

# Culture Maintenance, Occupational Change, and Social Status

The Welsh in San Francisco, 1880–1930

**ABSTRACT** Through a consideration of residential propinquity, religious and cultural activity, language retention, and levels of exogamy, this article provides a microstudy of the Welsh community in San Francisco and identifies the Welsh as a distinct ethnolinguistic community in the city during the late decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. What was the nature of Welsh immigrant culture, and to what extent were working-class Welsh people involved in its expression? In addition, through an analysis of intragenerational changes in socioeconomic status, as indicated by occupational mobility, the article tests the assumption that the Welsh were prime illustrations of the “American Dream,” thus providing a clearer picture than the images promulgated by contemporary Welsh leaders who strove to emphasize the industry and upward mobility of their fellow countrymen. Did the Welsh as a group occupy a privileged position in the occupational hierarchy, and were they universally successful in improving on this position?

IN FEBRUARY 1906, in the pages of *The Cambrian: A Magazine for Welsh Americans*, an obituary appeared for the recently deceased Dr. Ellis Jones. Jones, born in Llangollen, north-east Wales, in 1861, had worked as a child in the local flannel factory and later completed an apprenticeship as a saddler. He lived for some time in Manchester, England, before crossing the Atlantic to work in Canada and the southwestern United States. He finally settled in San Francisco where, in 1896, he married the California-born Miss Charlotte Scott. The following year he entered the College of Physicians and Surgeons of San Francisco, from which he graduated with a D.D.S. in 1900. Jones held offices in various orders, and at the time of his death he was the commander counsel of the city’s Woodmen of the World fraternal society lodge. In a Welsh American context, he was described as “a faithful member of the Cymrodorion Society, and a willing supporter of the Welsh church.” According to *The Cambrian*,

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the good doctor was kind, contentious, and modest, and if only he had “had ‘a little of the California blasé,’ he would have been one of the most popular Welshmen on the coast.”<sup>1</sup>

Ellis Jones represents the most respected aspects of Welsh American culture, and this obituary is representative of much of the writing on the Welsh overseas, which has been heavily influenced by the positive characterization of the group, is suffused with assumptions regarding their positive attributes, and invariably stresses their contribution to their new homeland.<sup>2</sup> This phenomenon can be related to the emergence in mid-nineteenth-century Wales of what Merfyn Jones has referred to as “a series of definitions of Welshness” that forged an identity “based on an assumed and proclaimed homogeneity.”<sup>3</sup> Prys Morgan and others have argued that from the 1840s onward, under the leadership of “nonconformist journalists, preachers, and radical politicians,” the very image of Wales was transformed. As? Morgan put it:

The Welsh saw themselves as the most virtuous and hard-working people in Europe, in farm, mine and factory, the most God-fearing, the best at observing the sabbath, the most temperate with regard to drink, the most deeply devoted to educational improvement and to things of the mind.<sup>4</sup>

Assertions of this nature were certainly endemic in commentaries regarding Welsh communities overseas during this period and, while such filiopietistic comments were not confined to the Welsh, the leadership of that community appears to have been particularly concerned with the propagation of a favorable image.<sup>5</sup>

As far away as Australia in 1887, the widely traveled Reverend Dr. Bevan could state at a gathering of his countrymen, “In America, no class earned more the respect of their fellow citizens than the residents in the Welsh settlements. The Welshmen there were famed for their virtue, religion, and many good qualities, and they made orderly and good citizens of a great republic.” For Dr Bevan, the Welsh “were essentially an intellectual people” and “the most evangelical people on the face of the earth.”<sup>6</sup> In the same vein, for a nineteenth-century American observer, the Welsh in the United States were “intensely industrious, provident, studious, religious, ambitious, musical, persistent, independent, gregarious, affectionate, grateful and spontaneous.”<sup>7</sup>

Certainly, the Welsh in San Francisco regarded themselves as respectable citizens of the republic in which they had made their new home. Explaining the high price of tickets for entry to the annual celebration of Wales’s patron saint, Saint David, in 1877, the popular Welsh American newspaper *Y Drych* commented:

mae yn beryglus i ni osod y pris yn rhy isel fel y gollyngir i mewn yr *hoodlum element* sydd mor lluosog yn ein dinas. Mae ein cyfarfodydd blynyddol hyd yma wedi enill y cymeriad uchel o fod yn un o’r cynullïadau mwyaf boneddigaidd a gynelir yn ninas San Francisco; felly, dymunol can belled ag y gallwn, ydyw cadw y cymeriad gwiw yna i fyny, a dangos i’r byd fod y Cymry can uchled eu moesau, a chan laned eu cymeriad ag unrhyw genedl arall sydd yn troedio y ddaear.<sup>8</sup>

It is dangerous for us to set the price too low as it will allow in the *hoodlum element* who are so numerous in our city. Our annual meetings have so far been of such a standard [as] to be the most respectable gatherings held in the city of San Francisco; therefore, it is desirable, as far as we are able, to maintain this excellent standard and show to the world that the Welsh are of as pure a character and have morals as high as any other nation walking the earth.

Samuel Williams, president of San Francisco's Welsh Association (described below), who spoke at the proceedings, was "unable to sit down without showing the audience that Welsh morality was higher than [that of] any nation on the continent of America." (ni allodd eistedd i lawr heb ddangos i'r gynulleidfa fod moesoldeb y Cymry mewn cymhariaeth yn gyfuwch ag unrhyw genedl ar gyfandir America).<sup>9</sup>

In San Francisco, as in every area settled by Welsh immigrants, community leaders purposefully and successfully promoted a public image of their countrymen that portrayed them as models of American citizenship by virtue of their perceived national characteristics, their contemporary standards of social behaviour, their religiosity, and the cultured nature of their community activities. Central to this positive image was the idea that the Welsh aspired to socioeconomic upward mobility: that they were possessed of an innate ability to achieve, maintain, and rapidly improve on their social and economic position.<sup>10</sup>

Ellis Jones personified much of what contemporary Welsh leaders advocated as the desirable attributes of Welshness. He was a Welsh-speaking, religious, culturally active family man involved in all the most favorable activities of his community, both secular and religious. In addition, this gentleman not only reflected the rich cultural life of Welsh migrants in the United States, but also epitomized the images of socioeconomic success and advancement so strongly pushed by leaders of Welsh communities in Wales and overseas. The central concern of this article is the extent to which Jones was truly representative of the Welsh community that had emerged in San Francisco by the beginning of the twentieth century.

Any study of nineteenth-century emigration from Wales must first acknowledge that Welsh emigrants were relatively few in number. This was due not only to the small size of the Welsh population, which did not register as more than one million until the 1841 U.K. census, but also to the rate of emigration from Wales, which was significantly lower than that in either England, Scotland, or Ireland.<sup>11</sup> In recent years, however, the Welsh in the United States have received increasing attention from historians and, quite understandably, these historians have focused on the greatest concentrations of Welsh settlement: the mining and metallurgical districts of Ohio, New York, and ultimately, Pennsylvania.<sup>12</sup> Pennsylvania alone contained 35,435 Welsh-born individuals (38 percent of the total) in 1900. Some 5,245 lived in Allegheny County, centered on Pittsburgh, and a further 16,286 resided in the two adjacent counties of Lackawanna and Luzerne, which were centered, respectively, on the towns of Scranton and Wilkes-Barre.<sup>13</sup> Besides these major concentrations, the Welsh were to be found, to varying degrees, throughout the United States and made up the dominant proportion of the immigrant population in numerous settlements, usually those associated with specific industries in which the Welsh were favored with expertise, such as the small slate-quarrying towns of Vermont and the isolated mining settlements of Missouri.<sup>14</sup> In most major U.S. cities, however, the Welsh neither numbered in the thousands nor did they constitute a major percentage of the population as a whole. In many of these cities they were, nevertheless, to be found in numbers sufficient to yield valuable insights regarding the nature of their communities and the ways in which they changed. San Francisco was one such city where the Welsh formed a small but distinct and highly visible ethnolinguistic community during the late decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth.

Correctly identifying the numbers of Welsh people resident in communities in the United States is, however, not simply a matter of consulting U.S. federal census reports, which starting in 1850 list each individual's place of birth and starting in 1880 list the place of birth of each person's parents. Individuals are occasionally not accorded a place of birth or are recorded as "born at sea." Furthermore, persons recorded as being born in one country in one census are sometimes recorded as being born in another in a previous or subsequent census. Other individuals are recorded more than once. In the 1900 census report for San Francisco, for example, Frederick Roberts, who was born in Wales in 1866, is found living with his Irish American wife, Mattie, and their two U.S.-born daughters, Eunice and Gladys, on Twenty-First Street and again at his mother's house on Shotwell Street.<sup>15</sup> The 1920 report twice lists an Albert Ace, who was born in Wales in 1890 and whose occupation was recorded as seaman. Ace appears residing as a lodger on Eddy Street in the city's Thirty-Third District but also appears listed as a steamship mess man, residing, along with scores of others, in a lodging house in the Twenty-Eighth District.<sup>16</sup>

Collators of census enumerations were also prone to error, with confusion caused by the recording of individuals as being born in south or north Wales or even New South Wales, Australia. Further to this, being born in Wales—or in any other country, for that matter—was by no means a guarantee that an individual regarded himself or herself as part of the national community of that country. Examples are legion of persons of Welsh birth who were most certainly not Welsh by any other definition. Numerous individuals born in Wales to Irish parents were clearly part of the Irish community in the United States, as indicated by their religious and linguistic background and frequently reinforced by choice of marriage partner, a phenomenon that merits and receives attention in this study. Correct assignment of ethnicity is further complicated by the frequent failure of enumerators to record the birthplace of parents.<sup>17</sup>

With these caveats in mind, it remains clear, as indicated in table 1, that the Welsh, although relatively few in number and never constituting a major part of the city's population, maintained a long and enduring presence in San Francisco.<sup>18</sup>

Despite this long-term presence, a perusal of the census returns reveals no evidence that Welsh migrants sought to live together. There are no districts or even streets containing a majority of Welsh-born or even enclaves in which the Welsh constituted a sizable minority. Welsh immigrants and their families were scattered throughout the city. The only evidence of ethnic clustering exists at the level of individual habitations. In 1870, the First Ward of the city contained a number of boardinghouses that were ethnic enclaves usually for Irish and Italian immigrants. Among these was that owned by Welshman William P. Jenkins, who lived there with his wife Margaret and their two American-born daughters.

**Table 1 • Welsh by Decade in San Francisco, 1880–1930**

	<b>1870</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>1900</b>	<b>1910</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>1930</b>
Welsh-born	238	335	399	415	467	496
Welsh stock*	n/a	151	243	298	276	298
Totals	n/a	486	642	713	743	794

\*Born in the United States with both parents Welsh-born.

This boardinghouse was also home to twelve seemingly unrelated Welsh-born men, one Welsh-born woman, one Canadian, one Italian, and a woman from Massachusetts.<sup>19</sup> The habitation abutted the residences of a Mr. Joseph Cordviola and a Mr. Patrick Beirne, which were home almost exclusively to Italian and Irish immigrants, respectively.<sup>20</sup> The census of 1900 reveals that the boardinghouse of another Welshman, Richard Jones, was the home to William J. Lewis, Morgan Richard, Robert T. Roberts, Mary Seinfeld, Samuel Evans, and William Jones. Although all of these individuals were born in Wales to Welsh parents, they shared the lodging house with twenty-two others from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.<sup>21</sup> In 1910, the census shows the household of Welsh-speaking husband and wife Thomas H. and Elizabeth Williams and their children also being home to two Welsh Americans and another Welsh speaker from the old country. Even here, however, the household was not exclusively Welsh or Welsh speaking, as the house was also home to Irish American Dominic O'Brian from Nevada.<sup>22</sup> The diasporic nature of Welsh settlement in San Francisco remained the case throughout the period, with no one area dominated by Welsh people or even appearing to exert a pull on Welsh people beyond the micro level.

Nevertheless, although Welsh-born people and children with two Welsh parents never numbered more than one thousand individuals, and although they were scattered throughout the city, they formed a culturally active ethnolinguistic community and became very much part of San Francisco's public face. Much Welsh cultural activity was associated with religion, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, religiosity—specifically Protestant Nonconformity—was regarded by many as a national characteristic, so much so, it has been argued, that it had become central to the idea of Welsh identity itself.<sup>23</sup> This image had accompanied the Welsh in their migrations overseas, and areas where they settled in any significant numbers were soon characterized by the construction of Nonconformist chapels, which were the most immediate indicators of a Welsh presence and have been described as “spiritual and linguistic” centers.<sup>24</sup> In 1854, *Y Drysorfa*, the monthly periodical of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, noted:

Mae yn beth hynod a thra chysurus yn nodweddiad y Cymry, eu bod, i ba le bynag yr elont, os bydd rhyw nifer ohonynt gyda'u gilydd, yn sefydlu addoliad cymdeithasol yn yr iaith Cymraeg. Yn nhrefi mawrion Lloegr, yn y gweithfaoedd glo a hiarn yn Scotland, yn ngwahanol daleithiau America, . . . rhaid i ymfudwyr o Gymru gael clywed yn eu hiaith eu hun am fawrion weithredoedd Duw yn iachawdwriaeth gras.<sup>25</sup>

It is a remarkable and comforting aspect of the Welsh character that no matter where they go, if there are any number of them together, they establish a social place of worship in the Welsh language. In the great cities of England, in the coal mines and iron works of Scotland, in the various states of America, . . . the Welsh emigrant must hear of the great works of God in his own language.

In the United States, it is estimated that as many as 600 Welsh Nonconformist chapels were built in the nineteenth century and, by 1872, the state of Pennsylvania alone had as many as 102, which were served by sixty-seven ministers and thirty-nine lay preachers.<sup>26</sup> The Welsh in San Francisco were in no way exempt from this phenomenon and a Saint David's Presbyterian Church was mentioned as early as 1852.<sup>27</sup> In 1872, the Reverend R. D. Thomas,

in a fascinating and comprehensive account of his travels throughout the country visiting and documenting Welsh communities, wrote:

Ymddengys fod cryn lawer o Gymry wedi sefydlu yn y ddinas enwog hon, yn gynar, a'u bod wedi codi addoldy bychan yno yn 1861, a bod y Parch. D. J. Lewis, a William o Fôn ac ereill, wedi bod yn pregethu iddynt. Nid wyf yn gwybod pa agwedd sydd ar yr eglwys yno yn awr.<sup>28</sup>

It is apparent that many Welsh have settled early in this famous city and they raised a small house of worship in 1861 and the Rev. D. J. Lewis, William o Fôn [bardic name] and others have preached to them. I am unaware as to the situation regarding the church there at this time.

Efforts to establish a Welsh and Welsh-language focus for worship in the city were not, however, immediately successful, and newly arrived John Powell, writing to his uncle in Wales in 1863, remarked that San Francisco contained “every religious advantage in every language except Welsh.”<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, by 1878, *Y Drych* reported that there was a thriving Sunday school and that work to establish a Welsh church was already under way. (Parha yr Ysgol Sul i gynyddu yn raddol, a rhifai 60 y Sabboth diweddaf. Mae y gwaith o sefydlu eglwys Gymreig wedi ei ddechreu, ac un ar hugain eisoes wedi rhoddi eu henwau i ymuno a hi mewn dau gyfarfod. Yn ol yr arwyddion presenol, fe geir un yn fuan).<sup>30</sup> Unlike most areas of the United States, where Welsh numbered more than a few score, San Francisco saw the emergence of only one Welsh denomination: the Calvinistic Methodists or Presbyterians. (The Welsh church that lay across the Bay in Oakland was also Presbyterian). The San Francisco Welsh, were, therefore, spared the quite astonishing levels of interdenominational rivalry that raged in other areas between the Baptists, Congregationalists, and Calvinistic Methodists, smoldering on for decades and leaving lasting scars.<sup>31</sup>

Although religion held a central position, Welsh cultural expression was not confined to the religious sphere, and a consideration of the institutions established by the Welsh and the events they held reveals much about the nature of the Welsh community in San Francisco. Cross-referencing the names of those mentioned in reports of events with the census reports gives some indication regarding the backgrounds of the Welshmen and women involved in San Francisco’s Welsh organizations throughout the period and provides a greater understanding of that community and the depth of its culture.

On March 22, 1877, *Y Drych* contained a report of the Saint David’s Day celebration held under the auspices of Y Gymdeithas Gydgynorthwyol Gymreig (The Welsh Mutual Aid Society, usually referred to as the Cambrian). The event, which took place in Platt’s Hall, was a grandiose affair and, unusually for this time, by no means purely Welsh. It was attended by the British consul, William Lane Booker, and by *amryw foneddigion eraill* (several other local worthies).<sup>32</sup> Proceedings began with the band led by Mr. L. Von der Mehden, which played *amrywiaeth o hen alawon Cymreig* (a selection of old Welsh tunes). This was followed by a piano duet by German American musician Mr. L. Bodecker and Welsh-born veterinary surgeon George T. Evans.<sup>33</sup> Next came a chorus by the Nortonville Choral Union, which was so well received that an encore was demanded and forthcoming. The day’s proceedings also included a poetic address by bookkeeper Gomer Evans, followed by a rendition of “Pan fo’r heulwen wedi ffoi” (When the sun has gone) by the Welsh Glee Club, under the leadership of William Rees.<sup>34</sup> The “Cambrian War Song” was then sung by Professor Jackson. The

audience was further entertained with the duet “Y ddeilen ar yr afon” (The leaf on the river) by Misses Nellie and Grace Pierce, the daughters of assayer Owen.<sup>35</sup> “Cambria” was sung by Mr. Phillip Jones, who, despite having sung almost every night for several days previous, “canodd yn ardderchog nes oedd seiliau Platt’s Hall yn crynu, a’r nenfwd yn ysgwyd fel deilen mewn awel gwynt” (sang so well that the foundations of Platt’s Hall shook and the ceiling trembled like a leaf on the breeze). The presidential address was given by the aforementioned Mr. Samuel Williams, who, when not performing his duties as president of the Cambrian Society, was a cook at the city hospital.<sup>36</sup>

The strength of national feeling—especially toward their culture, and in particular toward their language—among the Welsh who had settled in San Francisco is clear from other reports in the Welsh American press at the time. Later in 1877, *Y Drych* reported further on the activities of the Cambrian:

Y mae nifer o Gymry yn y ddinas hon, ac nid Cymry mewn enw yn unig ydynt, ond mewn gwaith a theimlad, yn amcanu dangos i’r byd eu bod yn dymuno “Oes y byd i’r laith Gymraeg”. Nid oes ar gyfandir mawr America, gymdeithas yn gwbl gyfanaoddedig o Gymry, ei holl olwynion yn Gymraeg pur, a’i dybenion yn gyfangwbl tuag at ddyrchafu y Cymry a’r hen iaith, mor egniol ag ydyw y Cambrian Society of San Francisco.<sup>37</sup>

There is a number of Welsh people in this city, and not Welsh in name only, but in work and sentiment, whose aim is to show the world that they want to wish “long life to the Welsh language.” There is no other society on the great continent of America that is so completely Welsh, its activities as purely Welsh, its intentions entirely geared toward promotion of the Welsh people and the old language, and as energetic as is the Cambrian Society of San Francisco.

*Y Drych* assured its readers that the society ensured that more attention was paid to Saint David’s Day in San Francisco than in scores of towns across Wales itself—and not only once a year but throughout the year, through literary and other meetings (Telir mwy o sylw gan y gymdeithas hon i’r cyntaf o Fawrth Dydd Gwyl Dewi Sant, nag a wneir mewn ugeiniau o drefydd yn Nghymru; ac nid yn unig ar y cyntaf o Fawrth y mae yn dwyn sel dros ddefodau Cymreig, ond llawer gwaith yn ystod y flwyddyn trwy gynnal cyfarfodydd llenyddol, &c.).

The paper further reported of a meeting held on April 13, 1877, in Huddy’s Hall under the sponsorship of the Welsh Glee Club.<sup>38</sup> The event was chaired by a Professor Thomas Price, the Hall was overflowing and an excellent feast was provided. Price, who is listed as an assayer on the census of 1880, was described by the correspondent as doing and having done more for Welsh people and the Welsh language in the city than anyone else of whom he was aware (yr hwn sydd wedi, ac yn parhau i wneyd mwy dros Gymry a Chymraeg yn y ddinas hon nag un arall a wn i am dano).<sup>39</sup> The singing was the same as that heard years ago in old Wales, full of music and spirit and the voices echoed like the bells of Aberdyfi (Yr oedd y canu yr un fath a glywais flynyddau yn ol draw, draw, yn Nghymru wen, yn llawn ysbryd a pheroriaeth, a’r lleisiau yn adsain fel clychau Aberdyfi.) The intention, it was reported, was to hold similar events on a monthly basis. (Bwriedir cynnal cyfarfodydd o’r fath bob mis. Pob llwyddiant iddynt.) The program included singing, instrumentals and recitations including one by book keeper Llewellyn J. Llewellyn, the son of foundry man David.<sup>40</sup>

Despite their paucity in numbers, the Welsh were sufficiently strong in enthusiasm and finance to open their own community center, The Cambrian Hall, which stood on Mission

Street.<sup>41</sup> The building was opened by the Cambrian Society, with the intention of serving as a home or a gathering place for the Welsh on the Pacific shore (yr hon a fwnedir yn benaf fel cartref neu. gynullfan i Gymry glanau y Tawelfor). This were substantial premises, costing \$9,000 and containing a reading room, changing room and a hall with capacity for 400 people. Despite its size and the torrential rain, the hall proved insufficient to accommodate all those who flocked to the opening meeting held on January 16, 1878 and people were forced to listen to the proceedings from the staircase while many others were turned away. The event commenced with the reading of a poem composed for the occasion by John G. Jones.<sup>42</sup> Following musical interludes, the event continued with the President, Samuel Williams, addressing the growth that had taken place in the society since its establishment eight years previously. This was not in any way a dry or stuffy affair and *Y Drych* informed its readers that the event continued with dancing that did not conclude until two in the morning. The report also mentions the existence of a Welsh literary society.

An article in *The Cambrian* in 1883 describes that year's celebration of Saint David's Day and reports of a boisterous affair that included "dancing." The magazine lists the organizers of the event, which was again held under the auspices of the Cambrian Mutual Aid Society, several of whom can be identified on the census report of 1880. These included custom-house worker Owen Jones, D. H. Watkins, John E. Raymond, assayer B. T. Price, C. R. Jones, assayer R. O. Pierce, and John Edwards, who was either a blacksmith or a railroad office clerk.<sup>43</sup> The article gives further details of the society, and cross-referencing again reveals more about the backgrounds of the Welshmen involved in San Francisco's leading Welsh organization. The society's president by this time was Professor Thomas Price, who is recorded on the census as an assayer.<sup>44</sup> The Committee of Arrangements included bookkeeper Zaccheus Floyd; H. A. Powell; R. T. Roberts, who was listed as working in the mint; and H. J. Jones.<sup>45</sup> The Reception Committee was composed of W. A. Jones, miner J. Meredith Davies, assayer J. T. Evans, bookkeeper Gomer Evans, laborer Joseph A. Davies, store clerk D. J. Lewis, and M. Morgans.<sup>46</sup> It was also reported that the society had dispensed \$2,000 in the previous year for charitable purposes.<sup>47</sup>

Nor were these activities confined to men. In October 1885, under the headline "Gwledd Gymreig o'r Radd Flaenaf-Safle Uchel y Cymry Fel Cantorion" (A Welsh feast of the highest standard: High standard of the Welsh as singers), *Y Drych* reported on an event held in the Cambrian Hall. This time the festivities were organized by the female element of the Welsh community, and the paper lists Mrs. Mary A. Ellis—the New York-born, Welsh American wife of David C. an employee of the city railroad—Mrs. R. T. Roberts, Mrs. J. R. Williams, Miss Sarah Hughes, and Miss Selina Riminton.<sup>48</sup> Male involvement was not entirely absent, and responsible for the musical side of the entertainment were T. D. Jones, who led San Francisco's Cambrian Choir; a gentlemen introduced only by his bardic name, Granvillefab; and the aforementioned D. J. Lewis. Also present were mint worker R. T. Roberts, builder Evan Watts from Blaenanerch in Cardiganshire, and the Reverend. M. A. Ellis.<sup>49</sup> The singers were accompanied by Evan Watts's sixteen-year-old daughter, Lizzie, who was described as being a regular organist for the Welsh church. This was a lengthy program and included a piano medley by Miss Emily R. Ellis; choral renditions by the Cambrian choir; and recitations by J. C. Hughes and Miss Minnie Jehu, the daughter of Welsh-born Nathaniel, who is listed on the census of 1880 as a private detective.<sup>50</sup> A canzona was sung by Miss Eliza A. Jones,

and there were piano duets by Misses Annie Morgan and Emily R. Ellis. A quartet of Miss Emily R. Ellis, R. T. Roberts, Miss Nellie Hughes, the daughter of assayer David, and the aforementioned bookkeeper Llew Llewelyn, son of foundryman David, also performed.<sup>51</sup> The well-known song praising the high standards of social behavior in Wales, “Hen Wlad y Menyg Gwynion,” was sung by stenographer Mr. J. C. Hughes.<sup>52</sup> It can be seen, therefore, that Welsh cultural activity was based on music and literature, and Welsh society in San Francisco was replete with organizations established for the gratification of these highbrow pursuits. These pursuits were, moreover, not the preserve of the educated or wealthy, but attracted representatives from a variety of backgrounds.

Furthermore, the language of the proceedings of these events was, clearly, Welsh, and it is worth noting that by the end of the nineteenth century the position of the Welsh language in Wales was far stronger than that of other Celtic languages in Ireland and Scotland. The first official census to include a question on language in Wales in 1891 revealed that 54.5 percent of those living in Wales, which included tens of thousands of English and Irish, spoke Welsh, with some 56 percent of those being unable to speak English.<sup>53</sup> The extent to which the language was spoken in Wales prior to 1891 has been the subject of numerous studies, with Thomas Darlington asserting that approximately 80 percent of those living in Wales spoke the language in 1801 and George Ravenstein estimating that 71.2 percent spoke it by the early 1870s.<sup>54</sup> In addition, by the mid-nineteenth century, Welsh had been established as the language of literacy and debate in Wales, and it fulfilled all the requirements of modern living. Speakers of Welsh were not confined to rural occupations or locations, but were also the inhabitants of large urban communities and accounted for every strata of rural and industrial society, with the exception of the great landowning and capitalist classes.<sup>55</sup>

It can be argued that the salient feature of Welsh identity at this time in the United States was the language. It was Welsh that primarily set the group apart and provided the only major hurdle to complete acceptance and integration into American society. The failure of Welsh immigrants to maintain and intergenerationally transmit their language would have removed the most immediate identifying characteristic, the ultimate badge of difference. The extent to which the Welsh language was spoken among the Welsh migrants who arrived in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century is open to a certain amount of conjecture.<sup>56</sup> In 1920, however, for the first time, the U.S. federal census recorded the “mother tongue” of each resident, foreign-born individual along with the mother tongue of each foreign-born individual’s parents. Of the 438 Welsh-born individuals listed in the census of 1920 for whom information is available, 175 (39.9 percent) are recorded as having Welsh as their “mother tongue.” For the Welsh-born with two Welsh parents, 151 of 338 (44.7 percent) are listed as first-language Welsh speakers. While this is in line with the figure for Wales in the UK census of 1921 (37 percent), neither of these figures is remotely comparable to other Welsh communities in the United States at this time, with percentages of over 95 percent recorded in, for example, the coal-mining settlement of Bevier, Missouri, and the slate-quarrying town of Poultney, Vermont.<sup>57</sup>

This is not simply explained by the Welsh-born population of San Francisco being made up of people born later in the century. From the census of 1920, table 2 relates date of birth to mother tongue for all the Welsh-born in San Francisco with both parents born in Wales for whom information was listed.

**Table 2 • Mother Tongue According to Decade of Birth in San Francisco, 1920**

Birth decade	1830s	1840s	1850s	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s
Welsh	66.6%	57.9%	37%	42%	39.5%	60.6%	31.6%	40%	0%
English	33.3%	42.1%	63%	57.9%	60.5%	39.4%	68.4%	60%	100%
Totals	3	19	46	88	76	66	19	10	1

**Table 3 • Mother Tongue According to Decade of Arrival in San Francisco, 1920**

Arrival decade	1840s	1850s	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s
Percentage	0.4%	1.8%	7.8%	9.3%	27.4%	17.4%	18.5%	17.4%
Welsh-speaking	100%	40%	47.6%	40%	45.9%	29.8%	58%	46.8%
Totals	1	5	21	25	74	47	50	47

Although those born in the last three decades before 1920 are predominantly English-speaking, whereas Welsh speakers predominated in the decades prior to 1850, the middle decades show no clear move toward an English-speaking majority, with Welsh speakers being in the clear majority of those born in the 1880s. Nor was this related to the date of arrival in the United States. table 3 relates the decade of arrival of all those Welsh-born, with both parents born in Wales, resident in the city in 1920 to those with Welsh as mother tongue, and shows that early arrivals to the United States were no more likely to be Welsh-speaking than those arriving in later decades.

The actual linguistic nature of the San Francisco Welsh community is made less clear by the fact that the various census enumerators in 1920 had differing ideas of what constituted a “mother tongue.” The correct designation of language is far from certain, with numerous individuals recorded as having a different language as their native tongue in consecutive censuses. Indeed, sometimes more than one language is listed. The census of 1930, which recorded “Language spoken in home before coming to the United States,” has Idwal L. Williams as speaking both English and Welsh prior to leaving Wales.<sup>58</sup> The same is the case for John Williams.<sup>59</sup> This ambiguity is best illustrated by Robert J. Jones, who was born in Wales in 1883 and was recorded working as a draftsman in a terra cotta works on the census of 1920. Jones appears residing as a lodger in the city’s Thirty-Second District at both Leavenworth Street and Bush Street. The only difference in the recorded details is Jones’s native language, once recorded as Welsh and once as English.<sup>60</sup> Despite the ambiguity, it appears that Welsh was the language of the minority of the Welsh-born residents in San Francisco by the 1920s.

If the Welsh community in San Francisco was initially Welsh-speaking, which qualitative evidence such as reports of community activity suggests to be the case, then a language shift among the Welsh in the city appears to have occurred by the early years of the new century. J. Neale Carman has identified what he terms as the “critical year” when the native language passed from habitual use among foreign-born communities in Kansas. For the Welsh in Emporia, Kansas, Carman argues that that year was reached sometime between 1885 and 1918.<sup>61</sup> This is not dissimilar to the experiences of other ethnolinguistic groups in Kansas and, indeed, elsewhere in the United States, and it represents the arrival into adulthood of the

second generation.<sup>62</sup> Even though Welsh had been the medium of community activity in the early years of the Welsh presence in San Francisco, it is clear that a linguistic shift from Welsh to English had taken place in the city at around the same time.

A report in *Y Drych* of March 21, 1895, describes the Saint David's Day celebration held in the Scottish Hall and reveals the Welsh community to be in fine fettle. The report describes the usual singing and recitations, including by the tenors R. J. Hughes and J. C. Hughes, who are listed on the census of 1900 as a railroad clerk and stenographer.<sup>63</sup> The piece reported on the presence of several Welsh sea captains and their vessels—Captain Hughes, *Celtic Race*; Captain Thomas, *Avon Alaw*; Captain Griffiths, *Riversdale*; Captain Jenkins, *Holt Hill*; and Captain Hughes, *Metropolis*—and described the event as the best concert ever held on the Pacific shore (y cyngerdd goreu a gafwyd erioed ar lanau y Tawelfor). Significantly, however, *Y Drych* felt it necessary to note that the Reverend R. V. Griffiths had given a short address in the Welsh language (anerchiad byr yn Gymraeg) suggesting that the rest of the proceedings, excluding songs sung in Welsh, had taken place in English. It appears a tipping point been reached in San Francisco by the 1890s that saw the Welsh language supplanted by English in a community small in number, residentially scattered, and linguistically mixed from its earliest days.<sup>64</sup>

On an even more basic level, one of the crucial factors in evaluating the ability of the group to maintain its cultural integrity and establishing the viability of culture and language transmission is the marriage preferences of both males and females among the Welsh. Fundamental to this, of course, was the availability, for want of a better word, of spouses from the same ethnolinguistic group, and among Welsh migrants there existed a significant gender bias in favor of men. Again, drawing on information contained within official census returns, table 4 shows the proportion of males in San Francisco for the period 1880–1930 for all Welsh-born with both parents Welsh. It clearly reveals a gender imbalance that would surely have had an impact on marriage preference.

Simply if crudely put, there were not enough Welsh women to go around. It might be considered hubristic to assume the desire of group members to marry within their own group, but the linguistic and, indeed, religious characteristics of the Welsh at that time would have been strong factors in choice of marriage partner.<sup>65</sup> In establishing marriage preference, information was collected from the census report for 1900 for all those Welsh-born with both parents Welsh who had married in the United States, thus excluding those who had married prior to their arrival, whose partners were overwhelmingly of the same nationality. table 5 shows male marriage preference, in so far as the word *preference* is applicable.

Of the eighty-one Welshmen who had married in the United States and were counted in the census of 1900, only fourteen (or 17.3 percent) had married Welsh-born women. While some of these couples must have been acquainted prior to departure, most—judging by

**Table 4 • Percentage of Males among Welsh Immigrants in San Francisco, 1880–1930**

	1880	1900	1910	1920	1930
Total	276	321	322	344	347
Males	172	196	218	222	201
Percent	62.3%	61.1%	67.7%	64.5%	57.9%

**Table 5 • Marriage Preference of Welsh-born Men in San Francisco, 1900**

Welsh-born	Welsh American	American	Other foreign	Total
14	13	25	29	81
17.3%	16%	30.9%	35.8%	100%

**Table 6 • Marriage Preference of Welsh-born Women in San Francisco, 1900**

Welsh-born	Welsh American	American	Other foreign	Total
14	4	10	22	50
28%	8%	20%	44%	100%

**Table 7 • Marriage Preference of Welsh-born in San Francisco, 1900**

Welsh-born	Welsh American	American	Other foreign	Total
28	17	35	51	131
21.4%	13%	26.7%	38.9%	100%

marriage and immigration dates—had met and married in the United States. A further thirteen (or 16 percent) had married an American-born woman with at least one and usually both parents Welsh, a total marrying within the group of twenty-seven, or 33.3 percent. Some of those in the American category may well have been of more distant Welsh stock, although this is not revealed on the census reports. The “other” category includes other foreign-born and ethnic Americans.

The situation for women (table 6) was somewhat different, with Welsh women far more likely to have married men from Wales but a smaller proportion of Welsh Americans; eighteen of fifty (or 36 percent) remained endogamous.

When the figures are combined (table 7), we see that, of the 131 Welsh-born individuals who had married in the United States at this point in time, twenty-eight (or 21.4 percent) married another Welsh-born individual and a further seventeen (or 13 percent) married a Welsh American, a total of forty-five (or 34.4 percent). This level of exogamy would have seriously undermined culture maintenance and made intergenerational culture transmission, even if desired, unlikely.

Even if the language of the Welsh community had changed by the beginning of the new century, enthusiasm for all things Welsh remained. Welsh cultural activity in San Francisco was by no means a short-term phenomenon and continued to be patronized by people from across the social spectrum. *Y Drych* of March 16, 1899, describes Saint David’s Day of that year as drawing the largest crowd ever before witnessed for the celebration (*yr oedd mwy yn bresenol nag a welsom ar y Glanau erioed!*)<sup>66</sup> The report describes a feast of music, singing, and recitation involving aforementioned stenographer J. C. Hughes and stair builder William C. Roberts.<sup>67</sup> The report also revealed the emergence of a new Welsh organization in the city, *Cymdeithas y Cymrodorion*. The following March, *Y Drych* reported on a concert held under the sponsorship of the *Cymrodorion* and led by one Captain Jones of the *Berkeley*,

a vessel at harbor in the bay.<sup>68</sup> The concert was free for all seamen then present in San Francisco, and attendees overfilled the Sailors Institute on Stuart Street, to the extent that the smoke from the sailors' pipes obscured the stage. (Yr oedd y neuadd yn or lawn o Jack Tars Cymreig a Seisnig; ac yr oedd mwg eu poenedigaeth o gathiau ysmocio yn dyrchafu fel mai prin y gellid gwel- ed y llwyfan ar brydiau). The highlight of the evening's entertainment was the singing of David Lewis, listed on the census of 1900 as a stair builder, and party, who were obliged to supply several encores.<sup>69</sup>

More than a decade and a half later, in 1916, the memory of Saint David was still being celebrated by the Welsh residents of San Francisco under the sponsorship of the Cymrodorion.<sup>70</sup> The participants were still drawn from across the social spectrum, and the program was led by the president for the day (Lywydd y Cymreigyddion), Mr. Griffith R. Williams, who is listed on the census of 1910 as a stenographer.<sup>71</sup> Other officers listed included: Chas. M. Williams, a retired farmer; house plasterers Adam Roberts and Samuel J. Jones; and J. Pryce Jones, a steam fitter.<sup>72</sup> Linguistically, however, English had taken over. Although the language of Reverend J. S. Thomas' address on Saint David was not noted, the remainder of the speeches—"The value of the Welsh blood," by Dr. Edward R. Taylor, Dean Hastings Law College, and "The Welshman in America," by Judge John E. Richards—were in English, as was much of the singing. Although cemetery laborer Mr. Hugh J. Williams and grocery salesman Mr. R. D. Parry sang in Welsh, Miss Hester Davies, the Welsh-born, nineteen-year-old daughter of plasterer Frank T. and Professor J. Francis Jones, who rendered "Accents of Liberty," performed in English.<sup>73</sup> Whatever its linguistic ethos, the program still reflected a culture of poetry and music, and the newspaper made a point of congratulating the organizers for setting the Welsh nation higher than ever in the eyes of their neighbors (esyd ein cenedl ar risyn uwch nag erioed yn ngolwg ein cymydogion). The Welsh were still convinced of the superiority of their national community and eager to prove it to the world. As noted, assertions of superiority among Welsh community leaders extend beyond the cultural sphere, and such leaders were keen to assert the industry of their compatriots. This brings us to a consideration of the much promulgated idea of socioeconomic success among the Welsh.

Occupation can be regarded as a singularly important determinant of social position and a useful criterion by which to categorize individuals and groups. A corollary of this is that upward occupational mobility is an indicator of improving socioeconomic status.<sup>74</sup> For an analysis that seeks to ascertain the position of an ethnic group in a particular community and the ability of that group to alter its socioeconomic position, data concerning occupational preference and mobility provide considerable insights. While categorization according to occupation (below) is relatively straightforward, the correct assignation of status to occupation is perilous in the extreme and, as argued by Ileen DeVault, even a blue-collar/white-collar divide is overly simplistic.<sup>75</sup> While movement from one occupational category can be identified from the census reports, this movement cannot be said to definitely indicate a rise or fall in economic or, indeed, social status. What the following analyses seek to suggest is that any movement out of a specific industry, and out of blue-collar work in general, indicated, at the very least, that some were able to take advantage of the increasingly varied occupational opportunities available in the United States; however, this movement should be regarded as outward as much as upward.

To gain a clear idea of the position of Welsh migrants in the occupational hierarchy, this analysis provides a comparison with Irish immigrants in San Francisco during the same period. First, however, it is important to ascertain which individuals were actually Welsh, as there was clearly a significant part of the Welsh-born population who were not part of the Welsh community in San Francisco, and this has implications for an analysis of occupational preference and mobility. Table 8 shows that as few as 70 percent of the Welsh-born in San Francisco had both parents born in Wales. This was in contrast to other Welsh communities in the United States, where the overwhelming majority of the Welsh-born were ethnically and linguistically Welsh.<sup>76</sup> (The census reports prior to 1880 do not indicate parental birthplace).

The significance of this is shown by the examples of Denis Cady and of the three Donovan brothers—John, Timothy, and Cornelius—who were all born in Wales to Irish parents. All four of these men were recorded on the census of 1880 as laborers.<sup>77</sup> At the other end of the occupational spectrum, we find brothers William and John P. Simpson working as clerks for a newspaper and in a bookstore, respectively. Both of these men were born in Wales to a Russian father and an English mother.<sup>78</sup> The part of this study considering occupational preference and mobility will, therefore, only include those born in Wales with both parents Welsh. This will not include stalwarts of the Welsh community such as Gomer Evans, whose father was born in England, but also will not be distorted by the inclusion of a much larger number of individuals who, it is abundantly clear, were in no way part of the Welsh community.<sup>79</sup>

Drawing on the census reports of 1880–1930, table 9 shows the occupational “preference” of all Welsh-born men, with both parents Welsh, for whom information was available. For the purposes of this study, the high white-collar category includes professionals, proprietors, managers, and officials; low white-collar includes inspectors, clerks, and salespeople; skilled blue-collar includes all skilled, semiskilled, and service workers (including sailors, stevedores, and longshoremen), except those who could be identified as being self-employed proprietors of small businesses; unskilled includes all unskilled laborers and menial workers.

**Table 8 •** Percentage of Welsh-born with Both Parents Born in Wales by Decade in San Francisco, 1880–1930

	1880	1900	1910	1920	1930
Welsh-born	335	399	415	467	496
Both parents	276	321	322	344	347
Percent	82.4%	80.4%	77.6%	73.7%	70.0%

**Table 9 •** Occupations of Welsh-born by Decade in San Francisco, 1880–1930

	1880	1900	1910	1920	1930
High WC	10.1%	9.0%	14.6%	10.1%	8.9%
Low WC	17.7%	15.7%	17.0%	20.7%	24.3%
Skilled BC	63.9%	65.1%	57.9%	57.6%	52.1%
Unskilled BC	8.2%	10.2%	10.5%	11.6%	14.8%
Totals	158	166	171	198	169

Although the table reveals a decline in the proportion of men in blue-collar skilled occupations and a general increase in the percentage of white-collar workers, suggesting some upward occupational mobility, generally these figures do not suggest universal success. Throughout this period there remained a significant, enduring, and growing proportion of the sample in the unskilled category. Although this may have been partly attributable to the continuing influx of young, inexperienced immigrants who began their working lives at the unskilled level, or older workers unable to perform more exacting physical duties, these findings sit rather uneasily with the traditionally accepted image of Welsh socioeconomic upward mobility. Nevertheless, even when viewed at this analytically superficial level, the Welsh clearly enjoyed a favorable position when compared with the Irish. From a random sample of 150 Irish-born men whose occupation could be identified, table 10 reveals a radically different occupational background.

At the lower end of the occupational spectrum, unskilled blue-collar work, Irishmen are represented to a far greater degree than their Welsh counterparts: in 1880, more than four times the proportion of Irishmen were to be found working as laborers, porters, watchmen, and in other unskilled jobs. Welshmen were also far more likely to be involved in white-collar occupations than Irishmen.

This simplistic analysis does not, however, address the ability of Welsh immigrants to improve on their occupational position, to rise up the occupational ladder. Further analysis is therefore required to establish intragenerational occupational mobility. To this end, the occupation of every Welsh-born male (with both parents Welsh) was recorded for 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930, as revealed by the censuses of those years. Data were then collected by tracing the sample through the censuses and cataloguing the occupational movement of each Welsh-born individual for whom information was available. Despite a large falloff due to disappearance from the records or ambiguity due to the paucity of Welsh surnames, a sample of sufficient size was obtained to enable observations to be made regarding the intragenerational occupational fortunes of Welshmen in San Francisco.<sup>80</sup> From this analysis, conclusions can be drawn regarding the ability of first-generation Welsh immigrants to move occupationally and thus we can better assess the accuracy of the popular image that saw the Welsh as initially occupying more desirable positions and, ultimately, achieving higher-status white-collar jobs.

Utilizing the same occupational categorization used previously, table 11 indicates a similar pattern to that revealed in table 9—namely the concentration of the Welsh-born in skilled blue-collar occupations.<sup>81</sup> The figures do, however, suggest that some degree of occupational mobility had been experienced.

**Table 10 • Occupations of Irish-born by Decade in San Francisco, 1880–1930**

	<b>1880</b>	<b>1900</b>	<b>1910</b>	<b>1920</b>	<b>1930</b>
High WC	5.3%	6.7%	5.3%	6.7%	6.7%
Low WC	6.0%	8.0%	4.0%	10.0%	14.0%
Skilled BC	53.3%	56.7%	52.0%	58.7%	55.3%
Unskilled BC	35.3%	28.7%	38.7%	24.7%	24.0%
Totals	150	150	150	150	150

**Table 11 • Intragenerational Occupational Change, Welsh-born in San Francisco, 1870–1930**

		High WC	Low WC	Skilled BC	Unskilled BC	Total
High WC	8.0%	69.2%	7.7%	15.4%	7.7%	13
Low WC	18.5%	16.7%	63.3%	13.3%	6.7%	30
Skilled BC	61.7%	7.8%	8.7%	70.9%	12.6%	103
Unskilled BC	9.6%	6.2%	18.7%	43.7%	31.2%	16
Totals	162	23	32	86	21	162

For example, 61.7 percent, or 103 individuals, began their working lives during this period in the blue-collar skilled category. Of these, seventy-three, or 70.9 percent, are to be found in the same category at the last traceable point of their career. A significant 12.6 percent, or thirteen individuals, however, are found in unskilled work at the end of their traceable working lives and seventeen, or 16.5 percent, have achieved white-collar status. Of the thirteen individuals initially found in the high white-collar category (8 percent), nine, or 69.2 percent, are still to be located in that category as far as they can be traced. Although the numbers involved prevent definite conclusions from being drawn, it can be suggested that these figures indicate a very mixed experience for the Welsh in San Francisco.

Overwhelmingly although not exclusively, white-collar workers remained in those categories, retaining their status. Thomas Price, born in Wales in 1839, is to be found listed as an assayer on the census reports of 1870 and 1880 and as a chemist in 1900. The census of 1910 has Price working on his own account as a mining engineer.<sup>82</sup> Albert Griffiths is recorded as being the manager of a grocery store in 1900 and a grocery store clerk in 1910 and 1920, and in 1930 he is recorded as working on his own account as a grocer.<sup>83</sup>

There were individuals who rose from blue-collar to white-collar occupations. For example, William F. James, born in 1848 and married to English-born Mary, is found working in a terra cotta factory in 1880. The census of 1900 lists him as a blacksmith but in 1920 the now-widowed James is found working as a clerk in a factory.<sup>84</sup> There are other examples of upward mobility starting from an even lower rung on the occupational ladder. Thomas Lloyd, born in 1874, for example, is recorded as rising from the position of machine shop laborer in 1910, the year in which he arrived in the United States, to shipyard rigger by 1920.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Humphrey Rogers, born 1865, is listed as a night watchman in 1910, a shipyard laborer in 1920, and a fireman for Standard Oil in 1930.<sup>86</sup> Even greater advances are recorded. Frank Jones, born in 1854, is found listed as a laborer on the census report of 1880. By the census of 1900, Frank had married Irish American Mary E. and had established himself as a saloon keeper. On the census of 1910, Francis, as he is now listed, is recorded as an employer and merchant of electrical supplies.<sup>87</sup>

Clearly, however, the most common experience was for skilled blue-collar workers to remain in that category. Thomas Phillips, born in Wales in 1862 and married to Welsh-born Annie, is listed on the census report of 1900 as a carpenter, as he is on the reports of 1920 and 1930.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, William Rhys, born in 1867 and married to Irish wife Katie, is found listed as an electrician on the census of 1900 and again in 1910, 1920, and 1930.<sup>89</sup>

Other individuals followed a downward trajectory with regard to occupational movement. Edmund Williams, born in 1847 and married to Australian-born Elizabeth, is found working

in a rolling mill in 1880 but as a shipyard laborer in 1920.<sup>90</sup> This may have been due to advancing years, as Williams would have been seventy-three in 1920, and it is true that several Welshmen who ended their working careers in unskilled positions were likely unable to continue practicing more physically demanding trades. This does not explain every case, however. Griffith Jones, born in 1869 and married to California native Cecilia, is listed as a compositor in 1900, a typesetter in 1910, and a printer in 1920, but as a janitor in a dry goods store in 1930, when he would have been only sixty-one.<sup>91</sup> This phenomenon was not confined to blue-collar work. H. R. Jones, born in 1867 and married to Washington-born Mary, is recorded as a dealer in cigars in 1910 and a shoe factory shipping clerk in 1920, but as a watchman in 1930.<sup>92</sup>

The Welsh people who congregated in San Francisco in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were relatively few in number, residentially scattered, exogamous, and, seemingly, linguistically mixed. In addition, and unlike in areas strongly settled by Welsh people, Welsh males in San Francisco were not concentrated in one particular industry. In the coal mines of eastern Pennsylvania, the iron mills of Pittsburgh, and the slate quarries of Vermont, a dominant industry provided a common and frequently familiar workplace. This was not the case in San Francisco, where Welshmen were spread throughout a wide range of occupations, thus rendering impossible the creation of social networks originating from a common occupation. In addition, Welsh people did not prove to be leading players in a migrant success story that stressed rapid improvement in socioeconomic status, as they were invariably cast by the leaders of their communities. Nevertheless, while most Welshmen remained in blue-collar work, there was a general improvement in socioeconomic status and some notable instances of rapid upward mobility. They were certainly in a better position than their Irish contemporaries. While quantitative and qualitative evidence does not entirely validate the views of contemporary Welsh leaders, it does suggest that such filio-pietistic assertions were not entirely without foundation and that the economic success of Welsh migrants justified, at least in part, the accolades awarded them by contemporary observers who admired their assiduousness. Whatever their economic success, the dispersed, numerically weak, and linguistically mixed Welsh community succeeded in maintaining a vibrant, highly visible presence for decades. The cultural expressions of the Welsh community and the large-scale participation (in relation to their numbers) by working people in activities involving music, recitation, literature, and poetic composition of a highly complex nature, is an admirable testament to the depth of culture that existed among the Welsh immigrant community of San Francisco.

## NOTES

1. *The Cambrian: A Magazine for Welsh Americans*, February 1906, 87–88. From 1880 to 1919, *The Cambrian* was one of the most popular magazines read by Welsh Americans. *The Cambrian* was published in English but much of the source material for the article was written in Welsh. Translations, unless otherwise indicated, are my own and are sometimes couched in rather clumsy English in order to convey the original meaning.
2. For example, Ebenezer Edwards, *Facts about Welsh Factors: Welshmen as Factors in the Formation and Development of the United States Republic* (Utica: T. J. Griffiths, 1899) and F. J. Harries, *Welshmen and the United States* (Pontypridd, Wales: Glamorgan County Times, 1927).
3. Merfyn Jones, "Beyond Identity? The Reconstruction of the Welsh," *Journal of British Studies* 31, no. 4 (October 1992): 338–339.
4. Prys Morgan, "Keeping the Legends Alive," in *Wales: The Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity*, ed. T. Curtis (Bridgend, Wales: Poetry Wales Press, 1986), 19–41.

5. W. D. Jones has addressed this phenomenon, as it applied to the United States, in *Wales in America: Scranton and the Welsh, 1860–1920* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993) and in Australia, in “Welsh Identities in Ballarat, Australia, during the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Welsh History Review* 20, no. 2 (December 2000): 283–307.
6. *Ballarat Star*, March 5, 1887. The good reverend doctor also described the Welsh as “broad in the shoulder, large in the head, and generally a little short in the leg.”
7. *Scranton Republican*, February 6, 1897. Quoted in Rowland T. Berthoff, *Republic of the Dispossessed: The Exceptional Old-European Consensus in America* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997), 128.
8. *Y Drych*, March 22, 1877. For a history of *Y Drych*, see Aled Jones and W. D. Jones, *Welsh Reflections: Y Drych and America, 1851–2001* (Ceredigion: Gomer Press, 2001) and Edward George Hartmann, *Americans from Wales* (Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1967), 128–129.
9. *Y Drych*, March 22, 1877.
10. For a consideration of occupational mobility in an Australian context during the same time period, see Robert Llewellyn Tyler, “Occupational Mobility and Culture Maintenance: The Welsh in a Nineteenth Century Australian Gold Town,” *Immigrants and Minorities* 24, no. 3 (2006): 277–299. See also W. D. Jones, *Wales in America* and Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans: A History of Assimilation in the Coalfields* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).
11. The reasons for this phenomenon are still very much open to debate. For analyses of the emigration decision, see Brinley Thomas, *Migration and Economic Growth. A Study of Great Britain and the Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy: Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and *Emigration from Europe, 1815–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). More specifically, see William E. Van Vugt, “Welsh Emigration to the USA during the Mid-Nineteenth Century,” *Welsh History Review* 15, no. 4 (1991): 545–561 and W. Ross Johnston, “The Welsh Diaspora: Emigrating around the World in the Late Nineteenth Century,” *Llafur* 6, no. 2 (1993): 50–74.
12. See, for example, W. D. Jones, *Wales in America*; Anne Knowles, *Calvinists Incorporated: Welsh Immigrants on Ohio’s Industrial Frontier* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) and Ronald L. Lewis, *Welsh Americans*. For a general survey of Welsh immigration into the United States in the nineteenth century, see Ed Hartmann, *Americans from Wales*.
13. For a contemporary account of Welsh settlements in the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century, see R. D. Thomas, *Hanes Cymry America* (Utica: T. J. Griffiths, 1872). An excellent English translation of this fascinating work is Martha A. Davies and Phillips G. Davies, eds., *Hanes Cymry America (1872): A History of the Welsh in America* (Wymore, NE: Great Plains Welsh Heritage Project, 2008). All statistical evidence for this paper is drawn from the United States Federal Census, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.
14. See Robert Llewellyn Tyler, “Migrant Culture Maintenance: The Welsh Experience in Poultney, Rutland County 1900–1940,” *Vermont History* 83, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 31–54 and “Occupational Change, Culture Maintenance and Social Status: The Welsh in a Missouri Coal Town, 1870–1930,” *Missouri Historical Review* 109, no. 1 (October 2014): 18–40.
15. US Census San Francisco 1900, roll 102, page 3A; roll 101, page 4B.
16. *Ibid.* 1920, roll T625\_140, page 2A; roll T625\_141, page 21A.
17. The genealogical service Ancestry is an excellent tool for taking the researcher to individuals at the micro level, but the collators for Ancestry were, of course, prone to the same errors as the original census collators. There is, simply, no substitute for a detailed reading of the census reports, and in this the researcher is aided by the relatively small numbers involved in this study.
18. This table draws on the information contained on the census reports with some minor alterations due to the reasons outlined above, such as duplication. The census of 1890 was largely destroyed in a fire.
19. US Census San Francisco 1870, roll M593\_79, page 45B.
20. *Ibid.*, roll M593\_79, page 45B, 44A.
21. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll 100, page 4B.
22. *Ibid.*, 1910, roll T624\_97, page 13A;
23. For a discussion of this and related phenomena see, for example, Prys Morgan, “Keeping the Legends Alive” and Merfyn Jones, “Beyond Identity?”
24. Robert Owen Jones, “The Welsh Language in Patagonia,” in *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), 289.
25. *Y Drysorfa*, August 1854, 266–267.
26. Martha A. Davies and Phillips G. Davies, *Hanes Cymry America (1872)*, 320–325.
27. Hartmann, *Americans from Wales*, 170.
28. Thomas, *Hanes Cymry America*, 151.
29. In Alan Conway, *The Welsh in America: Letters from the Immigrants* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961), 262.

30. *Y Drych*, February 14, 1878.
31. Hartmann, *Americans from Wales*, 103–104. The differences between the Welsh nonconformist Protestant denominations appear primarily to have been less concerned with differences in ritual and more with the way in which the church was governed, with denominations such as the Congregationalists advocating leadership by the entire congregation while the Calvinistic Methodists preferred a Presbyterian approach with an elected church government.
32. *Y Drych*, March 22, 1877.
33. US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 74, page 17D.
34. *Ibid.*, roll 79, page 402B.
35. *Ibid.*, roll 77, page 75B.
36. *Ibid.*, roll 77, page 238A.
37. *Y Drych*, May 10, 1877.
38. *Ibid.*
39. US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 75, page 219D.
40. *Ibid.*, roll 74, page 16A.
41. *Y Drych*, February 14, 1878.
42. It is worth briefly commenting on the nature of the poetic compositions that featured so prominently in Welsh cultural life. They can be divided into two. First, those written in free meter, which include the “Pryddest”, the “Pennill,” and the “Can,” the latter of which may be set to music. Second, and far more complex, are the “Cynghanedd,” which is a system of complex alliterative poetry that developed in medieval Wales. Of these, the “Cywydd” is a poem of indeterminate length of seven-syllable rhyming couplets in full alliteration, and the “Englyn,” a stanza of four lines to the same rhyme in full alliteration. The working men who mastered the complexities of these systems were aficionados indeed. I am grateful to the Reverend Dr. Sion Aled Owen, winner of the Crown for free meter verse at the National Eisteddfod of Wales at Machynlleth in 1981. The intricacies of Welsh language poetic composition are addressed by Alan Lloyd Roberts in *Anghenion y Gynghanedd* (Llandyssul: Gwasg Gomer, 1974).
43. US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 73, page 146C; roll 75, page 219D; roll 77, page 75B; roll 76, page 145B; roll 77, page 352B.
44. *Ibid.*, roll 75, page 219D.
45. *Ibid.*, roll 72, page 120B; roll 77, page 75B.
46. *Ibid.*, roll 79, page 234C; roll 79, page 153B; roll 79, page 402B; roll 73, page 323C; roll 75, page 476A.
47. *The Cambrian*, March/April 1883, 96–97.
48. *Y Drych*, October 22, 1885. US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 77, page 323D.
49. *Ibid.*, roll 77, page 75B and *The Cambrian*, November 1889, 348; US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 79, page 227A.
50. *Ibid.*, roll 76, page 87A.
51. *Ibid.*, roll 79, page 425B; roll 74, page 16A.
52. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll: 103, page 4A. In the nineteenth century, the judges at Welsh assizes were presented with a pair of white gloves if they had no criminal cases to deal with. This custom led to the saying “Hen Wlad y Menyg Gwynion” (The Land of the White Gloves), and to the notion that Wales was a place free from serious crime. For an explanation, see T. H. Lewis, “Y Wasg Gymraeg a Bywyd Cymru, 1805–1901: II Agweddau Diwydianol a Chymdeithasol,” *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymrodorion*, part 2 (1964): 222–236.
53. Census of England and Wales 1891, vol. IV, General Report, 81–82.
54. Thomas Darlington, “Language and Literature of Wales,” in J. Rhys and D. B. Jones, eds., *The Welsh People: Chapters on Their Origins, History, Laws, Language, Literature, and Characteristics* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1900), 548–549. E. G. Ravenstein, “On the Celtic Languages in the British Isles: A Statistical Survey,” *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* 42 (1879): 579–636. For a statistical survey of the language in nineteenth-century Wales, see Dot Jones, *Statistical Evidence Relating to the Welsh Language, 1801–1911* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988). For an excellent study of matters relating to the Welsh language in nineteenth-century Wales, see Geraint H. Jenkins, ed., *The Welsh Language and Its Social Domains, 1801–1911* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000).
55. Jenkins, *The Welsh Language*.
56. W. D. Jones and Robert Owen Jones discuss language retention in Welsh communities in Pennsylvania, the United States, and Patagonia, Argentina, in Geraint Jenkins, ed., *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998). W. D. Jones, “The Welsh Language and Welsh Identity in a Pennsylvanian Community,” 281–286; and Robert Owen Jones, “The Welsh Language in Patagonia,” 287–316. Robert Llewellyn Tyler considers the position of the language in an Australian community in “The Welsh Language in a Nineteenth Century Australian Gold Town,” *Welsh History Review* 24, no. 1 (June 2008): 52–76.
57. Census 1921: England and Wales: General report, 184. Robert Llewellyn Tyler, “Occupational Change, Culture Maintenance and Social Status: The Welsh in a Missouri Coal Town, 1870–1930,” *Missouri Historical Review*

- 109, no. 1 (October 2014):18-40; "Migrant Culture Maintenance: The Welsh Experience in Poultney, Rutland County 1900-1940," *Vermont History* 83, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 31-54.
58. US Census San Francisco 1930, roll 204, page 8A.
  59. *Ibid.*, 1930, roll 194, page 6A.
  60. *Ibid.*, 1920, roll T625\_138, pages 5A, 6A.
  61. J. Neale Carman, *Foreign Language Units of Kansas*, vol. 2 (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1962), 234.
  62. William D. Keel, for example, indicates that the German Mennonites of south-central Kansas began switching to English after 1900, and Emory Lindquist has Lawrence's Swedes experiencing the same process a little later. See William D. Keel, "Deutsch, Däätsch, Dtiütsch and Dietsch: The Varieties of Kansas German Dialects after 150 Years of German Group Settlement in Kansas," in *Preserving Heritage: A Festschrift for C. Richard Beam*, eds. Joshua R. Brown, Leroy T. Hopkins Jr., and William D. Keel (Lawrence, KS: Society for German-American Studies, 2006): 41-42 and Emory Lindquist, "The Swedish Immigrant and Life in Kansas," *The Kansas Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (Spring 1963): 11.
  63. US Census San Francisco 1900, roll 103, page 8B; roll 103, page 4A.
  64. *Y Drych*, March 21, 1895.
  65. For an analysis of this phenomenon as it applied to the Welsh in Australia, see Tyler, "Gender Imbalance, Marriage Preference and Culture Maintenance: The Welsh in an Australian Gold Town, 1850-1900," *Llafur* 9, no. 3 (2006): 14-28.
  66. *Y Drych*, March 16, 1899.
  67. US Census San Francisco 1900, roll 104, page 5A.
  68. *Y Drych*, March 1, 1900.
  69. US Census San Francisco 1900, roll 103, page 12B.
  70. *Y Drych*, April 13, 1916.
  71. US Census San Francisco 1910, roll T624\_97, page 13A.
  72. *Ibid.*, 1910, roll T624\_101, page 2A; roll T624\_100, page 5B; roll T624\_97, page 6A; roll T624\_98, page 13B.
  73. US Census Oakland 1910, roll T624\_70, page 8A; *Ibid.*, 1920, roll T625\_88, page 7B; US Census San Francisco 1920, roll T625\_136, page 5A.
  74. For example, Stephen Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); Amy Zahl Gottlieb, "British Coal Miners: A Demographic Study of Braidwood and Streator, Illinois," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 72 (August 1979), and John E. Bodnar, "Socialization and Adaptation: Immigrant Families in Scranton, 1880-1890," *Pennsylvania History* 43, no. 2 (April 1976).
  75. Ileen DeVault, *Daughters of Labor: Class and Clerical Work in Turn-of-the-Century Pittsburgh* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1995). For example, the percentage of white-collar Irish includes several saloon keepers, especially in 1900.
  76. Tyler, "Poultney" and "Missouri Coal Town."
  77. US Census San Francisco 1880, roll 78, page 580C; roll 77, page 276D.
  78. *Ibid.*, roll 74, page 565B.
  79. *Ibid.*, roll 79, page 402B.
  80. For a comprehensive clarification of the Welsh surname, see T. J. Morgan and P. Morgan, *Welsh Surnames* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1985).
  81. It was possible to trace individuals back to the census of 1870 whose Welsh parentage is established in later census reports.
  82. US Census San Francisco 1870, roll M593\_82, page 402A; 1880, roll 75, page 219D; 1900, roll 106, page 4B; 1910, roll T624\_101, page 2B.
  83. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll 102, page 12A; 1910, roll T624\_100, page 12A; 1920, roll T625\_141, page: 9A; 1930, roll 202, page 9A.
  84. *Ibid.*, 1880, roll: 77, page 314C; 1900, roll 100, page 4B; 1920, roll T625\_132, page 7A.
  85. *Ibid.*, 1910, roll T624\_97, page 13B; 1920, roll T625\_135, page 8A.
  86. *Ibid.*, 1910, roll T624\_96, page 25A; 1920, roll T625\_132, page 6B; 1930, roll 194, page 24B.
  87. *Ibid.*, 1880, roll 75, page 514C; 1900, roll 100, page 5B; 1910, roll T624\_95, page 5A.
  88. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll 103, page 5B; 1920, roll T625\_135, page: 6B; 1930, roll 195, page 3A.
  89. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll 101, page 8B; 1910, roll T624\_96, page: 4A; 1920, roll T625\_133, page 4A; 1930, roll 204, page 17A.
  90. *Ibid.*, 1880, roll 78, page 580D; 1920, roll T625\_137, page 4A.
  91. *Ibid.*, 1900, roll 104, page 3B; 1910, roll T624\_101, page 9B; 1920, roll T625\_136, page 1A; 1930, roll 199, page 1B.
  92. *Ibid.*, 1910, roll T624\_96, page 2B; 1920, roll T625\_133, page 10A; 1930, roll 204, page 12B.