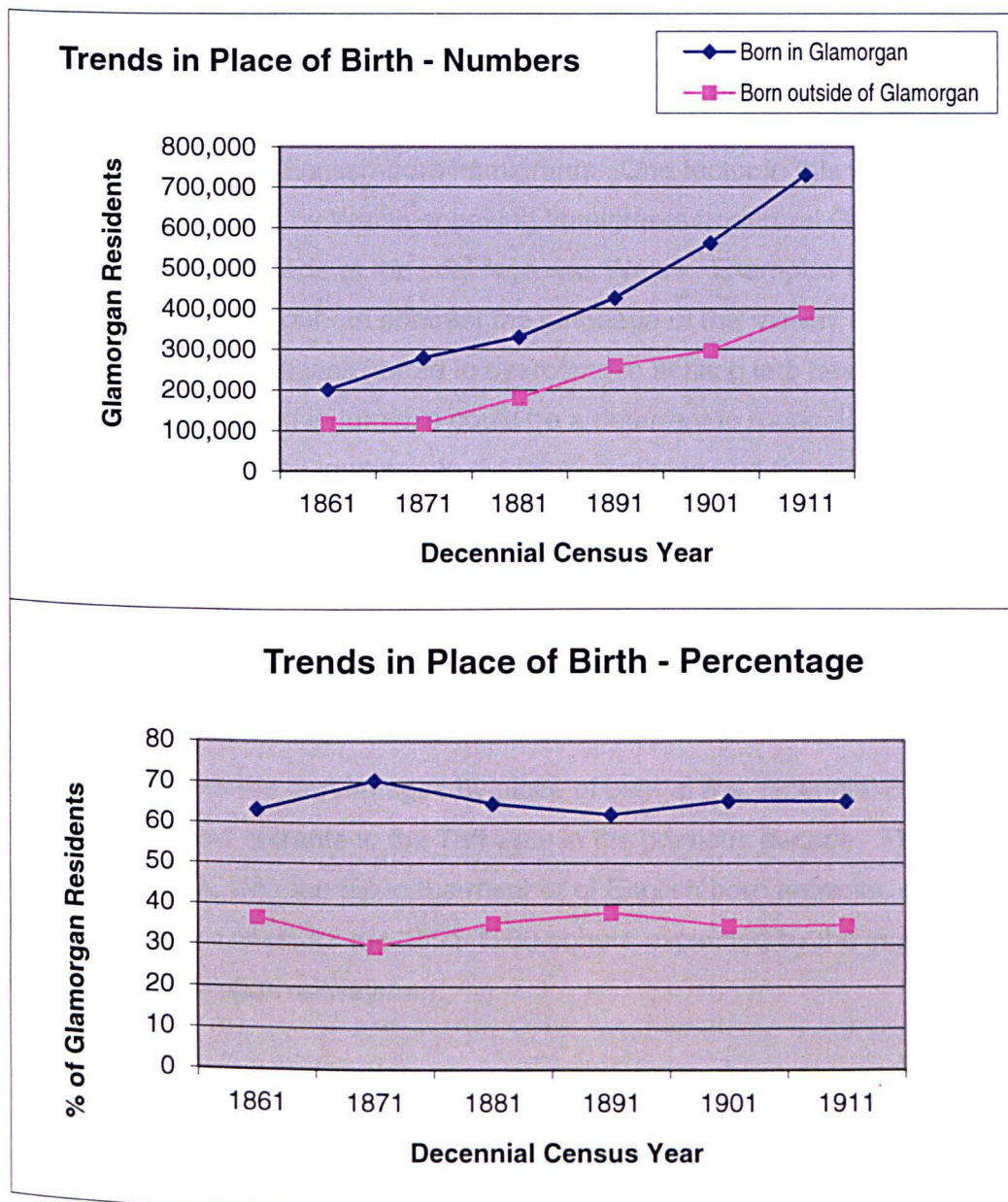
Source: Thomas, 'Migration of Labour', Table E, p53

From the early days of the iron makers of Merthyr there were migrants from other areas of Britain. This influx to south Wales increased rapidly with the exploitation of the rich coal seams. Farm labourers came from poverty stricken areas of rural Wales, the border counties of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, across the Bristol Channel from

south west England, and from Ireland.[14] Cardiff as an international port had its fair share of migrants from across Europe who had 'come ashore'.[15] Other groups, such as Italians, had preceded them to the industry of the Valleys. Migration into Glamorgan in the nineteenth century brought men into a range of employment, and once they had become established, their children would stay and find employment in the same industry. This is demonstrated at figure 1.1 where it can be seen that whilst the rate of immigration from outside of the county was maintained, the number of Glamorgan born residents also grew at a similar rate.

The trends outlined above were replicated in the origins of TVR employees, but with a greater proportion of English-born immigrants. One factor in this was that many of the coal pits were staffed by Welsh-speaking immigrants from rural Glamorgan and west Wales, and the language at the coal face was Welsh. Examples of the effects of this are given in chapter four. In contrast the language of the railway was English, and therefore this was one less hurdle to overcome in settling into new employment and new communities, and in turn this could be a deterrent to monoglot Welsh rural workers. Many English immigrants did take up mining and the number of railway jobs was small in comparison. English had been the language of authority since the Act of Union in the sixteenth century, and had become the predominant tongue of the southern edge of Wales.[16] Its use in commerce was reinforced by the English origins of the majority of the entrepreneurs and engineers who founded the local industries, and railways were dependent on the written word for rule books and timetables.

Figure 1.2 shows the percentages by place of birth at the decennial census, compared with those of new entrants to the Taff Vale in the previous decade. These demonstrate the English bias, with the dip in the number of English born entrants, and rise of Glamorgan-born ones, for the 1891-1900 cohort, explained by the increasing number of second generation railwaymen.

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[14] Thomas, 'Migration of Labour', pp45-48
[15] Daunton, Coal Metropolis, p142
[16] Davies, History of Wales, pp235-6

Figure 1.2: Comparison of the Birthplace of TVR Employees with the General Population of Glamorgan, 1871-1901

Comparison of Birthplaces of Employees and Glamorgan Population 1871-1901

TVR Date Entered Service (DES) by Decade / Decennial Census

Legend: Native born (GLA) ■ Other Welsh Counties □ English Counties □ Scottish Counties ■ Irish Counties □ Non-UK
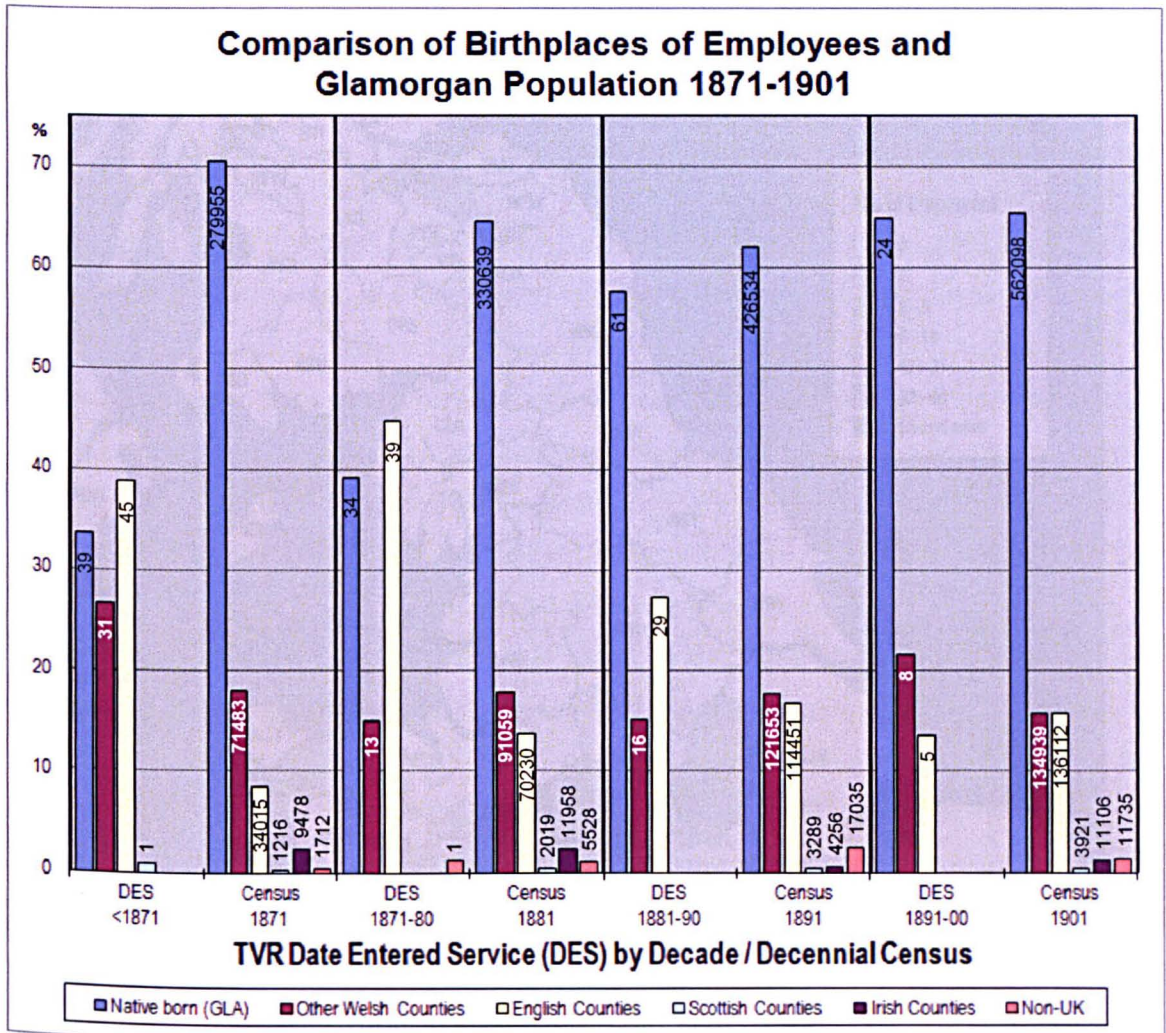
Sources: NA RAIL 684 *TVR Staff Registers*; NC HO107; RG9; RG10; RG11; RG12; RG13; Hodges, 'Peopling of the Hinterland of Cardiff', pp62-72; Thomas, 'Migration of Labour', pp37-58
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

Not all migrants had come directly from their home town or village, and some were part of a chain migration, where the individual or family had paused at an intermediate location for some years before settling in south Wales. A famous example is that of miners' leader Arthur Horner. He was born in Merthyr Tydfil, but his father, a Taff Vale employee, came from Nottinghamshire, whilst his grandfather had been born in Northumberland. The place of birth by county, where known, for a sample of TVR employees across the period of this study is depicted at Figure 1.3 and shows how, apart from Glamorgan, that an English county, Somerset, provided more workers than any other.

Figure 1.3: Map showing Birthplace of TVR Employees by County

Sources: NC HO107, RG9, RG10, RG12, RG13; Compiled using Gen Map v2.2;
Sample of 385 employees. One employee was born in Ireland.

But people did not only migrate to south Wales, they also left for the United States, and various parts of the British Empire. Among them were a number of Taff Vale employees. They did not leave because of unemployment or dissatisfaction with railway work, but sought new opportunities across the world. One such was Evan Price, son of a Taff Vale platelayer, who had progressed from Engine Cleaner to

Locomotive Fireman. In the 1890s he left Wales for South Africa where he found employment with a local railway company. His older brother John, a platelayer, stayed on in the Valleys to become a well respected Permanent Way Inspector.[17]

TVR Formation and Growth

As iron production increased the limited transport facilities down the Taff Valley to the port of Cardiff were progressively limiting the ironmasters' enterprise. Canal transport and associated tramways, like the one on which Trevithick's 1804 steam locomotive had made history, had now reached capacity, so in 1835 the respected engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel was asked to survey the route for a railway from Merthyr to Cardiff. In 1836 the TVR was incorporated and the first portion of the line from Cardiff to Navigation House (Abercynon) was opened in 1840. Unusually Brunel chose to use the 'standard' gauge, rather than his favoured broad gauge, which was thought impractical for the tight curvature required in the narrow twisting valleys.[18] Reflecting on the history of the Rhondda Valley, 'Periander' of the *Glamorgan Free Press* describes 'Brunel's blunder' which he had made in stating that a railway in the Rhondda would not pay as the 'coal was "washed" out'. He was to be proved wrong in 1853 when an agent of the Marquis of Bute won the £500 offered by the TVR for anyone to sink a deep mine at the head of the Rhondda Valley. The railway immediately set out to extend its line to Treherbert and the first trainload of coal was removed at the end of 1855.[19]

After completion through to Merthyr in 1841, the first branch was opened to Llancaiach (Nelson) in the same year, and in 1846 another railway to an iron making town, Aberdare, was opened, and operated by the TVR.[20] Coal traffic rose steadily as the iron industry declined, with the first furnace closure in 1859.[21] The additional costs of transporting imported iron ore from the coast and finished products to the ports brought about the closure of much of the iron production at the heads of the Valleys and its transfer to the coast. Not only had coal replaced charcoal as the fuel for the furnaces, but demand for it as fuel for steam-driven machinery, whether in factories, on ships, or

[17] J H Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years Anniversary 1841-1991: A Brief Account of the Working Life of John Price...* (Dorset, 1990)

[18] D S M Barrie, *The Oakwood Library of Railway History No.2: The Taff Vale Railway* (2nd ed.) (Godstone, Surrey, 1950) p9

[19] *Glamorgan Free Press(GFP)*, July 1, 1910, p8

[20] Barrie, *Taff Vale Railway*, pp11&15

[21] John A Owen, 'Merthyr Tydfil - Iron Metropolis 1790-1860', Merthyr Tydfil Historical Society, *Merthyr Historian* Vol. I (1976) p22

railways was increasing rapidly.[22] The importance of south Wales coal was emphasized during times of industrial action as described in chapter seven.

The Taff Vale always faced competition; initially with the Glamorganshire Canal, which it was constructed to replace, and then a number other railways anxious to tap into the lucrative coal trade from the Valleys. This competition was linked with the development of dock capacity at the coast, as the bulk of coal produced completed its journey by sea, whether as international trade, naval supplies or in coastal distribution. Land ownership around Cardiff was concentrated in a few hands and, one, the Bute Trustees, controlled access to the seas for many years, constructing a succession of docks as demand increased (see Table 1.1). This situation resulted in alliances and disputes with different railway companies over the years, and eventually in 1897 the Bute Trustees developed their own internal railway network into the Cardiff Railway, attempting to move into the coal-carrying business.[23] In a converse move the Taff Vale had created its own docks at Penarth and constructed a new line to serve them in 1859.[24] But Cardiff was not the only established port within reach of the Valleys' mines, and Newport and Swansea were each the target destination of rival railways, and as will be described below, a wholly new high capacity port was developed at Barry to the west of Penarth.

The first railway competition arrived in 1851 in the form of the Vale of Neath Railway, which was a GWR supported company, constructed to Brunel's broad gauge to connect the coal and iron industries at the heads of the Cynon and Taff Valleys with the ports on Swansea Bay.[25] It was soon connected with Merthyr, creating the station where all passenger services would eventually terminate, and also created a route to Newport running across the grain of the Valleys, via Quakers' Yard. As the extent of the vast coal reserves of the Rhondda was realised another link from Swansea Bay was established westwards from Treherbert by the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway (R&SB) in 1890 via the longest tunnel wholly in Wales.[26] The other main line to connect to an established port was the Pontypridd, Caerphilly and Newport Railway (PC&N), which did as its name suggests, connecting Newport with the TVR at Pontypridd. Both the TVR and the Bute Trustees opposed the Parliamentary bill, but once passed, the TVR secured a profitable contract to take coal from the Cynon Valley to Newport, and had agreed to provide the locomotives and crews to operate the trains on the PC&N.

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[22] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, pp3-8
[23] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, p129
[24] *Ibid*, p124
[25] *Ibid*, p155
[26] *Ibid*, p193

Figure 1.4 Estimated Traffic Flows on the TVR c1903-13 (including the Main Flows to South Wales Ports served by Other Railways)

KEY: Trains per weekday

1 - 24	
25 - 49	
50 - 99	
100 - 149	
150 - 249	
250 +	
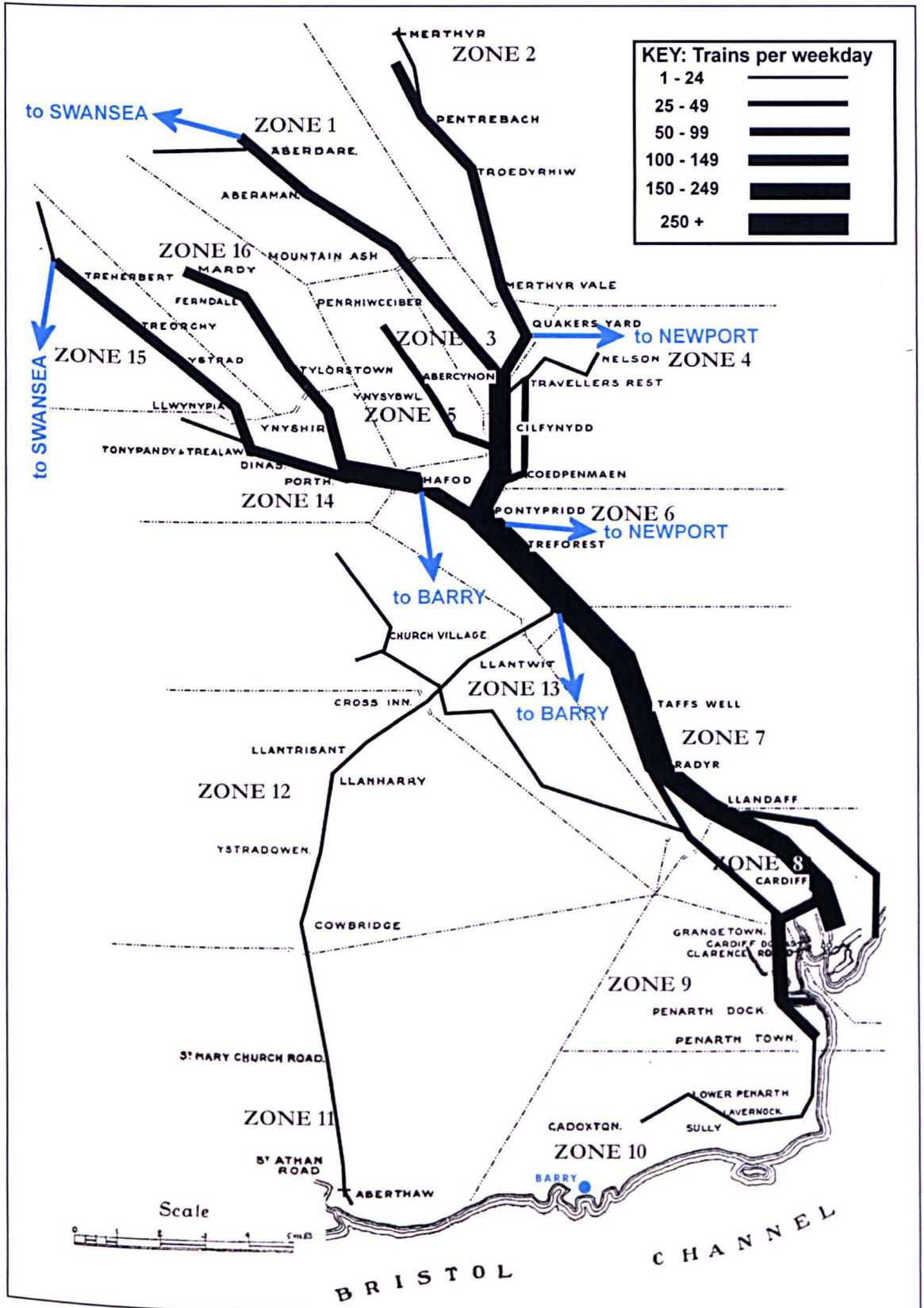
Sources: Barrie, *Taff Vale Railway*; NRM BRAD/66/7 *Bradshaw Railway Timetable: July, 1904, No.853*; Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*; RMag, '*Ammon Beasley*', etc.

This commenced in 1884, and to illustrate how complex parts of the south Wales network were becoming, Barrie notes that in the nineteen miles between Pontypridd

and Newport Docks trains ran over the metals of six different companies;[27] see Appendix E for the journey as far as Machen and figure 1.4 for a picture of the traffic flows within the TVR network.

From its opening the Taff was constantly constructing or acquiring new branches to access the increasing number of pits. As noted above the Cynon Valley was opened up in 1846, Treherbert in the Rhondda Fawr and Ferndale in the Rhondda Fach valleys were both reached in 1856, and the Ynysybwl branch in the Cwm Clydach was operational by 1886.[28] Whilst the Taff Vale's network was not yet complete the major coal carrying routes had been established. The Llantrissant (sic) and Taff Vale Junction Railway, the first section of which was opened 1864, served the less profitable southern edge of the coalfield, but in addition provided a more direct route for iron ore from local quarries to the furnaces around Merthyr.[29] It would have also formed part of an abortive attempt to develop yet another port at Aberthaw, via the Cowbridge Railway. This latter line had nothing to do with coal, but had originated with citizens of Cowbridge wanting to establish a link to the railway network. Later in the 1880s local opinion favoured an extension of their line to the coast at Aberthaw, and its lime works. This branch opened in 1892, but despite possible developments in the competition with the Barry Dock and Railway Company (BR), the branch never prospered.[30] At its full extent, the geographical spread of the TVR was not large; the mainline from Cardiff to Merthyr was only 24 miles in length and its total route mileage, as depicted on figure I.1, never exceeded 124 miles.

Between Glamorgan and the neighbouring county of Monmouthshire lay the Rhymney Valley, and its eponymous railway was built to serve the coalfield to the east of the Taff. At first it was no competitor to the TVR except for access to the docks at Cardiff, but later it developed links with other companies to compete at Merthyr in conjunction with the Great Western, and gave the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) access to Cardiff.[31] It was viewed by many investors as a sensible move for the Taff to take over its smaller neighbour, but despite negotiations in 1878 and 1893 agreement was never reached.[32] The major competitor, not just to the Taff Vale, but especially to the Bute Trustees, was the Barry Docks and Railway. The origins of this rival, which opened for business in 1889, and the role of the TVR are detailed below. It created a major new port on the Glamorgan coast and constructed its mainline from Hafod Junction on the Rhondda branch of the Taff Vale across the Vale of Glamorgan to the

[27] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, pp104-8

[28] Chapman, *Nelson and Ynysybwl Branches*, p38

[29] Chapman, *Llantrisant Branches*, pp21-24

[30] C Chapman, *The Cowbridge Railway* (Oxford, 1984) pp52-53 & 61

[31] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, pp118, 121 & 161

[32] *Merthyr Telegraph(MTel)*, June 21, 1878, p[2]; *Merthyr Times(MTms)*, June 9,1893, p8

purpose built docks at Barry. It then proceeded to build connections to as many other lines serving the coalfield as possible so that the traffic could be handled by Barry Docks.

Enormous amounts of Parliamentary time and money were spent on the competing railway schemes, not just major new routes, but also the numerous inter-company links and running powers, as the rivals sought to obtain access to new collieries. Also they sought to convey the coal for as many miles on their own metals as was achievable. An official return from 1901 shows that the TVR spent no less than £55,544 between 1892 and 1898 on Parliamentary costs, but two of its competitors had spent more. The Barry was next with an outlay of £66,730 and the Cardiff Railway (CR) had expended no less than £83,760.[33] Fortunately for the Taff Vale it had been first on the scene in its three main valleys, and most importantly it had been first in the Rhondda, with its vast potential. This meant that although its competitors might take the coal to their favoured port, the TVR had a hand in transporting a majority of the coal exported from south Wales for at least part of its journey. This short line was, in terms of tonnage conveyed, comparable with the big players such as the North Eastern (NER), Midland (MR), London and North Western and Great Western[34] railway companies.

As the traffic levels increased on the TVR system the number of tracks went from one to two, to three and eventually to four on various sections of the network. The four-track section extended from Cardiff to Pontypridd and three-track sections spread up the Rhondda and Cynon Valleys. But in addition extensive sets of sidings were required to hold loaded wagons heading for the docks and empty wagons waiting return to the collieries. The latter had little storage space, either to put the coal to ground, or hold empty wagons in anticipation of production, and so a steady flow of loaded wagons down to the coast, and empty ones back, was essential. Any disruption would stop the pits from working, and render the miners idle. Vast arrays of sidings were constructed at strategic parts of the network and the scale of this expansion can be judged from the yards at Radyr. A retiring traffic inspector recalled that when he had joined the company in 1874, there were only six sidings to hold 300 wagons; in 1925 there were 50 sidings to hold 3,000 wagons. In 1874 the staff had numbered 22, whilst in 1925 the number was 215.[35]

Despite the competition, and the inefficiencies described below, the Taff Vale remained profitable and carried ever increasing amounts of coal (see Table 1.2)

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[33] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, p18
[34] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p9
[35] *GWR Magazine(GWRM)*, Vol.XXXVII, March (1925) p112

Table 1.2 Taff Vale Railway Mineral Traffic 1841-1913

Year	Tons	Year	Tons
1841	41,669	1883	8,614,715
1842	114,516	1890	10,812,942
1843	152,100	1893	11,342,905
1853	874,362	1903	16,168,838
1863	2,772,011	1912	14,475,068
1873	4,527,641	1913	19,392,267

Source: Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, p100

The comparable figure for the Barry Railway in 1913 was eleven million tons.[36] The dividends earned on Ordinary Shares only once fell below ten percent from 1870 to 1888, peaking at 17½ per cent in one year.[37] However after the Barry had opened, the Ordinary dividend for 1890 had fallen to less than 2½ per cent (equivalent to 6¼ per cent on the old stock).[38] With a change of management an increase of 2½ per cent had been achieved by 1900.[39] However, Taff Vale dividends would never reach the levels paid before the opening of the Barry Railway, but coal carrying continued to be very profitable, see figure 1.5.

The impression that the Taff Vale company gave in 1878, was of an organisation comfortable with itself, paying high dividends to its shareholders e.g. 10% plus 6% bonus in 1884,[40] but stuck in an organisational rut and consequently unresponsive to its customers and the communities it served. Not that the company was unmindful of competition, and for example in 1884 had won back traffic from the Rhymney Railway (RR) for two significant groups of collieries with ten-year contracts.[41] It was hindered by factors outside of its control in its dependence of the Marquis of Bute's docks in Cardiff. Thus it was difficulties in increasing dock capacity and the near monopoly of the Taff Vale that prompted coalowner, David Davies, and others in that same year to set in motion the creation of a new coal port at Barry with a new railway to serve it. It was perhaps particularly on the passenger side that the unresponsiveness showed itself in the face of pleas from communities for stations to serve their locality. An

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[36] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, p127
[37] *Ibid*, p18
[38] *Railway News(RNws)*, May 16, 1891
[39] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p209
[40] *MEx*, Feb.9, 1884, p8; In comparison the neighbouring Rhymney Railway was paying 10%, the GWR 7½% and the LNWR 8%
[41] *MEx*, June 28, 1884, p8

example, from 1890, was when the residents of the mid part of the Cynon valley approached the TVR for a new station, and the applicants pointed out how past indifference had only been dispelled by the prospective incursion of a rival company.[42]

In the shadow of impending industrial action by the employees of the Taff Vale, Rhymney and Barry Railways, the editorial in *The Merthyr Express* of August 2, 1890 summarised the situation very well, writing of the TVR directors;

> They have thought of the shareholders and nobody on earth besides. It was this one-eyed policy which helped so much to bring them into the present difficulty. If they had had some consideration for their customers and a little for their employés years ago, it is hardly a matter of doubt that Barry would have no existence today.[43]

The directors were shareholders, and their fellow shareholders were content enough whilst the high dividends continued.

In July 1889, as the Barry Railway commenced its operations, a group of freighters had waited upon the TVR directors to complain at the way the company was being operated. A particular grievance was that pits had been made idle through an inadequate supply of wagons. The directors sought to blame the Barry for the situation, but the freighters pointed out that the delays were equally prevalent from Penarth and Cardiff. To assist in the resolution the opportunity, afforded by the retirement of two directors, was taken to appoint two of the freighters to the Taff board. The report concluded with a quote from the *South Wales Daily News(SWDN)*, which ended '...the board cannot be sufficiently conversant with the working of the line, or they would never have allowed matters to have drifted to their present condition.'[44]

The Shareholders' Revolt and its effects on the Company Structure

By 1890 the shareholders' concerns had increased, and in August of that year they set up a Shareholders' Investigation Committee (SIC) to examine the management of the company. By April 1891 the committee's work was complete, but they refused to publish the report until a special meeting of shareholders was called. The report was eventually issued to shareholders on 14 May 1891 and the special meeting arranged for 26 May. At which the entire board tendered their resignations. A further special meeting was then announced for 2 July to receive the resignations and elect a new board. The meeting was held and A E Guest, son of the first chairman, was elected to chair the board.

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[42] *MEx*, May 31, 1890, p6
[43] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p5
[44] *Railway Times(RTms)*, July 27, 1889

The allegations of the SIC as summarised were; firstly the '...per-centage of working expenses was excessive, and that the business ... was carried out in an inefficient manner...' and secondly the board had improperly cut rates, and made an arrangement with the Bute Docks Company that disadvantaged the company and aided its arch-competitor the BR.[45] With respect to the second there is some hypocrisy on the part of George White, leader of the 'revolt', as he had sent a letter to shareholders in January 1889 commending the arrangement to his fellow shareholders.[46] The first was amply justified as the criticisms of the freighters and local press, noted above, confirm. The *Railway Times* correspondent commenting on the report, under the headline 'Antediluvian Railway Management', wrote that; 'It would seem that the Taff Vale Railway ... has been enervated by long years of monopoly, and that directors and staff alike are unfit to cope with the exigencies of competition.'[47] The key weakness of the management structure was perceived to be its division '...under the control of three officers – viz., traffic manager, locomotive superintendent, and engineer...[with no system]...by which these officials are properly supervised, by committees of the board or otherwise'. The recommendation was that '...the official staff should also be reorganised, and a competent and experienced traffic manager should be appointed with sufficient powers of control, and a strong working or executive committee arranged so as to continuously supervise the working.'[48]

At the May 26 meeting Taff Vale chairman, James Inskip, in defending the past conduct of the board claimed that a committee structure had previously been considered by the board, but that they had been forced to choose between keeping the services of the then resident director, George Fisher, or working by committee; Mr Fisher remained in office.[49] The lives of George Fisher and his successor Ammon Beasley are examined in chapter two. A further special general meeting on July 2, 1891 saw the entire board formally tender their resignations, and the election of a new board drawn from the shareholders' committee, and other shareholders nominated by them. Among the twelve, were coalowners, freighters and three directors of other railway companies as diverse as the London & South Western, Midland and North Staffordshire (NSR) railways.[50] The report from the shareholders' committee had been very persuasive, and George Fisher had died before the report was issued.

Within four weeks of the latter meeting a committee structure had been established, and the new committees had held their first meetings on July 28. Prior to July 1891,

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[45] *RTms*, May 16, 1891
[46] *Ibid*, Jan.5, 1889
[47] *Ibid*, May 16, 1891
[48] *Ibid*
[49] *Ibid*, May 30, 1891
[50] *Ibid*, July 4, 1891

there had simply been the Directors' meetings which dealt with all aspects of day-to-day business as well as strategic issues for the company, although a finance committee would meet prior to the main board.[51] But from that time three committees were established to deal with routine matters, viz. Traffic: Locomotive, Stores and Engineering: Finance, Estate and Rents. These bodies generally met every two weeks in Cardiff although the venue might be changed to Bristol or London to coincide with the half yearly meetings of shareholders.[52]

Having tackled the oversight issue at board level it was now necessary to reorganise the reporting lines of the senior officers with the appointment of 'a traffic manager ... with sufficient powers of control'. The successful applicant for the post of 'General Manager' came in the person of Ammon Beasley, previously principal assistant to the General Manager of the GWR. Within months the new general manager had appointed an assistant in the person of another Great Western man, T E Harland, to the post of Outdoor Superintendent,[53] later called 'Superintendent of the Line'.[54] However in 1898 Ammon Beasley could boast, in referring to the senior officers of the company, that; "All these gentlemen, with the exception of Mr Harland have spent the greater part, and in one or two cases the whole, of their railway lives in the service of the Company."[55]

At the end of 1891 there had been rumours of a closer alliance or 'amalgamation' with the GWR, encouraged by a visit of that company's General Manager, but nothing further transpired.[56] There was a great difference in the size of the two companies; in 1883 the GWR employed 39,547 people, 12.7% of the total for the railways of England and Wales, and the TVR 3,316, just over one percent.[57] But perhaps Mr. Beasley wanted his own railway, see chapter two.

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[51] e.g. NA RAIL 684/8
[52] NA RAIL 684/14 *T.V.R. Traffic Committee: Minute Book No.1*; NA RAIL 684/22 *T.V.R. Locomotive, Stores and Engineering Committee: Minute Book No.1*; NA RAIL 684/32 *T.V.R. Finance, Estate and Rents Committee: Minute Book No.1*
[53] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[54] *Railway Year Book*, 1903
[55] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[56] *GFP*, Dec.26, 1891, p3
[57] PP 1884, LXX, *Returns of the Number of Men employed by the Railway Companies of the UK*

Figure 1.5 TVR Graph showing the Dividend paid on Ordinary Shares 1842 to 1897

TAFF VALE RAILWAY COMPANY

Diagram shewing the Dividends paid each Half-year since June, 1842.

← Trade depression

← Barry Railway opened

← Beasley appointed

← Sources: *GFP*;
GlamRO, Q/D/S
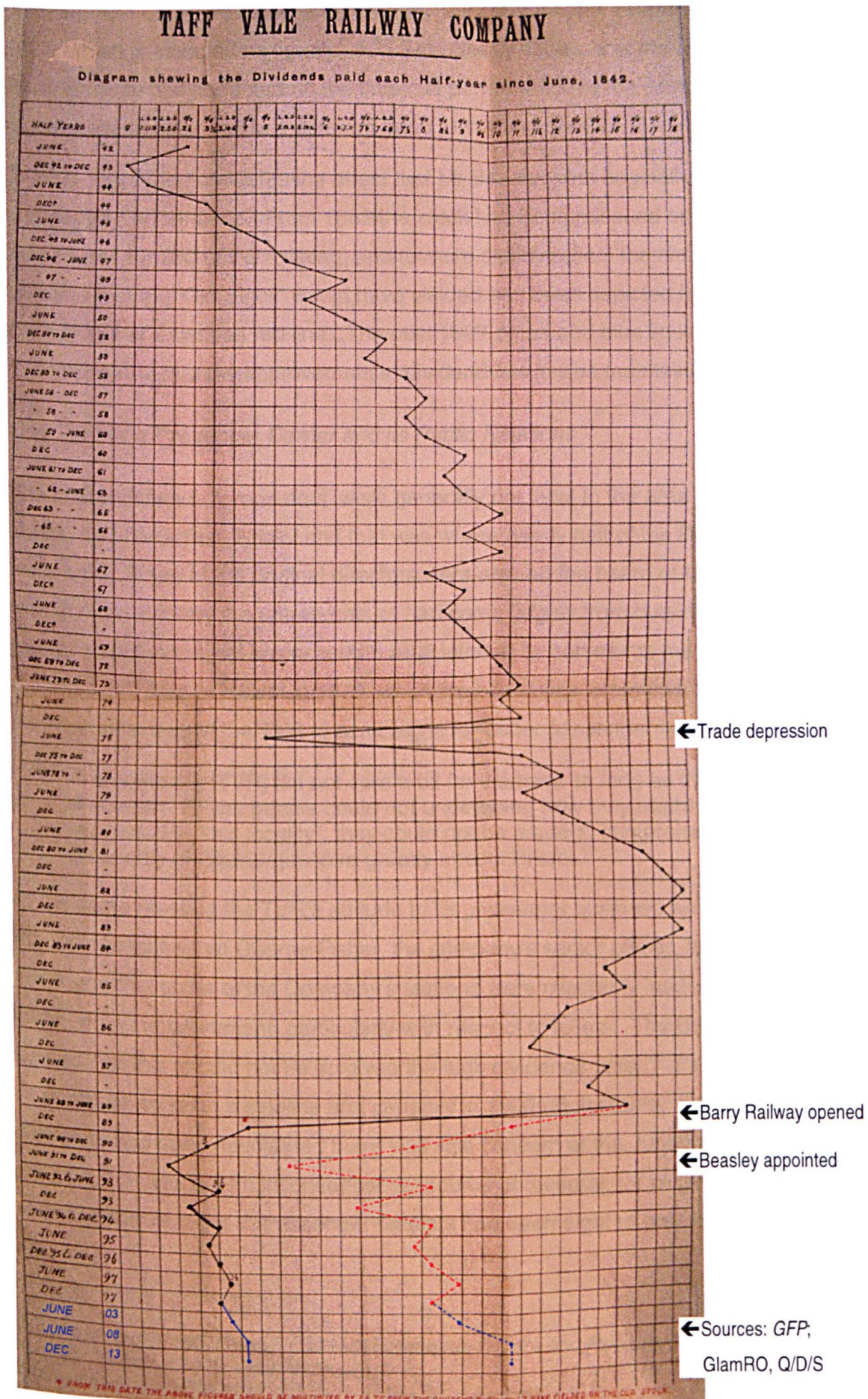
In early 1892 someone within the company, presumably at the behest of the Board, drew a graph depicting the level of dividend paid on Ordinary Shares from 1842 to 1891, which is included as figure 1.5.[58] This clearly shows how the opening of the Barry Railway had impacted on the financial performance of the company. The graph has then been extended in a different hand to the end of 1897.

The extension demonstrates the effect that Mr Beasley was beginning to have on the company's performance. From 1889 the stock had been reissued on the basis 100 of new shares for 250 of the existing, and to more clearly reflect the changes, the dividend that the 'Old Stock' would have yielded has been depicted for this project by the addition of a dashed red line. The post 1897 dates and blue lines have been added to demonstrate that the improvement in dividend levels was maintained.

The TVR as a Passenger Carrier and its Public Relations

The shareholders or 'proprietors' were generally not local to the area and much of the capital had come from Bristol and that was where nearly half of the Board meetings were held. Three of the original directors were also on the board of the GWR, and as with the iron industry the entrepreneurs had come largely from outside of Wales.[59] This was an irritation to local businessmen as illustrated by comments made at a meeting of the Merthyr Board of Health in 1879, when the board was lamenting the unresponsiveness of the TVR to campaigns for better passenger facilities.

> The company [TVR] did not care a bit for the town so long as they got their dividends. Bristol people could not understand how they ought to be interested in "this locality"; they could not be made to comprehend how the prosperity of Glamorganshire greatly affects Bristol.[60]

At the same meeting the TVR's attitude to its passenger business was clearly set out with an allegation that George Fisher, the company's senior officer, had 'conceded years ago that some of the Company's stations were miserably inadequate', and there had been no improvement, particularly with respect to toilets. The Board of Health agreed that this should not be so given the high dividends paid.[61] Passenger traffic often appeared to be a sideline and certainly in 1909 unprofitable, although as dividends had been maintained there was little concern at the June half-yearly meeting.[62] It was not an inconsequential source of revenue, for whilst in 1855 the ratio of Coal traffic receipts to Passenger receipts had been eight to one, by 1913 when coal

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[58] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16&17, *TVR Miscellaneous Papers and Records*
[59] Owen, 'Merthyr Tydfil - Iron Metropolis'
[60] *MTel*, May 30, 1879, p[3]
[61] *MTel*, May 30, 1879, p[3]
[62] *PObs*, Aug.14, 1909, p3

traffic had reached its zenith the ratio was less than three to one.[63] At the busiest two stations Cardiff (Queen Street) and Pontypridd the number of passengers on a weekday peaked at 16,000 and 10,000 respectively.[64] But it was still coal that maintained the dividends expected by the shareholders as the 1909 half-yearly report demonstrated.

The Merthyr Board meeting was in 1879, but the complaints were just as strident twelve years later at a meeting of ratepayers in Aberdare, when both the Taff Vale and Great Western stations were heavily criticised. It was alleged that the TVR station had not changed in thirty years, and that, in the years before there was competition from the GWR, the Taff considered abandoning passenger trains altogether. Moreover the Taff treated them discourteously, and the only answer was to get the directors to see for themselves. One man, who had recently visited the north of England, said that in comparison Aberdare stations were shanties, had an aspect of antiquity, and might be of interest to archaeologists. It was anticipated that the new directorate might help.[65]

In September 1891 the Glamorgan Free Press reported that the TVR was 'waking up' and had run an excursion from Treherbert to Porthcawl, on the coast, which was to be a weekly event for the 'benefit of tradesmen and their assistants'.[66] Hope was expressed that the change of Board would provide 'further facilities'.[67] After Mr Beasley's arrival more attention was paid to passenger services, and from this time new stations were opened and new services provided. An innovation from 1903 was the introduction of steam railmotors and the creation of 'platforms' over much of the network to provide improved local services.[68] But the railway was soon to experience fierce competition from electric tramways particularly at Pontypridd and in the Rhondda. The loss on passenger services, declared at the 1909 shareholders' meeting referred to above, was blamed on this competition.[69]

Initially the Taff was seen as 'their' railway in the Valleys which it served, but by 1891 the affairs of the TVR were not being as extensively reported in the Merthyr press, and the 'shareholders' revolt' was simply reported as that the directors had decided to 'resign as a body'.[70] No subsequent follow up has been found. It appears that with the arrival of first the GWR and then the LNWR Merthyr was more disposed to pay attention to these national companies than the purely local concern. Following the

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[63] GlamRO: Accounts of Statutory Undertakings Q/D/S, Report and Statement of Accounts for Half-Year ending / Year ending, TVR (June 1855); (Dec. 1913)
[64]
[65] Barrie, Regional History: Vol.12, pp28-31
[66] MEx, Oct.24, 1891, p6
[67] GFP, Sept.19, 1891, p5
[68] GFP, Sept.19, 1891, p5
[69] Barrie, Taff Vale Railway, p30
[70] PObs, Aug.14, 1909, p3
MEx, May 30, 1891, p8

national rail strike of 1911 the government encouraged the establishment of conciliation boards to arbitrate between the railwaymen and their employers. In reporting the response of the local railway companies the *Merthyr Express* reports the details of the GWR wage increase and also refers to the LNWR, but does not mention the company that was built to serve the town.[71] The position at Pontypridd was different, and the Taff Vale continued to hold the attention of the town as the main operator, with the only competition being from two smaller local companies, the Barry and Newport railways. In 1897, at the Pontypridd Chamber of Trade, a motion congratulating the Barry Railway on its 'excellent service of trains', received no seconder; for although the BR had been open for eight years and the TVR was often criticized, it had apparently not yet won the hearts and minds of the Chamber.[72]

Company Structure

The management of the Taff Vale can perhaps be divided into two epochs with the pivotal point being in 1891, with each epoch associated with an individual. Prior to 1891 it had been George Fisher, and after 1891 Ammon Beasley; biographies of these men are included in chapter two. As has been described above, there were significant changes at Board level with the introduction of a committee structure. The arrival of the new General Manager and his assistant supported the changed regime, probably more bureaucratic, but certainly more efficient, which was reflected in improved and maintained dividends. However, given the minimal changes at senior officer level, the overall staff structure appears to have remained the same with a steady rate of growth in staff numbers from 3,300 in 1883 to 4,400 in 1913. In terms of coal conveyed this represents a dramatic improvement in productivity, for whilst the staff numbers increased by 33 per cent, the tonnage conveyed increased by 125 per cent.[73]

In considering the management structure of the TVR it is interesting to note that the company followed the pattern of many early railways in that it chose an engineer as its first principal officer. Gourvish records that when railways were in the first stage of their development, '...the civil engineer was a popular choice for manager, being well respected by inexperienced management boards.'[74] George Fisher had joined the staff of Resident Engineer on the construction of the TVR in 1841, and at completion he was appointed General Superintendent.[75] Although the Taff Vale had long serving

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[71] *MEx*, Nov.4, 1911, p7
[72] *GFP*, July 10, 1897, p5
[73] PP 1884, LXX; PP 1914, LXXVII; Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, p100
[74] Gourvish, *Mark Huish*, p22
[75] *Proceedings of the Institute of Civil Engineers*, Vol. cvii (1892)

company secretaries, such as Frederick Marwood through the 1860s and 1870s,[76] they did not take on the role of general management, as had, for example, Charles Saunders of the Great Western. It was only on his retirement in 1863 that GWR appointed James Grierson as its first general manager.

Other major companies had appointed their first general managers, using that title, as early as the mid 1840s, such as Captain Mark Huish of the LNWR.[77] Whilst the GWR had belatedly followed suit in 1863, it was not until 1891 that the TVR made its first comparable appointment. It was perhaps appropriate that the successful candidate was Ammon Beasley, who had been principal assistant to Grierson for many years. And not surprising, that following the practice of the GWR, the board approved another new post in the form of 'Superintendent of the Line' to manage the Traffic department from day-to-day .[78] As Bonavia comments this clearly distinguished '...the functions of the General Manager from those superintending the traffic, to which on some lines he had been virtually confined.'[79] (see Appendix F for a projected organisation chart)

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[76] Chapman, *Llantrisant Branches*; *Bradshaw's Railway Manual, Shareholders' Guide and Directory 1869* (reprint N. Abbot, 1969); *Pontypridd District Herald(PDH)*, Mar.2, 1878, p4
[77] Bonavia, *Organisation of British Railways*, p13
[78] NA Rail 684/14, Min.406, Dec.20, 1892; *RMag,* 'Ammon Beasley', p16; *Railway Year Book,* 1903
[79] Bonavia, *Organisation of British Railways*, p14

Figure 1.6: The Atypical Staffing Pattern of the Taff Vale Railway
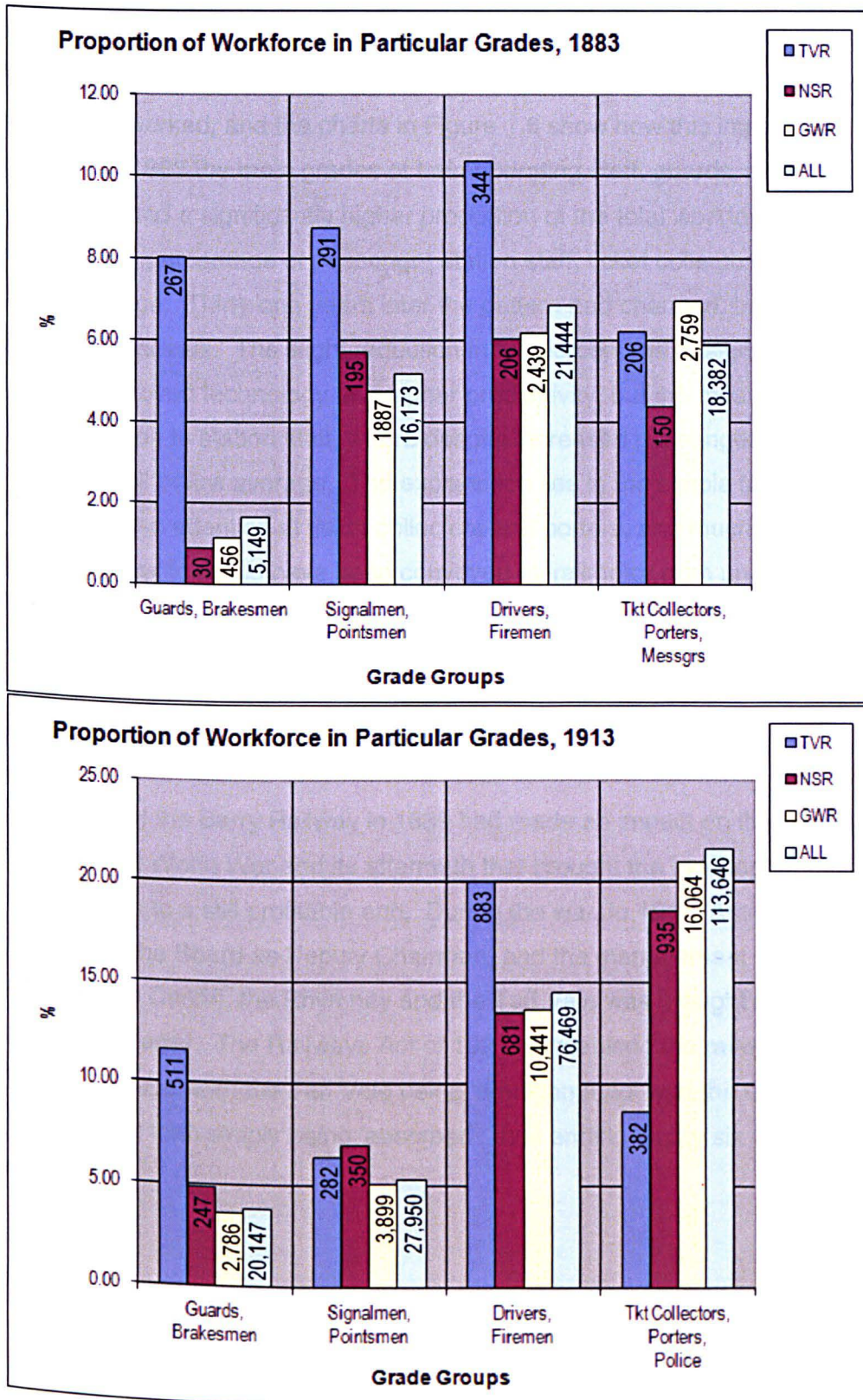
Notes: The 'ALL' figures are for England and Wales; NSR = North Staffordshire Railway (Included because of its comparable size); GWR = Great Western Railway (included as a competitor and Ammon Beasley's former company, see chapter two); *Sources*: PP 1884, LXX; PP 1914, LXXVII
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

The Atypical Staffing Pattern of the Taff Vale Railway

As noted above, the geographical spread of the TVR was small, but the strategic nature of its network meant that in terms of tonnage of coal conveyed, it was intensively worked, and the charts in Figure 1.6 show how this impacted on its staffing pattern. In 1883 the main grades of train operating staff, guards, signalmen and drivers, formed a significantly higher proportion of the total workforce than average, whereas the percentage of passenger station staff, ticket collectors and porters, was about average. Thirty-one years later the pattern had changed, but was similar for the guards and drivers. The slight reduction in the percentage of signalmen, probably reflects improved technology and higher productivity, but the most remarkable change was in relation to station staff, where despite increased passenger traffic the proportion was now well below average. The explanation lies in the simple fact that coal trains do not require the attention of ticket collectors and porters, and much of the increased passenger traffic would have been conveyed by railmotor from unstaffed 'platforms'. This meant that the majority of operating staff were not in the public gaze.

The End of Independence

The arrival of the Barry Railway in 1889 had made an impact on the company, but it was the First World War and its aftermath that brought the independent existence of the Taff Vale to a still profitable end. During the war, in 1917, Ammon Beasley was elevated to the Board as Deputy Chairman, and the management of three coal carrying railways, the Cardiff, the Rhymney and the Taff Vale was brought under a single general manager. The Railways Act of 1921 reorganised the railways of Great Britain into four groups, with the Taff Vale being 'amalgamated' with the Great Western as an equal, rather than simply being 'absorbed'; thus ending eighty six years of independent existence.

Section 1:Background and TVR History

Chapter 2 Two Men who were the Taff Vale

Introduction

The title of this chapter comes from the sentiment expressed in 1879 that 'George Fisher was the Taff Vale. There was no TVR – but Mr Fisher'.[1] As highlighted in chapter one the 'shareholders' revolt' of 1890-91 marked a pivotal point in TVR history including the transition from the reign of one autocrat to another; these men were George Fisher and Ammon Beasley. More attention is given to Mr Beasley as this study concentrates on a period largely covered by his time in office, but an understanding of his predecessor's fifty years with the company is crucial to interpreting the events of 1890-91.

George Fisher[2]

George Fisher was born in Derbyshire c1809, and came to the Taff Vale as an assistant to George Bush the line's civil engineer in 1841. Prior to that he had gained experience in America working on the Erie Canal, and had held two positions in Cardiganshire including work on the harbour at Aberystwyth. On Bush's premature death at the end of 1841, Fisher was appointed to the role of Superintendent in his place, but he resigned in September 1843. However within fourteen months he had renewed his association with the company when he had his tender to work the railway accepted by the Board. This arrangement was short lived, and he took up the role of Superintendent again from the start of 1846. He then remained with the company until his death. In the course of his career he was variously titled Engineer and General Superintendent, Engineer, General Manager, Resident Director and finally Deputy Chairman.

The rough justice of the period, in which Fisher had joined the TVR, and the hands-on nature of his leadership were illustrated by an account of 'The First Rhondda Riot' in 1853.[3] During the construction of the line in the Rhondda Fawr there was a dispute with the contractor over the ownership of some property, which, although in the possession of the contractor, was claimed by the TVR. At the time of the incident

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[1] *MTel*, May 30,1879, p3

[2] The biographical notes have largely been taken from his obituary in the *Proceedings of the Institute of Civil Engineers*, Vol cvii (1892), and a brief unpublished biography by Colin Chapman, deposited in the archive of the Welsh Railways Research Circle (WRRC)

[3] *The First Rhondda Riot*, http://www.south-wales.police.uk/fe/textonly .asp?n1=8&n2=253&n3=484&n4=486 (Accessed 06/07/06)

policing in the Rhondda was in the hands of a single constable. During the first encounter when Fisher and some railway police constables came to mark the disputed property, the police superintendent from Pontypridd was also in attendance and advised Fisher to desist. But George Fisher had no intention of giving up and returned a few days later when the contractor was attempting to move the disputed property. The contractor's men were reportedly armed with cutlasses and some pistols, and whilst initially met by Fisher with a small group, the TVR men were joined by 200 reinforcements. The railwaymen were the victors, but Fisher and three railway policemen were summoned to appear at the assizes. They were found not guilty on the advice of the judge because of the question of who owned the property. Although on a smaller scale the incident echoes a 'battle' which had occurred at Mickleton Tunnel on the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway in 1851. In that case the engineer was Brunel, who used an overwhelming force of navvies to reclaim the workings from a contractor in the face of opposition from the local forces of law and order.[4] Was Fisher following his example?

In 1856 he produced a report for the Board in which he recommended the extension of the Rhondda Fawr line to the head of the Valley to enable the carriage of goods into, and coal out of, this fast developing district. In this report, which was one of many, he displays his business acumen as well as his engineering skill, when he writes 'I am of the opinion that if a small engine worked the branch to... [take goods in and coal out] ...it would be found quite self-supporting, besides very materially hastening the development of that district'.[5] He earned praise for his skill as an engineer and the improvements he made to the infrastructure of the TVR, particularly bridges and stations. The viaducts at Taff's Well and Quakers' Yard, and the new station in Cardiff were singled out in his obituary from the Institute of Civil Engineers. He had been elected to membership of the Institute in 1869.

Such was his workload that in 1867 his responsibilities changed from being those of 'General Superintendent and Engineer' to just 'Engineer', with the appointment of a separate Traffic Manager. This latter post remained for the rest of his career, but he reverted to his original title, and extracts from the Directors' Minutes show that he was responsible for man management issues as well those affecting traffic, engineering and property.[6] Examples from the start of the period covered by this project are shown in table 2.1.

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[4] Terry Coleman, *The Railway Navvies* (London, 1965) pp98-101
[5] NA RAIL 684/45, *TVR General Superintendent's Reports 1854-1858*
[6] NA RAIL 684/8

Table 2.1 Extracts from TVR Directors' Minutes 1878 to 1882

Meeting Date	Min. No.	Minute Summary
Jan.17,1878	47	Penarth Harbour Dock Rly: site for Mission Church agreed by trustees and Mr Fisher.
July 10, 1879	956	Due to a miners' strike Mr Fisher asked if wages could be reduced; it was left to his discretion.
Jan.29, 1880	1291	Mr Fisher reported to the Board that new passenger coaches were urgently required, and he had investigated and recommended the latest design; he was asked to bring costings to the next meeting.
Jan.29, 1880	1292	Mr Fisher reported that Drivers and Firemen had had their premium removed during the trade depression; on restoration of the premium he recommended a gratuity of one week's pay in lieu of lost premiums; 'The subject was left with Mr Fisher.'
Jan.13, 1881	1805	Following an accident at Llantrisant the Traffic Manager's report concluded that it was due to driver error. It was left for Mr Fisher to deal with.
Jan.26 1882	2411	The Vicar of Llandaff had requested a grant towards the cost of a new road to Llandaff Station; it was referred to Mr Fisher for a report [see Minute 2431].
Feb.2, 1882	2431	Mr Fisher prepared plan which showed that it would be good for the TVR as it would shorten the distance from Whitchurch to the station. A contribution to the Vicar was agreed.

Source: NA RAIL 684/8

In the inquiry into the directors' role in overseeing the operation of the TVR, instigated by the shareholders' committee, the picture given is one of a board afraid of giving offence to Mr Fisher, when they sought to change the method of oversight. As described in chapter one, this had hindered improvements in the efficiency of the undertaking. He died in 1891 as the new era was about to be ushered in, and the following brief obituary appeared in the *Merthyr Express*.

> Mr. George Fisher, whom Mr. G. T. Clark, in bantering allusion to his autocratic exercise of the powers of management of the Taff Vale Railway, used to call King Fisher - and he had a Dowlais locomotive named in honour of the railway magnate - died on Sunday. He was manager and director of the Taff Vale Railway for a period of fifty years, during which the Company's traffic receipts increased from £14,964 in the half year to £15,000 per week. Mr. Fisher was 81 years of age.[7]

For most of his time working for the TVR he had lived in or near Cardiff, with the last few years of his life in a substantial property called 'Tynewydd' near Radyr. He took a full part in the civic life of Glamorganshire, as a Cardiff Town Councillor, magistrate for the county and chairman of the Radyr School Board. The latter is somewhat ironic as in 1878 the company colluded with the Vicar of Radyr to prevent the establishment of a school board by part-funding a National, viz. Anglican, school (see chapter nine). His

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[7] *MEx*, May 9, 1891, p5

son Henry was also employed by the company from 1863 to 1891, when, as Superintendent of Way and Works, he left as part of the shakeup following the shareholders' revolt.

Ammon Beasley[8]

One of the key findings of the Shareholders' Investigation Committee was that the company did not have a unified system of management to co-ordinate the work of the different departments. It was clear that the company needed an experienced General Manager to oversee the running of the railway.[9] Mr Beasley was selected for the post.

Ammon Beasley was born on November 27, 1837 the son of a working shoemaker, in the west Midlands town of Rugby.[10] He received his education at the local St. Matthew's and Wesleyan Schools, and started his working life as a clerk, possibly as a booking clerk in Stoke on Trent. When he became discontented with this job he answered an advertisement for a clerk at the GWR goods station in Wolverhampton c1858. Apparently he discovered it to be in some disarray, but such was the rapidity with which he pulled it round, that he attracted the notice of the District Goods Manager. This was James Grierson who was promoted to be Chief Goods Manager at Paddington. Beasley was likewise promoted to Paddington in November 1858 and became one of the principal members of Grierson's staff. By 1865 he had become Chief Clerk. Grierson himself had been elevated to the post of GWR General Manager in 1863, and later, possibly in 1876, Beasley was appointed as his Principal Assistant. He occupied this post under Grierson, and then under Henry Lambert, after Grierson's death in October 1887. Physically he was short of stature and autocratic by nature with the ability of total recall. He was to put this ability to effective use during his railway career which was demonstrated by his lack of papers when attending tribunals. He had married Lucy Adelaide Watkin a publican's daughter from Longton, Staffordshire, on August 18, 1866 and they went on to have six children, of whom only three, and his wife, survived him at his death on March 27, 1924.

As to religion, his background may have been Wesleyan Methodist but he was buried at St Augustine's Anglican church Penarth. No record has been found of a sympathetic

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[8] This section formed part of a paper presented at the 5th Railway History Congress, Palma de Mallorca, October 14-16, 2009, and which will be published in a collection of papers from the Congress by the Spanish Railway History Foundation

[9] RTms, May 16, 1891

[10] Biographical details were taken from an obituary in *Rugby Advertiser*, April 4, 1924, p5, and correspondence with two of his great-grandchildren (2005-7); details of Grierson and Lambert were extracted from E T Macdermot, (revised by C R Clinker), *History of the Great Western Railway: Volume II 1863-1921* (London, 1972, 1st revised edition 1964, 1st pub. 1927)

approach to the Church in general or evangelicals in particular. This was in stark contrast to Cornelius Lundie, General Manager of the neighbouring Rhymney Railway. Lundie (1815–1908) was of Scottish descent, the son of a Professor at Aberdeen University, and four of his brothers were ordained clergymen.[11] This very different background revealed itself in Lundie's enthusiasm for the evangelical Railway Mission.

In 1891 there was some surprise at the appointment of Beasley to the newly created post of General Manager of the Taff Vale. The *Railway Times* commented that; 'Mr. Beasley's chances of promotion to the highest administrative office under the Great Western Railway Company were, in the ordinary course of human events, decidedly hopeful. Again, in the comparatively near future, he must have become entitled to a handsome superannuation allowance.'[12] However, whilst he was the same age as Lambert had been on his appointment to General Manager at 54 years of age, any hope for advancement to that position was not so certain. The normal succession on the GWR at this time was from Chief Goods Manager, as with Grierson, Lambert and Wilkinson (Lambert's successor). Beasley had missed out on promotion to this post in both 1879 and 1885. He did, however, leave the GWR with the high esteem of his colleagues, who presented him with an illuminated address inscribed with the names of 228 'friends and colleagues', to accompany the gifts of 'Plate, a Library Clock and a Horse and Carriage'.[13]

There had been a large response to the advertisement and the competition was formidable, but the *Railway Times* could report that the Taff Vale directors had met on Tuesday, October 6, 1891, when '...it was decided to offer the newly created office of general manager of the company to Mr. Beasley, who, it is understood, intimated his acceptance of the position on Thursday...'. His knowledge of railway work and administrative ability were seen as '...exactly what the Taff Vale Railway Company has long needed.' The writer reminded his readership that the shareholder's 'Committee of Investigation' had recommended that the overall responsibility for control of the company's functions should be placed under one head, and Beasley's appointment fulfilled that recommendation. It was now expected that this would benefit the shareholders, customers and the 'proper development of the resources of the district'. Although in one major respect the article misread the future. As Beasley had come from the GWR, it was expected that there would be closer relations between his old and new

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[11] *History of the Clan Lundy, Lundie, Lundin*, http://www.lundie.org/newsite/book/pdf/Lundy_lundie_lundin_book_contents.pdf (accessed 05/01/10)

[12] *RTms*, Oct.10, 1891

[13] The illuminated address is in the possession of Mr A Heron, a great-grandson of Ammon Beasley

employers, and conjecture that closer cooperation might lead to a large combination of railway and dock interests in and around Cardiff. Nothing approaching this would occur until the government-instigated Grouping of 1922, and the TVR remained staunchly independent until Beasley's retirement in 1917.[14]

Bagwell in describing the run up to the 1900 dispute notes that Mr Beasley had reduced working expenses of 59 per cent of gross receipts at his appointment to 57.7 per cent by the end of 1899, and raised the ordinary dividend by two and a half percent, in spite of two major strikes in the mines.[15] But his claim to fame did not rest solely on improved efficiency, and in his interview with the *Railway Magazine* in 1898 Beasley described the provision of the various benefits for the employees, in particular the establishment of a non-contributory pension scheme. He attributed these to the company chairman, A E Guest, whose motive was described as an '...outcome of a desire on the part of Mr Guest...to do all in his power to cement the friendly relations which I hope exist, ...between the board and the great body of their staff.'[16] The pension scheme was established in 1892. However, one of the other benefits listed was the provision of privilege tickets, of which he says, 'Of course there are the usual facilities...for obtaining privilege tickets all the year round.'[17] Only three years before, there had been a 'privilege ticket movement' among the men whereby they sought to obtain such a facility, which was already commonplace on other railways. In reporting to their colleagues, '...the men regretted that the management, or the board of directors would not receive a deputation upon the subject'.[18] That financial considerations weighed more heavily than the welfare of the men was also illustrated by the TVR's approach to the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897.[19] Under the 1880 Employer's Liability Act it was possible for a company to opt out of its provisions if the company had created its own provident fund, thus it was possible for the directors to mitigate the financial implications of the Act. Contracting out was also allowed under the subsequent Act of 1897, but that Act stipulated that any private scheme had to be certified by the Registrar of Friendly Societies as being 'on the whole not less favourable to the workmen than the provisions of the Act'.[20] The Taff Vale did contract out, although the LNWR, which had contracted out after the 1880 Act, decided to cease

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[14] *RTms*, Oct.10, 1891 based on an article in the *SWDN*
[15] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p209
[16] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[17] 'Ibid'
[18] *GFP*, Jan. 26, 1895, p3
[19] PP 60&61 Vict., c.37
[20] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p121

opting-out following the passage of the 1897 Bill.[21] This suggests that the TVR had a more financially cautious regime than its larger neighbour.

Also in the *Railway Magazine* interview he states:

> '...my career...has simply been a career of hard work, which is precisely what most other railwaymen would say if asked. If I had come here [to the TVR] with any expectation that I was going to have an easy time - which I did not - subsequent experience would have shown my mistake. One great feature of railway work is that however hard and exacting it may be, it is not monotonous and for that one may be at least thankful'[22].

His words had a greater prescience than, perhaps, he could have imagined. The events of 1898 to 1903, which encompass the General Manager's involvement in the strike of August 1900, are detailed in chapter seven.

Railway historian Hamilton Ellis, who seemingly had little sympathy for the strikers, having commented on the generous pension arrangements, asks the rhetorical question, 'Who, under such liberal management, would wish for Union protection?'[23] Ellis concludes that the main grievance was 'non-recognition' and that, from the company's viewpoint, it was 'outrageous' for their well treated and adequately paid workers to withdraw their labour, '...the tail was wagging the A.S.R.S. dog, which was doing nothing to abate that vehement caudality.'[24] Whilst Beasley had triumphed, Ellis suggests that his pride was 'sorely hurt', and writes, 'One is reminded of a severely just, possibly clerical father of numerous children, gloomily wondering why, when they had been so well treated and so piously brought up, they could be so wicked'.[25] It is not clear on what Ellis is basing his assessment, but evidence suggests that the paternalistic attitude was tempered with a hard edged determination for the business to succeed. He always adhered to the principle that he and his Board had absolute control. During the strike this even impinged on his domestic space when he put up tents in his garden at Penarth for those who went on working.[26]

Immediately after Beasley's tenacity had secured the 'Taff Vale judgment' from the House of Lords, and revealed the vulnerability of trade unions, he was feted in railway and other boardrooms across the United Kingdom, and received monetary and other material rewards, although he did not need these. By 1901 he was living in considerable comfort with his wife at 'North Cliff', Penarth where he employed a cook,

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[21] *Ibid*
[22] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[23] Hamilton Ellis, *British Railway History: An Outline from the Accession of William IV to the Nationalization of Railways, Vol.II, 1877-1947*, (London, 1960 1st pub.1959), p225
[24] *Ibid*, p226, 'caudality' means tail-wagging
[25] *Ibid*
[26] Correspondence Ms A Weightman and Mr A Heron (2005-7)

two housemaids, a kitchenmaid, and a coachman, all living in, and also a gardener who lived at North Cliff Lodge.[27]

His business interests continued to expand when he helped found and was elected first president of the Bristol Channel Dock Owners' Association in 1905. He was re-elected unanimously in 1906, and remained in post until the organisation was wound up at the Grouping in 1922. His high standing among the railway companies nationally was still evident in 1914 when he was unanimously elected to be Chairman of the General Managers' Conference of the Railway Clearing House for the year 1915. At the age of eighty years he retired from the post of General Manager, and was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Board in 1917.[28] In 1907 the Liberal government sought to tackle industrial disputes through the creation of Conciliation Boards thus side-stepping the question of union recognition in the agreement. Whilst credited to Lloyd George, Bagwell's research suggests that it was mainly the work of Sam Fay, General Manager of the Great Central Railway, which if known at the time would have almost certainly ensured rejection by the railwaymen.[29] And Beasley is quoted as saying '[m]y company accepted the scheme as an alternative to recognition…I do not think it would ever been accepted by my board at all events, if it had not been so understood.'[30]

When Ammon Beasley died in 1924, the regional, railway and local press carried obituaries celebrating his long and active career. The *Great Western Railway Magazine* observed that, when he retired, '…there were more than twice as many trains running between Cardiff, and the Valleys as when he became General Manager and the mineral traffic was between 60 and 70 per cent heavier.' Particular reference was made to his ability as a Parliamentary witness, when he was 'always complete master of his case, and frequently discomfiting counsel. On several occasions he insisted upon legal points contrary to legal advice and invariably was justified in the result.'[31] In these and other legal roles he had extensive experience, promoting the great number of Parliamentary Bills the TVR submitted to Parliament or opposing those promoted by others.[32] He appeared as a witness in the TVR Case and before Parliamentary committees, and he prosecuted employees charged with offences such as embezzlement.[33] When referring to the Taff Vale case the *GWRM* revealed that this 'house magazine' was true to the anti-trade union principles of its management. It

[27] NC RG13/4989 ff 5-6, sched. 9-10
[28] RNws, July 14, 1917, p49
[29] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp269-270
[30] *Ibid*, pp271
[31] GWRM, Vol.XXXVI, May (1924) p186
[32] Williams, *Railways in Wales*, p73
[33] PObs, April 10, 1910, p2

claimed that 'revolutionary changes in the law' had resulted '...eventually in placing these organisations in a position of privilege practically above the common law of the land.'[34]

The article describes Beasley as feeling 'the advance of years' but continuing to be active and interested in life. Although his own education had been fairly basic he was able to send his sons to Westminster and St Paul's and his daughters to Cheltenham Ladies College. One son became a judge and was subsequently knighted.[35] He was described as '...not only a great railway manager with a relentless conception of efficiency.' He was also '...a great fighter for what he believed to be right, and he pursued his aim with unwavering purpose and skill. ... He was a towering figure amongst railway managers, and when it came to a fight, whether between masters and men, or between company and company, or company and public authorities, he was indomitable.'[36]

Conclusion

Whilst George Fisher had held a range of posts over fifty years and had earned respect as a civil engineer, his influence was largely limited to the Taff Vale and its local rivals. But Beasley in his thirty-one years as general manager and deputy chairman received national acclaim and recognition across the railways of Britain. However both were strong characters, able in their fields of expertise, which ensured the financial success of the Taff Vale in spite of competition and the company's own failings.

As noted above Fisher had participated in civic society, particularly as a town councillor, whereas Beasley's sole known involvement in local life was with the Cardiff Property Owners' and Ratepayers' Association, which was in any case relevant to his professional duties.[37] This was in contrast not just to Fisher but also to Beasley's colleagues who served on the council and other public bodies (see chapter four). This seeming total absorption with business goes some way to explain his attitude to and dealings with the workforce as described in later chapters.

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[34] GWRM, Vol. XXXVI, May (1924) p186
[35] Correspondence Ms A Weightman and Mr A Heron (2005-7)
[36] GWRM, Vol. XXXVI, May (1924) p186; This tribute also appeared in the Rugby Advertiser, where it was credited to the News of the World, Rugby Advertiser, Apr.4, 1924, p5
[37] Railway Gazette, Apr.4, 1924, p516

Section 1:Background and TVR History

Chapter 3 The Men who worked on the Taff Vale

Introduction

Whilst Fisher and Beasley may have headed the company for lengthy periods, their length of service was the norm for men of all grades, see figure 3.2. As senior managers they had the ear of the Board and regularly attended board meetings, but other grades also had access to present 'memorials', defend themselves when appealing against dismissal or to be rewarded for long and faithful service. In this chapter the start, progress and end of these employees' working lives are described under four main headings recruitment, progression, housing and risk. These will be discussed with reference to the work of a number of authors.

Kingsford's discussion of recruitment mirrors the experience of the TVR, including agricultural workers as a source, with the exception of locomen that were harder to recruit in his earlier period.[1] More's essay on labour markets provides a framework for the consideration of the Taff Vale experience; his particular contribution is the 'Occupational Labour Market' that is relevant to the company's workshops.[2] Savage in discussing the role of progression enables a comparison to be made between the TVR and the much larger GWR.[3] This also covers prospects of a career across the grades with the TVR offering better opportunities. Particularly with regard to footplate staff McKenna's approach wrongly assumes that many details such as promotional steps and classification were consistent between companies.[4] Kingsford considers the increase in mobility but his study contrasts with the TVR where, unlike his examples, wages staff moved more frequently than clerical staff. With respect to housing provision it will be shown that TVR practice varied from other companies and is discussed in the light of the work by Kingsford and Fitzgerald.[5] For example Kingsford suggests that generally signalmen were the most likely to be housed unlike on the TVR where few signalmen occupied a company house. Fitzgerald demonstrates high levels of provision on some companies, in contrast with the Taff Vale, mostly with the aim of promoting industrial harmony. The uneven level of risk of death or injury across the grades is highlighted by Knox and the statistics provided accord with comparative data

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[1] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*
[2] More, 'Reskilling and Labour Markets'
[3] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"'
[4] McKenna, *Railway Workers*
[5] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*

for the TVR.[6] Alderman discusses the legislation enacted to improve railway safety and the opposition from the companies;[7] whilst Bagwell shows how managements laid the blame for accidents on the workmen.[8]

Recruitment Policy and Procedures

In the formative years of railways, recruitment would be from local sources such as agricultural workers, servants and discharged soldiers. Kingsford comments that in general there was no difficulty in recruiting staff with the exception of footplatemen, whose skills once learnt were much in demand.[9] By the time of this study there were sufficient experienced footplate staff to train new entrants with few transfers between companies. From a sample of 28 entrants to the TVR, who had had previous employment, eight were agriculture workers, seven were shop assistants or tradesmen and four were coal miners. These were mainly young adults with an overall average age on entry of 26 years, who had joined the company between 1853 and 1921. Entry to the company would not normally have been from employment of long duration as is evidenced by the fact that nearly 80 percent of new entrants were under 25 years of age, see figure 3.1.

In Cardiff in particular, there was a large pool of unskilled workers from which the company recruited men and boys into the basic grades, apparently having no difficulty competing in an External Labour Market (ELM) at entry level.[10] The other main involvement of the company in the external labour market was with the engineering staff employed in TVR workshops in Cardiff. This was in part an Occupational Labour Market (OLM) with skilled workers transferring between companies.[11] Cardiff was a seaport, with ship-building, steel manufacture and other engineering businesses including workshops which constructed many of the thousands of railway wagons that conveyed the coal from pits to the docks.[12]

Throughout the area of Glamorgan in which the TVR operated, there had been both migration from other parts of the county, and immigration from across the British Isles

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[6] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks'
[7] Alderman, *Railway Interest*
[8] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*
[9] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, pp1-12
[10] The population of Cardiff grew from 20,000 in 1851 to 128,000 in 1911; Daunton observes that such a high rate was atypical in the second half of the 19th century, Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p11
[11] The characteristics of an OLM are recruitment of credentialized workers (in cases where skill is required) to fill vacancies, lack of internal job ladders, and hence a high degree of inter-firm labour mobility. More, 'Reskilling and Labour Markets', p94 f/note 3
[12] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p181

and Europe of men seeking employment.[13] In some Valleys there had been a choice of the mines, or iron works, but Jevons writing of the 'mining community' in 1915 took the Rhondda as an example. He described the situation thus;

> '...with a population of 150,000 [in 1911], we find that 95 per cent belong to families engaged in, or dependent upon, the mining industry. There are few works or factories, or other employment except for the comparatively few openings for employment on the railways and in shops.'[14]

In such a situation railways had no difficulty with recruitment. This is in agreement with Kingsford's general findings,[15] except that, unlike some companies, the TVR did not prohibit the re-employment of men who had left of their own accord.

New entrants were expected to match strict criteria and supply adequate references from people of note in the area, such as the doctor, shopkeeper or parson. For example, before joining the Taff Vale Thomas Carroll had had two references, the first from a clergyman and the second from a local grocer[16] Kingsford writes of the appointment by patronage of directors practiced by some companies, which in the guise of nepotism continued into the twentieth century as is noted below.[17] The staff registers and Directors' minute books give no indication of a recruitment policy, but as is discussed in chapter five, it was common for the offspring or siblings of existing employees to join the company. The basic qualifications for employment were set out in the Company's 1855 Rule Book, and included in rules two to four, the ability to read and write, the provision of a satisfactory reference, and written approval of the appointment from the 'General Superintendent'.[18]

The enrolment procedures that have been discovered for people recruited into the Locomotive Superintendent's organisation may have been replicated across other departments. The initial record for each entrant was entered in a separate register and included date of birth, date entered service and the position to which they were appointed. The new entrant was required to sign in the register to acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Rules and Regulations, and the signature was then witnessed by a staff clerk or supervisor. Rule one instructed the new entrant to 'carefully read and sign these Rules and Regulations...always have a copy...with him while on duty:

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[13] The population of Wales grew from 587,245 in 1801 to 2,400,000 in 1911; in 1801 some 12% of the total lived in Glamorgan, but by 1911 the proportion had grown to 46%; W T R Pryce, 'Migration: Concepts, Patterns and Processes' in J and S Rowlands (eds), Welsh Family History: A Guide to Research 2nd edition (Birmingham, 1998) p234

[14] Jevons, British Coal Trade, pp620-21

[15] Kingsford, Victorian Railwaymen, pp10-11

[16] T J CARROLL, DES Oct.15, 1906, Correspondence, P Carroll (2003-04)

[17] Kingsford, Victorian Railwaymen, p5

[18] UoWS SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2

[and]...provide himself with a watch...'[19] The main registers then recorded the detailed progression through the grades.[20] Kingsford notes that in the early days of railways all appointments might have to be approved by the directors.[21] In the 1890s the Taff Vale directors' endorsement was still required for railway policemen, and the names of men to be sworn in as special constables were presented to the Traffic Committee for approval.[22] Railway policemen had been the original general grade and over time their roles other than in policing the companies' premises evolved into a range of posts from signalmen to clerks.[23]

In the period of the study there does not appear to have been a policy of appointing of wages or junior clerical staff at station level from head office, although most staff did commence their employment in Cardiff, see chapter five. Local managers appeared to have had a free hand, which perhaps encouraged a degree of 'nepotism'. This is illustrated by Edward Clay the Agent at Merthyr who appointed two of his sons to clerical positions in his own office, where they served for a number of years before moving on to other jobs within the company.[24] At a more senior level, General Manager Ammon Beasley appointed his son-in-law to the position of Medical Officer, a post for which he had recently qualified.[25] Similarly the sons of successive Locomotive Superintendents were appointed to positions at the West Yard Works. C J H Riches, son of Tom Hurry Riches, Locomotive Superintendent (1873-1911), started at the West Yard Works as a draughtsman in 1897. D E Cameron, son of John Cameron, Chief Assistant to T H Riches (1894-1911), started at West Yard as a fitter in 1909, and within three years had risen to Chief Draughtsman; also John Cameron's younger brother, Alexander, was a foreman fitter at the Carriage Works in 1891.[26] McKenna describes how early railway managers had been recruited from among the military for want of other sources of suitably experience staff, but this was not the case on the Taff Vale.[27]

As suggested above there does appear to be a degree of 'nepotism' among the senior ranks of the company, which is evident where the appointing officer is a relative of the

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[19] Ibid

[20] NA RAIL 684/111, *TVR Register of Locomotive department Maintenance staff Inc. Passed Firemen and Cleaners: 1890-1910*; NA RAIL 684/113

[21] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, pp6-7

[22] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.325, Oct.11, 1892

[23] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p89

[24] NA RAIL 684/114, *TVR Register of Goods Dept. Staff: 1864-1904*

[25] E W Joscelyne, Medical Officer of the TVR 1902-22, married Constance Beasley in 1897; Mr A Heron, correspondence (2005-06)

[26] *The Locomotives of the Great Western Railway: Part Ten Absorbed Engines 1922-1947* (1966); NA RAIL 684/110 TVR Register of Locomotive department Maintenance staff Inc. Passed Firemen and Cleaners: 1890-1909; NC RG12/4392 129 332; NC RG12/4390 092 210

[27] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, pp32-3

new recruit. But there are very many examples of relatives, or close associates of existing employees, entering the company's service, where one would imagine that the connection has played a part in the appointment; however no explicit statement to this effect has been found. McKenna illustrates the generality of this practice with examples from the GWR.[28] Examples of both situations can be demonstrated from the Edwards family. E C Edwards, son of James Edwards, Dock Superintendent (c1865-92), was employed in his father's office from 1892, and no fewer than six other family members occupied posts at Cardiff over three generations.[29] The topic of multigenerational railway families is discussed in chapter five.

Figure 3.1 Age Profile of Staff Entering and Leaving the Company's Service
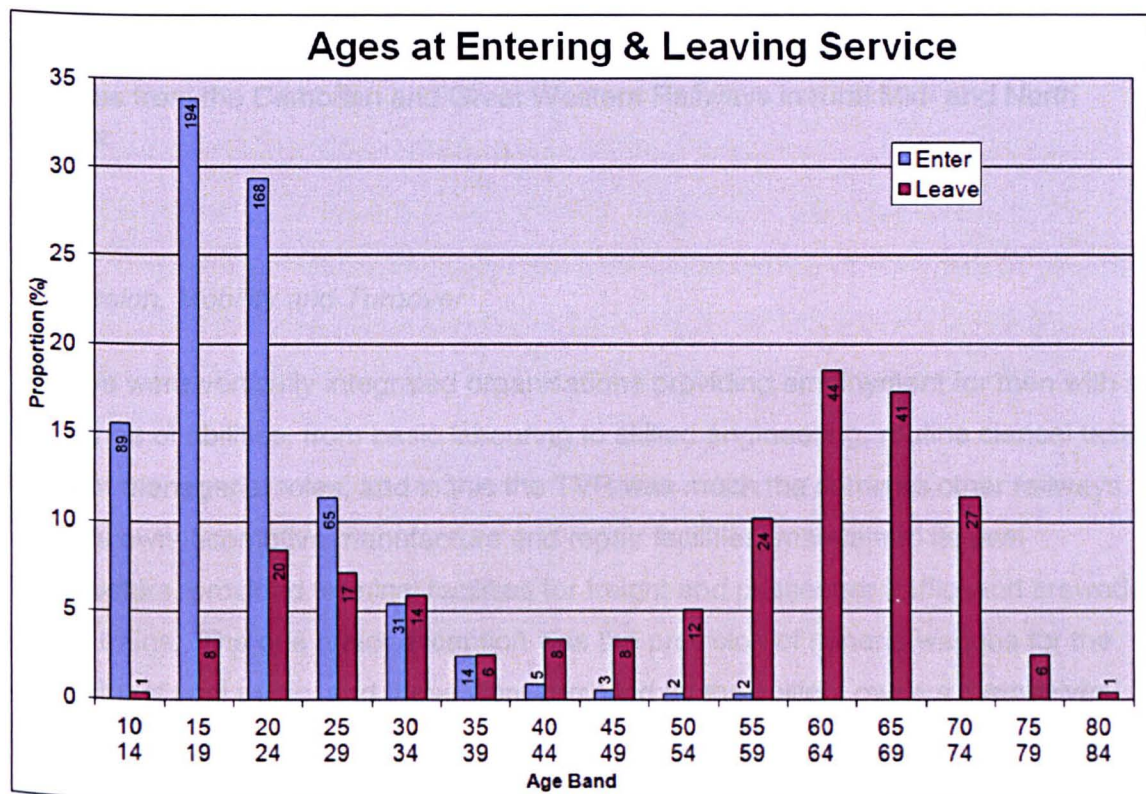
Source: Based on 573 Entry dates and 237 Leaving dates, covering staff who joined the TVR throughout its independent existence, 1840-1922, from Staff registers, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/113; 684/115, etc.
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

The entry grades for new recruits were many and various, but typically brakesman, engine cleaner, messenger, labourer, lamp boy, platelayer, porter or clerk. However, recruitment for the company's workshops was different in a number of respects. When a young man joined at fourteen years of age he was classed as a 'boy' or boy labourer,

[28] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p50
[29] H Southey Edwards, 'A Taff Vale History of the Family of John Edwards (1803-64)' in *150th Anniversary of the Taff Vale Railway: A Tribute to the "Servants of Steam"* (Rhondda, 1991) pp34-5

with the prospect of an apprenticeship at sixteen. Older entrants might enter as a fitter's labourer, or, if they were skilled, into the appropriate trade.[30] Once employed they might leave after a few months, or, if they continued, they might progress and or move to another location. A rapid turnover among new entrants was mainly evident in Cardiff among brakesmen, engine cleaners, and workshop staff in general. The age range of new entrants is shown in figure 3.1, and length of service in figure 3.2.

During the survey of TVR staff records no reference has been found to the employment of women in any role prior to 1915, however it is possible that a small number may have been employed in waiting rooms and as crossing keepers before that time. Women were present on Taff Vale stations as the proprietresses of refreshment rooms at, for example, Abercynon and Pontypridd.[31] Also Wojtczak has identified railway jobs carried out by women elsewhere in Wales before the First World War, and gives examples from the Cambrian and Great Western Railways in rural Mid- and North Wales.[32]

Progression, Mobility and Turnover

Railways were vertically integrated organisations providing employment for men with a wide range of abilities, from basic labouring to skilled engineering, routine clerical tasks to senior managerial roles, and in this the TVR was much the same as other railways. It had its own locomotive manufacture and repair facilities, maintained its own infrastructure, provided terminal facilities for freight and passenger traffic, and crewed its own trains. The one major exception was the provision of mineral wagons for the predominant coal traffic, and these were provided by the colliery owners themselves, although in earlier years the TVR had operated its own wagon hire company.[33] The vertical integration ensured a wide range of employment opportunities, where most were confined to skills and expertise peculiar to railways, although some, specifically in the company's workshops, were common to a wider sector of industry. Within the TVR workforce, other than the workshops, there was a wide range of experience with regard to both progression and mobility, in what was an Internal Labour Market (ILM). More in introducing his article on labour markets notes that Fitzgerald concentrated his research that included railways on ILMs and paternalism and that OLMs had not been

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[30] NA RAIL 684/110
[31] *MEx*, May 7, 1904, p5; *PObs*, Dec.28, 1907, p[1]
[32] Helena Wojtczak, *Railwaywomen: Exploitation, Betrayal and Triumph in the Workplace* (Hastings, 2005) p20
[33] Eric R Mountford & R W Kidner, *The Aberdare Railway* (Oxford, 1995) p38; GlamRO, Q/T/S, *TVR Revenue Account.-Half-Year ending 30th June, 1855*

widely researched.[34] In practice the TVR and many railways including the very much larger LNWR had experience of both.[35] For the employer there were advantages in having the stable workforce and worker loyalty, McKenna's 'organisation man',[36] that ILMs encouraged, but the flexibility of an OLM and casualisation gave cost advantages in the company's workshops.

Progression refers to the transfer between one position and the next, and usually involved promotion from a lower to a higher rated job. The use of the word 'usually' is used to indicate that demotion was also possible for one of three main reasons, firstly physical inability to continue, secondly the state of the company's finances and thirdly punishment for breaches of discipline. Formal grading of posts on the TVR does not appear in the registers until 1 January 1920, when, for instance, someone who had been a Foreman since 1906, became a 'Yard Foreman Class 1' at the same location, along with a number of colleagues.[37] This was possibly in readiness for the amalgamation with the GWR, which was to follow in 1922.

There is a debate as to when a fixed pattern of progression gave substance to the concept of a 'railway career'. Strangleman quotes Mike Savage's findings from studies on the GWR in querying the '...way authors such as Kingsford and McKenna give the impression that career trajectories were formalised from very early on...'.[38] Savage suggests that:

> 'In fact the types of career routes which workers had open to them, and the 'hoops' through which they had to pass to move into better-paid employment were subject to major change, especially in the period between 1860 and 1900...Career routes were not systematized, and a range of job movements was possible, there often being no clear ladders connecting jobs together.'[39]

More in considering 'career' takes his methodology from Vincent and his four main categories. These are 'gold-watch' pathways where the greater part of working life is with a single employer: 'migration' pathways in which the sequence of jobs is determined by possession of specific skill(s): 'meander' where there is a directionless drift between largely unrelated jobs: and 'fracture' when the career has a specific break point.[40] All four categories were in evidence on the Taff Vale but primarily the men had

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[34] More, 'Reskilling and Labour Markets' pp93-94; Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*; See chapter six for a fuller discussion of Fitzgerald's work
[35] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, pp123-25
[36] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p41
[37] John GRIFFITHS, DES Sept.4, 1864, NA RAIL 684/94
[38] T Strangleman, *Work Identity at the End of the Line? Privatisation and Culture Change in the UK Rail Industry* (Basingstoke, 2004) p22
[39] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p72
[40] Charles More, 'Workers' Careers and Length of Service c1860-1910', *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations*, No.7 (Spring, 1999) p111

'gold-watch' pathways with a smaller group following 'migration' pathways either in senior management roles or as skilled men in the company's workshops.

The TVR staff registers over this period show a clear distinction between footplate staff and others, in that the structure for progression from Brakesman or Cleaner to Passenger Driver was there from at least the late 1860s, and was reinforced by a standard entry grade of Cleaner in the early 1870s. However whilst there were common patterns among entrants to the traffic grades, e.g. entry as a Platelayer progressing to Signalman, the lines of progression were there for some, but not all employees. From a survey of the working lives of 156 traffic staff who occupied four or more posts it was found that 40 percent did follow one of seven identified pathways having allowed for some variation in the starting grade, see table 3.4. But progression became a management tool and method of control, with the shortening of lengthy pay scales and provision of promotional ladders to encourage aspiration;[41] although seniority lists and succession planning might diminish the place of merit. This is discussed further below for specific grades and more generally in chapter six.

Mobility refers to physical relocation of an individual's employment, be it from one station to another some distance away, or between two adjacent signal boxes or sets of sidings. Kingsford observes that mobility was 'an essential and customary feature of railway labour' and its scale in the middle of the nineteenth century was due to the opening of new lines.[42] This can be illustrated by the men who were transferred from Treherbert to the newly opened Rhondda Fach branch as described in chapter five. However the mobility rate did not decline on the TVR, but the distances involved were never on the scale of larger companies such as the GWR.[43] McKenna draws attention to the dispersal of staff at the Grouping with men moved long distances to unfamiliar locales, which did affect some employees of a TVR now part of the GWR.[44]

Both progression and mobility varied between groups of staff. Locomotivemen had several steps in the progression from brakesman or cleaner to passenger driver. Some stayed at the same depot throughout their career, or perhaps with a single move when they became passenger drivers.[45] Only about one quarter of Traffic staff stayed at the same location, and as they moved up (and down) the grades, they could be relocated throughout the company's network. Although largely static there was some movement among workshop and maintenance staff within the Cardiff area between workshops,

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[41] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', pp80-82
[42] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p55
[43] *Ibid*, pp55-8
[44] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, pp61-2
[45] The Locomotive Departments registers NA RAIL 684/110, etc. do not record most changes of location; see below for further comment

and some locomotive maintenance workers were based at engine sheds throughout the network. A statistical analysis of the progression and mobility of Traffic department employees is included in table 3.3 and examples of individual mobility are included in chapter five.

Clerical, staff at Head Office, were most likely to stay put in Cardiff, but if employed elsewhere would probably move stations, especially for promotion to Station Master or Goods Agent, and then between stations for more senior positions. The only clear picture of clerical progression, mobility including to and from Head Office, and turnover is in the Goods Manager's department registers. These give examples of each, and show that only a minority moved location.[46] Senior officers were, normally, the only group who would progress through mobility between railway companies, e.g. Ammon Beasley, although by the 1890s, most of the TVR's top management team were home grown.

There is no clear picture of the level of staff turnover before the 1880s for the Locomotive department,[47] or before c1893 for the Traffic department, because the earlier registers were replaced in the 1890s. Date of entry to the company's employ, and progression before that time, were entered retrospectively for those men still in service. From the registers that were compiled contemporaneously it is clear that there was a high turnover of staff among new entrants with Cardiff featuring prominently, e.g. brakesmen in the Traffic department at Cathays.[48] This high turnover is also evident in the Locomotive department for both footplate and maintenance staff, again largely in the Cardiff area. The specific circumstances of the workshop employees are discussed later in the chapter. At a rough estimate, the high departure rate among entrants to the footplate grades left only twenty per cent continuing with a career on the footplate.[49] These high turnover rates did not represent casualisation of the workforce but simply reflected a sorting of the wheat from the chaff, that is there were some new entrants who fitted the job and others who did not. The latter group were either dismissed or left voluntarily as did Arthur Horner at the age of fifteen. He recalled that he "could not accept the rigid discipline which at all times surrounded a railway employee in those days."[50] Those who stayed could look forward to an average of thirty years employment, see figure 3.2.

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[46] NA Rail 684/114; 684/115, *TVR Register of Goods Dept. Staff: 1871-1922*
[47] NA RAIL 684/109
[48] NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96, *TVR Register of Traffic department uniform staff 1891-1899*; 684/99, *1903-1912*
[49] NA RAIL 684/111
[50] A L Horner, 'Merthyr as I knew it', *Tydfil: A miscellany sponsored by the Merthyr and District Eisteddfod,* (Spring, 1959) pp11-12

Despite periods of trade depression, no mass redundancies have been discovered, except in the spring of 1895, when some 120 were laid off even though many others were working excessive hours; but the matter was quickly resolved and the men reinstated, see chapter seven. In fact no more than two or three employees are recorded as leaving on the same date. The only period with a 'mass' departure of established railwaymen is in 1920-22 in the run up to the Amalgamation when at least 21 employees with ages of between 68 and 76 retired within a period of eighteen months.[51] It is probable that these men had remained in service during the war years, when younger employees were away on military service.

Figure 3.2 Profile of Length of Service for TVR Employees

Length of Service
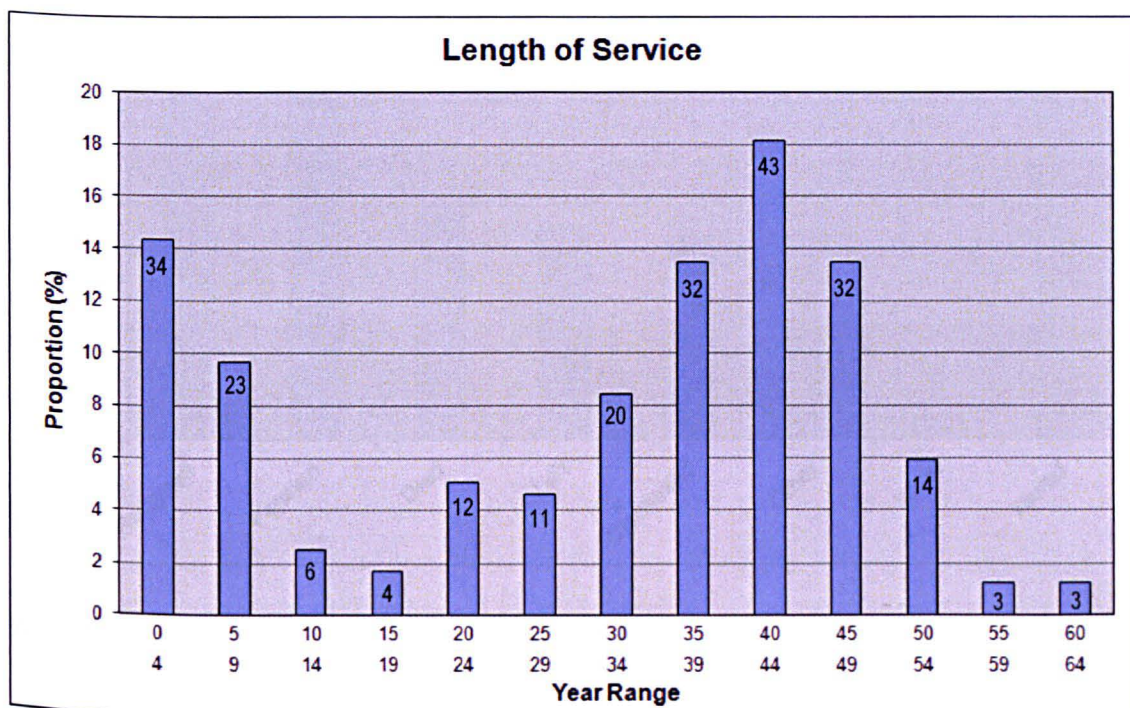
Source: Based on 237 Entry and Leaving dates, covering staff who joined the TVR throughout its independent existence, 1840-1922, from Staff registers, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/113; 684/115, etc.
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

Whilst the records for Traffic Staff joining after 1895 are generally much the same as those of previous periods, they reflect the coming of the Great War. Older employees were exempt from military service, but the younger men may have been expected by the general population to volunteer, although this expectation did not extend to the company. This is illustrated by the following entry for an employee who, 'joined the army without permission & consequently treated as dismissed the service'; however he was pardoned, and a later entry notes that he, 'returned from army 17/02/19', and

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[51] NA RAIL 684/94

continued his career.[52] Other employees requested permission to enlist, and it is noted where permission was granted. At the end of the war most returned to resume their careers whether they had left with or without permission. Some miners belonged to local territorial units and were probably called up earlier than their contemporaries, but this has not been observed to be case with railwaymen.[53]

Figure 3.3 Reasons for Leaving Service of TVR 1890-1922

Reasons for Leaving Service: 1890-1922

Reason	Value
Resigned	83
Pension	64
Died	41
Left	37
Dismissed	35
Other	5
Killed	4
Injured	2
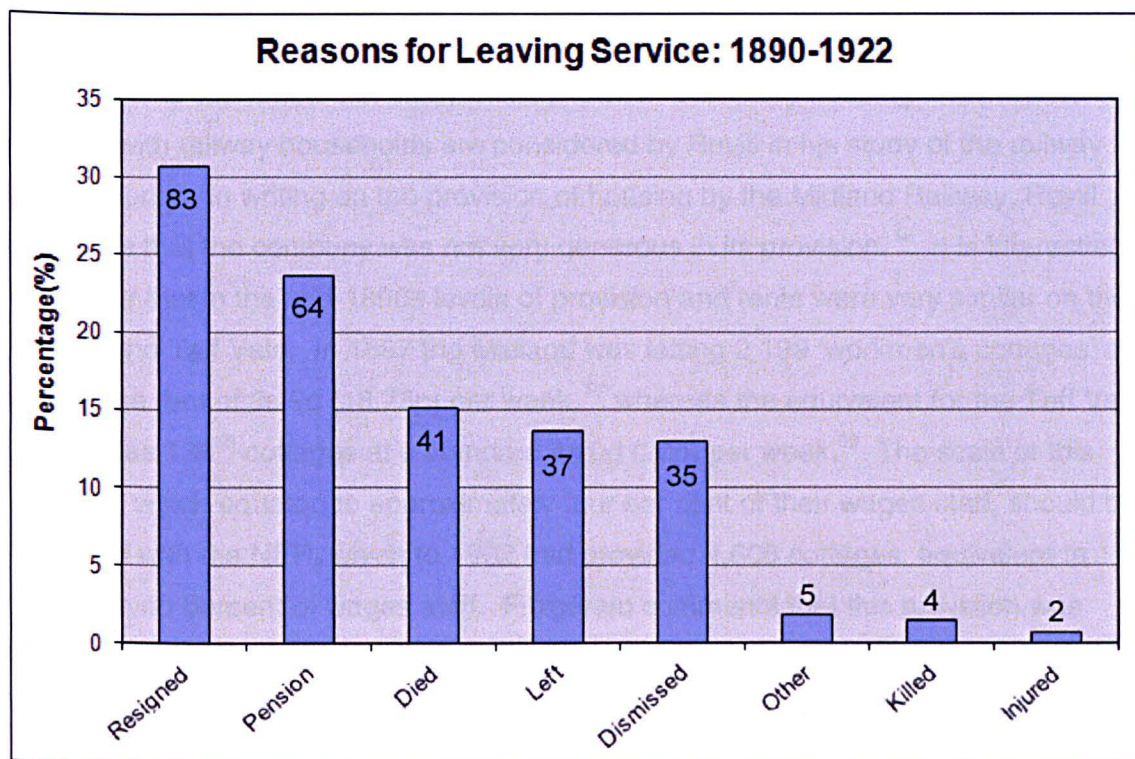
Source: Sample of 271 departees of different grades from Staff Registers, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/113; 684/115, etc.

Notes: The 'reasons' for leaving service are as recorded in the registers, and those noted as having resigned at or after pensionable age (60 years) will normally have received an occupational pension, see chapter six.
The number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

Railway Company Housing

Railway companies, among other employers, often provided housing for their employees, either as an expression of a paternalistic ethos, or for practical reasons, such as ensuring that accommodation was available near to an employee's workplace. The existence and location of company housing provided by the Taff Vale is described

[52] Walter O'DARE, DES Aug.21, 1904, NA RAIL 684/96
[53] Revill notes that Midland Railway employees at Derby had joined the Derbyshire Rifle Volunteers. Revill, 'Railway Derby', p403

in this chapter. In chapter five its relevance to a debate as to the nature of community is discussed. The paternalistic or welfare approach to housing is considered in chapter six.

Both Kingsford and McKenna highlight that housing had been provided from the 1840s both from necessity to enable staff to live near their employment and for control and preservation of company loyalty.[54] Kingsford suggests that ten percent of railwaymen were provided with accommodation,[55] but this varied significantly between companies. The TVR did make provision for 'on the job' accommodation, but not the extensive developments constructed in many railway towns. Company housing and provision of lodgings with railway households are considered by Revill in his study of the railway town of Derby. In writing on the provision of housing by the Midland Railway, Revill comments that the company was not very generous in its provision.[56] It is interesting to observe that in the mid-1890s levels of provision and rents were very similar on the Midland and Taff Vale. In 1897 the Midland was letting 2,199 'workmen's cottages' at an average rent of 3s 9d (18.75p) per week,[57] whereas the equivalent for the Taff Vale in 1893 was 138[58] cottages at a standard 4s 0d (20p) per week.[59] The scale of this provision, which equated to approximately four per cent of their wages staff, should be compared with the NER, which to 1902 had provided 4,606 cottages, equivalent to nearly eleven percent of wages staff. Fitzgerald comments that this provision was linked with the desire to maintain good industrial relations, and there was a reluctance to raise rents to cover expenses. The company considered that such an increase '...would create much discontent, and probably the effect in creating dissatisfaction amongst the men would do harm out of all proportion to the extra revenue available.'[60] A petition against a proposed 25 percent increase from 3s 0d (15p) to 4s 0d (20p) per week was received by the TVR Traffic Committee in 1891 and initially conceded, but within two years the increase was implemented with the aim of raising a specific sum of money to cover expenditure on the properties, demonstrating a different approach.[61] The weekly rent of four shillings per week should be compared with a typical weekly

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[54] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p50; Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p121
[55] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, pp110-11
[56] Revill, 'Railway Derby', p393
[57] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p21
[58] The rent increase amounted to a 25% rise, which it was estimated would raise £360 per annum; from this figure it is possible to estimate the number of cottages let to staff as approximately 138; NA RAIL 684/32, Min.285, Aug.1, 1893; Min.316, Oct.24, 1893
[59] NA RAIL 684/32, Min.285, Aug.1, 1893; Min.316, Oct.24, 1893
[60] NA Rail 527/31, NER Memo. for Board, 4 Dec 1902 cited in Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, p38
[61] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.11, July 28, 1891; NA RAIL 684/32 Min.285, Aug.1, 1893; Min.316, Oct.24, 1893

wage of 24s 9d (£1.24) for a member of the Traffic department in the 1890s at the age of 25 years, after five years' service.[62]

As far as the predominant employment of the south Wales Valleys, coal mining, was concerned although coal owners did provide housing for their employees, it was on a much smaller scale than other mining areas such as the North East of England. This lack of provision gave rise to a greater proportion of owner occupation and the development of building clubs and building societies among the working classes of south Wales.[63]

With regard to the grades of workmen housed by the companies, Kingsford specifically refers to station masters and platelayers, who were accommodated by the Taff Vale, but claims that signalmen were the most numerous with twenty percent of their grade.[64] On the TVR very few signalmen occupied company houses. The pattern of grades represented in company housing is discussed in the context of community in chapter five, e.g. Table 5.2. The convention of cottages by level crossings being let on condition that the wife of the employee operated the gates has not been found on the Taff Vale.[65] The mountainous terrain minimised the number of level crossings and such as there were came under the control of a signalman.

Where staff, such as platelayers, were required to live 'on the job' the company provided cottages for them, possibly where local provision was likely to be inadequate; for example nine were approved in 1884, to be shared between Porth and Rhondda Junction (Pontypridd).[66] As the company expanded in the still sparsely populated areas of the Vale of Glamorgan provision was made at Lavernock and Sully on the Penarth to Cadoxton line, and at Llanharry and St Mary Church Road on the Cowbridge and Aberthaw branches.[67] 'On the job' accommodation of a different kind was provided at the company's head office in Cardiff for the caretaker and his family, for which additions were approved by the board in 1885.[68]

It was the norm on the TVR to provide a dwelling for each station master (SM). In 1883 there were 28 SMs (inc. Goods Agents) and 37 Inspectors, although it is not clear how many of the latter actually occupied company houses.[69] By 1895, after expansion of

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[62] Based on a sample of 23 entries from TVR Staff Registers for 11 employees
[63] Jevons, British Coal Trade, p122
[64] Kingsford, Victorian Railwaymen, pp110-11
[65] Ibid, p123
[66] NA RAIL 684/9 TVR Directors' Minutes Book No.9 (1882-90), Min.765, Sep.11, 1884
[67] NA RAIL 684/10 TVR Directors' Minutes Book No.10 (1890-95), Min.170 May 10,1890 & Min.208 June 12, 1890; NA RAIL 684/14, Min.744, June 12, 1894; Chapman, Cowbridge Railway, p71
[68] NA RAIL 684/9, Min.1003, Mar.26, 1885
[69] PP 1884, LXX

the network, the number of station masters had risen to 43.[70] This suggests that there were between 30 and 70 houses provided for these groups of staff. The widows of a locomotive inspector and a bridge inspector were allowed to continue to live in company houses free of rent for a period after their husbands' deaths. These were apparently philanthropic acts, as with the similar concession to the widow of an engine driver at Penarth in 1895.[71]

As soon as the extension to Maerdy had been formally inspected by the BoT in 1889 and passed for passenger trains, the Board approved construction of a house for the new inspector at Ferndale.[72] The post of Inspector was subsequently upgraded to SM. Notice might be taken of the condition of station masters' houses but the decision to spend the money could be deferred as with the house of the Merthyr Goods Agent in 1894.[73] After the closure of the station at Pentyrch, the SM's house there was occupied by inspector, John Davis, and family from at least 1871 to 1881. But occupation of such a house was not confined to inspectors or station masters, and by 1891 it was the home of platelayer William Leaves with his wife and nine children.[74] For some reason the SM's house at Aberdare was no longer required in 1891 and was to be altered for letting to a tenant selected by the General Manager.[75] As the Taff Vale network continued to expand in the 1890s, the practice of providing housing for station masters continued. For instance a house was provided for the station master at Aberthaw on the newly opened Cowbridge to Aberthaw line in 1893, followed in 1894 for one at Llanharry. The Aberthaw property was in response to a request from the station master, and was provided by the adaptation of an existing property constructed for the Cowbridge and Aberthaw Railway Company.[76] The building at Llanharry was a management initiative, where the original plan for a single dwelling was extended to two.[77] Whilst the station master was in residence in 1901 the other dwelling was occupied by a non-railway household.[78] From company and census records it appears that most TVR station masters were provided with a house which indicates a higher level of provision than some other companies; for example Kingsford notes the London,

[70] Based on number of passenger stations
[71] NA RAIL 684/22, Min.197, Mar.29, 1892; NA RAIL 684/32, Min.527, Sept.25, 1894, in the latter case it was for a fixed period of two months and rent is not mentioned; NA RAIL 684/14, Min.885, Jan.8, 1895
[72] NA RAIL 684/9, Mins. 2897 & 2898, June 13, 1889
[73] NA RAIL 684/32, Minute 580, Dec.18, 1894
[74] NC RG10/5368 53 48, RG11/5289 115 p7 & RG12/4403 126 108
[75] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.111, Nov.24, 1891
[76] Ibid, Min.415, Jan.3, 1893
[77] Ibid, Min.744, June 12, 1894; Min.776, July 27, 1894
[78] NC RG13/5048 73 65&66

Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) with 27 percent in 1871 and the GWR with 44 percent in 1890.[79]

Kingsford considers the relationship between wages and housing provision, with examples of how an employer might link the two. For some he suggests company housing became an expectation, part of the conditions of service.[80] Although the TVR either forestalled, or did not encounter, the problem faced by the much larger Great Northern Railway (GNR), which as Fitzgerald records, commenced constructing houses, in response to '...high staff turnover due to lack of housing near places of work.'[81] This was the situation in the 1860s and by 1875 the GNR Board was hoping to restrict wage demands on the basis of housing provision that would tie the men to the company. Due to the high rent levels in London the company could not afford to keep up with demand; their eventual solution, after 1892, was to provide house-buying loans at four per cent.[82]

On the TVR there was no connection between remuneration and housing provision from December 1892 when rent allowances were withdrawn and added to 'salaries'. From that date everyone occupying a Company house had to pay 'a fair rent'.[83] The wording of the Board minute suggests that payment of rent allowances had been to a limited number of salaried staff. Also empty houses were let to non-railwaymen as at Treherbert, see chapter five. Whilst there was a demand from the men for greater provision this was not met. Between November 1881 and September 1892 petitions were submitted from Aberdare Junction (Abercynon), Maerdy, Roath Line Junction (Cardiff) and Treherbert. The outcome of the Maerdy petition is not known, but the other petitions were all refused.[84] Company housing could also be expendable when it stood in the way of expanded facilities, as when eight houses at Cathays, Cardiff were demolished in 1883.[85] The company was looking to expand its workshops and locomotive shed.

Some of the Taff Vale owned properties were purpose built, e.g. Treherbert, and Radyr, some were left over from the construction of the railway, e.g. St Mary Church Road,[86] whilst others were purchased from a variety of sources. Local landlords and or

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[79] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p123
[80] *Ibid*, p122
[81] NA RAIL 236/286, GNR Memos, 13 May 1861 & 6 Sept 1861, cited in Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, p36
[82] NA Rail 236/317, No. 18, GNR Memos, 17 July, 15 Nov 1875; 11 May, 15 & 18 Nov, 14 Dec 1892, cited in Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, p36
[83] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.345, Oct.25, 1892
[84] NA RAIL 684/8, Min. 2292, Nov.10, 1881; NA RAIL 684/9, Min.2930, June 27, 1889; NA RAIL 684/10, Min.114, Mar.27, 1890; NA RAIL 684/14, Min.314, Sep.27, 1892
[85] NA RAIL 684/9, Min.341, Sep.13, 1883
[86] Chapman, *Cowbridge Railway*, p71

builders offered properties to the company as was apparently the case at Aberaman in 1892.[87] Some of the property purchased appears not to have bought specifically for occupation by staff, but rather to allow for future expansion in company operations. The TVR bought two freehold cottages at Cowbridge in 1880, when they were placed on the market, to secure land in the path of possible future expansion; however, it is not clear as to whether these were let to railway employees.[88] The number of staff accommodated might amount to 300, allowing for children, siblings and boarders, but discounting non-TVR employees in the same households.[89] The distribution of the workmen's cottages is depicted on figure 3.4.

In 1903 the Traffic Committee recommended that furnished lodging accommodation should be provided for the 'Company's workmen' at Ferndale and Treherbert.[90] Whilst details of if and when this accommodation was provided are not known, it does reflect the general shortage of housing in the Rhondda valleys described in chapter four. Kingsford records that some companies did not permit the taking in of lodgers or sub-letting without the directors' permission and the lodgers had themselves to be company employees.[91] Both practices have been noted with TVR houses but no reference to express permission from the Board has been detected and some lodgers were not TVR workmen. The TVR Board, certainly after 1890, did not see housing as paternalistic or part of corporate welfare, but rather simply another expense.

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[87] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.269, June 21, 1892; Min.315, Sep.27, 1892
[88] NA RAIL 684/8, Min.1273, Jan.15, 1880; Min.1293, Jan.29, 1880
[89] Based on a sample of 79 TVR owned houses enumerated over two Censuses (1891 and 1901)
[90] NA RAIL 684/16 *TVR Traffic Committee Minute Book No.3*, Minute 870, Jan.6, 1903
[91] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p125

Figure 3.4 Distribution of TVR Workmen's Houses (where known)
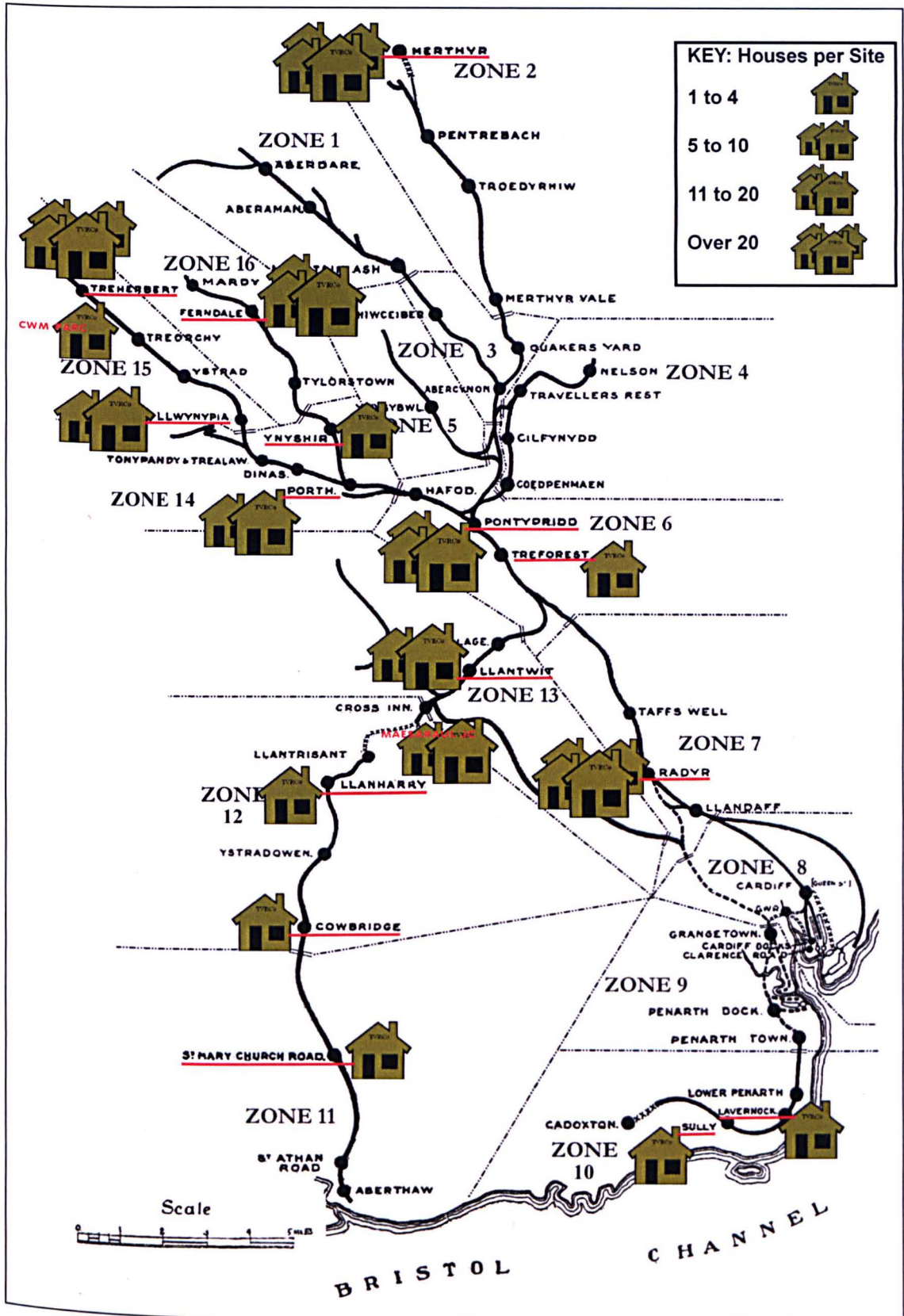
Risks of Injury or Death

Death and serious injury were a constant accompaniment to life in the Valleys with the three main industries each contributing to a litany of pain and bereavement. The pits of south Wales had the worst record of any British coalfield, mainly due to the geological conditions and the scale of the workings.[92] An industry such as iron and steel manufacture carried its own risks, but the number of employees was much less and concentrated in specific areas. The third largest group of workers was in transport, and, although rail safety was improving in the twentieth century, the risks were still high. Railway employment was often seen as a safer job than going down the pit,[93] but the choice to change from one to other was not necessarily for the better. Fred Coombs left his job in mining to work as brakesman on the TVR in 1891; in 1904 he suffered injuries to his hip and back, and then in December 1907 he was killed in an accident in the Rhondda.[94] Matthew Philpotts was a signalman on the Taff Vale and with an invalid wife and two daughters to support the higher wages at the pit were an attraction; sadly he was killed in a pithead accident a few months after transferring.[95]

Accidents brought trauma not just to the casualty, but also to those who were called upon to assist. In the absence of a local hospital with adequate facilities to deal with major injuries, it was necessary to transport the casualty to the Infirmary at Cardiff, and before the motorised ambulance the steam locomotive was the speediest mode of transport. On one occasion the engine driver who had been 'deputed to take the injured man to Cardiff, was so overcome at the sight that he fell and broke his arm'.[96] But sometimes the journey to Cardiff was deemed too risky and the local doctor had to carry out an amputation at the casualty's home. When platelayer Philip Powell badly injured his arm in an accident at work the surgery was carried out on his cottage table, and in the absence of an anaesthetic he was given a large dose of whisky.[97]

Kingsford records that it was not until 1871 that companies were obliged to inform the BoT 'of every case of death or injury of servants'.[98] In surveying TVR records the scale of accident reports increases in the 1890s from single Board minutes recording one or two accidents to fortnightly lists presented to the newly formed committees setting out the names of casualties. These averaged twelve per meeting at the Locomotive and

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[92] Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, pp122-3

[93] Bagwell gives figures for 1906 with Merchant Seamen on 55 fatalities per 10,000 employees, Miners on 13 per 10,000 and Railwaymen on 8 per 10,000, *Railwaymen*, p94

[94] F COOMBS, DES Jan.27, 1891, NA RAIL 684/116 *TVR Accident Book*; NA RAIL 684/96

[95] *Servants of Steam*, p31

[96] ALdr, Apr.1, 1922, p5

[97] *Servants of Steam*, p26

[98] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p47

Engineering Committee.[99] As Kingsford highlights, the figures for deaths were more accurate than those for injuries as it was difficult to define the latter.[100] Knox's summary for all railway staff 'killed and injured with the operation of the railways' shows that whilst the death rate shows a steady decline the injury rate increases significantly from 180 per 10,000 employed in 1883-87 to 431 per 10,000 for 1908-13.[101] A part explanation for the increased injury rate was improved reporting procedures; Kingsford describes how in 1870 a GWR report attributed an increase in accidents to 'stricter investigation'.[102] McKenna is forthright in his view that a 'considerable amount of responsibility...must be placed on the companies' policy of overworking underpaid men'.[103] This was the view of the workers, whilst railway managers laid the blame firmly at their door.

By the 1870s such was the national concern at the high incidence of death and injury on the railways that a Royal Commission was set up in 1874 to enquire into the situation; it reported in 1877.[104] Alderman reports the view expressed by George Findlay of the LNWR at the Royal Commission that 'nearly all accidents on railways were due to the negligence of the workers'.[105] Whilst recommendations were made with respect to safety, following a Select Committee in 1876-7, legislation came in the form of the 1880 Employers' Liability Act that applied across industry. George Fisher had been present during a Parliamentary debate on the payment of compensation to 'railway servants' recommended by the Royal Commission and in his report to the TVR Board he singled out one particular MP for his continuing favourable description of the company with 'its care in the way it was operated'.[106] It was resolved to write to him to express the Board's thanks, demonstrating the company's sensitivity to public opinion. As has been noted with the policies of Ammon Beasley in chapter two, there was a visceral hatred of anything that interfered with a presumed right to determine everything that happened within the company. Responsibility for injuries was often a matter of dispute between men and their masters and increasing safety measures could threaten shareholder dividends.[107]

For all that shunters were most at risk and despite a prolonged campaign by the ASRS from 1886 to persuade the companies to fit automatic couplers to freight wagons

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[99] NA RAIL 684/9; 684/22; 684/23, *T.V.R. Locomotive, Stores and Engineering Committee: Minute Book No.2*
[100] Kingsford, , p47
[101] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', Table 1 p6
[102] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, pp47-8
[103] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p38
[104] Alderman, *Railway Interest*, pp51,64-5
[105] *Ibid*, p65
[106] NA RAIL 684/8 Min.1359, Mar.18, 1880
[107] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p98

nothing was ever achieved.[108] There were, however, other safety measures accomplished by legislation.[109] The Regulation of Railways Act 1889 established the Board of Trade's role in setting the safety agenda for railways. Besides enforcing the use of the Block system and continuous brakes on passenger trains it gave powers to the BoT to require companies to submit returns listing numbers of staff working excessive hours.[110] The TVR Board approved the final installation of the block system in April 1892.[111]

Hours on duty had been considered by the 1877 Royal Commission, and were the focus of the next major piece of legislation with the Railway Servants (Hours of Labour) Act 1893, which provided a way for workmen and their representatives to appeal to the BoT where hours on duty were excessive.[112] The BoT investigated specific cases and in 1895 queried the hours of signalmen on one of the TVR's least busy lines, the five and one quarter miles between Llantrisant Junction and Maesaraul.[113]

A further Royal Commission on Accidents to Railway Servants in 1900 resulted in the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act 1900, which gave Parliament powers to issue regulations that would implement the Commission's recommendations.[114] But much more was needed to be done to improve safety. Besides the issue of couplers, another example was the tolerance of wagons with brake levers on only one side. This meant that shunters and others had to go under wagons unnecessarily, such as when in June 1904 a Taff Vale porter was caught between the buffers of adjacent wagons at Aberdare.[115]

By the mid-1890s all accidents involving injury were reported to the BoT and after investigation by a Board inspector recommendations were made to the company. The TVR Board sometimes only took heed to part of a recommendation, as when following an accident to a guard at Llwynypia in 1896, the BoT inspector recommended that the point rodding be covered and additional lighting provided. The Traffic Committee instructed that the rodding be covered but 'suggested' that the lighting was unnecessary.[116]

The TVR continually clashed with the Board of Trade over the use of brake vans on coal trains; guards travelled in one of the wagons. The opinion of the BoT was made

[108] Ibid, pp100-7
[109] Alderman, Railway Interest, pp133, 141 and 177; Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', pp4-5
[110] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', pp4-5
[111] NA RAIL 684/14 Min.206, Apr.12, 1892
[112] Bagwell, Railwaymen, p169-70
[113] NA RAIL 684/14 Min.884, Jan.8, 1895; Min.909, Feb.19, 1895
[114] Alderman, Railway Interest, pp176-7
[115] NA RAIL 684/116
[116] NA RAIL 684/14 Min.1353, Aug.4, 1896

plain in 1895 when after an accident to a brakesman they recommended the provision of brake vans. This the TVR Traffic Committee refused to countenance.[117] The BoT abandoned plans for running trials using brake vans on certain portions of the TVR at the end of 1906, conceding that the practice could continue subject to a rule amendment.[118] Barrie suggests that the company was able to prove 'that no accident had occurred which might have been prevented had a brake-van been attached'.[119] The use of brake vans did later become universal.

Financial mitigation could come from one or more of the following sources, which are discussed in the following paragraphs. Firstly company accident funds, then other company provision, such as prosthetic limbs and the payment of gratuities, and thirdly compensation that was governed by Act of Parliament from 1897. Financial assistance was provided by trade unions and finally there were independent providers such as Friendly Societies and insurance companies.

A compulsory Accident Fund had existed on the TVR from at least 1855, and Section Two of the Rule Book stated that: 'The fund is established for the support of any of the Company's or Contractors' Servants, who may be injured while upon the Company's premises, in the execution of their duty, and to which purpose it will be exclusively applied.'[120] Staff members were required to pay one penny in the pound from their weekly wage. It was replaced by a similar fund in 1898 after the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

From the 1830s one form of assistance that was always provided, when requested, was the supply of artificial limbs.[121] McKenna suggests that such provision and the re-employment of injured workers, albeit sometimes in a lower graded post, encouraged company loyalty.[122] On the Taff Vale a guard who had lost both of his feet was able to resume after an interval of five years, as a 'Carriage Roof Lamp Cleaner'. However, quite remarkably, some twenty-three years later he became a signalman, and continued in that post until he retired fifteen years after that.[123] In most cases where the injured employee could not continue in his existing post, he would, where possible, be accommodated in a suitable position. Sometimes that would be as a clerk, as when a guard who had injured his knee was transferred to the clerical department.[124] These

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[117] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.1010, May 28, 1895
[118] NA RAIL 684/12 TVR Directors' Minutes Book No.12 (1906), Min.62, Dec.18, 1906
[119] Barrie, Taff Vale Railway, p29
[120] UoWS SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2
[121] Kingsford, Victorian Railwaymen, p154
[122] McKenna, Railway Workers, p42
[123] C THOMAS, DES Mar. 1866, NA RAIL 684/94
[124] J MUMFORD, DES Feb. 1862, NA RAIL 684/94

manifestations of company paternalism were as Strangleman observes '...the most direct form of welfare'.[125]

Compensation was being paid by the TVR from the 1880s, for example a ten pound[126] gratuity was paid to John Morgan in 1884 for an injury received in 1879.[127] A formal compensation fund was approved in 1892.[128] Gratuities were paid to widows and dependents before the 1897 Workmen's' Compensation Act, but the scale of compensation increased as did litigation against the company from employees.[129] A claim for £329 5s 9d (£329.29) was submitted on behalf of the widow of an engine driver killed in an accident in 1899.[130] In that instance the company did also take remedial action to prevent further accidents by demolishing part of a building to provide safe access.[131] Four-weekly reports were submitted to the Loco Committee on the amounts paid out under the Act.[132]

Behind the statistics were the human tragedies played out as children lost their father, a wife her husband and the family its breadwinner. Compensation from employers had been minimal or non-existent and so a trade union, the ASRS, determined to provide for the dependants of railwaymen, who had died, or were incapacitated, through accident or illness. The initial approach, from 1875, was to set up an orphanage, but by 1879 a disagreement had arisen with the 'prominent citizens' of Derby over its management, which resulted in the resignation of the ASRS committee members. The union then established an Orphan Fund, with an additional levy of ½d (0.21p) per week, paid by the membership.[133] This was found to be more cost effective and the emphasis changed from 'charity' to 'self-help'; whereas Derby had only helped one child from the bereaved family, the Orphan Fund provided assistance to the whole family and was often able to keep the widow and children in the family home. For example in 1908 the Pontypridd branch secretary explained that twelve local children were each receiving 14s 6d (72.5p) per week.[134]

[125] Strangleman, *Work Identity at the End of the Line?*, p24
[126] £769 at 2003 values, Jim O'Donoghue, Louise Goulding and Grahame Allen, 'Consumer Price Inflation Since 1750', in Jim O'Donoghue(ed), *Economic Trends*, No.604, pp38-46, http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/economic_trends/ET604CPI1750.pdf (accessed 24/06/09)
[127] NA RAIL 684/9 Min.766, Sep.11, 1884
[128] NA RAIL 684/14 Min.329, Oct.11, 1892
[129] NA RAIL 684/24 *T.V.R. Locomotive, Stores and Engineering Committee: Minute Book No.3*, Mins.1032-4, Mar.7, 1899
[130] £26,762 at 2003 values, O'Donoghue et al, 'Consumer Price Inflation'
[131] NA RAIL 684/24 Mins.1034-5, Mar.7, 1899
[132] NA RAIL 684/24, *T.V.R. Locomotive, Stores and Engineering Committee: Minute Book No.3*, Min.160, Nov.21, 1899
[133] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp122-3
[134] *PObs*, July 18, 1908, p6

The other way to provide for the consequences of accidents was by self-help through the employee subscribing to one of a number of funds. Some were general funds such as the various Friendly Societies and others open only to employees of a particular company, starting with the GWR Provident Society in 1838.[135] McKenna comments that the industry went 'fund mad' in the early years; such were the fears of railway workers.[136]

The company kept an accident book and also, from the passing of the 1897 Act, minutes were kept of the Officers' Meeting, which considered each case and decided upon the company's response.[137] The range of accidents reported extended from the trivial to the fatal. For instance a guard caught his finger between a scotch and the rail, but was able to work on, however another guard working trucks down the Pwllyrhebog Incline fell off and had both legs amputated as the wagons ran over him; he subsequently died of his injuries.[138] Knox lists one of the principal causes of injury as the 'brakes and ropes on inclines'.[139]

The totals of killed and injured obscure the fact that the risks were not evenly spread across the grades. The clerk at his desk or signalman in his cabin was far less at risk than those whose duties took them among moving locomotives and wagons every working day. Table 3.1 shows the spread of grades among injured Taff Vale workers and relative risks. National BoT statistics are included for comparison. They represent an average for the period of the study and do not indicate overall trends, but as noted above Knox demonstrates a downward trend in deaths from the BoT figures, whilst injury rates were rising.[140]

Both Bagwell and Knox draw attention to the ASRS report from 1908 that revealed that shunters were twice as likely to be killed at work as miners, but set the permanent way staff on a par with the miners.[141] It could be expected that those who worked on the tracks in between the passage of trains might be at significant risk of death or injury, but they do not dominate either the TVR or BoT figures being ranked as sixth (see table 3.1b). However, the risk of death was much higher than other grades when accidents occurred. Based on the BoT data (1883-1913) for permanent way staff the mean ratio of deaths to injuries was 1:1.4, whilst for shunters it was 1:18.3. The

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[135] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p157
[136] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p43
[137] NA RAIL 684/116; NA RAIL 684/123, *TVR Minutes of Workmen's Compensation Act Committee*
[138] T E BRIMMELL, NA RAIL 684/116; J REES, DES >1851, Tony Rees, correspondence (2003-4)
[139] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', pp10-11
[140] 'Ibid', Tables 1 and 2 pp6-7
[141] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp94-5; Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', p4

difference was not as extreme for the TVR but out of twenty-one incidents five resulted in death.

Kingsford, Knox and McKenna are primarily concerned with the workmen who operated the railway, but there were other railway employees at high risk of injury. The foremost of these were workshop staff either in the company's main works or sometimes 'on-site' around the network. For the TVR as with other railway companies there were also railway-owned docks with their own risks illustrated by the drowning of a dock pilot in Penarth Basin.[142]

Table 3.1a Comparative Injury rate among most-at-risk Grades on TVR: Sample from c1878-1922

Grade group	No. of accidents in sample	Percentage of total	Fatalities in sample	Amputees among injured	No. of staff 1913	Relative Risk of injury/death 1 in
Shunters [1]	20	9	2	2	127	6
Goods Guards & Brakesmen [2]	47	21	8	3	511	11
Engine drivers [3]	21	9	4	0	349	17
Workshop	36	16	1	1	695	19
Firemen [3]	16	7	0	0	341	21
Porters [4]	13	6	1	1	382	29
Other	31	14	3	2	922	30
Permanent-way men	21	9	5	1	1082	52
Labourers [5]	17	8	0	0	n/a	n/a
ALL	222	100	24	10	4409	20

Sources: The sample of 222 injury accidents was extracted from a scan of the *TVR Board Committee Minutes, TVR Staff Registers, TVR Accident Book, and Local Newspaper reports*, NA RAIL 684/14; 684/22; 684/94; 684/96; 684/113; 684/116; *Merthyr Express; Pontypridd Observer*, etc. Staff numbers for 1913 were based on *BoT Return 1913* (PP 1914, LXXVII) and UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/3, ASRS *Census of Wages*

Notes:

[1] Based on BoT figure for signalmen adjusted by the ratio shunters to signalmen in ASRS, *Census of Wages*, includes Groundmen, Pointsmen, Yardmen and Couplers

[2] Passenger guards included in BoT total, but formed only a small proportion and do not feature among the accidents

[3] Based on BoT figure for Locomotive Department staff reduced by proportion of shed-based staff and split between drivers and firemen using ASRS *Census of Wages*

[4] Based on BoT figure although it is unclear as to the full range of posts included. Casualties included lampmen and carriage cleaners.

[5] Labourers not included under relative risk as they belonged to more than one department and their total number is unclear

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[142] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.956, Apr.2, 1895

Table 3.1b Relative Risk of Injury Rates on TVR compared with BoT Returns

Grade group	Taff Vale Injuries & Deaths				United Kingdom Injuries & Deaths			
	Rank	Total No.	Staff Nos. 1913	Risk 1 in	Rank	Av. No. per year	Av.Staff Nos. 1883-1913	Risk 1 in
Shunters	1	20	127	6	1	645	9,676	15
Goods Guards & Brakesmen	2	47	511	11	2	703	12,288	17
Engine drivers	3	21	349	17	4	347	20,278	58
Firemen	4	16	341	21	3	483	19,414	40
Porters	5	13	382	29	5	570	49,702	87
Permanent-way men	6	21	1,082	52	6	250	56,380	226
ALL		222	4,409	20		13,803	453,351	33

Sources: TVR data extracted from Table 3.1a (see above); BoT data derived from Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks', Tables 1 and 2 pp6-7

Notes: Whilst the Risk columns cannot be compared directly, the Ranking of the Relative Risks indicates that the TVR rates are comparable with UK data with the exception of Drivers and Firemen

Features peculiar to specific groups of staff

Footplate

By 1909, at least, Taff Vale Main Line drivers had reached the 40 shillings (£2) per week criterion used to define the first qualification for membership of a 'labour aristocracy'.[143] Whether such a class existed on the TVR or not, the establishment of a fixed line of progression and the superior wage levels, did set these men apart. Apparently the local GWR drivers at least saw themselves as a class apart. In addressing an ASLEF meeting in 1890 one speaker listed the extensive friendly society benefits provided by the union, describing them as possessing 'several special features adapted to the requirements of enginemen and stokers as a class'. In commenting on the high level of contributions he said that they 'did not expect pence to do what required shillings (cheers).'[144] But as they would generally live cheek by jowl with other grades there is no evidence of an 'aristocracy of labour' encouraging segregation as

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[143] E J Hobsbawm, 'The Labour Aristocracy in Nineteenth-century Britain' in *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London, 1986 1st pub.1964), p273; see chapter six
[144] MEx, Jan.11, 1890, p6

Hobsbawm and others have proposed.[145] The vast majority of union members among TVR footplate staff belonged to the ASRS.

The entry grade for footplatemen had initially been determined by the age on entry, with those under 17 years of age starting as engine cleaners or bar boys, and brakesmen if 17 or over. By the second half of the 1870s almost all started as a cleaner and from this time brakesmen were exclusively part of the Traffic department, and progressed within it. This set a clearer demarcation between the locomotive crew and others involved in the working of trains. The minimum age was fourteen years and where a boy younger than fourteen applied to the locomotive department he would be referred to the traffic department and would remain there until old enough to return.[146]

New entrants had several steps to progress from cleaner to passenger driver, typically five. The progression was usually cleaner to 'passed cleaner', to fireman, then supernumerary driver, mainline driver and finally passenger driver. There were other variations en route for some, e.g. pilot driver or motorman. McKenna describes a seven step sequence possibly based on his own experience of London Midland and Scottish Railway practice that differed markedly from the TVR and GWR.[147] The term 'passed cleaner' was applied to cleaners who had progressed sufficiently to perform a limited number of firing turns.[148]

Sometimes they might stay at the same engine shed throughout their career, but the staff registers, whilst recording their progression, very often did not hold a record of when they moved depot. Once an engine cleaner was ready to become a fireman he might be transferred to another shed until such a time as there was a suitable vacancy at his 'home' depot. The following quotation describes the situation at the very end of the Taff Vale's independent existence; '[t]he manner of promotion was that you went away until such times as there was vacancies in your own depot.'[149] It is unclear from the Locomotive Department's staff registers as to when such a policy was introduced.

It has been generally observed that the locomotivemen would take, on average, between sixteen and seventeen years to progress from cleaner, or brakesman, to driver, and typically another twenty years to become a passenger driver. The trend was that the qualifying period was extending with time. The number of years taken for progression to the first driving position is shown at table 3.2; from which it can also be

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[145] Hobsbawm, 'Labour Aristocracy', p273
[146] J ARNOTT, DES Aug.19, 1875, NA RAIL 684/113
[147] McKenna, Railway Workers, p109; NA RAIL 684/113; 264/96, NA RAIL 264/96, Lines absorbed by the GWR – Taff Vale Railway Engine Drivers and Firemen 1873-1915, etc
[148] Agreements as between the Cardiff and District Railway Company, the Barry Railway Company, The Rhymney Railway Company, and the Taff Vale Railway Company and their employees (Cardiff, 1909) p23; McKenna, Railway Workers, p137
[149] T G Smith, 'They were happy times though' in Servants of Steam, p22

seen that apart from the 1875-79 cohort the mean years figures are very similar to those for the GWR extracted from Savage.[150] The fixed and often lengthy steps on the promotional ladder emphasized the craft nature of their grade.

Not all drivers rose to become passenger drivers, whilst others rose to greater heights as a Shed Foreman or Locomotive Inspector. However, some drivers did not wish to progress if it involved moving home, and some declined promotion.[151] Others might qualify as drivers but be surplus to requirements or 'supernumerary', and then be moved into and out driving positions depending on traffic demands.

Returning to the discussion as to when any railwaymen might be described as having a career structure, Strangleman gives examples of two NER drivers from c1870, who progressed very rapidly, in one case from cleaner to driver in four years, and in the other from firemen to driver in three years.[152] The account is qualified with the rider that the NER was expanding very rapidly at the time. This contrasts sharply with the Taff Vale and in particular with two men who joined the company at the same time as the NER men; the first took fourteen years to rise from brakesman to driver and the other thirteen years, although the amount of coal carried was increasing throughout this period.

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[150] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the 'Career'', Table 5.4 Speed of entry to drivers' jobs (per cent by cohort) p85

[151] Thomas EVANS, DES Jan.6, 1879 NA RAIL684/113

[152] Strangleman, *Work Identity at the End of the Line?*, p23

*Table 3.2 Average time taken from Date Entered Service to first appointment as a
Driver (TVR), with comparative data for the GWR*

Cohort of Entry		Mean years [TVR]	No. [TVR]	Mean years [GWR]	No. [GWR]
1845	1849	--	--	4.5	2
1850	1854	--	--	3.6	10
1855	1859	--	--	11.0	8
1860	1864	--	--	10.8	8
1865	1869	13.3	2	10.2	24
1870	1874	13.2	23	15.9	18
1875	1879	15.6	27	12.1	15
1880	1884	17.9	54	16.3	13
1885	1889	18.8	1	--	--
1890	1894	15.8	16	--	--
1895	1899	14.6	1	--	--
1900	1904	16.1	3	15.7	47
1905	1909	14.5	4	14.8	35
1910	1914	19.4	4	21.5	24
1915	1919	23.0	5	20.9	38

*Sources: TVR Staff Registers NA RAIL 684/111, 684/113, 264/96, 264/97, 264/98;
Pathways and Prospects Database: footplate workers cited in Savage,
'Discipline, Surveillance and the 'Career'', Table 5.4 p85:*

Two features from the progression of footplate staff on other companies were
'classification' and the abolition of lengthy pay scales within a grade. McKenna
describes situations where drivers might be divided into five classes, determined by
type of work performed, seniority and merit.[153] Savage lists a smaller range of
classifications for the GWR and the TVR had even less. Classification gave a
promotional ladder holding out the prospect of advancement, and as progression was
not necessarily automatic it might, as Savage argues, provide an incentive for good
behaviour.[154] McKenna is scathing in his comments on classification and reports that it
was widely regarded 'as humiliating and divisive'. Savage describes how the GWR
determined to remove lengthy pay scales from the 1860s so that increased pay came
with only with increased responsibility. The industrial strength of Great Western drivers
was such that it was not achieved until 1879, see chapter six. From that date drivers

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[153] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p156
[154] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the 'Career'',pp88-89

were divided into three classes.[155] Taff Vale footplatemen retained scales that gave frequent increases; firemen had five rates with the maximum reached in the eighth year and drivers, also with five rates, reached their maximum in the eleventh year, punctuated by the change from 'pilot driver' to 'main line driver'.[156] It is clear that on the Taff Vale footplatemen had a career in 'railway work' from the 1860s, and by the 1890s the names of who was to follow who on promotion were beginning to appear in the registers.[157] Seniority had begun to take over from management selection.

From 1903 a new grade of 'Motorman' or 'Motor Driver' was introduced when the TVR commenced its rail motor services and opened many new halts in an attempt to compete for local passenger traffic.[158] 'Motor Driver' was a less senior position equivalent to a pilot driver, and consequently attracted a significantly lower rate of pay than the elite Passenger Drivers. This would suggest that it was driving skill that was being recognised rather than the fact that passengers were being conveyed, however progression time from cleaner to motor driver was no shorter.

By 1913 engine drivers made up 8.6 percent of wages staff, but their pay accounted for no less than 16.6 percent of the wages staff paybill and 6.5 percent of total working costs.[159] So it is not surprising that after the arrival of Ammon Beasley efforts were made to reduce the costs of this grade. During a period of extended unrest in the mining industry during 1892-7 there were a series of temporary demotions.[160] In 1895 footplate staff were put onto 'day-to-day ' contracts, but this was successfully resisted by the men (see chapter seven). However, limited casualisation was later achieved with new entrants by the introduction of a grade of 'day-to-day cleaner'.[161]

Workshop

Another seventeen percent of the manual grades, also within the Locomotive Superintendent's domain, were the workshop staff, who maintained the company's locomotives, carriages and wagons.[162] The West Yard works had the facilities to build locomotives from scratch, which they did until 1903. Barrie states that '...the Taff Vale was the only one of the South Wales railways to build locomotives in any numbers in its

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[155] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the 'Career", p82
[156] Agreements as between TVR and employees, p24
[157] NA, RAIL 684/113
[158] Barrie, Taff Vale Railway, p30
[159] GlamRO Q/D/S Accounts (December 1913); PP 1914, LXXVII; UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/3, ASRS, Report of the Results of the Census of Wages, Hours of Labour, etc. (1908)
[160] NA, RAIL 684/113
[161] NA, RAIL 684/113
[162] e.g. William WHITE, DES Aug.15, 1904, RAIL 684/111
  PP 1914, LXXVII

own shops',[163] rather than relying entirely on independent manufacturers. The Carriage and Wagon workshops were at Cathays, Cardiff where the staff constructed passenger carriages for the TVR until approximately 1905, then continuing with maintenance of carriages and wagons.[164] Fitters were also located at the TVR engine sheds across the Valleys. The largest shed was at Cathays, which the company opened in 1884 to replace the original Cardiff depot at West Yard.[165] Known union members among workshop staff belonged to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE), see chapter seven.

What stands out from this group of workers was the very short length of service and high turnover, with only a small proportion progressing within the workshops. Of the maintenance staff some 35 per cent had left within two years and 56 per cent within five.[166] In one sample extracted the average length of service, where the leaving date is known, was only five years, which was boosted by a small number, viz. 18 out of 53, whose service was five years or more, but a further 22 had left within two years. There were, however, nine, whose date of leaving service was not recorded in the register, who most probably retired from the Great Western or even British Railways. From a sample of 106 workshop staff over nine percent had broken service with gaps in employment of between one and thirteen months. Drummond records a similar situation at Crewe works with increasing mobility of skilled and unskilled workers who 'drifted in and out of the company works'.[167]

The range of entrants to the TVR workshops covered at least four categories; skilled, boilermakers, etc: semi-skilled fitters: unskilled labourers: and boys. With the exception of the skilled men the company was largely operating within an external labour market. In 1902 T H Riches boasted of investment in modern machine tools claiming that the company 'have for many years been steadily putting in labour saving tools of many kinds for milling, turning...etc',[168] which suggests deskilling and increasing employment of semi-skilled workers. Skilled and semi-skilled workers were available from other employers within the Cardiff area.[169] The management at Crewe attempted to stop the drift in and out of skilled and semi-skilled workers with the

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[163] Barrie *Taff Vale Railway*, p36
[164] Barrie, *Regional History: Vol.12*, p264
[165] E Lyons & E Mountford, *A Historical Survey of Great Western Engine Sheds 1837-1947* (Oxford, 1979)
[166] NA RAIL 684/110
[167] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p124
[168] 'Illustrated Interviews No. 44 – Mr T H Riches', *Railway Magazine*, Vol. VII (January 1902), p9
[169] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p181

introduction of a contributory pension fund,[170] but no such attempts have been noted on the Taff Vale.

New entrants who were unskilled might subsequently acquire one through a formal apprenticeship, or other 'on the job' training. The formal length of the apprenticeship has not been established, but the registers suggest that the starting age was 16 years and lasted for five years.[171] Where apprentices left at the end of their training, it was probably to take up other engineering jobs in the Cardiff area, e.g. Fred Pitman, the son of a TVR engine driver left the company taking his skill with him. But Arthur Whitehorn, probably the son of a TVR blacksmith, served his apprenticeship as a blacksmith and remained with the company.[172] An example of a skilled entrant was Robert Lynden who had been working as a blacksmith in Birmingham in 1881. By 1891 he was in Cardiff working as a 'boiler and ship plater' and a few months later he joined the TVR as a boilermaker. But within seven months he had been dismissed as his 'services were no longer required' and by 1911 he was working as a boilermaker in Barrow in Furness.[173] Both Lynden and Pitman demonstrate how they operated within an occupational labour market. The former came from a marine engineering business in Cardiff before joining the TVR whereas the latter took the skills acquired on the TVR to a similar business.

There was a high turnover of workmen, with explanations in the register of 'services no longer required' or 'reducing hands',[174] which suggests the 'casualisation' of the labour force. When a tradesman left with such a comment, there is no recorded attempt to replace that individual with someone of the same trade. This would seem to indicate that demand for that person's skill had diminished. Labourers and fitters on the other hand, whatever the reason for leaving, might be replaced. Six months after the end of the five week Fitters' Strike in 1895 (see chapter seven) the Locomotive Superintendent approached the Locomotive and Stores Committee for permission to recruit men to clear the backlog of maintenance. The Committee authorised him 'to engage men as required to dispose of the arrears of work in the shops and to report at each Board Meeting the number of hands employed.'[175] This clearly demonstrates the casual employment pattern.

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[170] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p124
[171] NA RAIL 684/110
[172] F PITMAN, DES Oct.3, 1898, NA RAIL 684/110; NC RG13/4977 97 75; RG14/32104 137; A WHITEHORN, DES Sep.3, 1888; RG12/4390 62 325; RG13/4977 102 69; RG14/32100 332;
[173] R LYNDEN, DES June 29, 1891, NA RAIL 684/110; RG11/2966 20 180; RG12/4396 106 260; RG13/4010 94 168
[174] NA RAIL 684/110
[175] NA RAIL 684/22 Min. 142, Mar.17, 1896

Although there were a majority who might have come and gone, there was a small core of skilled and unskilled workers who remained and progressed within the company. This pattern contrasts with that encountered by Drummond in her study of Crewe where the core of skilled workers was becoming more established over time with a periphery of skilled workers who moved across the country.[176] The internal labour market among TVR workshop staff was small. There were aspiring locomotive engineers that might start as draughtsmen and progress within the works, whilst others became part of an OLM to join another railway company. There were also skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled men who progressed within the company. Some might become foremen or acquire new skills such as the labourer who became a crane driver.[177]

Traffic

The Traffic department was broadly based and had included the men who maintained the tracks as well as those who operated the trains, apart from driving and firing the locomotives. At some stage the platelayers and associated grades were separated in the records from Traffic staff, but separate registers do not appear to have survived. When the Board committee structure was created in the early 1890s permanent way staff were grouped with the Locomotive Superintendent's department. The traffic department employed the largest group of wages grade staff comprising 34 percent of the total.[178] Some new entrants might be only twelve or thirteen years of age[179] and would start as a lamp boy or messenger, rather than the more usual platelayer or porter. In earlier decades there were even a small number of boys who entered the company's employ aged ten or eleven years.[180] On the GWR young men were recruited as boy porters or boy clerks to reduce wage costs, but no indication of such a policy has been found on the TVR.[181]

They were more likely to be relocated than other grades, and this could produce up to twelve or more moves for some individuals; although there might be stability for the latter half of a long career with, on average, 48 percent of the time being spent in their final employment (see table 3.3 below). The inter-station moves were for a variety of reasons, for promotion, requirements of the service, and demotion as a disciplinary measure. Kingsford highlights the increase in mobility over the decades prior to this

[176] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p126
[177]
[178] T J COURT, DES Aug.20, 1900, NA RAIL 684/110
[179] PP 1914, LXXVII
[180] e.g. A CLEMENTS, DES Jan.14, 1891 aged c12 years as a messenger, NA RAIL 684/96
[181] e.g. W H STEPHENSON, DES 1871 aged c11 years as a 'greaser', NA RAIL 684/94
Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p60

study, which continued as part of railway life, although his analysis shows clerks more likely to move than traffic staff.[182]

Mobility among 316 Traffic staff has been analysed and is summarised in table 3.3. It indicates that just over 70 percent of men in the sample changed jobs at least once, and on average these would have at least four jobs during their time with the company. However, only 36 percent had a change of post that also required a change of 'zone'; see Sources and Methods and figure 3.4 for the geographical spread of the zones. The 36 percent would criss-cross the company's domain, on average, experiencing more than two changes of zone. The first change of job, which would result in a change of zone, occurred three years later than the first change of post. Given that the average age at the first move across zones was 29 years, it would be expected that the employee would be married and be in the process of raising a family; see table 4.3 for comparative data for miners and railwaymen. Furthermore these transfers might involve moving house especially if the move involved two or more zones; this is considered further in chapter five. The estimated distribution of TVR employees is shown in figure 5.1.

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[182] *Ibid*, pp56-58

Table 3.3 Mobility of Traffic Department Employees

Mobility of Traffic Department Employees

Outline of Working Life

Mean Age at Date Entered Service	23yrs 1mths
Median Age at Date Entered Service	21yrs 9mths
Mean Length of Service	31yrs 4mths

Progression

Number changing post	223 (70.6 %)
Mean No. of posts per Traffic employee	4.3
Mean Age at first post change	26yrs 2mths
Mean Length of Service at first post change	3yrs 8mths
Mean Age at last post change	39yrs 4mths
Mean Length of Service at last post change	16yrs 3mths

Mobility

Number changing Zone	114 (36.0 %)
Mean Age at first zone change	28yrs 11mths
Mean Length of Service at first zone change	6yrs 7mths
Number moving more than one zone at change of post	80 (25.3 %)
Mean Age at first multi-zone change	29yrs 11mths
Mean Length of Service at first multi-zone change	8yrs 1mth

Source: Based on a sample of 316 employees with details extracted from *TVR Staff Registers*, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/99

Platelayer had been the most common entry position prior to 1890 with 18.2 percent of recruits, followed by guards and signalmen on 15.4 percent and 14.6 percent respectively. After 1890 the top two starting grades had changed to brakesmen on 24.6 percent and porters on 24.1 percent, well ahead of lampmen and assistant signalmen on 9.1 percent and 5.4 percent respectively. The significance of the changes is in the development of entry grades that provided a form of apprenticeship for the signalling and guarding roles. Whereas prior to 1890 men could enter the company as signalmen or guards, after that time there were the entry grades of lampman or assistant signalman for the former role, and brakesman for the latter.[183]

Signal boxes were classified according to the complexity and level of traffic, and had been identified by the shift length of the men who worked them, viz. eight, ten or twelve

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[183] NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/99, etc.

hours. But by 1909 all signalmen had a standard working week of sixty hours. The Taff Vale had five signal boxes, which because of their importance were awarded 'special rate' status with a higher level of remuneration, and it was possible for a lamplad to progress to such a post. [184] The five boxes or 'cabins', were Pontypridd Junction, Penarth Junction (Radyr), Cogan Junction, Rhondda Fach Junction (Porth) and P.C.&N. Junction (Pontypridd). All five were situated at pinch points in the network, where bad regulation could result in substantial delay. But even for these posts the top wage rate at 32 shillings (£1.60) per week was substantially lower than the starting rate for Main Line engine drivers of 42 shillings (£2.10).[185] The signalmen's struggle to achieve better pay and conditions is discussed in chapter seven.

By 1900 the principle of seniority was firmly established as is illustrated by punishments meted out by the TVR board to two guards involved in collisions. The first was punished by loss of two years' seniority and the second by the loss of one.[186] Another guard had been due for promotion to guard in 1919 before he had been demobilised, but once he had returned to the company in January 1920 his seniority date was recorded as March 1919.[187] By the turn of the twentieth century progression was increasingly based on seniority with succession planning rather than each promotion being based on merit, but advancement could be hindered by the disciplinary process.

Table 3.4 Promotional Ladders or 'Career' Patterns for Traffic Staff 1860-1914

Career Patterns	No.
Platelayer* - Signalman - Signalman [higher class] - (Spl. Rate Signalman)	21
Brakesman* - Guard - Train Former - (Yard Foreman)	18
Brakesman* - Guard - Passenger Guard/Inspector	7
Coupler* - Shunter - Train Former - Foreman -(Inspector)	7
Coupler - Brakesman - Pilot Guard - Goods Guard	5
Platelayer - Foreman Platelayer - (P W Inspector)	3
Porter - Foreman - Platform Inspector - Station Inspector	2
Key: * Entry grade varies Total	63

Source: Based on a sample of 156 employees with details extracted from *TVR Staff Registers*, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96; 684/99, etc.

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[184] A T NEWMAN, DES May 11, 1891, NA RAIL 684/96
[185] *Agreements as between TVR and employees*
[186] NA RAIL 684/11, *TVR Directors' Minute Book No.11*, Min.443, Jan.22,1900
[187] Tom SPILLER, DES Feb.2, 1912, NA RAIL 684/99

Permanent Way

In the earlier period platelayers had progressed to signalmen, often rapidly, whilst some stayed in that grade and a few would progress to become a Foreman Platelayer, or exceptionally Permanent Way Inspector. The 1909 pay agreement subdivided permanent way staff according to the type of work undertaken and interestingly where they were based. The subdivisions were platelayers, ballast gangs and relaying gangs, and the platelayers' pay was determined by the type of district in which they were located, viz. 'town', 'mining' or 'agricultural', in descending order.[188]

Clerks and Station Masters

Head office officials and clerks had more stability than most Traffic staff and moved much less frequently, with a small minority moving to a limited number of out-based jobs.[189] A specific register of station based clerical staff has not been discovered, but Goods Department clerical records give a clear picture of promotion within an office and transfers to or from other stations and head office.[190] Station Masters and other clerical staff at Goods and Passenger stations formed 54 percent of salaried staff.[191] Towards the end of its independent existence junior clerks on the Taff Vale automatically became senior clerks at eighteen.[192] However, the pay of a junior clerk started quite low at seven shillings per week, although the former employee quoted did receive an extra five shillings per week war bonus, when he started in 1917.[193] Whilst some clerical staff might progress to junior management posts such as Station Master, the officers of the company were either attracted from other companies, or selected from head office staff.[194] Clerks had had a lengthy pay scale that extended to eighteen years service commencing at five shillings (25p) per week for year one to £85 per annum for years seventeen and eighteen.[195]

Station Masters were drawn from both manual and non-manual grades. For example Edward Jewell started as a messenger and progressed through the clerical grades,[196] whilst Edward Davies, who had started as an engine cleaner, progressed through the manual grades in the Traffic department.[197] Those who had reached the position of

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[188] *Agreements as between TVR and employees,* p22
[189] NA RAIL 1057/1857/2, *TVR Details of Directors and Officers*
[190] NA RAIL 684/114; 684/115
[191] PP 1914, LXXVII
[192] *Servants of Steam,* p41
[193] *Ibid,* p16
[194] NA RAIL 1057/1857/2
[195] Handwritten copy of c1895 affixed to NA RAIL 684/114; Introduced May 1890 see *MEx,* Aug.23, 1890, p3
[196] E F JEWELL, DES 1881, *GWRM,* Vol.XXXIX, March (1927), p118
[197] E DAVIES, DES June 1866, NA RAIL 684/94,

station master in mid-career would usually progress from station to station, each post increasing in status. Oscar Hurford had been in charge at Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan, following which he was moved to Walnut Tree Junction on the main line, and he was later promoted to the second most important station on the network, Pontypridd. [198] The clerks were unhappy when station masters were appointed from among the wages grades rather from their own ranks, and with clerks from other companies expressed their discontent.[199]

Conclusion

In this chapter the working lives of the Taff Vale employees have been examined, covering recruitment to retirement, with examination of the possibilities for a career, being moved across the network, housed by the company and the risks of the job. The underlying pattern of railway employment was that if a new recruit, typically under-twenty-one years old, settled and continued for a few years, this was a job for life. Where adults were recruited the pattern followed that described by Kingsford with agricultural workers still as a main source; however, by the time of this study the shortage of experienced footplatemen to train recruits had passed.[200] More's framework of labour markets has been discussed and it has been shown that the internal labour market predominated.[201] External labour markets were only engaged with in recruiting unskilled workers at the start of a working life or in meeting the varying demands of the company's workshops. Casualisation was evident in these workshops with both skilled and unskilled workers, but it has been demonstrated that the skilled workers were part of an occupational labour market that took them from one company to the next as the demand from their skills dictated.

This chapter has provided a detailed analysis of progression and mobility across the entire company and has demonstrated that whilst footplatemen had their career structure before 1880, in accord with the Savage's findings on the GWR, on the Taff Vale the traffic grades were also developing career ladders from that date.[202] Another difference from Savage's findings was the survival of lengthy pay scales on the TVR. Particularly with regard to footplate staff it has been shown that McKenna's is wrong in assuming that many details such as promotional steps and classification were

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198 NA RAIL 684/14, Min.486, Apr.25, 1893
199 *MEx*,Oct.25, 1890, p6
200 Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*
201 More, 'Reskilling and Labour Markets'
202 Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"'

consistent between companies.[203] Kingsford has described how mobility became a feature of railway employment, which has also been found to be true on the Taff Vale, but unlike his examples, wages staff moved more than clerical staff, probably due to differing proportions of grades on the TVR. Progression varied by grade and stage of working life, but turnover did not vary over the period, and reflected the stability of those who were accepted and stayed. They might then remain in the same grade at the same location for the rest of their working lives.

With respect to housing provision it has been shown that the TVR housed a much smaller proportion of its workers than for example the NER, but much the same as another large company, the Midland. Fitzgerald argues that high levels of provision were aimed at promoting industrial harmony unlike the less generous policy of the Taff Vale.[204] Kingsford's analysis suggests that generally signalmen were the most likely to be housed in contrast to the TVR where few signalmen occupied a company house and train operating staff and platelayers predominated.

It has been demonstrated that for many grades there was a constant threat of injury or death, but these risks are shown to have been in line with the national figures for the period. It has been discussed how legislation, particularly as detailed by Alderman, was gradually introduced to ensure more complete reporting of accidents and enforce safety measures.[205] Knox shows how injuries increased whilst deaths decreased and one explanation advanced was the difficulty in defining injuries whilst with death there is no dubiety.[206] The reaction of the TVR management to legislation and its attitude towards the BoT has been shown to be combative, but increasingly compensation was paid to the victims and dependants. This was true on most companies, and accords with Bagwell's report of how managements had originally laid the blame for accidents on the workmen.[207]. The uneven levels of risk demonstrated by Knox and Kingsford were replicated on the TVR with shunters as the most at risk grade.

In relation to the following chapters the stability gave greater opportunities to be part of local society, progression might also bring recognition. Many of the topics considered are also discussed in chapter five in context of the formation of a 'network community'. But before that various concepts of community are examined in chapter four. Chapter six then picks up themes of the career, length of service, loyalty and mitigation for injuries in the context of paternalism and welfarism.

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[203] McKenna, *Railway Workers*
[204] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*
[205] Alderman, *Railway Interest*
[206] Knox, 'Blood on the Tracks'
[207] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*

Section 2:TVR Community and People

Chapter 4 Definition of Community and its Features

The previous chapters have introduced the company followed by the men who headed it and those who were employed by it. Reference has been made to the range of locations served and it was in these areas that the men lived and worked. But they were a small minority within almost all of these areas where the chief source of employment was the extraction and export of coal.

Defining Community

Thus far the word 'community' has been avoided except where it had been used by contemporaries, and in discussion of the historiography. Defining 'community' has been a task debated for well over fifty years with some concluding that it was impossible to achieve anything like a consensus and therefore had abandoned the endeavour.[1] For others such a concept or phenomenon was accepted as an idea to be researched and described whilst its political origins and relevance were debated.[2] An alternative way of avoiding the definition debate was to treat it as a symbol of the realities on the ground.[3] Few however have rejected the idea completely and even when they thought they had were forced back on to using the word.[4] Van Meijl concludes his recent essay "since Hillery's inventory of the wide range of different meanings in 1955 the concept of community continues to be used, just like culture, although there is consensus in academia about its limited analytical value."[5] The debate spans a wide range of disciplines including anthropology, geography, history, sociology and so it should not then surprise us that consensus has not been achieved.

Three texts stand out from the large volume of literature on 'community' and 'community studies' by virtue of the number of citations over a long period right up to the present time. These are in order of writing: F Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*,[6] G A, Hillery,Jr, 'Definitions of community: areas of agreement'[7] and Margaret Stacey, 'The Myth of Community Studies'.[8]

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[1] As reported by Dennis & Daniels, 'Community and the Social Geography', p7
[2] E.g. Pearson, 'Knowing one's place'
[3] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, pp11-12
[4] C J Calhoun, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities: some problems in Macfarlane's proposal', *Social History*, Vol.3, No.3, October 1978, p363.
[5] Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p144
[6] Tönnies, *Community and Association*
[7] Hillery, 'Definitions of community'
[8] Stacey, 'Myth of community studies'

Tönnies was writing at a time of transition from a rural society to an industrialised one and introduced scholars to the concepts of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*; the former usually translated as 'community' and the latter as 'society' or 'association'. *Gemeinschaft* represented the rural idyll of a close-knit group with shared beliefs, shared experiences, linked by kinship and 'wedded to the land in lasting union'.[9] In contrast *gesellschaft* was a construct achieved by rational conventions and legally binding agreements which bore a resemblance to *gemeinschaft* and had been brought about through the process of industrialization. Cohen paraphrases Tönnies' description of the transition as being from '*gemeinschaft*, the society of intimacy, of close personal knowledge, of stability,' to '*gesselschaft*, a society characterized by ego-focused, highly specific and possibly discontinuous relationships, in which the individual interacts within different social milieux for different purposes.'[10] Van Meijl comments that this 'ideal typical distinction drew on Marx's theory of alienation and criticised rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, which supposedly undermined the traditional communitarian *Gemeinschaft* in the German countryside.'[11] The move from Welsh rural settlements to the industrial conurbations of the Glamorganshire Valleys might be likened to this transition, but this was not single rapid universal transformation, in fact as described below, some of the Welsh brought the equivalent of *Gemeinschaft* into the new mining settlements.

In the mid nineteen-fifties Hillery carried out an extensive survey of the use of the term 'community' and investigated ninety-four sociological definitions which he claimed only had a single element in common; they all dealt with people.[12] This lack of consistency has been seized upon by some to write off its use altogether; however van Meijl has recently concluded that consistency is not entirely lacking. He notes that 'the majority of studies contained other points of commonality; 69 of the 94 were in accord that a community should be understood as meaning a group of people who inhabit a common territory for at least some of the time, who share social interaction and who have one or more additional common ties'.[13]

Stacey's 1969 essay 'The Myth of Community Studies' continues to be cited, usually in support for dismissal of the usefulness of 'community' as a concept.[14] A key reason for its rejection is the confusion that has arisen over definitions and she highlights

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[9] F Tönnies, *Community and Association*, p240 cited in D B Clark, 'The concept of community: a re-examination', *Sociological Review*, XXI, 3 (August 1973) p398
[10] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, p22
[11] Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p134
[12] Hillery, 'Definitions of community', p117-18 cited by Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p134
[13] Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p134
[14] E.g. Macfarlane, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities', p633

community defined by geography, and community describing a 'type of relationship'.[15] Her suggestion was that 'purely descriptive study of unique communities' should be replaced by 'comparative analysis of "local social systems"', that is considering the bonds by which people are linked, for example kinship, occupation, class, religion and politics, an approach she had taken in her study of 1950s Banbury. In that study Stacey concluded that Banbury could not be considered to be a community[16] and quotes Michael Young's suggestion that '…one necessary factor for the development of a community is shared history.'[17]

A key issue is how 'community' has been used for a wide range of spatial entities which differ in scale from a neighbourhood to a substantial portion of the continent of Europe and networks linking individuals across the globe;[18] at too large a scale it can become purely rhetorical, cf. European Economic Community (EEC).[19] Following on from Stacey's and other writers' views that fixed geographical boundaries are not the appropriate limits for studies of groups of people and that it is the social links that are important, Cohen and others have sought to identify the boundaries drawn by the groups themselves, rather than the artificial ones constructed by researchers.[20] These boundaries are often purely symbolic but still relate to an area on the ground. D B Clark argued for the continuing recognition of this spatial element, whilst voicing similar concerns to Stacey, complained of 'a certain neglect of the influence of place on community.'[21] He does, however, emphasize that geographical units are not synonymous with community, and draws attention to the large variation of some community studies from Williams' of Gosforth, a small Cumbrian village of less than eight hundred,[22] to Willmott's Dagenham, an urban development with a population of ninety-thousand people.[23]

In reviewing definitions various aspects of the use of the term have been noted. For most there is an emphasis on the importance of locality, for example the social anthropologist, W M Williams recommended the consideration of the 'the spatial and

[15] Stacey, 'Myth of community studies', p134
[16] M Stacey, *Tradition and Change: A Study of Banbury* (Oxford, 1960) p176-77
[17] Michael Young, *The Listener*, 23 Sept. 1954 cited in Stacey, *Tradition and Change*
[18] Elizabeth Roberts, "Neighbourhoods," Paper given at *History Workshop 23*, University of Salford, November 1989 cited in Pearson, 'Knowing one's place', p222; Ivan Callus, 'Theorising Europe from the Other Shore: Derrida, Community and the Exemplarity of Europe' in Herbrechter & Higgins, *Returning (to) Communities*, pp29-31; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers'; A critique of these latter works in included in chapter five
[19] See Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, p13
[20] *Ibid* p14; Mark K Smith, *Community studies* (2009, 1st pub.1996), http://www.infed.org/h-copy.htm (accessed 30/08/11) p6
[21] Clark, 'Concept of community' p398
[22] W M Williams, *Gosforth* (London, 1956)
[23] P Willmott, *Evolution of a Community* (London, 1963)

environmental aspects' of communal life,[24] and for MacIver and Page locality was one of the fundamental 'bases' of community.[25] Clark concurs with this noting that ecologists had 'made a major contribution to the study of community in emphasizing the effect of the physical environment on social relationships.'[26] Dennis in reflecting upon the historical usage of the concept sets down two main features, firstly it had a descriptive meaning equating to a social group plus a specific area, and secondly an evaluative meaning equating to positive neighbourly social relationships. He cites Raymond Williams' observation that community 'seems never to be used unfavourably' and has a 'sense of immediacy or locality [that] was strongly developed in the context of larger and more complex industrial societies.'[27]

As is illustrated by the preceding quotations, for many, community is a concept to be used in the context of a specific locality. Dennis expands this further by suggesting that 'community is not defined by who its members are, but by what they do. The church, like the pub, the club, or the factory, was a community, a coming together, and for most people in the nineteenth-century it was still a territorially restricted community.'[28] In this he is introducing a subdivision of the population within a locality; the terms used below for this subdivision are 'sub-community' and 'sphere of influence'. But as is described below there were Taff Vale employees whose experience of church and labour based organisations involved them in a wider constituency.[29] The concept of 'community' spread across a much larger geographical area is discussed further in chapter five.

But what determines the boundaries of these localities? Anthropologists such as Cohen, when faced with the difficulty in arriving at a commonly accepted definition of community proposed that it is more helpful to seek for the symbols by which its members define the boundary, although for most anthropological studies this is still within a specific space on the ground.[30] Mewett quotes Gusfield to emphasize the idea that 'communities as objects of study, "are constructed and constituted by the actors; they do not have an independent existence. It is in this sense that the commonsense, everyday actions of people can be conceived as methodologies for gaining and using

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[24] W M Williams, A West Country Village: Ashworthy (London,1963) p.xix cited in Clark, 'The concept of community', p397

[25] R M MacIver and C H Page, Society (London, 1961) p9 cited in Clark, 'The concept of community' p397

[26] Clark, 'The concept of community' p397

[27] R Williams, Keywords (1976) pp65-66 cited in Dennis & Daniels, 'Community and the Social Geography', pp7-23

[28] Dennis, English Industrial Cities, p285

[29] Cf. Clark, 'The concept of community', p411

[30] Cohen, Symbolic Construction of Community; Cohen (ed), Symbolising Boundaries; Note that Cohen claims to be writing for sociologists and anthropologists leaving the approaches of historians and geographers to those disciplines.

knowledge."[31] Mark Smith has more recently, in drawing attention to the work of Cohen and his associates, proposed that the question of how the idea of community is used by people themselves should form an approach to community studies, and follows Wright's assertion that it will be important to emphasise that 'community' is an idea, not a social or geographical entity.[32] Smith continues: 'What [we] are interested in is the way that people view particular places and groupings, and the attachments they may have to them. Thus, this isn't to say that place is not important, but rather to argue that it cannot be taken as a simplistic given.'[33]

Writers such as Tönnies writing towards the end of the nineteenth-century were very aware of the ideas of Marx and his approach to ideas of class so that *gemeinschaft* related to a period before the rise of class consciousness and the transition to *gesellschaft*, and the resultant alienation between masters and men was necessary for class formation. In the twentieth-century the Valleys of south Wales became synonymous with the labour movement, but the changes that brought that about were only gaining pace towards the end of the period of this study. Scholars taking a Marxist position appear too ready to identify 'class consciousness' or label the high degree of social cohesion a state of 'false consciousness'.[34] The extent of this cohesion in the Glamorganshire Valleys is described later in the chapter.

For Marx alienation was brought about by industrialisation; the working man was alienated from his product, his labour and other men, but this need not be inevitable and eventually working men would develop a solidarity among themselves, and they would become a class as a community.[35] The Marxist critique of how urban areas developed was based on the data of 'suburbanisation, improvements in transportation, the increasing spatial differentiation of commercial and different kinds of residential land use' that involved accumulation and class struggle. This was preferred by Dennis to 'social area' theory as it provided a more realistic context in which to investigate residential differentiation than 'modernisation' and 'increasing scale'.[36]

Such approaches led to the concept of the 'urban village' in working class districts separate from the middle classes and distinct from the mixed class 'communities' of

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[31] J R Gusfield, *Community: a Critical Response* (Oxford, 1975) p25 cited in Peter G. Mewett , 'Boundaries and discourse in a Lewis crofting community', in Cohen (ed), *Symbolising Boundaries*, p72

[32] S Wright, 'Image and analysis: new directions in community studies' in B. Short (ed.) *The English Rural Community. Image and analysis* (Cambridge, 1992) p205 cited in Smith, *Community Studies*, p6

[33] Smith, *Community Studies*, p6

[34] A.P.Cohen, 'Belonging: the experience of culture' in A.P.Cohen (ed), *Belonging: Identity and social organization in British rural communities* (Manchester 1982) p3

[35] Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, pp2-4

[36] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, pp8-9

traditional rural areas.[37] As is described below the Valleys were viewed as consisting of a single class, although this was changing over the period of this study with the growth of a middle class. Apart from Cardiff, segregation was not a major feature and even there many districts were socially mixed, so although Dennis and others might be able to study the development of socially differentiated areas in large towns and cities these were not a characteristic of the Valleys' urban districts.[38] That is not to say that there were not districts that were economically differentiated according to levels of household income.[39] But it is not clear that the local railwaymen were as advanced in their appreciation that the cross class Liberal - LibLab accord had gone and that 'communities' were now defined by social class, even though Keir Hardie had told them that it had.[40]

However community is defined it implies the existence of a set social relationships; Stacey, although critical of purely descriptive community studies, supports the concept using the term 'local social systems'.[41] Dennis proposes that community 'as social interaction may be defined through the medium of social network analysis'.[42] Calhoun suggests that networks can be constructed in any manner that produces a set of relationships, and for analytical purposes the description is more important than their existence.[43] The two key elements of a network are its 'density' and 'plexity' or 'multiplexity'. The former term describes whether relationships are close-knit or not, and the second gives the extent to which individuals interact, that is in different roles. Such networks can be analysed by various mathematical techniques, but results are likely to be less reliable with historical data, due to non-availability of records, and although, however the boundary of these 'networks of human contact' is drawn, some links will extend beyond that boundary; also the data for adjacent 'areas' may not be available. The topic of networks and their analysis is developed further in chapter five.

Despite of however community is defined, or agreement on a common definition is lacking, the term continues to be used by academics, politicians and administrators. It is the positive sentiment, noted by Raymond Williams and quoted above, and the ambiguity that makes for good rhetoric but a poor analytical tool.[44] There does, however, appear to be a majority view that whilst locality is important in defining a

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[37] *Ibid*, p220
[38] *Ibid*, p221
[39] Cf. Jones, *Unfinished Journey*, Jones grew up in Merthyr at the turn of the twentieth-century
[40] *MEx*, Oct.28, 1911, p6
[41] Stacey, 'Myth of Community Studies'
[42] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p270
[43] Calhoun, 'Community: toward a variable conceptualization', p118
[44] Cf. G Suttles, *The Social Structure of Communities* (Chicago, 1972) p257 cited in Simon R. Charsley, "Glasgow's miles better': the symbolism of community and identity in the city' in Cohen, *Symbolising Boundaries*, p173

specific community, its boundaries are unlikely to be coterminous with the physical and administrative boundaries of that locality. The boundaries, which might be entirely in the minds and discourse of community members, are determined by belonging either by attachment, a 'community of sentiment', or by membership, a 'community of interest'.[45] Within those boundaries there are social networks of kin, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, etc which can be analysed to reveal Stacey's 'local social systems'.

So for the purpose of this chapter, 'community' can be defined as: *the people living within a locality, as understood by its members, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but will also extend beyond that boundary.* This is implied for each of the towns, villages and settlements served by the TVR. The social networks of kin, friendships, and most neighbourhoods would be of high density, and would be supplemented by a range of roles that extended the multiplexity of those networks. This chapter describes the variety of social systems and influences that made up the 'communities' of East Glamorgan and how they related to lives of TVR employees.

The Communities of East Glamorgan

Did the inhabitants of late nineteenth century south Wales think of themselves as part of specific communities and did they use the term for the groupings of which they were members? I G Jones in his collection of essays published under the title *Communities* prefaces the collection by saying, 'All the essays examine specific communities...' without defining his understanding of what constituted a 'community'.[46] The three sections of the book are headed 'Building Churches', 'Communities' and 'Understanding Politics'; in the first section Jones examines the reasons behind, and the mechanism, of building Anglican churches within certain localities. The second analyses the housing and living conditions of the south Wales' mining valleys. In the third he explores the political dimension of the decline in the iron industry in Merthyr, Nonconformity, and public health. In each example he takes as his starting point the residents in a specific locality but overlapping 'sub-communities' such as the chapels are examined.

'Community' as a word was infrequently used in the local newspapers of the period. In 1890 on the eve of a rail strike, the editor of the *Merthyr Express* declared that 'all sections of the community unite in condemnation of the action of the directors'.[47] In 1904 as the religious revival spread across the Valleys the editor, quoting from a

[45] Clark, 'Concept of community', pp410-11
[46] Jones, *Communities*
[47] *MEx*, Aug.9, 1890, p3

regional newspaper, wrote of the 'rush for gaiety and pleasure among all grades of the community'.[48] Those examples use the term in the sense of 'society', whilst in 1910 during the Cambrian Collieries strike, one of the miners' leaders claimed that that there was still large opposition to trade unions on the ground that 'it was dangerous to the peace of the community'.[49] This latter example may have had the more intimate sense of locality and the social networks of kin, friends and neighbours within it.

Whilst the word 'community' might not have passed the lips of the average inhabitant of south Wales, he or she would be familiar with other terms such as, 'neighbourhood'[50] or 'locality',[51] 'family', 'church' or 'chapel'. At one step removed there were 'choir'[52] or 'sports club',[53] 'lodge' of a Friendly Society,[54] or the name of a local public house. The workplace would be defined by 'gang',[55] 'office', 'station', 'workshop', etc, and a Trade Union by 'branch'. In each example the individual knew that they belonged to, or at least were identified with, that 'community' or 'sphere of influence', see figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Model of the TVR Employee within Community(ies)
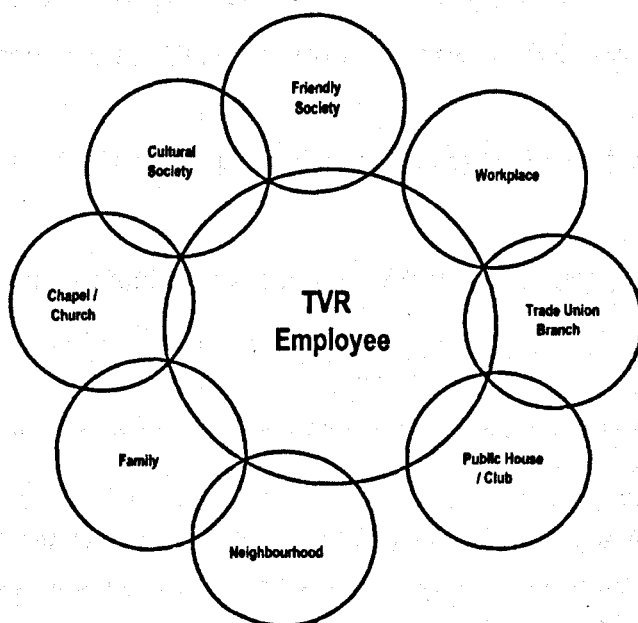
Another term that could be applied to these sub-communities is 'structural domain', which, in the glossary to Time, Family and Community, is defined as:

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[48] Ibid, Nov.26, 1904, p7
[49] GFP, Aug.26, 1910, p3
[50] Ibid, Aug.22, 1891, p8
[51] Ibid, Sep.5, 1891, p3
[52] Roberts, Taff Vale Railway 150 Years
[53] A G PULLING, DES Jan.31,1898, NA RAIL 264/96; Derek Savage, correspondence (2006)
[54] PDH, July 20, 1878, p2
[55] As in a platelayer's 'gang', see Roberts, Taff Vale Railway 150 Years

> Various social groupings (some overlapping) in which an individual may participate, e.g. the immediate co-resident family, wider kin, work colleagues, leisure-time associates.[56]

The term is referred to by Hareven in the first essay of this collection, where it is attributed to Meyer Fortes and described as '...the assumption that an individual participates in several domains simultaneously and fulfils a different role in each.'[57] These demonstrate the multiplexity of relationships.

The employee of a south Wales' railway company often lived in a settlement that only existed because of the demand for coal. Coal fuelled industry, the Royal Navy, and Britain's worldwide trade; the best steam-coal lay under the south Wales' valleys and railways proved to be the most efficient way of transporting it to the sea. Jones describes the 'sequence of settlement', beginning with wooden shacks or barracks for construction workers, noting that a pit would take several years to sink; these 'temporary' buildings might be later be occupied by miners and their families. When the coalowner was confident of success he would provide housing for the newly arrived miners, particularly in remote areas.[58] This was still an extension of the initial temporary phase, as unlike other mining areas, such as north-east England, it was unusual for coalowners to provide housing for their employees.[59] The third phase of development would consist predominantly of speculative building for sale to individuals, often financed through 'building clubs'.

Various amenities would have been provided in temporary form during the development phase, but Jones comments on the speed with which public buildings were erected. Good examples of this can be illustrated by the construction of chapels in the Rhondda Fach community of Ferndale, where within five years of the pit being opened a Baptist chapel with six hundred seats had been erected. This was followed by Independent, Calvinistic Methodist (CM) and Wesleyan Methodist chapels, so that in the ten year period to 1871 2,200 sittings were provided when the township was still only half-built.[60] On the 1884 Ordnance Survey map, based on a survey from 1868-74, there is only one public house shown in the Blaenllechau part of Ferndale, where the Baptist and CM chapels had been constructed.[61] The Taff Vale station was also located here and this was where its company houses were to be built. In 1871 the only other amenities in the township were the essential provision and service suppliers, e.g.

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[56] Michael Drake (ed), *Time, Family and Community: Perspectives on Family and Community History* (Oxford, 1994) p290

[57] Tamara K Hareven, 'Recent Research on the History of the Family' in Drake (ed), *Time, Family and Community*, p25

[58] Jones, 'Valleys: The Making of Community', pp144-46

[59] Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, p122

[60] Jones, 'Valleys: The Making of Community', pp144-46

[61] OS: *Six Inch*, Sheet XVIII SE (1884)

two or three grocers, a licensed victualler, a shoemaker and a greengrocer, plus a doctor, a midwife and a school.[62] The chapels were '...an eloquent testimony to the existence of shared values' which provided a 'cohesive force' in the community; in this case those of Nonconformist religion, and contrasts with other communities that might take many years to even approach such levels of social cohesion.[63]

Jones comments on the origins of the miners in Ferndale that they had moved from Aberdare and Merthyr, and so when some 225 men were killed in pit explosions in 1867 and 1869 'the mourning was in Merthyr and Aberdare'.[64] But the miners of Ferndale were not just from those two towns as can be seen from a survey of 86 households in the 1871 Census of Blaenllechau; 66 were headed by someone in the coalmining industry, but of these only seven had been born in either Aberdare or Merthyr Tydfil. However, 31 households contained children who had been born in one or the other of these mining towns, indicating that the head of household had lived there in the recent past.[65] This might also help to explain the ready cohesion of such places through the mining families' sojourn in the same areas prior to arriving in Ferndale, or just that they had all experienced a similar level of mobility.

The Census shows that the inhabitants had come from across south Wales,[66] with a scattering of English and Irish immigrants. Jones explains the social cohesion as follows:

> It is an illusion to believe that the processes by which communities were made in rural areas were entirely different from those operating in industrial areas as if the former were somehow insulated from the latter. Especially it is the relative simplicities of their social structures and their shared religious culture that needs to be stressed. It was these which made the transition from one to the other intelligible for the thousands of migrants who made the journey from country to town, and it was these which came to be expressed most completely and, for a time, most satisfying in a common political culture.[67]

Like Ferndale, Merthyr had grown up as a community without a middle-class; Lambert describes it as a working class town without a substantial professional section before 1851, and suggests that the absence of this middle group in society, between the small elite of ironmasters and the skilled workers was responsible for the lack of public amenities.[68] By 1878 Merthyr did have a range of public bodies, e.g. a Chamber of Trade, School Board, Board of Health and Board of Guardians, and reports of these

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[62] NC 1871 RG10/5376 ff59-81
[63] Jones, 'The Valleys: The Making of Community', p148
[64] 'Ibid', p144
[65] NC RG10/5376 ff59-81
[66] 76 out of 86, principally Glamorgan (24), Carmarthenshire (22), Pembrokeshire (11), NC RG10/5376 ff59-81
[67] Jones, Communities, pp.x-xii
[68] W J Lambert, Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales c1820-c1895 (Cardiff, 1983) p29

bodies appeared in the *Merthyr Telegraph*, although not a town council.[69] However, the working classes of the new mining and the few railway settlements took responsibility for founding and leading the whole range of religious, cultural and political organisations discussed below.

The TVR Employee's Experience of Community

The diagrammatic model seen in figure 4.2 is a development of figure 4.1 to include spheres with which the employee is not directly linked, but with which he might have regular contact. It also highlights the primary external influences, which would inform the employee's views and behaviour. He might not participate in all of the sub-communities, and participation would vary during the course of his life.

Figure 4.2 Model of the TVR Employee within Community(ies) with External Influences
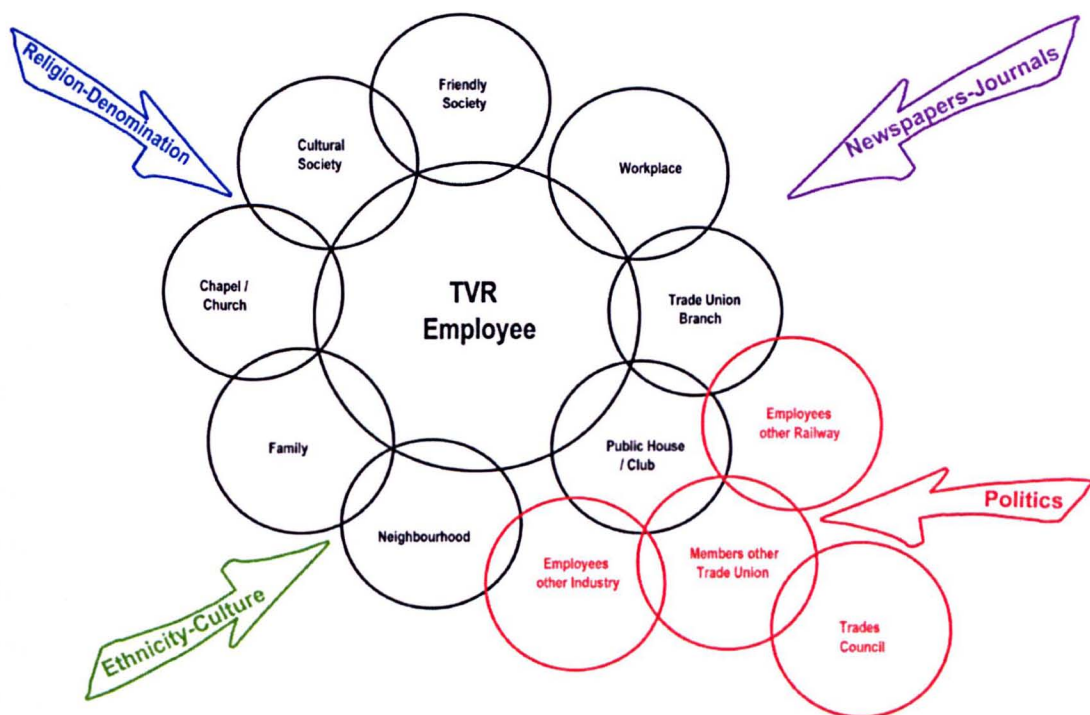
Key: The arrows depict the external influences brought to bear on the individual, the black circles the 'spheres' occupied by the employee, and the red circles those with which the employee has a link, but that are mediated through another.

The five interlinked spheres to the left on the above model principally represent the domestic, including female, domain whilst the three to the right represent the public, male domain. Much of Cultural, Friendly Society and Trade Union spheres might be firmly in the male domain, but women could be involved in activities organised within those spheres with provision of hospitality. For example this was acknowledged when

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[69] *MTel*, Sep.13, 1878, p[3]; Feb.30, 1879, p[3]; May 30, 1879, p[3]; July 18, 1879, p[3]

the wife of an ASRS branch official was presented with an engraved teapot.[70] From the 1890s local Liberal Associations had their ladies' section and from 1900 female supporters of the trade union movement were beginning to organise through the creation of Women's Guilds.[71]

The external influences would be mediated in a variety of ways, for example 'Religion-Denomination' would be channelled by 'cultural societies', 'family' and 'neighbourhood', as well as 'chapel or church'. 'Ethnicity-Culture' would be mediated by the same range of agencies and this included the celebration of patron saints such as David and Patrick. Whilst 'Politics' would primarily be communicated by labour organisations, the other three external influences would also carry weight with the individual in political matters; for example the traditional link of the Liberal Party and Nonconformity, and the political bias of the newspapers read.

Taff Employees as Community figures

The mobility of TVR employees meant that many would experience life in more than one locality, and although there might be features that distinguished one place from another, there would be those such as the chapels and public houses which were familiar. The external influences would also be much the same. Each of these localities would have people of note, who occupied their positions by dint of social class, public esteem, or function, and Taff Vale employees were numbered among them. These were people like Edward Clay, the Goods Agent at Merthyr, who served on the Merthyr School Board and Chamber of Trade,[72] and Ambrose Pontin a railway policeman who delivered telegrams in Aberdare was also the Parish Constable.[73] Some like Alfred Lear at Radyr were prominent in the founding of new chapels.[74] Others served as caretakers and deacons, whilst men like John Price took charge of choirs that won competitions at *eisteddfodau*.[75] James Horner, with his wife, established the first Merthyr Co-operative.[76] The local press treated Pontypridd station master Oscar Hurford with an attitude that was in turn respectful, affectionate and teasing. His role as head of the busiest station on the TVR, in terms of the number of trains, and his management of it earned respect, as did his organising of a Royal visit.

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[70] E.g. *MEx*, Nov.22, 1890, p5; Walter COLLIER, DES Sep.8, 1890, NA RAIL 684/113; Alan Stone, correspondence (March 2006)
[71] *MTim*, Apr.28, 1893, p4; *MEx*, June 9, 1900, p7
[72] *MTel*, Sept. 13, 1878, p[3]; Nov. 1, 1878, p[3]
[73] John Hutton, *Taff Vale Miscellany* (Yeovil, 1988)
[74] New Horizons, *Memories of Radyr*, Allan Cook of the New Horizons History Group, correspondence (2005)
[75] J H Roberts, *Golden 50th Wedding Anniversary: Joan Edens & John Howard Roberts 26th July 1955–2005* (2005) p93
[76] Horner, *Incorrigible Rebel*, p11

When he visited his son in Canada it was extensively reported together with his views on the Canadian way of life. But a probably fictitious report on the legendary efficiency of Prussian railways has the sub-heading 'Mr Hurford take note'.[77]

Among the trade union representatives that formed Trades Councils, and who sat on local councils, were many miners' leaders, but also TVR railway trade unionists. These included men such as Moses Jones, who helped organise the 1900 strike, F J Hookway and Walter Collier that were all members of the Pontypridd Branch of the ASRS. The meetings of such councils were regularly reported in the local press and discussed in branch meetings.[78]

When disasters occurred and the blame was laid at the door of a local railway employee, if that man was a respected member of the community, pleas for leniency might be addressed to the authorities. In 1878 two trains had collided just north of Pontypridd resulting in eleven fatalities, and it was immediately clear that local signalman William Roberts was primarily responsible. Nevertheless the foreman of the jury at the Coroner's enquiry, at which Signalman Roberts was remanded, said "Out of consideration of the long and faithful services rendered to the Taff Vale Company by William Roberts, we trust he may still be continued in their employ."[79]

Spheres of influence or Sub-communities

The purpose of this section is to explore those sub-communities that will not be returned to in such detail in later chapters, and the sub-headings employed are derived from figure 4.2. These are particularly 'Neighbourhood' and 'Family'. Other sub-communities are included here in summary to portray the range of spheres in which the employee operated in connection with his working life. They are then expanded upon in succeeding chapters.

Neighbourhood

Neighbourhoods are seen here as closely defined localities very often characterised by single types of housing, and composed of people drawn from a single social class. For at least one oral historian this was the spatial limit of working class communities as determined by the range of local gossip.[80] However in some localities, there was mix of social class and varying patterns of house ownership, whether that was by an employer, private landlord or the occupier.

[77] *PObs*, Jan.28, 1911, p2; June 26, 1909, p3; Aug.8, 1908, p4; Feb.8, 1908, p[3]
[78] *PObs*, Aug.4, 1900, p[4]; Apr.18, 1908, p1; July 7, 1908, p6; GlamRO, Ref.D/D NUR 1/1i,
[79] *ASRS Pontypridd Branch, Minute Book 1910-14*, Mins. May 24, 1914
[80] *MTel*, November 1, 1878, p[4]
Roberts, 'Neighbourhoods' cited in Pearson, 'Knowing one's place', p222

But neighbourhoods are more than bricks and mortar, and the social mix of a neighbourhood is illustrated by an extract from the 1891 National Census. This by its very nature can only be a snapshot where the picture recorded is a partial image frozen in time, but it does provide pointers to the mixed nature of the Valleys' settlements. The analysis is set out at tables 4.1 to 4.5, which were derived from a sample of 110 households (22 percent), enumerated in the Blaenllechau township of Ferndale.[81] The examples highlight features such as birthplace, employment sector, occupational class and language spoken with comparisons being made between head of household and his family and boarders.

Ferndale is particularly useful for studying the setting of Taff Vale railwaymen within their neighbourhood, as no other railway company had staff located in the locality. The settlement includes the township of Blaenllechau, which is separated from the main part of Ferndale by the Rhondda Fach river, and it is here, in a largely coal mining area, that the railway station and associated facilities were built including fourteen company owned houses (see figure 4.3). A discussion on the concentration of railway employees in specific areas is included in chapter five.

The heads of household came from many places, but principally from within Wales, and of the 102 individuals, whose birthplace was recorded, 37 shared their birthplace with at least one other. The largest number of heads of household, who shared a birthplace, had been born in Aberdare, Cardiff and Merthyr in descending order. The presence in the list of Aberdare and Merthyr is unsurprising given the history of Ferndale described above, and Cardiff is explained by the fact that four out of the five born there were Taff Vale employees most probably recruited in that town; however only two out of the six born in Aberdare were in coalmining.

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[81] NC 1891 RG12/4412 ff31-40

Figure 4.3 Blaenllechau Township (Ferndale)
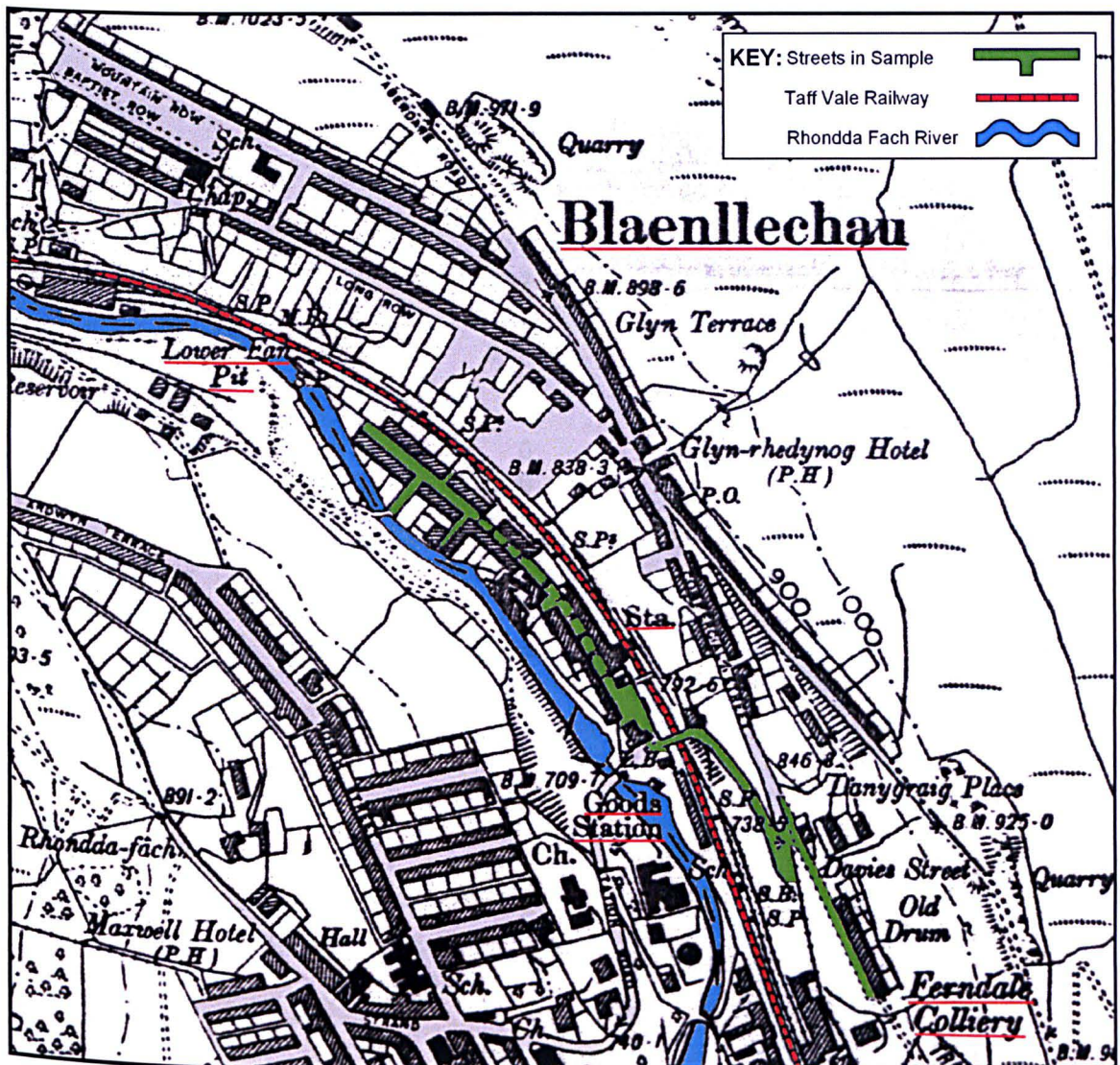
Source: OS: *Six Inch,* Sheet XVIII SE (1900)

In the first part of table 4.1 it can be seen that the Rail sector was slightly more represented among the heads of household than the Coal sector, although among all employed it is clear that Coal far outweighed Rail. This is also emphasized by the fact that only one rail worker boarded in a household headed by someone in coalmining, whereas nineteen from the coal industry boarded with a railway family, see table 4.2. Even in this neighbourhood, where there was a concentration of railway staff, employment in the pits predominated, although railway employees might move elsewhere in Blaenllechau for practical reasons. The example of this was the Pulling household who as their family grew had moved to a larger house in Long Row, a street almost entirely occupied by miners. The move was met with some opposition, as it was viewed by the miners that those houses were specifically for them.[82]

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[82] J PULLING, DES Aug.5, 1874, NA RAIL 684/94; D Savage, correspondence (Sep.2005)

Table 4.1 Analysis of Heads of Household and All Employed by Employment Sector and Occupational Class.

Breakdown by Employment Sector

Sector Code	Heads of Household in Employment		All Employed	
	No.	%	No.	%
CHUR	0	0	0	0
COAL	42	40.78	145	53.51
COMM	1	0.97	1	0.37
DOCK	0	0	0	0
DOME	1	0.97	5	1.85
EDUC	0	0	2	0.74
FARM	0	0	1	0.37
IRON	0	0	0	0
MARI	0	0	0	0
META	0	0	0	0
MINE	0	0	0	0
OTHE	4	3.88	4	1.48
PROF	0	0	2	0.74
RAIL	45	43.69	79	29.15
SHOP	3	2.91	21	7.75
TRAD	6	5.83	9	3.32
UNEM	0	0	0	0
UNKN	1	0.97	2	0.74
	103	100.00	271	100.02

Breakdown by Occupational Class

Class	Heads of Household in Employment		All Employed	
	No.	%	No.	%
I	0	0	0	0
II	1	0.97	1	0.37
III	0	0	5	1.85
IV	0	0	1	0.37
V	6	5.83	6	2.21
VI	17	16.5	32	11.81
VII	58	56.31	167	61.62
VIII	21	20.39	59	21.77
	103	100.00	271	100.00

Sources: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40; See Appendices 4A and 4B at the end of this chapter for definitions of *Employment Sector* and *Occupational Class*

Anderson in his examination of a mid-nineteenth century Lancashire cotton town explores the role of the neighbourhood as influencing and perhaps reinforcing the mores of society particularly when as immigrants they had come from the same locality; in this Welsh valley the predominant factor was a shared culture. He further expresses his opinion that neighbours and friends were probably of widespread importance in providing support networks among non-kin, and writes that the community spirit was reinforced in the communities he examined by the fact that

'...neighbours, workmates, co-villagers, friends and ... church members, would usually have been the same people'.[83] Similar points are made by Revill describing the nineteenth century occupational community in the railway town of Derby[84] and by Rosser and Harris in their study of 1960s Swansea.[85] As previously noted these overlaps demonstrate the multiplexity of social networks.

The neighbourhood of Merthyr Tydfil in which Jack Jones (b.1884) grew up had, as perhaps did many communities, an individual who 'kept an eye' on the neighbourhood, in this case 'Mrs Davies the coalyard', who he describes as a 'lady with a heart of gold'. She would help anyone irrespective of denomination whether 'Baptist Welsh, Catholic Irish or English Church'.[86]

Lodging or boarding provided an addition to family income,[87] and was widespread throughout these communities. For example in the Blaenllechau area of Ferndale from a sample of 108 households, in the 1891 Census, 49 were providing accommodation for boarders, with an average of just under two per household, see table 4.2. Whilst the terms 'boarding' and 'lodging' have specific meanings, it is not certain that they were used consistently by the Census enumerators, and for the purpose of this thesis no distinction has been made.[88]

In discussing the age at which children left home, Anderson, whilst noting that children in Lancashire manufacturing districts left earlier than elsewhere,[89] points out two factors relevant to lodging. Firstly, when sufficient children had left home, the household income could be made up by taking in lodgers, and secondly the children leaving home would most likely themselves become lodgers elsewhere. This corresponds with Rowntree's study of the stages of life and the typical level of income at each stage.[90] This pattern can possibly be detected among TVR households.

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[83] M Anderson, *Cambridge Studies in Sociology 5: Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971), pp102-103
[84] Revill, 'Railway Derby', p380
[85] Colin Rosser & Christopher Harris, *The Family and Social Change: A study of Family and Kinship in a South Wales Town* (London, 1965), p76
[86] Jones, *Unfinished Journey*, p39
[87] No record of amounts paid prior to 1920 have been found, but T G Smith recalled that on an engine cleaner's weekly wage of 21/-(£1.05) he paid 6/-(30p) per week for board and lodging; Smith, 'They were happy times though', p22
[88] Boarders would eat at the family table, whilst Lodgers would be responsible for finding their own meals. See Ruth Symes, 'Board & lodging', *Family Tree Magazine*, December (2007) pp62-65
[89] Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire*, p124
[90] B S Rowntree, *Poverty, a Study of Town Life* (1914, first pub. 1901) pp167ff

Table 4.2 Relationship between Boarders and Head of Household. Based on 1891 Census

Relationship between Boarders and Head of Household (N=89)

No.	%	
5	5.6	Shared a Birthplace
16	18.0	Shared a Birth County
43	48.3	Shared the Birth Country of Wales
10	11.2	Shared the Birth Country of England
16	18.0	Shared a Language of Welsh only
29	32.6	Shared Welsh or both English & Welsh
35	39.3	Shared a Language of English only
6	6.7	Shared no common language
39	43.8	Shared the Employment sector of COAL
19	21.3	Shared the Employment sector of RAIL
1	1.1	Did not share a common occupation when Head was in the COAL sector
19	21.3	Did not share a common occupation when Head was in the RAIL sector

Source: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40

The most common factor linking boarders and landlords was language with over seventy percent of boarders sharing at least one language with the head of household. Sixty-five percent were employed in the same employment sector, but only eighteen percent came from the same county and less than six percent, i.e. five individuals, came from the same town or village. There does not appear to have been an automatic link back to the head of household's birthplace when boarders were looking for lodgings, for in a further nine cases the boarder might have had the opportunity to lodge with someone from his home town or village. The most prominent sending county was Glamorgan (20 percent), with Somerset (12 percent) in second place, followed by Monmouthshire (10 percent) in third, see figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4 Map showing Birthplace of Boarders in Blaenllechau by County

Birthplace of Boarders in Blaenllechau: 1891

No. of Boarders

	0
	1
	2 - 5
	6 - 16
	17 - 31
	32 - 55
	56 and more

Source: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40; Compiled using Gen Map v2.2 from a sample of 89 boarders

Boarders or lodgers provided a supplement to household income, but also contributed to the density of occupation. Jevons commenting on the young miners who lodged in the houses of married miners wrote:

> This arrangement is not always desirable; as a rule both householders and lodgers are subject to inconvenience and discomfort, and family life is often much disorganized. In many areas, for example the Rhondda Valley, the percentage of lodgers is particularly high, and some of the five and six-roomed cottages are overcrowded to such an extent as to militate against the general health of the community.[91]

The level of boarding, and also the part-letting of houses, were not simply to enhance family income, but also reflected the shortage of houses. Hodges, in his study of the population of the hinterland of Cardiff prior to 1914, concludes that from 1891 to 1914 'house building failed to keep up' with the growing population, illustrated by the fact that, in face of a 44.9 percent increase, house building only increased by 3.2 percent.[92] This shortage was reflected in the rise in occupancy rates with an average of 5.6 persons per house in 1901 increasing to six persons per house in 1911; however this should be compared with the Ferndale sample from 1891, which reveals an above average occupancy rate of 6.6 persons per house. In addition twenty-two percent of the houses were part-let, compared with Hodge's average figure of 11.2 percent for 1901 and 12.3 percent by 1911.[93] The relative newness of the township and the physical constraints of the site may explain the density of occupation.

Using the birthplace of children as a surrogate for the number of location moves made since the setting up of a household, it appears that over half (53.93 percent) of all households had relocated. Households headed by a railway employee were slightly more likely (54.05 percent) to have relocated than those headed by someone in coalmining (50 percent), see table 4.3.

The second part of table 4.3 shows that all heads of households with children had moved from their birthplace, most probably in connection with their employment. Of these, ten percent came to Blaenllechau after the birth of one or more child, although this was less likely to be true of railway families. Once a household had been established a railway family, at 45.95 percent, was also slightly less likely to stay at the same location than a mining family, at 50 percent.

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[91] Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, p657
[92] Hodges, 'Peopling of the Hinterland of Cardiff', p72
[93] 'Ibid'

Table 4.3 Mobility and Stability derived from an Analysis of the Birthplace of Children

Mobility of Heads of Household with children (N=89)

For Heads of Households with Children	ALL	RAIL		COAL		OTHER	
	No.	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No. not moving from birthplace	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
No. not moving after birth of children	41	17	41.5	17	41.5	7	17.1
No. moving after birth of children	48	20	41.7	17	35.4	11	22.9
Heads of Household by Employment sector	89	37	41.6	34	38.2	18	20.2
Moves calculated from birthplace of children	71	28	39.4	25	35.2	18	25.4
Head's move from birthplace, if before birth of 1st child	80	35	43.8	29	36.3	16	20.0
No. of calculated moves + Head's move from b'place	151	63	41.7	54	35.8	34	22.5
Average No. of moves	1.7	1.7		1.6		1.9	

Employment sector	Heads **not** moving from birthplace		Heads moving from birthplace after birth of 1st child		Heads **not** moving after household established		Heads moving after household established	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
ALL	0	0.00	**9**	**10.11**	41	46.07	**48**	**53.93**
RAIL	0	0.00	**2**	**5.41**	**17**	**45.95**	**20**	**54.05**
COAL	0	0.00	5	14.71	**17**	**50.00**	**17**	**50.00**
OTHER	0	0.00	2	11.11	7	38.89	11	61.11

Source: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40; Percentages referred to in the text are in **bold** figures

Family

In this examination of the family as a sub-community the consideration is not just of the co-resident family of mother and or father and their children, but also the extended family as defined by Rosser and Harris, i.e.

> ...any persistent kinship grouping of persons related by descent, marriage or adoption, which is wider than the elementary family, in that it · characteristically spans three generations from grandparents to grandchildren.[94]

Each of the households in the sample consisted of a family related by blood and or marriage with fifty percent also hosting visitors or boarders; many of the visitors were also likely to have been relatives. The constitution of family groups is set out in table 4.4, and clearly demonstrates that in this relatively new community the nuclear family of parents and children dominate the scene with nearly eighty percent of all families, and less than five percent consisting of three generations. The number of extended family

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[94] Rosser & Harris, *Family and Social Change*, p32

members was made up mainly by siblings of the head of household or his wife, and some nephews and nieces. However information from other sources gives an indication of the extent of extended families not resident at the same address. The Dudson family was well represented with three separate households comprising in total seventeen members and included three generations.[95] The Rabbetts family also comprised three generations shared between two households.[96] Neither of these two extended families is apparent from table 4.4. These two were visible because of shared surnames, but another link of two generations was concealed by differing surnames, viz. Price and Thomas, and the relationship to head of household was shown as Boarder.[97]

Table 4.4 Analysis of Families by Size, Generations and Extended Family

Analysis of Families		No.	
No. of Families		110	
No. of Family members		496	
Av. No. of Members per Family Household		4.51	
No. of Generations per Household	**Generations**	**No.**	**%**
	1	18	16.36
	2	87	79.09
	3	5	4.55
	4	0	0.00
Households with Extended Families		**No.**	**%**
No. of extended Families		24	21.82
No. of extended Family members		35	
Av. No. of extended Family members per Household		1.46	

Source: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40

A key factor arising from and sustaining family cohesion would be the custom of sons following fathers into the employ of the same occupation (see table 4.5). The topic of two or more generations of the same family being employed by the TVR is discussed in the next chapter.

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[95] Thomas DUDSON, DES c1875; Gordon Jones, correspondence and conversations (2005-7);
[96] also see chapter five
[97] NC 1881 RG11/5300; see chapter five for move from Treherbert
Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years* (Dorset, 1989)

Table 4.5 Analysis of Commonality between Fathers and Sons

Relationship between Sons and Fathers (N=33)

No.	%	
3	9.1	Shared a Birthplace
11	33.3	Shared a Birth County
20	60.6	Shared the Birth Country of Wales
2	6.1	Shared the Birth Country of England
11	33.3	Shared a Language of Welsh only
20	60.6	Shared Welsh or Both English & Welsh
13	39.4	Shared a Language of English only
0	0.0	Shared no common language
3	9.1	Shared the Occupation of Coal Miner
13	39.4	Shared the Employment sector of COAL
5	15.2	Shared the Employment sector of RAIL
No.	**%**	
13	86.7	of Sons followed Fathers into the COAL Sector
5	71.4	of Sons followed Fathers into the RAIL Sector

Source: NC RG12/4412 ff31-40

Descriptions of the lives of mining families present a norm, not only of sons following their fathers, but also those sons being socialized by their fathers, as one son after another learnt the job under their father's guidance. The boys joined their fathers in the pit to work as their 'butties' or helpers at the coalface, and once the eldest son was established he would move to another job and the second son would join his father.[98] However, although a son might follow a Taff Vale father at the same location, the socialization that occurred in the workplace, where training was also 'on the job', only rarely involved father and son.

Chapel/Church

In Mann's *Census of Religious Attendance* in 1851 it was clear that the Welsh attended a place of worship in greater numbers than elsewhere in Great Britain and in Wales it was not the established Church of England that attracted the greatest numbers, but the Nonconformist chapels. The proportions were twenty percent of attendees worshipping in an Anglican church and eighty percent in a Nonconformist chapel and these possibly

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[98] Jones, *Unfinished Journey* pp71-5

represented forty percent of the population.[99] The numbers of communicants in c1893 for the main denominations are shown on figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5 Estimated Proportions of Anglican and Nonconformist Communicants 1893/5

Anglican and Nonconformist Communicants 1893/5

Denomination	%	Number
Calvinistic Methodists	26%	126,509
Independents (Congregational)	25%	125,578
Church Of England	23%	114,885
Baptists	20%	99,122
Wesleyan Methodists	6%	31,406
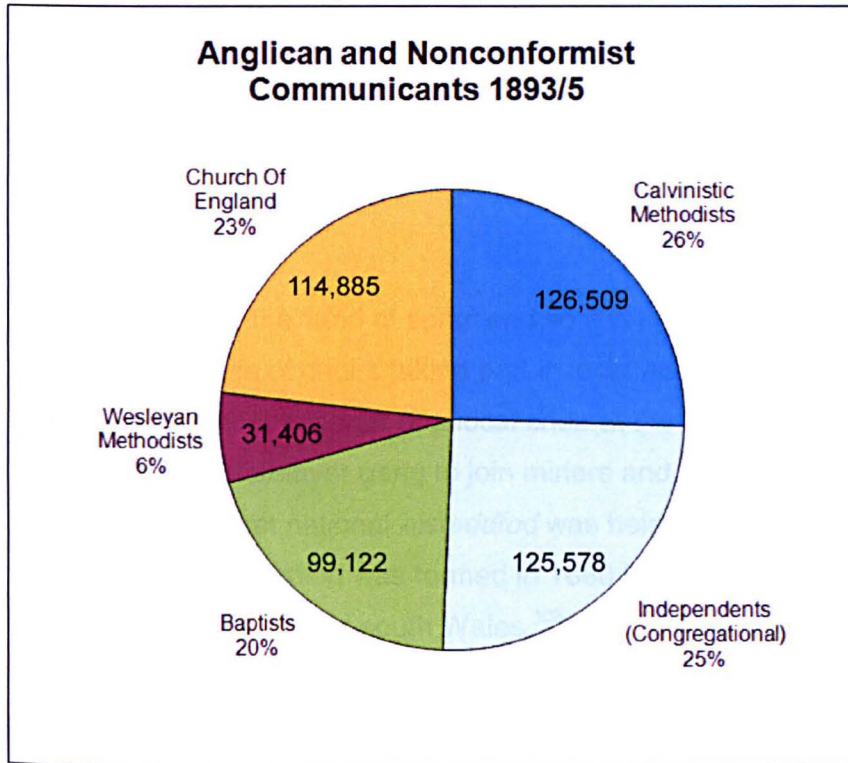
Sources: Church of England: *Bishop Edwards of Asaph* (1893); Nonconformist: *A Handbook of Church Defence* (London,1895) cited in *Morgan,* Wales in British politics, p83
Note the number in each category is included on the segment of the chart

This sphere is one where language did divide, and the chapel became one of the bastions of Welsh language and culture. Some Welsh denominations did provide English medium chapels,[100] but in other cases monoglot English Christians had to found their own. George Thomas describes how his English grandfather joined the English Methodist Church in Tonypandy, which had been founded by two immigrant Englishmen, due to the exclusive use of Welsh in other chapels.[101] From Jones' narrative it is clear that it was the women who were faithful in chapel attendance, reinforced among the miners by additional Saturday work, and the beer that kept them in their beds until lunchtime on Sunday.[102]

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[99] Davies, *History of Wales*, pp422-28
[100] Jones, 'Religious Frontier', p211
[101] George Thomas, *Mr Speaker: The Memoirs of Viscount Tonypandy* (London, 1985) p19
[102] Jones, *Unfinished Journey*, p41; Jack Jones, *Bidden to the Feast* (London, 1979, 1st pub 1938)

Besides the churches and chapels there were other organisations that linked Christians of a similar persuasion or concern; these included the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Christian Endeavour, and Band of Hope. The relationships between and within denominations ranged from the friendly and co-operative to the openly hostile and are discussed in chapter eight. The involvement of the people of the Valleys is discussed further in the context of how it affected the workmen of the Taff Vale in chapter nine.

Cultural Society

Wales is often described as the 'land of song' and so it is unsurprising to find miners and railwaymen as members of choirs taking part in local *eisteddfodau*. One young platelayer was appointed as the leader of a local choir at the tender age of sixteen, and took with him some of his platelayer gang to join miners and their families in winning local competitions.[103] The first national *eisteddfod* was held at Aberdare in 1861[104] and the National Eisteddfod association was formed in 1880 to stage an annual festival, which alternated between north and south Wales.[105] Local one-day events were also held, such as at Ferndale in 1891 where it was reported that approximately 15,000 people witnessed a great choral competition and the chairing of the Bard.[106]

The ASRS knew that it could attract a good size audience from the community by organising concerts to raise money for the Orphan Fund, and when held on a Sunday, as in 1893, the music performed was of a 'sacred nature'. This featured the works of classical composers such as Handel and Beethoven.[107] Social gatherings would also involve musical performances with a choir and soloist performing when a TVR engine driver retired in 1900.[108] Later cinemas and theatres were opened under licence from the district councils under an act of 1909, with control over the sale of alcohol and Sunday performances.[109]

Whilst the number of leisure time distractions increased as the working week was gradually reduced, it was sport in its many varieties that absorbed the enthusiasm alongside or in place of the singing for so very many. D Gareth Evans highlights the importance of sporting achievements to most Welshmen, noting how Rugby arrived in

[103] Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years*
[104] Davies, *History of Wales*
[105] National Eisteddfod Association, http://www.eisteddfod.org.uk/english/content.php?nID=66 (accessed 05/10)
[106] GFP, Sep.12, 1891, p6
[107] MTim, Nov.10, 1893, p5
[108] MEx, Jan.1, 1900, p6
[109] PObs, Jan.7, 1911, p3

the 1870s and Soccer some twenty years later.[110] Rugby was particularly successful from the 1899/1900 season when Wales defeated England at Swansea, and before the First World War Wales had won the 'Triple Crown' no less than six times. The pinnacle of Welsh Rugby in this period came in 1905 with the national team achieving a legendary defeat of the New Zealand 'All Blacks' on that year's tour. The south Wales soccer league was formed in 1890 and grew rapidly, and there were 63 clubs affiliated to the South Wales & Monmouthshire Football Association (SW&MFA) by 1903-04. As is described in chapter nine the religious revival of 1904-05 highlighted the extent of participation in the sport when its rejection became a mark of spiritual conversion. There were evidently many local soccer leagues in the Valleys and several were unable to function as whole teams or key players came under the influence of the Revival.[111] Despite that episode the SW&MFA had expanded to 74 teams by 1906 and 262 by 1910. Large crowds attended many of the matches, with the railway companies providing the transport, as when the 'vast number ... alighted at Pontypridd' for the Swansea versus Pontypridd football match in December 1904.[112]

There were many other sports competing for attention ranging from cycling at Aberdare in 1890 to whippet racing at Pontypridd in 1909.[113] Besides these the more thoughtful members of the community could avail themselves of reading rooms and institutes. The Merthyr Reading Room and Institute and the Aberdare Club and Institute were active by 1879.[114] The aims of the latter were 'to promote the social intercourse, mental improvement, and rational recreation of its members.'[115] Lectures on many subjects were to be heard in various public halls, and these increased in variety and number over the decades, probably reflecting increased leisure time. In the 1890s Naturalist societies were holding lectures on Evolution, for and against,[116] and by 1901 the Fabian Society was giving lectures on topics including 'Liquor Traffic', 'Old Age and Poverty', 'Railways and the Nation'.[117]

Friendly Society

Before the introduction of the Welfare State, it was all too frequent that when old age, bereavement or long-term illness deprived a household of its main wage earner that

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[110] D Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1906-2000* (Cardiff, 2000) pp60-2
[111] e.g. *MEx*, Dec.10, 1904, pp3&12
[112] Frank Keating, 'The Guardian: Way back when: The day Wales made everyone sit up and take notice', *The Guardian*, Jan.11, 1999, infoweb@newsbank.com (accessed 17/12/07); *PObs*, Dec.31, 1904, p4
[113] *MEx*, Sep.6, 1890, p6; *PObs*, May 29, 1909, p1
[114] *MTel*, Feb.21, 1879, p[2]; May 9,1879, p[2]
[115] *MTel*, May 9,1879, p[2]
[116] *MEx*, Dec.27, 1890, p3; Jan.31, 1891, p6
[117] *MEx*, Feb.9, 1901, p4

the family would be reduced to poverty, dependent on the Poor Law and or charity. When household income improved there might be sufficient surplus for this to contribute to a fund, which would provide some income in these circumstances. Many railway companies insisted that their employees contribute to a company based sick-pay scheme, to which both men and the employer would contribute, but as Hopkins records the 1874 Report of the 1870 Royal Commission on Friendly Societies criticised them for their compulsory nature, and the difficulty for men aged over 40 of obtaining cover if they left the company.[118] The Taff Vale required employees to contribute to the company's Accident Fund as noted in chapter three, but there does not appear to have been a general benevolent fund until the 1890s.[119] Some trade societies, precursors of the railway trade unions, were registered as friendly societies, such as the Locomotive Steam Engineers and Firemen's Society which was formed in Birmingham in 1839.[120] A Taff Vale engine driver had been the local treasurer at Aberdare for 22 years by the time he retired in 1900.[121]

Several of the national societies were represented in south Wales, for example the ubiquitous Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, which had been formed in 1838. This had branches across the TVR area in at least Aberdare, Merthyr and Upper Boat near Pontypridd. For a contribution of an average of 5d (2.1p) per week in 1895 the member would be entitled to a weekly payment of up to 9s (45p) per week and this could be paid for a full year.[122] The Oddfellows were only one of such societies in the district; others included the Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes, the Ancient Order of Foresters, the Loyal Order of Shepherds, the Sons of Temperance (SoT) and the Independent Order of Rechabites. The latter two were temperance based organisations.

Anderson in considering the role played by kinship in the support of family members when they fell on hard times, notes that '...contemporary writings [1850s] have little to say on relationships of friendly society members with each other and with their society...' except for cases of excessive drinking. He also observes that it became difficult to transfer from one society to another, and sanctions from kin, which might have checked improvident behaviour, would not apply with a friendly society where

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[118]
[119] Eric Hopkins, *Working-Class Self-Help in Nineteenth-century England* (London, 1995) p45
NA 1057/1857/16B, *TVR Employees' Benevolent Fund, A Grand Variety Concert, Jan.24, 1898*
[120]
[121] Hopkins, *Working-Class Self-Help*, p44
[122] *MEx*, Jan.6, 1900, p6
Annual Statement of the Loyal Taff Vale Lodge No.1481, of the Independent Order of Odd-fellows. Manchester Unity Friendly Society held at the Colliers' Arms, Upper Boat; For the Year ended December 31st, 1893; GFP, January 5, 1895, p5

attendance at lodge meetings was not compulsory.[123] Gosden suggests that the convivial activities continued, but the insurance function dominated in the later years of the nineteenth century.[124] The annual meetings of the temperance based societies could certainly be convivial and involve a dinner at a local coffee tavern as with the Merthyr Grand Division of the SoT in January 1886.[125] Apart from the temperance societies the meeting venue would generally be a public house.

The proportion of TVR men who belonged to friendly societies is not known but from a sample of 36 obituaries, funeral and retirement reports, at least eight were members of one or more society, and half of these were lodge officials. The sample is too small to draw conclusions but it may be significant that the minimum grade was signalman of which there were five, plus two station masters and one engine driver. It might have been the case that lower graded staff could not afford the contributions in addition to the compulsory deductions. Exactly how the Upper Boat lodge attracted its members is unclear, but the members who have been identified in the 1891 Census were from various occupations but mainly in coal mining.[126]

Other fraternal societies included the Independent Order of Good Templars (IOGT) which often met on church premises. This had two lodges in Merthyr, one at an English Baptist Church and the other at a Welsh Baptist.[127] The IOGT actively promoted the temperance cause and one TVR signalman was described as a 'vigorous worker and supporter'.[128] The other prominent organisation was Freemasonry which had Taff Vale managers and at least one director as members of local lodges. When a new lodge was established at Penarth in 1878, the first Worshipful Master was the TVR Traffic Manager James Hurman and the opening ceremony was attended by at least two other Taff Vale masons. These included Goods Agent, Edward Clay from the Merthyr lodge, where in later years director D A Thomas was a member, as confirmed by his presence at the opening of the new hall in 1912.[129] The lodge room for the newly formed Penarth lodge was at the TVR-owned Penarth Hotel.

Public House

The term 'the local' has not been found, but the name of a regularly frequented public house identified a male domain away from both home and workplace. Examples

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[123] Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire*, pp106-7

[124] P H J H Gosden, *Self-Help: Voluntary Associations in Nineteenth-century Britain* (London, 1973) p100

[125] *The Son of Temperance*, Mar.1886, from SoT: Heritage http://www.sonsoftemperance.abelgratis.co.uk/history.htm (accessed 11/06/10)

[126] *Annual Statement of the Loyal Taff Vale Lodge*; NC RG12/4409-20

[127] *MEx*, Oct.28, 1911, p6

[128] *ALdr*, Sep.25, 1920, pp2&4

[129] *PDH*, July 20, 1878, p2; *MEx*, Jan.6, 1912, p 10

appear in the novels of a former miner and the son of a miner,[130] and can be identified from newspaper reports involving Taff Vale employees. In mining areas it was usual for public houses to be open from early morning to provide beer to wash down the dust of a night shift spent underground.[131] Alcohol also provided comfort for those whose daily lot was a hard one, but sobriety and railways were closely associated as is discussed in consideration of the Taff Vale's disciplinary regime at chapter six. However, for most the public house was the place to meet friends and relax, a meeting place for trade union branches, and friendly societies.

Against this popularity was set the opposition of many Nonconformists and also dedicated socialists such as R J Derfel and Keir Hardie.[132] Throughout the period of this study temperance and the control of opening hours was seldom far from public debate. In the years before 1880 there was a campaign throughout Wales for the closure of public houses on Sundays and this is discussed in chapter eight. One consistent complaint from the temperance lobby was the lack of secular leisure facilities other than the public house, even though coffee houses had been opened throughout the Valleys.

The combination of angry strikers and alcohol was seen as a serious threat to public order and during the height of the Cambrian Collieries dispute in 1910 local magistrates ordered the closure of public houses in the Rhondda. Drunkenness often led to violence, and the newspaper reports of such incidents have provided information on the drinking habits of some TVR employees. When Thomas Thomas a TVR engine driver was having a drink with a mineworker friend a dispute arose when tossing a coin to see who was buying. Thomas was involved in a scuffle but it was his friend, James Gibbon, who was subsequently attacked and received a broken jaw.[133]

Trade Union Branch

Trade Unions were a feature of life in Cardiff and the Valleys from at least the 1860s, and by the 1890s their activities were regularly reported in the press, although it took until 1898 for the first permanent miners' union, the South Wales Miners' Federation (SWMF), to be established. The first enduring union for railwaymen, the ASRS, was established in 1871 and a branch formed at Aberdare in 1872.[134] The Llantrisant branch illustrates the progression among ASRS branches both in timing and meeting place. When founded in 1874 the lodge room was at the Talbot Inn and the lodge met

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[130] See Jones, *Bidden to the Feast*, T J Witts, *Black Pyramids* (Bridgend, 1983)
[131] cf. Jones, *Bidden to the Feast*
[132] GFP, June 20, 1891, p3
[133] GFP, Oct.10, 1891, p7
[134] MEx, Sep.8, 1900, p6

on a Saturday evening once or twice per month. In 1876 there was a proposal to abolish the prohibition on intoxicating liquor in the meeting room, but it is not clear whether this was carried.[135] There is a gap in the minutes from 1882 to 1888 by which time the current meeting room had proved too small and in 1889 the venue was changed to the vestry of the English Baptist Church at Pontyclown.[136] Six months later the secretary was prevented from attending on a Saturday due to a change in his duties, and by a vote of seventeen to twelve with one abstention it was agreed to switch to Sunday. This meant a further change of venue to the Pontyclown Reading Room. The move to Sunday was following what became regular practice in other branches with the Sabbath being the only non-working day for most, although twelve members had their reservations, maybe for religious reasons.[137]

In the nineteenth century the ASRS was not in the vanguard of the class struggle and various local worthies, for example the stipendary magistrate, were awarded honorary membership. The Llantrisant branch voted to restrict membership to serving railwaymen from 1878, but when the Merthyr branch was established in 1888 it continued the practice.[138] The issue of alcohol at meetings was avoided by some branches holding their meetings in Coffee Houses for example Aberdare, Merthyr and Pontypridd.[139] However within a few months the Merthyr branch had transferred to the Globe Inn, after the Magistrates had given their consent for a Sunday opening, 'seeing that ... Railwaymen could not meet together on any other day'.[140] Other unions were apparently less concerned as was highlighted during the religious revival in 1904-05, by the concern of young woman for her brother.

> Later on a young woman described her concern for her brother, who was a slave to drink. She said that she had kept him at her side until it was time for him to attend the meeting of his Union, where he was to pay his subscription. The meeting was held in a public-house, and once inside he did not leave until closing time. She went on to say, "It is a great shame and a disgrace to the leaders that the Unions, which do so much good, have their headquarters in public-houses. I pray to God that this wicked practice will be put a stop to, for the sake of weak men who cannot resist the temptation of such places."[141]

[135] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1, Mins. Jan.10, 1874; Apr.29, 1876
[136] Ibid, Mins. Dec.16, 1889
[137] Ibid, Mins. May 11, 1890;
[138] Ibid, Mins. Aug.8, 1874; June 23, 1877; UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/1, Mins. Apr.21, 1889
[139] UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/1, Mins. July 15, 1888
[140] Ibid, Mins. Feb.24, 1889
[141] 'Eilir' [William Eilir Evans] (ed), The Religious Revival in Wales: Western Mail(WM), Pamphlet 1, Dec.31, 1904, p28

That woman's prayer was answered as the last Rhondda District meeting of the SWMF in the Imperial Hotel at Porth was in April 1905 and from May 1 they met at the YMCA.[142]

Workplace

Railwaymen and miners shared the common need to look out for one another as they went about their daily business and each had to work to a clearly defined set of rules, the breach of which could result in injury or death for their fellows. Whilst miners had accepted practices that were taught on the job, the railwayman had his rule book with its hundreds of instructions to guide him. As mentioned in chapter three the TVR worker was required to have the rules and regulations with him at all times. The interactions between Taff Vale workers in the workplace are discussed in chapter five.

Indirect Spheres of Influence

The Taff Vale employee's involvement in community would most consistently revolve around the day-to-day personal contacts of everyday life punctuated by regular or occasional visits to public house or chapel. However there were other sub-communities of which he either could not be, or only rarely might be, a member, which nevertheless could have a distinct effect on his thinking. Most of these spheres, drawn in red on figure 4.2, would have been mediated through one or more other sub-community.

Employees of other industries were encountered domestically as family members, boarders or neighbours, and socially at chapel, public house or sporting event, as well as the workplace. It was not so uncommon for members of a family to be employed in different industries, and this provided opportunities for comparisons to be made in the home. Taff Vale men would have opportunity to share in the working life of colliery staff in the Valleys, dock workers in Cardiff and Penarth, as well as other industries across Glamorgan. It was very unusual for members of the same family to work for different railway companies but otherwise the pattern of contacts was true for the employees of other railway companies. Whilst at board level there might be a strong sense of competition, on the ground men from different companies had to get the job done, whether exchanging traffic with the BR at Hafod Junction, near Pontypridd, or visiting the GWR stations at Merthyr and Cardiff alongside other companies. The inter-dependence of railway workers still applied whoever might employ them. Also many

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[142] Arnot, *South Wales Miners*, p374

trade union branches had members from more than one company, and there would be opportunities to compare pay and conditions.[143]

Members of other Trade Unions would be encountered in much the same way as employees in other occupations, and such contact would have been most significant when one union was more progressive or militant than another. For example miners were usually regarded as being more militant than railwaymen as is described in chapter seven. Whilst there might be different views and sometimes criticism from one union of another, once industrial action was decided upon support from the members of one union for those of another was guaranteed. This might be by striking in sympathy or taking collections to send financial support to those on strike. Local branches of railway and miners' unions would also cooperate in the promotion of the role of workingmen in local government, such as when representatives from the Merthyr branch of the ASRS met with men from the miners' Association to discuss support for Labour candidates for the Merthyr School Board.[144] From these contacts stories, good and bad, true or false, could be spread throughout the network.

Formalised contact between trade unions was provided by the Trades' Councils which were formed of representatives from local branches, and had been established in Aberdare, Cardiff, Merthyr, and Pontypridd by 1900. They facilitated communication between unions and provided a structured way in which working men could assist one another and have their voice heard. They were also a counter balance to the Chambers of Commerce who spoke for local business. In 1897 the editor of the Pontypridd Observer criticised the members of both bodies for not taking their roles in the town seriously enough. Attendance at the trades' council was only seven or eight out of 34 when there was the important matter of the Employers' Liability Bill before Parliament. This Bill allegedly provided little benefit and only applied to six million workers leaving seven million untouched, and the editor claimed that accidents were more frequent on railways that had contracted out. As for the Chamber of Commerce both bodies held their meetings in the same place, and both had unfaithful members at a time when there were many issues to be discussed and local government needed to be watched. He also expressed regret that there was no member of the trades' council on the District Council and urged that both bodies should be involved on the School Board.[145] The promotion of labour candidates in district, borough and county elections was to give labour a voice in local government, and issues of health, education and working men on juries were among the many topics discussed. By 1908 former

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[143] MRC, MS127-1
[144] UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/1, Mins. Jan.24, 1892
[145] PObs, May 22, 1897, p[1]

signalman Moses Jones of the ASRS had been elected to the Pontypridd Urban District Council.[146]

The communal benefits of a trades' council was illustrated by a compensation case brought by a young girl injured at work which had received a harsh judgement. The matter was set out in a letter to the editor of the *Pontypridd Observer* and the correspondent wrote '...fortunately, she has got a father, who is a member of the ASRS, and through this have found friends among his fellow Unionists on the Trades Council, who have had the courage to bring this before the public with a view of appealing to a higher court on her behalf.'[147]

External Influences

Taff Vale employees lived in a world of constant upheaval; many were migrants, some only recently arrived, and always the ebb and flow of the economic cycle determined the availability of work and its level of remuneration. The migrants brought with them new ideas and attitudes, and the economic cycle was driven by a global economy heavily dependent on iron, steel and above all coal.

The Valleys were served by a wide variety of religious denominations, which can be divided into four groups, the Church of England, Nonconformists, Roman Catholicism and others. The 'others' consisted of groups regarded as sects by mainstream Christianity, e.g. Mormons and Philadelphians, plus non-Christian religions, such as Judaism and Theosophy. The influence and experience of religion is discussed in chapter nine.

Religion was closely linked with the ethnic origins of Glamorgan residents. The Welsh were a nation with a long heritage whose unity had been imposed from outside, first the Normans and then the English. For much of its history, the English influence through Church and State suppressed much of Welsh culture and distinctiveness, and marginalised the Welsh language; however, as the nineteenth century progressed, a sense of national identity took shape. It found expression in Welsh literature, the National Eisteddfod and in Parliament with the 'Welsh Party' of Liberal MPs, but the rising national consciousness was threatened in the south of the country by immigration on a vast scale.[148]

The rural Welsh brought their 'chapel culture'[149] and the Welsh language with them, and at the most fundamental of levels, that of the spirit, church goers were divided by

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[146] *Ibid*, July 18, 1908, p6
[147] *Ibid*, Oct.17, 1908, p2
[148] Davies, *History of Wales*, pp415-17; Immigration is examined in chapter one
[149] See chapter nine for discussion

language. Immigrants came to the coalfields from England and Ireland as well, but perhaps because of the lack of one clearly defined English culture, their contribution was limited to ensuring that English was the language of business. The Irish on the other hand brought with them a common culture which they celebrated. Irish wakes were held for their dead and shamrock was imported to authenticate the St. Patrick's Day revels.[150] The Roman Catholic Church would act as the focus for the Irish community, much as the Nonconformist chapel might for the Welsh.

As discussed under 'indirect spheres of influence' the TVR workman was involved in local politics through trade unions and trades councils. From the general election campaign of 1900 party politics became more diverse when trade unionists voted for the candidacy of the first Labour MP in Wales.[151] During the nineteenth century the popular franchise had been progressively extended so that after 1884 a substantial proportion of the working population of Glamorgan had a direct say in the composition of the British Government. Liberal Nonconformity ousted the Tory squirearchy and after a period of dominance began to lose it to the Labour movement which would eventually be its replacement. The involvement of the railwaymen in this and the interaction between religion and politics is explored in chapter eight.

For most of the period 'class consciousness' in a Marxist sense was not uppermost in peoples' minds and the social cohesion referred to at the start of this chapter can be demonstrated from the following examples. As described above, local worthies such as magistrates were afforded honorary membership of railway trade union branches before 1890. In 1890 railway strikers expressed their sympathy for local managers caught up in the strike. A decade or so before Tonypandy the Liberal editor of the *Pontypridd Observer* demonstrated his view of a cohesive society, by his combined criticism of both the local Chamber of Trade and Trades' Councils for lack of attendance and for failing in their joint role of holding Government and the local authority to account.[152] Through to at least 1903 local Merthyr Liberal MP, D A Thomas, advised and supported striking railwaymen, despite having been a director of the TVR, and it was only through his support that Keir Hardie was elected to the second Parliamentary seat for Merthyr in 1900.

David Smith well described the turning point in the Rhondda among the miners and families, writing of the 1910 'Tonypandy Riots' Smith describes them as evidence of social fracture :

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[150] N J BENNETT, DES Aug.18, 1919; Sylvia Stone, conversation (July, 2005)
[151] MEx, Sep.29, 1900, p3
[152] PObs, May 22, 1897, p[1], the article is discussed further above

"The Tonypandy riots, too, should be seen as evidence of social fracture as much as of industrial dispute. The crisis occurred within the framework of conventional labour relations; the crowd's response, in both strike and riot, was strictly that of an already industrialized society; but they also chose targets symbolic of their discontent with a community which was supposedly their own natural focus of being. Forced, via the strike, to reassess their own status, they ended by commenting on their relationship to a community defined for them in a graphic coda of selective destruction that was incomprehensible to those whose idea of the community was now threatened by this ugly, intrusive reality."[153]

But equally the blame was not to be laid at the door of 'extreme socialists' as one magistrate had done, for the Miners' Next Step was still two years away, and in 1911 there were still only nine out of a total of thirty seats occupied by Labour councillors.[154] The TVR men found themselves in the middle of the troubles, their trains were stoned and they carried the troops and police, but there was not the sympathetic action that the miners seemed prepared to offer during other disputes.[155] Whatever the stage that the miners had reached in their sense of class consciousness, it is not clear that the railwaymen shared this emerging sense of a fractured community. They were of course a tiny minority among workers in the Rhondda never more than 750 in number, whereas the Cambrian Combine alone employed some twelve thousand.[156]

There was a range of local and regional, and London newspapers available in the valleys; their absence was specifically noted when the Taff men were on strike in 1890.[157] The local and regional newspapers were mostly published in English and displayed different political leanings. Although mainly Liberal supporting, for example the Merthyr Express, there were others that were Left-leaning like the Glamorgan Free Press from Pontypridd. The two major regional papers were the Liberal South Wales Echo and the Conservative Western Mail, and these were quoted extensively in the local press, alongside snippets from the London papers. Each of the main denominations also produced their own journals, which were mainly published in Welsh.[158]

As the vast majority of TVR employees appear to have been literate, and were in fact required to be so,[159] it is unlikely that they escaped their influence. In the second of two articles a long-serving railwayman observed that the 'Merthyr Express has a wide circulation, and is much read by railway servants, from the top of the tree to the

[153] Smith, 'Tonypandy1910', p162
[154] 'Ibid', pp166, 182
[155] See chapter seven and the miners' willingness to support striking railwaymen.
[156] See figure 5.1; GFP, Nov.4, 1910, p4
[157] MEx, Aug.16, 1890, p4
[158] E.g. Y Goleuad (Methodist): Seren Cymru (Baptist): Y Tyst (Independent), K O Morgan, Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980 (Oxford, 1981) p16
[159] UoW SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2, Rule 2 'Not any person will be allowed to enter the Company's service, unless he can read and write.'

bottom'.[160] Another sign of the interest in the more popular local newspapers is the inclusion of obituaries and death notices for current and former railway staff.[161] Finally support from the press was welcomed during campaigns for improved conditions as with the signalmen in 1890 when '[t]he meeting concluded by thanking the central committee of the movement and the *Merthyr Express* for publicizing the cause.'[162]

Conclusion

Defining 'community' is never simple, it will always mean different things to different people and has been debated for well over fifty years, with some concluding that it was impossible to achieve anything like a consensus. There does, however, appear to be a majority view that whilst locality is important in defining a specific community, its boundaries are unlikely to be coterminous with the physical and administrative boundaries of that locality. But in whatever way community is defined it implies the existence of a set of social relationships or 'local social systems'.[163] For any given study it is important that scholars state what use is being made of the term, and so for the purpose of this chapter, 'community' has been defined as: *the people living within a locality, as understood by its members, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but will also extend beyond that boundary.*

Within each 'community' as part of the 'local social systems' are sub-communities that provide the social links for those members. Some sub-communities are informal, for example the favoured public house, others like friendly societies and trade unions are formal having a membership roll and rule book. Each has autonomy, however loosely drawn, and each is defined and viewed both from within and without, by those who belong and those who have chosen not to, or who are ineligible. The sub-communities to which the TVR employee belonged involved many interactions that brought a mix of comfort, entertainment, challenge and support. All were subject to external influences, which were reported in detail and mediated through the local press.

So the Taff Vale workman was part of south Wales society, as described above, and everyday life would involve contact with fellow workers and those from other kinds of employment. Those contacts might be in the home, with lodgers, or in a chapel, with fellow worshippers and each involved him in the local social system; but in the next chapter sub-communities, including the family, workplace and trade union branch, are investigated for evidence of a companywide social network. The four 'external

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[160] MEx May 12, 1883, p3; May 26, 1883, p5
[161] e.g. MEx and ALdr
[162] MEx, April 5, 1890, p5
[163] Stacey, 'Myth of Community Studies'

influences' proposed in this chapter have laid the foundation for an examination of the clashes of culture and belief in chapter eight.

Appendix 4A: Definitions of Occupational Class

I	Ironmasters; Coalowners; Company Directors; Higher Professionals and Managers
II	Lower professionals; Middle management; Managers of small companies
III	Routine non-manual; Clerical
IV	Shop-keepers; Farmers; Small proprietors; Self-employed
V	Foremen
VI	Skilled manual
VII	Semi-skilled manual
VIII	Unskilled manual; Agricultural workers

Appendix 4B: Definitions of Employment Sector

Sector Code	Description	Sector Code	Description
CHUR	Church (clergy+)	META	Non-ferrous metal
COAL	Coal Mining	MINE	Mining (Not coal)
COMM	Commerce	OTHE	Other
DOCK	Port & Harbour	PROF	Professional (Law, etc)
DOME	Domestic & Gardener	RAIL	Railway
EDUC	Education	SHOP	Retail
FARM	Agriculture	TRAD	Tradesmen
IRON	Iron & Steel	UNEM	Unemployed
MARI	Maritime (on ship)	UNKN	Unknown/Uncertain

Source: Appendices 4A and 4B, were devised specifically for this project

Section 2: TVR Community and People

Chapter 5 The TVR as a 'Network Community': Part One

Various concepts of 'community' have been explored in chapter four, along with an investigation of the social features of east Glamorgan, and the roles played by Taff Vale employees. But whilst they played those roles in a number of different types of settlement, this chapter poses the question as to whether they were part of a broader community that embraced the entire TVR network. The aim is to demonstrate the existence of this 'network community' which was subject to the internal and external influences that affected the workforce as a whole. After a discussion of paternalism and discipline in chapter six, the following chapters examine those influences, beginning with industrial relations before moving on to the topics of politics, religion and revivalism.

Defining Community: There was no need for propinquity for community to exist.

As noted in chapter four Dennis, reflecting upon the historical usage of the concept, set down its two main features; firstly it had a descriptive meaning equating to a social group plus a specific area, and secondly an evaluative meaning equating to positive neighbourly social relationships. He expands this further by suggesting that 'community is not defined by who its members are, but by what they do.[1] Although not confined to one village, town or district of a city, it is proposed that the Taff Vale railwaymen were a social group who, with the exception of most directors, lived within a clearly defined section of east Glamorgan. The spatial extent of the Taff Vale Railway is shown on figure I.1 and shows the full extent of the routes over which the TVR operated train services in 1914 and the area in which its employees lived. This relief map also demonstrates how the topography constrained housing development within much of the valleys, setting the physical boundary.

Several writers have expressed the opinion that fixed geographical boundaries are not the appropriate limits for studies of groups of people and that it is the social links that are important, with the boundaries drawn by the groups themselves.[2] Whilst some have recognised that the scale need not be confined to a small village or urban neighbourhood, extending boundaries too far, with no personal networks, can result in 'communities' that are purely rhetorical.[3] Salaman in discussing 'occupational

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[1] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p285
[2] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, pp12,14; Macfarlane, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities', p633; Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p10; etc
[3] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, p13

communities' took railwaymen and architects as two of the groups to be examined, he found that the railwaymen in his sample, based on a single location, related within a geographically limited section of Cambridge, whereas the architects' relationships were spread across a much larger area that included north west London. In affirming his argument that both the railwaymen and architects were occupational communities he describes one as *local* and the other as *cosmopolitan*.[4] Although he does note the argument against the architects being considered a community as they lacked 'geographical propinquity'.[5]

Macfarlane in referring to a distinction made by some between geographical and social aspects, commented that 'community' may or may not be geographically based, and concludes that as sociologists are mainly concerned with social relationships it might be a mistake to confine it within a physical boundary.[6] Dennis in introducing his work on *English Industrial Cities* writes of retaining an ecological emphasis on the 'the urban mosaic' broadened to include concepts of community beyond 'homogenous tracts' of social area theory to include 'non-place communities' or 'community without propinquity' with the concurrent decline of territorially defined communities'.[7]

Van Meijl develops this further commenting that

> 'for the social science practitioner, patterns of social relationships usually extend beyond particular settlements and are not necessarily tied to specific geographic localities. Furthermore the term [community] is used not only in relation to smaller settlements, such as villages or towns, but perceptively also to describe social relations at the level of the nation-state (for example, Anderson 1983) - a scale well beyond that of the village. Indeed, sociologists have rejected the concept of community for empirical research on the basis of these methodological inconsistencies (Stacey 1969).'[8]

It is interesting that Clark encourages researchers to establish which of his proposed 'communities of interest' are based in the local geographical setting and which in a much wider one. He suggests that this would 'reveal more clearly that community is not being eclipsed but that its expression is shifting from a local to a cosmopolitan form of activity and social relationships.'[9] Writing of contemporary society a recent Church of England report included the following; 'Network is a major social reality. Many people still think and live geographically – they may, for example, relate almost entirely to the village or estate in which they live. But increasingly people's lives are best

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[4] Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, p113
[5] *Ibid*, p124
[6] Macfarlane, 'History, anthropology and the study of communities', p633
[7] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p10, e.g. J Connell, 'Social networks in urban society' in B D Clark and M B Gleave (eds.), *Social patterns in cities* (London, 1973) pp41-52
[8] Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p135
[9] Clark, 'Concept of community', p411

described by the networks to which they relate, rather than simply by the place where they live.'[10] Did such a phenomenon already exist one hundred or more years previously, albeit in particular circumstances? Two writers who have used the term 'community' to embrace a much broader spatial concept are Benedict Anderson and D K Drummond. Anderson in his *Imagined Communities* was writing about the origins of nationalism and Drummond's 'virtual community' of railway engineers was also on a global scale. Their work is discussed below.

Referring back to the key texts highlighted in chapter four, the proposed community without propinquity or 'network community' as a totality could not be equated with Tönnies' g*emeinschaft* due to its scattered and heterogeneous nature, and relates more to *gesselschaft*, that 'is an 'artificial construction of an aggregate of human beings which superficially resembles *Gemeinschaft*...'[11] Tönnies thought that changes in the economic system were linked with the change from one to the other; the time span of this study, 1878 to 1914, places the TVR in the middle of that transition. Van Meijl in analysing Hillery's ninety-four definitions identified a degree of commonality, with the majority containing these four elements: 'a group of people': 'a common territory for at least some of the time': 'social interaction': and 'one or more additional common ties'.[12] If that were to be taken as a standard definition, it would resemble the Taff Vale 'network'. The suggestion, quoted by Stacey, that a necessary factor for the development of community was 'shared history,'[13] will be shown to have been the case on the TVR. It was a history created through lengthy periods of employment, extensive mobility but also high residential persistence.

As noted in chapter four, anthropologists such as Cohen, when faced with the difficulty in arriving at a commonly accepted definition of community proposed that it is more helpful to seek for the symbols by which its members define the boundary.[14] So what was the boundary of the TVR network, and what part might symbols play in defining it? In summary the main symbols were four in number: history, financial success, stability and paternalism. These identified the TVR to its employees, customers and owners.

In terms of history, the Taff Vale was the first main line railway in Wales and had been promoted by local ironmasters; an earlier ironmaster had sponsored the trip of the World's first steam train journey in 1804, and the northern section of the TVR paralleled its route. The company was pivotal in opening up the coalfields of the Cynon and

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[10] *Mission-shaped Church: church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context* (London, 2004) p62
[11] Tönnies, *Community and Association*, p74 cited in Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, p6
[12] Van Meijl, 'Community Development as Fantasy?', p134
[13] Michael Young, *The Listener*, 23 Sept. 1954 cited in Stacey, *Tradition and Change*
[14] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, Cohen (ed), *Symbolising Boundaries*

Rhondda Valleys; with communal recognition illustrated by press coverage that was in turn critical and nostalgic. Between 1891 and 1913 at least five nostalgic articles appeared in either the *Merthyr Express* or the *Glamorgan Free Press* describing the Taff Vale's earlier days. [15]

In terms of financial success it was a financially profitable company throughout its existence and carried the largest tonnage of coal from the Valleys, paying a high level of dividend for most of its existence;[16] although this was not adequately shared with its employees. The growth and financial success of the company provided sustained employment as well as rewards to the shareholders, and at least one employee celebrated its phenomenal growth on his retirement.[17]

The stability of the company was in part due to the two senior managers, both iconic figures, who held sway over the company for its entire 86 year history, and its 'top team' were, with few exceptions, home grown. [18] For employees, once established, this was a job for life, as is illustrated by an average length of service in excess of thirty years for Traffic staff.[19]

The paternalistic benefits afforded the men from the 1890s were appreciated, especially the well-received and cherished non-contributory pension scheme for the majority of its wages staff. That the pension scheme was valued was demonstrated by insistence on the protection of pension rights in the settlement of the 1900 strike,[20] and the scheme was a continuing source of pride long after the company had ceased its independent existence.[21]

Cohen proposes that 'community exists in the minds of its members' not in geographic fact, with its boundaries also in the mind.[22] He continues '[s]ymbolic expression of community refers to a putative past or tradition.' This not only applied to the Taff Vale in respect of its historic past, for the range of symbols also covered the everyday experience of the workforce. In discussing occupational communities both Salaman and Revill follow Cohen's basic point for the need to seek for the symbols by which its members define the boundary.[23]

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[15] *GFP*, May 23, 1891, p3; *GFP*, July 1, 1910, p8; *MEx*, Aug.7, 1909, p6; *MEx*, Mar.29, 1913, p10; *MEx*, Apr.19, 1913, p10; Also see account of Taff Vale history in chapter one
[16] See Table 1.2 and Figure 1.5
[17] *GWRM*, Vol.XXXVII, March (1925) p112
[18] George Fisher and Ammon Beasley, see chapter two; *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[19] See chapter three especially Table 3.3
[20] *MEx*, Sept.1, 1900, p5
[21] W J Jones, 'The Taff Vale Railway 1841-1921: Servant of the Rhondda 150 Years on' in *Servants of Steam*, p7
[22] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, p98
[23] Graeme Salaman, *Working* (Chichester, 1986), *p*75; Revill, 'Railway Derby', p380-81

> Some [boundaries] may be physical, expressed, perhaps, by a mountain range or a sea. Some may be racial or linguistic or religious. But not all boundaries, and not all the components of any boundary, are so objectively apparent. They may be thought of, rather, as existing in the minds of their beholders....We are talking here about what the boundary means to people, or, more precisely, about the meanings they give to it. This is the symbolic aspect of community boundary...[24]

In respect of the boundary of the TVR network community there is a geographical extent to it, but because it is also an amalgam of many spatial entities within that extent, it is necessary to define that community's boundary in terms that transcend those and which the members would recognise. Examples of those symbols are described throughout this study. They consisted of a common language, English, in the operation of the railway, the Rule Book and railway jargon.[25] Then there were tales of past and recent happenings, initiation pranks, accidents and the risks of the job.[26] Some of those symbols would be people, characters of note, for example Driver J H Stone, Station Master Joseph Hiscock, and General Managers Fisher and Beasley.[27] Other symbols were organisations and their activities, such as the First Aid movement with its competitions, and trade unions with their church parades and vigilance committees.

The extent of social cohesion in the Glamorganshire Valleys has been described in chapter four and is partly illustrated by relation of the workmen to their immediate superiors; although General Manager Beasley might have been vilified. Generally the lower ranks of company managers, apart from head office staff, lived among those who they managed. As noted the Valleys were a largely single class society with an increasing number of middle class shopkeepers and professionals as the urban areas developed. The point is that class does not appear to have been a major distraction to the network community, until wider trade union allegiances began to replace those focussed on the single company as 1914 approached.[28] Smith discussing the Tonypandy riots in the Rhondda describes how social fracture was occurring in this mining community in 1910 but proposes that the 'working class of mid-Rhondda in 1910 did not...own its own self as yet'.[29]

The topic of networks has been introduced in the previous chapter with the proposal from Dennis that community 'as social interaction may be defined through the medium

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[24] Cohen, *Symbolic Construction of Community*, p12
[25] See chapter one
[26] Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years*; R T Rees, 'From "Call Boy" to Driver' in *Servants of Steam*, pp11-12; See chapter three
[27] J H STONE, DES Sep.3, 1863, Apparently regarded as 'a god' at Coke Ovens depot; Mrs S Stone, correspondence (2005-7); See chapters six and two
[28] The rise of industrial strife on the TVR from 1890 is charted at chapter seven
[29] Smith, 'Tonypandy1910', pp162,184

of social network analysis'.[30] At this distance in time it is not possible to establish the density of most of the links between Taff Vale employees, nor the extent of the multiplexity for any meaningful mathematical analysis. However, examples have been discovered covering linkages through workplace contact, mobility across the company, social activities, kinship, intermarriage, residential persistence, boarding and roles in local and national organisations. As Dennis confirms when writing of the past:

> Unfortunately, in dealing with historical communities we cannot reconstruct complete patterns of social contact for every dimension of every individual's social life. We can determine neither the plexity (because we do not know about every form of activity) nor the density (because we do not know about every individual) of past social networks.[31]

The 'local social systems' proposed by Stacey as the object of study operated on two levels within the network.[32] Firstly in the customary fashion of single locality based systems in each settlement across the TVR area, and secondly in the broader entity that was the 'network community'. Some of the settlements display the characteristics of an 'occupational community' which is discussed below, and in others the distribution of TVR employees was too sparse for them to operate as a separate entity within that locality.

What is a 'Network Community'?

As this proposed community is comprised of the members of a single company it might be thought of as an 'occupational community'. Whereas Revill and Salaman could demonstrate the existence of occupational communities at Derby and Cambridge respectively, this is not possible for the Taff Vale as a whole.[33] However, the proposed network community does display similar features. These include for example a positive self-image, involvement in work skills and tasks, inclusiveness of the work or organisational situation with features such as organisational pervasiveness, organisational embrace, and restrictive factors; these features are discussed under the section on day-to-day contact.[34]

In addition members might well 'associate with, make friends of, other members in preference to having friends who are outsiders' and carry their work into leisure time.[35] Whilst it is clear that employees of the TVR were often associated in more than one role, the extent and importance of those roles to the members and how distinct the

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[30] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p270
[31] *Ibid*; despite this comment Dennis does illustrate what might be possible in some situations.
[32] Stacey, 'The myth of community studies'
[33] Revill, 'Railway Derby'; Salaman, *Community and Occupation*
[34] Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, p27
[35] *Ibid*, p21

work/leisure relationship might be from other occupations is difficult to determine at this distance in time. The role of social activities is discussed later in this chapter, along with intermarriage, multiple generations and lodging. Thirty-eight percent of the employees lived and worked in and around Cardiff, largely because the company's workshops and headquarters were located there. With the concentration of staff in a specific district, such as Cathays, there is clearly a possible 'occupational community', but such local concentrations of employees do not necessarily advance the argument for the existence of a 'network community'. So it is in the consideration of what relationships existed with and among the widely dispersed sixty-two percent that the concept can be tested.

Imagined or 'virtual' communities

For Anderson nation can be defined as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'.[36] It is *imagined* because of the limited knowledge each member has of most of their fellow-members. 'In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face to face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined.' He points out that in terms of nations there are boundaries, however flexible, 'beyond which lie other nations'. So they are imagined as *limited* but *sovereign*.[37] The final defining imagining is that of *community* where 'the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.'

In considering the front page of a newspaper Anderson asks what links the disparate readers and proposes that the answer is the calendrical coincidence; that is the date by the masthead. This he suggests is the 'single most important emblem on it'.[38] Anderson sees the newspaper as a form of ephemeral book, 'a one-day best-seller'.[39] The volume of production is very large and relatively few fellow readers are aware of each other's identity, but the reader, in observing others consuming identical publications, is 'continually reassured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life.'[40]

Anderson describes the rise of the bourgeoisie in the first half of the nineteenth-century which resulted in the expansion of a bureaucratic middle-class. The rise of 'commercial and industrial bourgeoisies...was highly uneven', but linked to the rise in print-capitalism.[41] Anderson argues that prior to this a common language was not

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[36] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p6
[37] *Ibid*, p7
[38] *Ibid*, p33
[39] *Ibid*, p35
[40] *Ibid*, p35-6
[41] *Ibid*, p76

essential; intermarriage and kinship governed relationships between nations. In comparison the bourgeoisie might not be related or even know one another, but they were united in imagination from a common print page. Over the same period the significance of bilingual Creoles within the empires they served increased dramatically.[42] This was an increase made possible, in the nineteenth-century, by the mobility afforded by new technologies such as the telegraph, the railway and the steam ship.[43] For now they could visit the 'metropole' for training and take that education, communicating with other bilingual Creoles as they travelled, to 'administrative centres' throughout the empire.

The newspapers, with many individuals joined through each reading the same text under the same dateline, obviously embraced more than the company's employees, but there were other texts peculiar to the employees and their masters. These were the Rule Book, Working Timetables and Appendices which almost like the sacred texts of a religion bound each together, setting out tenets of loyalty, obedience and mutual responsibility.[44] McKenna describes the railway as 'the first paper-dominated industry. Here everything was written down and posted up'.[45] The language of these texts was exclusively English, the language of business and technology, rather than Welsh.[46] This was re-enforced by the ownership of capital, be it the ironmasters or the Bristol-based investors in the TVR, and senior managerial appointments, such as George Fisher and Ammon Beasley. It was almost as if the Welsh-speaking employees were like Anderson's Creoles needing spoken and written fluency in the 'colonial' tongue before they could be employed. For many employees the language of home and chapel may have been Welsh, but English was the official language of the workplace.[47] So here was an expression of community that did not relate at all to the conventional spatial concept, but was based on the mental images of an 'imagined community', which nevertheless linked large numbers of people, links that owed their existence to the printed word.

Drummond in her article on Britain's Railway Engineers enquires whether they were the 'First Virtual Global Community'. In the introduction she likens her 'virtual community' to the present day internet with its almost instantaneous capacity to link

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[42] *Ibid*, p114-15
[43] *Ibid*, p42
[44] See examples from the Rule Book quoted in chapters three and six
[45] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p232
[46] Also true of the copper smelting industry of the Afan Valley, see Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, 'Smoke and Prayer: Industry and Religion – Cwmafan in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Welsh Religious History*, Vol.6 (1998)
[47] Based on the same Census sample as tables 4.1 to 4.5, 29 percent of families headed by a TVR employee were Welsh speaking, and from chapter nine seventeen percent of employees, whose denominational allegiance is known, worshipped in a Welsh speaking chapel. Also see comments on Treherbert under *'Continuity in company housing...'*

anybody anywhere to anyone else on the planet.[48] Much of the driving force for the expansion of the internet has been commerce as it was for the 'virtual global communities' established by nineteenth-century railway engineers.[49] Much as with Anderson's 'imagined communities' it was the expanding technologies of the nineteenth century that facilitated their establishment and growth.[50]

These revolutionary technical developments advanced communications so that groups such as British railway engineers could travel and keep in touch whether at home or abroad. Along with the developments already listed there were 'mass produced printed publications', which again emphasises the role of print-capitalism.[51] The ability to communicate rapidly might not be in dispute, but was it sufficient to establish that there was a social aggregation that could be called a community? For Drummond the search was for 'a common group culture or "group mind" that is facilitated by the constant circulation of information necessary for that community's continuance.'[52]

Drummond argues that the 'virtual global community' among railway engineers arose from the establishment of professional institutions and the need to ensure adherence to the standards of the professions throughout Britain's formal and informal empires. To this end the minutes and proceedings of those bodies were printed and circulated, and in addition details of available work was publicised.[53]

Among possible obstacles noted by Drummond was the increasing number of professional bodies and the competition between them and over the future contracts publicised in their journals. This might make the frequently changing networks 'often quite fragile', but it was their economic purpose.[54] So here again was an expression of community that far exceeded the conventional spatial concept, but was based on person to person relationships, as well as more remote links that owed their existence to the printed word.

From these two examples it can be seen that there is justification in the use of the term 'community' to define a practical concept very different to more traditional images of tight-knit rural villages or urban neighbourhoods. Although the term should be qualified or clearly defined for each study in which it is employed.

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[48] Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers', p208
[49] 'Ibid', p208
[50] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p115; Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers', p210-11
[51] Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers'
[52] 'Ibid', p211
[53] 'Ibid', p216-7
[54] 'Ibid', p219-20

Conclusion

In the previous chapter 'community' was defined as: *the people living within a locality, as understood by its members, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but will also extend beyond that boundary.* In this chapter that definition is developed to embrace a wider, albeit, looser concept. The aim was to see whether there was such a social entity as the 'Taff Vale Railway' that could be distinguished from the dominant occupational groups of the areas which the TVR served. A working definition of the 'network community' could be: *the employees of the Taff Vale Railway and their families living and working within the spatial and symbolic boundaries that define it, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but also extend beyond those boundaries.*

As noted in chapter four, Calhoun suggested that networks can be constructed in any manner that produces a set of relationships,[55] and in seeking to establish the existence of a 'network community' the following ten sources of potential links within the company have been explored. These are company identity, day-to-day contact, social contact, mobility and stability, multiple generations, inter-marriage, residence, persistence, lodging and trade unions. These are the factors to be discussed in Part Two of this chapter.

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[55] Calhoun, 'Community: toward a variable conceptualization', p118

Chapter 5 The TVR as a 'Network Community': Part Two

Company Identity – Symbols, Loyalty and Solidarity

In his consideration of the rise and fall of company loyalty McKenna writes that '[i]n the railway industry, the Protestant ethic, militarism and nineteenth-century paternalism met and were cemented into specific loyalties which retained their potency long after the amalgamation of disparate companies in 1923, or the advent of public ownership in 1948.' That continuity was evident in the book published to celebrate the sesquicentenary of the TVR in 1991 when several men who had actually worked for the company were proud to make their contributions.[56] The symbolic boundary of the Taff Vale network community has been described above and highlights the factors that made up the company identity and which could encourage that company loyalty.

The company identity had been reinforced by the affection and respect in which the local communities held the Taff Vale, as discussed at chapter one. Although that had diminished by the 1890s, it still survived, more strongly in some communities than others. Also even until after the First World War there were men employed by the company who had entered its service in the first two decades or so of its existence and retained a strong loyalty to it.[57] Such long service did not preclude joining a trade union or coming out on strike, as with George Grattan, pioneer member of the Aberdare branch of the ASRS, who was specifically reported as having taken part in the strike of 1900.[58] Paternalism is discussed in the next chapter, but the desire attributed to the company chairman in 1898 was "to do all in his power to cement the friendly relations... between the Board and the great body their staff."[59] For some employees the decennial Census provided an opportunity to declare that they were not just a railway porter, but a 'Taff Vale Railway Porter'. For example this was true of 22 employees in the Cardiff district, compared with 30 of the much larger GWR.[60]

The 'company identity' was not one constrained by loyalty to senior management or the owners, and could apparently survive industrial action. In the immediate aftermath of the 1900 strike the community spirit engendered by that identity was demonstrated at a trade union fund-raising tea party and entertainment in Abercynon and apparently transcended any recriminations. It was attended by a prominent ASRS speaker, and local signalman John Ewington, a central character in the dispute, whilst one of the

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[56] Servants of Steam

[57] These were men such as Joseph HISCOCK and David ANDREWS whose stories are recounted in chapter six

[58] MExp, Sep.8, 1900, p6

[59] RMag, 'Ammon Beasley', p16

[60] NC 1891 RG12/4379, 4383-4408

soloists was the Abercynon Station Master's daughter.[61] The strife developing between capital and labour did not destroy that sense of belonging for even a blackleg could be forgiven.[62]

Public celebrations and commemorations would naturally attract a variety of attendees, who would come because of personal knowledge of an individual, their prominence in the local community or out of respect for their labours in company, church or society. From examining a range of such events, mainly funerals, where attendance is reported, it is clear that, for the majority of Taff Vale men, both colleagues and or former colleagues would attend. When the employee had died after some years in retirement former colleagues and some current employees would often be present. Some ex-employees would have outlived their colleagues, or lost touch through removal to another town. Although in the latter case their demise would still be reported in the area from whence they had moved. Signalman John Gay had been pensioned by 1901, yet in 1913 his funeral was attended by a large number of railwaymen and officials, including the current Station Master Mr D Walters.[63] Although Passenger Guard Fred Gully had retired to live with his brother at Swindon in his native Wiltshire, his internment was reported in the *Aberdare Leader*.[64]

In chapter four it was noted that many TVR employees were very involved in the wider community. Funerals demonstrated that involvement and the multiplexity of the links between employees. Those links were discussed above with reference to the work of Dennis and Calhoun. Examples include situations where employees were members of friendly societies or temperance organisations, and some held office not just in a local branch but also at regional and national level. One good example was signalman George Parr, who held various offices in church and temperance organisations at local and national levels.[65] Another set of links involving a small proportion of the workforce were between those who belonged to the Railwaymen's Christian Association, which had been formed by the Railway Mission (RM) to enable railwaymen who were Christian believers to link up with their co-religionists. This national organisation is described in greater detail in chapter nine.

A good demonstration of the Taff Vale community and company identity occurred at the funeral of Aberdare-based traffic inspector, Charles Timms, in 1901. Attendees came from across Glamorgan, from Penarth, Cardiff, Taffs Well and Merthyr. These included

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61 *PObs*, Sep.8, 1900, p4
62 Former driver Rupert REES praised a generous Scot who came to the TVR in 1900, Rees, 'From "Call Boy" to Driver', p10
63 *ALdr*, April 26, 1913, p3
64 *MExp*, Dec.11, 1909, p8
65 *ALdr*, Sep.25, 1920, pp2&4

'nearly all the employees at Aberdare', and 'magnificent wreaths were sent by loco employees, traffic officials, Mr Price, Cardiff and others'.[66] Family members with company connections would also travel from other parts of the 'network'. This was demonstrated at the funerals of Charles and Mary Parr, brother and wife of George Parr mentioned above. The Parr family who lived at Aberdare were related to the Dudson families in the Rhondda Fach, some of whom attended both. When the wife of Elijah Grubb, lampman at Aberdare, was buried, his two railwaymen sons attended, and the Pontypridd branch of the Railway Clerks Association (RCA), of which one of the sons was secretary, sent a wreath.[67]

Day-to-day contact with colleagues across the company

The characteristics of occupational communities have been introduced in Part One of this chapter and here the relevant points are discussed in the context of the workaday world of the TVR employee. Railwaymen had a *positive self-image* and this was clearly demonstrated at an annual dinner arranged by the Merthyr branch of the ASRS. This was attended by various local dignitaries and the vice-chairman for the evening remarked that:

> He considered this class of people superior in some respects to other workmen (hear, hear). As a rule they were better educated, and required to be so before they could enter upon their work. Their responsibilities were very great, and therefore they required qualifications which made them superior to the ordinary class of working men (applause).[68]

This was an image the men recognised and accepted. These were men involved in *work skills and tasks*, for as noted below operating a railway required the cooperative effort of many different grades. Salaman divides the inclusiveness of the work into three attributes,[69] firstly *organisational pervasiveness*, that is the extent to which members of an organisation share a value system. The company laid down rules for behaviour and that reached beyond the daily task, such as expected church attendance, but the ASRS also encouraged this by holding annual church parades. The second attribute was *organisational embrace* which would have been more significant for the employees of companies that provided houses for large numbers of them, but in the remoter rows of Taff Vale houses the local manager, typically a station master, would be able to keep a weather eye from his adjacent house. The final attribute, *restrictive factors*, covers those features common to most railwaymen and which are inherent in railway work. This includes unsociable shift patterns which could

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66 *MExp*, Feb.2, 1901, p5
67 *ALdr*, May 25, 1912, p3
68 *MEx*, Apr.12, 1890, p3
69 Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, p27

prevent involvement in evening activities and might hinder the development of friendships. This was particularly true for train crew who could start a shift at any time of day or night; at least on the Taff Vale coal trains did not run on Sundays, when most trade union meetings were held.

Wherever the employee might be based or whatever his grade he would have face to face contact with other employees on a daily basis and many of those contacts would be with men based across the network. In these encounters there would be opportunities to share the latest rumours or 'network gossip'. The spatial boundaries of the network, over which that gossip would be spread, were far more extensive than Roberts' spatial definition of a working class community as a neighbourhood with boundaries that are 'primarily determined by the range of local gossip.'[70]

Locomotive and Traffic department staffs, whether they wished to be involved with each other not, had no option but to work together in the operation of the railway, although some would have more contact than others. This was not confined to groups of workers based at a single location, for although some were static, working for instance as shunters or porters, the trains they serviced were crewed by drivers, firemen, guards and brakesmen, who might visit several stations or group of sidings during the course of a shift. And then there was the more arm's length relationship between signalmen and train crew, where much of the communication between them would be mechanical. More direct conversations occurred at sidings where a clear understanding between the two was essential for the safe operation of the railway. It was here too that relationships might be made or broken.

Prior to the changed method of operation introduced by the new regime following the 'Shareholders' Revolt' of 1891 described in chapter one, on each trip between the coal mines and the docks, coal trains would call at a number of collieries or junctions to collect loaded wagons or drop off empties. However, under the new method a full load of wagons would be worked from one colliery to the dockside or holding sidings.[71] This reduced the number contacts to be made during a single shift. This pattern was to continue until after Nationalisation and was recorded by a former driver writing in the *Great Western Railway Journal*.[72] In this article he described the interaction between the railwaymen as well as the day-to-day contact with mining industry workers at the pithead. The revised method may have reduced the frequency of contact with specific individuals, but not entirely. The mines visited could vary from day-to-day and the contacts with fellow railwaymen and colliery employees would be maintained.

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[70] Roberts, 'Neighbourhoods'
[71] Experts' Report to Shareholders' Committee cited in *RTims*, May 16, 1891
[72] Fred Rees, 'From Roath to the Rhymney Valley', *Great Western Railway Journal (GWRJ)*, No.51 (Summer, 2004) pp155-164

Details of the everyday contacts are illustrated by various encounters that resulted in disciplinary action, and it is clear that not all of these encounters were amicable. For example one of the most common forms of inter-personal contact that occurred was when a member of the Traffic staff was required to give a hand signal to an engine driver that it was in order to proceed during shunting operations. A shunter working at ground level would be responsible to ensure that hand-operated points were correctly set for the move to be carried out;[73] similarly the responsibility might lie with a signalman in his cabin. Particularly for the latter, a moment's inattention could result in points being reset during the passage of a shunting engine or accompanying wagons.[74] In either situation a wrong move might result in a derailment, collision or track damage. A correctly executed manoeuvre possibly cemented relationships, or at least emphasized the teamwork nature of railway operations, whereas when things went wrong, there might be exacerbation of traditional rivalries between footplate and other grades, accentuated by the superior earnings of the footplatemen. From a sample of 293 disciplinary incidents just over sixteen percent had an inter-personal dimension, and, of these, 21 percent involved violence or abusive language, whilst the remaining 79 percent arose from failed or incorrect communication.[75] Naturally staff would have socialized in the workplace between tasks, but certain activities incurred the wrath of management, such as playing cards at an engine shed.[76] Discipline is discussed in chapter six.

It went against the grain for one employee to inform on another, and infringement of the rules, particularly locally accepted habits, would go unreported until a particular incident attracted the attention of management. Solidarity cost at least one brakesman his job for, firstly not reporting one such custom, and then, within a year, not reporting an error on the part of a guard.[77] Such loyalty was apparently instilled from an early age, which is illustrated by the prank played on a new recruit on his first day; he was met by lads, who he already knew, and bundled into a locker at 6:00am, the time he was due to report, and not released until 9:00am in spite of the foreman's enquiries as to his whereabouts. Despite this treatment and having to explain his lateness, he considered it wrong to inform on his captors.[78]

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[73] e.g. M DAVIES, DES May 26 1891, NA RAIL 684/96
[74] e.g. D THOMAS, DES January 1872, NA RAIL 684/94
[75] NA RAIL 264/96; NA RAIL 264/97, GWR Amalgamated Lines - Loco Dept.; NA RAIL 684/94; NA RAIL 684/95, Register of Traffic Staff: 1882-1891; NA RAIL 684/96; NA RAIL 684/99; NA RAIL 684/109; NA RAIL 684/110; NA RAIL 684/111; NA RAIL 684/113; NA RAIL 684/115
[76] W HEWITH, DES May 9 1910, and L BIRD, DES Mar.4 1907, NA RAIL 684/99; J EVANS, DES Nov.7, 1888, NA RAIL 684/109
[77] W MORGAN, DES Sep.19 1883, NA RAIL 684/95
[78] Rees, 'From "Call Boy" to Driver', pp11-12

Socialization also occurred in the workplace where training was 'on the job' and new recruits might be inducted with a phantom task such as being sent to find the 'rubber hammer'.[79] But on the job training had its weaknesses. By 1912 the Board of Trade required every railway company to report accidents involving harm to employees, which the Board then investigated. In one such investigation into the circumstances of an injury sustained by a brakesman during shunting it was discovered that the man had not followed the company's regulations. Although he had been employed for three months, he had never been issued with the appropriate appendix, and the method of working that had resulted in his injury was what he had learnt from the other men.[80]

For those who operated the trains, 'on the job' was not at the pit or factory for a fixed shift, but a working day might commence at any minute within a twenty-four hour period. The day for the engine driver would commence by being woken by a young 'call boy' from his engine shed, knocking at the door until he had had an acknowledgement, often by the driver throwing his pay tag down from the bedroom window. At some homes the driver's wife would already be up and might invite the boy in for 'a cup of tea and Welsh cake'.[81] These unsocial hours probably reinforced camaraderie bred by the shared experiences, and contact with the home emphasized the community nature of this employment. Also the job dictated the rhythm of family life, perhaps encouraging sons to continue with what they knew.

Mobility and Stability

The preceding paragraphs describe the daily interactions that involved a group of employees that might remain more or less constant for a period, but then there were the longer-term changes brought about by mobility and progression. A signalman now works in a cabin on a different branch, a driver may have moved depots to gain promotion, a porter may now have been transferred from the platform to the brake van to become guard, and each of these moves may separate former colleagues or reacquaint them. It is significant that 36 percent of the sample of employees in Table 3.3 had changed zone and that on average each change involved a move across two or more zones. These moves are important to the concept of a 'network community' with the mobility of staff across the TVR's network, and the possibility of finding the same people as colleagues and neighbours again. The mobility and progression of various groups of employees has been discussed in chapter three, and the overall geographical distribution of staff is depicted on figure 5.1. Examples of individual mobility are included with the discussion below on the continuity in company housing.

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[79] Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years*
[80] PP1913 LVIII, Fourth Qtr 1912, Appx. C, p157, Accident 26th October, 1912, John WILLIAMS
[81] Rees, 'From "Call Boy" to Driver', pp11-12

Figure 5.1 Estimated Distribution of TVR Employees by Zone for Grade Groups as at 1913 (excluding Head Office and Main Workshops in Cardiff, Zone 8)

KEY to Grade Groups
Permanent Way
Locomotive
Traffic

ZONE 1
98 58 59

ZONE 2
102 58 36
MERTHYR
PENTREBACH
TROEDYRHIW

ZONE 16
50 40 15
ABERDARE
ABERAMAN
MOUNTAIN ASH
MARDY
TREHERBERT
FERNDALE
TREORCHY
YSTRAD

ZONE 3
110 116 59
MERTHYR VALE
QUAKERS YARD
PENRHIWCEIBER
TYLORSTOWN
YNYSYBWL
ABERCYNON
LLWYNYPIA
YNYSHIR

ZONE 4
16 17
NELSON
TRAVELLERS REST

ZONE 5
11 24
CILFYNYDD
COEDPENMAEN

ZONE 15
75 147 114

ZONE 14
138 116
TREALAW
DINAS
PORTH
HAFOD
PONTYPRIDD

ZONE 6
211 209 120
TREFOREST

ZONE 7
104 134 77
TAFFS WELL
RADYR
LLANDAFF

21 20
LLANTWIT
ZONE 13
CROSS INN

ZONE 12
15 39 15
LLANTRISANT
LLANHARRY
YSTRADOWEN

411 151 387
ZONE 8
CARDIFF
GWR
GRANGETOWN
CARDIFF DOCKS
CLARENCE ROAD

COWBRIDGE

ZONE 9
124 64 66
PENARTH DOCK
PENARTH TOWN

ST MARY CHURCH ROAD

ZONE 11
8 5
ST ATHAN ROAD
ABERTHAW

LOWER PENARTH
LAVERNOCK
SULLY

CADOXTON
ZONE 10
11 26

Scale

BRISTOL   CHANNEL

Sources: PP 1914, LXXVII; Lyons & Mountford, A Historical Survey; John Copsey, 'Leamington Spa Engine Sheds', GWRJ, No.59 (Summer, 2006) pp157-75; The Locomotives of the Great Western Railway: Part Ten Absorbed Engines 1922-1947 (1966); Bradshaw, July, 1904, etc.

A further opportunity for staff to get acquainted in connection with their employment would be if they commuted in the company of others, between home and work. These opportunities would be limited for footplate and traffic staff, such as guards and signalmen, because their signing-on times would vary in relation to each different programme of work. In any case many signalmen in their signal cabins were isolated from other workers. Additionally the irregular shifts and isolated workplaces would encourage them to live near their place of employment. The one group of staff, with the opportunity to commute in the company of others, were clerical staff employed at Head Office in Cardiff. This is illustrated by a sample of twenty-two clerks from the Goods Superintendent's Department for whom home addresses were recorded in that department's staff registers. These included a number of relocations, and have been plotted on figure 5.4. Five lived on the railway's line to Penarth, and it is reasonable to assume that some if not all travelled together. High ranking officers, such as the General Manager Ammon Beasley, also lived in Penarth from the 1890s, but as he had his own transport, it is not clear whether he used his company's service.[82]

The railway line to Penarth (4¼ miles) was opened in 1878, but the main intermediate station, Grangetown (1¾ miles), was not opened until about four years later. Housing development in both places had commenced around 1860, but Daunton comments that it was, '...sometime before Grangetown came within accepted limits for travelling to work.'[83] But commuting in Cardiff could also be by tram, as is described below.

Social Activities

Salaman comments that members of occupational communities 'associate with, make friends of, other members in preference to having friends who are outsiders' and carry their work into leisure time.[84] Whilst it is not possible to confirm this with respect to the TVR, a range of social activities which principally involved railway employees have been identified and are detailed in this section.

A facility, which could be found in many railway towns, was the Workmen's Institute. One had been established at the West Yard Works before 1892 and was principally a reading room where for one penny a week staff had access to newspapers, popular magazines and technical publications relevant to an engineering works.[85] In 1903 a

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[82] In 1901 Beasley employed a coachman, NC RG13/4989 5 9
[83] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p78
[84] Salaman, *Community and Occupation*, p21
[85] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16C

proposal for another institute at Cathays Works was submitted to the Board and met with the Directors' approval, however further details have not been found.[86]

The First Aid (FA) movement which although it was an important part of staff welfare provision did also develop into a social activity. Mitigation of the effects of accidents prompted the development of the FA movement across the industry, and on the TVR was well established by 1895, when the four-man crew of a passing train rendered first aid to an injured colliery engine driver.[87] In the report of the incident details were given of the St John's Ambulance Club that they attended at Navigation [Abercynon], which was instructed by a local doctor. A decade later the company was providing a shield and medals for FA competitions between classes.[88]

Whilst staff outings were not a day-to-day event they did emphasize the community aspects of railway life. There was an annual staff outing from West Yard and other company works at Cardiff in the 1870s and 1880s. These involved moving up to 1,500 employees, relatives and friends from Cardiff to Merthyr Tydfil in special trains. The cost of the outing was met by the company, as authorised by the directors,[89] and the entertainment was organised by a local committee at Merthyr. The excursionists processed from the Taff Vale station to Penydarren Park where the events included 'races on the field' and refreshments provided by two local inn keepers. In 1878 the procession was led by the Cardiff Artillery Band.[90] The organisation of the event was a joint venture involving staff from the workshops and at Merthyr. One of the Merthyr organisers, an engine driver, also had a son working as a fitter in Cardiff.[91] It is unclear as to how long this company sponsored event continued.

In 1893 at least an outing was held for the officers and clerks from the Cardiff headquarters which was described as the 'Officers' Pic-nic'.[92] This event was a cultural occasion, with the apparent assumption that the staff would be interested in the location, Raglan Castle, where the meal and games were to be held. The 'pic-nic' appears to have been a feast and a traditional grace was sung before the meal. The participants were the officers and clerical staff of the company, probably with their wives. The music was provided by 'the Band of the Company's Trainmen'.[93] The musical selection indicates an extensive repertoire, but there was not a single Welsh piece. The tennis courts were made available, and cultural activities included a poetry

[86] NA Rail 684/11, Min.1033, Feb.24, 1903
[87] GFP, June 1, 1895, p5
[88] NA Rail 684/11, Min.1512, Apr.18, 1905
[89] NA Rail 684/8 Min.2130, Aug.8, 1881; Min.2659 Aug.2, 1882
[90] MTel, July 19, 1878, p[2]; MExp, Aug.23, 1884, p5
[91] NC RG11/5281 17 p33 & RG11/5311 97 p22
[92] WRRC, TV117, Taff Vale Railway: Officers' Pic-nic at Raglan: Wednesday Sept. 27th 1893
[93] It is possible that this was the band of the Cardiff Branch of the ASRS, see PObs, July 8, 1899, p[4]

competition, and for the ladies one for wild flower and fern arrangements; there is no mention of children. Alongside the cultural activities was a 'Programme of Sports'. There was obviously a range of ages among the contestants with provision for the junior staff under eighteen years, and it does appear as if every clerical department in the head offices was represented. The rules for the competition were straightforward, but the moralistic tone was emphasized by the prohibition of gambling.[94]

There is also evidence of other smaller scale excursions, as is illustrated by a photograph of a brake full of TVR employees in 1910, possibly from Pontypridd.[95] The scale of the outing and who organised it is unclear, but the photograph shows 24 people including six women, who in 1910 would not have been employees. Staff at various locations gathered for workplace photographs from at least 1889, and for the larger stations these would consist of thirty or more employees from all grades. These included Aberdare, Aberdare Junction (Abercynon) and Pontypridd, but only a small number have survived and appear to have been arranged by the staff themselves.[96] Some of these activities might simply reflect the sociable nature of the local manager and or his staff, but could also be indicative of a wider sense of belonging. The enduring nature of a TVR community was illustrated by the reunions of staff until at least 1930.[97] Besides these excursions there were other more regular activities, such as the platelayers' gang that formed a choir,[98] and illicit games of cards and 'push-penny' on company premises.[99]

Two or more generations of the same family employed by the company

This, and the next section on intermarriage between railway families, demonstrate how family links can contribute to the density of relationships across the company, and multiply the number of links through acquaintances of relatives. Whilst not unique to the railway industry the practice of sons following fathers into the same employment was identified by both Revill and McKenna as a norm.[100]

Among completed questionnaires received there were those which covered two or more generations. For the purposes of this study only those generations involved with

[94] WRRC, TV 117
[95] Rhondda-Cynon-Taff Libraries Digital Archive (RCT Libraries), RCT770, http://archive.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/treorchy/index.php, (accessed 10/06/05)
[96] RCT Libraries, ac/06/c/b/065, ac/06/c/b/007, PPf54/018, http://archive.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/treorchy/index.php, (accessed 22/01/10); Hutton, *Taff Vale Railway Miscellany*
[97] RCT Libraries, RCT772, 773, 774, http://archive.rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk/treorchy/index.php, (accessed 10/06/05)
[98] Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years*
[99] See chapter six for the details
[100] Revill, 'Railway Derby', p393; McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p50

the Taff Vale have been counted. The most remarkable example, the Dudsons of Ferndale, included at least thirteen members spread over three generations. Probably nine of them were with the company at one time. The family tradition continued into the next generation after the TVR had become part of the GWR and beyond.[101] The patriarch of this railway family was Thomas Dudson, who had been born in the Rhondda in 1858 to Charles Dudson from Staffordshire and his wife Maria from Somerset. It appears that Maria had died by 1871 and Charles had married a Jane Parr, who had been born in Devon. Jane was one of ten children, at least two of whom had also moved to south Wales and joined the TVR; these were George and Charles Parr whose arrival is recounted below.[102]

At the time of the 1891 Census, out of a sample of 326 households headed by a Taff Vale employee or widow of an employee, 100 (31 percent) had sons of working age, that is over thirteen years, living at home.[103] Among these 100 households, 69 were or had been headed by employees of the TVR and had one or more sons on the railway.[104] The breakdown of this sample by district is depicted in figure 5.2. It is influenced by the age profile of the families, the gender balance of the offspring and how long the sons may have chosen to remain in the family home. But the significance is that where there were sons in a railway family one or more would more often than not follow their fathers into railway employment. The summary of family data from the questionnaires and other biographies provide a similar picture. On the basis of 70 railway family groups with 165 employees, taken from biographical information mainly supplied by descendants of employees, 52 percent had members employed by the TVR for two or more generations. The biographies included a range of positions within the company from platelayer to company chairman.

However not all districts in the Census sample displayed the same pattern, and the pattern varied over time. To illustrate this, two locations Radyr and Treherbert, both with a significant cluster of company owned houses, were surveyed to illustrate how the pattern might vary. The number in the sample were 68 and 90 households respectively headed by a railway employee, with twenty and thirty-three sons of working age, of which fifteen and twenty-two had sons employed by the company. The results are shown on figure 5.3. It will be noted that the trends for the proportions of fathers and sons being employed on the TVR are opposite at the two locations, with the number declining at Radyr and rising at Treherbert between 1881 and 1891, and

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[101] Gordon Jones, correspondence and conversations (2005-7)
[102] RG9/4063 67 96; RG10/5386 48 119; *ALdr*, Sep.25, 1920 pp2&4
[103] Fourteen years was the normal minimum age by 1891, an exception at Thirteen years was William LEWIS, NC RG12/4453 14 125
[104] Derived from a survey of 549 households in the TVR area from NC RG12. The 69 includes six households headed by a widow of a TVR employee, most recently deceased

vice versa between 1891 and 1901. Radyr might show a different pattern to Treherbert due to a greater variety of local employment opportunities. With the wider range of local jobs the routine of sons following father might be expected to be less dominant. But on average the proportions of fathers and sons and of sons of working-age in railway employment are higher at Radyr. For although the overall proportion of working-age sons at work on the Taff Vale is in decline throughout the period at Radyr, the proportion is still higher than that at Treherbert in 1901. The explanation probably lies with increasing traffic levels and the expansion of the yard at Radyr from c1880.[105]

Figure 5.2 Survey of Taff Vale Railway Households with Working-age Sons across the Company in 1891
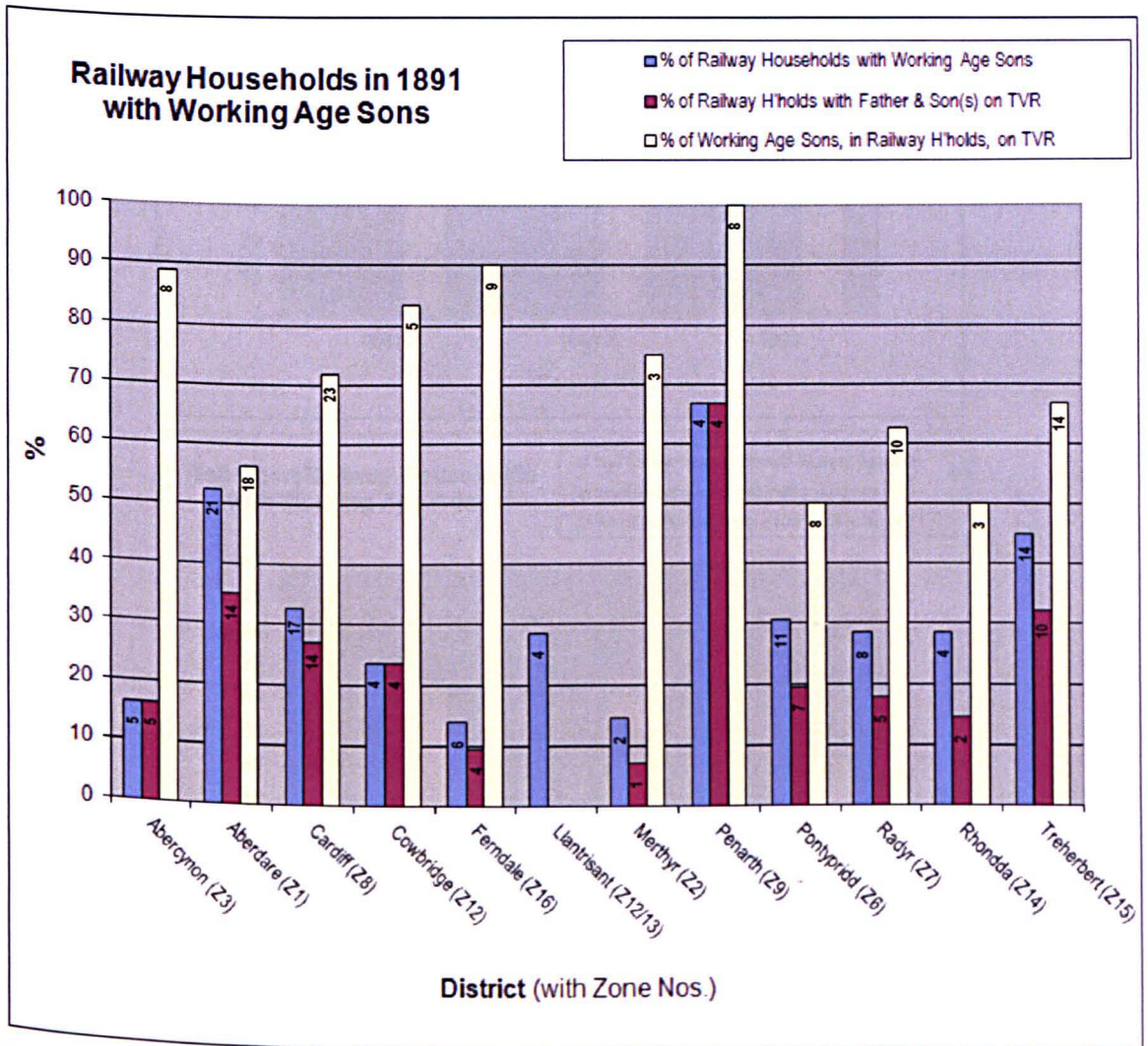
In other areas where railway jobs were scarce the young men would have to take what jobs were available. A clear example of this was in the district around Llantrisant,

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[105] *GWRM*, Vol.XXXVII, March (1925) p112

where in 1891, although there were nine sons of working age in four railway households, none had followed their father's occupation. There were fourteen railway households in the sample, the majority of which were in company accommodation, see figure 5.2.

Figure 5.3 Survey of Taff Vale Railway Households with Working-age Sons for Radyr and Treherbert for the Period 1881 to 1901
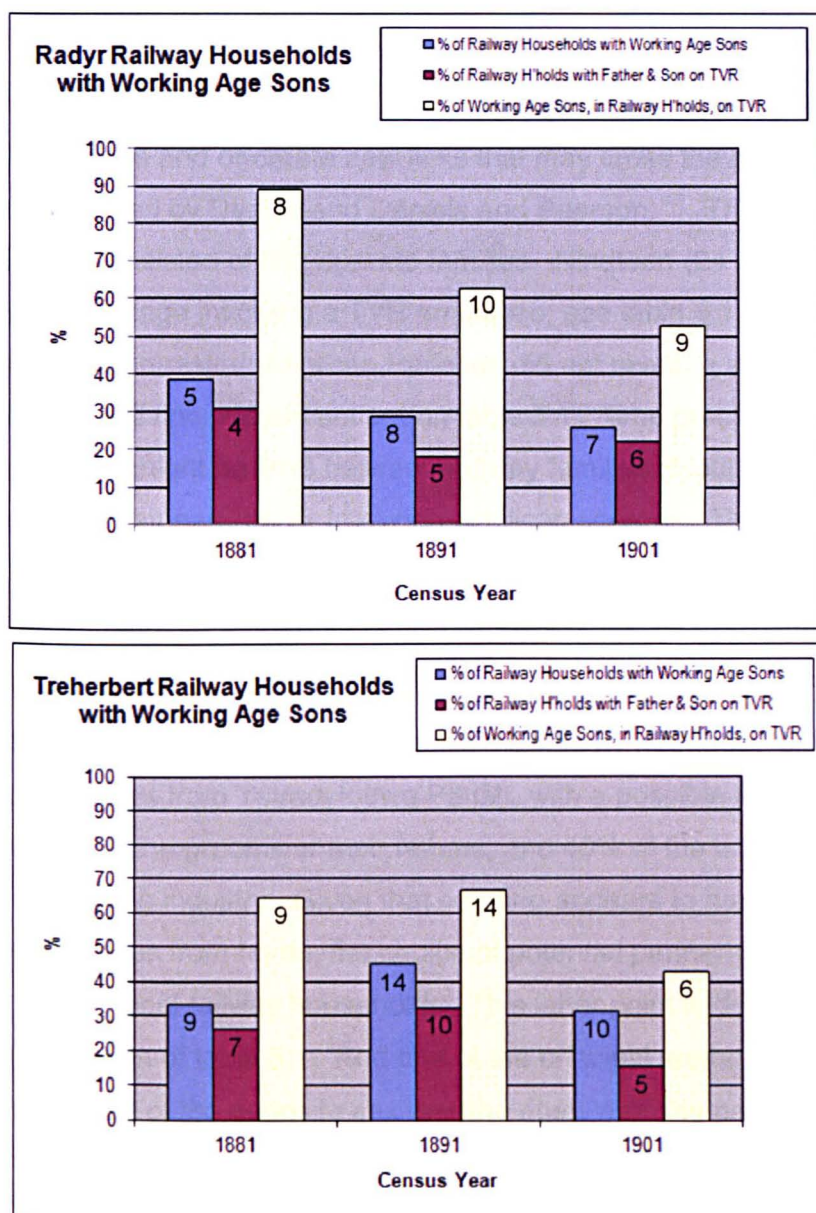
Sources: NC RG11/5289, 5300; RG12/4384, 4403, 4421; RG13/4971, 5012
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart.

The survey of the mining township of Blaenllechau discussed at chapter four shows that whilst 71 percent of railwaymen's sons followed their father's employment, the figure for those in coalmining was 87 percent, albeit from small samples. Taking into account all sets of data examined, only in one example, Treherbert in 1901, does the proportion of railwaymen's sons following their fathers fall below 50 percent, and the

average of all the values in figures 5.2 and 5.3 is 63.2 percent. This is a clear indication of one factor strengthening a wider sense of community, especially where sons moved to elsewhere on the network. A good example is John Peters who left home at Radyr to board with a railway family in Cardiff, before returning to live in a railway house at Junction Terrace.[106] Multiple generations could prolong the longevity of the 'network', and the father and son bond could reinforce its strength.

Intermarriage between railway families

Marriage between families in an area or in the same employment can both increase the density of relationships and or create new links that may cross the community boundary, as discussed by Dennis and Daniels and Pearson.[107] The 70 family groups, mentioned above, consisted of 80 separate families. Nineteen (24 percent) of these were linked by a marriage involving a TVR employee, see table 5.1. However, surveys of marriages in two contrasting Anglican Parishes did not reveal a similar level of intermarriage. The full findings are set out on table 5.1. Time precluded a wider survey to see if there might be links between railway families through the siblings of the bride and groom or their parents, or from non-Anglican sources. The two parishes were chosen to provide a contrast between a small town in the middle of the Vale of Glamorgan and the densely populated Rhondda Valley.

The overwhelming predominance of coalmining prevents any meaningful comparison with the much larger proportion of mining families linked by marriage. Even among the sample of 92 marriages from Ystradyfodwg Parish, with a possible link to the Taff Vale, at least 49 percent of the grooms or their fathers, and 40% of the brides' fathers, were employed in the mining industry. Given that courting appears to have normally taken place at short distances from home, the choice of potential partners might be limited or non-existent among local railway households. This latter point is demonstrated by the data in the final section of table 5.1. And one of the principal methods of making contact with members of the opposite sex was the ritual 'monkey parade' on a Sunday when the youth of a town or village would stroll up and down the main street in their finest attire.[108]

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[106] NC RG11/5280 44 p86; RG12/4403 120 36
[107] Dennis & Daniels, 'Community and the Social Geography', pp7&16; Pearson, 'Knowing one's place', p222
[108] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church*, p176; Gordon Jones, conversation (11/11/2005)

Table 5.1 Summary of Marriage Searches

Marriage Information derived from Questionnaires and other Biographical Sources

	No.	%
No. of Families with Biographical Data	80	100.0
No. of Marriages among these Families	10	----
No. of Families linked by Marriage	19	23.8

Marriages extracted from Parish Registers and a Marriage Index in a Search for the Marriages of Taff Vale Employees

Cowbridge (1840-1916) (21 Marriages investigated)

	No.	%
Groom employed by TVR	13	61.9
Bride's Father employed by TVR	5	23.8
Bride & Groom's Fathers employed by TVR	2	9.5
Groom & Bride's Father employed by TVR	2	9.5
Groom & Groom's Father employed by TVR	4	19.0

Rhondda (Ystradyfodwg Parish) (1877-81 & 1888-94) (92 Marriages investigated)

	No.	%
Groom employed by TVR	12	13.0
Bride's Father employed by TVR	9	9.8
Bride & Groom's Fathers employed by TVR	0	0.0
Groom & Bride's Father employed by TVR	0	0.0
Groom & Groom's Father employed by TVR	4	4.3

Merthyr Tydfil Registration District (1841-1900) (57 Marriages investigated)

Marriage Venue by Denomination

	No.	%
Nonconformist Chapel	26	45.6
Register Office	24	42.1
Anglican Church	5	8.8
Roman Catholic Church	1	1.8
Unknown	1	1.8

Survey of Distance between Bride and Bridegroom's Home Addresses

	Local	5 to 10 miles	Over 10 miles
Cowbridge Parish	12	1	7
Rhondda (Ystradyfodwg Parish)	86	1	5

*Sources:*Questionnaires completed by descendants of TVR employees; GlamRO, Parish Registers for Cowbridge (Holy Cross), Marriages from 1837 and Ystradyfodwg (St John the Baptist), Marriages from 1813; Merthyr Tydfil Reference Library, *Index of Marriages Merthyr Tydfil Registration District.*

The denominational issues affecting marriage venues are discussed at chapter eight, but it should mentioned at this point that more weddings would have been solemnized in Nonconformist chapels or Register Offices than in Anglican churches. For example,

of the 57 weddings in the Merthyr Tydfil Registration District examined as potentially involving a bridegroom who worked for the TVR, only five were held in Anglican churches. Tracing the addresses and background from Civil Registration and Nonconformist sources was regarded as too time consuming to be attempted, so the exact level of intermarriage between the families of TVR employees is unclear, but might not be as insignificant as at first appears.

However the 24 percent of TVR families linked by marriage noted above was not a maximum, and correspondents referred to other connections between families, but were unable to provide the precise details. Other marriage links were discovered in the review of the occupancy of company housing. For example in 1891 Thomas Mabbit was living with his grandfather Alfred Lear at Radyr. Thomas was the son of a TVR signalman who had married the Lears' eldest daughter, and by 1901 the two families were living in adjacent company houses.[109] Such links suggest that intermarriage was significant, and support the notion of a 'network community'.

An interesting story illustrating the relevance of kinship came from a correspondent whose great-aunt told of an occasion when, on boarding a train at Porth, she discovered that the driver was her brother, T G Dudson, the fireman was her son, Tom Pritchard and the guard was her husband, also Tom Pritchard.[110]

Concentration of staff in distinct districts or specific streets

The concentration of staff in distinct districts or specific streets was not only typical of railway households but was common across the industrial areas of Britain. This was largely through the desire to live near one's employment. Pearson in summarising his study of Leeds concludes 'that community, as perceived and defined at different times by these dominant groups in Leeds suburbs, entailed the articulation of two interrelated identities, firstly, a sense of place, and secondly, a sense of the past.'[111] On the Taff Vale the first is shown by residential persistence and the second by the past as part of the symbolic boundary.

In many of the settlements in the TVR area, even where there was no identified company housing, there was a higher density of employees than would be expected had the occupation of the dwellings been determined randomly. But the pattern varied with the type of settlement and the grade of staff. The towns which had been well established either before or during the development of the railway, such as Aberdare,

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[109] Alfred LEAR, DES Apr.1865, NA RAIL 684/94; NC RG10/5368 49 9; RG12/4403 121 41; RG13/4971 16 143 & 144
[110] Correspondence with Mr Gordon Jones descendant of DUDSON family of Ferndale, 2005
[111] Pearson, 'Knowing one's place', p221

Merthyr Tydfil and Pontypridd generally did not have such a concentrated settlement pattern; although in the case of the latter two, there was one terrace of company-owned houses in each.[112] The homes of employees were spread out across these towns, but with some groupings in particular streets sometimes intermingled with employees from other railway companies. The major factor in determining where an individual employee would live was usually proximity to the workplace, see figures 5.4 and 5.5.

Cathays was an area of mixed housing extending out from the commercial centre of Cardiff with a combination of professional, clerical and artisan householders, including railway operating and workshop staff, sometimes in the same street.[113] However many of the clerical staff employed at the company's Head Office adjacent to Queen Street station were dispersed across the built up area, as is shown on figure 5.4.[114] It is possible that these were better paid than other clerical staff, and could afford to commute on the expanding tramway system.[115]

Within the districts adjacent to major centres of railway employment, particular streets would have a greater concentration of railway employees than others, and the density of occupation was augmented by boarders. Overlaying this dominant factor, there were others determining the location of railway households in the same district, for example kinship and friendship. This was especially so in Ferndale, where the extended Dudson family lived in Taff Street, with some family members in railway owned houses and others in rented or owner-occupied properties. Other associated families included the Rabbetts and the Pullings who were prominent in the street or nearby for more than one generation.[116]

Richards Street in the Cathays district illustrates the typical situation. It was within easy walking distance of all the various centres of railway activity including the Carriage and Wagon Works and Engine Shed. It consisted of 117 houses and at the time of the 1891 Census was home to between 69 and 90 railwaymen.[117] These were spread over its entire length, and a few at the end furthest from the TVR installations might have been employed on the nearby Rhymney Railway; however, the majority were in the half of the street nearest the Taff Vale. It is also interesting to note that no less than six of the fourteen Cardiff branch members of the RMCA from the TVR, listed

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[112] NC RG11/5320-25, 5309-12, 5293-96; RG12/4443-47, 4433-37, 4411-20; RG13/5035-36, 5026-31, 5003-10
[113] NC RG12/4390, 4392-93
[114] NA RAIL 684/114; 1057/1857/2
[115] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, pp136-8
[116] Gordon Jones, correspondence and conversations (2005-7)
[117] NC RG12/4392 ff81-91, The total is unclear as some of the occupations listed are not specifically noted as 'railway', e.g. 'Clerk' or 'Pattern Maker'

in the handbook for 1892, lived between numbers 60 and 94. In respect to boarding a few of the railway employees in Richards Street were listed in *Kelly's Directory* for 1895 as providing 'apartments'.[118]

Figure 5.4 CARDIFF: Showing principal centres of Taff Vale Employment and distribution of residence post-1890
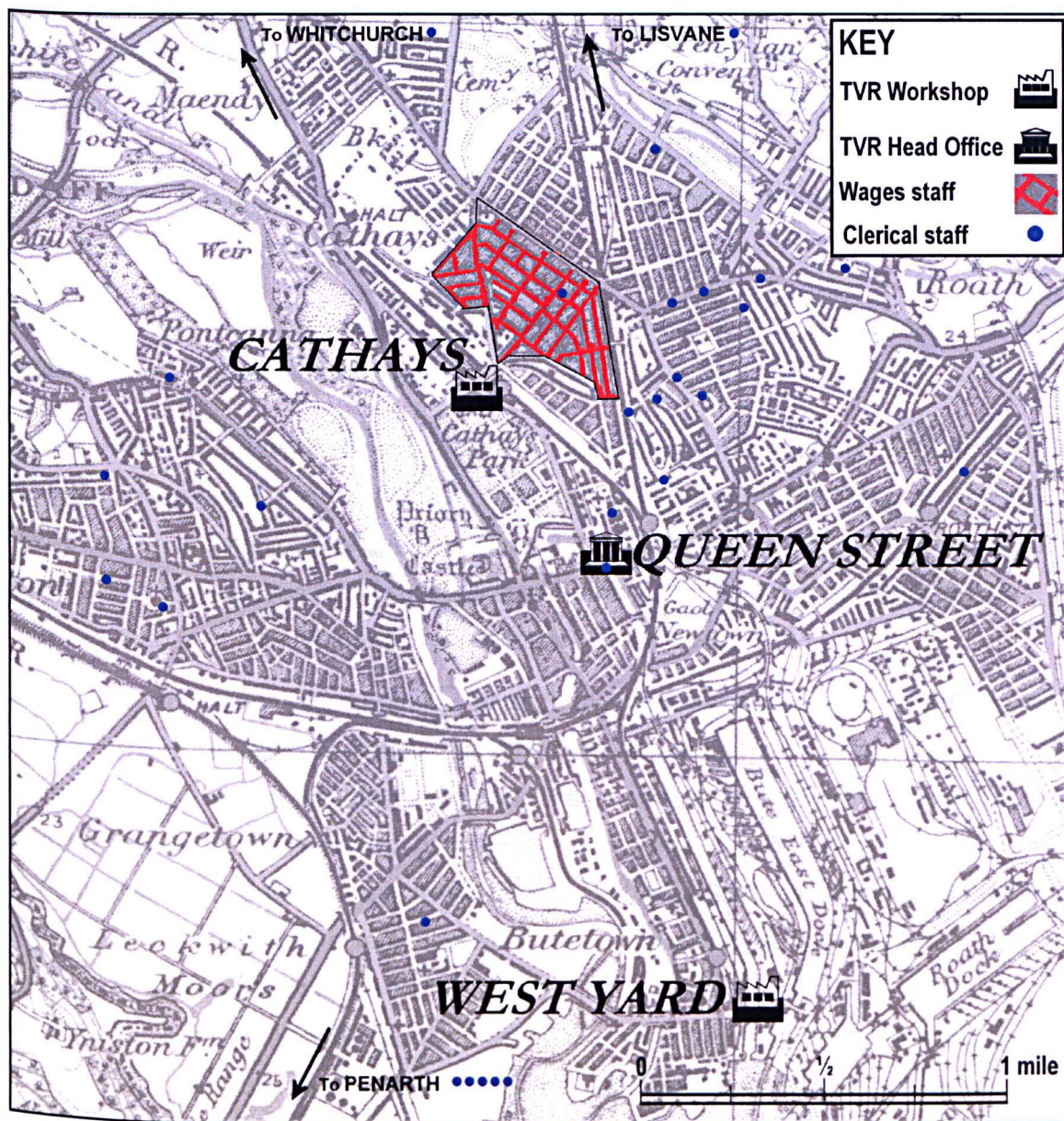
Source: NC RG12/4384-4401; NA RAIL 684/114; 1057/1857/2; Underlying mapping, Ordnance Survey Popular Edition One Inch to One Mile, Sheet 109 (1922)

KEY to Residence: Red Streets indicate main concentration of Wages Staff and Blue Dots illustrate the scatter of Clerical Staff

Cardiff was mainly developed by the landholders whose developments started with the conversion of the burgage plots of the medieval core. These soon became insanitary

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[118] *Kelly's Directory: South Wales*, p179

courts.[119] The next stage was the construction of Butetown alongside the Bute Dock from the 1840s, where the railway built its offices and workshops. The merchants from the area moved out of town leaving mainly offices and the seamen's district that became 'Tiger Bay'. In 1862 the TVR moved its offices to near its principal station at Queen Street.[120] From 1880 the housing developers provided homes in Cathays and Roath within easy reach of the main centres of Taff Vale employment, leaving relatively few TVR employees in Butetown. For example Thomas Hopkins workshop foreman at the West Yard Works moved from South Church Street, Butetown to Sapphire Street, Roath in 1880.[121] These developments were principally on the initiative of three major estates, Bute, Tredegar and Windsor. From the construction of Butetown onwards control was maintained by providing houses on 99-year leases.[122]

Continuity in company housing – from Census to Census, at the same location, or re-acquaintance at different locations

Dennis poses the question 'Does persistence engender community?' and states that potential for community to exist can be assessed from residential stability, as well as the frequency of kinship links between local residents.[123] The kinship links have been illustrated in the previous three sections and the persistence in company housing is demonstrated in this section from the example of Treherbert.

Provision of company owned housing for staff has been discussed at chapter three and the locations of identified company houses are shown on figure 3.4. Most of these houses formed parts of established communities, or ones that had grown out of the opening up of an area for mining, but two at least formed the nucleus of new communities. The largest concentrations were at Merthyr Tydfil, a well established iron and coal town, Treherbert, a recently established mining village, and Radyr, a community which effectively owed its existence to the TVR. The other new 'community', in a relatively isolated setting, was a row of six cottages at Maesaraul Junction near Llantrisant. One feature which emphasized the community at Maesaraul was the communal bakehouse. There was a rota whereby each cottage was allotted the day for its use; that is Monday to Saturday with 'no baking on the Sabbath day!'[124] Radyr also had its community traditions, one of which was the mode of transport of the deceased from Junction Terrace to the parish churchyard. Last performed in 1915,

[119] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis* p74
[120] Brian J Miller, *South Wales Railways at the Grouping* (Cowbridge, 1986) p57
[121] John Hopkins, correspondence (2005)
[122] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, pp73-83
[123] Dennis, *English Industrial Cities*, p250
[124] M M Manley, correspondence (04/07/2005)

relays of railwaymen would carry the coffin for approximately one half mile.[125] These company houses apart from those at Merthyr were in constant demand.

Probably the clearest example of the pattern of occupation of TVR houses was the settlement of Treherbert at the head of the Rhondda Fawr.[126] Fourteen houses had been built by 1871 and at the time of the Census housed eighteen families. Two cottages on the adjacent mountainside had also been purchased from Bute Collieries and these appear to have been in TVR use before 1871. By 1881 a further twelve houses had been added to Station Terrace. In every Census from 1871 to 1901 one or more of the properties was in multiple-occupancy, and if the 1871 enumerator has marked his book correctly, two of the joint households each consisted of eleven persons. From external photographs and maps it appears that the initial houses were in one continuous block, with the later twelve in four groups of three.[127]

In Station Terrace the largest group among the heads of household at every census were the engine drivers, and the second largest group was either that of guards or firemen, see table 5.2. In general the larger rows of company houses were occupied by those who worked on the trains, whilst the smaller clusters were generally tenanted by platelayers. The one exception to this was Vaughan Street in Pontypridd where eleven houses were owned by the company. Here in 1891 nine were headed by platelayers and two by signalmen.[128] This pattern can be explained by the need for footplatemen and guards to be near their depot where the trains were serviced, whereas platelayers were based on their allotted length of track. The workplaces for signalmen were diffusely spread, and their dwellings sometimes followed the same pattern. The small numbers of lower graded staff might suggest that the rents were regarded as too high; some were present, but generally as boarders. Even in 1909 the starting weekly wage for a platform porter was 16s 0d (80p) when the rent was at least 4s 0d (20p) per week. [129]

[125] New Horizons, *Memories of Radyr*, p52
[126] Based on Census data, NC RG10/5383 ff58-61; RG11/5300 ff37-40; RG12/4421 ff121-123; RG13/5021 ff119-121 & 124
[127] Hutton, *TVR Miscellany*, p[39]; See figure 5.5 for map
[128] NC RG12/4417 ff86-87
[129] NA RAIL 684/32 Min.285, Aug.1, 1893 & Min.316, Oct.24, 1893; *Agreements as between TVR and employees*, p23

Table 5.2 Station Terrace*, Treherbert: Grades of Heads of Household by Census

Grade	1871	1881	1891	1901
Engine Driver	7	11	13	9
Guard	0	2	4	6
Fireman	3	5	0	4
Brakesman	1	0	1	1
Platelayer	2	2	?	2
Station Master	2	1	1	1
Inspector	1	1	1	1
Clerk	1	0	0	1
Carriage &Wagon Examiner	0	0	0	1
Storekeeper	0	1	1	0
Fitter	1	1	1	0
Labourer	0	1	1	0
Locomotive Foreman	1	1	1	0
Porter	1	2	0	0
	20	28	24	26

Source: NC RG10/5383 ff58-61; RG11/5300 ff37-40; RG12/4421 ff121-123;
RG13/5021 ff119-121 & 124

Key: * - plus 1 & 2 Taff Cottages, called Bute Huts in 1871 and missing from the 1891 Census

By cross-checking the Census data for 1871 to 1901 it is possible to see the level of mobility and persistence with regard to these company houses. Eleven households lived in the Terrace for twenty or more years, and the inter-Census details are shown on table 5.3. This pattern is replicated with company housing elsewhere, including Ferndale, Maesaraul and Radyr.[130] Besides the continuity of the heads of household several of their sons would often remain at home for ten or more years after joining the company and before moving out. There was a demand for railway accommodation with staff resident elsewhere in Treherbert moving into Station Terrace when opportunity allowed. The nature of mobility across the company is illustrated by the following accounts of the comings and goings of individual employees who at some time lived in Station Terrace or nearby.

In 1871 Thomas Rabbitts and Jabez Richards and their families lived as separate households at number ten, but by 1881 both had moved to the newly developed branch in the Rhondda Fach, and lived in Taff Street at Ferndale.[131] The Richards household lived in a company house, whilst the Rabbitts were in private accommodation.

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[130] NC RG11/5294, 5297, 5289; RG12/4412, 4417, 4403; RG13/5001, 5007, 4971
[131] Taff Street, Blaenllechau, see figure 4.3; NC RG11/5294 ff88-89; RG12/4412 ff31-32; RG13/5001 ff34-35

Richards, as the local Traffic Inspector was still at number one Taff Street in 1891, but had died by 1901, whilst the Rabbitts' family were still present in the street, albeit at a different address. William Mordecai was boarding at number eight Station Terrace in 1871 and had also moved to Ferndale with his wife and family by 1881. They then lived in the same railway house in Taff Street until at least 1901.

Figure 5.5 Residential Pattern of TVR Staff at Treherbert in 1891
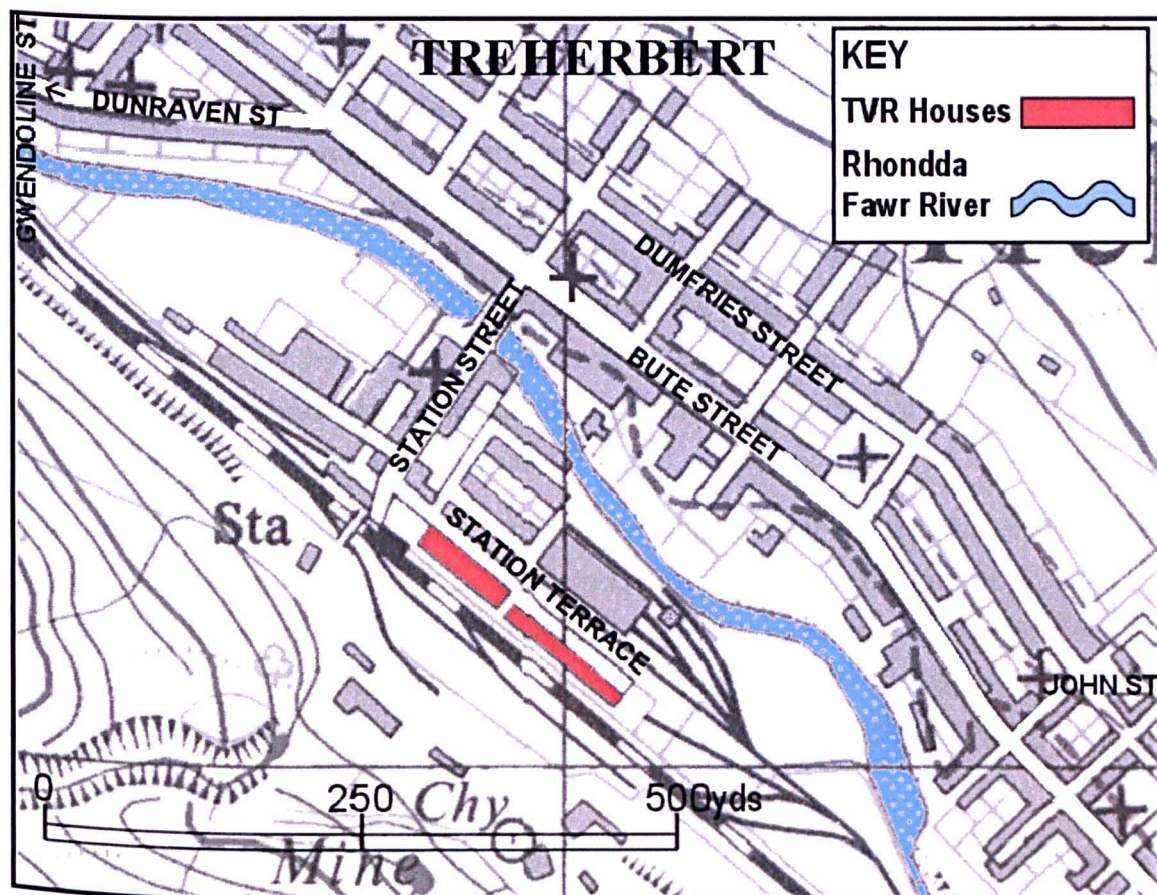
Sources: NC RG12/4421 ff7-123; Underlying mapping from *OS Map Extracts: The British Isles* (London, 1975)

Alfred Jordan was lodging in Station Road [Street], just around the corner from the company owned Station Terrace, as a 21 year old railway clerk in 1871.[132] By 1881 he and his new family had moved into the Terrace, but before the 1891 Census promotion had taken him to Trehafod.[133] However, by 1901, further advancement had brought him back to Station Terrace now in the Traffic Inspector's house at number one. Another boarder from Station Street was fitter William Bedford. He was boarding at number four in 1891, however by 1901 he too had moved to a company house but it was in Pontypridd.[134]

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[132] NC RG10/5383 58 124
[133] NC RG12/4419 51 199
[134] NC RG13/5010 113 224

William David was the son of a signalman at Llantwit Vadre who followed his father on to the Taff Vale and was lodging with a railway family at Abercynon by 1881 as an eighteen year old telegraph clerk.[135] In 1891 he was living at 39 Gwendoline Street, Treherbert not so far from Station Terrace with his occupation given as 'railway agent'. By 1901 further promotion had brought him to the Station Master's house at number two. Robert Pitman was living with his in-laws at number one Bute Street in 1891, having joined the company as an engine cleaner in 1884. After promotion to fireman he was able to establish his own home at number five Station Terrace by 1901.[136]

Richard Colville, born in 1823, was a long-serving employee of the company, and had lived in company accommodation at the Incline Top, near Abercynon.[137] By 1871 his duties as Locomotive Foreman had brought him to fourteen Station Terrace where he was to live out his days. He died in 1890 and by courtesy of the directors his widow and one son were still living at number fourteen at the time of the 1891 Census.[138] The son was employed by the railway as a 'locomotive clerk'. At that time Catherine Colville was one of three widows of employees in the Terrace, and at least two out of the three had sons in railway employment.

John Lennon had joined the TVR in Cardiff as an engine cleaner in c1880. By 1891 he had reached the grade of fireman and was lodging in the railway enclave of Cathays.[139] He had been promoted to Main Line Driver in 1899 and was living at twenty Station Terrace in 1901. Another young firemen in lodgings was William Westlake who was boarding with an engine driver at number twelve in 1891, but by 1901 he had married the niece of his landlord and set up home at number 21.

Whilst men moved to and from different parts of the TVR network, the principal source or destination was Cardiff, and this again is a pattern repeated elsewhere. If the concentration of TVR employees in Cardiff is considered from figure 5.1 this is not surprising; however, a lack of moves to or from Pontypridd, the hub of the network, is unexpected. One reason as noted in chapter three is that most new staff were recruited in Cardiff.

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[135] NC RG11/5296 168 p7
[136] Robert PITMAN, DES Apr.25, 1864, NA RAIL 684/113; NC RG12/4421 104 22
[137] Terry Powell, 'Plain Tales from Incline Top I (1847-50)', Welsh Railway Archive (WRA), Vol.III, 9, May (2004) p224-9; NC RG09/4055 65 51
[138] NA RAIL684/22, Min.197, Mar.29, 1892
[139] John LENNON, DES Feb.4, 1880, NA RAIL684/113; NC RG12/4393 52 635

Table 5.3 Stability and Mobility of TVR Employees in Company Houses at Treherbert

Table 5.3a TVR Company Houses, Treherbert (N=16): 1871 Census

No. of households headed by a TVR employee in **1871**	20
No. of households still occupying a TVR house at Treherbert in 1881	8
No. of households that had changed house in Station Terrace 1871-81	3
No. of employees in the 20 households	32

Stability (Individuals)

Present before 1871	No.	Still present in 1881	No.	Notes
Treherbert (TVR)	--	Treherbert (TVR)	10	14 Houses built c1870 + 2 acquired

Mobility (Individuals)   (origins and destinations where known)

Moved from (< 1871)	No.	Moved to (< 1881)	No.	Notes
Treherbert (non-TVR)	--	Treherbert (Non-TVR)	1	
Abercynon	2	Abercynon	--	
Aberdare	1	Aberdare	2	
Cardiff	10	Cardiff	2	
Ferndale	--	Ferndale	3	To TVR 'enclave' inc.2 to TVR houses
Llantwit Fadre	--	Llantwit Fadre	1	
Merthyr	--	Merthyr	1	1 other workman to TVR house by 1891
Penarth	--	Penarth	1	

Table 5.3b TVR Company Houses, Treherbert (N=28): 1881 Census

No. of households headed by a TVR employee in **1881**	28
No. of households still occupying a TVR house at Treherbert in 1891	19
No. of households that had changed house in Station Terrace 1881-91	1
No. of employees in the 28 households	45

Stability (Individuals)

Present before 1881	No.	Still present in 1891	No.	Notes
Treherbert (TVR)	10	Treherbert (TVR)	24	Further 12 Houses added by 1881

Mobility (Individuals)   (origins and destinations where known)

Moved from (< 1881)	No.	Moved to (< 1891)	No.	Notes
Treherbert (Non-TVR)	4	Treherbert (Non-TVR)	1	
Cardiff	3	Cardiff	--	
Cowbridge	1	Cowbridge	--	
Maesaraul	--	Maesaraul	1	To TVR house
Rhondda	1	Rhondda	2	

Table 5.3c TVR Company Houses, Treherbert (N=28): 1891 Census

No. of households headed by a TVR employee in **1891**	28
No. of households still occupying a TVR house at Treherbert in 1901	5
No. of households that had changed house in Station Terrace 1891-1901	0
No. of employees in the 28 households	48

Stability (Individuals)

Present before 1891	No.	Still present in 1901	No.	Notes
Treherbert (TVR)	24	Treherbert (TVR)	10	2 TVR properties missing from Census

Mobility (Individuals) *(origins and destinations where known)*

Moved from (< 1891)	No.	Moved to (< 1901)	No.	Notes
Treherbert (Non-TVR)	1	Treherbert (Non-TVR)	3	
Cardiff	4	Cardiff	2	
Pontypridd	1	Pontypridd	--	
Rhondda	1	Rhondda	2	
		Retirement	6	Plus 3 widows moving out

Table 5.3d TVR Company Houses, Treherbert (N=28): 1901 Census

No. of households headed by a TVR employee in **1901**	28
No. of employees in the 28 households	36

Stability (Individuals)

Present before 1901	No.	Notes
Treherbert (TVR)	10	

Mobility (Individuals) *(where known)*

From (before 1901)	No.	Notes
Treherbert (Non-TVR)	2	
Aberdare	1	
Cardiff	8	6 from a TVR 'enclave'
Ferndale	1	From a TVR 'enclave'
Rhondda	3	

Sources: NC RG09, RG10, RG11, RG12, RG13

The large reduction in households remaining between 1891 and 1901, shown in table 5.3c, can be explained by the number of men coming up to retirement age before 1901 and the deaths of three others prior to 1891 leaving their widows in the family home for that census. The tables show relatively few men moving to or from company houses elsewhere on the network, although the 'railway enclave' at Cathays featured in several

of the moves that included Cardiff, see figure 5.4. Thus there were possibilities for renewed contacts. What is clear is that stability in Station Terrace and surrounding streets afforded the opportunities for a sense of community to grow. There were probably more marriage links than the one noted above. It is possible that the company houses were becoming less popular over time, as three households had moved out of the Terrace between 1891 and 1901, and two properties were let to non-TVR workmen. There was a significant number of railwaymen living in the streets included on figure 5.5 from 1871 and in other nearby streets by 1901, which strengthened the local railway enclave. There was also persistence among some of these households; for example the Hurlow family in Station Street and the Williams family at 50 Bute Street who were present from 1871 until at least 1891.[140] But households might move from one railway enclave to another as with the Loxton family at 51 Dumfries Street in 1881 that had moved to 62 Richards Street, Cathays a decade later.[141]

One other feature of the workmen living at Treherbert was the higher proportion of Welsh speakers than the average for the TVR as a whole. From a sample of 216 employees across the whole company for 1901, 26.4 percent spoke Welsh, whereas the figure for Treherbert was 32.6 percent. If only the TVR houses are considered the percentage is lower at 30.6. These numbers indicate that Taff Vale workers were more likely to speak Welsh at the head of the Rhondda than elsewhere but not so likely if occupying a company house. This perhaps reflects the surrounding mining community and the preference of the monoglot English to live together.[142]

Boarders and Lodgers – employees staying with employee households

Young employees often lodged, but equally employees might lodge at any age or stage of their employment with the Taff Vale. The former situation continued throughout the independent existence of the TVR although no record has been noted as to whether the company had any formal arrangements, unlike the practice at Derby where young newly arrived recruits were placed with railway widows.[143] The pattern was described by a former employee, T G Smith, who joined the company at Cardiff as an engine cleaner, aged seventeen years, in 1919. On promotion to fireman in 1920, he was transferred to Treherbert, where he lodged with a lady whose father and father-in-law were both engine drivers. Smith explained;

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[140] NC RG10/5383; RG11/5300; RG12/4421
[141] NC RG11/5300 121 p7; RG12/4392 83 1022
[142] NC RG13/4971-5047; The percentage of Welsh speaking railwaymen living in non-TVR houses at Treherbert was in excess of 40 percent, but it is not always clear for which company they worked.
[143] Revill, 'Railway Derby', p385

> Our life was made up of lodging with people, railway people in many cases, one with another, not one of us, but there was 10 or 15 from other depots, all on the railway. The manner of promotion was that you went away until such times as there was a vacancy in your own depot. And life went on like that. Our life changed, we mixed with the people there and it was no different, sometimes a better manner of life and as a community we were coming home on weekends and then back to work for another week, looking forward to it very often.[144]

The quotation is particularly significant for its reference to the 'community' that existed among employees at the location where they lodged. Mr Smith also comments on reacquainting himself with friends made in 1920, when he returned to Treherbert more than twenty years later.[145]

Whether from within Glamorgan or from elsewhere, it was sometimes possible to board with relatives, as with John Price a platelayer, who on his move to the Rhondda Fach branch, stayed with relatives, along with his younger brother, Evan, an engine cleaner.[146] In their case it was a move of little more than thirteen miles. From a sample of 193 households that included a Taff Vale employee in the 1881 Census, 47 accommodated one or more boarders. The sample was taken from across the company and included a total of 68 boarders. A summary of the analysis is given at Table 5.4 and can be compared with a more general survey of a specific location included as Table 4.2. The ratio of Welsh-born to English-born is in line with the origins of staff entering the company's employ between 1876 and 1885 (64 percent Welsh-born, 32 percent English-born),[147] and reflects the English bias already identified in chapter one. Hodges gives the birth countries of the general populace of Glamorgan in 1881, as 83 percent Welsh-born and fourteen percent English-born.[148]

Tables 4.2 and 5.4 show that TVR employees did not just board with households headed by another employee. Living in 'digs' either with or near to another employee could provide life changing connections as is illustrated by the following examples. Inter-marriage between railway families has already been discussed, and some of those connections would have been made by the availability of lodgings. An example of a young fireman marrying his landlord's niece was included above.

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[144] T G Smith, 'They were happy time though' in *Servants of Steam*, p22
[145] 'Ibid' p22
[146] Roberts, *Taff Vale Railway 150 Years*; NC 1891 RG12/4412 032 14; J H Roberts, correspondence (2007)
[147] Based on a sample of 22 staff who joined the TVR between 1876 and 1885, NA RAIL 684; NC RG11
[148] Hodges, 'Peopling of the Hinterland of Cardiff', pp62-72

*Table 5.4 Relationship between Boarders and Head of Household for Households
including at least one TVR Employee. Based on 1881 Census*

Relationship between Boarders (N=68) and Head of Household (N=47)

No.	%	
6	8.8	Shared a Birthplace
19	27.9	Shared a Birth County
14	20.6	Shared the Birth County of Glamorgan
28	41.2	Shared the Birth Country of Wales
10	14.7	Shared the Birth Country of England
36	52.9	Shared an Employment sector
34	50.0	Shared the Employment sector of RAIL
46	67.7	Of Boarders were born in Wales
22	32.4	Of Boarders were born in England
27	57.5	Of Heads of Household were born in Wales
17	36.2	Of Heads of Household were born in England

Sources: NC RG11/5277, 5279-80, 5282, 5285, 5294, 5296, 5300, 5302, 5317, 5321;
NA RAIL 684/94, 684/113

Immigration into the Valleys could be for any type of employment, and once family and or friends had already made the trip this would encourage others to join them. This is well illustrated by the Parr family from Devon mentioned above. George Parr is recorded in the 1861 Census as an eighteen year old gardener, sharing lodgings with railwaymen, and living next door to a railway family where the father was an inspector and his son, a contemporary of George, already a signalman.[149] Within less than six months of the census George had started work as a platelayer on the TVR. His elder brother, Charles, made the same move, joining the TVR four years later, and whilst George's wife was from south Wales, Charles brought his wife with him, suggesting that Charles had moved his family on advice from his younger brother.

Lodging houses did exist in the larger towns and the mining valleys; however they did not appear to have been frequented by railwaymen, even when the houses were very near to a TVR station as with Picton Street, and 4 Lower High Street in Merthyr.[150] In the former premises most of the lodgers were miners, whereas the latter had a mix of miners and tradesmen. A quick survey of the Rhondda in the 1891 Census,[151] did not reveal any large lodging houses, and clearly showed that the smaller ones that did exist were almost exclusively occupied by miners. Cardiff did have a large number of lodging houses, the majority of which were adjacent to the docks, and extensively used

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[149] G PARR, DES Sept. 1861, NA RAIL 684/94; NC RG9/4066 99 85
[150] NC 1901, RG13/5025 73 62; RG13/5026 33 87
[151] NC 1891, RG12/4412, 4413, 4418, 4419-30

by seamen. The conclusion is that railwaymen boarded with railwaymen, or at least in other private homes.

One remarkable example of long-term boarding was the case of platelayer Michael Davies, who moved from Pembrokeshire to Aberdare and by 1871 was lodging with John Gibbon, a gardener, and his family. He continued to lodge with this family until his death in 1926, a total of 55 years. Initially this was not a railway household, but within three years the eldest son, William, had joined the TVR as a brakesman and went on to progress through the footplate grades to passenger driver.[152] John Gibbon, who was much older than his wife, had died by 1901, and Davies continued in the same household even after he retired in 1916. When he died in 1926, William, who had long before established his own household, acted as his executor.[153] It can be seen from the various examples of boarding included above that they played a major role in the development and maintenance of community, both within a specific location and across the network.

Trade Union branches

With this section it is not always clear where loyalties and a sense of belonging lay. For whilst there was the growing sense of worker solidarity, there was also a perhaps self-interested focus on the interests of fellow employees within the TVR. This can be seen by the establishment of company branches as union membership increased, e.g. the Cowbridge branch created from the Llantrisant branch in 1912.[154] Ferndale was also exclusively Taff Vale, and at their annual dinner in 1895 a prominent member of the branch and Taff Vale guard Thomas Godfrey, in responding to a toast, was full of praise for the company.

> In 1893 a deputation waited upon the T.V.R. directors asking them to adopt the Society's rules, and that the working hours per day should not exceed twelve. He was pleased to be able to state that the company did all in their power to meet the wishes of the workmen, and he would add that no railway company in England carried out the requirements of the society better than did the T.V.R. [155]

This response is quite remarkable as it was given midway between the two bitter strikes of 1890 and 1900 at a time of renewed tension. The attitude of this guard is also in contrast with the contributor 'Cardiffian' to the *Railway Review* in the same year who, after referring to the policy of not meeting with the men's representative that had prolonged the 1890 strike, gave a very damning picture of TVR management.

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[152] W GIBBON, DES Dec.1,1874, NA RAIL 684/113
[153] NC RG13/5035 144 249; *ALdr*, Sep.9, 1926, p5 & Oct.23, 1926, p4
[154] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1
[155] GFP, Apr.27, 1895, p7

It does seem that the dispute with the fitters has filled the management with rage, and they are trying to find a little relief by letting their anger and vindictiveness loose upon those of their workmen in other departments, some for no cause whatever, and others for the least trivial offence are being dismissed the service.[156]

It should be noted that the first quote is from a trade union activist who is recorded as supporting a motion at a mass meeting in Cardiff called to protest at TVR policy on payment for Good Friday.[157] Pontypridd was dominated by TVR men and in industrial relations matters was overwhelmingly concerned with the Taff; also inter-branch contacts were mainly with TVR dominated branches in the Rhondda.[158] The situation in Aberdare was much more mixed with membership divided between Great Western and Taff Vale men; however, the local ASLEF branch was almost exclusive to the GWR.[159]

There was a cross-grade inter-union focus which concentrated on one company. This was demonstrated by the actions of ASLEF footplate staff that put their jobs at risk to support the ASRS signalmen in 1900.[160] The solidarity that was displayed by the ASLEF footplatemen in defiance of their union prompted Raynes to describe the 'Taffies' as troublesome and ill-disciplined union members.[161] Whilst 1890 had seen the employees of the four coal-carrying railways of the Glamorganshire Valleys unite, by 1900 managements were effectively able to buy-off the employees of all but the Taff Vale.[162] Solidarity, it appears, was now limited to each company. Before 1900 there were a number of joint events involving managers and workmen, either of a social nature, as when managers were invited to annual dinners, or fundraising occasions for the widows and orphans that transcended sectional rivalries.[163]

One feature of the ASRS strategy that encouraged solidarity was the 'vigilance committee' that was established to monitor the Taff Vale's treatment of its employees. Pontypridd's proposal was formulated in May 1912 as a response to the creation of the Conciliation Boards, whereby they could monitor the company and exploit the Boards system for the sake of the men. Initially the idea was rejected by the General Secretary, but by July 1913 it was in place when the hours on duty at Hafod Junction signal cabin were 'referred to the vigilance committee'.[164]

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[156] MRC, MS127/AS/4/1/5g, *RRvw*, Sep.20, 1895, p4
[157] *Ibid*, May 20, 1895, p1
[158] GlamRO D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Apr.23, 1911; July 23, 1911
[159] AbLib, W W Price Collection, TU7/1/1,2 *ASLEF, Aberdare Branch Contribution Books 1904-11*
[160] The strikes of 1890 and 1900 are discussed in detail in chapter seven.
[161] Raynes, *Engines and Men*
[162] See chapter seven
[163] *MExp*, Apr.4, 1891, p6; Apr.21, 1900, p3
[164] GlamRO D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. May 5, 1912; May 12, 1912; July 20, 1913

Some features of trade union life were less militant and developed out of a concern for their fellows. At a local level it might involve arranging for a sick colleague to go into a sanatorium,[165] or, as described in chapter four, organising a concert or tea party for the Orphan Fund. Another method for fundraising was the holding of an annual church parade. The parades typically included a procession from an assembly point to a local church where the railwaymen would join the regular worshippers, which identified the local community with them. The idea for the Church Parades may have come from the practice of friendly societies, which also held annual church parades.[166] Those of the railwaymen were still an annual feature as World War I approached.[167] Attendance figures for the railwaymen were not generally included in reports, but in 1900 '60 members with a large number of other friends' assembled for the march to a chapel in Abercynon.[168] For the Merthyr branch at least there was an expectation that members would attend and censure for those who did not.[169] In Pontypridd the local branch meeting was rearranged so as to avoid a clash with the annual parade.[170] The response of those who attended was reportedly positive and significant sums of money were collected for the Orphan Fund.[171] Both the Abercynon branch, and the Pontypridd branch until it had raised sufficient funds to purchase its own, borrowed the Cardiff branch's banner for these occasions.[172] A further discussion of the role of trade unions is contained in chapters seven and eight.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the trade union branch was part of the local community, and cooperation between branches increased the links that support the concept of a 'network community'; although the ties of the branch might increasingly cross the symbolic boundary to link with the workers in other companies locally and to a new political world nationally. However, petitioning and negotiation, where it could be had, was with a single company, and employees would organize this through inter-branch contact.[173]

Conclusion

The working definition of the 'network community' was proposed as: *the employees of the Taff Vale Railway and their families living and working within the spatial and*

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[165]
[166] *MExp*, Dec.11, 1909, p8
[167] e.g. *MExp*, May 7, 1904, p11
[168] GlamRO D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Aug.11, 1912; These are discussed in chapter nine
[169] *PObs*, Sep. 8, 1900, p4
    Members were censured for not attending, UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/1, Mins. Sept. 4, 1892
[170] GlamRO D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Aug. 11, 1912
[171]
[172] *PObs*, Oct. 1, 1904, p4
[173] *Ibid*, July 8, 1899, p[4]; July 28, 1906, p[6]
    GlamRO D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Sep.1,1912; Mins. Sep.29, 1912

symbolic boundaries that define it, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but also extend beyond those boundaries. A lengthier definition would be in terms of the five characteristics discussed above. They are; a spatially located community bounded by the extent of the company's physical spread; a 'symbolic community' in the minds of its employees, customers and owners with a variety of images; an 'occupational community' limited to the employees and officers of one company engaged in the operation of a railway; a 'virtual' or 'imagined' community with a 'group mind facilitated by the constant circulation of information';[174] and finally a 'network' in that it is not confined to a single locality but is defined by a series of relationships that exist because of the railway.

Each of the ten factors considered have to varying extents supported the concept of a 'network community'. The argument is not that the Taff Vale was unique, but rather that it is an example of a feature that could be found across a range of companies and organisations. But the density of such communities would diminish with much greater membership numbers and or a more extensive spatial extent, as was illustrated during the industrial disputes on the Midland Railway examined by Revill.[175] The impression gained is one of a company family, part paternalistic, part shared experience, which, whilst strong before 1900, was beginning to fragment in the years up to 1914. Yet it was not destroyed by the Grouping, rather subsumed into a broader Great Western identity, still with nostalgia for a TVR past.

The next chapter examines the paternalism that contributed to the 'network community' through the universal benefits it bestowed, and the internal counter pressures of the disciplinary system.

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[174] Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers', p211
[175] G Revill, 'Railway labour', pp17-40

Section 3: Management versus Workers

Chapter 6 Paternalism and Discipline

Introduction

The next section explores the relationships within the workplace element of the 'network community'. Chapter six picks up from chapter three and examines the company's policies in the treatment and control of its employees. It also follows on from an examination of community, and in particular the concept of the TVR as a 'network community', which in part owed its existence to the company's paternalism as described in this chapter. Chapter seven builds on this foundation to chronicle and examine the industrial relations record of the company and describes the forces that threatened the cohesion of that community.

The TVR men employed the customary approach of submitting memorials to the board of directors when seeking improvements to their conditions of service, which did sometimes meet with a favourable response immediately. But in other cases correspondence between a men's committee and the board would continue for some months often with less favourable results.[1] However, any hints of trade union involvement were met with implacable opposition from the Board and Ammon Beasley when he was general manager. His attitude was that the package of benefits afforded the men by a generous company should remove any need to involve a trade union in protecting the interests of the men.[2]

Whilst the extensive correspondence files which recorded every detail of an individual's faults and failings have not survived a certain level of detail was included in many of the staff registers, and it is from these that a picture has been composed of the types of offence and the punishment that would be meted out. Failure to carry out the job in an efficient manner or to correctly observe the myriad rules and regulations would usually be met with a caution or reprimand, but unruly or criminal behaviour would result in dismissal. In the final section the management style and practices of the Great Western and the Taff Vale are compared and contrasted, in particular to discover whether the arrival of Beasley from the former had an impact on the latter. Based around an essay by Mike Savage, the issues of discipline, surveillance and the career will be explored across the two companies.[3]

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[1] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.995, May 14, 1895; NA RAIL 684/8, Min.2755, Sep.28, 1882
[2] See chapter two
[3] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"'

Paternalism

Paternalism and industrial or corporate welfarism describe a range of approaches of owners and managers to their employees. The scale, method and motivation varied considerably from company to company and over time. The term paternalism can be seen as the exercise of authority in the management of a company's affairs in the manner of a father with his children, and could be found across Victorian industry. Fitzgerald suggests that paternalism should be seen against the patriarchialism of home, and that Nonconformist employers, in particular, sought to instil virtues of 'hard work, temperance and self-enlightenment'[4]. Patrick Joyce links its origins with the *laissez-faire* politics of the mid-nineteenth century when he states that 'much of English paternalistic practice developed within the matrix of strongly held *laissez-faire* notions of what the relationship of employer and worker should be'.[5] Its origins can perhaps be seen in the small family or individually run businesses that reflected the traditional landed gentry-tenant roles, which became 'unsuited to large companies and professional management'.[6]

In large companies or those taking a managerial approach, industrial or corporate welfarism replaced paternalism, although it might have similar aims, as Fitzgerald comments 'paternal and systematic welfare had the same objectives'.[7] Various factors might influence the level of provision for welfare which could be described as a 'prophylactic against strikes, work dissatisfaction and resistance to managerial direction'.[8] It was firstly an attempt to 'mollify class-conflict', and secondly to remedy the economic insecurity that might prompt industrial unrest. Thirdly it was an area of the business in which workers and managers could cooperate leaving the managers control over running the business intact. Fourthly it augmented the internal labour market.[9]

Alborn in his book on Victorian joint-stock companies compares the banks with the coming of the railways in the following terms:

> Even railway promoters who otherwise upheld middle-class values lacked
> the banks' immunity from "high politics" owing to their dealings with
> aristocrats, City lawyers and financiers. Similarly, when railways catered to
> the needs of their workers and third-class passengers, they entered a realm
> of social relations that was foreign to the early banks. Here they departed
> from a different tenet of middle-class radicalism, "the principle of exclusion"
> which left most of society to one side until they could be educated up to the

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[4] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*), p9
[5] Joyce, *Work Society and Politics*, p138
[6] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, pp9-10
[7] *Ibid*, p19
[8] *Ibid*
[9] *Ibid*

level of rational political discourse. Faced with a large, uneducated workforce for whom eventual enlightenment was an unsatisfactory substitute for social control, railways replaced the more pristine political logic of direct representation with a rough and ready paternalism.[10]

There was a wide variation in scale of these enterprises, some operating routes no more than ten miles in length, whilst others extended to two or more thousand route miles. Simmons allocates the Taff Vale among the 'soundly-established companies of the second rank.'[11] These organisations had been established by Act of Parliament, and a significant number of Members of Parliament sat on their boards forming a 'railway interest' in both houses. Alderman describes their influence on legislation that affected not only the construction of new lines and regulations controlling tariffs, but also rules governing the safe operation of trains, and workmen's compensation.[12] So in this tightly regulated environment, railway company directors and senior managers were minded to use both carrot and stick when it came to the treatment of their employees. If the men did not appreciate the standard of care, they came to 'appreciate' the harsh treatment of employees who testified against their employer. Such was the case of goods guard F Harcombe of the TVR who was summarily dismissed.[13] Describing the situation before 1880, when asked by a member of a Royal Commission: 'What is the custom with regard to compensation to a man when he is injured in performing his work, or if he is killed leaving a widow?' he replied, 'I believe the compensation they receive is a nice coffin'.[14] The 1880 Employer's Liability Act was not entirely welcomed by the ASRS as it was possible for a company to opt out of its provisions, which the TVR did. It also opted out of the provisions of the 1897 act as described in chapter two.

Paternalism was not uncommon in Victorian industries with owners expecting deference from their employees and some acceptance that the employer would treat the worker well. Joyce defines deference as 'the social relationship that converts power relations into moral ones, and ensures the stability of hierarchy threatened by the less efficient, potentially unstable, coercive relationship.'[15] It was a relationship that could be one of mutual affection where the worker willingly submitted to the employer's control, as described by the Great Western engine driver quoted below.[16] Joyce is writing primarily about factory towns with their textile mills, but Drummond provides

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[11] Alborn, *Conceiving Companies*, pp173-74
[12] J Simmons, *The Railway in England & Wales 1830-1914 Vol.1* (Leicester, 1978) p241
[13] Alderman, *Railway Interest*, e.g. chapters three, four, eight and nine
[14] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p83
[15] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p115
[16] Joyce, *Work Society and Politics*, p92; As a parallel the coercive nature of discipline versus the self-motivation of career expectations are discussed later in the chapter.
[16] *MExp*, May 12, 1883, p3

examples from the railway town of Crewe and examples have been discovered for railwaymen who did not live in a railway town.[17] Joyce's description of emotional identification is criticised by Kirk for not recognising the primary role of coercion and underplaying the existence of class conflict.[18] Where such provision was made whether by a mill owner or senior railway manager the subordinate worker was expected to respond to what Drummond describes as 'kindly paternalism' by demonstrating their thankfulness.[19] Drummond's account of Crewe presents a situation not unlike that of a mill town and she is able to compare the two noting the similarities and differences of the experience of and reactions to the paternalism of mill owners and that of a senior officer of a large joint stock company in a railway town. But whilst Joyce argues that the culture of whole communities could be dominated by the local employer including in political matters, Drummond has demonstrated that it was possible at Crewe for many of the employees to defy the employer by denominational, political and trade union association.[20]

Paternalism existed before the Victorian era and its motivation extended from the ideological approach of Robert Owen in New Lanark or the later Quaker chocolate manufacturers to the hard-nosed business aims of corporate welfarism. Robert Owen took over the management of a model industrial community from his father-in-law in 1800. A visionary with social ideas a century or more ahead of his time, he provided the villagers with 'decent homes, schools and evening classes, free health care and affordable food.'[21] This philanthropy sprang from his belief that through education a 'society may be formed so as to exist without crime, without poverty, with health greatly improved, with little, if any misery, and with intelligence and happiness increased a hundredfold...'.[22] Some eighty years later the Quaker entrepreneurs George and Richard Cadbury were also concerned with the environment in which their workers lived. In response they moved their factory out into the Worcestershire countryside and as the business prospered were able to realise 'some of their social objectives'. From 1900 George developed 'a complete village community' in a 'new model village' with a

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[17] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p191, as with the TVR there were contrasting attitudes to the employer; Deference could still be shown in the 1890s, but for many working conditions were being seen as oppressive some years before. See chapter five for Guard Godfrey's eulogy of the Taff Vale in 1895 and above for a sarcastic response, re compensation for accidents, from Goods Guard Harcombe to a Royal Commission a decade or so earlier.
[18] Kirk, *Growth of Working Class Reformism*, pp14-5
[19]
[20] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p188
[21] *Ibid*, p210
[22] New Lanark, http://www.newlanark.org/index2.shtml (accessed 28/02/12)
Robert Owen, *Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark* (1816)
http://www.newlanark.org/robertowen.shtml (accessed 28/02/12)

range of amenities that included shops, schools, sports facilities and places of worship.[23]

There were others who, whilst not starting from an ideological standpoint, did have a social conscience that prompted them to improve their employees' conditions and provide good housing and other amenities such as schools, bath houses, parks and churches. A good example is Titus Salt at Saltaire in West Yorkshire. Despite its appearance of having been planned, Saltaire 'evolved' over twenty-five years from 1853 and probably did not start life as a 'model community'.[24] The move to this green field site was again prompted by the appalling insanitary conditions of urban industrial communities.

Examples of such paternalism did exist in the area where the Taff Vale was formed and a paternalistic ironmaster was the first chairman of the company. Josiah John Guest (1785-1852) managed the Dowlais Iron Company, which had been founded by his grandfather, and was among the business men who met in 1835 to promote a railway from Merthyr to Cardiff; he became chairman of the Taff Vale Railway in 1836. He had been elected as the first MP for Merthyr Tydfil as a Whig in 1832. Concerned about the welfare of his workers at Dowlais, he provided a large range of facilities. A V John describes how '[h]e attempted to deflect movements such as Chartism through the exercise of employer paternalism, encouraging rational recreation and incrementalist change through education.'[25] The co-educational system introduced by Guest was forward looking and the works schools were renowned. Another example of the welfare provision was a contributory medical fund that provided medical care for employee and family including access to a doctor.[26] In 1852 20,000 people turned out for his funeral.[27]

Guest was not the only paternalistic ironmaster in Merthyr; another was Robert Crawshay (1817-1879), the son of Guest's contemporary William Crawshay II (1788-1867), who with his wife 'helped in the provision of schools and providing books to read.'[28] In the middle of an obituary praising Robert Crawshay, who had done much for the town of Merthyr, the events which brought about the closure of the Cyfartha works in 1874 are described allotting the cause to the arrival of trade unionism at the works. This had allegedly broken the previously harmonious relationship between men and

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[23] *Bournville Village Trust*, https://www.bvt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/The-Bournville-Story.pdf (accessed 28/02/12)

[24] Clive Woods, *Saltaire: History and Regeneration* (2000)

[25] A V John, 'Sir (Josiah) John Guest' in H C G Matthew and Brian Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) Vol.24, pp176-7

[26] Jones, *Unfinished Journey* (London, 1938) pp32-3

[27] John, 'Sir (Josiah) John Guest'

[28] Watkin William Price, 'Crawshay Family of Cyfarthfa, Glam., industrialists', *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*, http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s-CRAW-CYF-1739.html (accessed 12/04/12)

master. The inflexibility of the men's union advisers was blamed for the demise of the works, and the journalist comments; '[h]e [Crawshay] clearly saw that the men could not serve two masters'; he continued: 'Mr Crawshay never could totally forget this rebellion on the part of the men evidencing as it a want of reciprocal good feeling.' and '[t]he relation between employer and employed had been severed...'.[29] An alternative explanation for the closure of the works was Robert Crawshay's refusal to change to steel production which was carried out by his son who reopened the works in 1882.[30] Jack Jones' maternal grandfather, speaking at the end of the nineteenth century, illustrated his deference by insisting that the unwelcome changes at the iron works would never have occurred when the previous generation of ironmasters who had employed him were in charge. Grandfather was a staunch supporter of Liberal MP Henry Richard and criticised his son-in-law for listening to Tom Halliday and his advocacy of trade unions.[31] Jones is writing of the close of the nineteenth century and illustrates the beginning of class-conflict.

For these entrepreneurs, either from a humanistic or religious stance, there was a moral duty to treat their employees in a fair and considerate fashion and to provide not just for the physical needs of good housing and canteens, but also for education and moral instruction or control. The latter might express itself in strict rules for the tenants in company housing developments and the exclusion of licensed premises from factory villages.[32] The settlements that Owen, Cadbury and Salt founded were set in pleasant rural areas away from the pollution and squalor of inner-urban slums, not so in Merthyr. But the feature common to all the above examples was the provision of schools and the high value placed on education that was aimed at self improvement.

Paternalism is readily associated with North Country mill owners where their enterprises were based within manufacturing settlements created to serve the textile industries. Joyce, Kirk and others have taken various examples from these northern factory towns to examine the labour history of the nineteenth century; in particular the mid-century 'quietude' in industrial relations or 'discontinuity' in the rise of the proletariat. In these studies particular attention is paid to role of paternalism, factory politics, a proposed 'aristocracy of labour' and trade unions.[33] Their studies are focussed primarily on the textile mills of North West of England and the West Riding of Yorkshire.

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[30] *MTel*, May 16, 1879, p[2]
'Cyfarthfa Ironworks', *The Hopkin Thomas Project*,
http://himedo.net/TheHopkinThomasProject/TimeLine/Wales/MerthyrTydfil/CyfarthfaIronWorks
[31] Images/cyfarthfa_ironworks_all_files.htm (accessed 12/04/12)
[32] Jones, *Unfinished Journey* (London, 1938) pp9-15
[33] *Bournville Village Trust*
Joyce, *Work Society and Politics*; Kirk, *Growth of Working Class Reformism*

One strand of the debate on what happened from 1850 is the role of the 'new paternalism' as to whether the quietude was a result of the paternalism or whether the employers responded to the improved workplace relationships with paternalism.[34] Joyce suggests that the mid-century paternalism of the cotton mill was encouraged by the paternalism of the home strengthened by family participation in the workplace. Also the mill towns will have often grown up around the mills encouraging an identification of factory with the community life of the town.[35] Also once the factory system had become established mill owners were faced with retaining workers and or their loyalty and support. Although the existence of the 'quietude' is widely accepted, Kirk points out that the industrial quiet was not complete, with several major disputes in the period.[36] Joyce sees the paternalism as part of the explanation; he writes: '[t]hus the primary source of class antagonism, the work-place relations of master and man, was in large measure neutralised and the enormous social force of later Victorian family, paternalist industry came into the fullest play: trade unions and deference were not only compatible but in many respects complemented one another.'[37]

As discussed in chapter three there is no clear evidence of an aristocracy of labour on the TVR, even though some enginemen, principally on the GWR in south Wales, did regard themselves as an elite group.[38] Any quietening effect on industrial relations was more from the point of view of company loyalty rather than an identification of common interest specifically on the part of enginemen. This was demonstrated by a sympathetic reaction to supervisors during 1890 strike, described in chapter seven.[39]

Prior to 1850 paternalism was the practice of the family owned business, and worker owner relations in the smaller enterprises could be either cordial and cooperative or extremely antagonistic possibly with a strong and active trade union presence. Some of the mill owners would have come from humble beginnings having worked their way up from the shop floor.[40] As the textile industries expanded the owning families were increasing linked by what Joyce describes as 'dynastic capitalism'.[41] There was a broad spectrum of approaches by the mill owners, but one feature that most shared with Owen, Cadbury, Salt and Guest was the family ownership of the business, and

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[35] Joyce, Work Society and Politics, pp134-54
[36] Ibid, pp181-2
[37] Kirk, Growth of Working Class Reformism, pp300-1
[38] Joyce, Work Society and Politics, p82
[39] MEx, Jan.11, 1890, p6
[40] MEx, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[41] See Joyce, Work Society and Politics, pp161-2
Ibid, p23

Joyce proposes that the spread of the 'limiteds', that is joint stock companies, brought paternal attitudes to an end.[42]

Trade unions had been active prior to 1850, but from then until the 1870s there was a lessening of activity. The end date of the mid-century period has been debated, but for Merthyr at least it was in the 1870s as described above with the closure of the Cyfarthfa Works. When the first permanent railway trade union, the ASRS, was formed in 1871 it was quick to form branches in the Valleys but recognition, although granted by paternalistic mill owners, was not achieved on the TVR until 1915.[43] This study takes as its duration the thirty plus years from c1880 to the outbreak of the Great War and only a few references to labour unrest have been noted in the years prior to that. If as seems there had been a period of 'quietude' it was being disturbed from the 1880s with the first major strike in 1890.

Where a railway company had large workshops its interaction with its workforce and provision of facilities might resemble that of the large mill owner or chocolate manufacturer with extensive housing and amenities such as schools and churches. But railways however large their workshops also had a widely dispersed majority who did not live in a 'railway town'. The Taff Vale workshops were tiny compared with the large railway corporations and even then not on a single site and were not accompanied by rows of company houses or other amenities.

The paternalism of the textile and confectionery businesses very often included provision of community amenities from churches and libraries to horticultural societies and sports fields, but in the railway context the act of incorporation might well limit the range of activities upon which company funds could be expended. This was true of the Midland Railway at Derby, where Revill describes how funding for such amenities came not from the company but other philanthropic sources in the wider community.[44] It is clear that on the Taff Vale there were no such expressions of paternalism either, but probably in this case company size would have been the main factor.

The attitude of employees to their employers and vice versa varied between companies, and perhaps sprang not just from their management style, but also their involvement at a working level within the company before elevation to high office. Simmons compares the origins of Sir Richard Moon of the LNWR and Sir Daniel Gooch of the GWR.[45] Although both occupied the position of Chairman of the Board, the former had been appointed to the board with no railway experience whilst the latter had

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[42] Ibid, pp339-40
[43] Joyce, Work Society and Politics, p52; See chapter seven
[44] Revill, 'Railway Derby', p395
[45] Simmons, Railway in England & Wales, p246

had many years of hands-on railway work. This endeared Gooch to the locomotivemen at least. The special position that he held in the affections of his men can be readily seen from a letter to *The Times* quoted by Bagwell, and an article written by an engine driver in the *Merthyr Express*. In the first an engine driver queried the need for legislation then before Parliament for the protection of footplatemen when 'they had Mr D. Gooch at their head'[46]. The second engine driver expressed his nostalgia for the pre-Trade Union days, and in describing the relationship of Gooch and his men uses expressions such as 'the good old times', 'the old love' and 'old mutual esteem'.[47] However, this deference did not extend to the directors and some managers, who he refers to as 'bloated directors' and 'managers riding about doing nothing'.[48] Although this engine driver does not specifically mention the name of his employer it appears that he was an employee of the GWR rather than the TVR. However both Moon and Gooch were subject to the same hostility during the 1881 campaign for shorter hours.[49] In 1898 General Manager Beasley observed that some of the senior officers of the company had worked for the TVR throughout their careers,[50] but there does not appear to have been similar expressions of affection.

In the Lancashire mill towns paternalism might take on a political dimension when the rivalry between competing mills extended to support for a particular political party at election times, especially if the mill owner was a candidate. Employees, besides joining in the general razzmatazz of the campaign, would be expected to support the appropriate man.[51] Drummond in her study of the railway town of Crewe describes a situation where senior management sought to secure the election of a local council more favourable to the company against the wishes of many employees. This was in the 1880s through an alleged process of intimidation, or by at least relying on the deference felt towards the company hierarchy.[52] But as Drummond has shown even under a highly paternalistic regime the beneficiaries of company provision could assert their independence, energised by denominational, political and trade union principles whereby Liberal Nonconformity challenged the Tory Anglicanism of the Works hierarchy.[53] Almost everything that might be written about Crewe was not true of the TVR. The politics of the directors and senior officers were probably not so polarised

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[46] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp22-3
[47] *MExp*, May 12, 1883, p3
[48] *Ibid*
[49] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, p165
[50] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[51] P Joyce, *Work Society and Politics*, chapter 3
[52] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, pp171-77
[53] *Ibid*, pp191-95

compared with their staff. The school board debate was a matter of company finances and the Board supported both Anglican and Nonconformist church causes.[54] The Taff Vale did not create any towns to rule over, and its works in Cardiff were small scale with probably only ever a handful of company owned houses. Its officers might have taken part in local politics, but only as individuals.

Party politics do not seem to have played a part on the Taff Vale in any paternalistic way. The company operated in a country where Liberalism was predominant among both men and managers until the turn of the twentieth century. Even then a Liberal MP, Richard Bell, headed the largest railway trade union and two others, Russell Rea and D A Thomas, served as directors of the company. Before the latter had joined the board he had openly shown sympathy to the cause of the south Wales railwaymen during the unrest of 1890 and had even offered advice on the conduct of a strike if it could not be avoided.[55] During the 1900 strike Rea showed a more open-minded approach than the chairman and general manager by meeting Bell informally along with Sir W T Lewis. General Manager Beasley gave miners' trade union leader and Lib-Lab MP William Abraham (Mabon) a free pass, but crossed swords with Lloyd George at the Board of Trade.[56] He also opposed Tory coalowner W T Lewis when the latter attempted to improve labour relations in the rail and mining industries through conciliation.[57] Some of the officers and directors of the company were Conservative in politics; for example Locomotive Superintendent Tom Hurry Riches served as a Conservative councillor in Cardiff for nine years from 1886 to 1895.[58] The impression is that party politics were not of particular concern in the higher echelons of the company with the focus being on whatever prospered the business. But in the 1855 Rule Book staff had been expressly told that they should not 'at any time interfere in the least with matters of a political nature'.[59] The Board did issue a circular to its employees in advance of the 1900 General Election, but unfortunately the minute does not record its content.[60] The men were generally Liberal and Lib-Lab in politics before gravitating towards Labour and class-based politics from 1900 when many were persuaded to support the candidature of Keir Hardie as a Labour candidate alongside D A Thomas the main Liberal candidate for Merthyr.[61] Religion of disparate kinds did

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[54] See chapter nine for the Board's response to requests to support churches and church schools
[55] Letter to *MExp*, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[56] NA RAIL 684/12, Min.290, Jan.7, 1908; Correspondence with Mr A Heron (14/07/2006)
[57] See chapter seven
[58] *Cardiff Directory 1914* (*Western Mail*, 1914) pp25-28
[59] UoW SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2, Rule 241
[60] NA RAIL 684/11, Min.342, Sep.9, 1900
[61] *MEx*, Sep.29, 1900, p3

perhaps, like Crewe nonconformity, ensure an independent spirit, but no strong sectarian views were apparent at Board or senior management levels.

In the early period of the 'Railway Age' there had been a shortage of engine drivers, which was reflected in wage levels and the ease with which a man dismissed by one company could find employment with another,[62] but from the 1850s or 60s it was not easy for those in any grade below officer level to move between companies, except perhaps as a strike breaker.[63] Where it is known that a new entrant to the Taff Vale had previously worked for a different railway it was not in south Wales.[64] As described in chapter three, by the 1880s at least, there was a rapid turnover among those entering the basic grades on the TVR, but for those who stayed this became a steady career. Fitzgerald highlights the length of service of most railwaymen and links this with company loyalty and welfare provision.[65] Bagwell describes how in the first fifty years railway company directors 'used every inducement to secure the loyalty of their employees' by a mixture of 'persuasion and cajolery'[66]. Wage levels might be competitive before 1900 as Bagwell claims, particularly in rural areas. An ASRS survey, based on returns for 1904, displays a wide variation in rates for each grade across the industry. The local companies competing in the Valleys are lumped together, [67] and were included in a single publication in 1909 possibly indicating a lack of competition in wage rates.[68] There were also a number of instances when the Boards of these companies consulted each other over specific situations such as payments for bank holidays.[69]

McKenna describes how railwaymen gained a sense of their own space at work whether it as the footplate of 'my engine' or the operating floor of 'my box'.[70] With the associated devolved responsibility came a loyalty to the specific company. This might be reinforced by the company's efforts to retain staff and their loyalty, with paternalistic provision of housing, friendly societies, and social facilities such as staff outings. Loyalty to the Taff Vale has been discussed in part two of chapter five when considering the railway as a 'network community', and the company's welfare provision

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[62] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p19
[63] See chapter seven especially accounts of the 1890 strike and the aftermath of 1900 dispute
[64] E.g. J Pulling employed by GWR at Hereford before the TVR, J PULLING, DES Aug.5, 1874, D Savage, correspondence (2004)
[65] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, pp31-6
[66] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p20
[67] UoWS, SWCC: MWB/TUG/1/3, e.g. Average rates for porters were LNWR 17/6 (87.5p) GWR 17/10 (89.2p) TVR, etc 19/6 (97.5p)
[68] *Agreements as between TVR and employees*
[69] NA RAIL 684/11, Mins. 699, Dec.7, 1901; 730, Jan.28, 1902; 752, Feb.11, 1902
[70] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, pp40-2

is described in this chapter. Some of this provision might be seen as a deterrent to bad behaviour with, for instance, dismissal resulting in loss of pension. Another punishment might be eviction from one's home in a company house in the event of taking strike action or serious breach of discipline, although this was rare on the Taff Vale.[71] A forfeited bonus was a much more widely experienced outcome of rule breaking. In these actions the TVR was following practices common among most railway companies.[72]

From TVR staff records it has been shown that long service was the rule rather than the exception and does not appear to have been influenced by poor pay and conditions nor corporate welfare when that was expanded in the 1890s.[73] Apart from engine drivers and clerks, there were no long pay scales and not all grades had skills that were non-transferable, but nevertheless even the unskilled porters and platelayers had lengthy service.[74] That is not to say that the non-contributory pension scheme did not have some effect, but there were other factors at work, whether love of the job per se, a sense of community, job security as coal traffic expanded or contemplation of the alternative which might be 'down the pit'.[75]

The nature of relations between the men and their masters on the Taff Vale before 1890 could be described as patriarchal; however the pattern of fatherhood in the Victorian era was authoritarian and any affection would be tempered with strictness. This is amply illustrated in the 1855 edition of the TVR Rule Book by Rule 26 which stated that:

> It is urgently requested, that every person, whether on or off duty, shall conduct himself in a steady, sober, honest and creditable manner, and that on Sundays and other Holydays, when he is not required on duty, that he will attend a place of worship; as it will be the means of promotion when vacancies occur.[76]

Many years after the 1855 Rule Book had been superseded Station Master Joseph Hiscock used his position as superintendent at a local Congregational chapel to insist that potential recruits attend his Sunday School. This has echoes of Rule 26 although

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[71] E.g. NA RAIL 684/16, Mins. 236, Mar.26, 1901; 274, May 14, 1901; in the event, the threat of eviction was not carried out

[72] See Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p21

[73] See chapter three

[74] E.g. a sample of 66 porters had an average length of service of 19.7 years, if those with service of less than five years are omitted the remaining 43 served for an average of 29.1 years, NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96, etc

[75] See Jevons, *British Coal Trade*, pp620-1 cited in chapter one

[76] UoW SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2

the report was from 1917.[77] This highly prescriptive Rule Book could be used to control the men inculcating 'appropriate' conduct at the workplace with, for example, the prohibition of whistling.[78] There was the paternalistic-deferential pattern of submission of memorials by the men and an open door policy on the part of the Board towards its employees; refusals to see the men only came during the lead up to the strike of 1900, but then only selectively during the dispute.[79] As described in chapter five an annual works outing from Cardiff to Merthyr had been provided at company expense until the 1880s and the company's clerks and officers had been treated to a 'Pic-Nic' at least in 1893. Housing provision was limited, but in line with the surrounding coalmining industry.[80] Prior to the 1890s there had been a housing allowance,[81] and when the threat to evict strikers was issued during the 1900 dispute, it does not appear to have been carried out. A similar threat had apparently been issued in 1890 for Treherbert but, unlike on the Rhymney, not carried out.[82] A proposed rent rise in 1891 was dropped when the Taff Vale tenants appealed against it. It was, however, implemented two years later allegedly to fund improvements to the properties.[83]

Increasingly the men were beginning to see the management in a different light; it had begun before 1890 and the obstinacy of the boards of four railway companies in that year led to the first major railway strike in south Wales. Even the local press chided the TVR for the treatment of its staff.[84] Although the Barry Railway and the Taff Vale had collaborated in their attempt to defeat the strike, the opening of the former had eaten deeply into the profits of the latter, and as has been described in chapter one the Taff shareholders protested and removed the Board. The result was a new management structure and a new manager.

As noted above, until union recognition was obtained, groups of men from one or more grade would present memorials to the Board of Directors on a range of issues including wage levels, working conditions and safety. And individuals were invited to raise personal concerns with the Board directly, or through an immediate superior. Examples from the *Select Committee on Railway Servants Hours of Labour* from 1890, cited by Bagwell, involved the LNWR and GWR, companies that had connections to

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[77] David Llewellyn Jenkins, 'Pontypridd to Paddington' in *Servants of Steam*, pp16-8
[78] UoW SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2, Rule 40
[79] E.g. *MEx*, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[80] Housing provision is described in detail in chapter three
[81] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.326, Oct.11, 1892
[82] See chapter seven
[83] See chapter three
[84] See chapter seven

the TVR.[85] A typical example of a petition to the TVR board from 1881 was a 'memorial from the enginemen, trainmen and signalmen for consideration of their wages and hours of labour'.[86] In the event only minor concessions were granted, and not the substantive claims. Another memorial received in the same year was from the 'officers and clerks' and sought the establishment of a superannuation scheme, which was acceded to with an approach to the 'Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund Association'.[87]

The change of Board and management in 1891 was accompanied by an efficiency drive. Such benefits that had been in place prior to the arrival of the new general manager were not above question. A statement was presented to the Traffic Committee in October 1892 on the payment of rent allowances to staff and it was left to the General Manager to report further.[88] From records examined the criteria applied for the granting of such allowances has not been established. In 1895 an attempt was made to make the most expensive section of the workforce, the enginemen, more cost effective. This was to be achieved by loosening their conditions of employment and putting the men on day-to-day contracts. This move and the dismissal of 120 staff, when many others were working overtime, both failed.[89] Whilst the men had also been largely successful in 1890, one key issue, that of union recognition, had not been achieved, but the company was concerned at the growth of trade union power. In 1892 the newly recruited Beasley was getting to grips with the adverse financial position occasioned by the opening of the Barry and described in chapter one. By 1895 dividends were improving despite a major strike in the pits in 1893, but there was unrest among some TVR staff because of the cost cutting measures noted above. It may then have been no coincidence that the various benefits other than the pension fund were introduced at this time.

It can be seen from the description of the paternalism demonstrated by the ironmasters of Merthyr that Taff Vale employees would be aware of situations not unlike those encountered by Joyce, Kirk and others in their examination of the mill towns of the North West. Some of the directors and other shareholders were drawn from the ironmaster families. The most significant was Arthur Edward Guest (1841-98), youngest son of the first chairman, who joined the TVR board in 1886 becoming

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[85] PP 1890-1, *Select Committee on Railway Servants Hours of Labour 1890*, Vol.XVI, Evidence of Messrs Findlay, Lambert and Connacher. Qs. 5488, 5816, 6949 cited in Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, note 7, p44
[86] NA RAIL 684/8, Min.2721, Sep. 22, 1881; Note the involvement of more than one grade.
[87] NA RAIL 684/9, Min. 46, Dec. 7, 1882
[88] NA RAIL 684/14, Min.326, Oct.11, 1892
[89] See chapter seven

chairman in 1891. The younger Guest had been a director of the London and South Western Railway since 1876 and his obituary describes him as being popular with the staff and that he 'never lost an opportunity of evincing a warm interest in their social well-being'.[90] It seems that he brought this approach, inherited from his father, with him to the Taff Vale. This is illustrated by the attention to an individual inspector and Beasley's attribution of the welfare benefits to Guest, see below. The TVR, with never more than four thousand five hundred employees, was not a particularly large company and the traditional attitudes can be found under the new regime. For example the chairman, Guest, reported that he had personally seen an inspector, who was seeking retirement, and arranged his superannuation.[91] And in 1904 instead of punishing a long-serving yardman following a collision, which had been due to his defective memory, the directors granted him retirement with an allowance.[92]

Fitzgerald describes railways as 'large managerial bureaucracies'.[93] It was in these large organisations that directors and senior managers exercised a 'paternalistic' style of control despite the bureaucracy. This was the approach portrayed by General Manager Beasley as was discussed in chapter two. The following is a longer extract from the interview that he gave to the *Railway Magazine* in 1898.

> *Interviewer:* "In these days of labour troubles it will be of interest to have some details of the facilities which you grant to your employees."

> *Beasley:* "I think the facilities and advantages granted to our staff compare favourably with those of any other company. Of course there are the usual facilities for free travelling at holiday times, and for obtaining privilege tickets all the year round, and facilities are afforded in many other ways which are of much advantage to the staff. In one respect I claim that the Taff Vale is more liberal to its employees than any other Company I know. Most railway companies encourage the establishment of provident and pension funds, to which the men and their employers subscribe in certain fixed proportions. On the Taff Vale Railway there is no pension fund, and no contributions are required from the staff; nevertheless, each and every person is entitled on reaching a certain age to claim a pension according to a fixed scale, the amount of which varies with length of service and the wages received. This great boon to the staff is the outcome of a desire: on the part of Mr. Guest, the Chairman, to do all in his power to cement the friendly relations which I hope exist, and which I trust will continue to exist for many years to come between the Board and the great body their staff."[94]

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[90] *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers,* Vol CXXXIV (1898); The obituary incorrectly gives his appointment date to the chairmanship as 1890
[91] David ANDREWS, DES 1853, NA RAIL 684/14, Min.196, Mar.29, 1892
[92] D GRIFFITHS, DES July, 1862, NA RAIL 684/94
[93] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management,* p2
[94] RMag, 'Ammon Beasley', p16

The staff that Beasley had in mind were the wages grades who formed the majority of the workforce, and not the clerical grades who were assumed to be part of the establishment. However, there was unrest among the clerks and goods agents from time to time.[95] Head office clerks probably enjoyed a closer relationship with senior managers which is illustrated by the 'Pic-nic' described in chapter five, and the cross-company Cardiff Railway Clerks' Improvement Society for clerks and managers. This Society was founded circa 1904 and its officers were drawn from among the senior managers of all the companies operating in the area.[96]

The take-up of membership of the Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund Association was disappointing to Beasley and in 1892 the company agreed to increase its contribution to the fund and obliged all eligible officers and clerks to join. The amended rules were then reissued at the same time as the introduction of a scheme of pension allowances for weekly paid staff not eligible to join the Superannuation Fund. This was the pension fund described by Beasley during the interview quoted above. A pension was available to wages grade employees over 60 years of age with at least 25 years service and payment was at the discretion of the directors.[97] In addition to the Pension Fund, the 1890s saw the establishment the TVR Savings Bank (1895)[98], the TVR Employees' Benevolent Fund (by 1898)[99], 'TVR Employés Accident Fund' (1898)[100] and the TVR Employees' Hospital Fund (c1911)[101]. The company had its own doctor or medical officer, who was Dr E W Joscelyne from July 1901, and he would see not only accident victims, but also those with other health problems. In one case a man with tuberculosis was 'ordered' to a sanatorium,[102] and in another a man, whose eyesight had failed in one eye, was deemed unfit for any job other than as a porter or a ticket collector,[103] but he did remain in employment.

All this activity, and Beasley's comments quoted above, demonstrate the attempts made to maintain the 'friendly relations' between management and the workmen. Rather than paternalism this was a management philosophy of welfarism in the guise of 'paternalism', particularly after the death of Guest in July 1898, in the face of rising of trade unionism. However the workmen were elected to the committees that oversaw

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[95] MExp, Mar.22, 1890, p 5; Oct.25, 1890, p6
[96] PObs, 04/11/1905, p4
[97] NA RAIL 684/10, details affixed to cover
[98] NA RAIL 1057/1857/17
[99] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16B
[100] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16
[101] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16A; No specific start date has been noted, but reference is made in the Fund Rules to the 'Edward VII Hospital' in Cardiff, the name of the Cardiff Infirmary from 1911, http://www.archiveswales.org.uk/anw/get_collection.php?inst_id=33&coll_id=76346&expand= King Edward VII Hospital (accessed 23/03/12)
[102] B EVANS, DES Apr.1, 1895, NA RAIL 684/99
[103] W E WILLIAMS, DES Nov.3, 1905, NA RAIL 684/99

the operation of the funds, and latterly these could be trade union activists.[104] As noted above Fitzgerald when describing 'paternal and systematic welfare' comments that it was an area of the business in which workers and managers could cooperate leaving the managers control over running the business intact.[105]

Discipline and Punishment

David Howell comments '...paternalism was complemented by a rigorous system of authority. ...Discipline was seen as essential to the operation of an efficient - and above all - safe system.'[106] The staff registers contain the disciplinary record with a range of misdemeanours and punishments. This is very extensive and extends from a caution for a minor delay to a train, through to dismissal for various cases of anti-social behaviour including drunkenness and theft. Most would have been covered by the famous Rule Book of 1855, which had some 284 general rules.[107] However, by 1904 a less personally prescriptive rule book based on the Railway Clearing House standard had been introduced.[108] The company's bureaucracy is illustrated by the dual reference system whereby the staff clerk and the Outdoor Superintendent, T E Harland from 1892, each had their own file references that were consistently recorded in the registers. For example an entry from 1906 records that brakesman Amos Georych was barred from being in charge of trains after having 'refused to work empties from Roath Dock', with the references, 'my papers 3/27718 Mr Harland's I48974'.[109]

Infringement of regulations designed to ensure the safe operation of the train service, were often detected and punished whether an accident resulted or not. In 1892 a signalman lost his bonus for a serious breach of signalling regulations although no accident had occurred.[110] However, just over two years later another error resulted in a collision between two trains and incurred a fine of two pounds as well as the loss of bonus.[111] An analysis of 201 offences committed by Traffic department staff is included in figures 6.1 to 6.3. Operating incidents predominate, and have been divided between shunting related events and others.

The few alcohol related offences resulted in dismissal. But in an exceptional case when a brakesman was dismissed for coming on duty under the influence of alcohol, he circumvented his punishment by rejoining the company in a different department.

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[104] Walter COLLIER, see chapter four, shown as committee member in the *Report & Statement of Account: 30th June 1920*, NA RAIL 1057/1857/16
[105] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, p19
[106] Howell, *Respectable Radicals*, p3
[107] UoW SWCC: MNA/PP/6/1/2
[108] NRM, *TVR Rule Book 1904*
[109] A GEORYCH, DES May 17, 1887, NA RAIL 684/95
[110] E CARROLL, DES 1876, NA RAIL 684/94
[111] Ibid

He was back in his old job seven months later![112] 'Bad behaviour' covers incidents such as an assault on a fellow employee.[113] Under the category of 'theft' a conductor was accused of retaining excess fares he had collected.[114] The potential for incidents in the 'operating (shunting)' category have been described in chapter five. The 'operating (other)' category is largely made up of the violation of rules by guards and signalmen. Damage to wagons and siding gates and derailment of locomotives was quite common, but 62 percent of known penalties imposed were either a caution or a reprimand.[115] Serious breaches of the rules that posed significant risk of a major collision or caused substantial damage would most likely attract a period of suspension without pay and or a fine. 'Traffic handling' offences included over-carried mail,[116] and incorrectly labelled wagons. In the latter case a wagon could be directed via a route that reduced the amount of revenue received by the TVR.[117] A breakdown of the penalties imposed is included in figure 6.2.

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[112] A GEORYCH, DES May 17, 1887, NA RAIL 684/95
[113] Thomas MORGAN, DES May, 1865, NA RAIL 684/94
[114] Richard MORGAN, DES May, 1891, NA RAIL 684/96
[115] NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/99, etc
[116] J WHITE, DES May 20, 1872, NA RAIL 684/94;
[117] M DAVIES, DES May 26, 1891, NA RAIL 684/96

Figure 6.1 Survey of Offences by Category (Traffic Staff)

Survey of Offences by Category (N=201)
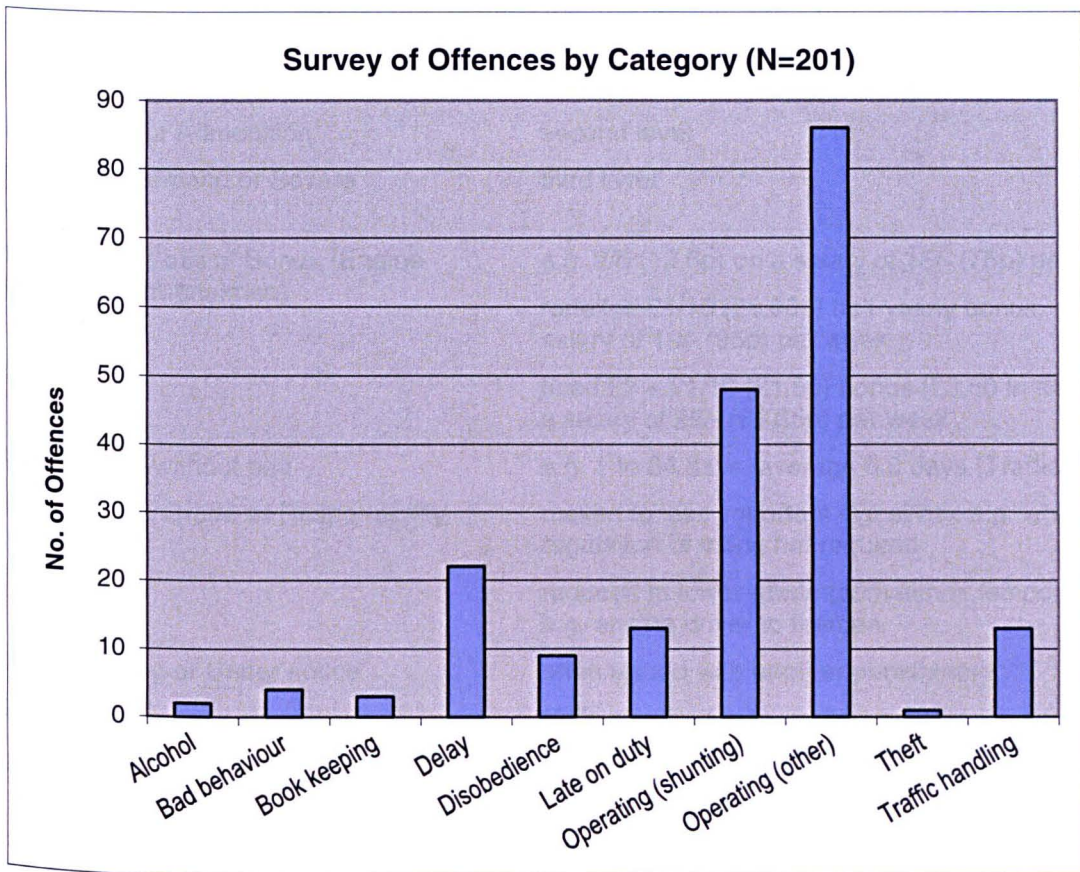
Sources: NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/99, etc

Table 6.1 below lists the range of penalties. It is in ascending order of severity, but as fines and suspensions are variable, and these and other punishments could be used in combination, it is only an approximate guide. One 'benefit' shared by both passenger drivers and signalmen was the payment of an annual bonus. The maximum for signalmen was five pounds whilst that for the drivers was ten pounds, but payment was 'subject to good conduct'.[118] Loss of bonus has been grouped with other fines.

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[118] *Agreements as between TVR and employees*, pp22-24

Table 6.1 Scale of Punishment Based on Examples from 1895-1914

Punishment	Notes
Caution or Warning	this and all punishments were put on record
Reprimand or Admonition	second level
Severe Reprimand or Severe Admonition	third level
Fine and/or Loss of Bonus (Engine Drivers and Signalmen)	e.g. 2/6 (12.5p) on a salary of 15/- (75p) per week
	forfeited £1/10 (£1.50p) half yearly bonus, on a salary of 19/- (95p) per week
	fined £2 + £1/10 (£1.50) bonus (£3.50 in total), on a salary of 25/- (£1.25p) per week
Suspension without pay	e.g. 1 to 34 days, average 6.6 days (Traffic Dept.)
Reduction in Grade or Responsibility	moved to less important signal box e.g. where regulation of trains not required
	reduced to lower grade (sometimes temporarily) e.g. engine driver to fireman
Final warning or Under notice	often issued with another punishment
Dismissal	skills acquired may not be transferable, and other railways unlikely to employ such an individual

Sources: NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/109; 684/110; 684/113, etc.

The application of table 6.1 to the sample of Traffic staff is shown in figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 Survey of Punishments (Traffic Staff)
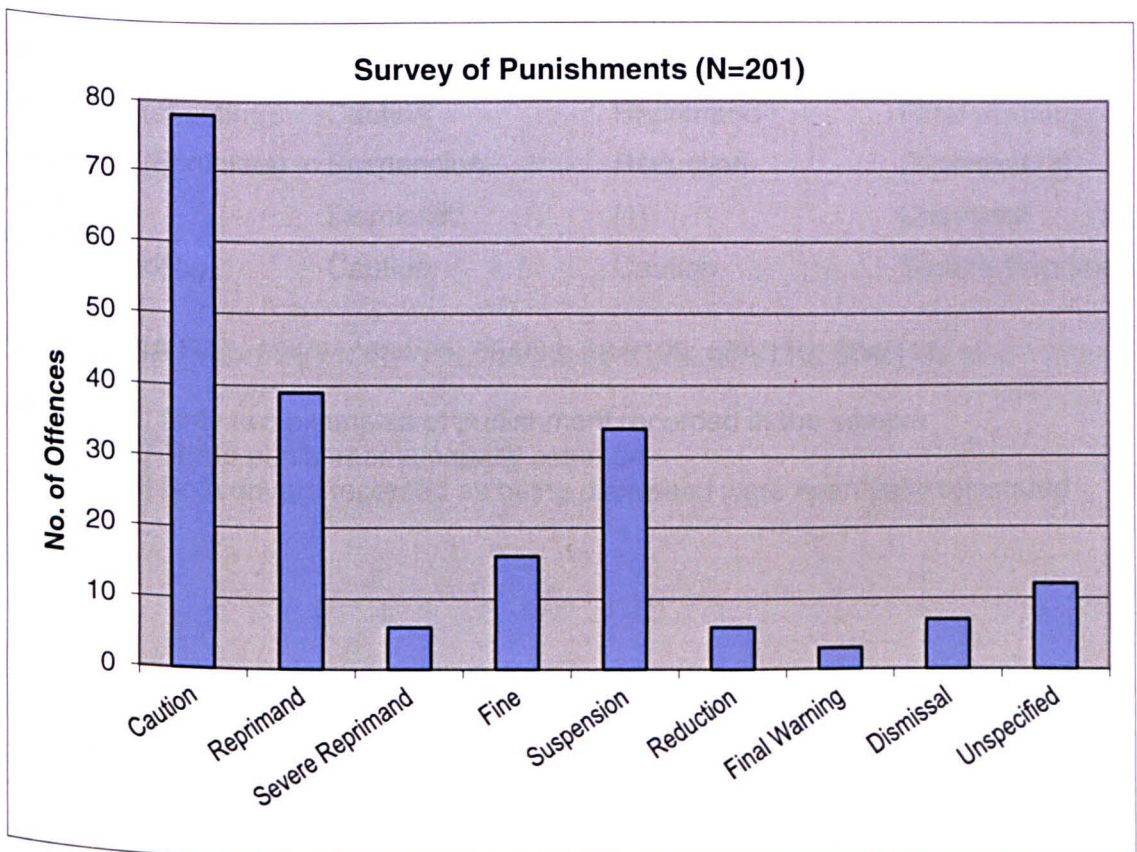
Sources: NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/99, etc

The disciplinary record of footplate staff is less comprehensive and predominantly incidents involved young men on the basic grade of engine cleaner. Drivers who offended were often reduced in grade and occasionally dismissed, but even then they might be allowed to resume, although sometimes this might be after some years.[119] Out of a sample of 31 incidents, ten involved bad behaviour on the part of engine cleaners who were invariably dismissed. The other significant group of offences numbering approximately fourteen consisted of operational malpractices such as passing a signal at danger. Of the twelve drivers involved ten were reduced in grade but none were permanently dismissed.[120] The range of punishments meted out to all grades in response to the various categories of offence is summarised in table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Range and Severity of Punishment by Type of Offence (N=232)

| Offence | Punishment | | |
	Minimum	*Modal*	*Maximum*
Alcohol	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
Bad behaviour	Reprimand	Dismissal	Dismissal
Book keeping	Suspension	[1]	Dismissal
Delay	Caution	Caution	Final warning
Disobedience	Caution	Caution Reprimand Reduction [2]	Dismissal
Late on duty	Caution	Reprimand	Suspension
Operating (other)	Caution	Reprimand	Dismissal
Operating (shunting)	Caution	Reprimand	Final warning
Operating (Footplate)	Suspension	Reduction	Dismissal [3]
Theft	Dismissal	[1]	Dismissal
Traffic handling	Caution	Caution	Severe Reprimand

Sources: NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/109; 684/110; 684/113, etc.

Notes: [1] Only two examples of punishment recorded in the sample
[2] Three punishments equally common
[3] Both drivers recorded as being dismissed were eventually reinstated

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[119] Evan REES, DES May 6, 1873, NA RAIL 684/113
[120] NA RAIL 264/96; 264/97, *Lines absorbed by the GWR – TVR Engine Drivers and Firemen 1900-1913*; 684/95; 684/109; 684/111; 684/113

There is little evidence of punishments being cumulative in their severity, and each incident appears to have been judged on the gravity of the offence. One entry suggesting that punishment might be cumulative was for Guard Brimmell where it is noted in the register that 'if [this was] not first occurrence of offence, [it] would have been dealt with more severely'.[121] But that remark was exceptional.

The disciplinary records of a signalman and a guard are included in table 6.3. Whilst it appears that signalman Davies' punishments are progressive from 1906, each incident can be taken on its own merit, with the exception of the final warning. Even then the final warning was not acted upon when Davies offended again in September 1910. He retired aged c65 years in 1912.[122] Another multiple offender was Guard John Pulling who also fell foul of the regulations on at least nine occasions, although over a longer period. Thought appears to have been given to the gravity of each individual incident, and despite having had two final warnings even the serious collision in October 1906 did not result in his dismissal.[123]

Table 6.3 Examples of Multiple Offenders and their Treatment

Table 6.3a Signalman / Groundman: John DAVIES

Date of incident	Notes made from Staff Register	Punishment
Mar.9, 1897	cautioned for late on duty - stopping colliery	Caution
Nov.30, 1903	cautioned for late on duty	Caution
June 2, 1904	suspended 4 days for letting train into blocked section	4-days Suspension
Nov.1, 1906	cautioned for delaying passenger train by shunting move	Caution
Apr.26, 1909	reprimanded for late on duty - delaying train	Reprimand
Apr.5, 1910	suspended 5 days for block telegraph irregularity	5-days Suspension
Apr.23, 1910	transferred to Aber Rhondda for bad regulation - not to be in position to control traffic – reduced to groundman	Reduction
July 12, 1910	suspended 1 day and final warning for not coupling wagons - train divided	Final warning & 1-day Suspension
Sep.21, 1910	warning for complicity in serious delay	Caution

[121] T BRIMMELL, DES 1904, NA RAIL 684/94
[122] John DAVIES, DES May 10, 1891, NA RAIL 684/96
[123] J PULLING, DES Aug.5, 1874, NA RAIL 684/94

Table 6.3b Guard: John PULLING

| Date of incident	Notes made from Staff Register	Punishment
Jan.20, 1894	suspended 26/01 to 07/02 not coming on duty for 08:45 train & refusing to hand inspector explanation - in consideration of visiting Gen Offices 27/01 & 07/02 allowed 50 hrs for w/e 10/02 'Mabon's Week'	12-days Suspension
Dec.24, 1898	admonished for bad judgement BV 6347 off road Rhondda Fach Jc & bad management of train causing considerable delay	Reprimand
Mar.14, 1899	Pulling had 14 days notice, but as improved case reconsidered & notice withdrawn	Final Warning
Nov.5, 1901	given 14 days notice, damage to GWR truck 18719 Ferndale Lr - allowed to resume after warning	Final Warning
Nov.19, 1901	suspended 5 days & severely admonished for carelessness, lack of proper understanding shunting - wagons derailed Maritime Colliery Sdgs	5-days Suspension & Severe Reprimand
Aug.19, 1905	suspended - late on duty, called but went back to sleep – train F1 32" late - suspended 24/08 to 31/08	7-days Suspension
Oct.6, 1906	suspended 19 days & severely warned for collision at Llantrisant Jc, BV 6346 derailed	19-days Suspension & Severe Reprimand
Feb.13, 1912	cautioned for not holding safety points at Naval Colliery - engine 161 derailed	Caution
Apr.21, 1914	cautioned for not checking gate closed at Lady Lewis Colliery hit engine - gate damaged	Caution

Sources: NA RAIL 684/94; 684/96

It is significant that the two employees with the most extensive disciplinary records were a guard and a signalman. The relationship between the number of offences and the size of the offending grade is depicted in figure 6.3. The chart reflects the relative numbers in each grade and the complexity of the rules applicable to that group of staff.

The apparent reluctance of the management to follow up a final warning or to respond to the number of offences with dismissal reveals a significant degree of tolerance, which possibly reflects the sense of community and or a paternalistic ethos. However, there were incidences where an individual was given a punishment short of dismissal resigning within a week or so of the event. The sometimes unanswerable question is how much pressure was brought to bear on the employee by management? For example a conductor under suspicion of not handing in excess fares of 20d (8.33p), resigned within a week of the alleged incident.[124] In another case a long serving

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[124] R MORGAN, DES May, 1891, NA RAIL 684/96

signalman was given the option of resigning within three days rather than being dismissed.[125]

Figure 6.3 *Survey of Offences by Grade (Traffic Staff)*

Percentage of Offences by Grade compared with Proportion of Staff in each Grade
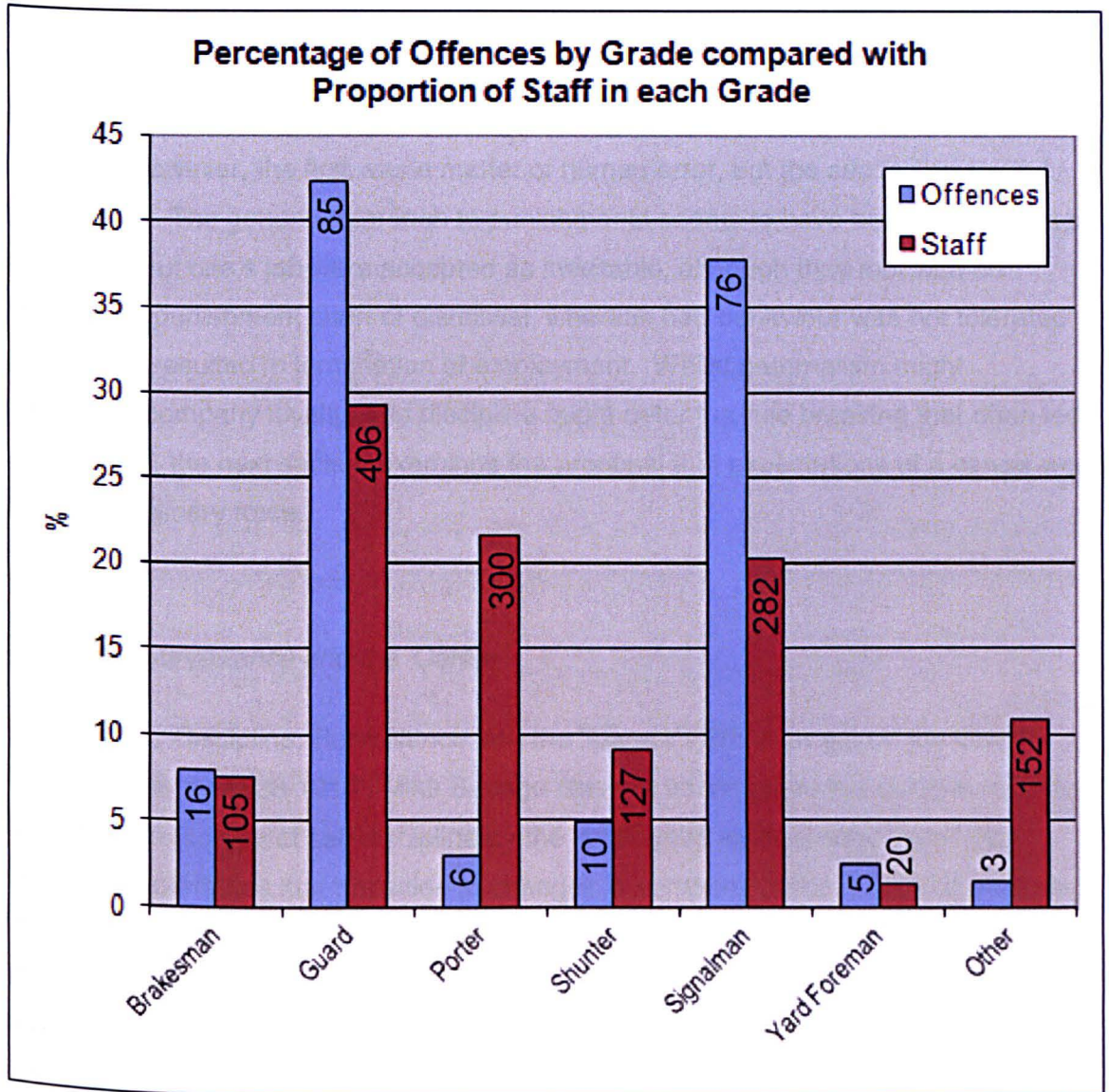
Sources: Offences (N=201): NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/99, etc
Staff (N=1392): Estimate based on 1913 BoT figures (PP 1914, LXXVII)
Note the number in each category is included on the bar of the chart

Occasionally the press would pick up on an alleged injustice. The *Glamorgan Free Press* quoting from the *Railway Review* highlighted the case of a porter from Ferndale who was falsely accused of withholding excess fares.[126] Despite the tolerance shown to Davies and Pulling, see table 6.3, a single offence could be used as an excuse to dismiss employees who were seen as a threat because of their trade union activities. This is discussed in chapter seven with particular regard to signalmen.

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[125] M THOMAS, DES Aug.12, 1869, NA RAIL 684/94
[126] GFP, Oct. 5, 1895, p6

Two of the most severe punishments short of dismissal were lengthy suspensions, but for completely different classes of offence. The first case involved a grave operating error, and the second serious ticket irregularities. In the first case a signalman had allowed two trains into one section, and the suspension was for 34 days. [127] In the second case involving a passenger guard the suspension was for 29 days, [128] but comparing the two incidents is difficult. The first incident could have had fatal consequences, whereas the latter would probably have deprived the company of revenue. However, the first was a matter of human error, but the second was wilful misconduct. The general approach to punishments seems to have been that mistakes in carrying out one's job were accepted as inevitable, although they met with an appropriate punishment short of dismissal, whereas bad behaviour was not tolerated and usually resulted in termination of employment. Whilst paternalism might encourage company loyalty, and discipline might deter the rule breaking that often led to accidents, the next section examines the proposal that expectations of a career were also a disciplinary force.

Discipline, Surveillance and the 'Career'

In his essay, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career": Employment on the Great Western Railway 1833-1914', Mike Savage charts a transition from a punitive method of staff control to one of self-discipline by the employees as they considered their career, and attributes that transition to changes in company policy. [129] Savage states that career and progress was 'predominant among non-manual workers'. [130] However this has not been detected among Taff Vale employees as has been discussed in chapter three. Progression of manual workers on the TVR is likely to be higher because of the relative proportions of non-manual and manual staff. These would roughly equate to the proportions of salaried and wages staff. For 1913 the ratio of salaried to wages staff was 1:11.2 on the TVR and 1:9.5 on the GWR. [131]

Savage refers to Bentham's *'Panopticon'*, noting Foucault's distinction between 'bodily control' and 'self-monitoring subjectivity'. [132] The dispersed nature of most railway staff, away from company factories and the larger stations, limited the former by hindering surveillance. For some grades the private spaces of the footplate and the signal box,

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[127] S ELLIS, DES 1864, NA RAIL 684/94
[128] T THOMAS, DES Feb, 1861, NA RAIL 684/94
[129] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"'
[130] 'Ibid', p65
[131] Calculated from BoT Returns, PP 1914, LXXVII
[132] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p67

allowed the development of an independent spirit. At one time the GWR appointed 'district superintendents' as a new layer of management; their role was to travel their districts unannounced to ensure that staff were kept on their toes. However, as Simmons recounts, the staff kept watch on the movements of the superintendents or auditors and used the electric telegraph to provide advance warning of their approach.[133] The Taff Vale was mainly a compact network, and whether by surveillance, a tip off or a 'lucky break' by management, two employees were caught playing games in signal boxes, one playing 'push-penny' and the other cards. In the first instance the man, who had four years service, was dismissed, probably for his unauthorised presence in the box; he was off-duty at the time. In the second case the man, who had ten years service, escaped dismissal.[134]

A former Taff Vale employee gave a further example of effective management surveillance from the post-Grouping period. One day when working a train from Pontypridd to Newport Docks his mate noticed that a pack of hounds had got on to the track ahead of them. He was able to stop his slow moving coal train in time, and once the line was clear continued on his way. He thought no more of the incident, and was apprehensive when called to the shed clerk's window the following day. But far from being stopped for an alleged offence, he was handed a letter of commendation from the Newport Superintendent for his prompt action. His response was, "Oh, they weren't long in finding out were they?" to which the clerk replied, "Oh well, it's the powers that be, they don't take long to find out where you were and all the rest of it".[135] Such is the ordered nature of railway work, with virtually every move planned and monitored in detail, happenings to trains on the track, good and bad, might more often than not be detected.

Although the management of a company such as the GWR might be interpreted as in transition from surveillance to self-motivated compliance, this is difficult to establish conclusively. The last narrative describes an event that occurred on the GWR after the TVR had been amalgamated with its larger neighbour. Whilst the actions of the driver attracted a commendation, an error or misdemeanour could also be detected and punished.[136] On the Taff Vale it is clear that the punitive approach to discipline was maintained alongside the welfarism. For this to be effective, detection of the offence is essential; whilst the effectiveness of welfarism depends on how much employees value the benefits put at risk by offending. Those who went on strike in 1900 were apparently

[133] H A Simmons, *Memoirs of a Station Master*, Edited by J Simmons (Bath, 1974, 1st pub. 1879) p33

[134]

[135] W HEWITH, DES May 9, 1910, NA RAIL 684/99; L BIRD, DES Mar.4, 1907, NA RAIL 684/99

[136] Cecil Williams, 'Footplatemen was their Title' in *Servants of Steam*, p45

Yard Foreman Thomas Brimmell was suspended without pay in 1927 for 'failing to send pilot engine to shed at end of work'. T BRIMMELL, DES Aug.25, 1874, NA RAIL 684/94

not initially deterred by loss of benefits, but essential to the eventual settlement alongside re-employment was the restoration of pension rights.[137] For the career to work as motivation towards good behaviour career prospects must be clear and bad behaviour must be seen as manifestly detrimental to those prospects.

Following Giddens, Savage draws the distinction between 'authorative' and 'allocative' aspects of control, both of which are essential to large organisations.[138] The authorative aspect was expressed through a rule book that contained instructions on how things were to be done safely, but which also laid down a strict behavioural code. The consequences of breaches of the rules have been described above along with the penalties that such breaches incurred. The allocative aspect was implemented in the compilation of timetables, staff schedules, and methods of working for the integration of the efforts of many individuals. Here too staff could come into conflict with their managers by action or inaction that disrupted those efforts. Examples given above included coming late on duty and incorrectly labelled wagons.

Savage claims that the GWR was one of the first companies to move away from recruitment and promotion based on patronage, and quotes C A Saunders, Company Secretary who retired in 1863 as stating in response to a presentation from the staff, that he never employed friends or relatives, and that he had '...an earnest desire to see those rise who by their qualifications, their talent, their industry and integrity are entitled to occupy better positions.'[139] This dictum, as has been illustrated in chapter three, was not followed on the TVR. Savage records that on the GWR porters could progress into any one of fifteen different grades, but this diversity was not available on the Taff Vale where in relation to the size of the company there were less than half the number of porters (see figure 1.6). The range of entry grades to the TVR is described in chapter three and from a sample of 156 entrants to the Traffic department at least 61 (39 percent) were found to have followed one of seven 'career' paths (see table 3.4). This contrasts with Savage's description of mobility on the GWR as being chaotic.[140] The difference may be explained by the relative size and geographical spread of the two organisations. Other TVR traffic staff did also progress, including to the position of Station Master, but via a wide range of unique pathways.[141]

In discussing the recruitment of footplate staff Savage refers back to the early history of the GWR where drivers were appointed from the ranks of engine fitters. He cites

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[137] See chapter seven
[138] A Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence* (Oxford, 1985), cited in Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p69
[139] NA Zlib 27/1 cited in Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p71
[140] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p72
[141] See chapter three, 'Clerks and Station Masters'

Bagwell in describing the competition between companies for the recruitment of footplate staff, and how men dismissed for bad conduct from one company could find employment with another.[142] By the late 1860s at least this does not seem to have been the case on the Taff Vale, and apart from the import of strikebreakers in 1900, all footplate staff encountered in the registers had started with the company. Later the general rule that employees of one railway company, other than senior officers, were not employed by another seems to have been maintained by the TVR,[143] with only a few known examples of previous employment, or subsequent employment, by another company.[144]

In investigating progression through the footplate grades Savage's findings for the GWR were that an individual's disciplinary record was not a hindrance, and, contrary to expectation, those who had recorded offences were on average promoted ahead of those who did not.[145] Taff Vale records are not precise enough to yield comparative data, particularly as the date of an offence was not always recorded in the precise manner of the Traffic Department. It appears that only 15 out of 140 drivers had offended before they were appointed, but it is possible that not all offences committed prior to the start of the compilation date of the registers in the early 1890s were carried forward. The overall average time, from entering service to appointment to a driving position of the 140 drivers, exactly matches the average of men believed to have offended before appointment to a driving position, viz. 16.4 years (see table 3.2). Savage expressed it thus, 'Rather than offences seen as a factor which might affect a man's career progress, it may have been that fines effectively seemed to wipe the slate clean, so to speak.'[146] In the case of Taff Vale drivers it was sometimes demotion and a period in a lower grade rather than a direct fine that inflicted the financial penalty.[147] In the limited number of incidences of demotion discovered locomotivemen (62 percent) were more likely to recover a career path than traffic staff (50 percent).[148] Of the 63 traffic department employees noted in table 3.4 as having had a 'career', twenty had offences recorded against them in the staff registers. These were principally cautions and reprimands, with a limited number of suspensions and fines. Thus it was not only footplate staff whose careers could recover from disciplinary episodes. But it is unclear as to whether the threat to career prospects actually influenced the

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[142] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p19 cited in Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p73
[143] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p119
[144] E.g. J Pulling employed by GWR and then the TVR, J PULLING, DES Aug.5, 1874, D Savage, correspondence (2004); Richard Cocks left the TVR to go to the Barry Railway, R COCKS, DES June, 1874, NA RAIL 1057/1857/2
[145] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', Table 5.1, p74
[146] 'Ibid' p74
[147] NA RAIL 264/96; 264/97; 684/95; 684/109; 684/111; 684/113
[148] Viz. five out of eight locomen and three out of six traffic staff; NA RAIL 684/94; 684/95; 684/96; 684/109; 684/110; 684/113, etc.

behaviour of TVR employees especially when misdemeanours would generally result in a setback to their career at worst, rather than its termination.

Savage observes that accompanying the surveillance there was a system of penalty payments. These were incurred when an employee was discovered to have broken a rule or otherwise misbehaved. Kingsford illustrates that this had originated in the early years of railways and comments that the fining system, which began then, continued until the close of the century.[149] It is true that the last recorded fine noted on the Taff Vale was in July 1896;[150] however pecuniary penalties persisted in two ways, the withholding or reduction of the annual or other bonus, and suspension from duty without pay. On the TVR a bonus was payable to signalmen and passenger drivers plus other drivers when driving passenger trains. Other grades could see their income reduced through suspension for any period from one day to one month, as discussed above.[151]

Savage quotes Ivatts' suggestion that the employee would pass on a fine to his wife and comments '...presumably still keeping his pocket money.'[152] However there was an alternative, members of the ASRS at Pontypridd could approach their local branch and apply for the pay lost through suspension to be made up by the branch. This is illustrated by the example of a driver who was suspended for one day because he had passed a signal at danger. His case was considered and payment was approved by the branch committee.[153] Robert Griffiths records that this was apparently standard practice with branches of ASLEF.[154] This would appear to lessen the deterrence of financial penalties.

Fines and other punishments were of course retrospective, and the concern for management was the prevention of future offences. For while deterrence could be claimed, was there a way of achieving efficiency and correct behaviour through the self-motivation of the employees? Savage proposes that after 1870 welfare provision for employees provided an additional incentive to the previous reliance on punitive measures described in the previous sections. Such benefits would be lost on leaving the company's employ and probably not achievable in other employment; so it is debatable as to whether this is Foucault's 'bodily control', out of fear, or 'self-monitoring subjectivity',[155] probably the former. As observed above with respect to the 1900 strike

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[149] Kingsford, *Victorian Railwaymen*, p22-3
[150] Ambrose PONTIN, DES 1860, NA RAIL 684/94
[151] Maximum discovered was 34 days, S ELLIS, DES 1864, NA RAIL 684/94
[152] I B Ivatts, *Railway Management at Stations* (London, 1861) p48 cited in Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p79
[153] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Aug.11, 1912
[154] Griffiths, *Driven by ideals*, p29
[155] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p67

there was concern that pension rights would be maintained. Whilst Howell emphasizes their role in maintaining discipline,[156] Bagwell describes company sponsored benefits as securing loyalty.[157] As quoted above, the General Manager of the Taff Vale considered them a means of maintaining harmony between men and their masters.[158]

But Savage's main argument is that the advent of the 'career' provided employers with a method of control that was much less heavy handed, which required less punitive action, and less opportunity for the self-aggrandizement of the individual employee. In reducing the need for direct surveillance it would also have been more cost effective. For the Great Western, alternative means of control had been sought from 1860 and that '...heavy use of punitive discipline, though still sanctioned by the rule books, was becoming a less frequent response.' So Savage proposes that it was from this time that the '...idea of the career as a project of the self began to be attractive'.[159] Comparable data on discipline for the Taff Vale has not been found for the years prior to 1881 for Locomotive Department staff and 1892 for Traffic staff, but from those dates until the end of its independent existence punitive action does not appear to diminish, although as has already been observed fines had ceased in 1896.

On the Taff Vale whilst a clear pattern of progression for footplate staff had emerged by at least 1865, it was not until a decade or so later that regular patterns became established for traffic staff. There was another way in which the career structure of the locomotivemen was emphasized. From the 1909 pay settlement it can been seen that they had much longer pay scales than Traffic staff, so that delays in their promotion did not mean stagnation in their pay.[160] Savage notes that it took until 1879 for the withdrawal of incremental increases to GWR footplate staff, '...such was the strategic power of footplate workers'.[161] The favoured position of their TVR contemporaries was such that incremental increases continued until the Grouping.

It was obvious that there would come a point beyond which an individual could not progress, for even if a lad clerk could rise to the position of general manager there was only one general manager but always many lad clerks; exceptionally GWR general manager Frank Potter (1912-19) had actually started as a lad clerk.[162] In 1860 the GWR had attempted to cut costs by the introduction of lad clerks, reducing the incidence of promoting wages staff to clerical positions, but giving hope of promotion to

[156] D Howell, *Respectable Radicals: Studies in the politics of railway trade unionism*, (Aldershot, 1999), p3
[157] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p22
[158] *RMag*, 'Ammon Beasley', p16
[159] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p79
[160] *Agreements as between TVR and employees*, pp21-24
[161] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p82
[162] Macdermot, *Great Western Railway*, pp236 & 242

the clerks. However, by 1870 45% of clerks earning an increase had still done so without changing job. This was against the object of linking increased earnings to increased responsibility.[163] Similar sentiments have not been detected on the Taff Vale where it was clear that clerks could look forward to many years of increases, as noted in chapter three.

Savage concludes that the development of the career on the Great Western was linked to managerial ideas that tied the career to discipline. Also that the career concept developed from the late 1870s depended on the employee's self-motivation and self-discipline. It had been developed following the realisation that surveillance on the GWR could be circumvented.[164] On the TVR, unlike on the GWR, the drivers and clerks still had lengthy pay scales when promotion was not available. For other grades the more restricted number of opportunities for promotion on the smaller company and the pattern of zero progression for the second half of the working life, see table 3.3, probably ensured that surveillance and punitive sanctions continued to be the rule on the TVR. The use of punishment along with 'paternalism' was also an attempt to counter the threat of trade unionism independent of any concept of career.[165] Despite the arrival of Ammon Beasley from the GWR no clear evidence has been detected that the TVR followed the approach of its larger neighbour.

Conclusion

Railways in the nineteenth century developed in an age of transition from the almost feudal rural relationships of landed gentry and tenants, when deference was the norm, [166] to a time of increasing trade union strength when the working man no longer trusted an employer's paternalism or welfare provision for his wellbeing. He had then taken his future into his own hands through collective action.

Paternalism on the Taff Vale followed the normal pattern of railway managements and their staff with the memorials to the Board, staff outings, company housing and a contributory accident fund. The stern patriarchal tone of the Rule Book was aimed at controlling behaviour as well as encouraging self respect and pride in the job. This is in accord with the commentary provided by McKenna, Fitzgerald and Bagwell. However, the extent of paternalistic provision was more restricted than the larger railway companies that encroached upon its area, notably the Great Western and LNWR.[167] It

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[163] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', p81, based on figures from NA RAIL 267/33, GWR, Staff Statistics. General Manager's Report 1870
[164] Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', pp88-89
[165] See chapter seven
[166] McKenna, *Railway Workers*, pp26-27
[167] Fitzgerald, *British Labour Management*, pp33-5 especially Table II p34

was not the paternalism of the factory town or urban village, or even a railway town, where the predominant employer might not only provide amenities to encourage deference, but also influence the politics and denominational allegiance of the employees and their families. It was not a paternalism based on an ideological approach as had motivated Robert Owen or George Cadbury nor the social conscience of Titus Salt. But it possibly reflected the ethos of the Victorian Christian gentleman described by Drummond, and illustrated by the patriarchal tone of the 1855 Rule Book.[168] However, from 1890 the welfare provision, although more generous than earlier years, should be regarded as corporate welfarism with specific managerial aims. Yet the generosity of spirit ascribed to Chairman A E Guest could well have been inspired by his father's paternalistic approach as an ironmaster in Merthyr.

Discipline was strict and many had some adverse entry against their name in the staff registers. The range of punishments appears generally to fit the offence, although with the clear divide between errors in carrying out the job, and the few instances of bad behaviour. It was coercive in nature with the aim of running a safe, efficient and socially acceptable railway, but in accordance with the rules. Even when trade union activists were dismissed it was because they had committed an offence; although another individual might have received a less severe punishment.[169] But as Strangleman following Savage records, paternalism, career structures and company loyalty can also be seen as part of a control mechanism, keeping the workforce compliant through the threat of what would be lost if faced with dismissal.[170] However Savage's proposal that the career structure replaced coercive punishment is not proven for the Taff Vale.[171]

Paternalistic actions may have reinforced a sense of community, but the anti-trade union aim of the policy from the 1890s was ineffective. The next chapter describes the deterioration of industrial relations on the TVR and the increasing involvement of trade unions.

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[168]
[169] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p189
[170] See chapter seven
[171] Strangleman, *Work Identity at the End of the Line?*, pp24-25
Savage, 'Discipline, Surveillance and the "Career"', pp88-89

Section 3: Management versus Workers

Chapter 7 Industrial Action on the Taff Vale

Introduction

If the name 'Taff Vale' is known at all, it is through the Law Lords' ruling that a trade union could be sued in its own name. A century later that judgement is still used in court cases and quoted in the House of Lords.[1] The facts of this 1900 case have been examined, and reiterated over the years, and the purpose of this chapter is not to repeat that process, but to set the dispute in the context of three other significant strikes on the TVR, viz. 1890, 1895 and 1911.

The disputes are set against a background of industrial expansion and increased competition. This was despite uneasy industrial relations in the dominant coal industry. As public companies the railways were owned by their shareholders and the unswerving aim of directors and general managers was the maintenance of dividends, often at the expense of the employees. From the 1870s railwaymen were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with their pay and conditions. The tradition of the men presenting 'memorials' to directors (see chapter six) was often not meeting the men's aspirations, whilst trade union membership was increasing.

This chapter examines each of the strikes and the industrial relations scene during the intervening years. The main focus is on the attitudes of the men, managements and Valleys' communities towards trades unions and industrial disputes. Each of these three groups had their spokesmen, sometimes active in more than one episode, and their involvement and interactions have been compared and contrasted. The key issues are union recognition, conciliation, strike-breakers and the conduct of the workmen. These are considered to show that senior management was not only out of step with its workforce, but also with wider society. The largely non-militant workmen wished to avoid industrial action by conciliation, but they were disappointed by the form of conciliation eventually obtained. When strikes did happen solidarity was a high virtue and the bad behaviour that did occur was prompted by strike breaking.

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[1] In the High Court Of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, 1998 M No 1180, *Between: Monsanto Plc, Plaintiff, And, 1. Rowan Tilly,...Defendants, And* 1998 M No 851 *Between: Monsanto Plc, Plaintiff, And, 1. Rowan Tilly,... Defendants, Plaintiff's Skeleton Argument*, For Hearing on 19 April 1999, http://www.fraw.org.uk/gs/monskel.txt, (accessed 15/12/08); House of Lords, Hansard, 9 Jun 2008: Column 415, Lord Neill of Bladen, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80609-0008.htm, (accessed 15/12/08)

1890

The origins of this strike go back to December 1889 when the ASRS sent its 'national memorial' to the directors of railway companies across Britain. The key aims were the introduction of a guaranteed week, a reduction in the working day to a maximum of ten hours, with eight hours for shunters and signalmen in busy yards; a fixed minimum interval of nine hours between shifts, and an improved overtime rate of time and a quarter. Sunday work was to be paid at time and a half. When the Aberdare Branch of the ASRS met for their regular meeting at the Castle Coffee Tavern on April 27, 1890 there was a large attendance, including members from Penrhiwceiber and other branches, to receive reports from the GWR and TVR delegates on responses to the 'national memorial'.[2] The guaranteed week had already being conceded by the Taff Vale, but not by the Rhymney. When the TVR management had received the memorial from the ASRS, they asked to meet with their own men. The men's delegate then met the directors, who promised sympathetic consideration. A mass meeting of TVR, RR and BR men that had met on the same day was told that the Rhymney and the Barry had not conceded their demands. The meeting unanimously supported a resolution that the ASRS executive offer to accept arbitration. In respect of outstanding issues the TVR directors were to be given until June 11, and if there was no reply, or the reply did not match the national memorial, notices were to be tendered. Alderman D Jones (Cardiff) was to be suggested as arbitrator.

At the end of June, on Sunday the 29th, workmen from the TVR, RR and BR met in Cardiff to consider the next steps in their campaign. At that stage it was only RR and Barry men that were ready to give in their notice, but it was resolved that the TVR men 'be called upon to render them support'.[3] By the following Wednesday morning all but four men on the Rhymney and one driver on the Barry had signed their notices and placed them in the hands of the General Secretary. Up to that point the TVR had made the most concessions with the offer of a ten hour day, 60 hour week (before overtime), and an eight hour Sunday paid at time and a quarter, whilst the RR had only offered to reduce the working day from twelve to eleven hours. The Barry had made no concessions.[4] The TVR men were to be balloted on their company's offer. At this stage the dispute affected engine drivers, firemen, brakesmen and guards; conspicuous by their absence were the signalmen.

The minute book of the Llantrisant Branch of the ASRS survives for the period of the 1890 Strike, and unrest was first noted in the minutes of the monthly meeting held on

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2 *MEx*, May 3, 1890, p6
3 *Ibid*, July 5, 1890, p3
4 *Ibid*

Sunday, July 6, when a resolution was passed 'that none of the members of the branch should go to work on the Rhymney Rly or the Barry Dock Rly should there be a dispute with the above companies.'[5] A similar Resolution not to handle diverted traffic, in support of the Barry men was passed at Tondu a week later. It declared that if the GWR took action against their men, they would strike until the men were reinstated.[6] Such were the feelings of solidarity across South Wales. At their next monthly meeting, on August 3, the secretary of the Llantrisant branch could record that; 'It was unanimously resolved to support the Rhymney, Taff Vale, and Barry Dock Rly men in their struggle for reduced hours of Labour, etc.'[7]

On the second of August the main news page of the *Merthyr Express* carried the headlines; 'The Labour Crisis: Threatened Great Strike of Railway Men and Dockmen: Possible Suspension of Traffic in South Wales...'[8]. The prospect of the complete stoppage of the three main coal carrying railways coupled with an impending dock strike gave genuine and grave concern across the communities of Glamorgan.[9] Ben Tillett, the militant dockworkers' leader, fresh from success in the London Dock Strike the previous year was present in Cardiff to organize his members. He took the opportunity to address a large meeting of railwaymen exhorting them to stick to their demands, and promised support from the dockers. He mentioned the death toll among platelayers, which he said was due to excessive hours, and claimed that an eight-hour day would create more jobs and no 'blacklegs' through encouraging union membership. Here again the emphasis was on solidarity, with the promise that the dockers would not 'load one ton of coal brought down by "blacklegs"', and possibly his reference to the platelayers, who were not party to the current dispute, was prompted by a suggestion that they were to be trained to work in signal boxes.[10]

In a meeting of railwaymen at Merthyr, mention was made of the 1887 strike of enginemen on the Midland Railway which had been broken by the import of men from other companies.[11] The strike had been sparked by the withdrawal of the guaranteed week and the implication that the men were using it to shirk. The strike was technically unofficial, although the Executive Committee (EC) of the ASRS was supportive. At the following AGM, ironically, it was the Cardiff delegate who moved that the protection grant, paid to the men who were not reinstated, was a violation of the rules. This was

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[5] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1, Mins. July 6, 1890
[6] *MEx*, July 19, 1890, p3
[7] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1, Mins. Aug.3, 1890
[8] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p3
[9] *Ibid*
[10] *Ibid*
[11] *Ibid*

legally correct, but the motion was defeated.[12] However, the speaker at Merthyr attributed the failure of the MR strike to 'tittle-tattle' as inspectors weakened the men's resolve through miss-reporting who had given notice. This was a tactic to be watched for, and which he regarded as intimidation.[13] In the event it was reported at the TVR Board meeting of July 24 that some 1,082 notices to 'terminate their contract of service within fourteen days' had been received from trainmen and signalmen.[14] The newspaper report also drew attention to the fact that the ASRS circular setting out the men's demands had omitted any reference to the signalmen, although the 1,082 figure had included some 245.[15] These figures represent a very high proportion for those grades, as the total in 1883 was less than 1,000.[16]

It was clear from press reports and the editorials that both the *Merthyr Express* and the general public were supportive of the railwaymen and their campaign, with much emphasis being placed on the situation where the men were unable to relax on a Sunday when they could be called to take duty without notice. In the days immediately prior to the cessation of work, a reporter toured the Taff and Rhondda Valleys interviewing TVR employees. In conversation with one long serving workman he asked whether the hostility between the directors and employees was a longstanding one, to which the reply was 'No…only since last Friday' when the company had started deducting money from the wages of men who had worked less than 60 hours.[17] Previously the men would have received a full week's pay irrespective of the amount of time worked over a full week. Besides the Sunday issue a similar situation could also occur during the week. He describes it as follows:

> I have seen me – week in, week out – with scarcely a moment to call my own, until my home was little better than a sleeping kennel for me, and all the happiness of domestic life was denied me. A fellow doesn't care to go home with the knowledge that he has to turn out again directly, and consequently many men go to the nearest pub. instead.[18]

However, it was generally a dispute without rancour between the men and their local managers, and a meeting at Merthyr during the strike expressed sympathy for Goods Agent Clay and Locomotive Inspector Thomas Price. But their anger was reserved for an engine driver, who despite having handed in his notice still reported for duty.[19]

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[12] Bagwell, *Railwaymen* pp129-30
[13] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p3
[14] NA RAIL 684/10 Min.294, July 24, 1890
[15] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p3
[16] PP 1884, LXX
[17] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p3
[18] *Ibid*
[19] *Ibid*, Aug.9, 1890, p3

A request for the directors to receive ASRS General Secretary Edward Harford, and the men's suggestion of arbitration, both met with a blank refusal.[20] By August 6, when the men's notices expired, there was no hope of a settlement. The editor of the *Merthyr Express* had no doubt as to where the blame lay, declaring that 'all sections of the community unite in condemnation of the action of the directors'.[21] The position of the four boards was not entirely consistent, as Alcock records that Harford had met the directors of the Rhymney and its General Manager, Cornelius Lundie. But failing overall agreement the Rhymney fell in line with its larger competitors, and the directors '...decided to stand or fall together'.[22]

The strike threat had already had worldwide effects, with overseas coal depots such as that in Gibraltar overflowing, which in turn had stopped further shipments affecting the business of the shipowners.[23] Collieries were stockpiling coal where they could, but already coal prices were rising and the pits would soon be at a standstill. The price of railway shares were falling, except for the Rhymney.[24] The railway managements remained intransigent with striking Rhymney employees evicted from their company owned houses at Taff's Well,[25] and notices to quit issued to Taff Vale employees at Treherbert.[26] This latter threat was never carried out as can be seen from table 5.3b. Advertisements were placed in newspapers for men to replace the strikers, and by the Friday before the strike was to begin 'hundreds of applications for employment'[27] had been received from railwaymen across the country. This possibly encouraged the intransigence of the directors. The enthusiasm on the part of men from other companies to become strikebreakers, was demonstrated in 1890, 1895 and 1900, and prompts the question as to what encouraged them to leave their current employer to travel to a different part of Britain, to unfamiliar and potentially hostile localities. Some may have been unemployed, whilst others may have been attracted by higher wages. The promised rates of pay were included in the newspaper advertisements. During the 1890 strike Harford claimed that the companies were offering better pay and conditions than that sought by their current employees. He commented that '[i]f the directors could offer these wages to men whom they knew nothing of, why could they not give

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[20] *Ibid*
[21] *Ibid*
[22] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p238
[23] Gibraltar undoubtedly serviced naval ships, but no reference has been noted of implications for the Royal Navy until the National Strike of 1911
[24] *MEx*, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[25] *Ibid*
[26] *Ibid*, Aug.16, 1890, p8
[27] *Ibid*, Aug.9, 1890, p3

the same wages to men of established character, who had been in their employ for over 20 or 30 years?'[28]

Employers were often ready to encourage or even organize strikebreakers who could be seen to be fighting a common enemy. During the Midland Railway dispute of 1887 the LNWR had provided 'blackleg' labour to break the strike.[29] Although not proven in the case of the strikes affecting the Taff Vale, at mass meetings organized by the ASRS prior to the 1890 strike rumours were reported that the LNWR were preparing to send 100 drivers.[30] The evidence for potential LNWR involvement came from Mr Watson, General Secretary of the General Railway Workers Union (GRWU). Speaking in Merthyr on July 26 he said that he had received a letter from Crewe

> '...stating that certain persons had received orders to proceed to Wales, having heard that there was going to be a strike. He wrote back to say that there was no such thing pending. That morning he had heard of the pending strike, and he had written to say that if any men left Crewe it should only be to work on the bona fide system of the London and North Western Railway Company.'[31]

At Aberdare Harford expressed his previously privately held view that given the fierce competition between the Barry and the Taff Vale the companies had sought to maintain their income by reductions in wages. He gave an example of brakesmen who had been earning 19s per week, now 'being sent home with 12s.'[32] Presumably this reflects the situation of the Rhondda railwayman whose critique of the deteriorating men-management relations is included above. Former ASRS General Secretary, F W Evans, had made the same point prior to the start of the strike, stating that the rate war between the Barry and the Taff Vale had 'sacrificed 25 per cent of their earning power in order to cut the throat of a rival company', but the Taff Vale directors were unwilling to make a minor adjustment in rates to 'meet the just and reasonable demands of the men'.[33] In his speech Harford claimed that 93 percent of the men involved in the dispute were members of the ASRS, mocking the remainder who 'would not' see the advantage of belonging.[34]

In contrast to those who might come to break the strike, there were other railwaymen, sent to the area by the GWR to assist with diverted traffic, who met with the men in dispute to assure them that they would do nothing to break the strike.[35] The local

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[28] *Ibid*, Aug.16, 1890, p8
[29] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p130
[30] *MEx*, Aug.2, 1890, p3
[31] *Ibid*; Alderman considered that there was no evidence of LNWR involvement, see Alderman, *Railway Interest*, p134
[32] *MEx*, Aug.16, 1890, p8
[33] *Ibid*, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[34] *Ibid*, Aug.16, 1890, p8
[35] *Ibid*

leadership of the GRWU also warned their members that they would face expulsion if they were found to be 'blacklegging'.[36] Men employed by companies unaffected by the proposed action pledged their wholehearted support.[37] The potential strikers were prepared, with quoted union reserves of between £80,000 and £100,000 available for strike pay, and this was even offered to non-union members who had given notice. Even then not all of the local ASRS leaders were in wholeheartedly in favour of a strike. F W Evans, urged the men not to deploy such a 'terrible weapon', expressing his own personal piety by saying that 'he prayed to God to avoid a conflict'.[38]

D A Thomas, Liberal, the senior MP for Merthyr, wrote to local union leaders on at least two occasions to offer support and advice to the railwaymen. In the first, read to a mass meeting of the men on the eve of the strike, he counsels:

> Continue to be careful not to alienate public sympathy; avoid everything in the nature of strong or exasperating language – a good cause doesn't need it; do not close the door to mediation; and if strike there must needs be, remember that union is strength and stick loyally to one another like men.[39]

The first letter was written to apologize for his being unable to attend the meeting, but by the time of the second letter addressed to Mr Harford, the strike was underway and he was in Cardiff, where the two men met. Thomas expressed his disapproval of a resolution, passed by the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce in support of the directors' refusal to meet with Harford. He praised the men for their moderation in pursuing their 'modest' claims, and expressed the public's amazement at the directors' attitude. This was in contrast to the South Wales coalowners, who readily met with the men's accredited representatives. The men's appreciation was expressed in a letter from the men at Aberdare, which referred to his continuing support for their campaign since its inception.[40] Thomas spoke of his concern that the railwaymen's just claims could be confused in the mind of the public with other less clear-cut industrial disputes; presumably one of those was that involving the dock workers. Thomas's own colliery was not affected by the dispute, as it was served by the GWR, but he was '...none the less anxious that some means should be found of averting what must have a disastrous effect upon the trade of the district for a long time to come.'[41]

It is perhaps ironic that within a year Thomas would himself be a director of the TVR, although he had left the board before the 1900 Strike, when the refusal of the Taff Vale directors to hold face to face meetings with the men's representative would again delay

[36] Ibid, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[37] Ibid, Aug.16, 1890, p3
[38] Ibid, Aug.9, 1890, p3
[39] Ibid
[40] Ibid, Aug.16, 1890, p8
[41] Ibid, Aug.9, 1890, p3

the settlement of a crippling dispute.[42] Maybe his stance on labour issues changed with age, for whilst he again urged a conciliatory approach in 1900, by 1910 in the year when he left Parliament, having represented Cardiff for the final year, he proved to be a hard-line inflexible employer when the miners of his own Cambrian collieries struck for improved conditions. However Page Arnot quoting Sir Arthur Markham MP claimed that the dispute might have been settled earlier if Thomas had not been dissuaded by the 'South Wales Coal Owners' from referring it to arbitration.[43] On the Thursday that agreement was to be reached, D A Thomas called in on the strike headquarters in Aberdare and was greeted by cheers. In his address to the assembled strikers, he made plain his disagreement with the TVR directors in not seeing Mr Harford 'in the first instance', but spoke favourably of Mr Inskip, who he had always found to be 'an honourable and upright man'.[44]

Another major coalowner, Sir W T Lewis, was actively involved in both the 1890 and 1900 disputes. Besides being a coalowner in his own right he also managed the Bute Estates that owned the docks at Cardiff through which much of the coal conveyed by the railways in dispute was exported. The railway strike also coincided with threatened regional action by dockworkers including those employed by Lewis. In connection with Docks dispute, the Bute Trustees met on Saturday August 9, at which meeting Lewis had his proposed Wages Board accepted. He had rejected a copy of the coal industry's Sliding-scale committee, and advocated a board that would consist of representatives of employers and employees. However, he made no mention of trade unions. On the same day, at a special meeting, the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce was considering proposals for conciliation boards to settle disputes, and in the following week a committee met to consider the pursuit of this aim.[45] In 1900 Lewis could focus more on the railway strike and seeing the income of the Bute Estates under grave threat was again pressing for conciliation boards. His enthusiasm for such boards appears to contradict his reputation, along with that of Ammon Beasley, for being 'unscrupulous in their dealings with labour disputes'.[46]

In 1890 there is little evidence of violence having been used by either the strikers or the authorities. Two 'blacklegs' from Lincolnshire were said to have been 'sent back by the next train', but the report does not mention actual physical violence.[47] And although anger was expressed against TVR men who turned up for work, it appears that verbal persuasion was enough to stop further strike breaking. They were then welcomed

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[42] He returned to the Board later, sitting from 1909 to 1916, NA RAIL 1057/1857/2.
[43]
[44] Arnot, *South Wales Miners*, p307n
[45] *MEx*, Aug.23, 1890, p3
[46] *Ibid*, Aug.16, 1890, p3
[47] Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p195
MEx, Aug.16, 1890, p8

back into the fold, having been 'questioned and promised not to do it again'.[48] During the dispute there was sympathetic support from miners, and one of their leaders, a county councilor, suggested that the threatened deployment of police would provoke disorder. The concern was supported by a rumour that colliers would assist in stopping trains, which was 'received with concern by all'.[49] Miners' leader William Abraham (Mabon) called for restraint, and proposed a mass sympathy meeting on the following Saturday if no settlement had been reached.[50] The impression given was that if left to their own devices the railwaymen would not resort to violence, but that their collier supporters might not be so restrained. The strike of 1900 was to prove to be different.

Key to the settlement of the dispute was that each side had complete trust in their representatives. Whilst in the earlier attempts of Mr Harford to meet with the railway directors the intention was for him to accompany the employees' representatives, the final settlement was to be negotiated between Harford and Inskip alone. The men empowered Harford to represent them on Monday evening August 11. Likewise the committee of directors had to have trust in James Inskip to represent their companies' interests, but agreement was not reached until the Thursday morning. Inskip had shown himself to be more conciliatory in spirit, having already met Harford unofficially, both individually and with seven of the men's representatives. This spirit had been detected in his speech to the TVR shareholders on the eve of the strike, and praised by the editor of the *Merthyr Express* after agreement had been reached. As recalled in the same editorial Harford and the ASRS EC did not always have the trust of their members. It included a report of the mass meeting when an agreed position approved by the executive had been rejected, although by the next day Harford had been given the authority to speak for them.[51] However, after the strike he was subject to criticism for not achieving a more advantageous settlement.[52]

During the strike the clergy of the churches and chapels of the Valleys expressed their concern for the wellbeing of their flocks and generally they supported the men. The local vicar visited the strike headquarters in the Aberdare Valley to express sympathy at the lack of a settlement. Ministers gave outspoken sermons proclaiming the shared interests of capital and labour, in the Liberal Nonconformist tradition.[53] Whilst many

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[48]
[49] *MEx*, Aug.16, 1890, p3
[50] *Ibid*, p8
[51] *Ibid*
[52] *Ibid*, p4
[53] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1, Mins. Oct.28, 1890
   MEx, Aug.16, 1890, pp3&8

clergy were becoming more political they did not appear to be so involved with later disputes.[54]

The Signalmen's Movement 1890 to 1900

Both at the inception of the National Movement at the end of 1889, and in the initial settlement of the strike, the signalmen were not specifically included. Although they had been active participants in the withdrawal of labour they were not content with the clause in the settlement covering their hours of duty. Further negotiations had to be held to achieve an acceptable improvement. Inskip and Harford met again on the Saturday along with Richard Richards, the signalmen's secretary. The men's concerns were examined, a number of options based on the experience of other companies were considered and a joint statement was prepared to be put before the men. Taff Vale and Barry signalmen met on Sunday in Pontypridd to hear Mr Harford, and after an extended debate a resolution was prepared and passed by the assembled workers. The aim was to amend a clause from the original settlement to make it clear that Sunday was not to be counted as part of the working week. The resolution gave Harford authority to negotiate with Mr Inskip, and gave them fourteen days in which to reach an agreement.[55] One week later a prearranged mass meeting in Cardiff heard that a settlement had been reached, and delegates reported back to a meeting of TVR men at Aberdare on the Monday. That gathering congratulated the signalmen, but expressed concern at violations of the new agreement affecting other grades. After a discussion the meeting appointed a local committee to which cases could be reported. The local committee was to report serious breaches to a central committee at Cardiff.[56]

During the continual industrial unrest on the railways of Britain the signalmen seemed to have had the greatest difficulty in achieving improved conditions of service. Whilst various grades had their campaigns for improvements covered in the local press throughout the 1890s, it is the signalmen who feature most often. The TVR signalmen had recently been awarded a fifteen per cent pay rise, but this was presumed to be in lieu of their aim of a ten-hour day.[57] The scale of this pay rise gives some indication as to extent of the directors' opposition to limiting their hours on duty. During 1890-91 Parliament debated the matter and in February 1891 a Select Committee was appointed to consider the working conditions of railway servants including signalmen.

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[54] See chapter eight
[55] MEx, Aug.30, 1890, p3
[56] Ibid, Sept. 6, 1890, p6; such 'vigilance' committees were to continue and increase after the 1900 and 1911 Strikes
[57] MEx, March 8, 1890, p5

The evidence given revealed a picture of excessive hours on duty for minimal pay.[58] The eventual outcome of the select committee was the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, which did little more than provide a formalized way for railwaymen to bring complaints of excessive hours to the BoT, either directly, or through a trade union.[59]

The continuing campaign was illustrated by a mass meeting of TVR signalmen held on Sunday, January 20, 1895 at Coombes' Coffee Tavern, Pontypridd, to consider the signalmen's national movement. Apparently the meeting was well attended with men from all parts of the system. It was reported that every signalman had signed the 'memorials' and a new secretary was appointed to carry the movement to a successful conclusion. He was also instructed to '...write to the management requesting an interview with the board in support of the memorials'.[60] Four signalmen, including John Ewington, were appointed to approach the directors. The meeting expressed regret that another member had been sacked, despite his long service, for what was his first offence.[61] This dismissal should be compared with the extensive disciplinary records detailed in chapter six. In fact, of the seven men named in the article three either had or were to lose their jobs, with the clear suspicion that they had been victimised for their trade union activities. Another signalman and activist, Moses Jones, lost his job after the 1900 dispute as is described below. Ewington was later selected as an inter-company delegate to a signalmen's conference in Birmingham.[62] Their discontent continued to form one of the key grievances in 1900, before Ewington's own position and the issue of union recognition came to dominate the dispute.

1895

Whilst the signalmen's agitation continued three other groups of workers clashed with the TVR. In May 1895 strike threats came from the members of two unions, the Amalgamated and Associated Societies. The ASRS protests, in the form of mass meetings, were prompted by the dismissal of 120 men, whilst 238 were working in excess of 60 hours. A resolution passed by the men on this occasion persuaded the Board to reinstate those dismissed.[63] Also in May the TVR management was seeking to impose an alternative method of payment on the drivers by placing them on day-to-day or fortnightly contracts, and issued dismissal notices to eleven ASLEF members.

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[58] PP1890-1, Vol. XVI, *Select Committee on Railway Servants (Hours of Labour)*
[59] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p171
[60] *GFP*, Jan. 26, 1895, p3
[61] *Ibid*
[62] *RRvw*, June 21, 1895, p4
[63] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p209; NA RAIL 684/10, Min.1532, May.14, 1895; NA RAIL 684/14, Min.1003, May 28,1895

The men sought approval from their union to strike, but the EC was not satisfied that the Cardiff branch had a mandate from its membership for such action. The EC demanded reinstatement by the company, but whilst waiting for a satisfactory reply the men took unofficial action. They were back on their old conditions by the end of July, and the Society paid 'certain expenses incurred during the dispute'.[64] These appear to have been cost cutting exercises arising 'in consequence of the depression in trade', which also saw the prohibition of weekend working at the company's workshops from April to July.[65]

In August fitters employed by the Taff Vale at its West Yard Works and at engine sheds across the network began a five weeks' strike in protest against new piecework rates. These had not been negotiated with the ASE to which most of the men belonged.[66] At the commencement of the strike at least two fitters were dismissed on August 21 for going on strike;[67] presumably they had not given sufficient notice. To counter the men's action the company imported men from the Midlands and the North of England as strikebreakers.[68] As the strike continued the *Railway Review* could report that only three or four fitters had not struck and they now considered themselves locked out. The main obstacle to progress was that neither Locomotive Superintendent Riches nor General Manager Beasley would meet the men's representative. The writer argued that Riches and Beasley were representatives of shareholders as Jones (ASE) was of the men and argued that it was '...fully time the men resented such treatment and put down once and for ever such autocratic management.'[69] The following week's issue could not report any progress and included accounts of 'vindictive' action against staff with dismissals and other harsh punishments.[70]

A five-week strike of a limited group of workers had been coped with by the introduction of strikebreakers from across the country, and the relocation of non-striking workers. However, the introduction of blackleg labour was not altogether successful as the Locomotive Superintendent had to write to the Board for authority to engage men as required to clear the arrears of maintenance.[71]

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[64] Raynes, *Engines and Men*, p107

[65] NA RAIL 684/22, Min.954, Apr.30, 1895; Min.1017, July 9,1895

[66] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p209

[67] Albert STROUD, DES Oct.24, 1894 & Robert SNOW, DES Dec.1, 1890, NA RAIL 684/110

[68] NA RAIL 1057/2697, *Recruitment of fitters from the North and Midlands to replace men who had left owing to dispute with the Company: 1895-6*

[69] RRvw, Sep.13, 1895, p4; Beasley's attitude was to be crucial in 1900, and Riches had lost his seat as a Tory councillor in Cardiff in the previous March, see chapter six

[70] *Ibid*, Sep.20, 1895, p4

[71] NA RAIL 684/23, Min.142, Mar.17, 1896

Immediately following the strike the representative of the men who had downed tools wrote to the board to request that they receive a deputation.[72] It was left to the chairman to reply, but this was apparently not in the affirmative, as over the next three months various approaches were made to the Locomotive sub-committee by men seeking re-engagement. Despite the support of Lord Windsor, the Mayor of Cardiff, who wrote on behalf of striking fitters, more often than not they were refused.[73] Any exceptions were usually where vacancies existed. Where a man was taken back it might be on new conditions, and in one case at a completely different location.[74]

The course of the 1900 Strike[75]

In 1898 the second major Miners' strike of the decade caused the railway companies to withdraw the guaranteed week which was permitted under the 1890 settlement. On Sunday, October 9, 1898, the first of five mass meetings was held in Cardiff protesting against TVR tardiness in restoring it. Following the series of meetings the men called a further meeting for November 6 to consider strike action, but that meeting did not proceed with the strike threat at the request of ASRS General Secretary Richard Bell. The guaranteed week was restored as from October 24. The next eleven months saw quietude among south Wales railwaymen which was to be disturbed by an open letter to the *Railway Review* published on September 1. The correspondent, 'Unionist', sought to challenge prevailing attitudes, particularly among signalmen in letting the points won in 1890 be neglected.[76] Three weeks later at the Pontypridd Empire on September 24 the signalmen of the Taff Vale agreed on a five point programme to be presented to the company.[77] As Alcock commented '...the Taff Vale were confronted once again with the agreement of 1890, which had been signed by Inskip, Harford, and Richards, the signalmen's delegate.' This was printed in full following the open letter.[78]

By October a south Wales all-grades committee had been formed from employees of the Taff Vale, Rhymney, Barry and Cardiff Railways, but a ballot for strike action did not reach the necessary 90 percent in favour. The Barry and Rhymney men then met to formulate their own programme, although a fortnight later a mass all-grades meeting at

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[72] Ibid, Min.15, Oct.1, 1895
[73] Ibid, Min.83, Dec 12, 1895
[74] Ibid, Min.84, Dec 30, 1895, & Min.94, Jan 7, 1896
[75] This section formed part of a paper presented at the 5th Railway History Congress, Palma de Mallorca, October 14-16, 2009, and which will be published in a collection of papers from the Congress by the Spanish Railway History Foundation
[76] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, pp306-7
[77] *PObs*, Sept. 30, 1899, p[3]
[78] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, pp306-7

Pontypridd confirmed their support for the joint committee, and Richard Bell published a rallying call in the *Railway Review*.[79]

In a more local initiative Taff Vale signalman and local organizer, Moses Jones, wrote to the TVR directors on November 28, asking them to receive a deputation. However, it was not until December 9 that they replied declining to see the men. Also in December the EC of the ASRS offered arbitration to the four companies, but failing their acceptance, they would ballot for a strike. As the response by the end of the year amounted to no more than formal acknowledgements a mass meeting was called for January 14, 1900 at the Park Hall, Cardiff, which overwhelmingly agreed that if companies did not agree to receive their representative within seven days the men were to hand in their notices.[80] A week later a meeting of Taff railwaymen at Aberdare confirmed their support for the Cardiff resolution. As Bagwell describes it, the 'tactical moment' came after the mass meeting of Sunday, January 28, when Richard Bell could report that the required 90 percent plus approval for strike action had been received from the men of all four companies. At this point Bell advised that they should give the companies 'seven to ten days' to change their minds.[81] The momentum with regard to the TVR was then lost for some months. Although, the Barry, Rhymney, and Cardiff directors did agree to see deputations during February and made significant concessions after Bell had advised them of the 'men's impatience'. But when Ammon Beasley of the Taff Vale met with deputations of signalmen, brakesmen and guards on February 9, only minimal concessions were made. In March Ewington was again part of a deputation seen by the directors, also without success. On March 11, despite Bell giving a fighting speech in Cardiff to a mass meeting of 2,000, the proposed ballot received insufficient support.[82]

On Saturday, April 28, signalman Ewington was ordered to move to Treherbert from Pontycynon on promotion, a move he declined due to family circumstances. Just under a fortnight later on Thursday, May 10 he was taken seriously ill with glandular fever and was not fit to return to work until July. In the meantime representatives of various grades continued to meet with TVR managers but without satisfaction. On Tuesday, July 24, when Ewington was due to return to work, he found that his position at Pontycynon had been filled on a permanent basis. He was offered a post at Llwynypia in the Rhondda, which would require him to move house.[83] His colleagues decided that he should decline the offer. On the following Sunday, July 29, a mass

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[79] *Ibid*, p308
[80] *MEx*, Jan.27, 1900; Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p211
[81] *Ibid*
[82] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p308
[83] *Ibid*, p309-10; The move involved four zones see chapter three.

meeting of signalmen, guards, brakesmen and shunters at Pontypridd gathered to consider the next steps to be taken in pursuance of their pay claim. Before considering the intended business Ewington was asked to put his case to the meeting. It was resolved to press for Ewington's reinstatement to his original position, with the company given seven days to respond. If the response was not positive, notices were to be signed and submitted before August 6.[84] With no positive response from the company, over 300 signalmen gave notice effective from midnight August 19. But on the same day a letter from ASRS district organizer James Holmes was published in the *South Wales Daily News* advising the men to postpone submitting their notices until August 13. Holmes was a 'militant socialist', and when faced with Beasley's intransigence, he was keen to strike a blow for Socialism.[85] This he confirmed by the sentence, 'There is nothing I would like better than to measure swords with this Taff Vale Railway dictator', intended for an article in the *Railway Review*. It was deleted by the editor.[86]

On Saturday, August 11, Ewington, plus two supporters, met with three directors, who offered him the post of relief signalman at Pontycynon, which would allegedly save him from moving house; his supporters expressed the opinion that he should accept.[87] The next day there was a mass meeting at St Andrew's Hall, Cardiff to receive reports on correspondence with the TVR management, and an update on the Ewington case. With respect to the latter it was again resolved that the men would not be satisfied until the signalman was 'reinstated at Pontycynon', i.e. his original post. It was reported at the meeting that the majority of platelayers had been awarded a pay rise.[88] The accessibility of the TVR Board to its staff was generally maintained throughout the period of the strike threat, as if to reinforce the message that this was the way industrial relations had to be conducted. On the Tuesday, August 14, a deputation of signalmen was allowed to see the directors, followed by the locomen on the next day.[89]

Arbitration was proposed on the Wednesday by the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce at an interview with James Holmes, when they suggested that an acceptable arbitrator be appointed. By the Thursday approximately 800 Taff Vale men had handed in their

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[84] *PObs*, Aug.4, 1900, p[4]
[85] H A Clegg, A Fox, A F Thompson, *A History of British Trade Unions since 1889, Vol 1, 1889-1910* (Oxford, 1964), p313; Howell argues that Holmes could not be described as a 'militant socialist' at this time, see David Howell, 'HOLMES, James Headgoose (1861-1934): Railway Trade Union Official' in Keith Gildart, David Howell and Neville Kirk (eds.), *Dictionary of Labour Biography*, Vol.XI (Basingstoke, 2003) pp130-39
[86]
[87] *RRvw*, July 13,1900, cited in Clegg et al, *History of British Trade Unions*, p313n
[88] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p312
[89] *MEx*, Aug.18, 1900, p6
In the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, 1900,T.No.1410, 1901,T.No.1886: Between the TVR and the ASRS, Richard Bell, James Holmes, Philip Hewlett, George W. Alcock and James Pilcher. (Consolidated) Chronological History (*TVR v ASRS*), pp10-11

notices, as reported in the following Saturday's *Pontypridd Observer*.[90] The paper briefly summarized the positions of each side, with the reporter expressing sympathy with Ewington, and pointing out that the men faced increased living costs. Not unexpectedly, on Friday General Manager Beasley declined a request for an all-grades deputation to see the directors with Holmes; and rejected the proposed arbitration. On the same day Bell was thwarted in his attempt to see Chairman Vassall.[91]

The meeting at Pontypridd on August 19, heard Moses Jones report back on the signalmen's meeting with the directors, and also on the offers made by the company in respect to the claims made by guards, shunters and firemen; all of which were rejected by the men. With the signalmen on strike from the following day, the assembly concluded that they had no option but to cease work, even, as they were warned by Holmes, many would face prosecution. The motion to strike was carried with only a few against.[92] In London, on the same day, the EC of the ASRS met to consider the situation with two representatives from the TVR present. After a lengthy debate a resolution was passed, condemning the men for their action, but agreeing to grant strike pay. Bell was dispatched to South Wales to resolve the matter as soon as possible. The content of the resolution was telegraphed to south Wales that evening.[93] Monday morning saw the suspension of all goods traffic, with just a few passenger trains worked by officials and 'blacklegs'. Bell arrived that morning and in the evening he wrote to Beasley requesting a meeting with the directors to resolve the dispute. This met with his absolute refusal to meet with anyone but the men.[94]

Although the strike had just commenced there was violence and sabotage on the first day. Around Pontypridd, a driver and fireman were kidnapped at Coke Ovens, and at Hafod, signalling and telegraph wires were cut. The company immediately offered a £100 reward for information.[95] Apart from the signalmen, who had given adequate notice, the other strikers were in breach of contract, and the company was quick to obtain summonses in the local police courts. By Wednesday two men, found guilty of violence against a chargeman, were given prison sentences, and those tried for breach of contract were required to pay damages of up to ten pounds per man.[96] Legal action of both types was to continue. The organization of the pickets was very effective and reached across the company's network, whether in turning back 'blacklegs' at Cardiff GWR station or harassing the crews of the few trains that the company managed to

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[90] *PObs*, Aug.18, 1900, p4
[91] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp214-15
[92] *PObs*, Aug.25, 1900, p3
[93] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p215-6
[94] *MEx*, Aug.25, 1900, p3
[95] *PObs*, Aug.25, 1900, p3
[96] *MEx*, Aug.25, 1900, p8

operate.[97] The effectiveness of the picketing prompted the company to seek injunctions against Bell and Holmes on the Thursday, and such was the intensity of feeling generated by the strike, that the local press was voicing fears of a 'general labour war'.[98] The BoT had also become involved in an attempt at mediation.

The turning point came when two letters were published in *The Times* on Friday, August 24.[99] One was from James Inskip, who when chairman of the Taff Vale in 1890 was willing to negotiate with the ASRS General Secretary, face to face, and the other from Sir W T Lewis. Inskip wrote that it was lamentable that the directors had not seen fit to meet with Bell, and Lewis proposed a conciliation board for the railways of south Wales. The letters assisted Mr Hopwood from the BoT, but he had to return to London on Monday, August 27 before a settlement had been reached. Although a final settlement had eluded him, he had persuaded the men to abandon the demand for union recognition.[100] The sticking points were the re-employment of all strikers, and the retention of 'blacklegs'. At that point Lewis stepped in and with the cooperation of Russell Rea, a director of the TVR, the two met with Bell and Holmes and eventually a settlement was reached late on the Thursday evening.[101] The strikers would be reinstated within one month and there was a nod towards Lewis's proposed four-company conciliation board. In reporting this, the editor of the *Merthyr Express* pointed out that both Hopwood and Lewis had dealt directly with ASRS officials, with Lewis acting as 'the ASRS mouthpiece'. And commented that,

> 'It is morally certain that Mr Bell and Mr Holmes would have made not less strenuous efforts on behalf of peace had they spoken face to face with the directors and Mr Beasley...Certain it is that the men's own feeling would have been mollified by...recognition of this principle...In all likelihood...Ewington would have been called upon to accept the company's offer in regard to himself, and there would have been no strike.'[102]

Prior to the settlement it had been agreed to refer Ewington's case to the BoT.

The strike officially ended at 10:30am on August 31 after the settlement had been ratified by the men. It dealt with the re-employment of the strikers with no break in service or loss of pension rights, and the withdrawal of legal action, but contained no reference to improvements in pay and conditions, only the possible establishment of a conciliation board. Even on the Saturday morning Beasley was refusing to re-employ

[97] See Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp218-9
[98] *MEx*, Aug.25, 1900, p8
[99] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p221
[100] *MEx*, Sept.1, 1900, p3
[101] *South Wales Argus*, Aug.30, 1900 cited in Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p221
[102] *MEx*, Sept.1, 1900, p3

all of the strikers and it took a further intervention by Lewis to secure full re-employment. However the normal train service was resumed that day.[103]

The Aftermath of 1900

The key weapon, which Ammon Beasley had sought to employ against his striking workers, was 'Free Labour', principally from the National Free Labour Association (NFLA), whereby he hoped to undermine the effects of the strike by obtaining an alternative workforce. The 'free labour' contingents were apparently a mix of railwaymen and non-railwaymen, and 'after the strike was over Mr Beasley admitted that although "400" men came to Cardiff from all parts of the country…only "about 190" were found suitable.'[104] The *Merthyr Express* noted the men's irritation over a statement by Beasley on the eve of the settlement expressing 'the view that the terms of the settlement gave the company a free hand with regards to the dismissal or retention of the imported workmen'. [105] The issue of the imported men was never completely resolved despite repeated attempts by the men to persuade the company to remove them. [106] In this matter Beasley had had his way, and at the Grouping in 1922 twelve imported-locomen were still in the employ of the Taff Vale.[107]

On the men's side there had been a high degree of unity with footplate staff from both the ASRS and ASLEF striking before their notice had expired. The ASLEF men who had joined the 1890 action had also acted without the sanction of their EC, as they did again in 1895. McKillop explains the ASLEF's reluctance to approve action in 1890 as the wise policy of not trying to make its power felt until it was on a national footing, but it is clear that the 'Taffies', as he calls them, were not subject to the society's control between 1890 and 1900.[108] Raynes in his history briefly mentions the 1900 dispute, whilst McKillop ignores it completely.[109] Neither document General Secretary Sunter's three or more day sojourn with the Strike Committee in Cardiff, nor the generous loan to fund the legal defence of James Holmes.[110] In 1900 the ASLEF showed its solidarity with the ASRS whilst keeping out of the limelight.

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[103] *Ibid*, p5
[104] PP1906, Vol. LVI, *Royal Commission on Trades Disputes*, Q1061, cited in Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p218
[105] *MEx*, Sep.8, 1900, p4
[106] NA RAIL 684/11, Min. 465, Jan.28, 1900
[107] NA RAIL 264/97
[108] McKillop, *Lighted Flame*, pp45&49
[109] Raynes, *Engines and Men*, p114
[110] *TVR v ASRS*, Chronological History, pp20-22; Alcock, *Fifty Years*, pp313-4

As part of the settlement Sir W T Lewis had proposed the formation of a conciliation board for the four Valleys' railways, which had been accepted by the men before the October deadline for its formation.[111] However, Lewis's proposal did not come to fruition, largely due to the refusal of Ammon Beasley to allow any other organization to have a say in the management of his railway. When the matter was discussed by the TVR Board on November 6, it was resolved: 'That Sir William Lewis be informed that the Directors cannot consent to depute the management of the staff to any outside body.'[112] On October 3 Richard Bell had become the first railway trade unionist to be elected to Parliament, as the junior member for Derby. One of his declared intentions was to amend the 1896 Conciliation Act, such that it would be unlawful to refuse to meet the elected representative of the men.[113]

The Board of Trade ruling on the treatment of John Ewington was received by the company on Monday, October 22. The conclusion was that Ewington had initially been treated unfairly, but that the company's final offer was equitable. Having rejected that offer he was not reinstated, and by April, 1901 he was working as coal hewer.[114] When approached by the men's representatives for an improvement in signalmen's pay in November, 1900 the Board refused to grant an across the board pay increase, but a concession was made for relief signalmen.[115] At their meeting on January 22, 1901 the directors took the opportunity to remove a further representative of the signalmen, when following consideration of the report into a collision, they directed that Moses Jones should not be re-employed as a signalman.[116] They did offer him a more junior post at some distance from his home, which apparently he did not accept, and the ASRS awarded him a fifty-pound victim's allowance.[117]

One piece of legal action, which was not withdrawn, was the injunction against Bell and Holmes, and although it was not considered possible to sue the union in its own name under existing legislation, the Trade Union Acts of 1871 and 1876, Beasley persisted. But as McCord has described, the Judicature Act of 1873 had made changes to the legal system, the significance of which, had not hitherto been noticed by employers or unions.[118] An interim injunction was granted on August 31 and on September 5 Mr Justice Farwell ruled that a trade union could be sued in its own name. The ASRS

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[111] *MEx*, Oct.27, 1900, p4
[112] NA RAIL 684/11, Min.382, Nov.6, 1900
[113] *MEx*, Oct.27, 1900, p5
[114] NC RG13/5004 94 251
[115] NA RAIL 684/11, Min 418, Dec.18,1900
[116] Ibid, Min 443, Jan.22, 1901
[117] ASRS *EC Minutes*, Min.63, Mar.11, 1901, cited in *TVR v ASRS*, Chronological History, p28
[118] McCord, 'Taff Vale Revisited'; The 1873 Act in combining Common Law with Equity had allowed the introduction of 'representative action' thus potentially avoiding the difficulty of suing each individual member of a trade union.

appealed, and on November 12 the Master of the Rolls and two other law lords reversed the decision, ruling in favour of the ASRS. But that was not to be the end. At Beasley's insistence and against the advice of the TVR's solicitors the lawyers acting for the TVR took the case to the Lords. On July 22, 1901 judgement was given in the company's favour.[119]

It was not, however, until Friday, December 13, 1901 that the claim for damages was lodged and nearly twelve months later, on Wednesday, December 3, 1902, that the hearing of the damages case commenced before a jury. The hearing lasted until December 19, and the sum of £23,000 awarded to the Taff Vale was paid by the due date of March 23, 1903.[120] In 1902, before the case for damages was heard, Richard Bell decided that it was not appropriate for Society funds to be used in defence of James Holmes, as he had exposed the union and its members to legal action, and Bell engineered an objection to the funding of his defence.[121] But Holmes' popularity ensured that a defence fund was created. The necessary amount was only raised in time with a short-term loan from D A Thomas and when that was due, with a donation and interest free loan from ASLEF in January 1903.[122]

James Holmes had already made history in 1899 by persuading the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to support the creation of a Parliamentary Election Fund (PEF) to facilitate the entry of representatives of labour into Parliament. The ASRS was also prominent in the meeting of February 27 and 28, 1900 at which the Labour Representation Committee (LRC) was set up.[123] This had the aim of bringing into being a separate political party which would decide its own agenda independent of the existing parties. Although the PEF had been approved by a majority at the TUC only a limited number of unions initially affiliated, but as the implications of the legal action following the settlement of the Taff Vale strike became clear the number of affiliations rose rapidly. From the end of 1900 to the following summer forty-one unions had signed up, however once the Lords had ruled, between spring 1902 and winter 1903 a further 127 unions had joined.[124] Yet it was not until 1908 that the Miners' Federation of Great Britain eventually voted to affiliate.[125]

Following the House of Lords judgement various attempts were made to change the law and nullify the effect of the Lords' ruling, once the implications for collective action had been realised, but these were to be unsuccessful until after the return of a more

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[119] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp222-23
[120] *Ibid*, pp223-24
[121] *Ibid*, p223
[122] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, pp313-4; D A Thomas rejoined the TVR Board in 1909
[123] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp206-7
[124] Adelman, *Rise of the Labour Party*, p32
[125] Arnot, *South Wales Miners*, p165

sympathetic government in 1905.[126] The Trades Dispute Act of 1906 was the outcome and established in law the immunity from prosecution that trade unions had assumed they possessed from 1876.[127]

In the years running up to the election of 1905 discussions were underway between Ramsey MacDonald of the LRC and Herbert Gladstone of the Liberal party that resulted in an electoral pact which secured the election of twenty-nine LRC candidates. When the new Parliament assembled on February 12, 1906 the twenty-nine, plus one more, declared themselves to be a new political party, the Labour Party.[128] Thus all the determination shown by Beasley in uncovering the vulnerability of trade unions was undone, and the workmen now had their own political party.

Taff Vale is often listed with Peterloo and Tolpuddle as one of the pivotal moments in Labour history. As a strike it was a failure; its aims were not achieved, and it placed trade unions in a position of weakness. Yet as the writer in the souvenir booklet from the 1906 AGM of the ASRS commented:

> Looking back upon the Taff Vale dispute and the momentous legal decisions which followed, we realise that the failure of the strike produced results far more beneficial and widespread than its success could possibly have accomplished. That which in 1900 appeared to be a serious disaster, has since proved to be a blessing in disguse [sic]. The Taff Vale dispute and decisions are indelibly stamped upon the history of Trade Unionism, and have done more to educate the rank and file of the workers to the economic necessities of their position than any previous decisions in history. [129]

1907 Conciliation Scheme

Bagwell notes that in the years 1903 to 1905, despite rising prices, the number of strikes per year had fallen to half of the average for the previous decade.[130] Passage of the 1906 Act encouraged an increase in industrial action, and by the time of the ASRS AGM in June there was a strong demand from the membership for a new all-grades campaign. Railway profitability had improved, but outstanding issues such as an eight-hour day, no return to duty within nine hours and a guaranteed week, excluding Sunday, had not been conceded in total by any, nor in part for most

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[126] John Saville, 'The Trade Disputes Act of 1906', *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations*, No.1 (March, 1996) pp11-45, Saville documents the various attempts made in Parliament to change the law.
[127] 'Ibid',pp36-37
[128] Adelman, *Rise of the Labour Party*, pp34-37
[129] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, pp312-3
[130] Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism* (1920) p603 cited in Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p225

companies. In this the Taff Vale men were better off than many with the guaranteed week and nine hours rest granted in 1890.

An all-grades conference was held in November 1906 and a National All-grades Movement was launched. Despite three attempts Bell was unable to gain access to the company boards. Pressure for a national strike was growing and ballots by the ASRS and GRWU produced significant majorities in favour,[131] and ASLEF members were also demanding strike action.[132] It was at this stage that the President of the BoT Lloyd George stepped in and met with Bell and his EC. A meeting was then held between Lloyd George, union representatives and six company chairmen, but not in the same room. Bagwell states that Bell had told Lloyd George's assistant that he would not press the issue of recognition as long as he obtained means for the men to gain improved conditions, and this was against a background of press criticism of the companies for not meeting with union officials face to face.[133] Sectional Boards were set up based on grade, with a Central Board as a court of appeal, with the proviso that full-time trade union officials could not represent the employees.

This prompted Alcock to comment that 'Agitation largely gave way to statesmanship, and it brought in a sort of halfway-house to "recognition".'[134] As noted in chapter two it appears that, unknown to the union side, it was a railway manager who had drafted the scheme and it was clear to Ammon Beasley that recognition had not been conceded. The ASRS leadership saw the outcome, whilst not ideal, as a victory, but Alcock looking back in 1922 was highly critical of ASLEF opposition and expressed the view that more might have been obtained without it.[135]

In February 1908 Richard Bell was upbeat in the speech he gave to railwaymen at Pontypridd, as he declared that whereas the final word in negotiations had been in the hands of Railway companies, it was now in the hands of the independent arbitrator and he added, amidst laughter and applause, '...they had the assurance of negotiations being carried out expeditiously with a guarantee against an automatic waste paper basket practice.'[136] He announced that the TVR, RR, Barry and Cardiff Railways had agreed to come into the scheme, but none had submitted proposals to the BoT and there was no excuse for the delay.

[131] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p267
[132] McKillop, *Lighted Flame*, p89
[133] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p268
[134] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p379
[135] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p388
[136] *PObs*, Feb. 8, 1908, p[3]

Within a year dissatisfaction had set in, with ASLEF general secretary Fox speaking of 'Confiscation Boards' in his annual report for 1908.[137] Whilst such a criticism might have been expected from the Associated leadership, it was soon echoed among Amalgamated men too, and in particular the limited remit which prevented the boards from hearing disciplinary grievances.[138]

In 1910 and early 1911 Conciliation Boards feature in the minutes of the ASRS Pontypridd Branch, but the main preoccupation was with the payment of expenses to members attending these boards. There was an apparent acceptance of their operation, and cooperation between local branches on support for candidates in elections.[139]

1911

The June 1910 meeting of the ASRS EC passed a resolution to publicise the evident growing discontent among railwaymen with the 1907 Conciliation Scheme. A copy of the resolution was sent to the President of the BoT effectively giving fourteen months notice of what was to happen in August 1911.[140] Alderman, based on articles in the *Railway Review* and *Daily Express* in 1910, claims that 'the conciliation machinery was worked according to the letter rather than the spirit.'[141] Bagwell observes that labour relations were already at low ebb. The cost of living had risen, and wage levels, especially for lower grade staff, were inadequate. Engine cleaners and porters were typically on basic pay of eighteen shillings per week or less. Also real wages had fallen in 1909 and 1910.[142] The quoted low rate of pay was evident on the TVR.[143]

What was needed was for the companies to recognise the unions and let them negotiate face to face on behalf of their members. The leaders of four railway unions met on August 15, 1911 and an ultimatum was sent to the government for recognition to be granted within 24 hours.[144] This took the government by surprise and the companies grossly underestimated the likely impact of a strike. However, with sporadic strikes across the country, they could not have been unaware of the feelings of their employees. The August date followed on from a successful strike in the docks in June

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[137] Raynes, *Engines and Men*, p141
[138] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p285-86
[139] GlamRO, D/D NUR 3/1/1
[140] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p286
[141] RRvw, June 10, p6 & Oct.14, 1910, p1 and *Daily Express*, Aug.20, 1910, p1 cited in Alderman, *Railway Interest*, p208
[142] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p289
[143] *Agreements as between TVR and employees*, p23
[144] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p291

led by Tom Mann and his Transport Workers' Federation. The Shipping Federation had been forced to concede most of the men's demands. There had been close co-operation between railwaymen and dockers, for example GWR men in London warned the Cardiff committee when strikebreakers were being sent. Liverpool saw railwaymen taking common cause with the dockers and fighting for their own improvements and so two weeks before the national strike they withdrew their labour on August 5.[145] The unions had chosen the timing well for this was in the middle of the Moroccan Crisis, when with the possibility of war, any interruption to the movement of troops, and coal for the navy, could have severe consequences. The Government arranged for the deployment of soldiers, and Asquith's 'take it or leave attitude', in his proposal of a Royal Commission, appears to have been the red rag to the Unions' bull.[146]

A telegram from the joint committee of ASRS, ASLEF, GWRU and United Pointsmen's and Signalmen's Society (UPSS) officers in London was sent on the afternoon of the 17th to 2,000 centres. It read;

> 'Your liberty is at stake. All railwaymen must strike at once. The loyalty of each means victory for all. (signed) Williams, Fox, Lowth, Chorlton.'[147]

The telegram was received in Pontypridd by the secretary of the ASRS branch and the local organisation immediately swung into action. He contacted three members of his branch and two from the local ASLEF one, and they decided to call a mass meeting at the Workmen's Hall in Hopkinstown for 11pm. The meeting convened, and after consultation with Cardiff the strike call was put to the vote. The results were seventy in favour, three against and two abstentions.[148] The instruction may have been issued from the national leadership, but local democracy was sacrosanct. Then thanks were tendered to Mr Gowan of the Castle Ivor Hotel, Hopkinstown for allowing them to use the workmen's hall 'at a minute's notice' and permitting the secretary to use his telephone for several hours.[149] The strike took immediate effect with the *Pontypridd Observer* reporting that, after the appointment of pickets, the strike was implemented by the signalmen at midnight, delaying the last up train of the day. Pontypridd Station Master Hurford had been recalled from holiday and on Friday neither union members nor most non-unionists had turned up for work, although a service was maintained by officials and some of 'other grades'.[150] The following day, at a committee meeting, resolutions were passed to support non-unionists who had come out on strike, to call for 'all trades' to join the strike and to hold a mass meeting at 2pm on Saturday

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[145]
[146] *Ibid*, p290
[147] *Ibid*, p293
[148] *Ibid*
[149] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. of Mass Mtg. Aug.17, 1911
[150] *Ibid*
PObs, Aug.19, p3

afternoon. This was to be addressed by councillor Moses Jones, veteran of the 1900 strike, among others.[151] Support was offered from other unions including the Bakers and the Chain Workers. The *Pontypridd Observer* reporter saw the strike as having far-reaching consequences, likening it, hopefully, to a thunder storm which, once it had passed, cleared the air; thus by analogy 'English'[152] railways would be most favoured by a lengthy industrial peace. The article goes on to observe that 1911 had seen the greatest number of strikes on record which had affected both civil and military sectors, and notes that the Government had put troops at the disposal of the railway companies, which, as Bagwell observes, had been achieved by suspending the rule that a local authority should request them. The journalist expected severe effects on the local district, which would exacerbate the plight of those already on hard times.[153]

On Saturday one of the key concerns had become that 'every man taking part in this dispute shall not suffer', and that the settlement should contain a clause that anybody occupying the post of a striker should be dismissed. So when the strike was barely 48 hours old thought was being given to the aftermath and away from the main issues, which are not actually mentioned in the branch minutes. Later that day when the committee met again, the main focus was how to make the strike complete and totally effective. Motions were proposed and seconded that the committee approach the manager of the tramway re conveying newspapers and for the last three men working at Coke Ovens to be asked to join the strike. The question of inviting the fitters, probably ASE members, to join the strike was left over until the Monday.[154] On Sunday the committee met to plan a further mass demonstration for the Monday with a procession from the workmen's hall at 2pm which would march to the Rocking Stone,[155] led by the Town Band, where they would be addressed by speakers from the shop assistants, and chain workers unions, and Moses Jones. The meeting was to be announced by the town crier.[156] Later on the same day the final committee meeting of the strike resolved that any one signing-on at Coke Ovens should be reported to the committee.[157]

Whilst the railwaymen were meeting in south Wales, at 3 o'clock on Saturday afternoon the unions' leaders and spokesmen of the railway managers met in London. This was

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[151] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. C'tee. Mtg. Aug.18, 1911
[152] Note the use of the term 'English' rather than 'British' or 'Welsh'
[153] *PObs*, Aug.19, p3; Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p296
[154] GlamRO, Ref.D/D NUR 1/1i, C'tee. Mtg. Aug.19, 1911
[155] The 'Rocking Stone' was a geological feature which provided a focal point for mass meetings on the edge of town.
[156] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. C'tee. Mtg.(1) Aug.20, 1911
[157] Ibid, Mins. C'tee. Mtg.(2) Aug.20, 1911

a ground-breaking first, but not seen as recognition by most railway managers.[158] Agreement was reached by 11pm on the basis that the men would return with a promise of reinstatement without penalty. There would be the speedy convening of Conciliation Boards and a Commission of Inquiry, and the unions would urge the men to return to work. There was some rejection across the country, but at a mass meeting in London on Sunday they voted in favour of trusting their leadership to pursue their demands. The strike was over and the railway was almost back to normal by Monday.[159]

'As suddenly and dramatically as it came so went the great railway strike' observed the reporter. This first national stoppage of any size had passed without major incident on the TVR, but to the west in Llanelli it had brought violence and bloodshed;

> 'The danger at these places lay not so much with the railwaymen as with these militant workingmen sympathisers to whom the very name "blackleg" was anathema and who adopted an unusually hostile attitude towards the men suspected of strike breaking.'[160]

Bagwell concluded that the strike had succeeded due to the unity of the unions, and the refusal of the non-striking RCA to supply strike-breakers. This was against the background of international unrest and the unpopularity of the use of troops.[161]

The local community appeared to have been sympathetic to the men's cause, which was demonstrated by the lenient attitude of the magistrate, a local alderman, when a TVR labourer appeared before him charged with obstructing the highway. On the Friday of the strike the defendant had been drunk and the crowd of workmen that had gathered caused the obstruction. They were idle due to the railway strike. The police constable who was witness for the prosecution described the event, but when questioned by defending counsel confirmed the previous good character and ten years railway service of this local man. The constable also concurred that the behaviour of the local railwaymen had been exemplary. The case was dismissed on payment of costs. His defence had been arranged by the chairman of the ASRS Pontypridd branch.[162]

The Royal Commission, set up as part of the settlement, reported in October and its findings were not especially to the liking of trade unionists. They also highlighted the divergent views of ASRS and ASLEF. The former wished for a central conciliation board, whilst the latter preferred the recommended retention of the sectional boards,

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[159] E.g. Claud Hamilton of the Great Eastern quoted in Alderman, *Railway Interest*, p210
[160] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p299
[161] *PObs*, Aug.26, 1911, p3
[162] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, pp297-8
PObs, Sept. 9, 1911, p2; GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. C'tee. Mtg. Sept.3, 1911

which emphasized their craft status. It was welcomed that the remit of the boards now included 'conditions of work' as well as wages but not the continued exclusion of disciplinary matters.[163] The lack of full recognition was highlighted by Merthyr MP Keir Hardie in a speech at Huddersfield. He counselled the men to reject the report, but not to break ranks and take isolated action. He declared that they were now led by men who could be trusted, and not the Lib-Labs who had now almost gone;

> They should stand beside each other, and, defeated or not, they would infuse the working classes with new hope and teach the ruling classes that the day of their power was over and that dirty, low, despised labour had learned the secret of their strength.[164]

The transition from Lib-Labism to Socialism was indeed far advanced; the old guard of union leaders was being forced out, as had happened to Richard Bell of the ASRS in 1909. Prime Minister Asquith answering questions on the railway strike re 'debatable points' in respect of picketing, union immunity and whether a general strike was legal stated that the Government was reviewing the law to see if change was needed. Responding to one recommendation of the report he declared that 'coercion by threats and intimidation were offences against which...the existing law could be, and ought to be enforced.'[165]

Some may have thought that the unprecedented meeting in August 1911 between union leaders and representatives of the railway companies had represented union recognition, but Alderman proposes that '[i]t was in the meetings...in December 1911, rather than in the previous August, that the concession of recognition took place.'[166] However this was hardly recognition as sought by the unions, the position was that a union official could represent the men at meetings of the conciliation boards, but full recognition was still being sought in 1914.

By November 1911 the GWR had announced an immediate increase in wages, which had been discussed at the Conciliation Board. In reporting this, the editor of the *Merthyr Express* expressed his belief that the strike had added the impetus, and observes that lower grades particularly benefited. The LNWR and others were doing something similar with the companies claiming that negotiations were well under way before the strike.[167] Bagwell records that '[i]n the first half of 1912 there were increases in wages on every major line in the country with the exception of the Taff Vale, the North Eastern, Great Central and SE&CR.'[168] But the men were still dissatisfied at lack

[163] *MEx*, Oct.28, 1911, p7
[164] *Ibid*, p6
[165] *MEx*, Nov.4, 1911, p7
[166] Alderman, *Railway Interest*, p212
[167] *MEx*, Nov.4, 1911, p7
[168] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p305

of full recognition for the unions and this prompted cries for further action. However the editor advises the men to accept what they have for now and see how the arrangements from the Commission worked out. He cautioned that the public rather than the companies are first to suffer and it was not trivial to turn their sympathy to hostility.[169]

In December 1911 a national ballot did not produce the clear support of August, although among those who voted there was a clear rejection of the Royal Commission's recommendations and a significant majority for action. But as Bagwell records, the results were concealed by J E Thomas of ASRS amidst concern that, with the large number of non-members and the lesser response to the ballot, a further strike would not succeed.[170] Howell quotes from a sympathetic journalist.

> 'They seem to be blowing hot and cold. They have given the men no clear
> or united lead. We really don't know whether they want the men to accept
> the report, or to be ready if need be, to strike for recognition.'[171]

Following the report of the Royal Commission, the Pontypridd branch initially refused to nominate for the Taff Vale Conciliation Board, although no reason is recorded in the minutes of January 21, 1912.[172] A fortnight later branch business included a proposal to keep a record of grievances against the TVR, and the general unrest was indicated by a proposal for a mass meeting of delegates from five local railways; presumably the TVR, Barry, Rhymney, Cardiff, and ADR companies.[173] The March meeting considered an appeal from a Taff Vale platelayer seeking nomination to the TVR Conciliation Board, and the secretary was instructed to contact his Branch for further information.[174] By April the unrest was focussed on a delegate conference in Cardiff at which the grade by grade aims on hours would be resolved, and a special meeting was held to instruct the delegates.[175] At the next ordinary meeting on April 28, the new conciliation boards appear to have been accepted and there was discussion on the grievances to be raised. The secretary was also instructed to write to each of the boards to ask what was being done with respect to the guaranteed week.[176] It was at this point that the 'vigilance committee' described in chapter five was created.

1913 saw the amalgamation of the ASRS, GRWU and UPSS to form the National Union of Railwaymen. When the NUR gave notice of the 1911 agreement it had

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[169] MEx, Nov. 4, 1911, p7
[170] Bagwell, Railwaymen, p304
[171] Labour Leader, Nov. 24, 1911 cited in Howell, Respectable Radicals, p125
[172] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Jan.21, 1912
[173] Ibid, Mins. Feb.4, 1912
[174] Ibid, Mins. Mar.3, 1912
[175] Ibid, Mins., Spl. Branch Mtg., Apr.3, 1912
[176] Ibid, Mins. C'tee. Mtg., Apr.28, 1912

prompted a letter from the ASLEF setting out their aims for revision, the first of which stated that '...a fuller recognition shall be given to the representatives of the Trade Unions.'[177] Alcock records the words of J E Thomas from March 1914 in his declaration that 'recognition was in their grasp';

> For the first time in the history of railwaymen we have, without either bringing pressure to bear or threat of a stoppage or anything else, a frank, free invitation, not in a backdoor way, but officially communicated to us as Trade Unions, that the railway companies are prepared to meet us.[178]

This was in response to a letter received from Sam Fay as spokesman for the railway companies. But fuller recognition had to wait until February 1915, when in the shadow of war a national pay settlement was concluded between the railway unions and company representatives.[179]

Conclusions

Before 1890 there had been reluctance on the part of railway trade union leaders to use the strike weapon, as was illustrated by the concern expressed by former ASRS general secretary F W Evans. It is perhaps ironic that ASLEF had come into being, in part, because the Amalgamated society was considered to be no more than a friendly society,[180] yet its leaders never endorsed any of the three strikes that occurred on the Taff Vale between 1890 and 1900 in which its members took part. One issue dominated the entire period from 1890 to 1911 and beyond, that of union recognition, and whilst there was more than a glimmer of hope with the settlement of 1890, and a disputed halfway house in 1911, full recognition had to wait until 1915.

Railwaymen were seen by their communities as more responsible than miners during the conduct of strikes, and even in 1900 it was a tiny minority who were convicted of violence. Perhaps it was this responsible behaviour, as well as the day-to-day contact that many would have with the railway, that maintained the support of the community throughout the period, although it was at its strongest in 1890. And the community could follow the minutiae of railway trade union business due to the extensive coverage of branch and other meetings in the local press.

The cardinal industrial virtue was solidarity with your fellow workers, the cardinal sin was to be a strike-breaker or 'blackleg', and commission of this sin was the pretext for what violence there was. The local solidarity showed itself to be of greater importance

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[177] Alcock, *Fifty Years*, p477
[178] *Ibid*, p478
[179] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p348
[180] cf. McKillop, *Lighted Flame*, p17

than discipline within a union and disobedience to or criticism of union leaderships was evident in virtually all but the 1911 action.

From 1890 the men sought or offered arbitration, and various individuals and community bodies were ready to assist, but when Conciliation Boards were created in exchange for calling off a threatened national strike in 1907 the men's experience of them was one of increasing disappointment. Reaction on the Taff Vale appears to have been muted without the extreme reactions of elsewhere, but when called out the men demonstrated their solidarity across unions and companies in contributing to the effectiveness of the first national rail strike.

The signalmen as a grade seemed to have fared worse than most with the importance of their role unappreciated and ill-rewarded, which placed them in the vanguard of industrial unrest. Such was the antagonism of the Taff Vale directors that the activists in the signalling grades often put their employment at risk. Their disadvantages encouraged solidarity among the workmen and elicited sympathy from the wider community.

One individual who stands out from the history of labour relations on the Taff Vale is Ammon Beasley. He was a man of considerable ability who kept to his principles, but his obstinacy was to achieve the very opposite of the principle for which he was fighting. Trade union liability for damages during a strike was reversed, and the workmen now had their own political party, which would one day take the railways into state ownership. All of that may well have happened without Ammon Beasley, but he did add considerable momentum to the process.

This section has considered the relationship and frictions between the managers and the managed. The next section begins with a look at the frictions within Welsh society as a whole in the overlapping realms of politics and religion.

Section 4: Religion and Politics

Chapter 8 Clashes of Cultures and Beliefs

Introduction

The scale and timing of immigration to the historic county of Glamorgan has been described in chapter one. In chapters four and five the concept of community has been explored in theoretical terms, and then more specifically in the involvement of Taff Vale employees in the individual localities in which they lived and the wider network of the company. Reference has been made to the varied origins of the members of these communities and something of the inter-relationships between these groupings. Here the differences are explored on a subject by subject basis. The relationship between managers and the managed has been examined in chapters six and seven through a consideration of paternalism, disciplinary policies and strike action on the Taff Vale Railway. In this chapter the four groups of 'external influences' that were proposed in chapter four are to be examined along with the frictions such influences might generate.

Taff Vale employees were involved in every aspect of community life, and would have been aware of the various political and religious debates taking place in their local newspapers. The role and availability of newspapers has been discussed at chapter four, and this chapter is largely based on papers readily available to TVR staff. Also as members of chapels or churches and trade unions the sermons, speeches or discussions heard would inform them of issues exercising religious and labour organisations. Another source of information on contemporary issues was the public meetings held in the range of civic, community and ecclesiastical halls erected in every locality of any size. This plethora of information would have highlighted the fault lines in their society inviting them to take sides or perhaps encouraging them to retreat into the comfort of the traditions in which they had grown up, although this could invite a clash between generations.[1] The extent to which Taff Vale employees involved themselves in many of the issues described in this chapter is unclear, but each set the tone of their communities' ethos and discourse. The chapter provides a backdrop for the detailed examination of the influence of religion on individual employees and the corporate life of the TVR in chapter nine.

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[1] E.g. Jones, *Unfinished Journey*, pp14-15

Immigration and Welsh Nationalism

South Wales in the long nineteenth century was a melting-pot as cultures met and interacted, but also witnessed the renaissance of an indigenous culture. Immigration at all levels of society brought a range of viewpoints, and beliefs, both religious and political. Liberalism and its working class expression of Lib-Labism partly reinforced an English political viewpoint, but at the same time became a vehicle for Welsh self-determination with the so-called 'Welsh Party'. Inseparable from this Welsh Liberalism was Welsh Nonconformity, a link reinforced by issues such as disestablishment, education and temperance.

Economic migration has been described in chapter one, and in addition to the national origins mentioned, there were many others. As observed, Cardiff, as a seaport, brought in ex-sailors from around the world who had 'come ashore', and French, German, Scandinavian and Maltese names have been identified.[2] Besides these, members of other ethnic groups have been identified living and working in the Valleys. These included a native of Barbados and an Indian doctor, both living in Pontypridd.[3] Jewish immigrants established their communities in towns such as Merthyr, Pontypridd and Aberdare as well as Cardiff. This is evidenced by the reported founding of synagogues and other appearances in local newspapers.[4]

The mixing of ethnic origins and cultures brought friction. Jack Jones writes of anti-Irish feeling in Merthyr and the anti-Irish riots in Tredegar following the Phoenix Park murders in 1882.[5] Jones also describes the resentment against English mine workers,[6] and in Ferndale English hauliers were excluded from the business of a meeting, as it had been conducted entirely in Welsh.[7] However when celebrating the memory of Evan Miles, the first Parish Constable of Llantrisant, the writer describes how Miles had calmed the anger of a crowd bent on attacking Irish miners, by force of personality and an explanation of the miserable lot and suffering that the Irish had experienced in their own country. The anger had in part been generated by rumours, which may or may not have been true, that the Irish were working for substandard wages. The article states that there had been no similar antagonism against the English.[8] The Protestant-Catholic religious debate might be carried out in the columns of local newspapers, as is described below, but as the period of this study progressed there was a growing sense

[2] c.f. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p125; Daunton, *Coal Metropolis*, p142
[3] *GFP*, Oct.4, 1891, p3; NC RG13/5003 43 87
[4] *GFP*, May 16, 1895, p7; *MEx*, Oct.25, 1884, Supp.2
[5] T W Moody & F X Martin (eds.), *The Course of Irish History* (Cork, 1967) p288; Jones, *Bidden to the Feast*, pp251ff
[6]
[7] Jones *Unfinished Journey*, pp14-15
[8] *MEx*, May 3, 1890, p7
GFP, June 6,1897, p7

of a common Celtic ancestry shared by Welsh and Irish communities that encouraged parallel struggles for self-determination. Irish traditions were also freely celebrated.[9]

Immigration from Welsh speaking areas ensured that the language was maintained at the coalface, but as described in chapter five, English was the language on the Taff Vale. One exception was that Welsh as well as English Bibles were provided in waiting rooms.[10] In Blaenllechau at least, the Welsh language was shared by a significant number of heads of households with both sons and boarders alike as can be seen in tables 4.2 and 4.5. But among TVR employees only 26.4 percent on average were likely to speak Welsh; see chapter five.

The changing pattern of Welsh-speaking can be found in the answers to the 'language question', which was asked in the National Census from 1891. This was sometimes demonstrated within a single family, where the children born after a specific date could only speak English, whilst their parents and older siblings could speak both.[11] Two events illustrate how speaking only English or Welsh could affect the judicial system. In the first case a young farmer was charged with an indecent assault on an orphan girl. This had been witnessed by a GWR switchman but, not understanding Welsh, he was unable to comprehend the heated exchanges between attacker and victim. As a result the farmer was convicted on the lesser charge of common assault.[12] The second example is from thirty years later in which a girl from Patagonia had been accused of stealing two testaments, one Welsh, one English, from the waiting room at Abercynon station. Her defence was that she did not understand the local custom and thought that they had been left behind by a passenger, even though both had 'TVR Not to be taken away' on the covers. It transpired that the defendant, Gwenllian Jones, could only speak Welsh and Spanish. She was bound over under the First Offenders' Act.[13]

No open anti-Semitism has been detected in the years of this study, although some news items such as one covering an affray refers to the participants as 'Hebrews',[14] and in referring to the foundation laying ceremony for a new synagogue in Pontypridd the correspondent writes of the 'influx of Israelites to the town'.[15] Both expressions would have been familiar to readers raised on the Biblical accounts of the Jewish people. However in another criminal case, which came to court on a Saturday, a Jewish lady, who had been a witness in a case of theft, refused to sign the witness

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[9] See chapter four
[10] MEx, May 2, 1908, p12
[11] e.g. NC RG13/4978 89 223, all eight children had been born in Cardiff (1882-1900) but only the two eldest spoke Welsh
[12] MTel, Aug.2, 1878, p[2]
[13] MEx, May 2, 1908, p12
[14] PObs, Oct.30, 1897, p1
[15] GFP, May 18, 1895, p7

statement as such an action would break the Jewish Sabbath. The stipendiary magistrate was scathing about her principles, which had also obliged the woman to walk over the mountain from Mountain Ash to Merthyr instead of travelling by train. The eventual compromise involved the lady returning to the court after sunset, i.e. the end of the Sabbath. The magistrates' clerk displayed a sympathetic attitude, but the magistrate was reported as saying, "The country is put to a great deal of inconvenience in consequence of religious scruples of this kind, and I don't see why it should be."[16] The remark appears to be anti-Semitic, but the jibe was apparently aimed at any strictly observant religious person.

To return to the subject of 'Celtic solidarity' against the English; in 1878 whilst the MP for Merthyr, Henry Richard, might be sympathetic to, if not envious of, the increasing power of the Irish Nationalists in Parliament there is no suggestion of Welsh-Irish co-operation at that stage. During a Parliamentary debate on the Bill to grant Ireland one and one quarter million pounds for Intermediate education, Richard contrasted it with the paltry sum of two thousand five hundred pounds granted for a Welsh University. He did not begrudge the Irish the funding, and asked the rhetorical question as to whether the Welsh were too passive compared with the Irish. He pondered whether they should perhaps start a Welsh equivalent of the Fenian movement for Home Rule, also noting that they had not obstructed the business of the House as had the Irish.[17]

By 1891 Welsh Liberal support for Irish Home Rule was demonstrated by a supportive speech given by local independent Liberal MP Mr Pritchard-Morgan at an Irish National League (INL) sympathy demonstration. The newspaper reporter notes that 'Mr Parnell's portrait had been replaced on the INL banner by Mr W O'Brien'. D A Thomas, the other Merthyr Liberal MP, sent apologies and promised a local political meeting soon. In referring to his opposition to Mr Morgan at the previous election he claimed that that was now behind them and there was 'universal support' for the Irish Home Rule Bill. Visiting Irish Nationalist MP, T D Sullivan, claimed that "...old race hatreds were dying away in the light of a new day of Christian feeling and everybody had experienced the change."[18] At the next day's meeting, with D A Thomas present, Sullivan spoke in support of Liberal Party issues such as the eight hour working day. Reciprocating, Thomas was supportive of Irish Home Rule citing common issues such as disestablishment. He commented on how the Irish now accepted the idea of Irish Home Rule, with the Welsh even more in favour, and that the Scots also supported it;

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[16] *MEx*, Nov 1, 1884, Supp. p2
[17] *MTel*, August 2, 1878, p[3]
[18] *MEx*, Aug.8, 1891, p3

all in opposition to the English. In concluding he said that, "He hoped that the Irishmen and Welshmen of Merthyr would fight side by side in the battle for freedom."[19]

At another Irish Nationalist meeting in the following December the discussion was about further local government reform including giving power to Parish councils, and the 'further empowering of the industrial classes',[20] all after the passing of the Home Rule Bill. There were comments on how Irish Protestants and Catholics lived alongside each other in peace and also how the Irish provinces supported Home Rule with the exception of Ulster, which was split. Mr. Balfour was accused of encouraging opposition and the view was expressed that there was the possibility of an armed insurrection by Orangemen.[21] In this, Liberal Nonconformists were supporting a Catholic majority against a Protestant and substantially Nonconformist opposition to Irish Home Rule.

Nearly twenty years later, in 1910, with Irish Home Rule still a decade away, the *Merthyr Express* carried a headline 'Home Rule for Ireland and Wales'. The article reported on speeches by Mr. J P Farrell, MP, Irish, and Mr. Edgar Jones, a Welsh MP, at a meeting of the United Irish League. Mr. Farrell congratulated the Welsh on their leader Lloyd George, and promised Irish support for the Welsh Disestablishment Bill. He claimed that, "The Irish National Party stood for progress, as did the Welsh party, and the Scotch (sic) people were also in favour of progress". Mr. Jones responded saying that after the Welsh had voted for Irish Home Rule they would welcome Irish support for Welsh Home Rule. Responding to an objection with regard to the power of the Irish priesthood, he claimed that Methodist ministers in North Wales wielded the same sort of power.[22] In reports from 1891 and 1910 Welsh politicians linked the three main Celtic nations in their rhetoric. Irish issues featured regularly in the local press despite a relatively small presence in the Valleys which can be seen from figure 1.2 and there were no Irish-born among the sample of Taff Vale employees on the same chart. There were however a few Irishmen who did work for the TVR.[23]

Different Views of the Gospel

Religion and religious debate were prominent throughout the period of this study as is clearly demonstrated from the scan of local newspapers in this chapter. Whilst orthodox Christian views retained their prominence for the entire period (1878-1914),

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[19] *Ibid*
[20] *Ibid*, Dec 26, 1891, p[6]
[21] *Ibid*
[22] *Ibid*, July 30, 1910, p11
[23] e.g. Daniel MURPHY, DES May 5, 1919, NA RAIL 684/103; Richard DOOLAN, DES c1865, Glyn Doolan, correspondence (2006)

heterodox creeds such as Unitarianism were gaining strength and the emphasis for many was moving away from a supernatural other-world faith to a practical creed focussing on the elimination of everyday injustices and deprivation. Unitarians trace their origins in England and Wales to the 1689 Act of Toleration, which gave freedom of worship to those who dissented from the views of the Established Church. Initially they were Presbyterian in name, and the adoption of the title 'Unitarian' came in the eighteenth century.[24] Some Welsh Unitarians saw their forebears as the founders of Welsh Nonconformity.[25] In 1878 the editor of the *Merthyr Telegraph*, responding to an attack made on him, and another of the paper's contributors, for their comments on Unitarianism, sought to depersonalize the attack, but robustly defended orthodox Christianity. He concluded that 'Christianity, as they term it, is a Christianity without Christ...Between Unitarianism and the religion of Christ there is indeed a great gulf fixed...'[26]

Some twelve years later another newspaperman wrote of the Unitarian chapel at Aberdare on its re-opening that this English church had been closed for eight years since the last minister had left, in spite of attempts to revive it. The reporter wished them well despite 'however much we may differ from our Unitarian friends in their creed'.[27] In his inaugural sermon the visiting minister sought to portray Unitarianism as the future of religion with the claim that, the 'Old religious beliefs had not been in agreement with the science of the age'.[28] This suggests an increased following for the denomination in the Cynon Valley, and a more tolerant attitude on the part of some opinion formers.

By 1895, at least, the Left-leaning *Glamorgan Free Press* was sympathetic, and in that year carried 'An Outline of Unitarianism' in which the author set out a clear statement of, and argument for, Unitarian belief. It included twelve articles of faith, which he owned as his conception of contemporary Unitarian belief. Among these, two might be taken as representing the continuing ethos of Unitarianism; firstly the 'absolute authority of Man's Reason and Conscience' and secondly 'the continuity and progressiveness of revelation'[29]. Even at the time of the 1904-05 Revival the animosity from some traditional Christians had apparently not eased. A Welsh Unitarian, writing from London, complained that, whilst the various nonconformist denominations had been at enmity, the revival had brought unity among them, so he was disappointed that some Unitarians had been excluded from revival meetings. He appealed for toleration

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[24] *St Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel York: Historical Notes* (York, c2005)
[25] *MEx*, Dec.10, 1904, p9
[26] *MTel*, Feb.8, 1878, p[2]
[27] *MEx*, Apr.19, 1890, p6
[28] *Ibid*
[29] *GFP*, Apr.13, 1895, p3

and moderation.[30] In 1910 the *Glamorgan Free Press* was still giving a platform to Unitarians by including a lengthy synopsis of a sermon preached at Morgan-street Unitarian Chapel, Pontypridd. In it the preacher argued against orthodox views of sin and punishment especially the role of the Atonement of Christ. He claimed that it had now been made obsolete by the principle that every man should pay for his own wrong-doing.[31] One letter to the *Merthyr Express* from 'A Convert', claimed the superiority of Unitarianism over Calvinistic Methodism on the grounds that intelligent, rational thought was intellectually preferable to emotionalism, and that in no way was Unitarianism 'an expression of Christianity or any other superstitious belief.'[32] In a response, another Unitarian took 'A Convert' to task claiming that it was indeed an expression of Christianity 'differing in many ways from orthodox presentations of Christianity, but only because it believes it comes closer to the mind of the Master.'[33] Another letter from an 'orthodox' Christian, in the same issue was scathing of the Unitarians' claim to authority, suggesting that it depended on 'a few itinerant Unitarian speakers'.[34] Unitarianism was still as actively debated at the end of the period in 1914 as it had been in 1878.

Another area of active contention was between Catholicism and Protestantism. Wales had been a stronghold of the 'Old Faith' in the sixteenth century, but by the nineteenth Roman Catholicism hardly existed in Wales, until mass immigration from Ireland.[35] The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 posed a quandary for Liberal Nonconformists, who whilst strongly anti-papist, saw the justice of the Catholic cause being similar to Nonconformist disabilities, as both faced discrimination from an Anglican establishment.[36] Occasionally there could be common cause between Catholics and Nonconformists on an issue such as temperance as described below. At Merthyr, in 1878, it was possible for the Liberal Nonconformist editor of a local newspaper to praise a recently deceased Roman Catholic priest,[37] although, his successor was soon to disturb the harmony, and education was to be battleground. The *Merthyr Telegraph* for November 1, 1878 carried an advert for a series of sermons to be preached by Father Dr. Saunders on Catholic doctrine. On the previous Sunday Father Saunders

[30] *MEx*, Dec.10, 1904, p9
[31] *GFP*, July 22, 1910, p8
[32] *MEx*, July 11, 1914, p12
[33] *Ibid*, Aug.1, 1914, p12
[34] *Ibid*
[35] Davies claims that Welsh allegiance to the Church of England was superficial and quotes reports that as late 1577 some clergy were still saying mass, and that 'for centuries the common people adhered to ...elements of the Old Faith'. Davies, *History of Wales*, p247
[36] See *Ibid*, p359
[37] *MTel*, May 17, 1878, p[2]

had delivered two sermons on education, both of which were attended by non-Catholics and heavily criticized by the editor. The intensity of anti-Catholic sentiment was demonstrated by the editor's response to the evening sermon. The title was 'The influence of Catholic education on men of the times', which apparently became an attack on Protestant education as a bad influence and that the only hope for Britain was to return to Rome. In countering this, the editor emphasized the healthy state of modern Britain and showed his strong Protestant credentials by recounting the martyrdom of Ridley and Latimer, quoting Latimer's famous words, "...we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."[38]

In the eyes of staunchly Protestant Nonconformists the Tractarian movement was as repugnant as the Roman Catholic Church, and Davies observes that; '[t]he Calvinistic Methodists felt little antagonism towards an Anglicanism which was Protestant, but their anger was aroused by an Anglicanism which emphasized its Catholicism'.[39] Protestant Anglicans were equally opposed to the High-Church wing. The Marquesses of Bute controlled the port of Cardiff and access to it, and their estate trustees clashed both with the TVR, and other coalowners and freighters. The industrial development was principally the work of the second Marquess who died prematurely in 1848. By that time the family had 'acquired or obtained a substantial amount of church patronage in Glamorgan'[40]. The second Marquess had been an evangelical 'deeply concerned about the spiritual and social condition of his Glamorgan estates',[41] but the third Marquess had little interest in the business and left the running of it to trustees. He converted to Catholicism at the age of twenty-one, and inappropriately used his family's powers of patronage to install High-Church clergy throughout Glamorgan. The patronage should have passed to Cambridge University, but instead it was handled by the 'trustees of the Marquess of Bute'.[42] This brought another source of conflict into Valleys' society.

An example of this conflict concerns the appointment of Rev Daniel Lewis to the living of St David's, Merthyr in 1885 as a replacement for the 'Protestant, anti-Ritualist' and popular John Griffith. The parish had wished that his son should succeed, and the appointment of Lewis 'divided and weakened the parish until his death in 1921'.[43] The situation in Merthyr is clearly illustrated by an account of the resignation of the organist in 1891, coincident with the abolition of the mixed choir and its replacement by robed

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[38] *MTel*, Nov.1, 1878, p[2]
[39] Davies, *History of Wales*, p373
[40] Roger L Brown, 'The Bute Church Patronage in Glamorgan, a legal note on *pro hac vice* patronage', *Journal of Welsh Religious History*, Vols.5 & 6 (1997/8)
[41] *Ibid*
[42] *Ibid*
[43] *Ibid*

choir boys. The standard of the mixed choir had been very high, but the new incumbent had imposed his will on the Protestant organist with the introduction of 'Roman practices' and the 'monotonous toning of Gregorian Masses'.[44]

The patronage issue also had a political dimension, illustrated by D A Thomas's support for Gladstone's proposal for removal of the disability preventing Catholics from holding the office of Lord Chancellor, with the proviso that there were restrictions in the matter of patronage. Thomas, answering Tory criticism, regarded this as fair, "...because they had seen that when a person who had the power of distributing patronage went over to the Catholic Church, he appointed three others to do the work for him, and it was often carried out very unfairly."[45] It is clear that he had the Tory Marquess in mind. Not all Bute sponsored clergy were despised and one at least won almost universal respect. This was Canon John David Jenkins whose compassionate ministry in Aberdare in the 1870s was cut short by his premature death. He had already earned the title 'The Railwaymen's Apostle' before his arrival in Aberdare, and his concern for workingmen led to his election as the first president of the ASRS.[46] Local union members raised sufficient money to install a memorial window in St Elvan's church at Aberdare.[47] As might be expected the third Marquess was also active in providing for his own church with a fulfilment of his promise to provide a Roman Catholic church in Treherbert at the head of the Rhondda. The building had been opened as an Anglican church, but its provision by the Marquess was on the condition that when there were sufficient Catholics in the district it would be transferred to that denomination. The intended transfer, announced in the local paper, had been triggered by the religious revival in progress in the Rhondda and the defection of a few Catholics to the newly arrived Salvation Army.[48]

One topic upon which Roman Catholics and Nonconformists could agree and sometimes co-operate was temperance. This unexpected unity was demonstrated by an interdenominational meeting at Mountain Ash in 1890 where 'all but one denomination was represented'.[49] It was not explicitly stated that the Anglican clergy were not present, but the assembly was only addressed by the local Catholic priest and Nonconformist ministers. This absence presumably reflected traditional Tory support for the Church of England and the brewers. One of the main concerns was the lack of

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[44] MEx, Feb.28, 1891, p8
[45] Ibid, August 8, 1891, p3
[46] C B Turner, 'Ritualism, Railwaymen and the Poor: the Ministry of Canon J D Jenkins, Vicar of Aberdare' in Jenkins, G H & Smith, J B (eds), Politics and Society in Wales 1840-1922 (Cardiff, 1988) pp61-79
[47] MTel, Oct.24, 1879, p[3]
[48] MTel, Apr.11, 1879, p3
[49] MEx, Dec.27, 1890, p6

leisure facilities other than the public house, an issue which was to come to the fore during the Revival of 1904-05, see chapter nine.

Another issue dear to the heart of Welsh Christians was observance of the Sabbath. Immediately after the opening of the Taff Vale in 1840 the directors of the company were accused of 'Sabbath desecration' for their decision to run trains on Sundays. In response they claimed to be 'most anxious so to arrange the passage of their trains as not to interfere with the hours of Divine Service.'[50] Whilst an investigation of what transpired between 1840 and 1878 has not been carried out, the subject of Sunday trains was still on the agenda in 1895. In the years immediately before 1880, the Sabbatarian debate focussed on the closing of Public Houses on Sundays. The Sunday Closing Association was actively promoting its cause in the Valleys, and *The Merthyr Telegraph* could report that 2,202 inhabitants of Mountain Ash had signed a petition in favour of closing public houses on Sunday. This had been forwarded to their MP, Henry Richard.[51] This was also a temperance issue and when the Merthyr Board of Guardians considered whether it would support a similar petition, the proposer of the motion in favour was concerned to limit the 'evils of drink'. He also claimed that if canvassed three out of four publicans would be in favour of a day of rest. One reverend gentleman, moving an amendment, objected to the motion on the grounds that it did not cover the rich man, who had his own cellar, or the man lodging at the public house. The seconder of the amendment saw the proposal as an attack on the working classes, and commented that Sunday was their only day off. He thought that religious 'Dissenters' were principally behind the proposal as they 'thought that by closing public-houses they would be driving people into chapel. [but] If they could not make a man religious by persuasion he was sure that driving him into chapel would do him no good.'[52]

In the 1880s the interests of the members of the ASRS and the clergy coincided when genuine concern for the railwaymen's welfare on the part of the clergy enabled them to vociferously support the nine-hours movement and advance Sabbath observance. A number of Cardiff-based clergy and Christian industrialist Richard Cory are recorded as attending public meetings in support of the campaign.[53] A decade or so later in June of 1895 Pontypridd Chamber of Trade reviewed the Sunday train service provided by the Taff Vale, noting that the times had remained unchanged for the previous thirty-two years. TVR trains had operated on Sunday from the company's inception, but

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[50] Williams, *Railways in Wales*, p9
[51] *MTel*, May 31,1878, p[2]
[52] *MTel*, July 18, 1879, p[3]
[53] *RRvw*, Jan.6, 1882, p10

considerations of church attendance and keeping the Sabbath still held their place alongside 'convenience of trade'.[54] The desired change was for the evening trains to commence their journeys later so that railway employees could attend Chapel or Church before coming on duty, if they so wished. This would also allow ministers to return home on Sunday evening after conducting services. In addition a later train would enable 'people of business', who wanted an early arrival in London, to make a much more convenient connection at Cardiff. One speaker was concerned that they should not encourage Sunday travelling, and "those who travelled...must put up with a little inconvenience." He continued, widening the scope of his concerns to football and cricket matches, and urging the Chamber to "make a stand against anything likely to lead to desecration of the Sabbath."[55] It does appear that he was alone in his opinion and the discussion moved on to seeking the opinions of the local branch of the ASRS. It was recalled that in a previous discussion at the ASRS branch the men were opposed to any change.

The Trades Council including the ASRS representative took up the debate which revealed antagonism between some members of the two bodies. The main objection from the Council was to the Chamber's view that the opinions of the travelling public should be given greater weight than those of the railwaymen, rather than being given equal consideration. The Council's view was that the changes being sought were more for the convenience of individual members of the Chamber instead of the general good.[56] The matter then appears to have been dropped at that point by both sets of protagonists.

Party Politics

Legislation to extend the franchise in 1868 and again in 1884-5 totally transformed the political map of south Wales paving the way for the shift from Tory dominance to a Liberal hegemony and later to the rise of Labour. As the franchise was extended it gave a greater voice to the workingmen of the Valleys especially from 1884-5 when Glamorgan changed from a two seat county with 12,785 electors to one with five divisions and 43,449 electors.[57] By 1886 the Conservatives, predominantly Anglican landowners, had seen their traditional power undermined by Nonconformist Liberals. These were entrepreneurs, solicitors and other professionals. The split within the Liberal Party over Irish Home Rule was insignificant in Wales and in fact gave strength

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[54] *GFP*, June 22, 1895, p 8
[55] *Ibid*
[56] *Ibid*, July 13, 1895, p5
[57] Morgan, *Wales in British politics*, p64

to Welsh Liberal MPs who held the balance of power following the 1892 election. From 1886, as Morgan expresses it, 'the Welsh members of Parliament were transformed both in composition and in organisation. For the first time, they were to resemble a coherent and distinct party.'[58] But that 'distinct party' never declared itself a separate Welsh National Party, as had the Irish, despite internal movements such as 'Cymru Ffydd'. The previous year had also seen the election of miners' leader William Abraham (Mabon) for the Rhondda as the first Lib-Lab MP in Wales.[59]

Even though there was a 'unity of outlook' between working men and middle-class dissenters providing the support base for the Welsh Liberals,[60] the Conservatives did have a presence in the Valleys from the mid-1880s with the formation of Conservative Associations and the opening of Conservative or 'Constitutional' Clubs. The clubs at both Aberdare and Merthyr were opened in 1884.[61] Workingmen's Clubs and Institutes were also founded in this period,[62] but these were Liberal in politics until into the twentieth century. Conservative voting TVR railwaymen were not unknown but few in number, for example the Martin brothers of Treorchy who were 'staunch members' of the local Conservative Club.[63] In 1900 it was Liberal D A Thomas who as senior member for Merthyr facilitated the election of Keir Hardie as the first Labour MP in Wales.[64] This arrangement continued until 1915 with the replacement of D A Thomas by Edgar Jones as senior member in 1910[65] suggesting that the politics of many individuals continued to be influenced by the traditional Nonconformist-Liberal link.

As described in chapter seven, James Holmes, the ASRS organizer had been active in promoting an independent political party to represent the interests of labour. This would result in the formation of the Labour Party in 1906, which with the efforts of Keir Hardie and the ILP would see the end of Lib-Labism. None of the labour disputes on the Taff Vale were political strikes in the sense that the strikers had specific political aims, but both 1900 and 1911 had political outcomes. The strike of 1900 aided the formation of the Labour Party, whilst the move away from Liberalism to Socialism after 1911 is evidenced in the minutes of the Pontypridd branch of the ASRS as described below.

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[58] Ibid, p112
[59] Arnot, South Wales Miners, p25
[60] Morgan, Wales in British politics, p66
[61] MEx, Mar.22, 1884, p5; Oct.25, 1884, p8
[62] GFP, Nov.2, 1895, p5
[63] E A MARTIN, DES Mar.6,1908; A M Thomas, correspondence (2005)
[64] MEx, Sep.29, 1900, p3; The formation of the Labour Party has been discussed in chapter seven
[65] A J Church, Political History of Merthyr Tydfil 1832-1918 (Merthyr, c2000), pp33-4

The rapid change in regional and national politics was brought to the attention of the Taff Vale workmen through the trade union branches, as with the Pontypridd branch from 1910 to 1914. The 'Osborne Judgement' of 1909 that prevented trade unions from using their funds for political purposes both aroused the branch's ire and restricted its activities. A motion was passed instructing the EC to expel Osborne from the Society, and the branch declined an invitation to join the campaign for the incorporation of Pontypridd until the implications of the judgement had been clarified.[66] In August 1910 the branch resolved to affiliate to the East Glamorgan Labour Party, and in November 1912 agreed to accept an invitation to send a delegate to a conference called by the Independent Labour Party and the Fabian Society.[67] Other Labour organisations were also keen to secure the support of the branch and an offer of a speaker from the Central Labour College (CLC) was accepted for March 1913.[68] This was followed by an approach from the rival Ruskin College inviting the branch to send a delegate to a conference in Cardiff. A motion that the branch do nothing was overturned by an amendment and presumably a delegate was sent.[69] It appears that there were divergent views in the branch, but no further reference to Ruskin College has been noted. However, in April the branch agreed to send a contribution to the CLC, and a further speaker was received at the end of August.[70]

Also in August the branch was addressed by a speaker from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and at the following meeting a resolution in support of women's suffrage and the abolition of the 'Cat and Mouse' Act was passed, despite some opposition.[71] The resolution was in response to a letter from the WSPU seeking support. An amendment that the letter should be ignored was moved and seconded but received only six votes. The number cast in favour was not recorded, but as attendances could reach at least 50 it would appear that the vast majority of the attendees were in favour of women's suffrage.[72]

One topic which might be thought to have caught the attention of the branch, given its geographical position at the gateway to the Rhondda and contact with the CLC, is Syndicalism, but no reference has been noted. Its key contemporary text The Miners' Next Step was in any case specific to the coal industry, but even when the opportunity arose to discuss the issue of industrial unionism within the context of railway trade unions it was not taken. Locally the various railway unions had worked well together

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[66] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Jan.30, 1910; Feb.27, 1910
[67] Ibid, Mins. Aug.14, 1910; Nov.10, 1912
[68] Ibid, Mins. Feb.16, 1913; Mar.2, 1913
[69] Ibid, Mins. Mar.30, 1913
[70] Ibid, Mins. Apr.27, 1913; Aug.31, 1913
[71] Ibid, Mins. Aug.31, 1913
[72] Ibid, Mins. Nov.9, 1913

especially in August 1911 during the first national railway strike which is described in chapter seven. The amalgamation in 1913 that created the NUR omitted the ASLEF, and had little effect on the branch. When it came for the branch to instruct their delegate to the ASRS Special General Conference to consider the amalgamation no opinions were expressed and the delegate was given 'a free hand'.[73] However subsequent reaction to the Labour press coverage at the next meeting was more animated when there was a long discussion on what had appeared in the *Daily Herald* on January 22 and 24 'with reference to the fusion of the three societies and its officers'.[74] A resolution was carried expressing disgust at the 'unwarrantable criticism of the proposed rules of the new union' and they considered that the proprietors of the *Daily Herald* wanted to 'sling mud at the officials of our society'. The detail that had caused the upset was not recorded but it is possible that they were following the reaction of the ASRS General Secretary who denied that membership of the new union would be open to 'every class of worker employed on a railway'.[75]

Religion and Politics

The most significant intersection of Religion and Politics was between orthodox Christianity, steeped in the supernatural, and Socialism, which for some might be purely secular. For others it had its roots firmly in the teaching of the Bible, and for some Unitarianism provided a religious basis for their move towards Socialism.[76] The ensuing debate comes to prominence after 1890 continuing to the end of this study and beyond. The other two to be considered are the more practical matters of Disestablishment and Education, not that the Socialism debate did not have its practical outworking. English and Anglican landowners had long been seen as an enemy, and this was augmented in the process of industrialisation by the influx of capital and capitalists from England. Alongside the capitalists came Left-leaning working men who introduced ideas of socialism, for which there was initially no equivalent word in Welsh.[77] Among whom was James Holmes south Wales' secretary of the ASRS who led the 1900 strike. His biography gives no details of his views on religion, but he was friendly with a Unitarian minister in Doncaster who also conducted his funeral.[78] Liberalism had become identified with Welsh Nonconformity, but also it held a belief in the commonality of interests between worker and master, which was to

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[73] Ibid, Mins. Jan.19, 1913
[74] Ibid, Mins. Feb.2, 1913
[75] Bagwell, *Railwaymen*, p334
[76] Note the support for Unitarian teaching given by the *Glamorgan Free Press* as detailed above
[77] Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, p22
[78] Howell, 'HOLMES, James Headgoose', pp138-9

be swept aside, especially from the turn of the twentieth century, in the rise of class consciousness.

The ideological struggle between Socialism and Christianity largely focussed on a reinterpretation of Nonconformity playing down the 'spiritual' or supernatural, as with the New Theology[79] or the Unitarianism described above, and for some led to secularism. For the middle class Liberals it was a resolute opposition to any form of collectivism, or class struggle, and they supported forms of Christianity that demonised socialism. But equally socialists, like Keir Hardie, who might still use Christian imagery,[80] would be harsh in their criticism of traditional forms of Christianity. Hardie attacked the largely Christian mining company directors for their resistance to the miners' claim for a living wage whilst enjoying an exorbitant remuneration. Writing in the Labour Leader in 1898, during a miners' strike, Keir Hardie commented on Richard Cory's evangelistic work in which Cory warned the workers against Socialism, 'because all Socialists are atheists'.[81] The Cardiff-based coalowners John and Richard Cory were active evangelical Christians whose pits were served by the Taff Vale. Hardie also suggested that Miss Cory's concern for the starving Armenians would be better directed to the 'starving Welsh collier'.[82]

Use of Christian imagery is clearly illustrated by an 1895 editorial entitled 'The Eastertide of Labour', in which the editor reinterprets the Biblical account. The editor begins; 'At this Easter season, when all Christians look eastward and reverently commemorate the noble sacrifice of Him who taught that all men are brothers, we would turn from the crucifixion of the Carpenter of Nazareth in the days of old to the crucifixion of Labour in our own time.'[83] He continues with emphasis on the 'crucifixion' theme, acknowledging that some of the wealthy capitalists are generous in the sharing of their wealth, but others only recognized the forces of the market, with the bodies and souls of men bought at the lowest price. The capitalist might find no fault with his men, but the unremitting pressure of market competition demanded that the workmen be crucified. The capitalist takes the role of Pilate, consigning Labour to the cross, and Christ is described as the 'prototype of Labour'. Enquiring as to what can make the way to resurrection, the editor declares that it is not through legislation, such as Employers' Liability, that the 'salvation of society' can come about. Trades' unions,

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[79] PObs, Nov.26, 1910, p2
[80] G Dale, God's Politicians: The Christian Contribution to 100 years of Labour (London, 2000) p37
[81] Labour Leader, July 2, 1898 cited in Arnot, South Wales Miners, pp63-64
[82] Labour Leader article from 1898 cited in Arnot, South Wales Miners, pp48-49; Miss Cory was probably Richard's daughter Beatrice, see chapter nine
[83] GFP, Apr.20, 1895, p4

whilst a necessary defensive tactic, are not the answer, but rather the 'power of the Christian message'. This meant that individual capitalists needed a 'change of heart', leading to a new view of Labour with its dignity, arising from 'simple morals', 'love' and 'lowly service of Labour'.[84] This is allegory using a non-supernatural vision of Christ's death to portray the perceived plight of the workingman. In it his sufferings are equated with those of Christ, but the orthodox Christian views of a substitutionary death in which the sin of mankind was borne, and a physical resurrection guaranteeing eternal life, are ignored. It does not appear to have provoked a protest, and in any case was in sympathy with the platform given to a Unitarian protagonist in the previous issue.[85]

The *Glamorgan Free Press* quoted above does not appear to have been typical in its active promotion of such unorthodox interpretations of Christianity. But other debates on Socialism were reported and filled the correspondence columns in Liberal newspapers such as the *Merthyr Express*.[86] Political discussions were held in chapels and churches with clergy entering into the debate as set out below. Whilst no attempt has been made to discover the numeric balance between clergy who upheld orthodox Christianity and those with more progressive views, Rees, commenting on the latter among Nonconformist leaders, considers them to have been in a minority. He writes of them as 'a few...[that]...even pleaded the cause of Christian Socialists'.[87] Examination of the statistics for the main denominations (see figure 9.4) does not reveal an overwhelming move away from orthodox Christianity. This is especially true once allowance is made for the fading of the initial excitement engendered by the 1904-05 Revival. The one denomination that had dipped below its 1904 total before 1914 was Congregationalism. This may reflect a greater willingness to espouse Socialism by following the lead of Congregationalist ministers such as R J Campbell and T Rhondda Williams.[88] The aftermath of the Revival is discussed in chapter nine.

Some four years previous to the Easter-tide allegory a correspondent to the same paper, in defending Socialism, distinguished it from Communism in defining the moral basis of the former as 'justice' and the latter as 'altruism'. He proposed that Socialism was a step on the way to Communism, with the purist form of the latter being in agreement with the Sermon on the Mount. He defines the essence of Communism as 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need', and that of Socialism 'to each according to the amount and the merit of the work done'. The former is seen as a challenge to Christians to prove the relevance of their faith, whilst he considers

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[84] *Ibid*
[85] *Ibid*, Apr.13, 1895, p3
[86] e.g. *MExp*, July 2, 1910, p12
[87] Rees, *Chapels in the Valley*, p158
[88] Smith, *Religion and the Rise of Labour*, pp180 & 186

that Socialism is a negation of it. Nevertheless he regards Socialism as the 'vestibule' by which Communism is to be reached, and he invites the Churches to join with 'us [Socialists] to bring about the new order.'[89] In 1907 the debate continued in the pulpit as when the preacher at Sardis, Welsh Congregationalist Chapel, Pontypridd gave a sermon entitled 'Christ and the Social Order'. The reporter considered it a significant sermon, which brought together Socialism and Christianity, effectively claiming a crossover between the two. In it Rev Evans criticises the 'passive attitude of the Christian Church towards the great question that was agitating the country', and declared that 'his subject could be approached from two standpoints - Christianity as thy [the] outcome of Socialism or Socialism the outcome of Christianity'; he opted for the latter. To him Socialism needed Christ, his authority, moral tone and love, and the pulpits had to rise to the challenge.[90] Here some Christians were bringing Socialism into the Church, but in chapter nine two young men raised within the Church are recorded turning their backs on it. They were Noah Ablett and Arthur Horner who briefly worked for the Taff Vale.

Some Taff Vale workers were exposed to the views of clerical supporters of Socialism when in 1913 Rev George Neighbour offered to address the Pontypridd branch of the ASRS. The offer was accepted.[91] George Neighbour had been the minister of an English Baptist church but was opposed by the deacons for his Socialist views. He subsequently left and formed a short-lived Labour Church.[92]

An exchange between two local clergymen illustrates the differing voices, which those that attended chapel or church might encounter; these two not entirely displaying the expected allegiances. The topic to be debated at this public meeting was, 'Is Socialism opposed to Christianity? The report records that there was a 'fair attendance'. Nonconformist Rev D J Evans spoke for the motion and was opposed by Rev Gower Jones, Vicar of Glyntaff. Evans argued for 'Social Welfare' rather than Socialism, and took up the argument of the Rev R J Campbell that Socialism was a religion, concluding that it was not Christianity. He declared that 'He did not stand there as a Liberal, nor a Tory - God forbid. (Laughter and applause.)'[93] Yet he revealed his Liberal tendencies in his argument that Socialism would require the removal of individual liberty. He contended that Christianity was aimed at the regeneration of the individual. In his reply Rev Jones referred to the Sermon on the Mount, and enquired as to whether his opponent saw it as impractical, and went on to draw on the teaching

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[89] *GFP*, July 11, 1891, p3
[90] *PObs*, Dec.21,1907, p3
[91] GlamRO, D/D NUR 1/1i, Mins. Sep.28, 1913
[92] *Llais Llafur*, Oct.19, 1907, p8; Oct.26, 1907, p6 cited in Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, p59
[93] *PObs*, Nov.26, 1910, p2

of Isaiah who he said, 'thundered against landowners and landlordism'. He considered Socialism to be practical Christianity. The reporter records that the extensive debate ended amicably without a vote.[94]

The Easter theme was taken up again in 1912 when the Rev T E Nicholas, one of several Nonconformist ministers who had embraced Socialism, writing in the most Socialist of Merthyr's newspapers, the *Merthyr Pioneer (MPnr)*, declared that, 'It was not the cross of Calvary which would save the world, but the cross of suffering and self sacrifice which each person had to carry.'[95] Nicholas, a friend of Keir Hardie, was not local to the Taff Vale's catchment area, but there were other such ministers in Merthyr for example the Rev David Pughe and his deputy Rev Percy Halling, Wesleyan Methodists, who received the approval of the *Merthyr Pioneer*.[96] A majority of the Welsh miners' leaders had grown up within the 'chapel culture' of the Valleys, and many had acquired their public speaking skills as lay preachers. These were men like Arthur Horner, Noah Ablett and Arthur Cook, who abandoned orthodox Christianity for left wing politics. So in many churches and chapels that the TVR employee might attend, or in the newspapers he might read, the interrelationship between Socialism and Christianity would be drawn to his attention. The trade union branch to which he belonged might embrace the new ideas of Socialism and Syndicalism emanating from the CLC (see above), but the annual church parade was still part of the branch's life, as described in chapter nine.

Whilst many English immigrants were Nonconformists, others were adherents, at least nominally, of the established church, and probably not so interested in the disestablishment debate.[97] However, for Welsh Nonconformists, especially from rural areas, it was an important issue. It had affected their lives almost literally from cradle to the grave. In rural areas particularly the only available school might be a National School, where the Nonconformist children would be taught the Anglican catechism. Later when time came to marry, if the chapel the couple might attend was not licensed for marriages, they would often opt for the Registrar's Office rather than be married in an Anglican church.[98] Finally, when death called, a Nonconformist could not be buried in a churchyard after a service conducted by a minister of their own denomination.

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[94] *Ibid*

[95] *MPnr*, Feb.10, 1912, p8

[96] *Ibid*, Sep.7, 1912, p4

[97] See figure 9.2

[98] At least five examples have been noted from questionnaires of where an employee was a member of a Nonconformist church but married in a Register Office spread between 1866 and 1923

Although this last disadvantage was removed in 1880,[99] its shadow was cast forward into the twentieth century when it was 'suggested before the Royal Commission on the Welsh Churches in 1907 that many Nonconformists refused to take advantage of the Act, lest they antagonise the rector'.[100] But it was largely rendered irrelevant through the construction of extensive municipal cemeteries, such as the Cefn, at Merthyr (1859) and Glyntaff at Pontypridd (1871).[101]

Socialism might be the most significant ideological and theological debate within religious and labour organisations, but the long-lived struggles between the Established Church and Nonconformity had a very political element centred on Disestablishment and Education. The 1851 Census of Religious Observance clearly showed where the religious sympathies of the Welsh nation lay.[102] Increasingly as national consciousness grew the Church of England represented a foreign power with the tithes as a tax which did not benefit the majority, burial restrictions that reached beyond the grave and control of schools which permitted indoctrination of the young. The only place where this conflict could be resolved was the Houses of Parliament, where the necessary legislation would have to be enacted. The close parallels of the struggle for Irish Home Rule are referred to above. The first attempt to introduce a Disestablishment Bill, in this case for England and Wales, immediately followed the Irish Disestablishment Act of 1869, but attracted the support of only seven Welsh MPs.[103] By 1879 Rev Edwards, Dean of Bangor, had this bleak assessment of the position of the Established Church in Wales; 'If the large majority of the Welsh people are to continue permanently outside of the Church, all their ecclesiastical endowments cannot be retained by her clergy.'[104] Even with a Conservative government in power, he noted, two-thirds of voters had elected MPs favouring Disestablishment. This prompted the editor's riposte that it would have been three-quarters, if it were not for intimidation by 'the more wealthy church-adherents - Conservative land-owners and Conservative labour-employers.'[105] Dean Edwards was urged to take his comments to their logical conclusion, i.e. Disestablishment and disendowment, and the editor made a comparison with the

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[99] Alec R Vidler, *The Pelican History of the Church: The Church in an Age of Revolution* (London, 1968 first pub.1961) p137

[100] *Royal Commission on the Welsh Churches, Evidence*, vol.iii, qu.22, 147-9 cited in Morgan, *Wales in British politics*, f/n 2, p62

[101] *Glamorgan Archives*: 'MUNICIPAL CEMETERIES', http://www.glamro.gov.uk/adobe/municipal.pdf (accessed 20/09/10)

[102] See chapter four; the 1851 Census apportioned attendees as 80% chapel, 20% Anglican church

[103] Davies, *History of Wales*, p434

[104] *MTel*, June 27, 1879, p[2]

[105] *Ibid*

eighteenth century 'Reformers' such as Daniel Rowlands and Howell Harris, who had had to leave the Church.[106]

From the 1880s the Liberal party concentrated on Welsh Disestablishment and by 1891 under the 'Newcastle Programme' it featured second only to Irish Home Rule. This portrayed the Tory opponents of Disestablishment as anti-Welsh.[107] Various unsuccessful attempts were made in the mid-1890s until the fall of the Liberal Government in 1895. The incoming Liberal government of 1906 had a clear majority of 108, but without the same level of Welsh influence, disestablishment was stalled by the appointment of a royal commission on the church in Wales. Davies claims that the Welsh Revival of 1904-5 'envigorated the disestablishment campaign', with the peak of attendance among the Nonconformists coinciding with the fact finding phase of the royal commission. The results demonstrated that Nonconformists outnumbered Anglicans three to one.[108] Asquith introduced an unsuccessful Disestablishment Bill in 1909, and the debate continued on the correspondence pages of the local press.[109] With the power of the House of Lords weakened by 1911, it was now possible for such a measure to gain the Royal Assent, which it did on 18 September 1914, but the First World War delayed its implementation until 1 April 1920.[110]

Education in Wales was not just a political issue; it was a religious one as well. Prior to Foster's Education Act of 1870, elementary education relied principally on the two main voluntary societies, the one Nonconformist and the other Anglican, namely the British and Foreign and the National respectively. The 1870 Act made provision for local School Boards to be created in areas where there were insufficient 'voluntary' schools. A further Act in 1880 made attendance compulsory for five to ten year olds. School Boards were funded out of local rates, whereas the voluntary schools received grants directly from Government.[111] One of the most contentious points for school boards was the provision of religious instruction, for which they were responsible.[112] The key aim of Nonconformists was to ensure that their children would not be exposed to teaching of the Anglican Catechism, either in Board schools, or National schools in areas where there was sufficient capacity and therefore no justification for the creation of a School

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[106] Ibid
[107] Davies, History of Wales, pp434 & 463
[108] Ibid, p507
[109] MEx, Jan.6, 1912, p12
[110] Davies, History of Wales, p507
[111] Ibid, pp435-36
[112] See below for reports of the local debate

Board.[113] The strength of feeling was such that many, like Merthyr MP Henry Richard, argued that religion should not be taught in schools, and in fact half of the 320 Welsh School Boards took this position.[114]

It was a debate that filled many column inches of local newspapers, as is illustrated by the following example from *The Merthyr Express* in 1883. In reporting the proceedings of the Gelligaer School Board under the headline 'The Question of Bible Reading again' there is a detailed report of the debate, which is mainly between the four clergymen on the Board, on whether the Bible should be taught in Board Schools. The Anglicans were in favour, and the Nonconformists against. One suggestion on how to resolve the impasse was that the Bibles should be paid for by voluntary subscription. Apparently some time previously the Nonconformists had conceded that The Lord's Prayer should be said at the beginning and end of the school day, and therefore, in the Vicar's eyes had already 'betrayed their principles'. Previous debates had evidently been quite acrimonious with the Rector having called the Board 'quite a Godless Board', and in continuing his opposition to existing policy accused the Board of 'sowing the wind' and it would 'reap the whirlwind'. He went on to accuse his opponents of '...opposing the children being taught the fear of God and the wisdom of the Bible.'[115] The debate continued with the Nonconformists arguing that, even if the Bibles were paid for voluntarily, Board School teachers were still 'State officials', with their pay coming from rates and taxes. They argued that Sunday Schools were the appropriate places for religious education and quoted Her Majesty's Inspectors' opinions as saying that "The Sunday schools have done more good in teaching religion in ten years than all the day schools in fifty years."[116] The vicar's motion was lost six to three. Unlike the Nonconformists on the Gelligaer School Board, there were others such as the editor of the *Merthyr Telegraph* who saw the uninterpreted reading of the Bible as an essential for the moral instruction of the young and as a counter to sectarianism.[117].

In 1891 with the question of support of denominational schools again on the Parliamentary agenda the Left-leaning *Glamorgan Free Press*[118] set out the arguments in favour of Board versus Voluntary schools with ten reasons 'why we should have the School Board System'. Various statistics are quoted to prove the points made, and

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[113] The attitude of the Taff Vale directors to funding schools out of local rates is discussed in chapter nine.
[114] Davies, *History of Wales*, p435
[115] *MEx*, June 16, 1883, p8
[116] *Ibid*
[117] *MTel*, November 1, 1878, p[2]; The Editor's Nonconformist credentials were made clear by his reaction to Dean Edward's comments on disestablishment noted above.
[118] The *Glamorgan Free Press* demonstrated its political leanings through including frequent discussion of Socialism and Unitarianism in its columns particularly by inclusion of pro-Socialist and pro-Unitarian articles and correspondence.

much of the argument against Voluntary Schools can be classed as criticism of their democratic deficit compared with Board Schools with lack of accountability with regard to taxpayers' money. It was argued that that money was being used to propagate the views of a specific denomination, and that with grants and parents' fees it could be without any charge to the denomination. The concept of Bible teaching without sectarianism is seen as one of the arguments for Board schools, and also because 'conscience was more fully respected'. Under point eight the claim was that the 'Conscience Clause' was less used on Board Schools because '...the religious instruction is Biblical, and not limited by the doctrines of a particular Church.'[119] This was, as noted above, at variance with the views of the, by then, late Henry Richard and other Nonconformists. Richard had sat on the Royal Commission that had resulted in the Cross Report of 1888 on elementary education. One of its most controversial recommendations was No. 183 of the Majority Report, which sought a fundamental revision of the 1870 principle that rate aid should be available to board schools, and not to their denominational rivals.[120]

The subsidizing of denominational schools from local rates continued to be a contentious point, brought to the fore in the 1891 Free Education Act, and firmly established under the 1902 Education Act, which created a furore among Nonconformists as is illustrated by the following report from Merthyr.[121] The reporter wrote that the previous Sunday evening 'had witnessed another demonstration of the Baptist spirit of defiance to the new Education Act', as the pastor of Nazareth English Baptist Church declared that 'there were responsibilities on nonconformists and educationalists - they should refuse to pay the new Education Rate'. He had appealed to the "heritage of religious freedom", and the reporter concluded that '[t]he demeanour of the congregation expressed concurrence.'[122].

As with the Gelligaer School Board, described above, membership of Boards would often include clergy, and Davies comments that 'School Board elections were ferocious sectarian battles'[123]. The non-clerical members were also from the middle-classes, and by 1900 this had become a concern of the Pontypridd Trades and Labour Council, when the ASRS representative, and Taff Vale Engine Driver, David Herbert, spoke during a debate on the forthcoming School Board Election insisting that workingmen

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[119] *GFP*, June 6,1891, p 5
[120] M Hyndman, *Schools and Schooling in England and Wales: A Documentary History* (London, 1978) pp235-45
[121] Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p105
[122] *MEx*, June 27, 1903, p6
[123] Davies, *History of Wales*, p436

should be represented.[124] School Boards were abolished under the 1902 Act and the responsibility transferred to County and County Borough Councils.

At the start of the period of this study in 1878 the Pontypridd Parish Church and two local Nonconformist chapels combined to run a combined treat for their Sunday Schools,[125] but it is suspect as to whether the same co-operation could have existed in 1910 when at the height of the Tonypandy riots the Vicar of Pontypridd launched a vitriolic attack on the lack of religious education in schools and the failure of Welsh Nonconformity. In his review of the violent disorder which had gripped the Rhondda he had concluded that

> ...all this mischief was accomplished by a body of young, irresponsible men, ranging from the age of 16 to 24 years. It was not so much a shame as sorrow which filled his heart as he witnessed the results of this uncontrollable physical energy and ignorant spirit. It saddened him because he realised that these young men had not had the opportunities of knowing better. They were the product of their present-day school education, an education which, however perfect it might be so far as their bodily and mental culture might be concerned, ignores the higher part of our being – the spiritual. It was an education without God; the Bible had been banished from the schools: a vague something has been substituted which in popular language bore the name of Undenominationalism.

He went on to ask 'Where are the Nonconformists and where are the Bible-lovers today?' and declared that Nonconformity had failed, and it was only the Established Church with its Apostolic inheritance that could, in time, provide an answer. He blamed the Nonconformists for not reaching the young working class men, but admits that the Church had not done so either.[126] It appears that in the twenty years since the *Glamorgan Free Press* article in support of Board Schools quoted above Nonconformists had had their way and religious instruction had been excluded from the schools of the Rhondda.

Conclusion

As noted at the beginning of this chapter the extent of the employees' involvement is unclear. In many cases it would be purely passive in terms of circumstances, as where one lived, with whom one worked, or with whom one fell in love. In the first, location might determine the denomination of the school attended, in the second the political views encountered in the workplace and in the third case, the church or chapel where one might marry and continue in membership.

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[124] *PObs*, Sep. 29, 1900
[125] *PDH*, Aug. 10, 1878, p2
[126] *GFP*, Nov.18, 1910 p10

The directors of the company would be less involved at a local level in Glamorgan, as most lived elsewhere and principally in England, but would surely not be ignorant of the issues of the day. The issues discussed above which did come to the attention of the Board were dutifully handled purely with respect to the company's finances, and not revealing denominational allegiances (see chapter nine), although this was not always true in political matters.

The perhaps unanswerable question is to what extent did the presence or absence of religious education in school guide the behaviour of Taff Vale employees, especially at times of heightened tensions in industrial relations, between man and master and between strikers and blacklegs. Did the declamations of the Anglican clergyman with regard to the unruly behaviour of young men have some justification?

South Wales society was divided in many ways and each area of division produced its own tensions, and it is in the often inseparable areas of Politics and Religion that they were at their most intense. The latter is examined in chapter nine concentrating on the involvement of the Taff Vale men and their masters.

Section 4: Religion and Politics

Chapter 9 Religious Thought, Practice and Influence

Introduction

In chapter eight the various fault lines in late nineteenth century south Wales were identified and described, noting the intertwining of politics and religion. In this chapter the influence of religion on individual employees and the corporate life of the TVR is surveyed and analysed through the examination of local newspapers, questionnaires, company minutes and the records of the Railway Mission. Reasons are sought for the atypical denominational allegiances and uneven effects of the religious revivals of 1878 and 1904 apparent among Taff Vale employees. The chapter also continues the exploration of the *Chapel/Church* sub-community from chapter four.

Nonconformity was the faith of the nation rather than what was seen as the imposed alien establishment that was the Church of England. It was large numbers of nonconformist chapels that lined the streets of every community, with perhaps a solitary Anglican church, erected to serve the rapidly expanding mining communities, with a new parish carved out of the vast ancient parishes that were stretched out across barren mountainsides.[1] Only in the Vale of Glamorgan would there have been little change in parochial structures (see chapter one). Chapels of the old dissent, e.g. Baptist and Independent, had been joined early in the nineteenth century by the Calvinistic Methodists, and the Wesleyan and other Methodist groups, which sprang from the revival of the mid-eighteenth century. Apart from the Primitive Methodists most established both Welsh and English-speaking chapels.[2]

Although principally a Welsh medium organisation, the CMs encouraged the formation of English speaking chapels to preserve their language and culture whilst still encouraging the non-Welsh speaking incomers to practise their Christian faith.[3] Services in the Anglican churches might also be in Welsh, but less likely to be exclusively so.[4] Many smaller denominations and sects could be encountered across south Wales, with Mormons being quite prominent in Merthyr,[5] and whilst they, like the

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[1] e.g. *Kelly's Directory: South Wales*, pp42-43, in 1895 Aberdare district had 10 Anglican churches compared with 45 Nonconformist places of worship

[2] *Ibid*, pp42-43, 290, 464, 471-72, 503-04, 527, 588, 610, 634-36, 775

[3] Jones, 'Religious Frontier', p211; For an example see AbLib, W W Price Collection, RM14/1/1, *Trinity English Calvinistic Methodist Church, Aberdare*

[4] *Kelly's Directory: South Wales*, pp42-43, of the 10 Anglican churches in the Aberdare district, two held services in Welsh, whilst approximately 25 of the 45 Nonconformist places of worship were Welsh speaking

[5] *MTel*, May 31, 1878, p[2]; *MEx*, Apr.28, 1900, p6

SA, might receive a mixed press to begin with, soon became part of the religious variety within the community alongside Roman Catholics and Jews. The arrival of the large number of English immigrants was seen as a dilution of the influence of Welsh Nonconformity and facilitating the rise of left-wing political ideology. As Holton comments, '[t]he erosion of the miners' traditional non-conformist culture by large-scale migration into the valleys was also significant in undermining the Nonconformist emphasis on harmony between the classes.'[6]

For all that violent death was a common visitor to the Valleys in the form of mining and railway accidents it does not appear to have provoked religious comment in the local press. Clergy would be involved comforting those who mourned and actively supported fundraising for the ASRS Orphan Fund. Yet only one incidence has been discovered where a preacher had used sudden death as a call to prepare for an after-life, see below.

Periodically from the eighteenth century parts, or all, of the Principality had experienced religious revivals culminating in the last national revival of 1904-05.[7] The start date of this project was determined by the revival that accompanied the expansion of the Salvation Army into the south Wales valleys in 1878-79. Its close was set by the outbreak of the First World War that occurred ten years after the start of the 1904 revival.

Statistics for Denominational Allegiance

The difficulties in ascertaining denominational allegiances have been set out in Sources and Methods. Whilst the findings on figure 9.1 are not extensive they do illustrate the range and proportions of church and chapel membership among the Taff Vale community. When analysed by place of birth they mirror the origins of Taff Vale employees as a whole,[8] and as shown by figure 9.2 ethnic origins did have a bearing on which church one might attend. However, there does not appear to have been any direct correlation between a man's grade and the denomination he might support. For example a platelayer might be a staunch Anglican and the company chairman Wesleyan Methodist.[9]

A key issue is the division of Welsh Nonconformists into two categories of 'members' and 'adherents'. The latter group were the many who attended church with some

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[6] Bob Holton, *British Syndicalism 1900-1914* (London, 1976), p80
[7] Davies, *History of Wales*, p360
[8] Based on separate data samples used for figures 1.2/1.3 (English 33%, Welsh 66%) and 9.1/9.2 (English 34%, Welsh 61%)
[9] e.g. Philip POWELL, platelayer, *Servants of Steam*, p26; Joseph WESTON-STEVENS, Chairman, Jacqueline Sanders, correspondence (Oct., 2005)

degree of regularity, but had not committed themselves to full membership.[10] The Royal Commission of 1906 revealed that the proportions of adherents was significantly higher in English-speaking chapels, and Davies quotes the ratios as '168 total to 100' for Welsh-speaking chapels, and '279 total to 100' for the English ones.[11] This differentiation can make the comparison of membership statistics difficult, as some denominations would include them whilst others did not. No attempt has been made to determine the category of individual employees, although the level of church involvement can sometimes be determined from the source data. In the case of the Anglican Church there was no concept of 'adherent', and statistics would generally include all those eligible to communicate, whether in practice they might have done so.[12]

Membership, in almost all denominations, would be preceded by baptism, but the mode and timing of baptism would vary. For most denominations baptism would be administered to infants, with the exception of those who joined a church in adulthood, but who had not been baptised as infants. The main exceptions to this pattern were the Baptists who baptised only on 'profession of faith', i.e. the candidates would always be of an age to request baptism for themselves.[13] For Nonconformists the next step was to be received into membership at a customary age, usually from mid-teens, but as all baptised Anglicans were regarded as members of the Church, there was not the same emphasis on becoming a member, although confirmation would probably be administered at a similar age.[14] The different understanding of baptism would at times prove a hindrance to harmonious relations between Baptists and other Nonconformists, even at times of revival.[15] The differences between Nonconformists and Anglicans went much deeper, not just in terms of theology, but also in politics with the issues of Disestablishment and Education, see chapter eight.

The data collected represents the denomination(s) with which an individual employee was associated at some stage during their employment by the TVR. As most were probably static for most of their careers, it is likely that there would be very few changes of place of worship, and even fewer changes of denomination.[16] The available obituaries support this with accounts of lengthy periods in membership or attendance, and service.

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[10] Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, pp114-15
[11] Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p175
[12] *Ibid*, p176
[13] W M S West, *Baptist Principles* (London, 1963) p31
[14] *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), p263-64,297
[15] MEx, Nov.26, 1904, pp4&11
[16] See chapter three

If at no other time, religion touched the lives of the employees in the various rites of passage, viz. baptism, marriage and burial. In the case of the marriage ceremony, as with religious education in schools, staunch Nonconformists might exclude themselves from formal religion and be married at a Register Office. This could be as an alternative to the local parish church where the couple's own chapel was not registered for weddings.[17] Brooks in his history of a typical Valleys' chapel records that it was not unusual for the marriage to take place at a chapel of choice that could be at some distance from the bride's home. This typically occurred when they were seeking a more fashionable place of worship, or where the local chapel was not licensed for marriages. After marriage it was customary for the wife to transfer to the husband's place of worship.[18] Whilst in some chapels a change of denomination might be frowned on, the average TVR employee or potential spouse might not concern themselves with regard to the denomination of their intended, and this openness extended to intermarriage between those of church and chapel backgrounds.[19] Therefore the church or chapel in which the marriage took place is not necessarily an indication of the denominational allegiance of the employee. Membership of a particular denomination might be a label which one was expected to keep, and when a church member moved home a letter of transfer would be provided to introduce the person to a church of the same denomination at the new location. As Brooks expresses it 'Leaving for another denomination was not a situation that would have been condoned.'[20] It may have been that the Baptists were stricter in this regard than other Nonconformists, and it was probably not so unusual to change denomination when getting married and or moving location. A good example is William Doolan who changed denomination at least twice, from Anglican to Wesleyan Methodist and finally to Primitive Methodist. This family is also unusual in that they were Irish immigrants, but were of Protestant stock rather than of the customary Catholic allegiance.[21]

The final rite of passage, burial, may be a no more reliable indicator of religious belief, in part due to demographic factors. At the start of the industrial expansion there were a few very large parishes covering the Glamorganshire coalfield, each presumably with its churchyard. The chapels of the old Dissent and Calvinistic Methodists also often

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[17] Examples of Nonconformists marrying in a Register Office: Correspondence, P Carroll (2003-04); G Jones (2005-07); Mrs M M Manley (2005); Mrs J M Bryant (2005); T Rees (2004)
[18] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church* (Cardiff, 2008) pp92&170
[19] e.g. Norman BENNETT (Baptist) married Deborah Morgan (Anglican) at St David's Anglican church, Pontypridd in 1928, Mrs S Stone, correspondence (2005-07); William DOOLAN (Anglican) married Mary McDougall (Wesleyan) at Wesleyan English Chapel, Ferndale in 1894, correspondence, G Doolan (2006)
[20] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church*, p92
[21] G Doolan, correspondence (2006)

had their own burial grounds.[22] As new Anglican churches and Nonconformist chapels were established to provide for the expanding population, not all would have had a graveyard. Thus population growth led to the establishment of large municipal cemeteries, such as Glyntaff in Pontypridd, or the Cefn in Merthyr, see chapter eight.

Death, even in the present secular age, is customarily marked by a religious service. For some the local parish church or Anglican clergyman would suffice if the deceased had no other denominational links at time of death. But in a land of Nonconformists the uncommitted would more likely turn to a chapel with past family associations than to the parish church, a practice which extends to the present day.[23]

Funeral customs varied by period and family, and followed family and national traditions. The form of service would reflect the ritual of the denomination. The norm was for only men to be invited to attend, either at the church, chapel or graveside. However, the women of the family might be involved if the formalities commenced with a short service or simple prayer at the home of the deceased before proceeding to the chapel or cemetery. Only after the end of the period under review did the custom begin to change. Then the male mourners would walk and the women would travel by carriage.[24]

The ceremonial minimum would be the reading of the burial rite over the grave in the presence of former colleagues, male friends and male family members at a public cemetery.[25] At the other extreme there might be a full choral service in church in advance of a graveside committal.[26] Within the range of proceedings, there were some that included ritual specific to the friendly society to which the deceased had belonged.[27] Particularly where a railwayman had been an active participant in the life the local churches, more than one clergyman might be involved in the funeral service.[28] Sometimes newspaper reports from a service might include the hymns sung. These reveal the popularity of two hymns in particular; 'Jesu, Lover of My Soul' and 'Lead Kindly Light'.[29]

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[22] e.g. 'Groeswen, Caerphilly (1752)', *Capel Newsletter*, No.43 (Spring, 2004)
[23] Conversations with Rev N Howarth minister of Caerphilly English Baptist Church (2006-07)
[24] First noted example, funeral of Mary Parr, wife of George PARR, *ALdr*, Oct.30, 1915, p3
[25] W J MEREDITH, *MEx*, Jan.27, 1900, p5
[26] Robert BUTLER, *ALdr*, Dec.2, 1922, p3
[27] Daniel WELLS, *ALdr*, June 7, 1913, p3
[28] Wife of George PARR, *ALdr*, Oct.30, 1913, p3
[29] e.g. John LITSOM, *ALdr*, Aug.15, 1908, p3; Charles PARR, *ALdr*, Jan.5, 1924

Figure 9.1 Main Denominational Allegiances of TVR Staff
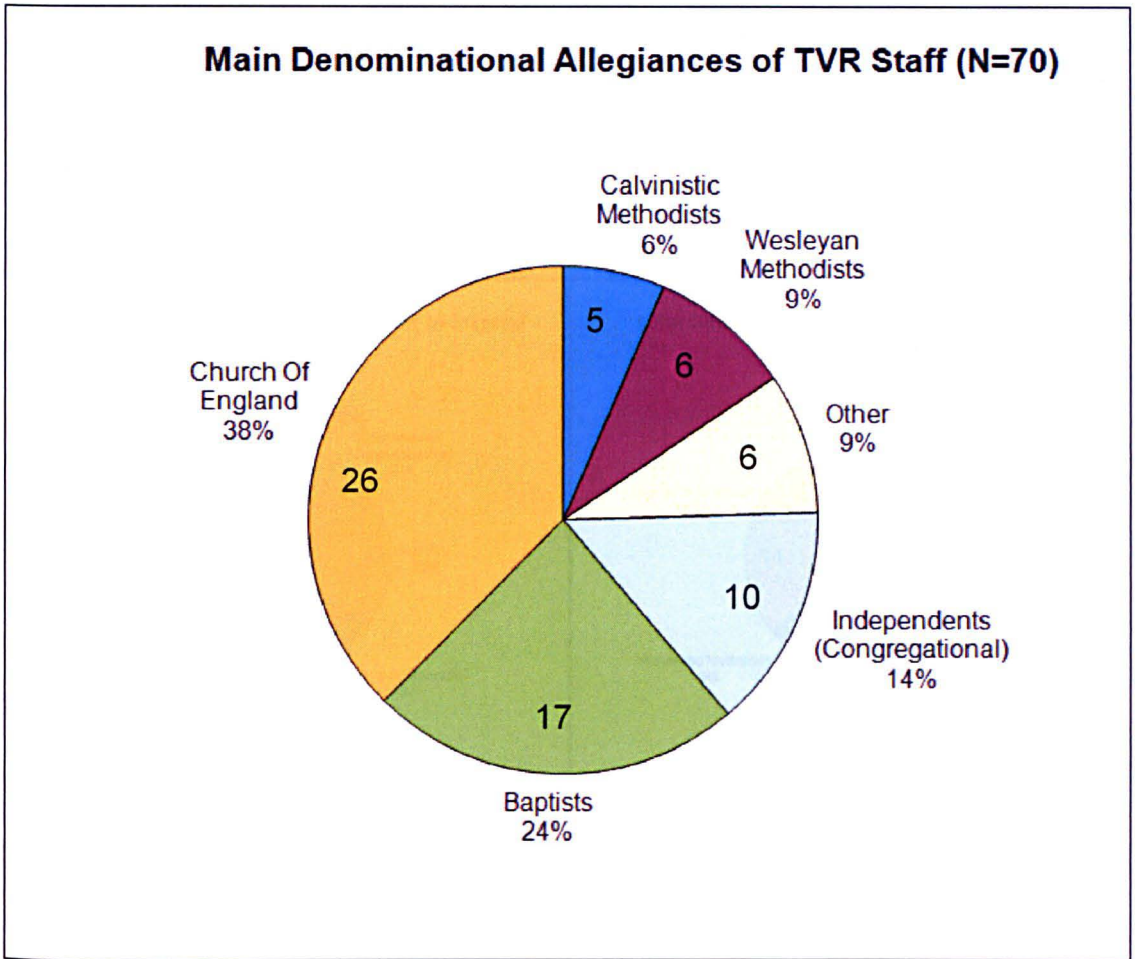
Main Denominational Allegiances of TVR Staff (N=70)

Calvinistic
Methodists
6%

Wesleyan
Methodists
9%

5

6

Church Of
England
38%

26

Other
9%

6

10

Independents
(Congregational)
14%

17

Baptists
24%

Sources: Derived from a survey of local newspapers, questionnaires completed by
correspondents and the GWR Magazine; NC HO107; RG9; RG10; RG11;
RG12; RG13
Note the number in each category is included on the segment of the chart.
'Other' comprises two Roman Catholics and four various Nonconformists

Although there were members of smaller denominations represented among Taff Vale
employees, the vast majority fell within the five main divisions, see figure 9.1. These
clearly differ from the figures for the whole of Wales from the mid-1890s in figure 4.5,
where the dominant denomination was CM followed by Independent with Anglican in
third place. There are two main reasons for the disparity between the two charts.
Firstly denominational support was not evenly spread across Wales; Glamorgan was
the stronghold of Independents and Baptists.[30] Secondly, denominational loyalties
were related to national and linguistic background. Calvinistic Methodists were mainly
Welsh-speaking and predominated in Welsh-speaking areas of Wales, and among
those who had emigrated from those areas to the south Wales coalfield. Some TVR
employees had come from such districts, but a larger than average proportion had

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[30] Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, pp15-16

come from England, see figures 1.2 and 1.3. The high proportion of Anglicans among Taff Vale employees can be explained by this English bias and is consistent with the proportions of Church communicants from Mann's Census of Religion, of 52 percent in England and 32 percent in Wales.[31]

Figure 9.2 Denomination of employees: By Birth Country and Parentage who entered TVR employment between 1844 and 1922
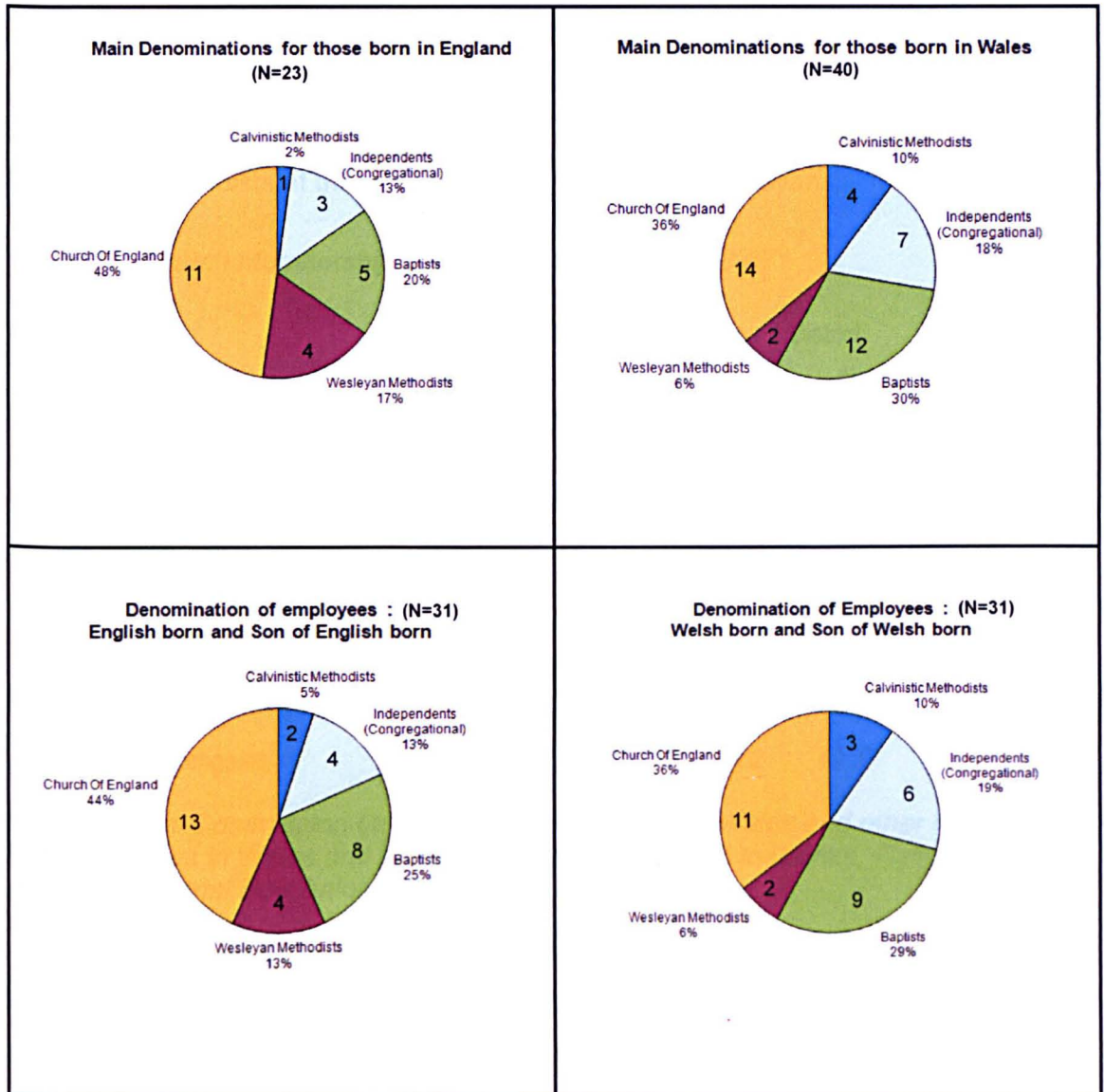
Sources: Derived from a survey of local newspapers, questionnaires completed by correspondents and the *GWR Magazine*; NC HO107; RG9; RG10; RG11; RG12; RG13

Note the number in each category is included on the segment of the chart

The relative strengths of the denominations were not constant, and the big three Nonconformist groupings were unevenly affected by the 1904-5 Revival, and this is shown in figure 9.4 There were also other factors that affected the relative strengths of

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[31] Davies, *History of Wales*, p360

denominations, some working against each other. For example, the minister of an English-speaking CM chapel in Aberdare complained that many of his congregation were not convinced CMs and had come from a range Nonconformist denominations in England.[32] But there were instances where English Nonconformists whilst shunning the Anglican Church at home found the Welsh chapels too emotional and the Welsh Anglicans livelier than their English counterparts.[33] For the majority of TVR-based worshippers it was national origin that most affected the choice of their place of worship, as can be demonstrated from figure 9.2. From this sample it does appear that the children of English immigrants tended to come more in line with their Welsh colleagues. This can be observed from the increased proportions of Baptists and Calvinistic Methodists at the expense of Anglicans and Wesleyans.

Table 9.1 Church Membership related to Population 1906-07

	Aberdare & District		Merthyr & District	
	No.	%	No.	%
Population	44,104	100.00	62,109	100.00
Anglican communicants	2,741	6.21	3,649	5.88
Nonconformist members	13,942	31.61	14,662	23.61
Nonconformist adherents	10,744	24.36	12,351	19.89
All Nonconformists	24,686	55.97	27,013	43.49
All churchgoers	27,427	62.19	30,662	49.37

Source: Royal Commission on the Church of England in Wales and other religious bodies in Wales and Monmouthshire (1906) cited in Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution, Appendix I

Table 9.1 shows the scale of church attendance in the immediate aftermath of the 1904-05 Revival when Nonconformist membership was at its zenith.[34] This demonstrates the dominant position of Nonconformity and the variation between districts. Nearly ten percent of TVR employees worked in Aberdare or Merthyr, see figure 5.1. The denominational ties of 70 Taff Vale people are depicted on figure 9.1. In the next section it is noted that there were 48 employees who at some stage had belonged to the Railwaymen's Christian Association, and given the evangelical nature and English bias of the RMCA it is probable that they were members of English-speaking Nonconformist chapels. This coincides with the allegiance of the three whose

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[32] AbLib, W W Price Collection, RM14/1/2, *Trinity English Calvinistic Methodist Church, Aberdare: Centenary 1867-1967* (Aberdare, 1967)
[33] Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p75
[34] See figure 9.4

church membership is known. Taking the two figures together this gives an indication of denominational loyalties for approximately 120 individuals. Together with Mann's conclusion that 40 percent of the Welsh population attended church, it is clear many others would have belonged to a church or chapel.[35]

The Railway Mission

The Mission was founded in 1881 as a development of earlier organisations. Its aims were to bring a distinctly evangelical Christian message to all railway employees, and amalgamate all such evangelistic activity within the one organisation.[36] In 1884 the Railwaymen's Christian Association was formed to provide personal membership for railway employees and associate membership for supporters of the Mission. There were soon branches throughout the British Isles.[37] However, the RMCA did not make much progress in south Wales, with only the Cardiff and Aberdare branches serving the TVR districts and having TVR members.[38] Although it may not be possible to establish the reason for certain, it is probable that chapel life satisfied the spiritual needs of the Welsh and might be seen as the appropriate proselytising agency. Surviving membership lists from 1884 to 1900 include the names of 48 Taff Vale employees. The place of birth has been established for 34 of these which revealed that nearly two thirds had been born in England, and of the Welsh-born only one was from outside of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. The Aberdare branch had been a flourishing branch, but due to the lack of an affordable meeting room it had closed by 1892.[39] The Secretary, Taff Vale engine driver George Gratton, reported to a RM conference at Dowlais in December 1891 that, 'The mission had fallen through at Aberdare from the lack of sufficient funds to pay the rent of the hall.'[40] Gratton and at least nine other RMCA members were also members of the ASRS, eight of them based at Aberdare.[41] The evangelical nature of the former was apparently not then seen as being conflict with membership of a trade union. During the 1900 dispute at least one joint member did come out on strike.[42] The Mission itself kept well away from industrial

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[35] See chapter four
[36] NRM, Acc.No. 2004-8112: *Minute Book of the Railway Mission* (Nov 1881 to Jul 1895) Mins. Nov.14, 1881
[37] *RSig*, Vol.II, No.5 (May, 1884) p105
[38] *Railwaymen's Christian Association Handbooks*
[39] *MEx*, Dec.12, 1891, p8
[40] *Ibid*
[41] MRC, MS127-1; *Railwaymen's Christian Association Handbooks*
[42] *MEx*, Sep.8, 1900, p6

relations and declined a request to support the signalmen's campaign described in chapter seven.[43]

Cory brothers John and Richard have been introduced in chapter eight, and their interest in the RM was first noted in June 1888 when Richard Cory promised £25 to finance an evangelist for Wales, which was matched by a further £25 from his brother.[44] John Prothero was temporarily appointed to the position after an exploratory visit to Cardiff by RM general secretary Elliot Walton. He reported that he had 'been impressed of the necessity for an extension of the work there & in South Wales.'[45] Mr Prothero commenced his duties at a salary of thirty shillings (£1.50) per week, which was made up to two pounds by a bonus of ten shillings (50p) 'for separation from family', until the post was made permanent.[46] The basic rate of pay would have been equivalent to that for a TVR guard.[47] He was made permanent and in the *Railway Signal* for June 1891 the missionary for Wales describes his pattern of work;

> 'In Cardiff we have nine services a week, besides open-air services. We get lively meetings; people shout in the Welsh tongue, "Praise the Lord!" I distribute RAILWAY SIGNALS and tracts along the line as I travel. As I journey up and down the lines people get to wonder what I am, and what my object is.'[48]

In response he gave out explanatory leaflets, and gathered groups of supporters at various stations. He was pleased when he could gather a dozen together, but saw it as worthwhile 'seeking the soul' of 'one man in a brake van'.[49]

In December 1891 the Mission organised a conference at the Undenominational Mission Hall in Dowlais that was addressed by Richard Cory, who had funded the hall. The closure of the work at Aberdare was reported, and evangelist Prothero speaking of the work throughout Wales described the difficulty often encountered in obtaining a hall. He expressed a desire for the erection of a railwayman's institute in every town throughout Wales, where the men 'could obtain tea and coffee, see the papers, and hold their meetings.'[50] Another member of the Cory family, 'Miss B Cory', became President of the Cardiff branch at the commencement of 1893 coincident with the opening of a mission room with a capacity for 100 people.[51] This was replaced by a

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[43] *RM Minute Book*, Mins. Dec.1, 1892
[44] *Ibid*, Mins. June 7, 1888; May 23, 1889
[45] *Ibid*, Mins. May 8, 1889
[46] *Ibid*, Mins. June 19, 1889
[47] cf. Abel DUDSON, DES Oct.9,1877, NA RAIL 684/94
[48] NRM, Acc.No. 2004-8112: *The Railway Signal or Lights Along the Line: A Journal of Evangelistic and Temperance Work on All Railways (RSig)*, Vol.IX, No.6, (June, 1891) p112
[49] *Ibid*
[50] MExp, Dec.12, 1891, p8
[51] RSig, Vol.XI, No.1 (January, 1893), pp21-2; Miss B Cory was probably Richard's daughter Beatrice, NC RG12/4390 74 14

permanent hall, but no other mission halls have been identified that particularly served TVR employees. When the Rhymney Railway arrived at Cwm Bargoed to the east of Merthyr Tydfil in 1875, a mission hall was established, but at the time there were no places of worship.[52] The hall was opened on September 4, 1892 with the support of the Rhymney management, including the Chairman, and General Manager, Cornelius Lundie, who was 'in sympathy with the work'.[53]

After John Prothero had been in post for about four years Richard Cory questioned his suitability. The RM Committee resolved to seek the views of his older brother John.[54] In July 1894, Prothero was given a lump sum of £3 and three months notice 'as the committee wished to make a change at Cardiff'.[55] Seven months later Richard Cory was asked to recommend a new worker and after correspondence from John and Richard Cory the Committee 'decided to send a lady as soon as possible'.[56] Prothero's departure apparently prompted a sharp drop in numbers with Cardiff branch membership falling from forty-five with nine auxiliary members in 1892 to four and six respectively by 1896. The numbers of members and auxiliaries had recovered to twenty-two and fourteen respectively in 1900.[57] The RM had not had made much progress among the TVR workmen, but it did not have the supportive management of the smaller Rhymney Railway.

'Chapel culture'

There was a cultural solidarity, which the rural Welsh brought to the mining communities as they migrated into the rapidly expanding mining villages of the Valleys, see chapter four. But the rapid development of the chapels was not just an illustration of community action; it was also a result of missionary activity on the part of specific denominations. This is shown clearly by the history of the Baptist chapels in Ferndale, which could trace their lineage back to a 'mother house', much as could the monasteries of the Middle Ages. In this case the original chapel had been founded in Merthyr. But the big difference was that here were lay people moving between districts in search of employment and gathering together a new congregation around a core of members from another mining community, rather than religious professionals seeking to expand their order. There is a certain irony that many of these congregations first

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[52] Josh Powell, *Living in the Clouds* (2007)
[53] *RSig*, Vol.X, No.10 (October, 1892) p203
[54] *RM Minute Book*, Mins. Oct.18, 1892
[55] *Ibid*, Mins. July 11, 1894
[56] *Ibid*, Mins. Feb.13, 1895; Mar.13, 1895; Branches of the RM were predominantly led by women, see *RM Minute Book*
[57] *Railwaymen's Christian Association Handbooks*

met in the traditional 'long room' of a local inn, but once established became staunch promoters of the temperance cause.[58]

Chapels provided a place where working men could determine their own destiny and provided opportunities to acquire leadership and oratory skills, as is illustrated in the experience of men like Noah Ablett referred to below. The focus of chapel leadership was the *Sêt Fawr* or 'Big Seat', which refers to the prominent bench at the front of a chapel usually occupied by the deacons. This emphasised their authority.

The chapels themselves became the focus of a community, which provided for a range of activities, and education to counter the attractions of 'the World'. Such activities often involved music and the choirs would be brought together for an annual *cwmanfa canu* usually organised on a denominational basis.[59] For all the emphasis on fellowship there were constant rifts in that fellowship often resulting in members transferring between churches, and the foundation of new chapels.[60] One example of the former arose over the temperance issue, where one TVR signalman who was prominent in the temperance movement resigned from his Baptist chapel in protest at the use of alcoholic wine at the communion service, c1889. He and his wife then transferred to a Calvinistic Methodist chapel for the rest of their lives. They had spent at least thirty years in the former and over twenty-five years in the latter.[61] Yet the respect that both enjoyed in their community, ensured the participation and tributes of the ministers from both chapels at their funerals. As to the issue of alcoholic communion wine, Baptists in general were often seen as slower to adopt a strict temperance ethos, and for example Salem Newydd chapel in Ferndale did not make the change to a non-alcoholic cup until 1906.[62]

The chapel was not just for Sunday and most provided mid-week gatherings for prayer and Bible study 'fellowship meetings' when teaching was also given. It was often the female members of the family who would be faithful in chapel attendance as described by Jack Jones on his youth in Merthyr, and supported by a descendant of the Dudson family of Ferndale.[63] But the culture was deeply ingrained in the psyche, so when the railwaymen came together on the eve of the 1900 strike it was natural that they sang hymns while they waited for the meeting to begin.[64] It also showed itself in the sentiments expressed in a 1901 letter from a railwayman to his son who had been

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[58] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church*, p56; AbLib, W W Price Collection, RV7/1, Salvation Army
[59] *MEx*, Dec.31, 1904, p5
[60] AbLib, RM14/1/2
[61] *ALdr*, Oct.30, 1915, p3; Sep.25, 1920, p2
[62] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church*, p222
[63] Jones, *Unfinished Journey*, pp41-44; Gordon Jones, conversation (8/11/05)
[64] *PObs*, Aug.25, 1900, p3

seriously ill, when the grateful father wrote; 'We feel very thankful that God has been so merciful to you and us...'[65] The home was a place of simple and sincere devotion, and produced men such as the father of boy preacher Willie Powell described below.

An important part of chapel life was the Sunday School which provided for adults as well as children, and a number of Taff Vale employees were involved in this aspect of chapel life.[66] In particular there was Station Master, Joseph Hiscock, who as referred to in chapter six made a point of recruiting from his Sunday School. Although generally attached to a specific church or chapel, these were often quasi-autonomous organisations with their own secretaries, treasurers and budgets. Along with other youth oriented associations such as the Christian Endeavour and Band of Hope these were often prominent in the community with their annual or more frequent parades led by colourful banners.[67]

One of the key differences between Anglicanism and Nonconformity was the relative number of opportunities for the laity to hold office and perform other serving roles within a congregation. This is clearly demonstrated among the employees and officers of the TVR. Of the Anglicans whose church connections were noted in press reports the characteristic usually highlighted was regular attendance.[68] The wide range of positions among Nonconformists included musical roles such as organist or choir master, leadership positions such as deacon, elder, chapel steward, Sunday School superintendent and functional roles such as church secretary, sidesman, trustee and lay preacher.[69] Some nonconformist railwaymen had also been among the founders of new congregations.[70]

Born into a mining family in 1883, Noah Ablett was one of eleven children, who worked as a goods clerk on the TVR at its Wattstown warehouse in the Rhondda Fach from 1895, when he was twelve, until 1897.[71] Noah himself attended a local chapel and became a lay preacher. It was here that he acquired the public speaking skills that were to stand him in good stead for his later trade union leadership. He was active in the SWMF which funded his education. The 'devout, religious and Chapel student who

[65] Edwin CARROLL, DES July 25, 1875, NA RAIL 684/94; Peter Carroll, correspondence (2003-04)

[66] e.g. William WESTMACOTT, MEx, Mar.29, 1913

[67] See Brooks, Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church

[68] e.g. Daniel WELLS, ALdr, June 7, 1913; Robert BUTLER, ALdr, Nov.25, 1922

[69] e.g. Thomas EDWARDS, GWRM, Vol.XXXIX, September (1927) p380; Thomas JONES, MEx, Dec.11, 1909, p8; William WOOD, ALdr, Jan.26, 1929, p8

[70] e.g. Alfred LEAR who founded Radyr Methodist Church, see chapter four

[71] N ABLETT, DES Sep.30, 1895, NA RAIL 684/114

had gone up to Ruskin' was transformed into an 'agitator' within the union and an advocate for syndicalism who co-authored *The Miners' Next Step*. [72]

Arthur Horner, whose father was employed by the TVR at its Merthyr Goods warehouse, not unexpectedly joined the company. However the disciplined routine of the railway office was not to Arthur's liking and he resigned after two years.[73] Horner senior was a devout Christian who became involved on the founding of the Churches of Christ congregation in that town, and his son also became a lay preacher.[74] This led to his entering a Baptist Theological College in Birmingham. However, his personal beliefs were evolving in a politically leftward direction that eventually took him away from Christianity and to Communism. The railway employment of these two miners' leaders did not overlap, but Arthur Horner was later to declare that it was Noah Ablett that had taught him the ways of socialism.[75]

To begin preaching in one's teens was not at all unusual in this period, but Willie Powell had commenced preaching at the young age of eleven years. He was the son of a Taff Vale signalman. This caught the attention of local newspapers and drew criticism from one in particular. In May 1897 the *Pontypridd Observer* took up the defence of young Willie after interviewing his parents. The paper had accused his church of 'gimmickry' by using a 12 year old boy. When the *Observer* reporter visited the home in Treherbert, the boy was at school and he found the father to be an 'unassuming man of unimpeachable character'.[76] The parents said that he had never been like other boys; he was studious, never mixing with other children, and they could not get him to play. Baptised at the age of ten he started preaching at eleven on the invitation of his church. They confirmed that his sermons were all his own work and they expected to send him to college.[77] The course of Willie Powell's life has not been pursued, but in the 1901 Census he is living at home with no occupation shown.[78] He has not followed his father onto the railway and he may have been waiting to enter theological college. By 1898 his fame had spread to New Zealand[79] and he was still

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[72] Arnot, *South Wales Miners*, pp326-27
[73] A Horner, *Incorrigible Rebel*, p13
[74] M W Casey and P Ackers, 'The Enigma of the young Arthur Horner: From Churches of Christ preacher to Communist Militant (1894-1920)', *Labour History Review*, Vol.66, No.1 (Spring, 2001) pp8-9
[75] Horner, *Incorrigible Rebel*, p15
[76] *PObs*, May 15, 1897, p[3]
[77] *Ibid*
[78] NC RG13/5012 51 56
[79] *Mataura Ensign*, Dec.3, 1898, p3, http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d=ME18981203.2.16&e=--------10--1----0-- (accessed 06/08/12)

preaching in 1902.[80] This section on *chapel culture* has demonstrated that TVR employees and their families were active particpants.

ASRS Church Parades

This section notes the topics of three sermons as reported in the local press. They are described in order of relevance to the railwaymen, and two are examined in detail. They reflect the relationship of the railwaymen with their local communities, and acceptance of a culture that placed a high value on religious faith. The first sermon, given at the Congregational Church, Abercynon on Sunday July 2, 1899, was preached by the Rev W Jenkins from the book of Job chapter 30 verse 25; 'Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?'[81] This was a straightforward sermon based on Biblical texts, and can be seen as apposite to the purpose of the parade. Rev Jenkins spoke of the objects of charity comparing some with the lot of Job, and said that 'people should not preach to them of their difficulties'. They should check their motives against the words of Christ; 'If thou makest a feast call the poor, the maim, and the blind'.[82] He then appealed to the congregation to respond generously. This they did with a total, including that collected en route, of £5 10s 2d (£5.51), an equivalent at current monetary values of approximately £450.[83]

The second exposition was given at St Elvan's Anglican Church, Aberdare on Monday October 29, 1900 by the Rev C A H Green, who took as his text Matthew chapter six verse 33; 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God'.[84] Taking this well known verse Rev Green, declared that the railwaymen had an important part to play in the future, and intrinsic to their occupation were virtues of punctuality, alertness and openness of mind. Their employment also gave them a wider concept of labour as more than 'mere manual work'. Having praised his hearers, the vicar challenged them to 'seek first the Kingdom of God', before material things such as food and clothing. They needed to go beyond religion with a soul 'surrendered to God', whereby labour became holy with a life 'mapped out by God'. Their attitude to wealth would change, to see it as a gift from God for their disposal as his stewards. Christian contentment was a partner to 'earnest

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[80] *Cinderford Baptist Church*, http://www.forest-of-dean.net/downloads/Stories_Articles/Baptist_Church_Cinderford.pdf (accessed 06/08/12)
[81] *PObs*, July 8, 1899, p[4]
[82] Luke 14v13
[83] O'Donoghue et al, 'Consumer Price Inflation'
[84] *MEx*, Nov.3, 1900, p6

endeavour of strenuous effort'. The preacher had held his audience with the reporter concluding that the sermon was 'listened to with rapt attention'.[85]

The last of the three sermons was delivered in Market Square English Congregational Church on Sunday June 7, 1891 by the Rev J G James, based on Daniel chapter twelve and the second half of verse four; 'Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased'.[86] This sermon was declared by the newspaper headline to be a 'Sermon on Railway Travelling', and the preacher applied this verse to railway travel and railwaymen in a rather literal and selective use of the Biblical text. The reporter records that, '[t]he preacher having indicated the original application of the words to the book of prophecy, proceeded at once to show their striking fulfilment in these modern days of railway travelling'.[87] Railwaymen were firstly extending the conception of the beauties of God's world; secondly they were broadening knowledge of the world of commerce and art, dispelling provincialism, and opening up commercial and labour markets. And thirdly they connected different classes and districts, which encouraged the 'solidarity of the race'. He went on to compliment the men on their civility, courtesy and efficiency, acknowledging that they needed the patience of Job and the meekness of Moses to take what the British public might throw at them; however, the public did appreciate them. The preacher praised the ASRS for their help to 'fight your battles when you are in the right' and to 'take care of your little ones when you are gone.' He concluded by challenging the men to be 'consecrated to the service of Christ' in carrying out their daily duties.[88]

The preachers of the last two addresses, although speaking nearly a decade apart, had each thought carefully on how to develop an ennobling discourse to describe the workaday lives of the railwaymen, calling them to saintly lives. They were reportedly well received, especially the latter, which was unusually reported in a Pontypridd newspaper as well as at Merthyr, and was published as a pamphlet by the Merthyr Express to meet popular demand.[89] Both sermons emphasized the role of railways and railwaymen in the progress of society describing it as a God-given role. Both encouraged an exalted view of the railwaymen's work, the vicar calling them to a wider conception of labour as more than manual work, and the minister describing their service to the public as 'heroic', 'noble' and 'self-sacrificing'.[90] Whether consciously or not the two men seemed to have embraced the concepts of 'Muscular Christianity', possibly from the writings of Charles Kingsley, who 'consistently stressed the

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[85] Ibid
[86] Ibid, June 13, 1891, p5; GFP, June 13, 1891, p8
[87] MEx, June 13, 1891, p5
[88] Ibid
[89] Ibid, Aug.22, 1891, p5
[90] MEx, June 13, 1891, p5

importance of strength, energy, and physical behaviour in pleasing God - one's physical activity must complement one's spirituality, a muscular Christian duality that Kingsley himself perfectly manifested.'[91]

The church parades detected were held over the period from 1890 until 1912, in at least five separate towns, and were hosted by churches of five denominations. The railwaymen were well received, and when addressed directly they were highly praised. That the members of a secular organisation could be addressed in such direct religious language without demur illustrates the strength of Christian belief then prevalent in industrial south Wales. And the men, TVR employees among them, enthusiastically accepted the mantle of sainthood.

TVR Board and the Church

The Taff Vale was an early railway in a more conspicuously religious age as was shown by the famous Rule 26 of the 1855 Rule Book[92] and the provision of bibles in waiting rooms.[93] The company was content to positively influence both employees and customers in respect to religion. With Rule 26 there would be the hope that anyone who conscientiously followed a religious creed would be more reliable than someone who did not. The rule had gone by 1904 and probably was not present in the Book issued in 1881.[94] However, when the board came to deal with religious bodies, particularly as such contact usually involved requests for money, the policy was far more cautious.

One aspect of the churches' wider mission, which did sometimes receive financial or practical assistance were missions to seamen that operated in the Cardiff and Penarth docks. Examples found included providing land for a Mission church at Penarth Harbour in 1877, although a request in 1879 from the Seamen's Mission, Penarth, for payment of heating and lighting bills until the debt on the building had been cleared was declined.[95] Occasionally the company could be spontaneous in its giving as when in 1898 the General Manager reported that the new 'Mission Yacht' had been supplied with a truck of coal 'that he would pay for', and directions were to be given 'that all coal for the yacht be carried free of charge'.[96] Requests for free passes were frequently

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[91] Anon, *Brief Biography of Charles Kingsley, 1819-1875*, http://www2.bc.edu/~rappleb/kingsley/Kingsleylife.html (accessed 29/06/09)

[92] See chapter six

[93] When Mr T W Hill, a director of the Taff Vale Railway, died in 1869 he left £100 in his will so that Bibles, New Testaments and copies of the Psalms could be placed in railway stations along the line, http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/news/139/284/Signal-Box-Bibles-For-Railway-Staff/ (accessed 23/04/12)

[94] NA Rail 684/8, Jan.13, 1881, Min.2721

[95] Ibid, Dec.20, 1877, Min.47; Aug.7, 1879, Min.1000

[96] NA RAIL 684/23, May 27, 1898, Min.752

received by the company; some were granted, but others were refused, as with one from the German Consul in Cardiff for the pastor of the German Seamen's Mission.[97]

The key aim and responsibility of the Board was the maximisation of dividends through revenue gained and costs minimised. One factor in the latter was the avoidance of taxation, including local rates. Once a Board School had been established in an area, the cost fell on the local authority, whereas if the area's educational requirements were provided by a 'National' or Church school, the bulk of the finance was provided from central funds via the Church of England. To ensure that this situation continued, the Board was responsive to requests for the upkeep of Church schools. Thus what might have appeared to have been at least a charitable act, if not a religious one, was a cynical cost cutting exercise, probably working against the wishes of the Nonconformists among their workforce; see chapter eight for the background.

The company minute books are full of requests from vicars seeking regular 'subscriptions' for the upkeep of parochial schools. Which were acceded to, and which were refused, appears to have been a matter of judgement as to the risk of future liabilities. When the interests of the Anglican Church and the Board coincided the latter could be very generous, as is clearly demonstrated by the following approach.

> The Secretary submitted communications with Revd Humphreys Vicar of Radyr with respect to School accommodation for the parish stating that steps were being taken to adopt the School Board and suggesting the desirability of Voluntary Schools and asking for a donation from this company. It was:
>> Resolved that Mr Humphreys be informed that provided such accommodation can be supplied as will effectually prevent the necessity of establishing a Board School the Company would be prepared to make a donation of £100 - but that the offer is made on the condition stated.[98]

Not only was payment of the £100 donation agreed, but as that was the maximum sum the Board could authorise, it was agreed to put a recommendation to the next shareholders' meeting that the donation be raised to £200.[99] This clearly demonstrates the perceived financial advantage to the company from ensuring the continuation of voluntary schools. The sum here is quite out of the ordinary, and annual donations to other schools did not exceed ten pounds.

An application from the vicar of Whitchurch for funds to build a new church and a request for assistance with repairs of Llanwonno church were declined as were similar requests from other parishes.[100] But when the request for assistance came from a

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[97] NA RAIL 684/11, Jan.2, 1900, Min.124
[98] NA RAIL 684/8, May 23, 1878, Min.255
[99] Ibid, July 18, 1878, Min. 339
[100] NA RAIL 684/8, Feb.24, 1879, Min.714; July 15, 1882, Min.1526

member of staff, the Board was more responsive. Arthur Lewis, who was probably Works Clerk at West Yard, Cardiff, sought funds for a new Anglican church at Llandaff Yard for which he received ten pounds. On a second application he was granted £20 from a fund 'reserved for Workmen's Schools etc.'[101] The well respected Station Master at Abercynon, Joseph Hiscock, was sent a cheque for ten pounds 'for his rooms'. Mr Hiscock was Sunday School Superintendent at Abercynon English Congregational Church.[102] The issue was one of personalities rather than denomination.

The Board did not apparently see provision for the spiritual needs of its workforce near the workplace an appropriate use for company funds, which was demonstrated when blacksmith Arthur Whitehorn[103] asked for 'assistance towards a Mission Room for railway servants at Cathays' and received the reply that 'the company had no funds for that purpose.'[104] This was the type of request that senior managers on other railways would accede to, including Ammon Beasley's former superior, the GWR general manager, James Grierson.[105] In 1898 the General Secretary of the Railway Mission wrote requesting a free pass, and it was left to General Manager Beasley to reply. The outcome is unknown, but Mission staff had been provided with free passes by many other companies.[106]

Attitudes displayed by directors during industrial disputes may have been influenced by personal faith, as well as temperament. This can be seen by comparing the men who were TVR chairmen in 1890 and 1900. Their behaviour has been described at chapter seven. James Inskip, Chairman in 1890, was a prominent Bristol solicitor, alderman, and philanthropist with an active interest in religious charities such as the YMCA.[107] References to him in the press during the 1890 dispute are always favourable, even from the men's side, with comments to the effect that if had it been left to him, rather than to the joint committee of directors from the four companies, the dispute could have been resolved much sooner.[108] His conciliatory approach in meeting ASRS general secretary Harford brought an end to the strike, and in 1900 in the same spirit Inskip's letter to *The Times*, along with that of W T Lewis, prompted a more serious search for a settlement on the part of the company, see chapter seven. On the other hand Robert L G Vassall, Chairman in 1900, was also a prominent Bristol solicitor, but with no record

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[101] NA RAIL 684/9, Sep.13, 1888, Min.2544; Feb.6, 1889, Min.2745
[102] Ibid, Sep.13, 1888, Min.2559
[103] A WHITEHORN, DES Sep.9, 1888, see chapter three
[104] NA Rail 684/14, Min.965, Apr.16, 1895
[105] RSig, Vol.I, No.6 (January, 1883) p98
[106] NA Rail 684/15, Min.313, Jan.1, 1898; *RM Minute Book*, Mins. Feb.20, 1889
[107] J Wright & Co's (Matthews') *Bristol Directory 1901*, pp767-68
[108] see chapter seven

of philanthropic activity in the City directory of 1901, unlike his predecessor.[109] In reports of his approach to business, he was in accord with his general manager, Ammon Beasley, in the stubborn insistence that their freedom of action could never be restricted by a third party, be that the Board of Trade, a trade union leader or other arbitrator, acting as an intermediary. With Inskip, the impression gained is that he displayed an integrity that arose from his religious faith, whereas Vassall, whilst correct in his dealings, was driven solely by business interests.

Prior to the meal at the Officers' 'Pic-Nic' the traditional grace 'Be present at our table Lord' was sung.[110] An Annual Report of the Workmen's Institute at the West Yard Works listed the reading matter provided with acknowledgement of the donors. This included Christian journals donated by officers of the company; for example the Locomotive Superintendent had donated eight monthly issues of *Banner of Faith* and others had given subscriptions to the *Illustrated Church News* and the *Methodist Recorder*.[111] The general religious ethos of the period was sometimes reflected in the actions of senior officers of the company.

Religious Revivals

Religious revivals had been a frequent occurrence in Wales since the middle of the eighteenth century, and were occasions when a static or declining Church found a new enthusiasm, and energy, which affected the wider community. The phenomena experienced were attributed to the direct intervention of the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and his 'in-dwelling' of individual believers.[112] There had been revivals throughout the nineteenth century, with the most recent national movement occurring in 1859, and it was to that event that those who experienced the last national revival in 1904-05 looked for comparison. However the years 1878-79 witnessed similar events, as the Salvation Army's 'female evangelists'[113] began their evangelistic mission in south Wales, although this 'revival' was not on the scale of the outbreaks of 1859 or 1904-05.

The history of the SA in Wales starts in 1863 when John and Richard Cory invited the Booths to Cardiff, where the first mission station was established 1874. In 1877 coincident with the organisation's name change to the 'Salvation Army' it began its rapid spread across the Valleys. Activities were commenced in Merthyr, Dowlais,

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[109] Wright's, *Bristol Directory*, pp759-69
[110] WRRC, TV 117
[111] NA RAIL 1057/1857/16C
[112] cf. Bishop Owen of St David's reported in 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 2, p29
[113] e.g. *MTel*, May 31, 1878, p3

Aberdare and Mountain Ash in 1878 and the Rhondda followed in 1879.[114] These were all districts served by the TVR.

Initial reactions were mixed, with the fairly positive tone of an account from Dowlais in the *Merthyr Telegraph* for 24 May 1878 when 'one of the female preachers engaged by the Christian Mission' was reported as holding meetings.[115] But the following week's edition was highly critical and this antagonistic stance continued until at least January 1879.[116] Across in the Cynon Valley the work of the Mission had been started by Mrs Pamela Shepherd who was sent to Aberdare by William Booth in September 1877 after ten years work in London. The branch formally became a part of the SA in September 1878 and the early meetings resulted in six hundred conversions.[117] Rosina Davies described the effects of the resultant revival thus; 'All over the mining areas the public houses were empty...and there was less swearing in the mines and on the streets. The horses were better treated underground. During the dinner hour men and boys gathered together and held prayer meetings to the joy of the older Christian miners.'[118] By the April of 1879 the progress of revival had been acknowledged by the *Telegraph*. It described the situation as follows; 'the revival now going on in the Rhondda Valley by the Salvation Army has given so great a stimulus to every religious denomination'.[119] Horridge describes the sweep of the revival through Wales, as 'it spread rapidly along the coalfields'.[120] He concludes that it was not just an alternative to the chapels as it 'picked up those not seen in them'.[121] Whilst the more dramatic effects of the Army's mission might have faded, its biggest expansion was from 1878 to 1883. Its enduring appeal to the working-classes was fostered by its women preachers, militarism, local involvement and above all a willingness to help the poor. The effect on the communities served by the TVR is illustrated by the increased number of adult baptisms at Salem Newydd chapel in Ferndale. In contrast to the annual average of nine between 1878 and 1883 the total for 1879 was 32.[122] One Salvationist familiar to Taff Vale employees was a Merthyr coal merchant who spent his Sunday afternoons distributing tracts in the company's coaches.[123] However, no TVR employee has been noted as enlisting in the SA until after the First World War. Railwaymen might have

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[114] Horridge, 'Salvation Army in Wales', pp51-69
[115] *MTel*, May 24, 1878, p3
[116] *Ibid*, May 31, 1878, p3; Jan.17, 1879, p2; Jan.24, 1879, p2
[117] AbLib, W W Price Collection, RV7/2, Transcript of interview with 'Mother Shepherd' from *MEx*, Nov.25, 1925
[118] R Davies, *Rosina Davies, Evangelist. The Story of My Life* (1942) p64, cited in Horridge, 'Salvation Army in Wales', p62
[119] *MTel*, April 11, 1879, p3; The provision of the new church is discussed at chapter eight
[120] Horridge, 'Salvation Army in Wales', p62
[121] 'Ibid', p66
[122] Brooks, *Salem Newydd: Welsh Baptist Church*, p206
[123] *MEx*, Dec.11, 1909, p8

perceived themselves as of higher status than many who attended Salvationist meetings.

Such had been the frequency of revivals that many churchmen always looked for yet another revival whenever the progress of their churches was in decline, and revival was seen to have benefits for every facet of Welsh society both religious and secular. This was clearly set out by Rev H A Davies from Aberdare speaking at the Glamorgan Congregational *Cymanfa* at Barry Dock in 1897, when he gave four reasons why a religious revival was necessary. To further the Church's work in the provision of places of worship and education, to meet the demands of the age for fervent Gospel preaching, to secure the commercial prosperity of the country and to draw a clear line between the pure and impure in society.[124] The report provoked several letters both for and against.

The origins of the 1904 revival are traced back to different dates and locations depending on the observer. Various explanations were looked for and links were also made with past revivals. One minister who had known the 1859 revival contrasted the two events with their different emphases; in 1859 it was a 'deep conviction of sin', whereas for the current it was 'the greater manifestation of the love of God.'[125] He noted that 1859 had been linked by some to contemporary outbreaks of Cholera, and that how after the revival people became indifferent.[126] For some in 1904 the link was with a serious train crash at Loughor on October 3 with 'the awakening of man and woman to the reality of spiritual and eternal things';[127] a link dismissed by the revivalist, Evan Roberts.[128] Another explanation expressed by a correspondent to the *Merthyr Express* was that it was 'a reaction against the sordid, gloomy, and cheerless lives which the great mass of the people of South Wales have to experience.'[129] John Davies reports a suggested contributory factor among the much-affected Welsh-speaking miners was the sense of guilt felt by many from rural areas who had 'turned their backs upon the values they had inherited'.[130] However, Davies considers this an inadequate explanation.[131]

The widely recognised outbreak of the revival happened in west Wales in early 1904. Evan Roberts, who was to become the human focus of the revival, had yet to receive

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[124] *GFP*, June 5, 1897, p7
[125] *MEx*, Dec.3, 1904, p12
[126] *Ibid*
[127] W L Taylor, 'The Welsh Revival: Its Origin, Character, and Results', *Aldersgate Primitive Methodist Magazine*, No.86 (1905) p135, cited in Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', p803
[128] Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', p803
[129] *MEx*, Dec.31, 1904, p9
[130] Davies, *History of Wales*, p506
[131] *Ibid*

his 'anointing', and others were pioneering the movement.[132] The significance of the spiritual awakening was not immediately apparent in the Valleys. Reports of sermons preached and correspondence in local newspapers still carried headlines such as 'Why our Churches are empty'[133] and 'How to fill the Churches',[134] even as Evan Roberts' ministry was beginning in Loughor. The first incursion into the TVR area was at Trecynon near Aberdare on November 13.[135]

Gitre proposes that the revival depended significantly on two products of modernity, the railway and the mass circulation press.[136] Roberts' ability to appear unexpectedly at a location and travel rapidly across south Wales did owe much to the network of railway routes that followed the valleys and occasionally crossed the intervening mountains, (see Appendix E). Whilst a whole range of local and regional newspapers covered the progress of the revival, it was the *Western Mail* that perhaps maintained the most sustained coverage with its own correspondent, 'Awstin', embedded with the team around Evan Roberts. Roberts' 'journeys' in the early months of the revival show a conversance with *Bradshaw's Railway Guide* with the sequence of meetings chronicled by the *Western Mail* following the tracks, see figure 9.3. Gitre claims that 'Roberts understood the implicit centrality of railway travel' and this provided the means of 'overcoming' both space and time.[137] An interviewer from the *South Wales Daily Post* asked Roberts, "And what are you going to do?" to which he replied "Do? How do I know? I shall go where the Spirit calls me."[138] The revivalist claimed that his itinerary was under the direction of the Holy Spirit, but technology facilitated that obedience. 'Spirit and machine coexisted.'[139] Not all his journeys were by train, either because of a desire to accelerate a journey, or because of failing health, he might hire a Hansom cab.[140] The *Western Mail* recorded the modes of transport of those attending the meetings; 'Farmers on horseback, tradesmen in traps, hundreds by motorcars, hundreds more by trains, colliers and other workmen trudging on foot'.[141] There appears to be a hierarchy in the means of transport, with the implied suggestion that the 'colliers and other workmen' could not afford the train fare; but all would cram into the same chapels.

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[132] Adams, *Diary of Revival*, pp42ff; Evans, *Welsh Revival*, pp49ff
[133] *MEx*, Nov.12, 1904, p5
[134] *PObs*, Nov.19, 1904, p2
[135] Jones, *Rent Heavens*, p39
[136] Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', pp 792-827
[137] 'Ibid', p810
[138] *South Wales Daily Post*, Nov.16, 1904 cited in Adams, *Diary of Revival*, p114
[139] Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', p811
[140] *PObs*, Dec.24, 1904, p3; 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 5, p12
[141] 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 1, p27

The pattern of these journeys would sometimes confine Roberts to the train services of a particular railway company and from November 20 until Christmas this was principally the TVR. A survey of *Bradshaw* confirms the possibility that the majority of his journeys were made by train,[142] and in a few cases the specific train service is mentioned in newspaper accounts, see figure 9.3. On one occasion a crowd had gathered at Merthyr Vale TVR station in response to a report that the revivalist was to arrive on a specific service, only for him to arrive on foot from a different direction.[143] The *Merthyr Express* headline describing the area read 'Business practically at a standstill', and the article recorded that the Taff Vale and Rhymney railways had brought crowds of visitors from all parts.[144] At another TVR station, Tonypandy, a banner with Gospel texts on each side had been strung across the station approach.[145] The crowds would sometimes have to wait for the arrival of their trains, and the platforms became the scene of impromptu revival meetings with hymn singing and prayers. Awstin describes this as 'the way the fire is spread' referring to services held on the platforms at Mountain Ash and Abercynon stations 'while people were waiting for their trains to depart homewards.'[146] Such events were not confined to those situations, for when, owing to an accident at Abercynon, the morning workmen's train was delayed, the men waiting for it at Quakers' Yard held a prayer meeting on the platform.[147] Thus secular spaces had been made sacred.

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[142] *Bradshaw*, July, 1904
[143] 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 2, pp6-7
[144] *MEx*, Dec.17, 1904, p11
[145] *Western Mail*, Dec.22, 1904, p5 cited in Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', p814
[146] 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 1, p16
[147] *MEx*, Dec.17, 1904, p5

Figure 9.3 Possible Journeys made by Evan Roberts using TVR Trains during November and December 1904

Evan Robert's Journeys from Abercynon on November 20, 1904 to Treherbert on December 23, 1904 by TVR Trains*

MERTHYR

PENTREBACH

ABERDARE.

TROEDYRHIW

ABERAMAN

MOUNTAIN ASH
November 21

TREHERBERT.
December 23

MARDY
December 11

MERTHYR VALE
December 14

FERNDALE
December 8 & 10

PENRHIWCEIBER

TREORCHY
November 29

QUAKERS YA

PENTRE
December 2

YSTRAD

TYLORSTOWN
December 12

NE

ABERCYNON
November 20

TRAVELLERS

VNYSYBWL
November 23

LLWYNYPIA

YNYSHIR
December 9

CLYDACH VALE
December 19

CILFYNYDD
November 25

TONYPANDY & TREALAW.
December 21

DINAS.

COEDPENMAEN

PENYGRAIG
December 22

PORTH
November 27

HAFOD
December 16

PONTYPRIDD
December 18

CAERPHILLY
December 5

SENGHENYDD
December 7

SCALE

0   1   2   3   4   5 MILES

Sources: 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales,* Pamphlets 1 and 2; *Bradshaw, July, 1904*

Notes: *See table 9.2 for companies used to and from Senghenydd. Not all journeys have been proved to have been made by train. The dates listed are for the day of arrival.

Typically Roberts travelled in the afternoon and one example was an anticipated return visit to the Rhondda on December 8; on this occasion his destination was Ferndale. The crowds had gathered at two o'clock and there was disappointment when he did not arrive, but a revival meeting was still held. The revivalist eventually arrived by train 'at about a quarter to five o'clock'.[148] This matches with the 4:46 pm arrival from Porth,

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[148] 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales,* Pamphlet 1, p29

and as on the previous day he had been holding meetings at Senghenydd in the Rhymney valley, it is possible to construct a likely itinerary that illustrates the co-ordination of Valleys' rail travel, see table 9.2.[149]

Table 9.2 Probable Itinerary of Evan Roberts on December 8, 1904

Station	arrive/ depart	Times	Company
Senghenydd	depart	3:00 pm	RR
Caerphilly	arrive	3:12 pm	
Caerphilly	depart	3:31 pm	ADR
Pontypriddd	arrive	3:45 pm	
Pontypriddd	depart	4:10 pm	TVR
Porth	arrive	4:20 pm	
Porth	depart	4:28 pm	TVR
Ferndale	arrive	4:46 pm	

Source: Bradshaw, July, 1904

Much was made in the *Western Mail* and other accounts of the revival of how many had lost their appetite for physical recreation whether as participants or observers, with stories of football teams being unable to field a side. [150] But at Christmas 1904, two months into the revival, the *Pontypridd Observer* records that among the greatly increased number of passengers at Pontypridd, were a large number travelling to the Pontypridd v. Swansea football match on Tuesday December 27.[151] The increase in the number of passengers, which peaked on Boxing Day, owed much to people travelling to be reunited with their families. Roberts himself returned home to Loughor on Christmas Eve. Gitre comments that there were no statistics for the number who travelled to the meetings,[152] but there may have been various factors working against each another. As observed the revival discouraged sporting activity[153] which would itself have a depressing effect on revenue from this source, whilst the numbers travelling to revival meetings would have had a counter effect to this. Over a busy Christmas period far more people alighted at Pontypridd than booked,[154] and at that time Evan Roberts was in west Wales. The revival was credited with a fall in the

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[149] *Bradshaw,* July, 1904
[150] Cf. *MEx,* Dec.10, 1904, p3
[151] *PObs,* Dec.31, 1904, p4
[152] Gitre, '1904-05 Welsh Revival', pp814-15
[153] *MEx,* Dec.10, 1904, pp3&12
[154] *PObs,* Dec.31, 1904, p4

number of travellers 'on local lines' over Christmas in Aberdare.[155] Comparing the six monthly figures for the second half of 1903 with the same period in 1904 does show a modest increase.[156]

After a single sentence report on the Revival in the November 19 issue of the *Merthyr Express* the reporting began to expand with the following week's 'Gossip' column expressing surprise and seeking for an explanation; 'the tide of revivalism in Wales has risen with remarkable rapidity, and it presents a psychological phenomenon at once wonderful and interesting. The causes for such a spontaneous outburst must be looked for…deep down in our social, moral, and industrial life.'[157] It was a reaction to excessive emphasis on pleasure-seeking and the acquisition of wealth that had led to an 'impatience of authority and all restraint.' The results it claimed were witnessed to by the press, divorce courts, workhouses and asylums. This called for a prophet of the ilk of John the Baptist.[158] Just before Christmas the *Pontypridd Observer* expressed a simpler hope for two outcomes; 'First that in future people will be honest whether they are watched or not, and secondly that men will treat their wives with some of the gallantry that characterised their courting days'.[159]

In the December 3 edition of the *Merthyr Express* the reporter concluded that '[a]ccount for it as you may, the revival movement has taken firm hold of the people of Aberdare, with the most beneficial results.' At least 16 meetings had been held each night, with attendance at the meetings of 500 to 1000; public houses were nearly empty, and in some places there was an emphasis on temperance. The report noted an improvement in language on the street and underground, particularly among hauliers, and made reference to prayer meetings held in the pits, and cases of restitution being made.[160] Such accounts could be found across the range of newspapers for the duration of the revival.

Whilst Anglican churches had largely been unaffected by the revival exceptions were reported from Aberdare, at St Mary's Welsh Church and St Elvan's. At the latter, a preacher had said Anglicans were inclined to look down on such activities consigning them to the SA, but he thought that the more respectable some people were the more they needed conversion. He wished that many of that respectable congregation would be converted, but urged any that were, to stay within the Church. A revival service had

[155] *MEx*, Dec.31, 1904, pp5&12
[156] GlamRO Q/D/S (December, 1904)
[157] *MEx*, Nov.26, 1904, p7
[158] *Ibid*
[159] *PObs*, Dec.24, 1904, p1
[160] *MEx*, Dec.3, 1904, p12

then been conducted after evensong, 'following extemporary pattern of Nonconformists' and the reporter, perhaps with nostalgia, comments it was a rare scene in an Anglican church 'reminiscent of an evangelical country church of 40 years before.'[161]

The correspondence pages of the *Merthyr Express* were often full of religious debates, but it is noticeable that the revival attracted only a few letters. For example the December 17 edition contained eleven letters, but only two concerned the revival, whilst the topics covered included religious teaching in schools and a continuing debate on 'life after death'. Both of the revival letters were from clergymen, one in defence of a young church member who had been maligned in a previous edition and the other expressing concern at the lack of recreational facilities for young people. There was a fear that those affected by the revival might be seduced by the public house and gambling particularly at Christmas.[162] E T Davies reports that 'it was believed at the time in the Aberdare area that the revival made its appeal largely to non-readers'.[163] This might explain the lack of correspondence, and the enthusiasm of the movement would have discouraged any analysis of the experience. However, Welsh was the language of the revival and the smaller number of Welsh language newspapers have not been accessed directly. Evan Roberts, when asked why he did not conduct his meetings in English, replied 'that it was because the Spirit had not told him to do so.'[164] The Stipendary Magistrate for much of the Taff Vale area, Sir Marchant Williams, commented in March 1905 '...nor has it [the revival] apparently affected the English-speaking section of the population.'[165] Only just over one quarter of TVR employees spoke Welsh.[166]

At the end of February 1905 the *Western Mail* published its second set of statistics compiled from returns gathered from across Wales. The number of converts claimed for south Wales was 76,566.[167] It is notable that many of the places listed had not received a visit from Evan Roberts emphasizing the wide involvement of many Nonconformist ministers, and laymen close to Roberts in the spread of the revival. Adams explains that 'there were countless, less well-known church leaders and young

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[161] *MEx*, Dec.17, 1904, p5; See above re Nonconformists that preferred Welsh Anglican churches to the chapels, Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p75

[162] *MEx*, Dec.17, 1904, p9

[163] Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p171

[164] *Ibid*, p169

[165] Sir Marchant Williams, 'Some practical Results' in 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 4, p1

[166] See chapter five

[167] 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 4, p29

people now forgotten who spread the revival spirit by their enthusiastic sharing of its message.'[168]

The *Railway Signal* journal of the Railway Mission, carried reports of the revival between February and April 1905, but there were few references to railwaymen being affected. None of these can be definitely identified with the Taff Vale. The first article in the February issue describes how a GWR signalman had been converted on December 10.[169] Despite another full page of reportage on the revival, the issue contains no further reference to railwaymen. But there was a branch report from Canton (Cardiff), which reported that following a 'Watch-night' service on New Year's Eve and they had had 'a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit.' The writer declared that, 'The blessed Revival that is flowing over Wales reached our Mission.'[170] By the time of the March edition, General Secretary, Richard Nixon, had made a visit to south Wales, which coincided with the revivalist's presence in Dowlais from January 22 to 24. A local guard related to Nixon that the customary profanities of the miners on the workmen's trains had been replaced by hymns.[171] Given the widespread response of miners to the revival, this transformation would have been repeated on workmen's trains across the Valleys.[172] There is one puzzling reference which refers to a lunchtime meeting of 200 men from 'a railway workshop at Pontypridd'.[173] But there does not appear to have been a railway workshop of that size in Pontypridd, which was principally served by the TVR. The location may have been misreported or the numbers grossly exaggerated. The following month's issue again included significant coverage of the revival, but without any reference to railwaymen.[174] There was a final reference in the Cardiff branch report for June, which recorded that 'During the past few months the power of the Holy Spirit has been greatly felt in the saving of many precious souls.'[175] The Cardiff branch was mainly active at Canton, GWR, but meetings were also held at mess rooms on both Taff Vale and Rhymney railways.[176]

Taff Vale stations had been the focus for crowds who came to greet Roberts and the transit point to and from the revival meetings. Forty percent of the February total of converts[177] were from districts served by the Taff Vale Railway. But as can be seen from the last paragraph no response from TVR workmen has been found.

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[168] Adams, *Diary of Revival*, p 123
[169] *RSig*, Vol.XXIII, No.2 (February, 1905) p35
[170] *Ibid*
[171] *RSig*, Vol.XXIII, No.3 (March, 1905) p53
[172] cf. Quakers' Yard prayer meeting described above
[173] *RSig*, Vol.XXIII, No.3 (March, 1905) p53
[174] *RSig*, Vol.XXIII, No.4 (April, 1905) p73
[175] *Ibid*, Vol.XXIII, No.6 (June, 1905) p118
[176] *Railwaymen's Christian Association Handbooks*
[177] Based on 'Eilir' (ed), *Religious Revival in Wales*, Pamphlet 4, p29

The membership of the chapels of the three main denominations in Glamorgan increased significantly between 1904 and 1905, but only the Baptists continued to grow, showing an increase of 28 per cent by 1906 compared with 1904. By 1906 both the Congregationalists and Calvinistic Methodists had begun to lose members, whilst the latter did grow again in the second decade of the century albeit slowly. The membership trend of the Congregationalists was down, and by 1914 the count was some five percent lower than in 1904. The Baptists declined quite steeply after 1906, but had stabilised at around eight per cent above the 1904 total from 1912, see figure 9.4

Figure 9.4 Church Membership Figures for Major Nonconformist Denominations in Glamorgan; 1904-14
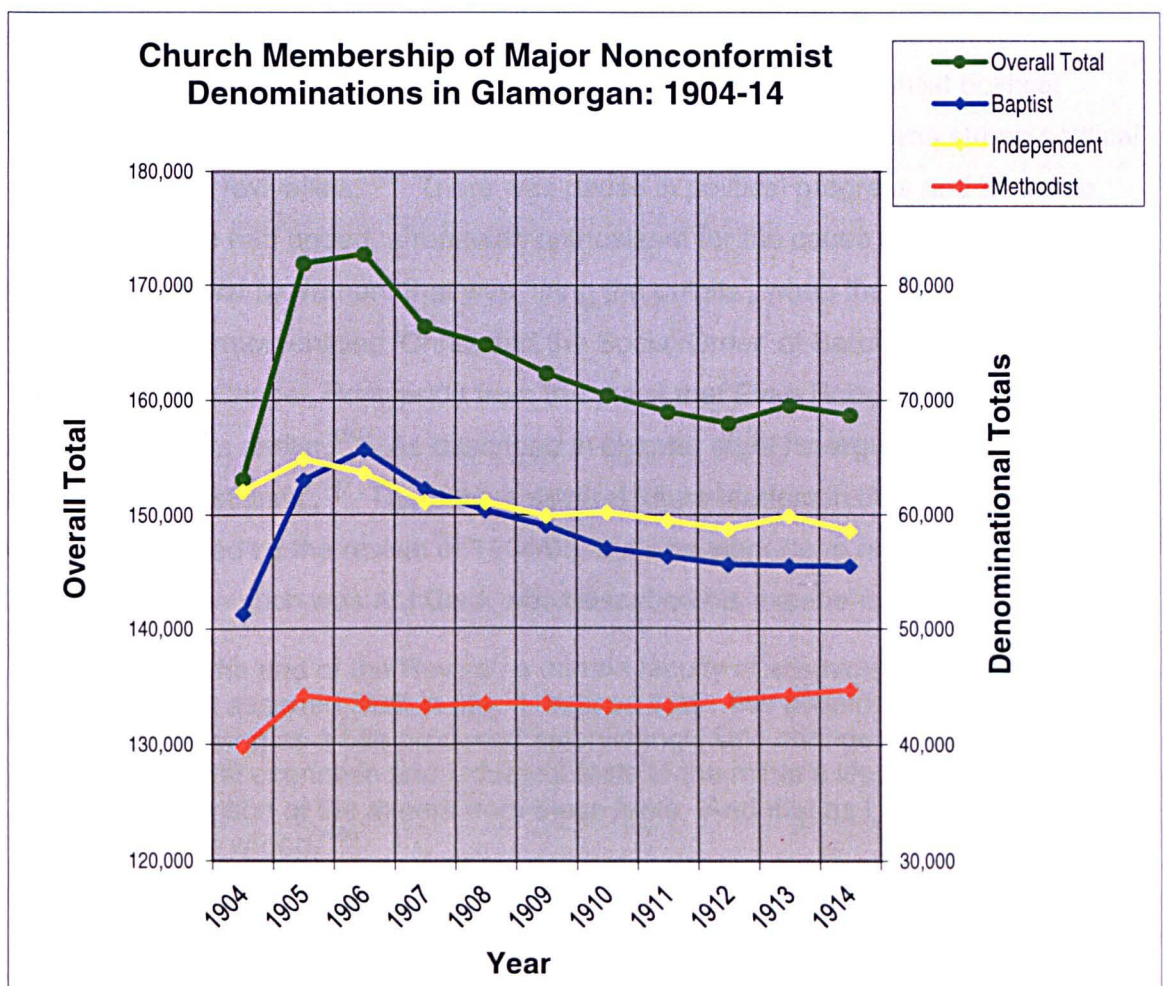
Source: Based on John Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics, II* (Cardiff, 1985), pp249-345 cited in Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, Table 3.1, p115

Notes: Independent = Congregationalist, and Methodist = Calvinistic Methodist
The Methodist totals include adherents as well as members

The revival did have a lasting effect, both on individuals and sections of the Church across the world and launched Pentacostalism throughout Britain with the formation of

the Elim and Apostolic Churches.[178] It had lasted for approximately fourteen months,[179] but for some the expectation had been for it to last and usher in a new era for the Welsh Church and Nation.[180] It was a movement that had its greatest effects on the younger members of society and part of its distinctiveness compared with earlier revivals was the role of lay people in the leadership of meetings.[181] Looking back in 1908 a speaker at the Mountain Ash Free Church Council recalled that 'The young people in these populous valleys rushed into the churches by hundreds'.[182] But whilst the churches had been encouraged to provide activities and accommodation for them, the speaker was disappointed that so little had been done.[183]

Eilir writing at the end of January, 1905, concluded that 'workmen were more satisfied with their wages and surroundings, and the Revival has exorcised the evil spirit of disaffection from the mine and the workshop.'[184] He reported that whilst political meetings had been held, 'in districts where the spirit of the Revival was strong political leaders became revivalists.'[185] There was pause in political progress and for some, when that pause had ended, a renewed enthusiasm for the cause of Labour. By 1907 it was the Socialist Movement that was 'firing the pulpits', when the Rev. Evans preached his sermon entitled 'Christ and the Social Order' at Sardis Welsh Congregational Chapel, Pontypridd from the pulpit that Evan Roberts had occupied some three years earlier.[186]. As described in chapter eight he argued for 'Socialism the outcome of Christianity'.[187] There were several future leaders in the labour movement who were affected by the revival of 1904/05, but who went on to reject orthodox Christianity. One such was A J Cook who described his experience thus;

> 'Towards the end of the Revival, a certain faculty of scepticism and critical judgement asserted itself in me. I realised that...this powerful current of feeling flowing as a tide produced astonishingly little change in the fundamental economic and industrial facts of the miner's life. It did, indeed, divert attention of the miners from these facts. And that as I was beginning to see was wrong.'[188]

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[178]
[179] Evans, Welsh Revival, pp192-94
[180] Adams, Diary of Revival, pp115-9 listing Roberts' 7 journeys, credited to R Tudur Evans
cf. Mr Parry, Reminiscences of one who experienced the 1904-5 Revival: Recorded c1973-4
[181] with Mr Parry then 86 years of age (2005)
[182] 'Eilir' (ed), Religious Revival in Wales, Pamphlet 2, pp28-29
[183] MEx, Mar.21, 1908, p4
[184] Ibid
[185] 'Eilir' (ed), Religious Revival in Wales, Pamphlet 3, p1
[186] Ibid
[187] 'Eilir' (ed), Religious Revival in Wales, Pamphlet 5, p11
[188] PObs, Dec.21, 1907, p3
Paul Davies, A J Cook (Manchester, 1987) p5 cited in Pope, Building Jerusalem, p95

Miners' leader James Griffiths had been intended for the Congregationalist ministry and could compare the influence on his life by Evan Roberts and R J Campbell. He spoke sparingly of the revival meeting but most emphatically about 'his conversion to Socialism'. The first was seen as transient but the other was of 'lasting significance'.[189]

John Davies claims that the Welsh Revival of 1904/5 'envigorated the disestablishment campaign', with the peak of attendance among the Nonconformists coinciding with the fact finding phase of the royal commission. This showed Nonconformists outnumbering Anglicans three to one.[190] E T Davies repeats a claim that the revival 'partially restored Nonconformity to a position of leadership in the social and economic life of the Welsh people' producing leaders who could understand contemporary labour issues.[191] Rees agrees that the revival gave Nonconformist chapels a new 'lease of life', revitalising them and extending the survival of their way of life.[192] Whilst Smith claims that inspiration for the 'concern for social questions broader than Education and Disestablishment', was due to both the 'New Theology' and the Revival.[193] E T Davies acknowledges that 'as time went on Nonconformist ministers became more outspoken on social issues' but opines that this would have happened without the revival which emphasized personal salvation. [194]

As some debated the roles and validities of Christianity and Socialism there was a continuum of orthodox Christian faith and practice, and as Davies notes Nonconformist Churches were not entirely blind to the conditions of workingmen and the need for social reform.[195] One by one the denominations formed organisations to face the challenge of Socialism. For example the Welsh Baptist Union established the Social Service League at its 1911 Annual Assembly in Mountain Ash.[196]

But was there an enduring effect on the community at large? Communities that had witnessed a major diminution of crime and drunkenness during the months of revival were soon to be thrown into turmoil. The year 1910 saw the Cambrian Collieries dispute, made notorious by the riots in Tonypandy, 1911 a major dock strike, and the first national railway strike with six deaths at Llanelli. In 1912 there was another protracted miners' strike. The revival had only improved industrial relations for a short while.

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[189] Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, pp102-03
[190] Davies, *History of Wales*, p507
[191] C R Williams, 'The Welsh Religious Revival, 1904-5', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.iii, No.3 (1952) p259 cited in Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p172
[192] Rees, *Chapels in the Valley*, p157
[193] Smith, *Religion and the Rise of Labour*, p95
[194] Davies, *Religion in the Industrial Revolution*, p173
[195] *Ibid*
[196] Pope, *Building Jerusalem*, p136

Conclusion

Denominational allegiances of the Taff Vale employees in part reflected their ethnic origins with strong support for the Anglican Church explained by the above average number from England. It is clear from the high levels of church attendance in Wales that many more than those detected would have belonged to a church or chapel. Whilst the Railway Mission did have some members in Aberdare and Cardiff, it had not made much progress among TVR employees; maybe because it lacked a supportive company management.

Nonconformists dominated the religious scene in Wales and had developed their own culture that gave workingmen opportunities for self-development and positions of responsibility. TVR employees and their families were active participants.

The wider community shared the railwaymen's concern for those killed or maimed and joined the annual church parades for raising funds, and the railwaymen apparently appreciated the almost sacred role they were credited with. Mammon and religion met in the boardroom, particularly with respect to church schools, and the former was more likely to be favoured. The company was part of the general religious ethos of the age with Bibles in waiting rooms, grace before a meal and Christian magazines in the workmen's institute.

Religious revivals were periodic events in Welsh history from the eighteenth century filling chapels and churches and checking bad behaviour in society. Many explanations were given for these outbreaks. For the devout it was always a divine intervention, for others it might have been external events or conditions that aroused religious emotions. The outbreak in 1904 whilst having many of the facets of earlier 'awakenings' was aided by two features of the modern age; the mass circulation newspaper and the railway. Taff Vale stations had been a focus of activity and many of the converts were from districts served by the Taff Vale Railway. But no record of responses specifically from TVR workmen has been found. Two factors militated against a significant effect. Primarily the language of the revival was Welsh and only just over one quarter of TVR employees spoke Welsh, and unlike the miners there were few places where they gathered in any number.

Many individuals were positively affected by the revival and for a while communities enjoyed a reduction in crime, disorder and industrial strife. There was significant boost to Nonconformity that diminished as the Revival generation passed on, leaving Pentecostalism as its legacy. For the rising number of socialists, lay and clerical, it had

come and gone along with its pacifying effects, and working men and their supporters returned to the class struggle.

Despite the social and political changes affecting the Valleys' communities throughout the period of this study, they retained a high level of religious observance. Cultural and political factors combined to ensure that Church and Chapel retained a prominence in south Wales society that impinged on the life of the TVR and its employees. However, whilst religion and the revivals were a continuing part of the underlying ethos of society, they had relatively little impact on the operation or management of the company. The politics of individuals were probably influenced by the traditional Nonconformist-Liberal link, but for many, clergy and laity, there was a transition from Liberalism towards Socialism. Neither religion nor revivalism appear to have particularly affected TVR labour relations.

Conclusion

This study has uniquely presented a wide ranging examination of the employees of an entire railway company, not just a single centre or grade, and it has discussed employment practices, welfarism, discipline and industrial relations. The closely observed examination of east Glamorgan society, informed by a wide range of disciplines from anthropology to theology, has permitted an examination of community theory, defended use of the term and proposed a new type of community. It has also demonstrated the role and interaction of politics, religion and religious revival.

In the first section the geographical and historical setting has been introduced along with the company's most senior managers and the thousands they employed. The study has encompassed an entire company and all grades from general manager to porter. Whilst the Taff Vale was a relatively small railway it did have most of the features of a much larger one. There have been a number of studies of railway towns, but these only represent a relatively small proportion of the employees of any one company, and, typically, they have concentrated on workshop staff. In most respects the TVR was representative of British railways as a whole, and much of its capital came from England and most directors and senior managers were English.

This study has closely examined a wide range of personnel issues such as recruitment, workplace interaction, careers, housing, mobility, risks of the job and discipline. It has provided a detailed analysis of mobility and progression across the entire company and has demonstrated that whilst footplatemen had their career structure before 1880, the traffic grades were also developing career ladders from that date on the Taff Vale. What has emerged from comparison with other studies is that it cannot be assumed, as some do, that every railway managed its workmen in the same way or that experiences of progression and mobility were standard. This caveat also applies to other types of provision for example housing and pension funds.

The history of the Taff Vale in the period of this study can be divided into two parts; from 1878 to 1891 and from 1891 until 1914. The pivotal point was occasioned by the arrival of the Barry Railway in 1889 and the revolt of the shareholders in 1891 as they saw the detrimental effect on their dividends. But it was the First World War and its aftermath that brought the independent existence of the Taff Vale to a still profitable end. The most senior management post in the company was held by strong minded individuals for virtually all of its existence; these were George Fisher and Ammon Beasley. The change came with the shareholders' revolt that coincided with the death of George Fisher. Whilst George Fisher had held a range of posts over fifty years and had earned respect as a civil engineer, his influence was largely limited to the Taff Vale

and its local rivals. But Beasley in his thirty-one years as general manager and deputy chairman received national acclaim and recognition across the railways of Britain. These men ensured the financial success of the Taff Vale despite competition and the company's own failings. The company's predominant traffic gave the atypical proportions to the numbers employed in each grade. As noted, progression varied by grade, but turnover was consistent over the period, and reflected the stability of those who were accepted and stayed. The range of labour markets has been discussed and it has been shown that the internal labour market predominated. External labour markets were only engaged with in recruiting unskilled workers at the start of a working life with the company or in meeting the varying demands of the company's workshops. Casualisation was evident in these workshops with both skilled and unskilled workers, but it has been demonstrated that the skilled workers were part of an occupational labour market that took them from one company to the next as the demand from their skills dictated. Unlike companies such as the NER only a small proportion of the men and their families lived in company-owned houses. But in relation to the discussion on community the stability gave opportunities to be part of local society, and, with mobility, gave opportunities to forge links across the company. It has also been demonstrated that for many grades there was a constant threat of injury or death, but these risks are shown to have been in line with the national figures for the period.

Defining 'community' is never simple; it will always mean different things to different people and has been debated for well over fifty years, with some concluding that it was impossible to achieve anything like a consensus. The second section of the thesis has explored the nature of community through a range of approaches across a number of disciplines and a contribution has been made to the ongoing debate on the nature of community and its usefulness as a concept. In this it has examined theories of community and defended use of the term but it has also proposed a new approach for social historians with the concept of a 'network community'.

There does appear to be a majority view that whilst locality is important in defining a specific community, its boundaries are unlikely to be coterminous with the physical and administrative boundaries of that place. But in whatever way community is defined it implies the existence of a set of social relationships or 'local social systems'.[1] For any given study it is important that scholars state what use is being made of the term, and so for the purpose of this study 'community' has been defined as: *the people living*

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[1] Stacey, 'Myth of Community Studies'

within a locality, as understood by its members, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but will also extend beyond that boundary.

The study has covered the behaviour and activities of railway workers in the wider community, as well as analysing that community. For this the research has been bottom up starting with the working careers of the railwaymen and their day-to-day interactions. It has shown how railwaymen contributed to the larger settlements through service to local society, and how they developed their own society when the railway was at its centre. Also it has explored how four external influences religion, ethnicity, politics and newspapers affected their lives.

As part of the 'local social systems', within each 'community' are sub-communities that provide the social links for those members. Some sub-communities are informal, for example the favoured public house, others like friendly societies and trade unions are formal having a membership roll and rule book. Each has autonomy, however loosely drawn, and each is defined and viewed both from within and without, by those who belong and those who have chosen not to, or who are ineligible. The sub-communities to which the TVR employee belonged involved many interactions that brought a mix of comfort, entertainment, challenge and support.

Calhoun has suggested that networks can be constructed in any manner that produces a set of relationships,[2] and in seeking to establish the existence of a 'network community' the following ten sources of potential links within the company have been investigated. These are company identity, day-to-day contact, social contact, mobility and stability, multiple generations, inter-marriage, residence, persistence, lodging and trade unions. It is proposed for use by social historians as a concept or investigative tool in the study of employees and owners of companies, or members and officers of non-corporate organisations. However the density of such communities would diminish with much greater membership numbers and or a more extensive spatial extent.

The working definition of the TVR 'network community' is: *the employees of the Taff Vale Railway and their families living and working within the spatial and symbolic boundaries that define it, with the system of social links that are mainly internal, but also extend beyond those boundaries.* It was a spatially located community bounded by the extent of the company's physical spread; a 'symbolic community' in the minds of its employees, customers and owners; an 'occupational community' limited to the employees and officers of one railway company; a 'virtual' or 'imagined' community with a 'group mind facilitated by the constant circulation of information';[3] and finally a

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[2] Calhoun, 'Community: toward a variable conceptualization', p118
[3] Drummond, 'Britain's Railway Engineers', p211

'network' that was not confined to a single locality but was defined by relationships that existed because of the railway. The impression gained is one of a company family, part paternalistic, part shared experience, which, whilst strong before 1900, was beginning to fragment in the years up to 1914.

In the third section the relationships between the workers and managers have been analysed; firstly through noting the management's treatment of its workmen and then by an exploration of the company's industrial relations history. The control strategies employed by companies through paternalism, welfarism and discipline and the specific approaches of the TVR have been identified. In examining the welfare provision by the TVR management it has been concluded that whilst in earlier years the approach may have been paternalistic, from the 1890s it was clearly industrial welfarism aimed at maintaining good relations with the workmen.

It had not been a paternalism based on an ideological approach as had motivated Robert Owen or George Cadbury nor the social conscience of Titus Salt. But it possibly reflected the ethos of the Victorian Christian gentleman described by Drummond,[4] and illustrated by the patriarchal tone of the 1855 Rule Book. Neither had it been the paternalism of the factory town, where the predominant employer might not only provide amenities to encourage deference, but also influence the politics and denominational allegiance of the employees and their families.

The study has provided a closely observed account of the disciplinary regime on the Taff Vale showing the range of offences and the penalties that they attracted. The proposal that a career structure, as introduced by the GWR, might be a method of control to replace disciplinary penalties has been shown not to be true on the Taff Vale. Discipline was strict and many had some adverse entry against their name in the staff registers. The range of punishments appears generally to fit the offence, although with the clear divide between errors in carrying out the job, and the few instances of bad behaviour. It was coercive in nature with the aim of running a safe, efficient and socially acceptable railway.

Rather than simply revisiting the Taff Vale dispute of 1900, this well known event has been set in the context of TVR labour relations from 1878 to 1914. It also draws attention to the less well known roles of ASLEF in the 1900 strike and that of D A Thomas in the disputes of 1890 and 1900. The account shows that Ammon Beasley's obstinacy was of greater importance to labour history than has been recognised. The reaction of the trade union movement against his legal action prompted many more

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[4] Drummond, *Crewe Railway Town*, p189

unions to support the Labour Representation Committee thus assisting the creation of the Labour Party. It also inspired the campaign for what became the 1906 Trades Disputes Act.

Before 1890 there had been reluctance on the part of railway trade union leaders to use the strike weapon and one issue that dominated the strikes from 1890 to 1911 was union recognition. Whilst there was more than a glimmer of hope with the settlement of 1890, and a disputed halfway house in 1911, full recognition had to wait until 1915. From 1890 the men sought or offered arbitration, and various individuals and community bodies were ready to assist, but when Conciliation Boards were created in exchange for calling off a threatened national strike in 1907 the men's experience of them was one of increasing disappointment.

Railwaymen were seen by their communities as more responsible than miners during the conduct of strikes. Perhaps it was this responsible behaviour, as well as the day-to-day contact that many would have with the railway, that maintained the support of the community throughout the period, although it was at its strongest in 1890. The cardinal industrial virtue was solidarity with your fellow workers, the cardinal sin was to be a strike-breaker or 'blackleg', and commission of this sin was the pretext for what violence there was. Local solidarity has been shown to be of greater importance than union discipline and disobedience to or criticism of union leaderships was evident in virtually all but the 1911 action.

In portraying late-Victorian Glamorgan the final section has investigated the interaction of politics and religion and the implications for ordinary working people. It has emphasised that religion and politics were inextricably entwined in much of society and, although particularly relevant to Wales, has drawn attention to the fact that religion still played a ubiquitous role in the mores and culture of Britain. A sample of the religious and political debates from the period has been discussed with reference to Church and Chapel and the developing labour movement. Finally the phenomenon of religious revival has been examined in the context of the valleys in which the Taff Vale operated.

The overall project has sought to discover the influence of religion and revivalism on a discrete group of railway people. It has established the religious allegiances of a sample of the TVR people and their involvement in the spread of religious revival. To provide the background, this and the previous sections have built a picture of life in late nineteenth century Glamorgan through a close reading of local newspapers.

The development of the labour movement has been demonstrated from the minute books of three ASRS branches and local newspaper reports. This has shown the

development of political awareness and moves towards Left-wing politics. But the politics of many individuals were still influenced by the traditional Nonconformist-Liberal link.

The extent to which Taff Vale employees involved themselves in many of the issues described is unclear, but each set the tone of the ethos and discourse of their communities. In many cases involvement would be purely passive in terms of circumstances; the denomination of the school attended, the political views encountered in the workplace and the church or chapel where one might marry and continue in membership. The mainly English directors of the company although less involved at a local level in Glamorgan, would not be ignorant of the issues of the day such as school boards that came to the attention of the Board. Many of the divisions and tensions in south Walean society were in the often inseparable areas of Politics and Religion.

The study has shown a continuing acceptance of religion and its involvement with business and trade union life. The minute books of the ASRS branches and newspaper reports have shown the links with local churches through church parades and contact with progressive clergy. The wider community shared the railwaymen's concern for those killed or maimed and joined the annual church parades to raise funds, and the railwaymen apparently appreciated the almost sacred role they were credited with.

Mammon and religion met in the boardroom, particularly with respect to appeals from churches, but they were more likely to be rejected. The company was part of the general religious ethos of the age with Bibles in waiting rooms, grace before a meal and Christian magazines in the workmen's institute.

The denominational involvement of a sample of the TVR people has been discovered and the effects of religious revivals on them and their places of worship have been investigated. During the 1904-05 Revival the Taff Vale Railway was at its centre for several weeks but the TVR railwaymen were not notably affected by it.

Denominational allegiances of the Taff Vale employees in part reflected their ethnic origins with strong support for the Anglican Church explained by the above average number from England, but overall Nonconformists predominated. It is clear from the high levels of church attendance in Wales that many more than those detected would have belonged to a church or chapel. The Railway Mission did not make much progress among TVR employees, possibly because the management were not supportive. The Nonconformists had developed their own culture that gave workingmen, including TVR employees, opportunities for self-development and positions of responsibility.

Religious revivals were periodic events in Welsh history from the eighteenth century filling chapels and churches and checking bad behaviour in society. Many explanations were given for these outbreaks. For the devout it was always a divine intervention, for others it might have been external events or conditions that aroused religious emotions. The outbreak in 1904 whilst having many of the facets of earlier 'awakenings' was aided by two features of the modern age; the mass circulation newspaper and the railway. Although Taff Vale stations had been a focus of activity and many of the converts were from districts served by the Taff Vale Railway, no record of specific responses from its workmen has been found. Primarily the language of the revival was Welsh but only just over one quarter of TVR employees spoke Welsh. In the aftermath Nonconformity received a boost and Pentecostalism became its legacy. For the rising number of socialists, lay and clerical, it had come and gone along with its pacifying effects, and working men and their supporters returned to the class struggle. But despite the social and political changes affecting the Valleys' communities throughout the period of this study, they retained a high level of religious observance.

The dramatic economic, social, political and religious change that occurred in late Victorian and Edwardian south Wales did involve and affect the Taff Vale Railway and its employees. Yet there was stability in employment evident in an internal labour market and in a family and social life that was part of a network community. From 1890 the company employed industrial welfarism to control the men, but this did not prevent the famous dispute of 1900 or other lesser known strikes. In 1900 the general manager of the time played a significant role in wider labour history. The discourse of the period involved a mix of politics and religion and a religious revival was aided by the modernity of the railway, but neither religion nor the revival made a significant impact on the politics or labour relations of the Taff Vale Railway.

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Descendants of TVR Employees

TVR Staff Questionnaire for (Name) _____

Personal BMD

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy): _____   Place of Birth: _____

Baptised (dd/mm/yyyy): _____   Church or Chapel: _____

Marriage (dd/mm/yyyy): _____   Church or Chapel: _____

Died (dd/mm/yyyy): _____   Place of Death: _____

Buried (dd/mm/yyyy): _____   Church, Chapel or Cemetery: _____

Address: Date from: Date to:

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

Wife/Parents/Children: (Non-employees):

Name:	Date of Birth:	Date of Death:	Relationship to Employee:
			Wife **

** Name/Occupation of wife's father: _____   :

Service History

Date entered Service: (dd/mm/yyyy): _____

Date left Service: (dd/mm/yyyy): _____

Location:	Date:	Department:	Job Title:

Appendix A: Questionnaire (*continued*)

Membership of Organisations
Church/Chapel inc. name and/or denomination:

_____

_____

Political Party/Organisation e.g. ILP, Liberal, Liberal Unionist, etc.:

_____

_____

Trade Union e.g. ASRS/NUR, ASLEF, etc.:

_____

_____

Friendly Societies/Professional Bodies: e.g. Provident/Savings groups, Oddfellows, etc.:

_____

_____

Culture/Leisure: e.g. Choir, Clubs, etc.:

_____

_____

Events
Stories: (especially, but not exclusively job related – include reference to newspaper accounts if relevant)
e.g. Accidents, family legends, achievements, etc.

(Start here - continue on an additional page if necessary)

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Note: The questionnaire can be used for both paper and electronic input.

Appendix B: Sample Proforma for Staff Data

ID	SOURCE 1	SOURCE 2	SURNAME	1st NAME	2nd NAME	3rd Name /alt ID	RLY	Date/ batch	DoB	DES	DLS	LOCATION	Reason for leaving	POSITION/ EVENT	NOTES	Date of note
JON999	COY0001		JONES	Thomas			TVR	ZZZ99	18420000	18650101	19100102	Cardiff	Pension	Brakesman	(discipline items, etc. - Include date in notes for non-Event items)	18951023
										18700000		Coke Ovens		Fireman		
										18850000		Coke Ovens		Driver		

Notes: General purpose proforma for the capture of data from Staff Registers. The red text provides an example for guidance when inputting data. It can be used, either as a printed form, or for direct input to a computer.

Appendix C: Proformas for Newspaper Extracts (1 - Manual)

PUBLICATION:	Date of Extract

Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Date:_____ No.:_____ Page:____ NOTE:	
Additional Notes:	

Notes: Proforma for the capture of data from Newspapers.
It was designed used for use as a printed form in libraries where direct input to a computer was not possible. The electronic form for computer input is included below.

Appendix C: Proformas for Newspaper Extracts (*continued*): (2 - MS Excel)

		PUBLICATION:		Date of Extract:		Next Event					
Source ▶							Note cols B, D & K are Text format				
	Reference	Report text			◀Sheet no	News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
2						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
3						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
4						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
5						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
6						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
7						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
8						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
9						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										
10						News Type ▶					
Date:				◀Headline	Event ID	Subject Area					
No.:						Politics	Religion	Economics	Community	File Ref 2	File Ref 3
Page:				▲ Event date	Event Type						
NOTE:				◀Note text		Event Person (4) ▶					
	▲ Photo no.										

Notes: Proforma for the capture of data from Newspapers.
It was designed and used for direct input to a computer or for the input of extracts previously recorded on the paper proforma (see above).

Appendix D Selection of events and periods for Newspaper Searches

Year(s)	Event/Movement
1878	Fatal train crash on TVR at Pontypridd
1878-80	Arrival of Salvation Army in South Wales
1884-85	'Third Reform Act'
1889	Opening of Barry Railway
1890	Joint rail strike on Barry, Rhymney and Taff Vale Railways
1890-91	Shareholder revolt on TVR
1891	Arrival of Ammon Beasley as General Manager of TVR
1891	Accident at Pontypridd Station
1893	Fatal train crash on TVR at Llantrisant Junction
1893	Miners' Strike
1895	Fitters' Strike on TVR
1898	Founding of South Wales Miners' Federation
1900-06	Taff Vale Dispute and Judgement
1900	General Election; Formation of Labour Representation C'tee
1900-03	North Wales Quarrymen's Strike
1904-05	Religious Revival
1910	Cambrian Collieries Dispute, Tonypandy Riots
1911	Fatal train crash on TVR at Pontypridd
1911	National Rail Strike
1913	Senghenydd Colliery Disaster
1914	Outbreak of WW I

Appendix E: Railway Map of TVR and surrounding Companies
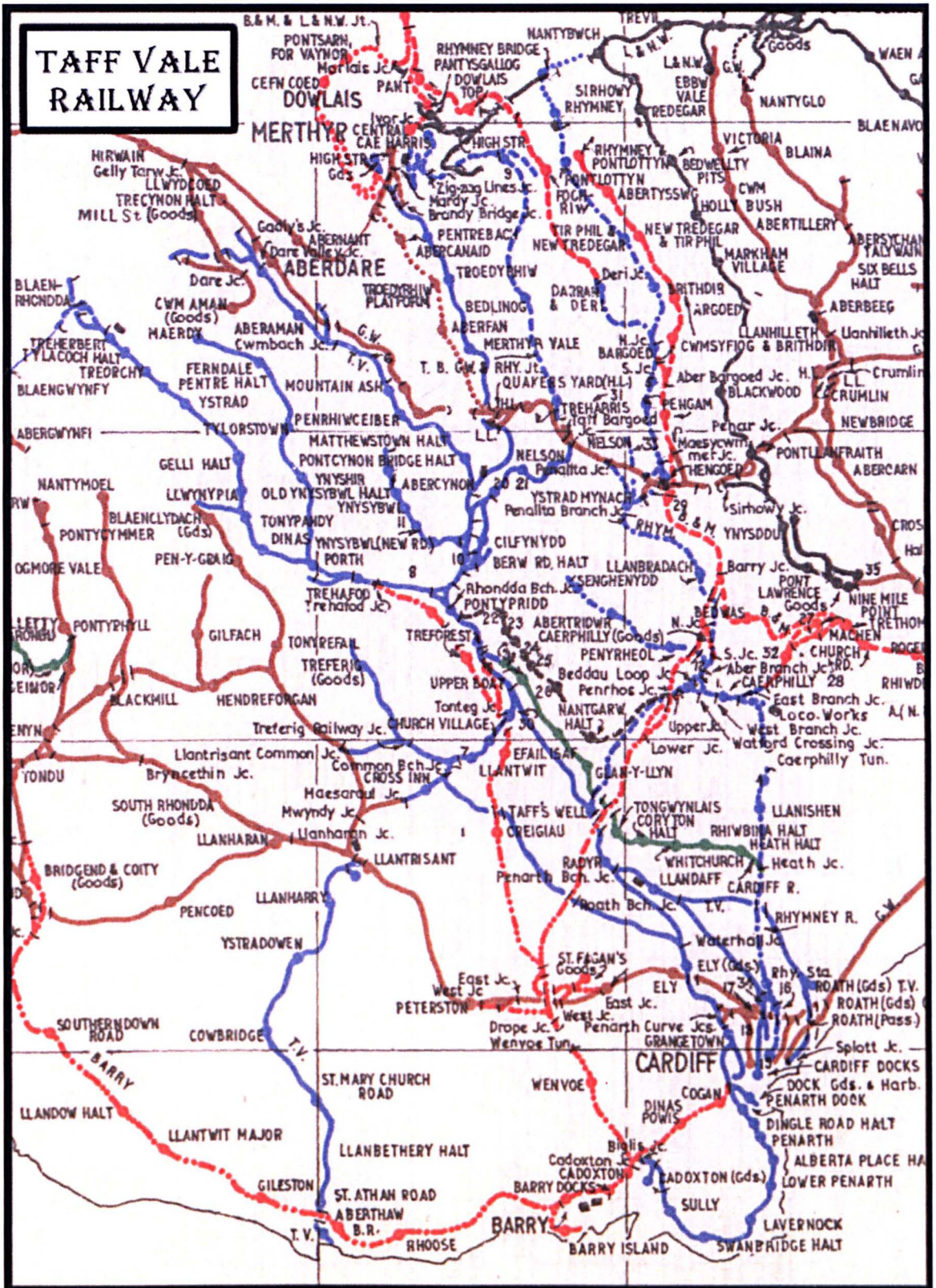
Source: W Philip Conolly, *British Railways Pre-grouping Atlas and Gazetteer* (2nd ed) (London, 1960) p43(part):

Key to Map: Major Lines only

Alexandra Docks Railway	ADR	Great Western Railway	GWR
Brecon & Merthyr Railway	B&M	London & North Western Rly	LNWR
Barry Railway	BR	Rhymney Railway	RR
Cardiff Railway	CR	Taff Valley Railway	TVR

TAFF VALE RAILWAY ORGANISATION CHART:
[Reflecting deduced position c1900]

HEAD OFFICE

DEPOT/STATION LEVEL

Chairman → Board of Directors → General Manager

Reporting to General Manager:

- **Chief Engineer** → New Works Engineer → Engineers Drawing Office → Engineers Clerical
  - Permanent Way Inspectors → Foreman Platelayers → Platelayers → Relaying Foremen → Second-men → Ballast Foremen → Ballastmen

- **Line Superintendent** → Traffic Clerical → Head Office Inspectors
  - Station Masters
    - Special-rate Signalmen → Signalmen → Porter Signalmen → Lamp Men/Boys → Policemen → Signal Fitters
    - Traffic Inspectors → Traffic Foremen / Train Formers → Goods/Mineral Guards → Brakesmen / Bank Riders → Groundmen → Pointsmen → Couplers
   - Main Line Guards → Branch Line Guards → Brakesmen → Motor Conductors → Train Porters → Booking Clerks → Ticket Collectors → Porters (various)

- **Company Secretary** → Accountant → Auditor → Cashier → Clerical sections

- **Solicitor** → Medical Officer → Caretaker

- **Locomotive Superintendent** → Locomotive Drawing Office → Locomotive Clerical → Head Office Inspectors
  - Works Manager, West Yard Loco. Works → Works Manager, Cathays Carr. & Wagon Works → Foremen → Tradesmen → Fitters → Apprentices → Labourers → Carriage & Wagon Examiners
  - Locomotive Inspectors → Locomotive Foremen → Passenger Drivers → Main Line Drivers → Pilot / Motor Drivers → Firemen → Passed Firemen → Engine Cleaners → Other Shed Staff

- **Goods Manager / Superintendent** → Goods Clerical
  - Goods Agents → Clerks → Detectives → Foremen → Checkers → Warehousemen → Porters

- **Dock Master** → Dock Master's Clerical
  - Collector, Penarth → Collector's Office, Clerical → Harbour Master → Foremen / Train Formers → Shunters → Pointsmen → Couplers → Crane Drivers → Tippers

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Notes:

Compiled from Staff Registers and other Company Papers. Where there is a larger gap between boxes on the vertical lines, this indicates that the lower post does not report to the post immediately above. The grades listed are only a selection of job titles discovered, and a wider selection is included in Appendix G.

Appendix G: List of Job Titles derived from TVR Staff Records

Job Titles	Job Titles (cont'd)	Job Titles (cont'd)
Accountant	Fitter Smith	Passed Fireman
Acting Train Inspector	Fitter's Labourer	Passenger Driver
Apprentice	Fitter's Mate	Passenger Guard
Assistant	Foreman	Passr & Gds Guard
Asst Checker	Foreman Platelayer	Passr Brakesman
Asst Foreman	Forgeman	Permanent Way Inspector
Asst Inspector	Ganger	Platelayer
Asst Passr Brakesman	Gateman/Porter	Platform Porter
Asst Passr Guard	Gds & Min Guard	Platform Inspector
Asst Signalman	General Manager	Pointsman
Asst Signalman/ Lampman	Goods Agent	Policeman
Asst Warehouseman	Goods Foreman	Porter
Asst Yardman	Goods Guard	Porter/Asst Brakesman
Ballast Foreman	Goods Porter	Porter/Asst Guard
Bankrider	Grinder	Porter/Carr Cleaner
Bar Boy	Groundman	Porter/Foreman
Blockman	Guard	Porter/Lamp Cleaner
Boatman	Guard (Supernumerary)	Porter/Lithographer
Boilermaker	Haulier	Pumping Engineman
Boilermaker's Asst	Holder-up	Pupil
Booking Clerk	Horse Driver	Relief Signalman
Booking Constable	Housekeeper	Rlf Passr Brakesman
Boy	Inspector	Ropeman
Boy in Loco Depot	Jnr Asst Loco Supt	Shedman
Boy Labourer	Jnr Clerk	Shunter
Brakesman	Labourer	Signal Fitter
Brakesman (Supy)	Lamp Cleaner	Signalman
Brakesman/Guard	Lamp Cleaner/Porter	Smith
Brass Moulder	Lampman	Springmaker
Carpenter	Lavatory Attendant	Station Agent
Carriage Cleaner	Leading Shunter	Station Master
Cashier	Loco Foreman	Steam Raiser
Chairman	Loco Inspector	Storekeeper
Checker	Loco Superintendent	Striker
Chief Asst Loco Supt	Lookout man	Sub-inspector
Chief Draughtsman	Machine Shop Foreman	Superintendent
Civil Engineer	Machinist	Tail Lamp Minder
Clerk	Mail Guard	Telegraph Clerk
Coppersmith	Main Line Driver	Ticket Collector
Coupler	Messenger	Timekeeper
Crane Driver	Mineral Brakesman	Tipper
Deputy Chairman	Mineral Guard	Train Former
Detective	Motorman	Train Inspector
Director	Night Foreman	Trimmer
Draughtsman	Night Policeman	Turner
Driver	Night Train Former	Turntable Man
Engine Cleaner	Night Watchman	Walking Policeman
Engineman	Nightman	Warehouseman
Examiner	Number Taker	Watchman
Fencing	Office Boy	Weigher
Fireman	Paid-hand	Yard Foreman
Fitter	Parcels Porter	Yardman

Notes: These job titles were not necessarily all in use at the same time and many were probably unique. Many reflect shared responsibilities where there was no justification for two posts.

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