

GWYN THOMAS AND THE EMERGENCE OF AN  
ANGLO-WELSH LITERARY TRADITION

by

JEANNE MARY WILSON  
B.A., University of British Columbia, 1967

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department  
of  
English

We accept this thesis as conforming to the  
required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April, 1971

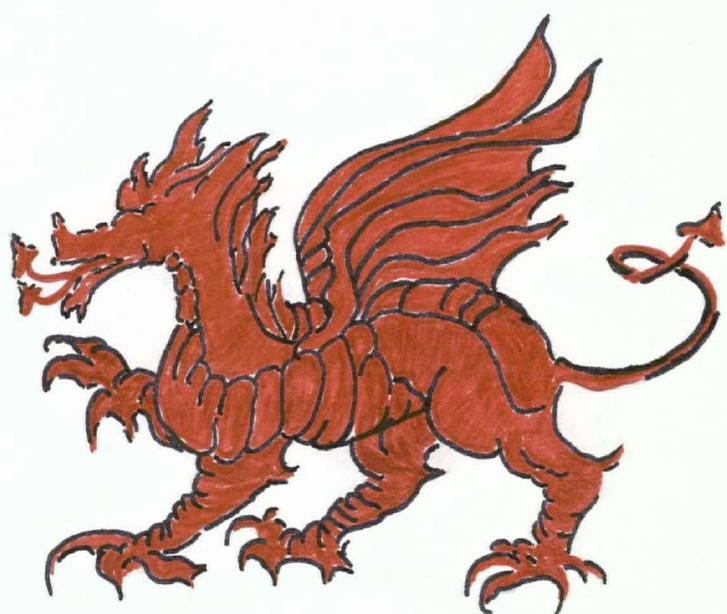
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study.

I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of English

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver 8, Canada

Date April 30, 1971



## ABSTRACT

Gwyn Thomas, a Welshman from the Rhondda Valley in industrial South Wales, is a contemporary writer whose contribution to Anglo-Welsh literature bridges the divergence between cultures. The emergence of Anglo-Welsh writers is relatively recent; and although these writers have no imposed homogeneity, no shared defined purpose, they have in common a generic quality that is recognizably that of the Welshman writing in English.

Collectively, the Anglo-Welsh demonstrate their fundamental and real experience of the alienating effects of industrialism and anglicisation. The industrial wasteland and linguistic schizophrenia are the shameful and inconsolable central wound in South Wales.

Gwyn Thomas demonstrates the effects of industrialism in Merthyr and the Rhondda Valley. In his novel, All Things Betray Thee, he recognizes the destructive and alienating effects of technological progress. In this and other works, he speaks for the victims of economic depression, but transmutes the mean streets of industrial villages into a world where there is a rural and green peace within echoing distance of the mountainous tips, a world where an articulate, lyrical, Puckish people, who were indigenous to Wales long before the expansion of Elizabethan England, are the counterpart to their rural country-men. Gwyn Thomas exemplifies the invincible spirit of the people among whom he was born

and grew to manhood, and with whom he shares lineage ties with all Welshmen, whichever tongue they speak.

In harmony with the precept that laughter ameliorates suffering, the humour of Thomas's characters annihilates their degradation. His jester's wit entertains and evokes laughter which, by virtue of its contrast with his compassion and serious comment, gives insight into the pity and the shame of a people's rejection and a land unmade. His alliterative, euphonious language, his vivid imagery and metaphor, his wit, perception and lyricism, derive from the people of Wales. He is a poet of the industrial valleys, and his voice is true to Wales. His is the generation of Anglo-Welsh writers who have established a new literary tradition.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	
THE DRAGON'S TONGUES: WALES AND THE ANGLO-WELSH . . . . .	1
Chapter	
I. PUDDLERS, PREACHERS AND POLITICS . . . . .	18
II. THE FEAST OF FOOLS . . . . .	33
III. SHADOWS OF MUTE DREAMS . . . . .	51
IV. THE WHEELS OF THE JOURNEY . . . . .	84
V. LAUGHTER IS THE COLOUR OF SAYING . . . . .	99
CONCLUSION	
GWYN THOMAS: A WELSH EYE AND AN ANGLO-WELSH TONGUE . . . . .	105
NOTES . . . . .	111
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	135

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am deeply indebted to Professor John R. Doheny for the direction of this thesis, and for his continued support of my studies in this field of literature.

Professors D. G. Stephens and I. S. Ross, of the University of British Columbia, have given me invaluable assistance for which I am profoundly grateful.

For their assistance, interest and encouragement, I would thank Mr. Gwyn Thomas; Professor Trevor L. Williams of the University of Victoria, British Columbia; Professor Ralph Maud of Simon Fraser University, British Columbia; Mr. Meic Stephens of the Welsh Arts Council; and Professor Gwyn Jones of University College, Cardiff.

Mr. Edwin T. Phelps of Liverpool, England, has given generously of his time to obtain for me works of Gwyn Thomas no longer readily available in North America. He also has given endless encouragement, and I thank him.

To my patient, bemused, English-speaking family-- Julie, Alex and Hugh--: 'Diolch yn fawr.'

GWYN THOMAS AND THE EMERGENCE OF AN  
ANGLO-WELSH LITERARY TRADITION



## INTRODUCTION

### THE DRAGON'S TONGUES: WALES AND THE ANGLO-WELSH

I am no Celt (or Celts say I am not).  
I am no Saxon, that at least I know.  
-Richard Hughes, "Lament of a Trimmer"

The Welshman bilingual in Welsh and English has been evident since first the affairs of Wales became affected by English infiltration. Expediency motivated the practice of intermarriage with the English, particularly during the reign of Elizabeth I, a period of westward expansion<sup>1</sup> encompassing the pacification of the Scottish border, the assimilation of Cornwall and Wales, the bitter and brutalizing conquest of Ireland, the struggle with Spain, and the settlement of the New World. At this time it was Welsh self-determination which was undermined and Welsh national-consciousness which arose from the threat to Welsh traditions and identity.

The early practice of marriage of Welsh daughters with English invaders, however, has led to a weakening of the Welsh language; for, since the Act of Union of 1536, the necessity to learn Welsh increasingly has diminished: peripheral geographical infiltration by monoglot English-speakers has caused the language to retreat from those areas; English borrowings--loan-words and idioms--have been introduced to facilitate communication; an increasing number of Welsh-speakers, who, having learned English, disdained to use Welsh, have served to undermine the

language. But it was not until the nineteenth century that the situation became critical.

The immediate effects of the Industrial Revolution in Wales were beneficial: there was an appreciable improvement in the standard of living; increased wealth provided for chapels and circulating schools; financial backing for the established Welsh Press increased the printing of Welsh language books (including two editions of a ten-volume Welsh encyclopedia), thus making books available to a greater percentage of the population; it was a ready-made market, for the Welsh people are education-loving, and deeply conscious of the power of literature. Consequently, this period of the last century was one of considerable development in Welsh culture and Welsh national consciousness. Industrialization provided work for a people who might otherwise have emigrated to industrial England. Unlike Ireland's emigrants during the agricultural depression, the Welsh were provided with remunerative occupations at home: the mineral resources of Wales provided native industries and much needed employment. But if industrialization brought an increase in wealth and its attendant advantages, it brought, too, a vast increase in non-Welsh speakers, and an acceleration of subjugation by the English. With English-speaking management, English became crucial for those seeking employment. Monoglot Welsh-speakers now encouraged their children to speak the language which would give them a purchasing power in a competitive labour market. Early, the children learned the expedience of English usage, and many came to scorn the language of their parents and the traditions of their past. In the preceding century Jac Glan-y-gors gave

the bitterly satiric name of 'Dic Siôn Dafydd' (Dick John David) to the Welsh child who denied his heritage. In the modern age, the Welsh poet Sarnicol (T. J. Thomas, 1873-1945) has expressed in a brief epigram about Dic Siôn Dafydd the Welsh purist's supreme contempt for men such as Dylan Thomas, Gwyn Thomas, and others of the Anglo-Welsh:

He scorned his land, his tongue denied;  
Nor Welsh nor English, lived and died  
A bastard mule--he made his own  
Each mulish fault, save one alone:  
Dick somehow got, that prince of fools,  
A vast, vile progeny of mules.<sup>2</sup>

But, the spread of English, speeded by the industrial revolution and its concomitant influx of English speakers from elsewhere in the British Isles, was inevitable. Recalling his early childhood in Merthyr where he was born in 1884, author Jack Jones writes:

The Welsh were in a minority in Tai-Harry-Blawd, where they were mixed with English, Irish and Scotch people, whose fathers and grandfathers had been brought into Wales by the old Iron Kings. At first I knew only Welsh from my parents and grandparents, but as I went on playing with the Scott, Hartley, Ward and McGill children who couldn't speak Welsh I became more fluent in English than in my native language. Dad was annoyed when I started replying in English to what he had said in Welsh, but our mam said, in Welsh: "Oh, let him alone. What odds, anyway?"

"Plenty of odds," dad said.

. . . . .  
Our dad could read a little Welsh and English, sing Welsh and English songs, and speak in both languages, but it was Welsh he preferred to speak.<sup>3</sup>

Thus it is that, writing of his childhood in the Rhondda valleys in the second and third decades of the present century, Gwyn Thomas says:

We were not, in terms of nationality, a homogeneous people. Into the valleys had poured as many Englishmen as indigenous Welsh. The only binding things were indignity and deprivation. The Welsh language stood in the way of our fuller union and we made ruthless haste to destroy it. We nearly did.<sup>4</sup>

The process of anglicization to which industrialization contributed was accelerated, once more by an institution which conferred, initially, tremendous benefit. The Welsh Intermediate Schools Act of 1889 introduced for the first time state secondary school education. During the most formative years of creative ability, Welsh youth was brought into intimate contact with the literature of past and present, and learned the skills and techniques of syntax, structure and style. The younger generation, eager for knowledge, was soon undeceived. Compulsory school attendance was no hardship for children of a people who highly value education, and yet for the Welsh-speakers it came to be so: for the Act required all instruction to be given in English. So it was that the Education Act served to alienate the older children from their Welsh-speaking parents and younger members of the family attending elementary schools where instruction was given in Welsh. Because the language of adolescence is most often the language of creativity, it is in English that many Welshmen write. Related directly to the Education Act and its implementation, is the emergence in modern literature of Anglo-Welsh authors. And the schools which produced and continue to produce these writers, have, too, educated the audience for whom their literature has meaning.

Deriving from two such disparate parents, and resembling neither, in itself the mule is unique. The Anglo-Welsh writer is unique; but,

unlike the mule, he displays traits derived from each culture which are recognizable and which can be isolated. The Anglo-Welsh author is writing in the language of one culture from the experience of both. He, like the Dragon of Wales, has not one tongue but two:

[Anglo-Welsh] writers belong largely, by birth and upbringing . . . to Welsh, rather than to long-anglicized Wales; and their surnames indicate that they are not either, most of them, the descendants of those immigrant English, Scottish and Irish of whatever class who have settled in their thousands in Wales in the last centuries. They are in fact the products of a highly democratic society, one in which everyone who speaks Welsh tends to regard everyone else who speaks Welsh as a natural equal. This has given them the negative common characteristic of not having the results of class discrimination and consciousness among the constituents of their emotional stock-in trade.<sup>5</sup>

Anglo-Welsh authors are not a homogeneous body having a common purpose, a defined philosophy, shared characteristics and each readily identifiable with others of a discrete group. In "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig"<sup>6</sup> (An Anglo-Welsh Writer), a critical article in the literary journal Taliesin, Glyn Jones describes his background and early life as one of a Welsh speaking family. He refers to the confusion and controversy<sup>7</sup> that have arisen from the term Anglo-Welsh, and defines it clearly: very simply, an Anglo-Welsh writer is a Welshman writing in Wales, of Wales, through the medium of the English language. He is Welsh by reason of his nativity, kindred, and affinity with Wales.<sup>8</sup> Almost without exception, the Anglo-Welsh are the first generation of Welsh nationality to speak English as their first tongue. For many Anglo-Welsh the loss of their language was virtually total.<sup>9</sup> And whilst there is no Anglo-Welsh school per se, and no declared aims or purpose to unite Anglo-Welsh

authors, their literature is a dynamic creative movement in the life of Welsh society and is an expression of that life. Their attitude to Wales and the Welsh language is diverse. There are those who are bilingual, but whose literature is written in English--L. Wyn Griffith, Gwyn Jones and R. S. Thomas, for instance. There are those whose adoption of English in boyhood was a practical necessity in the industrial valleys--Jack Jones, Glyn Jones and Gwyn Thomas are three such authors--and whose facility in Welsh took second place as English became the language of their imagination. Diverse in purpose and point of view, each of these writers has an individual style; Jack Jones on the one hand, and Gwyn Thomas on the other, exemplify this difference.<sup>10</sup> As a class of writers they have achieved a reputation for their seriousness of purpose, their industry and prolific output.<sup>11</sup> Nonconformist in their religion, radical in their politics, these writers are nonetheless very different from one another. The only forum for the discussion of the problems of being an Anglo-Welsh writer is provided by their literary journals.<sup>12</sup> In general, the Welsh-speaking authors, writing in either English or Welsh, come from rural Wales and an agricultural environment; the English-speaking writers come from the industrial and urban Special Area.<sup>13</sup> They emerge from two mutually exclusive cultures: the writing of the former derives from "a community which still bears the marks of a tradition, a continuity of language and function," in a pastoral setting and a parochial atmosphere; the work of the latter reveals, "in varying degrees, the break with this tradition and an attempt to come to terms with an alien mode of life--capitalist industrialism."<sup>14</sup>

It is significant that Anglo-Welsh literature holds its own in the English-speaking world.<sup>15</sup> In Is there an Anglo-Welsh Literature? (1939), Saunders Lewis is disturbed that Anglo-Welsh writing "enriches the English imagination and literary sensibility" rather than the Welsh.<sup>16</sup> This at once establishes the fact of its difference from English literature, and its affinity with Wales; evaluates its contribution to English culture, and the loss to Welsh; and recognizes its achievement in a wide arena in universal terms, and the concomitant erosion of Welsh literary tradition, denuded from within. However justified these fears may be, we are concerned here only with the contribution the Anglo-Welsh have made to English literature. In the first publication of The Welsh Review, Gwyn Jones refers to these writers who, though not intent on interpreting Wales to the remainder of Britain, nevertheless give insight into and understanding of Wales and her people to the outside world.<sup>17</sup>

The Anglo-Welsh writer is dismissed by the Welsh critic, who scorns the work of one who has betrayed his heritage and embraced the language of an alien culture. The Welsh purist accepts as Welsh only that literature which is written in Welsh; and thus, for him, it is axiomatic that a Welshman writes in Welsh. A Welshman writing in English is regarded as having gone over to the English and it is assumed that his work will embrace English literary tradition; all that is different from Welsh tradition will be attributed to English or American influence. In A History of Welsh Literature, translated by Sir Harold Idris Bell, Professor Parry's only reference to Anglo-Welsh literature is a case in point. Criticising the work of Geraint Dyfnallt, Parry writes:

The author, perhaps taking his cue, with no happy results, from certain of the Anglo-Welsh writers, seems bent on keeping his readers' attention continually on the stretch. His style is tense, self-conscious, and rather precious. . . .<sup>18</sup>

When listing republications of early prose classics Parry writes:

Reference may also be made here to . . . a new translation, with valuable introduction, of the Mabinogian by Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones . . . which, though in English, is mentioned here because the translation was made from a new critical text. . . .<sup>19</sup>

It is significant that Professor Gwyn Jones (of the University of Wales, Cardiff), an Anglo-Welsh scholar, literary critic and author, has no other mention in Parry's History, despite the mastery of his first language, Welsh, as demonstrated in translating a critical text founded on two of the Four Ancient Books of Wales. It is of greater significance that this tribute to Professor Jones's scholarship at once establishes his competence and, by inference, deprecates the language in which this is displayed.

But if the Anglo-Welsh author is considered by the Welsh to be "lost to the English"<sup>20</sup> he is not recognized as "one of us" by the literary critic across the border. Different from the English norm in expression, style, idiom, subject matter and treatment, the Anglo-Welsh work frequently confounds the critical faculties of the English reviewer. The Anglo-Welsh author is a new breed; he fits into no one category, belongs to no recognized literary movements, no avant-garde group of writers, and, as in the instance of Gwyn Thomas, is compared variously to "Chaucer, Dickens, Compton-Burnett, Shaw, Runyan, Swift, Aristophanes,



Thomas Love Peacock, Evelyn Waugh, Balzac, Wodehouse, D. H. Lawrence, Rabelais, Hardy, Wells, Arnold Bennett and Dylan Thomas."<sup>21</sup>

It is evident, then, that a Welshman writing in English will be judged as an English writer, and his work will be submitted to tried and tested values, to that "measuring stick for excellence . . . that same remorseless and unregional flail which has thrashed and winnowed English literature throughout the centuries."<sup>22</sup> The English critic whose judgement may be impaired by the force of Welsh rhetoric and whose eulogy or invective derives from his ignorance of the generic form of expression throughout Anglo-Welsh writing, fails to evaluate those qualities which make a work essentially Welsh.

No Anglo-Welsh writer can let it be said that he writes English "very well--for a foreigner."<sup>23</sup> Yet for many, whose first language was Welsh, mastery of English, the stipulated language of instruction in all secondary schools, was a painful process. As Richard Llewellyn writes in How Green Was My Valley,

English grammar and composition is difficult even for the English, but worse and worse for a Welsh boy. He speaks, reads, writes, and he thinks in Welsh, at home, in the street, and in Chapel, and when he reads English he will understand it in Welsh, and when he speaks English he will pronounce the words with pain and using crutches. So stupid are the English, who build schools for the Welsh, and insist, on pain of punishment, that English is to be spoken, and yet, for all their insistence, never give one lesson in the pronouncing and enunciation of the spoken word.<sup>24</sup>

The essential difference between Welsh and Anglo-Welsh literature lies in the Welsh use of their own language of communication for literary purposes; a "Welsh Wales remains . . . and almost untouched,"<sup>25</sup> and the

Welsh are inimical in their attitude towards any who would penetrate their way of life. B. Ifor Evans writes:

The life of the Celt is ultimately a secret life. He wishes to hide himself from the world. He quite often wishes to hide himself from himself. He is not prepared to share that secret, particularly with anyone from over the border. The great merit of English literature has been that it has been able to absorb in the sociable way of the English, elements from the Welsh, the Irish and the Scottish. The Welsh, for better or for worse, have not got that power. It is in part a parochialism, and it is in part a mysticism. In part it is a disbelief in the material world, and along with a disbelief in it, a distress in its appearance.<sup>26</sup>

The Welsh do not wish to be interpreted to the English, for implicit in this is a sense of being disparaged or patronized. The Anglo-Welsh, on the other hand, recognize the alienation within Wales and know that it derives from the centuries of industrialism. Their voice has penetrated the Celtic fringe, not merely with the tragic power of the plight of the valleys, but with "the innate humour which is an indestructible part of the Celtic life."<sup>27</sup> And this is manifest in the work of Gwyn Thomas, realizing the hopeful anticipation of B. Ifor Evans:

. . . I should like to see a closer union of this secret Welsh spirit with England. I should like to see its expression in English literature. . . . Still, creative writers can overcome these barriers, and it may well be that some writer of the Anglo-Welsh tradition will be able to capture some of this spirit of Wales and transfer it into the English language, which, after all, is the nearest thing to a universal language that we possess today.<sup>28</sup>

But, and never let it be forgotten:

These Anglo-Welsh writers are indeed only just Anglo; they are Welsh, and Anglo as it were, by the skin of their teeth.<sup>29</sup>

And their Welsh characteristics are dependent on Wales retaining her language. This is demonstrated in the experience of Glyn Jones:

Until I was twenty-five I had taken no special interest in Wales or Welsh. . . . I lived in a sort of isolation, so obsessed with my own problems and with the modern English literature I was reading that I was quite indifferent to the atmosphere and activities of the Welsh community to which my parents belonged. The combination of ignorance and arrogance is a guarantee of insensitiveness, but in time I began to know some of the young Welshmen and Welshwomen . . . and their proud Welshness affected me profoundly. . . . I began in time to find it intolerable that I should be a Welshman, living in Wales, and yet ignorant of my Welsh heritage, the first in a seemingly endless family descent who was unable to speak the language of my ancestors, and so excluded from the Welsh community.<sup>30</sup>

He re-learned the language he had ignored for twenty years, and began writing literary journalism in Welsh. He gave a radio talk for Welsh-language listeners, and regained competence in his mother-tongue. But his attempts to write creatively in Welsh as he had in English were abortive: the language of adolescence continued to be that of his creative literature:

. . . every line of poetry that has arisen unsought and unexpectedly in my mind, the words of every image and description, almost every beautiful and striking individual word, have all been English. I, and those Anglo-Welsh writers brought up in circumstances similar to mine, certainly did not reject the Welsh language. On the contrary the Welsh language rejected us. This is true even of those who are deeply conscious of and love our Welsh heritage.<sup>31</sup>

Loss of one's language means eventual cultural alienation.<sup>32</sup> The fears and frustrations of the Welsh parallel those of French Canadians who need the language of their heritage, for it is fused inextricably with their way of life, their traditions, mores, and expresses their very

soul: "Self-determination is for majorities; nationhood drags ethnic minorities in its train."<sup>33</sup> It is my purpose to demonstrate through the work of Gwyn Thomas how social and cultural alienation is exemplified in Anglo-Welsh literature. It will be shown that despite the fact of Welsh predominance in Wales, the English have alienated the Welsh, a minority group in a plural society having a central government in England.

. . . . .

Professor Gwyn Jones has stated that Gwyn Thomas writes English as he speaks it, and has perfected his style, his variations from the English norm, so that it is "one of the most personal idioms possessed by any living writer. . . ."<sup>34</sup> With the exception of The Love Man, a novel whose setting is Spain, and whose theme is the persecution of Don Juan when he is past his youth but still possessed of the courage that makes him indomitable, of the spirit that mocks his captive body and declining years, Gwyn Thomas's work has as its unifying theme the people of the South Wales industrial valleys. Gwyn Thomas's spontaneity of wit and metaphor, his sense of human freedom, his underlying identification with the 'voters' whose antics are comic and tragic both, create in his work a style that is entirely individual. His felicity of speech and idiom, and his fluidity of narrative, give a flavour and a raciness to his style that are unmistakably the voice of the Welshman speaking in English: speaking the language into which English has been transformed in the process of its adoption. The Welsh have adapted it to meet the

imagery and vibrance, lyricism and fluid rhythm of their native and more ancient tongue.

Gwyn Thomas, as do Chaucer and Swift, writes of a time-determined age; and his characters, as theirs, are created from the imagination of one who is conditioned by his nature and philosophy to reveal the irony of their world. The time and the place are, in his writing, peculiar to South Wales; but the characters are placed in situations which are universal, and it is this factor which extends his audience even to those who have no familiarity with the background to his stage; and sufficient historical, geographical, social, and economic details are contained in the pages of the autobiographical A Few Selected Exits and A Welsh Eye to remedy any confusion arising from elements remote in the distance of time or place or experience. These two works are the touchstone of his art. Like any complete work whose components are inter-dependent and from which a unity evolves to fulfil the primary concern and criterion of art, the work of Gwyn Thomas has, as its reason for being, the people of the valley, the world into which he was born:

The mind, the body move in shrinking circles. My being has never edged more than a few inscrutable inches from the kitchen of the house where I lived as a boy, a teeming and tempestuous place, cocoon of myths and spinning absurdities. From its seemingly always open door we had a mountain in view. It was called Arthur's Crown. Once long ago we had a sad and noble king called Arthur. This mountain had a sad and noble shape. So we called it Arthur's Crown.<sup>35</sup>

And here, where there are places where the "air and the grass are a

matching velvet" is the core of his being and the place of his heart:

The whole day had been a throne of sweet sensations. The walk over the mountain-top had been exquisite, the air and the grass a matching velvet. We had meat and wine in the dining room [of the Fountain Inn]. We were in a fine, rare mood of abdication. We talked of the futility of power and spoke with relish of Edward II who had been betrayed, captured in a dingle nearby and trundled to some English Fortress, there to be abominably executed. So we had been told by our teacher in the primary school whose authority was total, and who had compiled a bulging dossier on local treacheries.

The inn filled up with a rush. It was a visit by the whole of Pendyrus Male Voice Choir, singers of matchless passion from Little Rhondda. . . .

Then, the midsummer dusk out-standing, [the choir] sang one of the loveliest of the quiet carols. The night put on a cap of gold. I was home, at my earth's warm centre. The scared monkey was back in the branches of his best-loved tree. I've never had any truly passionate wish to be elsewhere.<sup>36</sup>

As is true of all his writing, Gwyn Thomas's language, like that of Anglo-Welsh writers as a group, is "a language . . . having a rhythm of its own, easily distinguishable from the English over the Border."<sup>37</sup> His characters speak with his own fluency of metaphor, his own articulate expression. In The Dark Philosophers the philosophers who meet at Idomeneo's possess their creator's love of opera, and his humanist philosophy of love and loyalty to those of courage and endurance. The practice of loving kindness in these unemployed is no mawkish romanticism. Their involvement in the affairs of others results in grief for their friend Willie and precipitates the death of the Reverend Emmanuel Prees. But, as Walter says, "How else would you want it? How else could it be?"<sup>38</sup> The Reverend Prees had stilled his conscience and silenced his preaching against the brutalizing conditions in the collieries

and the poor housing and poverty of the people, to become in the pulpit the compliant and gentle echo of his benefactor, the managing director of the colliery. Mr. Dalbie, a man who stored his pity, like his coal and his wood, for his own comfort, received the dividends from his investment in Emmanuel when this erstwhile crusader, who "rang the bell in his surveys of social conditions,"<sup>39</sup> suffered a stroke and was persuaded to return to the pulpit preaching submission. The philosophers, John, the narrator of the story, and his friends, Walter, Ben and Arthur, know that the "strongest fibre in the people who struggled through the years of the depression has been a sense of pity and comradeship."<sup>40</sup> This fibre has often been betrayed and strained, "but it has never been broken."<sup>41</sup> The irony of Willie's expectations of life and their contrast with the reality of the lives of the four philosophers, his friends, is made explicit when he says, earnestly, "I am looking forward . . . to my future as a voter;"<sup>42</sup> and we listen to the thoughts of these experienced voters:

We cursed within our minds the sterile cold loneliness we had lived in for many years . . . and we thought sorrowfully of all those many voters lying around about us who had been made numb and stupid by poverty, dead even to the divinest beauty created by man.<sup>43</sup>

Of these dark philosophers, the Reverend Emmanuel says:

You held the post that I abandoned. Your minds are the bridge between myself and the past I wish to return to.<sup>44</sup>

And the Reverend Emmanuel does redeem himself even as he has wished. How else could it be? In this novel Gwyn Thomas celebrates "the radiance and

goodness, . . . brightness of tongue and heart, and almost witless idealism of the people of the Rhondda Valley."<sup>45</sup> In The Alone to the Alone, when love comes to Eirona, once again Walter, Ben and Arthur with their friend, through whose persona the narrative is told, involve themselves in the attempt to achieve happiness for others.

Gwyn Thomas transmutes the world of steep and mean streets, the Terraces, into a world of philosophers, sitting on a hard, stone wall, trying to resolve the inexplicable and unexplained paradoxes and passions in man. "Invoking the mercy of God and the wisdom of Lenin in a worsening world,"<sup>46</sup> they go to the aid of those, who, no more than they, are victims of the valley's depression. The author speaks for the invincible spirit of his people, and restores to them the humour and dignity that the Assistance Board, the Means Test, and the charity organizations such as the New Age group have tended to degrade. His satire, when directed against the crass ignorance of governments and social workers who treat people as statistics, is as sharp as the swords of Toledo. But he complies with the injunction engraved on those old weapons, for he draws it not without cause, and sheathes it not without honour. He presents the case for "the hopeful, the decent and articulate among the underprivileged," for the "casualties of stupid government,"<sup>47</sup> and does so with a humility that rests on his seat on the wall with his voters, his presence in the cage with the victims.

There are times when Gwyn Thomas evokes a response exactly in accord with his Celtic monk: "This is it. My . . . heart tell[s] me. . . ."<sup>48</sup> It is then that Thomas's literary competence is transmuted and



becomes great. In All Things Betray Thee it creates a work of art.

Rilke has written that

Works of art are of an infinite loneliness and with nothing so little to be reached as with criticism. Only love can grasp and hold and be just toward them.<sup>49</sup>

Only love of his valley and its people could have given Gwyn Thomas the insight and understanding that capture their essence and plead their cause.

Influenced by the urgency of the social condition of the South Welsh valleys, he demonstrates, in stories such as "Oscar," in Where Did I Put My Pity?, that society is repressed and repressive, but that man's attempt to ameliorate his suffering derives from his capacity to meet adversity. Love--in the general sense of sharing life with others, of feeling as sensitively for others as we do for ourselves--is the most dynamic quality in his characters; it negates the suffering of these folk and becomes the summum bonum of the Rhondda. Deriving from the South Wales industrial society, his tales have lineage ties with the folk tales of pre-industrial tradition. Gwyn Thomas is writing of a people who are a synthesis of all that is implicit in the term Welsh: culture, environment, history, tradition, and language--for the English spoken by a Welshman is not the tongue of the English. Gwyn Thomas's language is English, but it is the language of a reflecting mirror, not of one that distorts.

## CHAPTER I

### PUDDLERS, PREACHERS AND POLITICS

As Gwyn Thomas has said, the story of the industrialization of South Wales "has become a loathsome thing."<sup>1</sup> Emerging from the cauldron of industrial ferment, civilization--in terms of nineteenth-century British expansionist policy--was the death-blow to a rural society whose folk industries were contained within the social pattern of a close community of widely scattered neighbourly families. Traditional skill in creativity, and enjoyment of the music of words, of story-telling, songs and singing, inspired in every son a chauvinistic attachment to the land of his Fathers, his language, and his leisured way of life. Increasing encroachment around their borders had pushed the Welsh further into their mountain valleys, and had been the cause of continued suspicion of the English:

Ever since the great battles in the North and Midlands of England that sent us haring towards Cardigan Bay, we have felt that east of Chepstow, Ross, Shrewsbury, stood a baleful and violent moron, as ready to clobber us with penury in this century as he was to do it with battle-axes in the time of the Welsh princes.<sup>2</sup>

Here, in the Glamorgan hills, was one of the last strongholds of the Welsh way of life. It was in these mountains that Caratacus, the legendary Caradoc, took refuge with the Silures during his nine-year rampage against the Romans.<sup>3</sup> In country so ideal for guerilla tactics, he was a constant thorn in the invading side. Long were the Welsh tribes to remain

unconquered, even after Caradoc's betrayal, capture and eventual release with a free pardon.

In A Welsh Eye, Gwyn Thomas notes that "the far, bloody past has taken on a second wind with the rise of the Nationalists."<sup>4</sup> In his reminiscences he writes with a sympathetic understanding underlying his criticism of Welsh Nationalism:

A large part of my childhood was dominated by as ripe a specimen of Welsh chauvinist as ever I met. His surname had a slightly English overtone and he preferred to be known by his given name, Caradoc. He wore a heavy moustache which we thought he had modelled on that of Lloyd George, but he told us that it was identical with that he had seen worn by Welsh nobles in a painting of the court of Howel Dda. He was a short man with a stoop. The stoop came from having spent many years walking up the Rhondda hills brooding about the English.<sup>5</sup>

And it is through the eyes of tolerant childhood that we see Caradoc unfold his namesake's last battle:

At least once a week, for as long as he was our teacher in the primary school, Caradoc would desert the simpler disciplines of the class-room and give us a summary of Wale's bloody past and threatening present. . . .

When Caradoc came to the Romans his style became slower and more coherent. He made a production of the last battle of Caratacus. He did not give the great Silurian chief his British name, Caradoc, because he could see that since he bore that name himself we would be baffled. He explained to us about the testudo, the advance of the Romans beneath a virtual carapace of upraised shields. He got ten of us to fashion bijou shields of papiermâché. He himself would stand on a chair with a wooden sword, impersonating Caratacus and his beleaguèred force. He did good work with his sword. He would shatter the shields and the lesson would end with first-aid being given to four or five stunned legionaries, while Caradoc intoned, 'I have shown you what it should have been like, had justice been done to the fire of Silurian pride. But in real life it was not like that. The testudo did its fell work. Roman blood flowed in rivers but the testudo did not break. Caratacus was betrayed by Cartismandua, wife

of the king of the Brigantes, a woman of infamous record.' Caradoc was a bitter bachelor and if there was a woman of infamous record anywhere in the annals he would manage to bring her in. Caratacus was taken captive in chains to Rome.

And Caradoc would stand erect, stroking his moustache, faintly smiling. Then he looked the Roman Emperor right in the eye and made the speech that moved the Roman Senate to clemency. I think Caradoc made a bigger thing of his speech than did Caratacus. If the ancient Briton had carried on for as long as Caradoc the Senators would have had him thrown to the lions just to get back to their debauchery.

Very often the headmaster of the school, a distracted and silent man, would look through a small window at these performances. But he did not interfere. There was a teacher shortage at the time and he had no wish to probe.<sup>6</sup>

If "History glowed through Caradoc to a point where he ceased to be a teaching man in a brick school in a broken town and one saw only a skeleton of remembrance,"<sup>7</sup> it lives in the words of his one-time pupil, who, though aware that the patriotic fervour of Nationalists embraces a dream of a Wales that never was, nonetheless treats of the past which led to that dream with a loyal, if ironic, Welsh eye:

. . . time and again the hillsides seem to stir once more with the hosts of fierce, dark-faced men on their way to join their leader for a last raising of the fists against the inclosing trap of English brain and muscle. The English trained on us. By the time they had us reeling wall-eyed around Snowdon and asking for the sponge in both languages, they were ready for Scotland, Ireland and Patrick Henry.<sup>8</sup>

The Danes, who "stormed up the beach at Llantwit in the eighth century" disturbed the peace that had settled on the place that in the fourth and fifth centuries, before the coming of the Anglo-Saxons, "was one of the world's most eminent centres of learning." It was a place to which "Princes came from every corner of Europe to sit at the feet of the early schoolmen."<sup>9</sup>

The Norman conquerors built castle towns which established in Wales the first urban centres. Some prospered; some declined, when too far removed from scattered hamlets to provide the services required by a rural community. Some of these moribund towns, by virtue of their accessibility, were to draw reviving sustenance from the very disintegration of the South Wales valleys:

The Normans came in from the sea and coal came down from the hills. The coal made more money than the Normans, and a gaggle of cottages around a castle became a city which has at last managed to get itself recognized as the capital of Wales.<sup>10</sup>

As with the monastic Celtic Church, the Norman castle was built before a settlement developed in close proximity. Only when church or castle was sited favourably, on rich soil or at the junction of much travelled routes, did either attract settlers. The Welsh landscape is dotted with isolated churches, miles from the nearest cottage, farm or village; and it fairly abounds in castle ruins:

These Welsh castles never fail to give the historical fancy a kick. Most of them are a low, defensive mutter in an alien hating land. Time and ruin have brought them a pathos of peace.<sup>11</sup>

We have a lot of them and most of them merit a long look. The Normans put a great stone rump down on us, for we were a restless lot, always ready to come storming out of the hills to break our teeth and hearts against the nearest English bastion. It only took someone with a strong, buzzing Norman name like Fitzhugh or Fitzherbert to build a protective wall and in less time than it takes to shout 'Ymlaen' (forward) that wall was either warped or was being warmed by our bodies. But some of the stone stuck, and the castles rose in a land of scurrying, whispering, frowning folk who led vestigial lives in the distant hills until an Owen Glyndwr or a Prince Llewellyn or some other Welsh leader sang out once more and raised the banners for yet another bloody fling.<sup>12</sup>

Castell Coch, Red Castle, on the banks of the Taff river, was built on the site of the fortress of Ifor Bach (Little Ivor), "a bow-legged battler, a master of ambush who kept the nerves of the Normans scalloped."<sup>13</sup> Gwyn Thomas continues with the story of Ifor and his men tunnelling their way from Castell Coch into Cardiff Castle, "a long enough journey even on a municipal bus," to rescue his abducted bride; and of the Norman overlord's counter-attack which sent Ifor to cover in the Rhondda hills. Ifor's beacons had burned for fifty miles around to summon his friends; and when the "cavalcade of vindictive warriors clanked up into the mountains after him" they were ambushed. "The arrows of the hillmen poured down. The fact of death was great in the valley and the tears of the Norman women were deep." But, "more Normans came more ruthless and wary. Ifor perished. His fortress was destroyed."<sup>14</sup>

In Britain for many years a toothpaste manufacturer has used an advertisement in which a castle is depicted guarding against decay. Gwyn Thomas sees the irony of Castell Coch in this analogy:

. . . Castell Coch . . . rises suddenly from the trees. Its suggestion of a toothpaste ad chimes oddly with the fact that it stands on the threshold of valleys made carious with industrial refuse.<sup>15</sup>

This is the landscape of Merthyr, Rhondda and the Valleys, a drama in contrasts. It is at Merthyr that the industrial saga begins; but, since the region's natural resources and geographical location were the reason for its industrial development, it seems appropriate to begin at the coast with Cardiff.

But Cardiff, to all but a few Welshmen, is the city. The whole sweep of the south-east Glamorgan landscape around it has a magic pattern. Northward from Cardiff, like the fingers of a bruised hand, shoot the great valleys that would have produced, given a little more attention and a lot less rain, a culture of brilliant vitality. One half of Cardiff is the life that streams into it from the northern hills. For millions of children from the Rhondda Cardiff has been the nerve-end of all delight, the glare at the end of the tunnel, their first contact with a well-lit urbanity, the first visible evidence of wealth and ease.<sup>16</sup>

The tributaries Rhondda Fach and Rhondda Fawr and the Cynon flow into the Taff, which has in the open basin at its valley-head the township of Merthyr Tydfil. This region of the coalfield--the Valleys, as it is known--is an area whose natural boundaries, cultural heritage, and economic development make it an organic unity. 'The Rhondda' is an all-embracing term for the valleys of the tributaries of that name. From Cardiff to Merthyr, through Rhondda and the Valleys, industrialism was to change the face of the rich cornland and mountain scenery with "air aromatic with wild flowers and mountain plants."<sup>17</sup> For now,

Come up towards the Rhondda from Llantrisant. The hills grow less gentle. The fields lose grace and lushness. The first coal tips sit flatly on torn slopes. Black pyramids set up by nimble-witted Pharaohs who had the theatrical guile not to get themselves enclosed within. The housing takes on a sombre, barrack-like monotony.<sup>18</sup>

Before the first collieries came, these valleys of the Rhondda (the 'Good Patch' would be its literal translation--hence this title for H. W. J. Edwards's book on the Rhondda) were famed<sup>19</sup> for their groves of finest oaks; for their wooded valley sides and magnificent mountain slopes, tree-feathered and exquisite; and for the stark headlands and rocky, alpine cliffs with their stubborn little bush-like oaks clinging to their native

soil with all the tenacity of Ifor Bach. Some of their beauty remains:

But I have a South Wales view of mountains. I want them of a size I can live on and walk on. One after another, small smooth ranges of a classic line, shortish and utterly accessible, like the dark, exuberant Celts who fiddle at their feet. And across the broad, serene plateau of each run paths of springy grass, fern-lined avenues of profound tranquillity. To me this is the most precious part of Wales.<sup>20</sup>

[Arthur's Crown] was very beautiful. It was bare except for a fringe of stunted trees across its top, bent and crouched by the winds that blew from the sea.

I felt sorry for these trees and I was relieved when I climbed the slope for the first time, touched them and found them stronger and happier-looking than they had ever looked from the valley bed. That mountain became the centre of my heart and imagination.<sup>21</sup>

The effects of industrialism on society in Wales were more revolutionary than those experienced in England. The reason for this was the lack of industrial tradition in a predominantly pastoral society, which was ill-prepared to meet the demands of advanced industrial technology, and which could assimilate neither the values alien to its own culture nor the influx of non-Welsh speakers who swarmed to the South Wales coal-field.

The philosophy of the French Revolution embraced a principle of social equality whose purpose was to abolish all vestiges of feudalism. But the ideal of individual dignity and freedom was already old in the Welsh way of life. Servility was not in the experience of the Welsh workers who had a long fierce history of resistance to any threat to their individuality as a nation.

The Saxons, followed by the Normans, tried repressive measures on



the Welsh; but the process of conquest, occupation, exploitation and disintegration of an indigenous people did not succeed until the coming of the ironmasters.

The economic enterprises of the industrialists were not seen as a national threat. The early ironmasters were not recognized as aggressors; their small number did not represent an invasion. The Normans in their clanking armour proclaimed their aggressive intent unequivocally. With them, the Welsh knew where they stood. And when Norman military strategy proved superior the Welsh took to the hills. Left to their feudal practices and their brooding castles, the Normans knew that somewhere 'out there' the Welsh were 'living it up,' unconquered, unrepressed, and independently free--a state characterized in the Laws of Hywel Dda.<sup>22</sup> The advantage of hindsight makes clear that the iron-clad Normans were, in effect, an early version of the ironmasters; for the ironmasters forged a feudal system in their industries that was cast in the mediæval mould. The people who came out from their pastoral seclusion to join the enthusiasts at the old iron workings little knew that they were leaping off a cliff carrying their own safety net. It was the most successful Norman conquest yet. The ironmasters puddled<sup>23</sup> their way to fame, and the age of affluence was begun with child-labour in the mines and women as beasts of burden:

From the moment man began to fiddle with his first furnace, he was, like the sparks he created, on his way upwards. To re-create the heat of the sun from which he sprang, that was the task. When he learned to blow the impurities out of iron bubbling away at infernal temperatures, he had taken Nature firmly by the hand and the time was ripe for the vast, pounding hammers that were to beat out the tools and weapons of the modern age.

To the children of South Wales, who grew up familiar with the sights of open furnaces making the night sky crimson, such works as these were the eyes of the world.<sup>24</sup>

Industrial man in Wales, called into being from the comparative isolation of a rural community, was to become alienated from and by that Welsh-speaking rural community as increasingly he was required to use the English tongue. He turned to the nonconformist chapel which was, and remains, a guardian of the ancient language of Wales; and sought comfort in revivalism when his economic condition, the consequence of industrial exploitation, was insupportable.

When mountains of industrial waste of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grew to rival the size of Glamorgan's green hills, and burning tips and coal tips reached upwards and spread outwards, a ghastly accretion of discarded refuse, the South Wales industrialists were not hampered by a tax such as that levied by the Romans on all "Mining Dumps and Rock Piles."<sup>25</sup> These tips have caused tragedy in recent years, shocking the world when rain made the mountain a moving mass that engulfed a school filled with children who long had played in its towering shadow.

Underlying the humour of the situation in this excerpt from one of Gwyn Thomas's short stories, is a grave warning:

"Damned amazing, damned amazing," Justin kept on saying. "You know the house where Marcus lived. Built on an old tip with a lot of coal dust in it. Seems there's been a slow combustion going on in a tiny part of it for years. Marcus and Ollie were going back there tonight for a copy of some song. Do you know what the song was?"

"Keep the Home Fires Burning," I said sombrely.

Justin began to laugh on an absurdly high key but I cautioned him back to austerity.

"They open the front room door. Ollie is going to step in

wondering what the hell the smoke is all about. There is no front room. The whole damn lot has gone into the hole caused by that slow combustion. I had a bad time with Marcus, I can tell you. You try explaining about slow combustion and the action of pressure on materials like small coal to a bloke whose front room has just gone from sight. He kept saying that his wife Lottie had complained about feeling too warm, but he had put that down to the flushes which are often felt by loud contraltos and to the way she no doubt felt about Edgar Devonwald. And Ollie! He was in a state. He swore that this was all your work. He says it was you who had sent him for the sheet music, and you would never have thought of that particular title if you hadn't known what was afoot. He used that very word, afoot.

He claims he's seen you poking and blowing at the base of the tip on which the house was built."<sup>26</sup>

It was not the houses crowded into long terraces one behind the other on the valley slopes; nor the blockage of overhanging tips that shut out the sun from the over-crowded and insanitary homes; nor yet was it the fluctuation of wages in competitive labour and industrial markets, that precipitated the disturbances which erupted in 1800 with the violence of long suppressed despair. It was the Company shops which proved to be the focus of grievance,<sup>27</sup> and which continued to be the catalyst responsible for the recurrence of rioting in Merthyr between 1800 and 1832. The workers believed these truck shops to be responsible for much of their economic distress; but the sudden nature of the riots was that of men already living on the hunger-line, and trapped in a cycle of debt and dependency. It would be impossible to say how deeply anger and rebellion were rooted in desolation for the beauty that was laid waste and the life that was devoured to feed the "writhing need for coal and [iron]," for environment is fundamental to man's human situation:

For the men of the valleys live in two worlds. They know on the one hand, the noise, the disfigurements, the failure of industrial man,

and just up the hillside over the ridge, a pastoral calm that has never seriously been breached.

... when a man has a paradise of trees and fields half an hour's walking distance from his own street he is going to find it harder to accept that street sunk too far below the level of dignity and delight he expects for his neighbours and himself. Once you have heard the lark, known the swish of feet through hill-top grass and smelt the earth made ready for the seed, you are never again going to be fully happy about the cities and towns that man carries like a crippling weight upon his back.<sup>28</sup>

Nonconformity flourished in the region, filling needs that were social, cultural and spiritual. The chapel services were conducted in the Welsh language;<sup>29</sup> Welsh literature and traditional crafts featured prominently in their social gatherings. The emphasis on moral responsibility and individual guilt made a virtue of deprivation; and a necessary catharsis was achieved through sermons<sup>30</sup> which dwelt on the extreme anguish of Christ's passion, of the suffering he endured for them, of the grief he felt for their sins. They, the people of Wales, of Merthyr, were the sinners for whom Christ had accepted the burden of punishment; and their suffering was as nothing compared to that which had paid the price of their future reward: an eternity in a spiritual paradise. The grief of the congregation, visibly and audibly manifested,<sup>31</sup> engendered feelings of profound guilt, an overwhelming burden to be atoned. It was reasoned that their present privations were a just punishment, the acceptance of which ennobled and made them worthy of heavenly reward. For the desecration of beauty and human defilement they were made culpable; theirs was the guilt, and theirs the responsibility to atone--by being honest, abstemious, industrious, and sexually restrained. Purged and renewed to take the strain in the conflict between the harsh demands of

of industry and the needs of human life, a subdued, submissive people was sustained by the virtue and the justice of its lot, and given strength for six days more of deprivation. Thus the habit of acceptance was fostered, and fed and fortified at weekly intervals by those who scorched a trail for: "a brigade of austere nay-sayers who stood by to purge us of gaiety, to silence our laughter and hamstring our host of leaping lovers."<sup>32</sup> This "wind of wrath" was to lash the Merthyr and Rhondda peoples as Daniel Rowlands had never done. When Rowlands preached he stirred the mass emotion of the thousands who had come to hear him. It was then that jumping or leaping for joy occurred, "the excited emotions breaking forth at one and the same time, not only for jumping, but also in ejaculations signifying glory or hallelulijah."<sup>33</sup> The spirit of the early religious revivals was a joyous and splendid experience.

Baptists, Unitarians, Independents and Calvinistic Methodists were united in their condemnation of working-men's unions.<sup>34</sup> Their unfriendly eye saw blasphemy in the secret oaths taken, and depravity in the union clubs because they met in beerhouses. A curious anomaly is seen in the chapel's alliance with the ironmasters who, as a prophylactic against union clubs, started paying wages in beerhouses. Gwyn Thomas writes:

I do not know who invented beer but I can say right off who have made the most fuss about it: the Welsh. No nation can ever have bred such a covey of drought-fanciers, people who can identify a glass of beer with the last emblem of evil . . . looming out of the strange, dark social terrors which inspired the most fanatical temperance associations.

The most raffish Celt is bound to have in his bones a kind of respect for these people. They permeated every cranny of our childhood.<sup>35</sup>

The Calvinistic Methodists assumed a tremendous responsibility when they found and punished guilt in the workers of Merthyr. As H. J. Laski has said: "Men do not move to violence until they have been driven to despair;"<sup>36</sup> and the nature of the outbursts of behaviour savage in manner, or emotionally extreme from men whom Thomas Carlyle was to describe as "poor creatures toiling all in sweat and dirt, amid their furnaces, pits and rolling mills,"<sup>37</sup> was that of a people's despair. The Barleymeal Riots of 1800, with raiding, looting and with women in the vanguard of clashes with authority, progressed to the marching rioters of 1816, with gangs of men armed with picks and other tools of their work, singing and shouting as they ranged the coalfield, "calling out the men, fighting pitched battles on the way with the constables, soldiers, sometimes with the entire personnel of recalcitrant works."<sup>38</sup> By 1822, the rioting gangs had become an army, still not organized, but presenting a formidable front. The outbreak in Merthyr, in June, 1831, was the climactic point that marked the ending of disorganized labour. Wales has always been "stauncher to preserve than ready to assimilate,"<sup>39</sup> and radical ideas were slow to gain support. It took a martyr for the political ideal to take hold and unite the workers.

In his autobiography, Jack Jones writes:

We Merthyr boys had long cherished the memory of . . . Dic Penderyn whose name and innocence had been handed down to us by our fathers and grandfathers. Taken to Cardiff to be hung at the age of twenty-three for the wounding of one Donald Black.<sup>40</sup>

And here is his memory of his grandfather's account of what had happened more than half a century before:

My grandfather related to me what his father had told him about the coming to Merthyr of the Dragoons in 1800. Drawn swords, with which they sliced dogs in half; and the crowns off old men's high hats. They had come to cow those who in their fierce hunger had looted the company shop by the Angel. Two of the hungriest of the men were taken to Cardiff to be hung. . . .

"All that was before my time, Johnny," he would remind me. "But" --each time he neared the Castle Hotel he would stop to point and say--"what happened there in '31 I seen with these two eyes. Heard the shots which the Scotch highlanders fired in there, Johnny, and seen the people fall. Nobody knows how many was killed by here where we're standing that time, Johnny, for people was afraid to say about them that was carried to their homes to die. But it's safe to say that the soldiers killed twenty, Johnny. No soldiers killed. But they hung Dic Penderyn down Cardiff before he was twenty-three because, so they said, he had wounded one of the Scotch highlanders." After he had sighed and shaken his head he would say: "No, the poor boy was as innocent as you, Johnny. But they hung him all the same."<sup>41</sup>

This was the background to Gwyn Thomas's novel All Things Betray Thee, and his play, Jackie the Jumper:

In Britain we have had extraordinarily few riots. A deep stream of ale to dilute most rages and free outlets of disputation among the plebs; and a full seam of self-protective cunning among the patricians have kept our social body jogging along without too many civil commotions. So we tend to cherish the ones we've had. . . .<sup>42</sup>

In All Things Betray Thee, the rising mountains of waste, the stench of burning refuse, the din of giant machines, and the fermenting anger of Wales welcome the wandering harpist to the valleys of the South and herald the dawn of the age of progress. Published in the same year as Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, the novel demonstrates that industrial society is corrupt and forces man to be ruthless. Gwyn Thomas appeals to humanity to recognize the destructive forces of industrialism and to know its own capacity to hate, instead of love, and to use power for power's sake. The language of the characters is no indication of their place within the

social structure, since in Wales there were no class distinctions in the sense of those operating across the Border. The harpist speaks to Helen and Richard Penbury with engaging ease; the gaoler speaks in imagery that derives from a traditional oral literature, as does Benny Cornish's ability to memorize the messages he delivers, "just like verses."<sup>43</sup> The harpist is drawn into the industrial conflict. He has no choice but to stay. As Jeremy Longridge says:

Men like John Simon Adams and myself, we are not much more than the leaves in the wind, bits of painful feeling that gripe the guts of the masses. From the cottages, the hovels, the drink-shops and sweat-mills, anger rises and we are moved. No choice, Mr. Connor, save perhaps the last-minute privilege of adjusting the key of the scream we utter.<sup>44</sup>

In us, too, anger rises and we are moved, for "a death that draws the tears of many people you never even knew has a special taste and never vanishes from the earth."<sup>45</sup>



## CHAPTER II

### THE FEAST OF FOOLS\*

God hath chosen the foolish things  
of the world to confound the wise . . .  
I Corinthians I:27

When the curtain rises on the first act of Jackie the Jumper, the wistful mood of the workers is reflected in the music to which they dance: "A sad, sweet dirge. . . . Two musical themes commingle here. One a lament of great plangency, the other a serenade. The two mounting each other could give a good picture of grief knocking its stupid old head against hope."<sup>1</sup> Against a back-cloth of the reflected glare of the furnaces, the yearning of the people for the return of the one who was leading them "to a place of calm, clean peace,"<sup>2</sup> is the verbal echo of the music and movement that coördinate the scene. Throughout the play, music and choral passages are inter-related with the dialogue and action; the correlation of music, singing and dancing to the changing moods of characters and events, is contrived so well that they are integral parts of the drama. As the people's hope affirms "The Jumper, Jackie the Jumper," the music makes a leap, soaring to meet Jackie as he appears "at the top of a mound, radiant, smiling."<sup>3</sup> He appears in sharp relief,

---

\* In the Middle Ages the Feast of Fools was universally celebrated throughout Christendom, frequently on Innocents' Day, though on different days of the year in different places. Directly traceable to the pagan Saturnalia of ancient Rome, it was a quasi-religious festival, the ecclesiastical counterpart of the secular revelries of the Lord of Misrule.

arms both raised "in a fervent gesture of greeting." It is an extraordinarily impressive moment, for it holds the echo of these words:

Such men have a way of creating a whole new sky of promise. A sky that makes the earth and us look different. Then they vanish.<sup>4</sup>

For a timeless moment the vibrant yearning surges and is held; and then the music quickens in harmony with the joy that his coming brings. The rhythm is one with the blood-beats quickening, as "Jackie takes girl after girl in his arms"<sup>5</sup> in a dance that banishes the void of longing.

Alternately serious and light, the drama is subtly devised: the elements of comedy or light-hearted overtone heighten the tragic significance; and the characters, presented in actions successively comic, serious, or profoundly moving, achieve a depth of emotional response that is immediate. The comic effect enriches the tragic element, bringing into sharp relief the irony of the fate of Jackie Rees, who is an amalgam of Dic Penderyn and Lewis the Huntsman--a "libertarian vagabond."<sup>6</sup> The action advances swiftly; for the intensive treatment of the drama causes the issues involved to follow closely upon one another. Increasingly, the tension heightens as the complexity of rôles assigned to Jackie the Jumper unfolds with moment-to-moment immediacy: "to the mad rhythm of a mad time."<sup>7</sup> It is this complexity that gives unity to the drama of "the early struggles of a society tormented and besmirched by the eruption of the great iron furnaces and the descent of the great Calvinistic vetoes."<sup>8</sup> Trapped in the vortex of this violence, Jackie is at the heart of the "narrowing and vicious circles"<sup>9</sup> that are closing in

around him.<sup>10</sup> And in the vanguard of the hounds who hunt him down is his uncle, the Reverend Ritchie 'Resurrection' Rees, "a thundering divine,"<sup>11</sup> who sees "the devil with a union card,"<sup>12</sup> and his nephew as the embodiment of all the carnality and fornication of which he is an avid voyeur:

(A thoughtful quietness hits the group. They stare at the leaping furnace lights. The men start whistling a soft counter-melody to some such folk tune as 'Aderyn Pur' and they lead their girls on to a kind of grassy bank. They lie down in postures of frank passion. . . . Their bodies sink more cosily into the earth and their crooned song touches silence.

Then there is a black, discordant crash of wind and brass. In comes RITCHIE RESURRECTION REES, followed by two attendants, small men with all the stigmata of timid piety upon them. Regardless of context they have their hands half-raised to express horror. RITCHIE REES is a big, handsome, passionate man, with a voice full of Old Testament bugles, and long fingers nailed with anathemas and ready at all times to project accusations. He points at the silent clumps of lovers. He stares at them incredulously and turns to his companions. They hide their faces and their whole expression is that of men who have now seen humanity cover the last yard of its depraved course and are now giving up the ghost)

RITCHIE REES: No!

(His companions shake their heads to back him up but do not try to compete with his voice)

RITCHIE REES: No! No!

(There is no stirring from the lovers)

RITCHIE REES: Locked in carnality in full view of the world. Deaf with it!

COMPANIONS: Their ears are stopped with it.

RITCHIE REES: Lechery is death!

GEORGE CHISLETT: It isn't, you know.

RITCHIE REES: Lust is ruin.

JIM JAMES: Lust is all right.

RITCHIE REES: Stand and be named. Stand and be shamed, physically wanton; morally lamed. Stand and be named.

(The couples are intimidated and one by one they descend the hillock to stand before the evangelist. Only JACKIE and JANET remain undisturbed. They give an enormous groan of pleasure that makes RESURRECTION REES clench and raise his fists)

. . . . .  
(JANET peeps from beneath JACKIE)

JANET: It's your uncle, Mr. Resurrection Rees.

(JACKIE rises slowly and faces his uncle)

JACKIE REES: I thought so. Still keeping the urges on the hop, uncle? How are you, sir?

RITCHIE REES: I shall be a lot better when I see a set of iron bars around you, you disgraceful vagrant. . . .<sup>13</sup>

Jackie, who loves freely and lives in harmony with the clear streams, deep valleys, and fern-clad hilltops of the land he roams beyond the "furnace-stink. . . [and] the killing glare of the fires"<sup>14</sup> of Ferncleft, embodies the hope and yearning of all the down-trodden. They assign to him the emblematic rôle of a libertine, of a freedom-fighter who will lead them, as he has promised, "out of this place, out of this pain, away from this degradation."<sup>15</sup> It is their dream, and his; but it is only a dream, as Jackie knows:

JACKIE REES: A man will say, when awake, the things he hears in sleep. People hear, people believe.<sup>16</sup>

The people dream of freedom, but they are tethered to the guilt of their betrayal.

Presenting a mixture of wisdom, naïveté, wit and grace, Jackie is like the Harlequin of the timeless world of the Italian Commedianti dell'Arte:

He is like a mere sketch of a man, a great child visited by flashes of reason and intelligence, in all of whose capers . . . there is something sharp and interesting. The model Harlequin is all suppleness and agility, with the grace of a young cat; . . . the rôle is that of [one who serves], patient, faithful, credulous, . . . always in love, always . . . afflicting himself and consoling himself again with the readiness of a child, one whose sorrows are as amusing as his joys. Such a part demands a great deal of naturalness and wit, and a great deal of physical grace and suppleness.<sup>17</sup>

Jackie the Jumper is all of this. In the uncertainty all around, he is outstanding for his sure, unfettered movement from each welcoming door and every moment of fulfilment. He leaps into the cycle of events, vibrant, virile, voluble; now touching with wry humour on the cause of his rheumatism;<sup>18</sup> now mocking his uncle's wrath:

In the last year they've blamed four strikes, one cattle pox, ten deaths and nine rapes on me. I'd need to be a man-sized grasshopper and a shire stallion to get around the way they say I do.<sup>19</sup>

To authority, Jackie represents a defiance of the moral code which embraces "the good, cool bastions of marriage, money and dogma,"<sup>20</sup> Luxton, the ironmaster, of authority and yet standing apart, sees the Jumper as he is:

They call him Jackie the Jumper because he doesn't settle in any one place, because he accepts no organized work. He stirs people's dreams into a hot broth with his gospel of a love and joy achievable here on this earth. Sexually he has prowled like a tireless tom over the roof of a nation's desire. He has me, with my foundries, and you Rev. Rees, with your condemned-cell ethic, ticketed as a pair of tricky and undesirable monkeys.<sup>21</sup>

To which the clergyman replies: "Which is why he must be thrust away." For him, Jackie is a walking text for every fiery sermon on sin; he represents Jackie as a libertarian, "a defiler of holy matrimony and a subversive anarchy,"<sup>22</sup> an emblem of sin and rouser of rabble politics.

But there is a further rôle assigned to Jackie Rees: the martyr's:

(The furnace flares are crazily enlarged and intensified. They all turn round and look in terror at the new brilliance)

JACKIE REES: What's this now?

ALL (quite happily): Apocalypse!

JACKIE REES: No. Apocalypse will be dark and ordinary. Tax-collectors, sergeants, preachers and lawyers; an unlighted lot. (Three men, in postures of revelation, appear at the top of the hillock)

1ST MAN: Luxton is raking out the furnaces. Every foundry for four valleys around will be stone cold by morning, and will stay cold until we meet Luxton's terms.

2ND MAN: They've brought the army into Birchtown. There was a clash on Birchtown square an hour back.

JACKIE REES: Clash? What about?

2ND MAN: Human rights and the allocation of Birchtown's four full-time harlots. The mayor read the Riot Act.

GEORGE CHISLETT: He knows it by heart. It's the only steady reading the man's ever done.

2ND MAN: The soldiers fired their guns. Two of ours are dead.

JACKIE REES: As long as death is about somebody'll use it.

GEORGE CHISLETT: There was no other way for you but this, Jackie.

JACKIE REES: What do you mean? No other way?

GEORGE CHISLETT: The cobbles of the road were laid down for you a long, long time ago.

OLD MAN (holding up his hands prophetically): God be with you, Jackie boy. Go forward, boy. I see through the days to come. You'll be a martyr, Jackie. They want to hang somebody special. Let it be you, Jackie. You are martyr meat. Your corpse will shine like stars for us. The tears we'll shed for you will make us clean and strong. . . .<sup>23</sup>

A martyr is awaited; a martyr is appointed:

RITCHIE REES: You are the sacramental victim, the expendable pagan. You have no root here. Your passing would provoke tears but no fists.<sup>24</sup>

Tears are the emotional release offered by a tragic sacrifice: a sacrifice to justify their continued self-betrayal in allowing themselves to be intimidated:

RITCHIE REES: Go, you others. . . .

JACKIE REES: Stay where you are. He's just one of a whole legion peddling brands of death. He drains your hearts of heat to make a true gift of it to that ironmongering scamp on that hillside yonder. You are making a hobby of being cowed and dispersed every time these

dervishes start to howl their case for submission and toil. Let us break the theological teeth of this chipmunk, then let's restart our revels.

(The lovers resume their crooning tune and turn once more to their little Venusberg on the hillock)

RITCHIE REES: Consider, you people. This man is a phantom. He was not here yesterday; he will not be here tomorrow. He'll be on his way shattering fresh maidens, subverting honest artisans. But you'll be here. And I'll be here. Mr. Luxton, the ironmaster, will be here, and the furnaces in which you work will be here. His sort of laughter and his sort of freedom are death.

(In the Top Right of the stage a darkness forms, and into it JACKIE's friends back. JACKIE turns to them and tries to beckon to them to come back).

JACKIE REES: You've got them, uncle. You and Luxton have found the words, the mood, that put the snuffer on their dreams.<sup>25</sup>

Tied to their struggle for existence, the workers see in Jackie the freedom they dare not take: for they are afraid to be free. They want a death to release them from this guilt. His death.

GEORGE CHISLETT: Aaron, you're all right. You've been through the mill and most of us have done the trip with you. You've only got one fault and most of our people share it with you. You want your martyrs too cheaply. You want your heroes cut-rate. I want Jackie to live to be a hundred. And I want him to celebrate his hundredth birthday by chopping down a gibbet.<sup>26</sup>

Aaron Mead, whose eyes were consumed by the furnace fires, burns with a vision of a martyr to idealize man's struggle against oppression:

Ever since my eyes went in that furnace-blast I have had a vision. The vision of one of our own, killed for love of us. Somebody in whom the dousing of light would have darkened the whole earth. Jackie, in a word.<sup>27</sup>

But the Reverend Ritchie Rees wants a hanging as an exemplary punishment of all who rebel against authority:

REV. REES: The people are confused and full of devilish impulses. A good, sudden, dramatic death will show them more clearly than any sermon of mine the need for a new gentleness.

COUNTY SHERIFF: Nothing restores social sanity more swiftly than a significant corpse dropped judiciously on heads made hot by dreaming.<sup>28</sup>

In all of these, there is a ruthless singleness of purpose. What distinguishes the Sheriff and the Colonel is their cold detachment. Neither regards Jackie, or for that matter the rest of the labouring poor, as a human being; and in this they are joined by the Reverend:

JACKIE REES: Here are three men who cast a big shadow. They peeped at us over a wall. Genuinely talented and brave men who have made of their cleverness and courage the tools of a disinfectant aloofness. The sermon, the eviction, the sabre and some differences of dress have worked marvels for them. . . .<sup>29</sup>

The Colonel who has hunted people down like vermin believes that "Enemies of the King's peace are not people."<sup>30</sup> Military training and military strategy are used in a civilian conflict. Here, killing can be done with detachment only if the victims are dehumanized. Military courts-martial require execution for the soldier who rebels; but in a civilian situation, military ethics are here in conflict with ironmaster Luxton's humanitarianism. The Colonel's actions are dictated by duty to the King; Luxton's, by his paternalistic sense of responsibility towards his workers and by the awareness that he is culpable not they:

I want to speak out loud the things my mind has been muttering in between the market booms and hunger riots. I don't want to go floating into time as the man who initiated three new types of deformity in under-nourished children.

. . . . .



I will write one great apology across the earth. Sorry! Sorry! This is the coke and clinker boy coming to heel. I will offer my own pelt as a girdle to mute the rattle of old iron in the body of our kind.<sup>31</sup>

Luxton empathizes with the Jumper and sees reflected in him the dreams and desires he once has known. He knows that Jackie follows "the ideal of an unconditional freedom," an ideal he, Luxton, holds in his heart. The influences that forced him into an ironmaster's mould have not taken the strength from his belief that "everyone must be heard. Heard and respected."<sup>32</sup> He believes that: "Whatever the Colonel and his troop might say to the contrary, the only sweet and worthy death is to die in an effort to communicate."<sup>33</sup> He has no illusions, least of all about himself. He has looked into himself and seen there the betrayal of his own human needs. The workers have cast him in the rôle of a tyrannical 'Ironhead'; and the inflexible will of the Establishment ensures that he does not change his image. Luxton is aware that he has a choice not to play the rôle; but by doing so, he knows that he would be replaced by another more malleable than he in the hands of "the law-jugglers, the mountebank interpreters of God to man, the warriors who want a bit of cut-rate glory in between the vast national butcheries."<sup>34</sup> A marionette, twitching at the end of a rope,<sup>35</sup> he is a tragic figure, suffering deeply for Jackie the Jumper with a compassion that is itself a punishment.<sup>36</sup>

The Reverend Rees is ignorant of the motives of his choice: his spiritual orgasms give the lie to his professed belief in his own morality. His restraint is not self-restraint but society's restraining influence: his behaviour accords with the voice of the moral code. He,

too, has a passion, and although he is vehement in his assertion that for good his is the voice that cannot be silenced, he transmutes his physical yearning into a religious ecstasy that has a kinship with the experience of physical fulfilment that he has said is death:

(The door is flung open. The whole crowd of workers flood in led by RITCHIE REES. His eyes are blazing. His clothes are disarrayed. . . . LUXTON's first daughter is at his side, radiant)

REV. REES: What made them jump? I did. I was tremendous. The sun and the moon swung from my every word. I was riding love to hounds. Then some heat, some intimation of climax flowed out to me from the listening people. I stopped talking. I held my hands out to the congregation. I started to cry. Then I said, 'I will speak no more. I will stand here weeping until the core of flint in every human heart has been melted away.'

JACKIE REES: A fair tactic. Save on the words.

REV. REES: Oh! the shuddering of miracles. The walls of petrified restraint that are tumbling to nothing in my heart. Before this I was seeing only the heel of humanity, the fleeting heel of humanity. I am being liberated into the light as you are being lowered into the dark, Jackie. The light. And the first shaft had to be this. To ravish your little kingdom of confident licence, to inherit some part of your bold and laughing confidence. There is only one mistake, to operate on only one level. By the minute I am growing. See me now, my votaries around me in a tight cluster of caressive zeal. I timed this whole thing better than you did, Jackie. Shrink now and be still. Now, children, down into the valley, to the new freedom.<sup>37</sup>

As the wild and passionate religious experience reverberates around him, he is at the core of all that pulsing fervour of sublimated desire. For him, it is a moral imperative that Jackie be found guilty for submitting to that desire; be condemned for succumbing to a human response which finds echoes in himself:

COUNTY SHERIFF: . . . Your daughters are jewels. . . . .

COLONEL: Eirlys!

COUNTY SHERIFF: Arianwen!

REV. REES: Mona!

(Their eyes are alight with enthusiasm and desire. LUXTON watches them cautiously and as if with a bud of new understanding in his mind)

LUXTON: . . . I'll bring them in to meet you for a few minutes.

(LUXTON leaves)

(REES, the COLONEL and the COUNTY SHERIFF move restlessly, watch each other cunningly as if, in this new situation, they are changing moment by moment, and they are trying to determine what the changes consist of.)

LUXTON returns with his three daughters. They have a demure radiance. Their dresses are white and have a theme of lace. REES, the COLONEL and COUNTY SHERIFF are magnetised by them. The last two make a great whooping fuss of them, but RESURRECTION REES, in tribute to his own standing at God's side, hangs back, his eyes none the less lucent with desire)<sup>38</sup>

The shame he would feel if he recognized lust in himself is kept at bay by investing his excesses in Jackie. The punishment he demands is at once the price he exacts from one who undermines the chapel's coda to morality and an act of castration on a symbol of virility. Jackie has the reputation of being an "inter-shire stallion," a seducer of women; the Reverend finds sublimation in revivalism; in the ecstasy of mass manipulation. The people jump for Resurrection Rees, jump in response to the feelings of excitement he has stimulated.<sup>39</sup> As Luxton observes in his defence of Jackie:

These reputations can be very spurious, Colonel. There is so much torpor in the field of sex that a stirring of a finger can sometimes look like a major assault. In the kingdom of the castrate the one-eyed man or whatever you'd call him is king.<sup>40</sup>

Blind to his own folly, Ritchie Rees takes refuge in hounding a libertarian, a huntsman. He advocates a pagan, ritual killing, whilst professing himself on the side of the Christian brotherhood of men. The

self-appointed Master-of-the-Hunt to God, he is a sinister fool in a secular revelry:

JACKIE REES: . . . What kind of clowning is this?

COUNTY SHERIFF: No clowning. We are cancelling your licence to be a pest, Rees. We've let you roam for too many years on a tether of loose-lipped dissension. Now we are pulling in the rope for more practical use.

JACKIE REES: You wouldn't be such fools.

COUNTY SHERIFF: We are what we are because we are such fools. If by folly you mean the daring to choose our solution and the right ground from which to hurl it, you, Jackie the Jumper, are going to be hurled. When your neck is broken, lust, laziness and all doubts about the social contract will be dislocated as well. There will be no resistance, no hitch. Your friends might mutter something into their grimy mufflers, then shuffle back into their slum.

COLONEL: We shall stand guard around the gallows to give you plenty of breathing space.

REV. REES: I shall read the lesson from a specially-made, resonant pulpit. What I shall have to say in the immediate wake at your death will make you a richer being dead than ever you were in life.<sup>41</sup>

The Reverend Rees clings to the social structure he has aided in erecting. Were his Christian conscience capable of combating injustice and oppression, he would be forced to alienate himself from the protection the system offers. Social values offer little protection and no perspective to the professed Christian who would practise as passionately as he preaches. His desire for a hanging, for a moral victory to be gained and a moral law to be shown to triumph is a travesty of the principles of secular law whereby the ends of justice at least must appear to be served. As the Colonel makes clear, before Jackie is brought before them, he has been condemned out-of-hand.<sup>42</sup> And although Luxton points to the fallacy of these charges against Jackie,<sup>43</sup> and exposes Rees's hypocrisy:

LUXTON: . . . Now tell me, what have you got against that nephew of yours . . . Why make him so special a target?

REV. REES: He is a man of moral character so loose that he has to turn back every five minutes to pick it up. He is a tramp, a defiler of holy matrimony and a subversive anarchist. . . .

LUXTON: I know exactly how he feels. And I see the point of a lot of it. I tasted some of it myself once and the flavour was fine. Where is he now?

REV. REES: Here. He had the insolence to return.

LUXTON: And you want him destroyed.

REV. REES: Destroyed? My Dear Mr. Luxton, my whole life speaks for the Gospel of Peace, for the unguent of love.

LUXTON: Mr. Rees, we are both mature men. If we are to make fools of words and ideas let us, at least, shake our clowns' caps at each other as we do so.

REV. REES: I want my nephew warned. His life is a sty. I want it cleaned. But without violence. I want him to appear before the magistrates and to be told to desist from his mischief. It's an ethically directed bit of house-cleaning, no more.

LUXTON: The first broom I heard of with a rope on it. I heard every word you said last night to the County Sheriff and the Colonel of the Militia. You thought I was dozing over my wine. I wasn't. You three had given me a pain in my head-bones. I was resting. You were striking blows for decency right, left and centre. You convinced them without any difficulty at all that your nephew should be hounded down and hung up. This fascinates me, Mr. Rees. You want a part of what he is, has been. You want to inherit part of the vacuum that will be left when he dies.<sup>44</sup>

the farce is acted out; and the fabricated charges are upheld.<sup>45</sup>

The hearing at Luxton's home is but the prelude to Jackie's arraignment before a court of law; it is a trial-run for what will pass for justice in the legal ritual which will give Jackie the Jumper no less rigorous dispatch than here planned. Against a sinister backcloth of outraged moral sensibilities and vindictive verbal rectitude, this innocent clown will be shewn that even at the Cardiff Assizes, "The new morality creates new definitions of crime, each one elastic, each one a noose."<sup>46</sup>

Rees, the Sheriff and the Colonel demonstrate the measure of their

capacity for cruelty. They manifest qualities diametrically opposed to the principles of Christian love, human justice and civil protection. When they assume the arbitrary right to judge Jackie they do so from the inviolate security of their power in the social structure. They assert the right to judge; and yet the ambiguity of right and wrong permits of no such assertion; for

Justice, in short [is] an empty husk, a stock-in-trade of bourgeois rhetoric . . . one [has] always to know which one [is] dealing with: the one which [will] give a man his own, or the one which [will] give everybody alike.<sup>47</sup>

But it is Rees who is blind to his evil. He is exposed as a hypocrite and a liar; and his response is to accuse Luxton of not being himself, of being in need of a doctor or a rest. He dare not admit to himself the truth that he has lied to Luxton; he must believe in the mask he presents to society, for without it he has no identity:

A clown, whose main effect is his mobile face, must keep his face very mobile. I used to always stick out my tongue at myself before I began my exercises, so as to get quite close to myself before I could withdraw from myself again. Later on I stopped doing that, and without any tricks whatever just stared at myself, every day for half an hour, until finally I wasn't there at all . . . I often came close to going mad. I simply forgot it was me whose face I was looking at in the mirror, turned the mirror around when I had finished my exercises, and if I happened to glance in a mirror later on in the day I got a shock: that was some strange fellow in my bathroom, . . . I didn't know whether he was serious or comic, a long-nosed, pale ghost--and I would run as fast as I could to Marie to see myself in her face. Since she has left I can't do my facial exercises any more; I am afraid of going mad. I always went up, after doing my exercises, quite close to Marie, till I saw myself in her eyes: tiny, a bit distorted, yet recognizable: that was me and yet it was the same person I had been afraid of in the mirror.<sup>48</sup>

Like Heinrich Böll's clown, Rees would find it terrifying to see himself

as he really is. He does not recognize himself in others. He evaluates according to his own moral precepts; but his senses are gratified by the probing curiosity of his libidinous eye. He sees lust in others, but recoils in horror from Jackie's words of truth:

JACKIE REES: . . . Tell me, uncle, what have you most enjoyed doing?

REV. REES: Preaching.

JACKIE REES: To what end?

REV. REES: To persuade and convert.

JACKIE REES: Or to bewitch and seduce. You know you've based a lot of your life on the belief that you are so different a man from me. You've made yourself a fine, high platform, introducing God to his guests as rotundly as a good butler. Me you've depicted as a rampant and disgraceful stallion trampling the hills, vales and virginities of this land. But we're the same man working from different ends. I am the carnal boy with a post-coital urge to sermonise. You are the preacher who creates before him a vague cloud of generalised lust.

REV. REES: A lie.

JACKIE REES: I've watched the faces of women after you have been pelting them with hot words. Had it not been for two hours on a hard bench and six layers of thick clothing they would have put their cool piety in pawn for you, any place, any time. I envy you, uncle. You've had the real excitement, the real melting union. And always with pride and exaltation. No shame, no betraying weakness.

REV. REES: You dare to say that we are but shadows of each other.<sup>49</sup>

So used is he to seeing his projected image of a celibate, restrained self, he does not recognize that the reflections he sees of Jackie are, in reality, his own. But Jackie does from the beginning, in this soliloquy:

We are rarely more than a light flickering between two identities. I could have spoken all the words he [Rev. Rees] spoke. And he, I suppose could have doubled for me. We inhabit a procession of wombs that grow darker, and we avoid the one authentic birth by acts of clownish mischance.<sup>50</sup>

Jackie is in harmony with nature. His kinship with humanity, his child-like capacity for living richly, and his insight and humour move

across the sombre scene with fantastic effect. Comic and serious by turn, he is a merry and delightful clown in the inferno of South Wales. Like Dante's devils, the fools who are "the dispellers of doubt"<sup>51</sup> are cruel in their antics; and they are the lost souls: the thundering divine, the Colonel and the Sheriff, hunting men all, each according to his peculiar lust or sport,<sup>52</sup> indulged to his individual limits of indifference, intolerance, or intolerable disdain for creatures of a lower species.<sup>53</sup> These, the lords of misrule, are the representatives of English government, English law, and God's kingdom; and of a system of laissez faire which has exploited men like Luxton and turned them into builders of an iron empire whose key-stone is settled on the host of broken dreams. These are the fools whose revelries have bound an iron belt of chastity on the love and land that were free:

GEORGE CHISLETT: His fancy's land. God made the earth in seven days and this joker collared it in eight.

COUNTY SHERIFF: Land goes to him who treats it best.

JACKIE REES: And you saw no wrong in the death from hunger of the people you evicted.

COUNTY SHERIFF: People who are capable of dying from hunger in any context are a gross nuisance. Nature flicks them off like midges.<sup>54</sup>

Luxton's achievement is that he exposes the tragic-comic pretensions of this "Feast of Fools," this Harlequinade of hunters in which we see the secular revelries of the Establishment in a hunt that derives from the sport of kings. And it is Luxton's sense of affinity with Jackie that gives balance to the play, for he bridges the incredible gap between the life force and its negation. He is the truly complex character in the drama; the one in whom the mutually exclusive idealism



of Jackie and dehumanized pragmatism of the Sheriff and the Colonel meet in anguish. Through Luxton, we see Jackie's power to inspire men to act and think with belief in the ideal of human freedom, and the power of the Establishment to force men to conform. In Jackie, he sees what had been denied him so many years before; but he knows that that freedom is betrayed even as he passes his mantle to Jackie; as Jackie knows it, too.<sup>55</sup>

Jackie is the tragi-comic clown, the mediæval fool, who uses his jester's wisdom to speak truth. His passionate acclaim of life is the antithesis of the Sheriff's dispassionate disgust. His bright eyes contrast with the Sheriff's which have "a glacier in each."<sup>56</sup> As F. R. Leavis writes of the contrast between Sissy Jupe and Blitzler in Dickens' Hard Times, such a contrast renders the opposition between "the life that is lived freely and richly from the deep instinctive and emotional springs" and "the thin-blooded, quasi-mechanical product" of the system.<sup>57</sup> Death is the penalty Jackie must pay for "Having tried to interpret the dreams of a people who did not even know they were asleep;"<sup>58</sup> for a people "[whose] ignorance is the deepest grave of all."<sup>59</sup> When his friends have left him, Jackie demonstrates an understanding of their betrayal that might be compared to that of Billy Budd. It says much for Gwyn Thomas's use of humour that this scene ends on a note of hope and sadness rather than one of mawkish romanticism.

It would seem that, to some extent, the Sheriff, the Colonel and the Reverend Ritchie Rees each embodies and exemplifies extremist characteristics; they are satirical caricatures, personifications of the

institutions they represent. They are symptomatic of the dehumanizing influences that turn men into empire-builders. They, like Justice,<sup>60</sup> have been blindfolded: they are blind to the central truth of the human universe: that man's nature is good and bad, dark and light, and that truth itself is relative. They all reinforce the blind code of tradition; but the choice between right and wrong is never clear, for a state of flux and a changing environment are subtle and obscure influences. Rees is blind to the fact that he who is looked to to interpret life's mysterious pain and God's ineffable love stumbles in the abysmal darkness in which he "guides the wind of God's wrath."<sup>61</sup> The Sheriff and the Colonel, the "anti-communication squad,"<sup>62</sup> alienate a people whose tongue and language they do not speak.<sup>63</sup> Luxton has seen the blindness of illusion and the betrayal of his ideals; and his horror is the knowledge of man's hand in control of the primal heart, the life-force.

Jesters and clowns mock the makers of the tragedy of this "Feast of Fools." It is men who are found culpable, not an anonymous 'they,' an ambiguous society, an abstract Authority.

### CHAPTER III

#### SHADOWS OF MUTE DREAMS

On a journey ill,  
And over fields all withered, dreams  
Go wandering still.

--Matsuo Basho

As the iron furnaces "alternately darkened and reddened the sky"<sup>1</sup> over the social and political upheavals of the nine valleys, a wandering harpist was moving swiftly, purposefully, toward Moonlea and the only being with whom he would share his sweet solitude: John Simon Adams. Alan Hugh Leigh is the harpist; his friend, the singer:

We wandered all the mountains of the North and the plains of the Middle Country together. We always said that when our feet grew tired we would find some sweet solitude just right for the joint root of us to rest in. He heard his father was at Moonlea, feeble, rickety and playing the fool around the puddling yards of Penbury, your [Helen's] father. He left me, came down here, watched his father of the earth and stayed. It puzzled me. That was two years ago. Now I'm going to fetch him.<sup>2</sup>

All Things Betray Thee presents the harpist struggling to regain his lost freedom in a world that has betrayed him. It is not the same world he has known: for the present is opposed to the allegorical past. Alan Hugh Leigh seeks to return to the shared life he has known with his friend, to find "the sweet solitude [they] dreamed of."<sup>3</sup> He has inherited from his grandfather, "in the north-west corner of the land . . . two hills and a valley that are so lovely they make paradise pout."<sup>4</sup>

Here, he dreams, they will reconstruct the peace of their past experience, of the pastoral life of their youth. But already there is a shadow over his dream, and his harmony is broken, even as the drover destroys the tranquillity of his mood beside the lake at Lindum:

Then a drover arrived, a prosperous yeoman in charge of his own herd, and a giant. He stood at least two feet and a fortified stomach above average peasant-level. He was solid and broad as a hillock and as dense. I watched the food and drink go down him as down a pitshaft. He was on his way to a market centre in one of the border counties where the new industrial towns had created a legion of lean bodies begging for his stock. I drank my ale and watched this man, the sight of whom took up and spat upon the whole wonderland of quiet forgiveness into which I had been led by my hour at the lake shore. I spoke to him of the places I had been, of the far hamlets where singing, clustered groups had dipped their slab of squalid wants for a short forgetting into the liquid of my music. I told him of the ironmasters whose dark little towns I had glanced at and fled from in my wanderings, who laid their black fingers on the heads of the field-folk, tensing their neck muscles for the laying of a clumsy knife. I whispered to him as the ale-pool grew deeper and the crazy malice of my ruined mood spread wing and gained fast in fury and power, I whispered to him all I knew of hunger on earth, its fruition and flow, for all the world as if hunger were my sister, a dearly familiar slut. Then a hurled pot came within an inch of taking off my ear and I saw that this drover to whom life was clearly good and widening its grin, was viewing me as he would a toad, a mad, purposeful toad.<sup>5</sup>

The artist, poet, wandering minstrel, is an outcast. His vision makes him an outsider, for it is not distorted by the singleness of purpose of the Establishment or the Revolutionary. The artist sees the human longings and desolation in those who have been cast in the rôle of villain; and his voice transmutes all griefs and desires into "the shadowed orbit of his own thoughtfulness, to tempt their voices into a dusk-softness of melancholy sound."<sup>6</sup> His vision is dangerous to the cause of the rebel, for it sees the good in the soul of conservatism

even whilst it exposes the wrongs. The harpist's voice speaks of the peace and harmony of a far and distant time, and links the dreams of folk whose lives are "brief and black" with the "image of beauty" in the farthest distance of "some certain paradise,"<sup>7</sup> of some earthly Eden:

The story of Eden is a greater allegory than man has ever guessed. For it was truly man who, walking memoryless through bars of sunlight and shade in the morning of the world, sat down and passed a wondering hand across his heavy forehead. Time and darkness, knowledge of good and evil have walked with him ever since. It is the destiny struck by the clock in the body in that brief space between the beginning of the first ice and that of the second. In just that interval a new world of terror and loneliness appears to have been created in the soul of man.<sup>8</sup>

The harpist sees the effect of industrialism on the lives of the people; and understands the suffering of the women, who can not find forgetting in work and ale. It is for the women that his compassion flows; for, "It's only their souls that have the quality of silk that allows them to be stuffed into the smallest and furthest folds of hell."<sup>9</sup> Such thoughts are not tolerated by established authority, in which the duality of idealism and materialism is reconciled in the cause of progress. There is no place for Alan Hugh Leigh in the conflict that sears the region; but he is caught in the violence of events by the fact of his own nature, and because of his bond with John Simon Adams. It is the drover who foreshadows the violence to come, and who demonstrates the effect of the harpist on men whose conscience has been muffled or is mute:

My prattle of unease among mankind had fished deep down into the great bulk of that drover, had brought up on a hook his last feeling nerve and had scoured hell out of the thing.

When he recovered from his giddiness he went into the corner where

my harp stood and he kicked it, as deliberately as I will ever see anything done, into splinters. He turned around to stare at me, gasping and malevolent, seeming to ask what my next move would be. There was no next move. I and life were all full up and not a muscle of either moved. I had felt, in the quiescence of will that had marked my mood on arriving at that spot, that some profound transformative antic might be in the course of execution, and I felt no strangeness as I witnessed my harp's death and my own wondering survival. My meekness impressed the drover. He paid me for the damage and I left at dawn the next morning.<sup>10</sup>

And when Alan Hugh Leigh is released from prison, and again when he takes leave of Helen Penbury, he is recompensed for the pain he has suffered. But nothing will ever compensate for the deep, vibrating loneliness that had held the harmony of his being and the dream of a solitude outside the social system; the system which has failed to reach outside itself for a humanistic code of values. Just as harmony is the shadow language of the music of melody,<sup>11</sup> so the harpist gives depth of emotion to John Simon's words of reason, and John Simon gives meaning to the harpist's infinite, inexpressible need for fulfilment. John Simon's death, foreshadowed symbolically by the harp's death, leaves the harpist alone; alone in a society which has alienated him because he is not dedicated to a cause, or committed to the code. The harp and his friend are left behind him when he leaves Moonlea, "feeling in [his] fingers the promise of a new enormous music."<sup>12</sup> A music that will speak the bitterness of his loss, "so perfect and simple and sounding a soul to me, . . . mangled and dumb like earth."<sup>13</sup>

In his wanderings, the harpist has always fled from the change which industrialism has brought into Welsh life. Now, in the early years of the 1830's, he has come to Moonlea, an industrial village, which, like

Merthyr Tydfil, is at the head of one of the five Western Valleys of the South Wales coalfield. Moonlea, a fictional name for what might be Merthyr in 1831, is a man-made place that the ironmasters have grafted onto a lovely valley. Here, at the foot of the slopes of Arthur's Crown, like the harp left behind him at the lake inn, the hopes and dreams of Moonlea's "dark pool of men and women"<sup>14</sup> are "mangled in the midst of that loveliness,"<sup>15</sup> of "the joyful beauty of the hills around."<sup>16</sup> There is tragic irony in the harpist's self-consolation for the harp's loss: his journey to Moonlea indeed will "mark the induction of a brand new type of tomorrow into [his] days;" but not, as he anticipates, "a tomorrow resting on a diligent security and assurance."<sup>17</sup> The destruction of the harp is symbolic of the end of innocence: the harpist is beginning a new life of awareness; his erstwhile harmony with nature is no protection in the "civilization" that has replaced the old Welsh pastoral peace, and his journey of enlightenment is a confrontation with the victim of an alien culture: social man; and of the industrial revolution: industrial man. The harpist journeys from the place of his natural being, from an Eden in rural Wales. And it is as if he were walking from the morning of the world, where, in his pure relation to nature, he has known the infinite power of his own rhythm: "the infinite ground of [his] deep vibration."<sup>18</sup>

The harpist is both a character within the novel, and hence subject to the author's development of events, and an observer outside the situation, fulfilling a choric function by reporting and interpreting the events. Through the eyes of innocence, Gwyn Thomas draws attention to a

morally corroded society. The harpist's assertion of human freedom is in conflict with his distressed vision of a population trapped between the power of authority and the aspirations of the employed. A stranger to labour in field or foundry, Alan Hugh Leigh reveals, with disturbing insights, the failure of any social values in a society which is in a state of flux. Placed within the struggle against the repressive machinations of ambitious, power-driven men, the harpist experiences the loneliness and isolation that come to every individual who confronts society with its shams. Through the harpist's eyes, understanding and response, and from his experiences and their contrast with his Edenic background,<sup>19</sup> man's dualism is made manifest: he is both betrayer and betrayed; good and evil; and these dualities, diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive, are the measure of man's capacity for conscious error or virtue, and the opposition to these of man's subconscious urges and desires. The ambivalence of good faith and bad in the man whose instinct for self-preservation is not submerged by his dedication to a cause--as exemplified in Wilfie Bannion and Katherine Brier, for instance--is made explicit in the words of Bartholomew Clark, the tragic clown:

'Bartholomew,' [John Simon] said. . . . 'Deep down in your heart you believe as we do. . . . Help us to get out of here' . . . .

'It's no good,' [Bartholomew] said quietly, his face upturned towards the grille where John Simon was still listening. 'You said--deep down in your heart. There is no deep down, honest to God, Adams, there is no deep down. It's a thin slice of a thing, gone dark with age, dampness, cold, not fit even for my own teeth. I'd agree to get you out because I believe you stand for some things that are right, that you are good, that you are better at least than the people who put you here. I'd agree to go to that tavern and



tell your friends. I'd wish them well. But I'd betray them too. Every day I must have my bit of betrayal or the night would be too strange to be borne. The only really thorough and constant ones, Adams, are the corrupt ones. That's why people like you will always manage to get yourselves hanged whenever you crop up and try to make men blush. I'm glad little Jacob [his assistant] came. I wouldn't like you boys to see to the very furthest corners of my sty. . . ."<sup>20</sup>

Caretaker of Tudbury Castle and gaoler to the harpist and his friend, Bartholomew, in his drunken escape from consciousness, in his delirium of anguish, looks into himself and mirrors the agony of his vision of the betrayal of his own "bitter burning protest"<sup>21</sup> against oppression, his self-betrayal of his youthful dreams of human freedom. Together, the harpist's life-celebrating vitality and the gaoler's life-escaping introspection mirror the conflict in social man; they embody the agony of the human will, of man's alienation from his human bond:

I told Bartholomew he should be ashamed of himself for having lent his life to such a piece of fraud. When I said that he would look at me with a terrible sadness in his eyes as if I had dug my finger into some aching patch of corruption within him. Then he would drink a little more, peer outside the cell door to make sure that there were no spies in the corridor; then he would bring his head close to mine and whisper those rusty antiquated songs of revolt that lay strewn along the gutter of his fine, abandoned self, and after a night or two I got to know them as well as he and we made an impressive sight crooning this rhyming litany of defiance and revenge against the walls in which I was imprisoned, against the men who paid Bartholomew to keep guard over us, while the tears ran fast down his face into his nearly black cravat of greasy immemorial linen while I smiled up at the oblong of sky I could see through the grating, pleased by the rich gravy of absurdity this scene seemed to pour over the black dollop of what appeared to be our forthcoming doom.<sup>22</sup>

As narrator of the events, the harpist reveals the profound effect upon him as a character in the action; and as freely as he moves from narrator to protagonist, so does the narrative move from the

dialectic of philosophic thought and human confrontation to passages of vivid imagery that capture the taste and touch, sound and smell of the beauty that is the Wales of moorland, wooded glen, and fern-topped mountain slopes, and the shape and look of fear, hate, greed and power. When he descends the mountain path to the "bald, huddled cottages in the township below with its ravelling cap of smoke and its air of sullen detachment from the joyful beauty of the hills around,"<sup>23</sup> his meeting with Helen Penbury has cast the first shadow over his dream, for it anticipates the conflict he is entering and his relation to its participants. Their encounter in the clearing, a natural hortus conclusis, with the curve of a stream enclosing it at one side and the dingle trees and bushes thickly protecting the glade, anticipates their meetings in the walled garden of the ironmaster's house. The harpist, the dreamer, enters the glade, even as the central figure of Guillaume de Lorris' Roman de la Rose enters the enclosed garden, with the portrait of the goddess Idleness matched by Helen Penbury. Here, the harpist encounters in this woman, who is "emblematic of many things [he knows] little of,"<sup>24</sup> the forbidding aspect of power, privilege, and blind prejudice, and the counterpart of Guillaume's allegorical figures--Danger, Fear, Evil Tongue, and Shame:<sup>25</sup>

'Who's your friend?'

'John Simon Adams.'

From the girl's face I could see that she had heard of John Simon, and her expression affected me like a thrust icicle. It was strange to be sharing any common territory of knowledge with this woman.

'Why?' I asked. 'What about him?'

'That man is a deadly nuisance. Wherever he is there is no peace.'

'John Simon Adams was never a deadly nuisance in all his days, never.'

'When did you see him last?'

'Two years ago.'

'Since then he has been learning, harpist. He is now a graduate, Moonlea's leading thorn.'

'A thorn to whom?'

'My father and almost all others.'

'How? What makes him prickly? He was always as soft as a petal.

... How is he a thorn?'

'Go down there and find out. He's an evil man.'

'Do you know him?'

'No. I don't need to.'

I threw my bread lump angrily into the stream.

'For God's sake, woman, what is the relation between you and humanity? Oh, that's a big wild question and I don't need an answer. But there's a cold selfishness in your eyes and your heart that's new to me, that makes me . . . ' I rose quickly to my feet. She grew paler and I was glad to see that, although I meant her no harm. When I spoke to her again, it was softly, almost humbly, sorry that I had sent my voice into that flight of fuss. 'In all the being of John Simon Adams, and compared with that of you and your father, it is a great lighted dome of being, there is no shadow of evil. I don't know what you've done to him in that smoky sty of a place down there in the valley, but whatever it is it can be cleaned away and he can become what he was in the days when Moonlea was a name to him and no more. You see, lady, I've found the sweet solitude we dreamed of.

... '25

There is no resolution to their differences. Helen is repelled by his contempt for industry and industrial man:

'What's wrong with them?'

'What's wrong with chaining a bear and paying him a few pence per hobble? That foundry work's a pen for the idiot and the life-sick. Some men put on a coat of dirt and servility too swiftly for my taste. When a man accepts a master's hand or a rented hovel he's fit for the boneyard.'

'You're a savage or a radical. You ought to say those things to my father. He'd have you sitting over a furnace learning elementary logic in less than a minute.'26

She is contemptuous of his allegiance to John Simon Adams, and his wandering life: "[Moonlea] has no place for drones,"27 she tells him. And

yet she is attracted to this pagan man, who speaks to her with the freedom of an equal and whose harpist's fingers have "an expectant sort of curve as if they are already listening to the note."<sup>28</sup> He, too, is both repelled by and attracted to this daughter of the 'gentility.' He is repelled by what he senses in her: "Her own impulse to create and mould and become the dominant motive of her universe,"<sup>29</sup> in the town of Moonlea, the "life-trap" for all the small field-folk driven off their land by the new and powerful landowners--for land enclosure served to feed the industrial centres with much needed labour; it might be said that it was directed to this end. As the harpist looks at her, Helen Penbury has caught "a handful of [his] fibre, with one accurate movement of her spirit, pressed it, taught it to ache with a shrill, embarrassing plain-tiveness;"<sup>30</sup> and despite her arrogance and pride he can not "erase the impression that this woman, her words, the colour and sound of her, [have] made upon [his] thoughts." An analogue of Idleness, she is an ironic goddess of Nature, the antithesis of the guileless harpist, antipathetic to his roaming spirit and the freedom of his dreams. The thesis and anti-thesis of differing concepts of freedom, justice, mercy presented in the novel are anticipated in this dialectical encounter. And as the harpist is drawn toward Helen Penbury against his will, so he becomes drawn into the conflict between the workers and the representatives of the establishment.

The developing human conflict and the emergences of a primitive workers' movement is the central situation of the novel; but as the harpist becomes involved in the struggle and committed to keep faith with

John Simon, who is an organizer of the workers' revolt and leader of the North-Eastern Valley men, he becomes the central figure, the raison d'être of the novel. The effect of the alienation of the people from their agricultural land, and the corrupting influences on man in society, are heightened when seen through the eyes of innocence, when seen against the harpist's idyllic background, and when the harpist experiences for the first time the fear that comes when someone has him by the leg:

'Have you a choice, harpist?' Jeremy asked me.

'I don't know. I've never seen life as you boys seem to see it, a distinct, separate thing like a detachable shadow, to be examined and kicked or kissed. It's just flown around me, not hurting too much and I've never given a conscious damn. No, I've never thought about this business of choosing. I wish I were away from here. I wish John Simon Adams were far away from here. I wish he were still full of the joyful singing that was in him once and which has now died. But I'm here, and so is he. And his joy may still be in him, but it is singing in a key that my ears are deaf to hear. I feel the hate and fret that fills the ground between you and the mighty. The mighty have me by the leg too, and my leg kicks to be free, but hour after hour I stay here, like the rabbit stays by the weasel. That puzzles me.'<sup>31</sup>

For John Simon, the choice has been made: He has seen the hunger in the people who were drawn to Moonlea by the fascination of iron; has been bound there by the same spell:

'... Why do you hang around such a place as this, making iron and power for Penbury and misery for yourself. You have the experience of an undertaker at a cheaper funeral. You are up to the brow in shadow. Why did you stay here?

'Keep your eyes and mind open, Alan, and you'll soon find the reason. My father took a long time dying when I came down here to bear him company through the last stretch of the road. Most of the time he talked about iron and the wonder of all molten and malleable things. He told me all the secrets of his craft. The only thing in all his life since the day he walked away from my mother up in the

North to run into the shape he wanted was that liquid-iron. He was mad for it. When he died you were no longer here to take my mind off it. So I found the moulding yards dragging me like a magnet. Deep down I probably had something of the old man's elaborate misery, and it might have been calling for the same cure. So I didn't resist. Penbury liked the skill of my hands, and I liked the job. My father was right. Under the dirt there's a lot of beauty.<sup>32</sup>

And he has seen the suffering of the people who were driven to Moonlea by the propulsion of economic necessity and from whom was to be exacted the loss when there came a lull in the writhing need for coal and iron. Deprived of their small farms and their place in the agricultural community, alienated from "a dozen counties [these people] have no common understanding, no common language."<sup>33</sup> The dream of freedom that is mute in men "made dumb by the strangeness of their different yesterdays,"<sup>34</sup> is the "swamp; the sucking swamp of other people's helplessness, and [John Simon's] own compassion."<sup>35</sup> He has seen the subjugation of the people by men who have used their authoritative power to instil fear, and who repress criticism and dissent by labelling them 'Jacobinism' and 'treason'-- activities which disturb the King's Peace, and which are penalized by death, transportation or imprisonment.<sup>36</sup>

Men such as Plimmon, Jarvis, Radcliffe, Wilson and Bowen, use the authority of God and the State for what Dr. Lionel Rubinoff defines as "the pornographic enjoyment of power for its own sake."<sup>37</sup> They breed followers like Spencer and Bledgely. They cultivate conformists like Lemuel Stevens, who will "perjure with passion and skill"<sup>38</sup> for them; and manipulate or coerce men like Richard Penbury. Isabella Stevens, no less than Floss Bennett, is "one solid block of interlocking betrayals;"<sup>39</sup> both are victims of the pseudo-morality of the new industrial society.

For the people who have taken "the full weight of the boot"<sup>40</sup> there will always be one who sees the "lost bewildered stare that comes from their eyes when the world-storm dies down for a moment and lets the full horror of knowing themselves slip back into the old position,"<sup>41</sup> and becomes committed to achieving their inward dream of freedom. As Abel Jefferies says to Alan Hugh Leigh:

In some men the winds of joy drop quickly and in their silence all the grieving of earth seems to find an echo. Such a man, I think, is John Simon.<sup>42</sup>

Here, in the hill-side tavern, 'The Leaves After the Rain,' the meeting of men takes on significance. It is here that John Simon speaks of his commitment to humanity, and Abel of his allegiance to John Simon. After the failure of the peaceful demonstration and the hunting down of its leaders, the tavern is a place of refuge for John Simon and the harpist, where they can meet with Jeremy Longridge, leader of the Western Valley men, an erstwhile pacifist who converted John Simon to his belief in the power of persuasion by peaceful means, by appealing to authority with words of reason. The irony of their opposing convictions is that when Longridge became convinced that moral persuasion and non-violence would always fail in an appeal for humanitarian treatment for the workers, John Simon was as strongly persuaded that even the least enlightened of the masters could be changed:<sup>43</sup> "His spirit had flown or crawled, depending on the way you look at it, on to precisely the same hillock of patient passivity which had just been left by Jeremy."<sup>44</sup> Believing that a peaceful demonstration would be met with the same brand of treachery

as he had experienced,<sup>45</sup> Longridge and his thousands of supporters failed to join the march. Now, John Simon's grief for the men who have died is hard with bitterness for the men who have betrayed his faith in them and made him betray the workers who had trusted him. Only now does he know that he has sought to change the thinking of men whose power derives from their capacity for enjoyment of power: he has sought to change their human nature. For, as Freud has pointed out: "Men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, who simply defend themselves if they are attacked . . . . a powerful measure of desire for aggression has to be reckoned as part of their intrinsic instinctual endowment."<sup>46</sup>

John Simon has a belief in man, in man's nature being fundamentally good. His whole philosophy has been based on thinking that ante-dates Thomas Paine and the Age of Reason. Jeremy Longridge is "a clear seer" who knows that Mass man is a slave who has betrayed life,<sup>47</sup> betrayed his humanity. Rubinoff draws attention to the pressures in modern industrial society which have produced conformity. He cites psychiatrist Robert Linder's definition of Mass man:

The Mass man . . . is the psychopath in excelsis. A mechanized robotized caricature of humanity, it is he who finally tears down around his own head the house of his culture. A slave in mind and body, whose life signifies no more than the instrument of his masters' power, a lost creature without separate identity in the spreading collectivity, a mindless integer of the pack who awakens from his torpor only when prodded by the whip from outside or the stab of brute appetite from within, it is he who finally inherits the earth and runs it to ruin.

Mass man, the universal psychopath, is born when the individual ego is weakened to the point at which it loses separate identity and is forced, for security, to merge with the mass. This becomes possible however, only when what I believe to be a fundamental instinct of the human animal is outraged or betrayed. There is that within us that



cannot be denied without destroying the essence of humanity. It is a drive to master, to overcome, to express positive protest against whatever stands in the way of the far-off unknown goals of evolution. When this built-in urge is impeded or suppressed, the qualities that make up the humanity of man disappear, and in the place of man stands a goose-stepping automaton driven by animal lusts.<sup>48</sup>

Lindner, here, is stating implicitly the position of John Simon Adams: that man is fundamentally good. But Longridge, the clear seer, takes Rubinoff's view of man:

Now I fully agree with Lindner, but with some serious reservations. In addition to this Apollonian or virtuous capacity for goodness and creativity, and for rebelling against injustice and arbitrary use of power, there is also in man a Dionysian or demonic capacity for aggression and for enjoying power, the expression of which is just as important as the expression of creativity. This leaves us with the problem, as Freud well knew, of finding healthy, creative ways of expressing this aggression. In more concrete terms: the problem for man is to build a world that is as much a home for his body as for his mind.<sup>49</sup>

Longridge recognizes that industrial society has allowed these demonic qualities to develop; that it has encouraged in men in authority a ruthless enjoyment of their capacity for aggression. Industrial society, he believes, has produced industrial Mass man who has betrayed his life by suppression of his instinct for self-expression, by submission to the arbitrary will of the masters:

'Jeremy doesn't believe in persuasion by peaceful example any more. He says it's like putting your head in the lion's mouth before pulling the heart out of the lion or the teeth from its head. He says the rich are a small army which keeps the whole nation of the poor besieged within thick filthy walls by guile and terror. He says that for men to live in their thousands simply to enrich the Penburys and Plimmons is to betray life. Therefore, he says, let the nation of the poor be rid of its besiegers and make its life a serene and clear and fruitful thing. He says it is good that those who forge

the iron should be the masters of the foundries in which it is forged. He says it is likewise good that the fields should belong to those who wish to till them, as once they must have done. He says that if the workers are to be slaves in the new towns, a prey to hunger and diseases they didn't know before, then it is better that the foundries and mines be destroyed now and we with them and the valleys made empty and quiet once again.<sup>50</sup>

Longridge sees that industrial towns have bred greed and deprivation; competitive aggression and subjugation. The only hope for man is a return to the conditions of the past: to de-industrialize South Wales. In this, Gwyn Thomas's character is expressing the idealism of Saunders Lewis;<sup>51</sup> and he sees, as do John Simon, the harpist, Eddie Parr, Abel Jefferies, the gaoler, Jameson, ironmaster Penbury, and all the characters whose individuality has not died in them, the condition of a people enslaved. He sees in the towns the same misery that the modern Welsh poet T. H. Parry Williams has observed in the city: the whole nation of the poor, huddled in slums,

Where man  
Begins to die ere he begins to live,

and where the mass of people

Die without dying and without living live.<sup>52</sup>

Fear of punishment and the need to propitiate authority lead to betrayal. And thus it is that Alan and John Simon are betrayed by Abel's wife; and the tavern, once more, is the place of brutal aggression.<sup>53</sup> As Bartholomew knows, loyalty to one's fellows and compassion no longer exist when one is confronted with oppression:

'He's a good lad,' he would croak into my ear, jerking his finger towards John Simon's cell, 'with a heart bigger than this,' patting the magnificent outswell of his stomach, 'but a fool, a great fool. You can't beat these, nobody can beat these.' He banged his fist on the immense stones of the wall behind us. 'And there are worse things than the stones and the men who pile them one on another for their own power's sake. It's those swine down there.' He pointed with stiff arm down in the direction of Tudbury. 'Poor folk all, but they'd as lief hang you both as look at you if Plimmon threw them a penny from his saddle bags and told them to get on with the job. There's too much autumn, harpist, too much autumn for anybody's liking. And the falling rotting ones among us are never trodden properly into the ground.' At that point he would make a long pause and stare as if in wondering worship at the wall that separated us from John Simon.

'Someone's always paying, harpist . . . for radiant boys like you who are setting your faces towards the dawn and keeping fresh the parts of life that we defile, breaking the silence in our acre of degradation, the paying's never done.'<sup>54</sup>

The axiom 'Might is right' is vindicated when John Simon Adams and Alan Hugh Leigh are found guilty of charges which carry the death penalty. Vindicated, too, are the men who murdered two men and a boy in their ruthless quelling of what they termed a riot.<sup>55</sup> Had it been impossible to find witnesses willing to give perjured evidence, authority would have had difficulty in repudiating the charges of its own guilt. As it is, honour and truth have been discredited, and the official representatives of justice, moral law and social order have been upheld; for their respectability is vouched for by their social position, and so long as they appear to adhere to principles of justice and humanitarian ideals, they can use their power to destroy those in whom these ideals live and demonstrably challenge their corruption. Lord Plimmon's speech against child labour has established his image as a humanitarian--a radical, even--; his acquisitive seizure of land has been seen as conservation, and his plans to increase the land's productivity and wealth as purely

philanthropic.<sup>56</sup> The truth, as the harpist's painful experience demonstrates, is diametrically opposed to this image.<sup>57</sup>

In such a society as this, there is no place for the artist or for the sensitive humanist. The essence of the harpist is the ability to express his own humanity, to express creatively the harmony that has been his in solitude. He, no less than the leaders of the revolt, is a rebel against injustice; and it is through him that Penbury can reveal his true being. Manipulated by the policies of Plimmon, Radcliffe, Jarvis, Richard Penbury is not the man of inflexible iron the leaders of the revolt have depicted. An artist forced into the rôle of an industrialist,<sup>58</sup> Penbury is trapped in a world alien to his nature. His sympathy for the workers is repressed by Plimmon and Radcliffe: for it is against their interests, as it is against the interests of the insurrectionists, for him to reveal his humanitarian face by taking off the mask moulded for him for the rôle that the men and the age have cast him. His sleepless nights and "philosophic migraine"<sup>59</sup> evidence the predicament of one who falls victim to his own surrender of dreams, and who is victimized by those very ambitions in which he had seen the consolation for his loss of freedom:

. . . we've failed, you [Alan Hugh Leigh] and I. And the rack-makers probably think they have as much right to make a living and ply their curious craft as we. I, too pensively, undecided; you, too errant and idle, both unfit for conflict. There was something about the ambitions of my father that had a vague rough poetry and I consoled myself with that for a time. But there is no beauty in the sound of fist on face or whip on back. There is a mixture of pride and cleverness and utter clarity in these Radcliffes and Plimmons that will make of them some superlative and horrifying animal before their days on earth are done. They'll be deaf as stones and they won't hear

the dreadful drying rustle of other people's lives at all. It's cost me a lot, not being like them, but I'm glad I wasn't. Tenderness is the whole of life, tenderness is the only science worthy of pursuit. I'm glad I've been stricken into silence and uselessness. It would be bad for the earth if all dissenters were as you and I, harpist, soft-cored, courteous, haunted by a sense of lost and recoverable beauty. Fortunately or unfortunately, there will always be John Simon Adams, changing his name, his precise longing and his mode of agony in each generation, making his poetry from mad resistance, almost numb with confidence in his own courage and rightness, chanting the unspoiled promise of our kind, dying with good cheer to shame the plunderers, the ungentle and the bad. I say fortunately because this fanatical identity with the multitude may wreak some miracle of decency among the great herd and its scoundrelly drovers. I say unfortunately, because all this endurance and greatness may be doing no more than prolonging a fruitless pain.<sup>60</sup>

Penbury's mental anguish for John Simon is a matter for amusement to the men to whom he has surrendered responsibility for the workers he morally and legally is obligated to protect.<sup>61</sup> He has saved the harpist, but can do nothing to save John Simon: Radcliffe and Plimmon need a scapegoat to subdue the rebellious and deter any further demonstrations against their authority; and the people are only too willing to let John Simon pay the penalty and avert the wrath of reprisal.<sup>62</sup> The terrible irony is that a martyr will give strength to the revolutionary cause, for it will rally the survivors and give new purpose to their movement. The final irony is that the people for whom he has given his life, of whom he once said: "People get skill in suffering and we want to break them of the habit,"<sup>63</sup> rejoice that he is dead:

This is a day of feast for Tudbury. Slavishness goes deeper than the sewers in this little town. The High Sheriff and his friends have declared a state of chronic holiday to celebrate the overthrow of the disloyal and the disaffected. I'll be selling ale and wine far into the night. This place will have a special appeal to the revellers. The Flag [Inn]. The flag [the Union Jack] is waving

proudly over the castle. The thoughtless and the replete will have three or four days in which to swill and vomit over their vows of allegiance. On Sunday they will foregather and the vicar, the dean, the bishop will explicitly identify John Simon Adams with the devil and the pious will moan with joy at having been relieved from the peril that overhung them.<sup>64</sup>

Evil and bad faith have been sanctified by the blind prejudice of religious authority.

Wandering, in solitude, Alan Hugh Leigh has been detached from human suffering and protected from the influences that emerge in industrial society and cause men to behave in a way that is at variance with their capacity for beneficial self-expression and creativity. In Moonlea, expediency is the criterion of power and conformity, and men such as Captain Spencer assert their power with the same violence and indecency they have learned from the example of the Plimmons and Radcliffes--it is no coincidence that Spencer's attitude towards the workers is analogous to that of the fox-hunting Plimmon:

'In a way,' said Spencer in what for him must have been a thoughtful tone, 'in a way, it's a pity.'

'A pity? For these fellows [John Simon and Alan], you mean?'

'Good God, no. A pity if the whole affair is going to fizzle out like this, hauling a few of these scoundrels before a magistrate for a round of quiet boring hangings. I think they could have arranged a more satisfying bit of hunting after putting us to the trouble of getting our uniforms on once more. Life's getting hellishly dull, Banbury, hellish. . . .'<sup>65</sup>

Spencer's function is to defend the King's Peace. The military authority has encouraged in him the development of those latent traits of cruelty and aggression which, perhaps, first influenced his choice of career. Rubinoff gives an insight into the intensity of this wish to

destroy and the lack of feeling for those who are terrorized and tortured:

In the authoritarian society the individual loses his humanity. Inter-personal relationships are transferred from the realm of subjectivity to the realm of objectivity. The relationship between one person and another is mediated by rules. The person is defined in terms of his function and is encouraged to identify completely with his roles. In such a society there is no longer any need for feelings like trust, compassion, and concern. The "risk" of existence, which is the source of an existential void, is now replaced by massive structures, which fill in the void and make the world a safer, more secure, and more permanent place to live in.

But without compassion, without the anguish that comes from living in trust, the individual is emptied of all human content. He becomes what T. S. Eliot has so aptly called a "hollow man."<sup>66</sup>

Emblematic of the hollow men is Tudbury castle, "that had been the heaviest knuckle in the looting baronial fist through many centuries of border-war."<sup>67</sup> Like Plimmon, the High Sheriff of the county, the castle dominates the county town. It is where John Simon and the harpist are lodged for trial, in "a lodgement that [Plimmon] considered more fitting [than the new prison at Chungford] for men who were traitors to the King's Peace."<sup>68</sup>

In solitude, John Simon transcends the prison walls and achieves a state of consciousness which, in overcoming anguish and agitation, precludes the torment of false hope. He accepts his fate: to be rescued, or to die: one or the other will take place; agitation will not change it. He is "reconciled and at peace" in a way that the Reverend Claude Mayhew would find beyond his experience to understand.<sup>69</sup> As the harpist reflects:

Reconciled and at peace. There's a lovely magic in those words.  
It's a pity their meaning is so dim.<sup>70</sup>

Faced with the consequences of his involvement, John Simon accepts them for himself, but not for his friend.<sup>71</sup> There is a propinquity in John Simon's acceptance of martyrdom and Penbury's affirmation of this: 'When men set up as symbols, harpist, they must be prepared for treatment which will be rather less or rather more than human.'<sup>72</sup> John Simon does not suffer for himself. But he does not lose hope for Alan, who barely has stifled fears such as Shakespeare's Claudio voices whilst waiting for death.<sup>73</sup> Having achieved a state where he has almost banished hope to live, he has not achieved John Simon's state of being prepared to die:

Let's look on the black side. It's smooth, cosy, and doesn't strain the eyes. I'm trying to be serene and I'm finding the road steep. You're not making things any easier by these doubts and prophesies [that the harpist will be exonerated and set free]. . . . I'm trying my best to smother hope and you go pumping air into the damned thing. I had it within an inch of the last twitch and here it is again mewling like a cat and keeping me awake. For the first time in my life I can't even raise enough wind to tell people to go to hell. Once I could see men as a tribe of quaint and forgivable comedians, but I am beginning to uncover a seam of dull and horrible earnestness in their antics. They really like to be foul; don't they? It's an activity, they put art into it.<sup>74</sup>

The harpist knows when he accepts the freedom offered him that his friend will understand and not mind being left alone.<sup>75</sup> But when he asks Mayhew, "You don't think he'll imagine I'm betraying or deserting him?"<sup>76</sup> he has found himself guilty of betrayal. He has said "I want to live," but when John Simon is dead and he returns, for the last time, to the hill-side tavern, the shadows of all their betrayed dreams give life a different shape: "Nobody's lucky to be alive," he tells Abel.<sup>77</sup> And his words speak the grief he has felt on his way back to Moonlea:



I took the same road back as I had travelled on the way in with Eddie Parr. As I walked through the late autumn wood the sound of my footsteps in the leaves had an eloquent clarity. I heard Eddie's voice, faithfully echoed to the last whimsical syllable in the hollow vessel of my grieving. I heard the voice of John Simon, like the doomed and lovely leaves I trod in its rich remembered rise and fall. I stopped abruptly, leaned against the bark of a larch and wept with a soft obscene abandon into its wise grey roughness.<sup>78</sup>

Despite this, or, rather, because of it, the harpist is able to give comfort, when he comes upon Lemuel Stevens:

At the first sight of me his face showed terror of the least answerable kind and the wish to flee. Then the terror itself fled as if convinced that there could be no more flight for its victim that could lead to anywhere but the very same spot on the circle's edge. . . . and in the chinks of my loathing there stirred a bowelful of compassion for the man and his intensely wasted patch of goodness and delight. I stood by him. His hands grasped my legs and his whole body shook with sobs. I lifted him to his feet, uncurious about the cause of his condition, impressed only by the spectacle of such a complete, perfectly laboured grief, so similar in texture to that which had overtaken me in the wood. I led him forward, gently and without a word.<sup>79</sup>

There is that in the harpist, an immense sensitivity to people, that expresses the good of human nature in very human terms. He is an affirmation of John Simon's dream; and with one unforgettable moment such as this, he annihilates the nightmare of an Orwellian world, of "a boot stamping on a human face--forever."<sup>80</sup> But John Simon, who came too soon,<sup>81</sup> is dead; and so is Isabella, who never lived.

Exemplified in Jackie the Jumper and All Things Betray Thee is Gwyn Thomas's condemnation of what society has done to the experience of physical love. The harpist is bewildered by Helen Penbury's engagement

to Lord Plimmon, a man whom she does not love;<sup>81</sup> and by her ability to control her passionate response to her being, a response that has met his own:

The gate yielded behind her. We entered the garden. A few yards from the gate there was a gently sloping turfed bank. We lay upon it. Our hunger for each other filled the night. Our passion swung into the deliberate beat of the tear-ecstasy of the hymn singers who were still at it below. We scorched every shadow beneath the trees.<sup>82</sup>

He is puzzled that John Simon and Katherine have restrained their love for the sake of her husband, who loves her as would a child, for he has remained a child "long after the years of manhood have come."<sup>83</sup> To Isabella, Katherine is a woman "without shame": "They say there is some kind of magic about her, but I was never able to see it, being shielded by decent thoughts."<sup>84</sup> To Mr. Bowen, the minister of the new chapel, John Simon is guilty not only of turning the workers against the masters, but also of turning Katherine into an adulteress: "Mr. Bowen says that even if John Simon had not been guilty of poisoning the hearts of the foundry hands and setting man against master, that what he has done to poor Davy Brier would have been enough to set the brand of Cain upon him."<sup>85</sup> The truth is far otherwise. Had Katherine been the "bitch" she is called, she and John Simon would have done what the harpist believes they should do: gone away together. Loyalty to Davy has tethered their impulses.

In A Few Selected Exits and A Welsh Eye, Gwyn Thomas writes of his own paradoxical state of mind: one in which the early influence of the

chapel's stern attitude towards sex has an inhibiting effect upon an exuberant, vibrant personality and a keen, perceptive mind.<sup>86</sup> In relating the historical and legendary background to All Things Betray Thee, and the circumstances leading to Jackie the Jumper--with which he was "glad to give the Merthyr Riots another run for their skeletal money, and to project, through the Jumper himself, a brand of sexiness that would have [his] elder brothers and sisters, puritans to a man, leaving the theatre flanked by ushers"<sup>87</sup>--he writes:

. . . my mind came back to where it abidingly belongs: South Wales. I wanted a play that would paint the true face of sensuality, rebellion and religious revivalism. . . . I wanted a theme that would illustrate the curious seesaw of passivity and defiance in human life. . . . The urge to exult and love at odds with the compulsive wish to geld and part. . . . Time and again one would have the feeling that disgust and love had reached a climactic tumescence. . . . Preachers of an operatic force and brilliance: harmonized hymns of a plangency to wash away all the rocks of grief and the grimaces of thought. . . . Often leaving the chapel after an interminable sermon and six rousing hymns . . . one would have an ache for sensual relief in some shape or form that would have bleached our elders' bowlers if they had truly known how perverse are the tides of piety in the minds of the younger sectaries. But they had us firmly held in their loved and heavy chains. We must never fall below the level of their revelations, sunlit by the word of God and kept spinning by their own athletic terrors.

Our night was full of their hurt, bewildered eyes. All delights of sight or touch were to be shunned as part of the world's fallible and fissile truss of fleshly comforts. We had had the golden assurance of an everlasting non-human love. . . . Then, in answer to every wave of libertarian fumbling, would come a wind of evangelism. . . . And I, magnetized by both factions, jumped like a grasshopper, back and fore between the charms of sin and that of redemption. Whether the cause was earthly insurrection or heavenly salvation, I was always one of the leading banner-bearers. . . . My bardic name was ambivalence.<sup>88</sup>

Beneath the self-mockery, the gusto, and the spell of words that captures the uncurious acceptance and the insatiable inquisitiveness, the undaunted

effrontery and the immaculate innocence of childhood, is the trenchant comment on the predicament of generation upon generation of chapel-going Valley people. Through the opposition of Jackie the Jumper and his uncle, and through the delineation of Isabella and the wasted consummation of her Bowen-bound chastity, Gwyn Thomas demonstrates with intense sensitivity the alienation of man from his own sex. And the emotional discomfort evoked by the ribald mirth for the wicker drawers Isabella fashions for Lemuel is for the harsh truth it has exposed. Gwyn Thomas's profound concern is that of the poet Rainier Maria Rilke:

Why are we not set in the midst of what is most mysteriously ours? How we have to creep round about it and get into it in the end; like burglars and thieves, we get into our own beautiful sex, in which we lose our way and knock ourselves and stumble and finally rush out of it again, like men caught transgressing, into the twilight of Christianity. Why, if guilt or sin had to be invented because of the inner tension of the spirit, why did they not attach it to some other part of our body, why did they let it fall on that part, waiting till it dissolved in our pure source and poisoned and murdered it? Why have they made our sex homeless, instead of making it the place for the festival of our competency? . . .

A churchman would point out to me that there is marriage, although he is not unaware of the state of affairs in respect of that institution. It does not help either to put the will to propagation within the sphere of grace--my sex is not directed only towards posterity, it is the secret of my own life--and it only, it seems, because it may not occupy the central place there, that so many people have thrust it to the edge, and thereby lost their balance. What good is it all? The terrible untruthfulness and uncertainty of our age has its roots in the refusal to acknowledge the happiness of sex, in this peculiarly mistaken guilt, which constantly increases, separating us from the rest of Nature, even from the child, although his, the child's innocence . . . does not consist at all in the fact that he does not know sex, so to say--"but . . . that incomprehensible happiness, which awakens for us at one place deep within the pulp of a close embrace, is still present anonymously in every part of his body." In order to describe the sensual appetite we should have to say: Once we were children in every part; now we are that in one part only. But if there were only one among us for whom this was a certainty and who was capable of providing proof

of it, why do we allow it to happen that generation after generation awakens to consciousness beneath the rubble of Christian prejudices and moves like the seemingly dead in the darkness, in a most narrow space between sheer abnegations!?<sup>89</sup>

Penbury and Luxton have repressed their sensual responses; Lemuel's mistaken sense of guilt is rooted in Isabella's sense of sin, in a deceptive moral cloak for the perverted sublimation of the life-force that is itself stimulated by religious fervour and negated by spiritual ecstasy. Isabella is awakened by Bowen;<sup>90</sup> but her desires move in the darkness of an illusory virtue that is a total abnegation.<sup>91</sup> It is her husband she buries beneath the weight of Bowen's prejudices, and it is he who moves in the darkness of her sublimated passion, "in the most narrow space between sheer abnegations." At the tavern, Lemuel's submerged grievance and his abused sex swell and break the ice in which Isabella has contained them. Floss provides the "incomprehensible happiness of a close embrace;" but it is fulfilment fraught with furtive embarrassment: she is an outcast of society, which ensures that, through her, sex is made homeless. Even the will to propagate is negated in Isabella: sex is not suffered even within the ethic of the marriage vow of duty and the explicit permission to propagate in fulfilment of God's purpose, and its implicit instruction that the function of holy wedlock is to bless the procreation of children, thereby making sex sublime and placing it within "the sphere of grace." When Isabella called Lemuel an animal and "dedicated herself to the chaste life,"<sup>92</sup> she underlined the fallacy of human puritanism. For Lemuel, the marital bed would have been a "sphere of grace," but for Isabella it could not be so since she regarded his need

as an animal urge. She has "poisoned and muddied his pure source," and has chilled it in a belt of her own dead force. In the darkness of her ignorance, Lemuel's deprivation, in terms of sexual fulfilment, was to cause him to lose his way: there was a very powerful human imperative to seek an outlet for his misery; and to turn that misery into profit. Such men become the tools of those whose moral deviation is fortified by their power over their victims, and Lemuel is used by Plimmon and Radcliffe. Victim of the power politics which harnessed his frustrations with the promise of advancement to compensate for his defeated passion, Lemuel is manipulated by men in whom burns the frost-chilled passion of Isabella's frigid soul:

'Penbury and Radcliffe will help you. They'll be grateful to you, Lemuel. You've helped them a lot in all this profitable butchery that they've just completed.'

'I don't want their help. . . . I was never much at home with them, harpist, honest to God. Often I felt sick, grasped in their warm strong hands, used, used, used, sick as I often felt with Isabella in the night, cold, cold, getting kicked and slapped for them to line their bit of dark with gold.'<sup>93</sup>

When the harpist meets him for the last time, Lemuel is in that state of emptiness that is receptive to a new force. He has been forced to deny his own sexual needs, and has gravitated towards another source of fulfilment. In resisting the latter, he is drawn back to the centre of his being, to rescue his sex from the edge of the circle and let it "occupy the central place" it once held, when "the days locked together and made a kind of daisy chain."<sup>94</sup> As Rilke says: "He who resists withdraws himself forcibly from the attraction of one centre of power, and

he may, perhaps, succeed in leaving the field of its activity, but beyond it he finds himself in emptiness and has to look round for another force of gravitation to attract him."<sup>95</sup>

Helen's cool self-control and Isabella's practising chastity conceal on the one hand a passion that is stimulated by the thought of violent death<sup>96</sup> and on the other an avid desire to experience the "immorality" of sex by imagining it in others. Helen demonstrates the erotic arousal sought by the Roman ladies through the spectacle of the gladiators: Isabella that of the voyeur:

' . . . but as far as [John Simon is] concerned any place out of Moonlea is a good place for him.'

'But not for that bitch Katherine. She'll miss the great hot body of him.'

'That's a pagan statement, Mrs. Stevens. You shock me.'

'Oh, I didn't mean anything wicked by it, harpist. You ask Lemuel. I've got a mind like snow. He's said so many times. You'll never find the devil's mark between these four walls.'

'Keep trying. It's not so bad.'

I looked at her. Her face was moving to a morbid rhythm. Some elemental shoots were breaking through the stone hard surface that she and Lemuel had laid down upon their lives, upon their allotment of diligent desolation.

'Tell me, harpist,' she said, dragging her words out, 'is it true what they say, that Davy has nothing of the man about him at all, that she sickened of having always a sleeping man at her side and that is why she rushed in an adulterous fashion to the arms of John Simon Adams?'

'I'm only there for a short space. I only talk to Davy. I don't look him over for flaws. I'm ignorant about these things. Men and women could be after each other in the open manner of cats and dogs, and I have an inkling that they would be no worse off than they are now. I don't like the look of you when you speak about these things. What kind of well have you and Lemuel been crouching in to give you such thoughts as those. How would you like it if I asked you what kind of a performer Lemuel is. It's all right. I won't press for an answer and there's no need for you to totter into a faint.'

'You're disgusting, harpist, disgusting. Lemuel Stevens and I have led the cleanest lives in Moonlea.'<sup>97</sup>

Isabella's dream is to return to Tudbury with a successful husband. Lemuel's advancement will restore her in the estimation of those like her mother who believe that in marrying a man "poorer than a church mouse, with nothing but his character," she, the daughter of the "richest butcher in all Tudbury," has "married beneath [her]."<sup>98</sup> And Lemuel, profiteering from the national wheat crisis and the desperate plight of the workers who can not afford the price of his bread, sees that advancement within his reach as repayment for his willing services as an informer. It is, as John Simon has said: Lemuel is adept at betraying, but is blind to the betrayal of himself. It is not until he sees that the dream of prosperity was a self-betrayal that he recognizes the truth of what he has done to others, and the full extent of what has been done to him. There is a light of awareness in his darkness--as painful as that he has been instrumental in bringing to others:

'You think people make a choice. There is no choice. Your roof is stripped off; you've got to get out of the rain. Your food is torn away; you can't hire out your stomach. . . . I tell you, harpist, there is no choice. There is the innocent rear of the people as they nibble their fertilized meadow and there is the shod foot of the smart ones who kick them into a more meagre pasture. . . .'

' . . . there must be ways of making meadows eternally secure and contriving freedom for the body and sustenance for the guts. But here you are more helpless than ever.'

'You're wrong, Alan,' said John Simon. 'Here in Moonlea and places like it the people for the first time are not quite helpless. . . . Their collective hand is big enough to point at what is black and damnable in the present, at what is to be wished in the future. . . .'

'There'll be no change in them. They will endure dumbly here as they did elsewhere, a kind of walking dung that doesn't even insist on the traditional privilege of being carried to the furrow.'

'The light gets stronger, Alan. . . . When the gutted villages first spewed their people out into the iron towns, either they were numb with misery or excited by the jingle of the ironmaster's



shillings and they had little chance to marvel at the anguish of their slashed root. Now the numbness has worn off; the excitement is wearing away. They are looking around. They know from the feel of their every day that they are well within the doorway of a changed world.<sup>99</sup>

Lemuel's efforts to advance Penbury's patronage, his hope that the ironmaster would convert his shop into a truck shop, his desire for wealth, have been false dreams; and he wants no further part in the bleak landscape his eyes see on opening. Isabella's dream is founded on the illusion that a life of self-restraint, "chronic and without end or palpable solace,"<sup>100</sup> is a guarantee of direct access to the almighty and a bonus in Tudbury en route. The glimmer of awareness that comes to Lemuel on the night the harpist accompanies him to attend Plimmon's celebration of his engagement to Helen Penbury is the first understanding he has of his betrayal:

They've blinded me. Penbury, Bowen, Isabella, they've blinded me. The bloody Samson of Moonlea. That's me, harpist. A blind, deluded bloody Samson.<sup>101</sup>

The shadow of Bledgely that dwarfs the puny Lemuel is the harpist's nightmare ghost who walks with them in the woods.<sup>102</sup> But Lemuel's envy of Bledgely's muscles, whilst it allows him to see how Isabella is mastered, does not reveal to him that in Bledgely's shark-like look, his steel-sharp mutilated hand, his savage strength, his predatory cruelty, Isabella, afraid yet fascinated, is face to face with the reflection of her own mutilated soul.

In Plimmon's engagement to Helen, the daughter of an industrialist, there are intimations that this is a misalliance--he, too, has chosen a

mate who is beneath him--and that he has had hopes of a marriage that would have "brought him near the throne."<sup>103</sup> But, as with Isabella, Helen's response to a man whose strength matches her own, will give both the fulfilment they desire for senses that are stimulated by the smell of human blood. She has betrayed her capacity to live in harmony with the natural world in which the harpist first found her.

The harpist has been made aware of the corrupting influence of industrial society. With desolation has he relinquished his dream of happiness, the dream he had held on to even when it was repeatedly betrayed. As Helen Penbury tells him, he never will be able to escape the remembrance of his experience, nor will this allow him to return to his erstwhile sanctuary of harmony.<sup>104</sup> As he climbs away from Moonlea, ascending the same path that had led him there, he looks back and sees "the house of Penbury, big, smiling and living with light," and, in answer to the thought that had foreshadowed his experiences,<sup>105</sup> he walks away from Moonlea, with the memory of betrayed dreams bringing him back, even as he had lingered on the last hill to look down into the valley of all his awakening: "I turned, walking away from Moonlea, yet eternally towards Moonlea, full of a strong, ripening, unanswerable bitterness, feeling in my fingers the promise of a new enormous music."<sup>106</sup>

Irrespective of genre, All Things Betray Thee is a significant novel. It is also a beautiful work. The harpist, whose understanding of human suffering is that of the wise fool, the tragic clown, who finds an answering anguish in the gaoler, who perceives the pain of those, like Penbury, who have crumpled like dead leaves in the wind, is

delineated with a mastery that makes him unforgettable. His clown's humour, like Gwyn Thomas's description of Floss Bennett, reveals his innate pity for the human predicament. In Alan Hugh Leigh, the author has captured and made permanent the shadows of all our broken dreams; and has affirmed man's capacity to fulfil the infinite experience of living true to his being. He is what Rilke says of Richard Dehmel; and his artist's response, as Rilke says of Dehmel's, is "great, strong as a primitive instinct; it has its own unyielding rhythms in itself and breaks out of him as out of mountains."<sup>107</sup> And just as, for Alan Leigh, the mountains are the best thing that we have, so he is the best that we have in mankind. Soon, his music will speak the mute dreams of all who have died and live.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WHEELS OF THE JOURNEY

The tramway climbs up from Merthyr to Dowlais,  
Like the slime of a snail over a slag heap;  
Here of a time was Wales, and now  
The ruins of cinemas and rain on tips that  
grow no more;

. . . . .  
. . . the sorry waste  
Of the refuse of chimneys and vain child-bearing  
Have drowned the stars beneath the slime  
of the dole.

--Saunders Lewis

The threads of Rhondda's turbulent past run through the literature of Gwyn Thomas. Like the canal and the Taff Vale railway which run the length of the valley from Merthyr to Cardiff docks, linking the mining towns and villages along the valley and on the hills, the threads are interwoven, linking this, the place of his childhood, with the whole of human experience:

Those Rhondda days are, for me, for ever bathed in brilliant light; the tumult of political enthusiasms, the white-hot oratory of the people's paladins, the festivals of folk singing and hymn singing in the vast chapels, moving groups on the hillsides at night . . . their echoes can still fill my mind with an intense creative excitement. Then the hill-walks across to Llanwonno, or over to the Dimbath, the Beacons to the north, pulling us towards an even wilder solitude than we had ever known; and the Vale of Glamorgan to the south, tempting us to an ordered placidity which it would benefit our souls to cultivate. And between these two poles of attraction the fermenting disquiet of the Valley streets, ringing with every note of pain and laughter contrived since man's beginning. In that small territory of land and feeling lay the whole world's experience. The years of study and experiment have driven convenient lines of communication through it; they have not enlarged its frontiers, nor enriched the texture of its earth.<sup>1</sup>

With the opening of the Rhondda coal mines and increased migration into the valleys, the population climbed from 3,000 in 1861 to 17,000 in the next census. Villages like Pantywaun<sup>2</sup> came into being with the haste given to putting up the Ty-un-nos<sup>3</sup> of long tradition; mining towns like Pontypridd and Aberdare were "grafted on to an ancient market place;"<sup>4</sup> and in all these villages and towns, from Ebbw Vale at the head of the valley to Aberbeeg and Cwm to the south, winding terraces "like petrified meringue, twirled out of plumb by the twists and turns of the hillsides,"<sup>5</sup> led steeply down to the pits.

Despite the Trade Union Act (1871) and the Eight Hours Act (1909), working conditions in the deep mines continued to be dangerous and the miners were not protected against the drastic reduction of wages. Industrial unrest continued. During the strike of 1910, rioting in Tonypandy,<sup>6</sup> with soldiers and Metropolitan policemen quelling the mob, heralded a winter of fermenting discontent. In 1913, The Miners' Next Step established the hostility of miners for employers by advocating the adoption of all methods that would reduce out-put and thereby ruin the coal-owners. The disaster at Senghenydd pit when 439 lives were lost added a searing bitterness to the seething unrest. It was the eve of the Great War; it was the year of Gwyn Thomas's birth.

During the war and for a number of post-war years, industrial production was accelerated in the coalfield. But the reliance upon the demand for Welsh coal and the "entire dependency of south Wales on the basic industries of coal, iron, steel and tin-plate"<sup>7</sup> were to be the cause of unrelieved hardship in the years of the post-war slump. In

industrial Wales, particularly the mining valleys, the contemporary Anglo-Welsh authors were growing up; in Swansea Dylan Thomas was learning to obscure his Welsh accent, at the insistence of his father, who in this resembles Gwyn Thomas's character, the teacher, Mr. Rawlins:

Mr. Rawlins it is who selects the pieces to be read and the boys to read them. Spencer and I were chosen for this job at the beginning of the year but Mr. Rawlins took one listen to our delivery, turned pale at the thought of paganism being spread into every corner and raved about the uncouthness of our intonation. He snatched the Bible from us: . . . The trouble with Mr. Rawlins is that he has been against the Welsh accent ever since he attended a series of week-end schools with the Drama League . . . and particularly he does not like the accent of the fringe in connection with Bible readings, on which he puts great stock, being a lay preacher and an out-board motor on such bodies as the Y.M.C.A. He thinks that to get the full flavour of holiness from these readings the voice of the reader should be delicate, refined and Churchy. So he started a great campaign against the Celtic lilt and broad vowels. The vowels of Spence and myself are so broad that we have to be tapped lightly on the back of the neck to get them past our lips. We love broad, uncunning, accepting sounds and when we get started we fill up with vowel and, if sound were gas, we would be afloat in no time at all. And our lilt is so fierce that when Mr. Rawlins put us through a trial trip with a passage from Isaiah running down adulterers that gave us every chance of letting it rip without meaning to cause the adulterers any unease he stopped us in disgust and told us that he could not decide whether the mess we were making of it was just lilt or pure oratorio.<sup>8</sup>

In Gwyn Thomas the lilt has never been obscured. But theirs is one tongue of the Dragon; and theirs are two voices of Wales.

The youngest of a family of twelve, all Welsh speaking, Gwyn Thomas was born into a world dominated by the colliery, with its smoking stack and two great shaft wheels spinning endlessly as they worked the steel cage that carried the coal trucks and colliers to and from the sunless streets a half mile or more into the womb of the earth. The wheels

of the journey<sup>9</sup> were turning, hauling coal from the coal-face to the pit bottom to feed the demands of war, and to aid European post-war recovery. But the years of hunger had begun for many Rhondda families: accelerated mechanization in industry and agriculture acutely increased unemployment and kept wages at a minimum. This was the time of Gwyn Thomas's early childhood. It was a time

when the whole region seemed to be teetering on the edge of violence. The swift decline of economic power after the First World War had given a spearhead of fanatical decision to the vague, evangelical socialism and syndicalism that had formed the South Welsh political idiom since the beginning of the century.

Even around my cradle I seemed to detect angry fists and raised voices. The miners and their masters had elected to tear the entrails out of each other. About this there was nothing new. For a hundred years the valleys had been given over to industries that were brutally dangerous and dirty, with repression and revolt glaring at each other like imbecile twins. My gripe-water was flavoured with chopped pamphlets. As a pre-sleep tactic, my father would let me stroke a slight lump on the back of his head. This, he claimed, had been caused by some ruffianly cossack of a constable who had broken his truncheon on my father's pate during the Tonypandy Riots.<sup>10</sup>

In 1921, a three-month stoppage in the mines aggravated the bargaining position of South Wales in the highly competitive arena of world-trade: "Markets shrank as conflict in the coalfield grew."<sup>11</sup> As if to dispel "the great sense of wonder and stillness that fell upon [the Rhondda people],"<sup>12</sup> and in anticipation of riots,

some Whitehall Napoleon dispatched a force of infantry, the Yorks and Lancs, to nip insurrection in the bud and protect the rentiers and virgins of the land from spoliation. The soldiers were small, unsoldierly and amorous fellows. Copulation thrived and in our boyish games among the ferns, tripping over lovers and the attendant troupe of telescope-toting voyeurs became a fixed hazard. Often one would see a passionate Lancastrian being harangued by one of the

miners appealing to him not to exhaust utterly the local supplies of warmth and to revert, for pity's sake, to the role of running dog of imperialism.<sup>13</sup>

Throughout the 1921 Strike, the younger children were fed in soup-kitchens.<sup>14</sup> Five years later, Gwyn Thomas was at the County School and, like Eurona in The Alone to the Alone,<sup>15</sup> was not eligible for the charity dispensed to children at the local school:

Our earliest sexual stirrings were shadowed by so consistent a hunger that for years to come the zone's libido had a stammering tongue. The strike, begun in late spring, did not end until the autumn. The weather was flawless. Every day opened and closed like a great flower. The valley slipped back to its primal calm. The hillsides were murmurous with groups talking, singing, gambling with buttons or pins.<sup>16</sup>

And then came the street processions of bandsmen dressed for carnival and playing their instruments, gazookas, an instrument hardly known outside Rhondda and South Wales, and drums.<sup>17</sup> Gazooka--a short novel based on the author's radio play of that title--is possibly the most representative of Thomas's writing, displaying, as it does, his humour and insight, his sensual, lyrical word-music, and the delineation of characters who speak with his own engaging lilt and ease, and who belong to the Rhondda, even as does he. Emerging from the story is the range of his humour. Gazooka reveals his ability to see the pathos of his comic characters and the absurd aspect of a painful situation. The ingenuity of the story, with situations as ridiculous as a farce, has yet an underlying sadness that comes to the fore as the people walk homewards across the fern-topped hill. The surface comedy moves toward the harmony



of a shared experience, a deeper insight. He presents a comic vision of the Welsh unemployed that evokes a smile for their clownish antics and pity for their precarious plight. The characters derive colour, vitality from their struggle against poverty. But there is no self-pity in the author's social protest:

My eyes are full of the wonder they knew in the months of that long, idle, beautifully lit summer of 1926.

. . . No smoke rose from the great chimneys to write messages on the sky that puzzled and saddened the minds of the young. The endless journeys of coal trams on the incline, loaded on the upward run, empty and terrifyingly fast on the down, ceased to rattle through the night and mark our dreams. The parade of nailed boots on the pavements at dawn fell silent. Day after glorious day came up over the hills that had been restored by a quirk of social conflict to the calm they lost a hundred years before.

When the school holidays came we took to the mountain tops, joining the liberated pit-ponies among the ferns on the broad plateaux. That was the picture for us who were young. For our fathers and mothers there was the inclosing fence of hinted fears, fear of hunger, fear of defeat.

And then, out of the quietness and the golden light, partly to ease their fret, a new excitement was born. The carnivals and jazz bands.

Rapture can sprout in the oddest places and it certainly sprouted then and there. We formed bands by the dozen, great lumps of beauty and precision, a hundred men and more in each, blowing out their songs as they marched up and down the valleys, amazing and deafening us all. Their instruments were gazookas, with a thunderous bringing up of drums in the rear. Gazookas: small tin zeppelins through which you hummed the tune as loudly as possible. Each band was done up in the uniform of some remote character never before seen in Meadow Prospect.<sup>18</sup>

Here, in Meadow Prospect, we see the spirit of Rhondda: the humour spiced with pain that overcomes defeat. It is a satiric humour, directed against the prevailing social order; and it is exemplified in the motion debated by the philosophers of Meadow Prospect in the Discussion Group at the Library and Institute: "The shadow of the Boy Scout, with all the

attendant ambiguities of his pole lies too heavily on British society and politics."<sup>19</sup> The shadow over Rhondda is the element of pain that heightens the comedy: the humour of Cynlais's efforts to win the race is an emotional mitigation of the valley's deprivation. Gwyn Thomas describes the agony of the English-speaking industrial man who has been alienated from his Welsh heritage, dispossessed by his Welsh-speaking countrymen, and now is betrayed by the industrial world which called him into being, claimed him, and rejected him.

In Gazooka we see demonstrated the kinship ties amongst the people; ties that relate to the integrated family community that once obtained. Beneath the comedy of the carnival, and the rivalry amongst the competing bands, lies the need for individuality, and for the expression of that individuality. In Meadow Prospect, industrial recruitment, as elsewhere, has been alien to individuality: for individuality leads to migratory habits which are inimical to the assembly-line continuity of industrial progress. Out of the fervour and shared experiences of the carnival a new experience unites the people: it is a link with the past; it is the product of human experience:

At the carnival's end Gomer and Cynlais said we would go back over the mountain path. . . . Some kind of sadness seemed to have come down on us. It was not a miserable sadness, for we could all feel some kind of contentment enriching its dark root. . . . As we watched the weird disguises, the strange, yet utterly familiar faces, of Britannias, Matadors and Africans, . . . we knew that the bubble of frivolity, blown with such pathetic care, had burst for ever and that new and colder winds of danger would come from all the world's corners to find us on the morrow. But for that moment we were touched by the moon and the magic of longing. We sensed some friendliness and forgiveness in the loved and loving earth we walked on. For minutes the silence must have gone on. Just the

sound of many feet swishing through the summer grass. Then somebody started playing a gazooka. The tune he played was one of those sweet, deep things that form as simply as dew on a mood like ours. It must have been 'All Through the Night' scored for a million talking tears and a basic disbelief in the dawn. It had all the golden softness of an age-long hunger to be at rest. The player, distant from us now, at the head of the long and formless procession, playing it very quietly, as if he were thinking rather than playing. Thinking about the night, conflict, beauty, the intricate labour of living and the dark little dish of thinking self in which they were all compounded. Then the others joined in and the children began to sing.<sup>20</sup>

The carnival has achieved a re-adjustment; the shared experience has led to harmony; and the principle of laughter has overcome defeat. The people are at one with the past and secure in their kinship with one another. And if the serenity is evanescent and the element of self-mockery a discordant note, it is because the years had grown dark and sardonic, and moments, such as this, must be protected. The human heart protects itself from renewed pain and disappointment by satiric humour; by humour directed against itself:

The strikes left South Wales gutted and stricken. It is still difficult to assess the mind of Wales without reference to these outrageous collapses of the social framework. We saw lunacy established among us as an apparently normal stable companion. We saw, but we didn't quite believe. The experience left our imagination with a perpetual tilt towards the sardonic. Even in the current effervescence of new industry, the last product to be definitely marketed will be confidence. The geology of remembrance is damnably deep and will need to wait overlong for its final textbook. It will prove to be more insolent and unyielding than the rocks and destructive bubbling filth of this eroded and ambulant clinker. And legend has made our particular case more than usually complicated. Ever since the great battles in the North and Midlands of England that sent us haring towards Cardigan Bay, we have felt that east of Chepstow, Ross, Shrewsbury, stood a baleful and violent moron as ready to clobber us with penury in this century as he was to do it with battle-axes in the time of the Welsh princes.<sup>21</sup>

Social man is defined by his rôle in society, industrial man by the job that he does. In Wales a man's name, nickname, is derived from his characteristics or his work, his idiosyncrasies or the place of his birth. In the Rhondda, the influence of anglicization on the Rhondda Welsh dialect has led to colourful and humorous nicknames; and Gwyn Thomas has demonstrated this practice with typically Welsh skill. In Gazooka we meet the auctioneer, Erasmus John the Going Gone; "that cantankerous and aged imperialist," Georgie Young the Further Flung; Teilo Dew the Doom, who "early had come under the influence of Carlyle and tight velveteen trousers;" Willie Silcox the Psyche, "the greatest tracker in the valley of those nameless beasts that roam our inward jungles;" Mathew Sewell the Sotto, "that specialist in the head voice;" and, amongst others, Gomer Gough, "known for his addiction to chairmanship as Gough the Gavel."<sup>22</sup> It was this facility that gave Lewis Lewis, a haulier by trade and libertarian by reputation, the nickname Lewis yr Heliwr, which has the meaning of his nickname in English, Lewis the Huntsman. It is as if the loss of identity in industrial man is finding compensation in an ancient custom. These voters who people Gwyn Thomas's Rhondda possess individuality, an individuality that makes each of them a 'character' in the social sense. He invests them with individual characteristics, each with his own identity, many to become familiar acquaintances in subsequent tales. Through them he mirrors the aspirations, struggles and endurance of an alienated people. Like Uncle Edwin, Edwin Pugh the Pang, "who operate[s] as an exposed compassionate nerve on behalf of the whole species,"<sup>23</sup> Gwyn Thomas does not ask compassion

for himself; rather does he, like Pugh the Pang, demonstrate "an assertive hope in man."<sup>24</sup> That his characters are articulate, that they voice their thoughts, emotions, philosophy and passion with the vitality of their author is no accident. The Rhondda miner's intellectual interests have been noted by strangers to the region,<sup>25</sup> as has his ability in self-expression. As Gwyn Thomas said in a radio interview with Glyn Jones:

The people among whom I grew up spoke with a boisterous artistry. On certain levels of deprivation, life and speech cease to be cautious and hedged-in. Life in the valleys when I was a boy was a precarious and disquieting thing which encouraged an amazing vitality on people's tongues. We talked endlessly. That was one way of keeping up our spirits in a universe that did not seem very encouraging. A cracked world and a love of the poets gave us all the spiritual incentive we needed. If we lacked sixpence for the pictures we could always float on a sea of metaphor in a session of high Socratic debate under a lamp-post in Porth Square or outside the Tonypandy Empire. Our imaginations had a ferocious quality. They roamed through our cosmos like hungry wolves, free to feed on whatever they fancied, finding nothing to make them fall back into a reverent hush.<sup>26</sup>

And it is from Wales and the Welsh sermon that this power of philosophic discussion and verbal vitality stems:

The great dynast of preachers shaped our soul and established the rules of our not inconsiderable rhetoric. And behind the preacher has always stood the image of the powerfully literate ploughman and miner who have given to our working people an impressive and articulate dignity. That is why the Eisteddfod cuts so deep into our social earth. There is not a single artist in Wales today who, in his earliest years, was not made more aware and communicative by the cult of self-expression developed by the teeming vestries of our valleys.<sup>27</sup>

Gwyn Thomas's unemployed voters, these 'Johnnys on the Dole',<sup>28</sup> seek self-definition in a world which denies their existence. The

wheels of the hauling cable at the pit-head have stopped turning; the wheels of the journey have fallen into silence:

Long before the great depression of 1930, Rhondda was a valley where men were starving. . . . The evil of unemployment reached its climax that year [1926] and the next when it was estimated that in Mid-Rhondda some eighty per cent of the people were living on unemployment insurance, public assistance, or the old age pension.<sup>29</sup>

In the early thirties, when the men of Rhondda marched in protest to London, the valleys held their pain, a living, pulsating thing that made the silence hurt. And out of the pain of unfulfilled yearning grew a dedication to the dream of "a new dimension of dignity and freedom"<sup>30</sup> for the children born "at the hub of darkness and lacerations."<sup>31</sup> Even as the poet, who "carries the load of all our stricken and mutilated lives, and seeks, through intensity of expression, to bring restitution to those who have been too cruelly denied the gifts of beauty, wisdom and dignity,"<sup>32</sup> the children were to be burdened with their parents' dream of academic achievement as the escape-route from industrial entrapment:

The whole of my boyhood saw a vast cult of hatred directed against such brutalizing antics as pit-labour. The Grammar Schools were seen as escape shafts out of the tunnels of the proletariat, and high literacy was the North Star that was to guide us finally out of the night. Contempt and kicks awaited the boy who failed to make the 11-plus grade or who faltered in his march to the university. The mark of Cain was on the boy who, through mental slowness or indolence, slipped into the penumbra of shop work or the authentic shadow of the mine. Book-learning was to be the key to the New Jerusalem, and the average earnest miner saw heaven not so much in terms of release for himself from scars, hazards and petty pay, but a tidy collar and clean hands for his sons. My father carried this kind of faith so far that he forbade us to engage in any useful manual activity that might have led us into the ranks of the artisans.<sup>33</sup>

In the valleys, the people knew, as did Shakespeare's Fluellen, that, "it is not so good to come to the mines."<sup>34</sup> They knew that "there [was] always a little blood on the moon in the economic life of this zone."<sup>35</sup> But the children, who wore themselves "wild and bandy-legged"<sup>36</sup> on the hills, for whom the black tips and patches of subsidence held no horror, and for whom the promise of a pit strike held the promise of excitement, as did the floods after particularly heavy rain,<sup>37</sup> came to realize that their parents' stress on passing the scholarship examination to the Grammar School was, as Gwyn Thomas says of the stress on coal, "a deadly, paralysing truss."<sup>38</sup> In A Hatful of Humours he writes:

There were 10 of us in my village for whom he [the teacher of the scholarship class] had the highest hopes. We were like brothers in our rhythm of mood, movement, desire. For all the years we spent in the primary school we assembled at the same spot in the back lane and walked together to school.

Mr. Napier was convinced that nothing would ever disturb our unity. He was certain that not one of us would fail. He scraped our lives down to a bare bone of academic dedication. . . .

On a morning of black-rimmed majesty the headmaster read out the examination results. Five of us failed. Five of us passed.

On our first morning in the county school the five of us who had been chosen met our rejected companions at the same spot in the back lane. Our brand-new satchels glowed like a new repellent dimension.

We walked down through the town. We reached the bridge beyond which lay the county school. We raised our satchels in farewell and our five companions turned and made their way upward to the primary school. Mr. Napier fell in behind them in mournful dignity.

At that moment I felt the whole fabric of life tear from top to bottom, and through all the years it has not been truly or finally healed.<sup>39</sup>

In the short story "Not Even Then," Gwyn Thomas captures the essence of the dream and the anguish in the heart of every child on whom is placed the burden of obligation to realize the dream. The boy is the

victim of a conspiracy, first to succeed, and next, having failed, of bitter reproach. "Seeking . . . some refuge further and more assuring," he finds the source of his first known security; but even in fantasy he is rejected. She, his dead mother, would have shared his brother's dreams for him; on her face, too, he sees "the dumb, pale hurt and outrage"<sup>40</sup> of bitter disappointment. The reality of her love for him is the measure of what her dreams would have been. Subconsciously, the boy knows this and experiences the bewilderment and misery of the out-cast, the panic that surges into the void of isolation that comes with the ultimate rejection:

Her face grew further from mine. I threw out my arms to hold her, asking for mercy and patience, crying "Mam, mam, mam," in a breath of anguish that must have made a wind all around the world. Feature by feature, grace by grace, she vanished and with her went the dwelling and the light. The warmth and security had again gone out of life, and I was alone with the pointed, menacing whisper of leaf and water. I was alone in the wood, my wet, stricken face pressed into the bark of an ancient oak.<sup>41</sup>

It is, as the boy knew: "The people who take academic achievement most earnestly" are the Welsh. "With them even the dead get vindictive about it."<sup>42</sup>

But the dream and its fulfilment widened the gulf between Welsh-speaking Wales and the bilingual people of the industrial valleys; between the Rhondda parents and their anglicized children. That Gwyn Thomas recognizes the tragedy of this loss of the Welsh tongue is evidenced by his short story "Little Fury." Miss Ilfra Desmond has learned Welsh "in order to express her emotional kinship with the people who speak it,"<sup>43</sup> and teaches Welsh to a special class:



We were the children of Welsh-speaking parents from whose tongues the language had for some reason vanished. The echoes of the ancient speech stirred in the back of our minds but our lips knew it not. Miss Desmond approached us with a mixture of sympathy and an apostolic urge to repair a great wrong. She had found what we had lost and she was anxious to restore it to us.<sup>44</sup>

The sons and daughters who made the journey away from the industrial past see the alienation and its roots; but the social and economic influences that produced the Anglo-Welsh are irreversible. Social advancement through academic achievement will not erase the fact of human exploitation and deprivation. It is an illusory citadel: for the stones of the keep, the illusions, crumble in the reality of wasted opportunity in living out the dreams of others:

In all the sages of my South Welsh generation I detect an air of something fungoid, a suggestion that the serenity and gaiety which should be the first fruits of prolonged education have been completely left in our contemporary miscarriage of social intentions. . . .

The themes of waste and voluntary self-destruction obsess the great bulk of verbal art. In every human situation, however passionate the mouth's dedication to freedom and compassion, somebody is being put upon, spoiled, wasted.<sup>45</sup>

Culturally and socially alienated, the Anglo-Welsh have no place in traditional Welsh culture, nor in the valleys of their childhood. For: "Unless a man's whole environment changes, his own efforts at drastic alterations will make him a cripple."<sup>46</sup> Son of a collier, Gwyn Thomas experienced to the full the effects of alienation. He was pushed up "a lift shaft of academic grace, from a ghastly underworld to a lighted surface."<sup>47</sup> But "[his] terms at Oxford were from beginning to end a series of spinning alienations;"<sup>48</sup> and his return to Rhondda brought no

reassurance.<sup>49</sup> And yet, this is the place to which he belongs. Always, it is where he returns. Like the harpist, turning to look back on Moonlea, his journey has come full cycle. The wheels of the journey begin and end, here, in the Good Patch.

## CHAPTER V

### LAUGHTER IS THE COLOUR OF SAYING

'Tis no small thing to argue down one minded like a mule,  
Talk wisdom with the wise and yet make jestings with a fool  
And still not show one's self a clown with all one's ridicule--  
My tambourine has silly bells, yet 'tis my earning tool.

--Juan Ruiz

Throughout his work Gwyn Thomas demonstrates the truth that in the face of disaster and defeat human beings are capable of an endurance that is heroic. The heroism of the voters is not epic in scope, classic in structure, nor exalted to a point infinitely removed from the world of pit and chapel. Thomas reveals the loneliness of betrayal, and the tragic-absurdity of man's efforts to ameliorate his suffering, to overcome his defeat. And if the humour of his writing seems to mock his characters' comic antics, it is because the Welsh "have some curious ways of expressing compassion."<sup>1</sup> The value placed on brotherhood and kinship in Welsh society is one that stems from a familial society; and in the Rhondda, the world of the slump developed ties of shared endurance that make Gwyn Thomas one with his voters. Throughout his work is seen "that half-impish, half-angry irony that ran through the thought and speeches of [Aneurin] Bevan."<sup>2</sup> He demonstrates that the principle of laughter and the philosophy of Sancho Panza are essential to combat human defeat, for they allow of an emotional mitigation of deprivation, a re-adjustment to present circumstances.<sup>3</sup> Man comes to terms with his human failure; he does not self-destruct in the agony of its reality.

Thomas's voters, these thinkers and philosophers who sit on the wall discussing life, these clowns who participate in races, carnivals, primitive mining, operas and pageants, these humanitarians whose destitution is no less than that of those whom their efforts attempt to redeem, have an affinity with their creator that binds him to them. His laughter, however wry, combats their human loss; for he knows and shares their pain, and challenges it with self-mockery.

Comedy must be founded on truth and on an understanding of the real value of a character before it can pick out the high-lights. It is only when one thoroughly understands a person that one can afford to laugh at him.

And here I would stipulate another quality that I find indispensable to the comic spirit--that of good nature . . . . comedy is inextricably bound up with kindness. . . . For comedy is bound up with lack of proportion. It is technically dependent on accents of emphasis. It is not concerned with presenting a balanced whole: it consists in sharpening the angles of the complete character.<sup>4</sup>

Gwyn Thomas at once stands outside a character and is at one with him. His vision graphically details every shade, subtlety, significance of the Rhondda microcosm whilst at the same time it looks further and deeper than the little world of the valley. He sees the truth not the comic distortion of the image he presents. He, too, beneath the clown's mask reveals a face of bewilderment. The vivid consciousness that man is neither heroic in the chivalric sense, nor base in the puritan concept is revealed in his awareness of man's first instinct to make the best of misfortune. Sometimes his anger breaks through the comic mask. In stories such as "Oscar," and "Where My Dark Lover Lies," and through the tragi-comic suffering of Omri Hemlock in The World Cannot Hear You, the

compassionate laughter he evokes barely conceals his anger that men can be so betrayed. The clown's mask cracks and his humorous exaggeration of people like himself, like Onllwyn in "Thy Need," the family in The Keep, like Omri Hemlock and Floss Bennett, becomes a serious comment on the reality of human betrayal.

When the clown's antics to escape the cage of reality reveal his inability to function within the cage, laughter becomes painful; and the clown's fears and the hopelessness of his predicament cause laughter to give way before feelings of pity and grief for the plight of the clown. A paradox: foolish, yet valiant; pathetic, yet possessed of that indomitable will to overcome the loss to his humanness, he is motivated by the desire for a future based on a mythical dream and is betrayed by an irreversible industrial past and a present materialism. The harpist's dreams are betrayed by the machinations and manipulation of the people, and by the sacrifice of freedom for technological advance. In Point of Order the councillor's efforts for the people of his ward are betrayed by "a league of corrupt craftsmanship"<sup>5</sup> as ruthless as the moving, mountainous tip, that "symbol of the . . . mutilated past,"<sup>6</sup> Always there must be a scapegoat for those whose frustrations find expression in "the rich actionable pastures of spoken malignancy."<sup>7</sup>

Rarely does Gwyn Thomas allow his innate compassion and charitable good humour to be overcome in the delineation of character. Sylvester Strang evokes sympathy even though he exemplifies the arrogance of social investigators who went to the Rhondda between 1926 and 1939 to observe the people in their poverty. As Thomas states in A Hatful of Humours,

"There is something disquieting in any society where one set of human beings can be introduced to another set with either curiosity or repugnance."<sup>8</sup> Thomas takes the image of the place where he was born and the people who are his own and presents it with humility, for he is imaged there. And if his art succeeds, it is because the people, with all their imperfections, are invincible; and it is laughter that makes them so:

People tell me there are comic undertones in even my most sombre imagery. I can easily believe it. Humour is a sense of the incongruous or absurd, an aggravated sense of the contrast between man's divine promise and his shambling, shabby reality. There was enough incongruity between the way my people lived in the Rhondda of my early manhood, and the way in which they would have wanted to live, to have nourished at least ten thousand humorists of the first rank. But of course about the humour produced from such a situation there will be hints of the most extreme savagery; and the artist into whose spirit it may have entered too deeply will find his main task to be the rendering of his anger bearable to himself and acceptable to others.<sup>9</sup>

In "Oscar" there is a hint of extreme and savage anger. There is also an extraordinary understanding of human nature. In the tragic-absurdity of the situation we see that her sexual need is stronger than the widow's desire for revenge. Sexually aroused by the man responsible for her husband's death, the widow's passion of grief and hate is transmuted into an ecstasy of fulfilment that had been denied her for so long. Here in the mining valleys there were many such women "who were short of food and reasons for living."<sup>10</sup> There were girls like one of the Macnaffy girls from Brimstone Terrace:

Her face was tired, thin and savage. . . . She was the sort of element who has been preached against ever since preaching started. . . . Her voice was soft and dark, which was a great feature of most women in the valley, even women who looked as if they were going to

rip you open like this Macnaffy. Voices like cats' backs, the velvet of skin and purr.<sup>11</sup>

Like Floss Bennett, this Macnaffy is an outcast; and whilst both are described with humour, their alienation is no less real than that of the wandering harpist or gypsy.

Antipathetic to the Puritan Ethic, the wanderer is defined as a parasite, a rebel. His refusal to relinquish his identity gives society justification for its persecution: he is a social deviant who will subvert the standards of moral society; a radical libertarian who will stir men to rebel. In his depiction of Floss Bennett, of Peredur and Iolo, of Alan Hugh Leigh, Gwyn Thomas is not suggesting that these people must be understood as social victims, rather is he pointing to the lack of sensitivity on the part of society that subscribes to such "reductive morality."<sup>12</sup> It is not men's frailties that he parodies in his human comedy; it is the cruelty of society's attitude towards them that he satirizes. The World Cannot Hear You and The Alone to the Alone are no less a protest against the government's indifference to and society's contempt for the people of the Rhondda<sup>13</sup> than was Swift's A Modest Proposal for the people of Ireland. But, such is Thomas's wish for appeasement and his reluctance to contribute to "these bundles of contempt and hatred handed about like unwashed laundry,"<sup>14</sup> that when Nemesis comes to characters like Oscar and Picton their end is felt with regret. They evoke anger for their treatment of others, laughter for their comic display; but Thomas does not annihilate their humanity, nor their right to acceptance and life. They, too, dream of a place in the sun.

Thomas's humour, like the poetry of his prose, is passionately individualistic. Morris, in The Alone to the Alone, is drawn with a warmth of delight that does not deny the pathos of his life. It is not the humour of Morris's purple suit and bowler hat that impresses--even though this, it is my belief, is a masterpiece of comic description. It is the sad contrast between Morris's colourless existence, its shabby reality, and the delight it should have been. It took so little to give him pleasure. His dreams, like the clown's, shape his pain; and laughter is the colour of its saying.



## CONCLUSION

### GWYN THOMAS: A WELSH EYE AND AN ANGLO-WELSH TONGUE

The visitor can judge for himself when he meets these small, dark-haired, somewhat Puckish people with their quick physical and mental reactions, their musical speech, and their ready wit. He will find them almost anywhere in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire . . . but more especially in the mining valleys of the Welsh uplands. They themselves are conscious of their separateness, as anyone can understand who is privileged to hear a South Wales miner discourse on the peculiarities of the 'Northmen.'

--W. J. Gruffydd, South Wales and the Marches

There is a saying in Wales, "Cenedl heb iaith, cenedl heb galon": A Nation without language, a nation without heart. The threat to the Welsh tongue which nationalists see in the Anglo-Welsh is understandable if fallacious. Wales is a nation with two languages, both expressing the perceptions of a Welsh vision and the loyalty of a Welsh heart. No one who has heard a Welshman's spoken English can doubt its individuality or its kinship with Welsh idiom and structure. It is Anglo-Welsh that is spoken, not English; and, as Glyn Jones has established by the title of his work, the dragon of Wales has two tongues, both rooted in the heart of Wales.

The Anglo-Welsh writers who emerged from the industrial regions are distinct from their contemporaries across the border. It is to Wales that they owe their outlook, their use of language, their motivation. And if fluency or competence in Welsh have been taken from them, attendance

at chapel and participation in local Eisteddfodau would have developed in them an early response to the Welsh literary tradition: a response that manifested itself in literature dipped in the colour of Welsh saying. The language that they use may have come from the English, but they have made of it a Welsh tongue.

In "Llenyddiaeth Eingl-Gymreig" (Anglo-Welsh Literature), R. S. Thomas appeals to the Anglo-Welsh writers to create literature congenial to the Welsh tradition; to be aware of the beauty and charm of Welsh literature, and to study the characteristics of the Welsh Muse--of cynghanedd,<sup>1</sup> for example. He refers to the tendency of the Anglo-Welsh to give a picture of Wales that creates an impression of a land of coal pits. That these writers have emerged from the pain of an oppressive industrialism, from an experience that is undeniably of Wales, should not prevent them looking back to the rural traditions of a century ago, to what is essentially Welsh in a land that is, for R. S. Thomas, green. He believes that all Welsh writers have a responsibility to the next generation to preserve these traditions and not let them languish, for they belong to the future, that a child may know his country.<sup>2</sup>

The land of pastoral peace is never far from Gwyn Thomas's Welsh eye. He sees "the two faces of South Wales, the man-made face of mighty industries and brutally inadequate townships, and the face of the moorland, wood and field that has changed little except in rateable value since time began."<sup>3</sup> He has a deep love of Wales, but his pacifist philosophy has led to anti-chauvinist<sup>4</sup> attitudes that embrace a refusal to support militant Welsh nationalism and the demand that Welsh be recognized

as the official language. His plea is for an end to the "faction fight between the Welsh-speaking folk of Wales and those from whom the language has been taken."<sup>5</sup> He salutes "the restless, wagging tongue of Cymru, infinite in its guile to survive the calamities of shame and time,"<sup>6</sup> but urges "a more tolerant assessment by the Gorsedd Circle of the need to keep the non-Welsh speaking Celts within the racial fold."<sup>7</sup> And if he rebukes the chauvinism of Welsh speakers, he is no less scathing of English visitors who "talk loudly because they are convinced that we cannot understand."<sup>8</sup>

Like the Spanish poet Ruiz, with whom he has an affinity,<sup>9</sup> Gwyn Thomas's work is inspired with the passionate beauty and lyricism of his land. As Glyn Jones has so rightly said:

. . . Gwyn Thomas's values are very largely Christian, he has invariably the good word for human brotherhood, for love, for compassion, for simplicity as against cynicism, for tenderness as against cruelty, for warm-hearted reasonableness as against violence. And he has a mind to go along with this that uses metaphor as naturally, as abundantly and as persistently as do most of us the cliché, a mind that enlarges and enlivens and decorates, which shoots up all its material as it were into massive and spectacular fountains, and plays upon them always the dazzling illumination of his wit. To me, he is the supreme poet of the industrial valleys, the cyfarwydd of the working class, comic, compassionate, of inexhaustible invention, and of an utterance unequalled among the Anglo-Welsh for its richness, its consistency and its vigour.<sup>10</sup>

In Jackie the Jumper and All Things Betray Thee the symbiotic relationship between revivalism, the rigorous enforcement of moral law and social order, and the exploitation of human resources calmed the querulous and quieted the conscience of authority, whilst the people jumped in unsuspecting ecstasy. The individual who refused to be confined by

institutions and who evaded enmeshment in productive industry, saw, because of his deeper awareness, social and cultural traditions struck at their very root.

Today, as then, the wanderer is an outcast. He is a gypsy, leading a Bohemian life, and "in all the wide world there [is] no longer any place for gypsies, for people who [are] not willing to accept an ordered stable life, to settle down to the squalid routine of organized labour and democratic discipline."<sup>11</sup> The gypsy dreams of "a world in which coolness, slowness and safety [will] take over from the detonating madhouse that we have contrived for our faster liquidation, a world invented by genius for the free sport of idiots."<sup>12</sup> The technological age has regimented society and alienated man from his human bond; but the gypsy, the wanderer, the outsider, for whom there is only contempt and intolerance, have a self-defining integrity that, like that of the minstrel of old, underlines the tragedy of this age of progress "that has made one human being leap in terror from the path of another."<sup>13</sup> Like Alan Hugh Leigh, the gypsy is alienated because of his "refusal to conform with decisions that destroy what a man alone, in the wisdom of his own skin, demands of life."<sup>14</sup>

In writing of his favourite books, Gwyn Thomas says:

Thomas Wolfe's Look Homeward Angel I would choose as the greatest act of poetry in the modern novel. It carries to the highest point of expression two themes that I consider the most fascinating in the whole range of art: The huge poignancy that attends the undoing and death of a large family, and the task of describing the extent to which we are explorers of all the dead hours in which we have left some living part of ourselves.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout his work Gwyn Thomas expresses these themes: he explores "all the dead hours in which [he has] left some living part of [himself]," and through them traces the undoing of the Welsh family and the alienating effects of industrialism and its concomitant, the influx of an English-speaking working class. In the South Wales coalfield, the people saw the loss of their land, their language, their ties of kinship with pastoral Wales, and their individual identity. In this century, Wales has seen the emergence of a new generation: the Anglo-Welsh, and of a passionate, rebellious, humorous generation of Anglo-Welsh writers, whose voice speaks for an alienated people:

We have been mutilated, rubbed to a shabby stump against the rock [of endurance] you mention. Deplore it but don't waste rapture or pathos on it. It's just ugly and will become less so as our grieved and silent legion makes way for a less tolerant and more assertive generation.<sup>16</sup>

There is a poignant irony in Gwyn Thomas's term 'voters,' for these unemployed workers, these 'Johnnys on the Dole,' are powerless to change their economic condition; their enfranchisement has not given them control of policies affecting their basic human needs. The voters of Meadow Prospect and Ferncleft have grown wise to the ways of a universe in which the stress on coal has been a millstone around their necks, and in which man, armed with a machine and an acquisitive urge, has reduced the South Wales valleys of incredible greens to a Special Area of uniform deprivation. The wheels of the journey of industrial progress have travelled into the latter half of the twentieth century leaving in their wake a realm of ugliness and destruction:

The Nineteenth Century did not attack beauty. It simply trampled it underfoot, with the result that our modern democracy is born atrophied, and has painfully to recover that love of significant form which has been one of the marks of civilized man from the Bronze Age until the Industrial Revolution temporarily destroyed it.<sup>17</sup>

The land that was theirs, as Alan Hugh Leigh says of the newly enclosed land of Lord Plimmon's estate, has been appropriated with a ruthless, relentless disregard for its time-honoured possessors:

So this is Lord Plimmon's land. If he bought it, no part of the money was paid to me nor would I have willed the sale. If he fought for it I was not here to see the fighting. Count me out of the agreement.<sup>18</sup>

Their land and their language and their Welsh identity have been taken from them, and they "stand confessed the last, lost nonconformists of an Age."<sup>19</sup> But they are Welsh in the soft consonants of their Welsh-sprung spoken English; and in the loyalty they give to Wales, the Anglo-Welsh have rejected their alienation and established their ties with the aspirations of all their countrymen. As Gwyn Thomas has shewn, in some living part of every Rhondda man there is that sense of kinship, that need to share the pain of others, that give him strength to rise above the betrayal and the ruin of his human dignity.

NOTES

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup>Vide A. L. Rowse, The Expansion of Elizabethan England (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1955), pp. 2 et seq. Rowse insists on the essential reasonableness of the movement to impose the ordered society of the new, Renaissance nation-state on the old Celtic chaos. He argues that although almost always opposed and often suffering set-backs, western expansion was an inevitable "historic" process which resulted in the ultimate betterment of life for the subjugated peoples. Rowse draws such a conclusion from a position of acceptance of the values of western civilization; he does not question the morality of the imposition of an alien culture on an unwilling populace.

<sup>2</sup>Translated by Sir Harold Idris Bell, in his The Development of Welsh Poetry (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 181. Bell notes that Dic Sion Dafydd "is the prototype of the anglicized Welshman, who makes it a point of honour to deride everything Welsh."

<sup>3</sup>Jack Jones, Unfinished Journey (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Welsh Eye (Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Greene Press, 1965), p. 103.

<sup>5</sup>Glyn Jones, The Dragon Has Two Tongues (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1968), p. 53.

<sup>6</sup>Glyn Jones, "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," Taliesin, Vol. IX (Llandybie, s.d.), pp. 50-63.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 50 and 58; The Dragon Has Two Tongues, p. 53; vide the adverse criticism of the Anglo-Welsh in Bobi Jones, "The Anglo-Welsh," Dock Leaves, III, No. 10 (1953), pp. 23-28, in which the author states: ". . . the Anglo-Welsh had to import and adapt their culture from an uninteresting and impoverished England during a period of unhealthy flux. . . ." and "The Anglo-Welsh movement must be prepared to participate actively and consciously in the whole social life of the nation, instead of filching material [from Wales?] and giving nothing in its place" (p. 26); to which Noel A. Jones replied in Vol. IV, No. 11 (1953), refuting the arguments of the former by indicating their faulty logic. An attempt to denigrate Anglo-Welsh activity by the Welsh dramatist and scholar in the field of foreign literatures, John Gwilym Jones, in "No Man's Land," Lookout (publication of the University College of North Wales, Bangor),



(November 21, 1961), p. 4, was rebutted by Meic Stephens in "Crumbs from the Black Swans," Lookout (December 5, 1961), p. 4, who takes the former to task for attitudes incompatible with his scholarship, and who finds the conclusions Jones makes to be untenable; he calls for all men and writers to "resist any attempt to split further the people of our homeland, . . . and not waste time and energy in quarrelling for crumbs." L. Wyn Griffith rejects, unequivocally, the term applied to Welshmen writing in English: "I have been described as an 'Anglo-Welsh' writer. I am nothing of the kind. I am a Welsh-speaking Welshman (need I say so?) who writes in English," in "A Note on Anglo-Welsh," Wales, New Series, I (1943), pp. 15-16.

<sup>8</sup>Glyn Jones, "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," p. 58.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 58. In "The New Anglo-Welsh," Yr Einion ('The Welsh Anvil'), No. 1 (1949), pp. 56-62, Professor Gwyn Jones summarizes his review of the work of Roland Mathias, R. S. Thomas, Gwyn Thomas, Cledwyn Hughes and George Ewart Evans with the statement: "Here are five new authors of promise. Each is sharply distinct from his fellows; no one follows tamely in the track of the earlier Anglo-Welsh" (p. 62).

<sup>11</sup>Glyn Jones, "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," p. 58.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.; vide D. C. Jenkins, Writing in Twentieth Century Wales: A Defense of the Anglo-Welsh. Doctoral Dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1956, pp. 151-170.

<sup>13</sup>David Williams, A History of Modern Wales (London: John Murray, 1950), pp. 292-294. After the General Strike (1926) and during the depression, part of the South Wales coalfield was designated a 'Special Area.' Merthyr and the Rhondda were part of that special area for which new industries were introduced, and from which miners and their families were encouraged to move and settle in the rural Vale of Glamorgan. These attempts to counteract unemployment met with only qualified success. The re-armament programme at the onset of World War II gave work to many who had been unemployed on the dole for fifteen years; vide Jack Jones, Unfinished Journey, p. 291; also H. W. J. Edwards, The Good Patch (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938), pp. 78-87.

<sup>14</sup>William Moelwyn Merchant, "The Relevance of the Anglo-Welsh," Wales, New Series, I (1943), p. 17.

<sup>15</sup>Richard Llewellyn, Richard Hughes, Alun Lewis, Dylan Thomas, and Henry Treece are sufficiently well-known to preclude amplification; Gwyn Thomas's books are published and reviewed in North America; vide Glyn Jones, "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," p. 60, and Saunders Lewis's tribute to Anglo-Welsh poets noted by Keidrych Rhys, in "Contemporary Welsh.

Literature" (ii), The British Annual of Literature, 3 (1946), p. 17.

<sup>16</sup>Vide Merchant, loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Thomas Parry, A History of Welsh Literature, trans. H. I. Bell (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1955), p. 455.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 380.

<sup>20</sup>Gwyn Jones, "Language, Style and Anglo-Welsh," Essays and Studies (1953), ed. Geoffrey Bullough (London: John Murray, 1953), p. 103.

<sup>21</sup>Patrick Skene Catling, "Funny Men," Punch (May 4, 1960), p. 632.

<sup>22</sup>Gwyn Jones, "Language, Style and Anglo-Welsh," p. 106.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Richard Llewellyn, How Green Was My Valley (London: World Books, 1941), p. 319.

<sup>25</sup>B. Ifor Evans, "The Collective Genius of English Literature," I. "Wales," The Author, Vol. LX, No. 1 (Autumn 1949), p. 7.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 8; Glyn Jones, in "Three Anglo-Welsh Prose Writers," Rann, No. 19 (1953), pp. 1-5, reviews the early prose of Gwyn Thomas, whose "scintillating comicality [of situation] . . . unending crackle of metaphors . . . unstanch'd [sic] torrent of comic imagery" (p. 2) make him a humorous writer, but who is a writer, "in spite [of this], . . . to whom the sorrows of the world are sorrows and will not let him rest. He is a writer who takes sides, and his side is that of the poor, the browbeaten, the dispossessed, the underprivileged" (p. 3).

<sup>28</sup>B. Ifor Evans, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup>Glyn Jones, "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," p. 60.

<sup>30</sup>The Dragon Has Two Tongues, p. 36.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 38. Vide also "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," pp. 60-61. Glyn Jones describes the effect of English instruction on children of Welsh-speaking families; of an educational system against which Raymond Garlick writes in "Teaching English in the schools of Wales," The Teacher in Wales (May, 1962), pp. 19-22. Garlick advocates the teaching of

English as a language of Wales, and the teaching of the literature of Wales. Glyn Jones recalls the glorious revelation of this literature when, after he had started writing and publishing in English, he came to its charm and the unfamiliar music of its poetry with an understanding of Welsh that was ragged and uncertain: "Nid oeddwyn i yn eu deall i gyd, wrth gwrs; yr oedd miwsig anghyfarwydd y cywddau mor swynol . . ." (p. 61). Gwyn Thomas writes in A Welsh Eye, pp. 13-14: "I was one of the Rhondda generation whose language, with an almost malignant ease, had changed from Welsh to English. But the chapel's teaching had remained in Welsh."

<sup>32</sup> John Gwilym Jones, "No Man's Land," loc. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Guy Hunter, South-East Asia--Race, Culture and Nation (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 76.

<sup>34</sup> Gwyn Jones, "Language, Style and Anglo-Welsh," p. 107; Raymond Garlick, op. cit. states: "Anglo-Welsh writing may be of Wales in several senses. It was written by people who were--by birth, or family, or circumstances--of Wales, and sometimes its full significance will be readily apparent only to readers who are of Wales themselves. What it communicates, however little connection with Wales it may at first appear to have, will also be of Wales in the sense that it is being presented by a sensibility which (by reason of heredity or environment, or both) is not 'of England,' though it shapes the English language to its own purpose. The reader or critic in London or New York tends naturally to be more conscious of this than his counterpart in Wales--who, precisely because he is 'of Wales,' is much less aware of it" (p. 21).

<sup>35</sup> Gwyn Thomas, A Few Selected Exits (London: Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 1968), p. 208.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 211-212.

<sup>37</sup> Aneirin Talfan Davies, "A Question of Language," Yr Einion, Vol. V, 1953, p. 20.

<sup>38</sup> Gwyn Thomas, The Dark Philosophers (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1947), p. 178.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>45</sup>A Few Selected Exits, pp. 138-139.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 161.

<sup>49</sup>Rainer Maria Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1954), p. 29.

## CHAPTER I

- <sup>1</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Welsh Eye, p. 103.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 18.
- <sup>3</sup>Leonard Cottrell, Seeing Roman Britain (London: Evan Brothers Ltd., 1956), pp. 102-104.
- <sup>4</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 103.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 105.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 106-107.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 107.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 167.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 173.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 135.
- <sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 140.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 167.
- <sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 173.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 173-174.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 173.
- <sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 135.
- <sup>17</sup>In H. W. J. Edwards, The Good Patch, p. 38.
- <sup>18</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 9.
- <sup>19</sup>Vide Thomas Phillips, Wales: A Physical, Historical and Regional Geography, ed. E. G. Bowen (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1957), p. 360; H. W. J. Edwards, pp. 41-43; A. Trystan Edwards, Merthyr, Rhondda and "The Valleys" (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1958), p. 24; Brinley Thomas, "The Growth of Industrial Towns," Vol. I, "Modern Wales" Wales Through the Ages, ed. A. J. Roderick (Llandybie: Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd., 1960), p. 60.

<sup>20</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 160.

<sup>21</sup>A Few Selected Exits, pp. 208-209.

<sup>22</sup>In Thomas Phillips, Wales: The Language, Social Condition, Moral Character, and Religious Opinions of the People, considered in Relation to Education . . . (London: John W. Parker, 1849), pp. 577-578. Hywel Dda succeeded to the government of South Wales at the beginning of the tenth century and inherited Powis Land, a large part of North Wales. He caused all laws and customs of the country to be reviewed by a convocation of twelve learned men who convened at "Y Ty Gwyn ar Daf" (The White House on the Taf; now known as Whitland). By command of William IV of England the ancient laws and institutes of Wales, of which the laws of Hywel Dda were the chief content, were printed under the direction of the Commissioners on the Public Records of the Kingdom. The Preface to this publication contains observations on the accurate definition which characterized Welsh laws, and on the enlightened civilization from which they emerge: a civilization which esteemed the arts, sciences and religion, and which achieved a degree of refinement in its "acquaintance with political institutions . . . concern for the interests of commerce . . . and the accurate definition of crimes and offences, and the just adaptation of penalties and punishment, . . ." See also Eiluned and Peter Lewis, The Land of Wales, 3rd ed. (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1949), pp. 11-15. The authors give a picture of ancient Wales derived from the laws of Hywel Dda and it is clear from his depiction that the countryside of Wales has retained its isolated communities and semi-nomadic way of life. It is ironic that the rivers that encouraged the settlement of Celtic monasteries were to be equally necessary to the ironmasters and that in the late eighteenth century iron men puddled where the monks had paddled and prayed.

<sup>23</sup>David Williams records that in 1783 and 1784, Henry Cort at Fontley in Hampshire and Peter Onions at Cyfartha, simultaneously invented a method of stirring molten iron to remove its carbon impurities "and then passing it through rollers at welding heat." This method of making wrought iron, called 'puddling,' came into widespread use in the coalfield, and for this reason was known as 'the Welsh method' (p. 187). It follows that the workers engaged in puddling were called 'puddlers.' In 1856, Bessemer's invention of converting iron into steel rendered puddling out of date and puddlers redundant.

<sup>24</sup>A Welsh Eye, pp. 144-145.

<sup>25</sup>Leonard Cottrell, Seeing Roman Britain, p. 132.

<sup>26</sup>Gwyn Thomas, "By That Same Door," Ring Gazooka and Other Stories (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1957), p. 23.

<sup>27</sup>Gwyn A. Williams describes the ironmasters' control as one which

"enmeshed their employees in a truck system which reproduced, even in detail, the industrial serfdom of thirteenth-century Flanders;" in "The Emergence of a Working-Class Movement," Wales Through the Ages, Vol. II, ed. A. J. Roderick (Llandybie: Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd., 1960), p. 141.

<sup>28</sup>A Welsh Eye, pp. 145-146.

<sup>29</sup>Vide David Williams, A History of Modern Wales, p. 146; H. V. J. Edwards, The Good Patch, p. 131.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 4. For an understanding of the powerful rhetoric of the Welsh Nonconformist sermon and its debt to the Calvinistic-Methodists see B. Ifor Evans, p. 7, and H. W. J. Edwards, pp. 136-138.

<sup>31</sup>Thomas Phillips, Wales . . ., p. 108; pp. 144-145.

<sup>32</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 174.

<sup>33</sup>Phillips, Wales . . ., pp. 144-145.

<sup>34</sup>Vide Benjamin Disraeli, Sybil, Vol. I (London: M. Walter Dunne, 1904). The novel depicts the idle futility of the lives of many of the aristocracy, and the harsh futility of that of the working poor. Disraeli's upper-class loungers exemplify the attitudes discerned in reports in the Times of the 1830's and demonstrate the ambiguous position of the labouring poor who were regarded by the upper class as being some form of creature rather between those of the human and the animal. It is of interest to note Disraeli's advocacy of a cooperative movement for the benefit of the workers, and his enlightened attitude toward them compared to that of the aristocrats he caricatures so satirically. The secret ritual of the Union meeting with its attendant solemnity and awe is an ordeal for the initiate. The denunciations (p. 315-316) are of interest when considered in the light of the fear instilled by the Scotch Cattle who ranged the South Wales coalfield intimidating all workers who succumbed to the masters' efforts to suppress Trades' Unions. The secret oath administered to Michael Radley (Dandy Mick) gives an insight into the binding nature of such oaths (pp. 317-318). Mrs. Gaskell considers the injustices suffered by the workers in Mary Barton (London: Bliss Sands and Co., 1898). Mrs. Gaskell's indictment against conditions which reduced the able-bodied workers to worn and listless and diseased creatures who would have difficulty in finding employment if they were associated with Chartism or a Trades' Union (p. 99), indicates clearly the cycle of cause and effect: the appalling working conditions (p. 74) and phenomenal food costs (p. 75) leading to human suffering which found expression and relief in rabid politics (pp. 75-76), which in turn led to increased victimization. This is the theme of Charles Dickens, Hard Times (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). This work was first published in 1854. Bounderby and Gradgrind represent the reactionary forces.

intimidating the workers, whilst Slackbridge, a representative of the radical element, embodies an attitude equally inimical to the independent thinker. In Dickens' portrayal of industrial society, Stephen Blackpool is victim of both powers in the industrial dispute. Vide II. iv; II. v. For a description of Coketown, a mining town, vide I. v. As in Mrs. Gaskell's Mary Barton, the characters postulate attitudes that demonstrate the author's point of view toward the extreme positions they represent. And it is not the purpose, here, to add to the body of commentary--sanguine or polemical--that these industrial novels have attracted.

<sup>35</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 33.

<sup>36</sup> H. J. Laski, "The Decline of Liberalism," The Quest for a Principle of Authority in Europe 1715--Present, ed. Thomas C. Mendenhall, et al. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 369-370.

<sup>37</sup> In Eilund and Peter Lewis, The Land of Wales, p. 54.

<sup>38</sup> Gwyn A. Williams, "The Emergence of a Working-Class Movement," p. 143.

<sup>39</sup> The Land of Wales, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Jack Jones, Unfinished Journey, p. 51.

<sup>41</sup> The account of the trial as reported in the Times, London, August 9, 1831, p. 4, reveals that the Quaker ironmaster, Price, convinced of Dic Penderyn's innocence of the charge of wounding Donald Black, secured corroborating evidence at Merthyr and sufficiently persuaded Melbourne of the possibility of a miscarriage of justice for the latter to grant a stay of execution of one week until August 13th. The Times expressed the hope that there would be a reprieve; and the belief that the ends of justice already had been secured.

<sup>42</sup> A Few Selected Exits, pp. 147-148. Further information concerning the Merthyr Riots and the martyrdom of Dic Penderyn, vide the Times (London), June 6, 1831, p. 2; June 9, p. 5; June 11, p. 3; August 9, p. 4. A. Trystan Edwards gives an account of the events in Merthyr, Rhondda and "The Valleys", pp. 90 et seq.

<sup>43</sup> All Things Betray Thee, p. 194.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>45</sup> A Few Selected Exits, p. 147.



## CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>Gwyn Thomas, Jackie the Jumper; in Plays of the Year, ed. J. C. Trewin, Vol. 26 1962-1963 (London: Elek Books Ltd., 1963), p. 217.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>6</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Few Selected Exits, p. 146.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 225.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 216; Gwyn Thomas, A Few Selected Exits, p. 148.

<sup>12</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 234.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 222-224.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>17</sup>Marmontel; quoted in Maurice Sand, The History of Harlequinade, Vol. I (New York; London: Benjamin Blom, Inc., s.d.), p. 64.

<sup>18</sup>Jackie the Jumper, pp. 235-236.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 254-255.

- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 250-251.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 239 and p. 241.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 230.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 224-225.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 279.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 278.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 273.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 283-284.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 290.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 252 and p. 253.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 255.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 252.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 272.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 285.
- <sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 295-296.
- <sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 259 and p. 261.
- <sup>39</sup>Vide Phillips, Wales . . ., pp. 144-145.
- <sup>40</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 260.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 272 and p. 274.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 260.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 250-251.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid., pp. 271-272.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

- <sup>47</sup>Thomas Mann, The Magic Mountain, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Knopf, c. 1927), p. 691.
- <sup>48</sup>Heinrich Böll, The Clown, trans. L. Vennewitz (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), pp. 138-139.
- <sup>49</sup>Jackie the Jumper, pp. 285-286.
- <sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 231.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 258-259.
- <sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 262; p. 255.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 269; p. 285.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 289; also p. 264; vide The Land of Wales, p. 28. Increased poverty resulted from the removal of grazing rights when hundreds of thousands of acres of common land were enclosed by Act of Parliament. And new ownership of properties led to the enclosure of land and rivers that had been shared freely with the people by the Welsh landowners.
- <sup>55</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 297.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 272.
- <sup>57</sup>F. R. Leavis, The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad (London: Chatto and Windus, 1948), p. 231.
- <sup>58</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 294.
- <sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 244; vide pp. 294-295.
- <sup>60</sup>George Frederic Watt represented "Justice" and "Hope" blind-folded.
- <sup>61</sup>Jackie the Jumper, p. 272.
- <sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 293 et seq.
- <sup>63</sup>It is unlikely that either the Sheriff or the Colonel would have been able to speak Welsh; and certainly, not sufficiently to communicate abstractions. Luxton must have had more than a smattering of Welsh; and one is reminded of John Guest, who learned Welsh to communicate with his workers, and Charlotte Guest, who translated the Mabinogion into English. The sons of Sir John Guest were given Welsh names, as were the daughters of Luxton. Articulate and passionate in the expression of their fervour, Jackie and his uncle speak the tongue of the people and communicate in the language of emotional appeal. Gwyn Thomas has demonstrated the powerful appeal of Non-conformity for a people who have been alienated from the land, traditional order, and peaceful coexistence.

### CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup>Gwyn Thomas, All Things Betray Thee (London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1949), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 123. The Celtic name Alan means harmony; Hugh, Danish in origin, means mind, spirit, soul; and, by taking a liberty with the spelling of the harpist's surname, lee in Welsh is cysgod gwynt, which translated means wind shelter--since Plimmon and Radcliffe are the wind (p. 241), and the people are as helpless as leaves in the wind (p. 205), it is of interest to see the significance, intentional or not, of the characters' given names. I would, here, draw attention to the appropriateness of the following: John Simon; Katherine; Floss (Florence); David; Lewis; Lennie (Leonard); Agnes; Isabella; Claude; Benny (Benjamin); Jacob--in the light of Bartholomew's fear that Jacob might supplant him; Eddie (whether an abbreviation of Edward, Edmund, or Edwin). Wilf, who is resolute for war; Bartholomew, who once was but no longer is 'a war-like son'; Helen, who is emblematic of the ambivalence of light and darkness, of the paradox of darkness in light, light in darkness, and symbolic of the infinite cycle of night and day, and who remains an enigma, like the design in her room of veiled women (p. 281): Is she in harmony with life? (p. 283). By adapting to the new age, is she bringing light into darkness? By making an expedient marriage, is she motivated by a wish to put a brake on Plimmon's hate and carry light into his darkness?; and Richard, who is the antithesis of his name: an iron king he might be, but he is not strong and powerful in the sense that Crawshaw was; on the contrary, he is the polarity of his projected image, are names that reveal the duality of human nature and the irony of the development of one trait when forces are inimical to the other. The Welsh word Pen means head; chief; end; summit; supreme. The English meanings of an enclosure, or to enclose, or to be enclosed are also significant.

<sup>8</sup>Loren Eiseley, The Immense Journey (New York: Random House Inc., 1946), p. 125.

<sup>9</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 123.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-9; it is relevant to note that Radcliffe and Plimmon are compared to drovers (p. 278), an analogy of bitter significance to the speaker, Penbury.

<sup>11</sup>Vide Edward A. Macdowell, "Folk Song and Harmony," from Critical and Historical Essays; in Composers on Music, ed. S. Morgenstern (U.S.A.: Bonanza Books, 1956), p. 315. Note the following:

When our playing began, I listened attentively to Felix. I initiated nothing, thickening his melodies and bordering his climaxes with a periodical harmony. He played well, and as I grew to sense his moments of greatest stress and urgency in his progress through a tune, I made my support more overt, edging him on with a touch here and there into a passionate excitement over the considerable beauty we were making with our strings. . . . We played for ten minutes, the playing of my companion becoming more assured and eloquent with every bar. . . .

' . . . Like the music?'

'Lovely. You make a good shadow for Felix's light. My father [Richard Penbury] likes it too. He says it's made him feel better than he's done for months. He's taken quite a fancy to you' (pp. 85-87).

<sup>12</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 318.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>18</sup>Rainer Maria Rilke, "Sonnet 13," Sonnets to Orpheus, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1942), p. 95. This composition, in the Second Part of the Sonnets, was written in March, 1922.

<sup>19</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 243; 245; 247; 248; 256.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 247-250.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>24</sup>Vide Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Romaunt of the Rose," Works, ed.

F. N. Robinson, 2nd edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), lines 4479-4498.

<sup>25</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 14-15.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 205; vide pp. 227; 237.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-44.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 191; pp. 141-142; pp. 224-225.

<sup>37</sup>Lionel Rubinoff, Human Nature and the Pornography of Power, Seven Radio Talks on CBC FM Network Program, March 20-May 1, 1967, Program 1, p. 9.

<sup>38</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 211; vide pp. 215; 223.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 189-192.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 191-192.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>46</sup>Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents, trans. Joan Riviere. The International Psycho-Analytical Library, ed. Ernest Jones,

No. 17 (London: The Hogarth Press Ltd., 1930), p. 85. Note the characteristics of Captain Spencer in All Things Betray Thee.

<sup>47</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 189.

<sup>48</sup>Rubinoff, Program 2, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>50</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 189.

<sup>51</sup>In A History of Welsh Literature, pp. 408-413.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 401.

<sup>53</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 141-142.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 226-227.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 221-223; 231-233; 252-253; 257; 271-272; 279; 208-209.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 66-72; 77; 113.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 143-145.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 277-278.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 312-313.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>66</sup>Rubinoff, Program 6, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 223.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 279.

<sup>73</sup>Measure for Measure, III.i.116-132.

<sup>74</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 233-234.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 255.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., pp. 255-256.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 315.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 313.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 314.

<sup>80</sup>George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), p. 215. A useful comparison may be made between O'Brien's discourse on the nature of power (pp. 210-216) and the discussion carried on by the representatives of the establishment at Richard Penbury's home (pp. 90-93). It should be noted that both novels were published first in 1949.

<sup>81</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 162.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 23. The name Isabella, which means 'consecrated to God,' is particularly apt for the two women, the one in Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, the other in this novel: for both are dedicated to an ideal of rectitude and chastity, and both are fervent in their religious persuasion. Both see virginity as the gateway to the Lord. Shakespeare's cloistered Isabella is about to renounce the world and become "a thing ensky'd and sainted;" Gwyn Thomas's has renounced the flesh and is called by the harpist "a saint."

<sup>85</sup>All Things Betray Thee, p. 24.

<sup>86</sup>A Welsh Eye, pp. 174; 35.

<sup>87</sup>A Few Selected Exits, p. 147.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., pp. 143-145.



<sup>89</sup>Rainer Maria Rilke, "The Young Workman's Letter," Vol. I. Selected Works, trans. G. Craig Houston (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions Books, 1960), pp. 75-77.

<sup>90</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 138-139.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., pp. 147; 154.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., pp. 138-139.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 317.

<sup>95</sup>Rilke, "The Young Workman's Letter," p. 74.

<sup>96</sup>All Things Betray Thee, pp. 130-131.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., pp. 124-125.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., pp. 131-132.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-32.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., pp. 272; 276; 284.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 318.

#### CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup>Gwyn Thomas; quoted in Welsh Short Stories, ed. Gwyn Jones (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. xii.

<sup>2</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Welsh Eye, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup>Literally, the 'one-night house.' A traditional practice based on the belief that freehold ownership of unenclosed land could be claimed by erecting overnight a roof and a chimney smoking from a fire on the hearth. The boundaries of the squatter's property were established by the distance in all directions from the doorway of his house that the squatter could throw a hammer. Vide Glyn Jones, "Price-Parry," Welsh Short Stories, ed. Gwyn Jones, in which Mati Ty-unnos takes her name from the tiny cottage which is her home--this, too, being traditional in practice. Notice the descriptions of Mati's cottage (pp. 109-127).

<sup>4</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 154.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 154; Gwyn Thomas, The Stranger At My Side (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1954), p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>David Williams, A History of Modern Wales, p. 287.

<sup>8</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Frost On My Frolic (London: Victor Gollancz, 1953), pp. 10-11.

<sup>9</sup>Coal taken from the coal-face is loaded on to a tram which is hauled by pit-horse to the junction of the tramway where it is linked to others to make a 'journey': twenty-five trams coupled together. From this can be understood the dual significance of Jack Jones's autobiography, Unfinished Journey.

<sup>10</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 139-140.

<sup>12</sup>The Stranger At My Side, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup>A Welsh Eye, pp. 15-16.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>15</sup>Gwyn Thomas, The Alone To The Alone is published in America under

the title Venus and the Voters (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948).

<sup>16</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup> The Good Patch, pp. 160-161.

<sup>18</sup> Gwyn Thomas, Gazooka and other Stories (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1957), pp. 64-65.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 127-128.

<sup>21</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 18.

<sup>22</sup> Gazooka, p. 65.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>24</sup> The Stranger At My Side, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> In Search of Wales, pp. 247-249.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in The Dragon Has Two Tongues, p. 109.

<sup>27</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 27; vide The Good Patch, pp. 135-138; B. Ifor Evans, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> The Good Patch, pp. 84-87.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>33</sup> Gwyn Thomas, "The Keep," Plays of the Year, Vol. 24, ed. J. C. Trewin (London: Elek Books, 1961), pp. 124-125.

<sup>34</sup> Henry V, III. ii. 61.

<sup>35</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 139.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> A Few Selected Exits, pp. 29-31; Gwyn Thomas, The World Cannot Hear You (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952), pp. 198-205.

<sup>38</sup> A Welsh Eye, p. 139.

<sup>39</sup> Gwyn Thomas, A Hatful of Humours (Letchworth, Herts: The Schoolmaster Publishing Company, Limited, s.d. [1965]), pp. 15-16.

<sup>40</sup> Gwyn Thomas, "Not Even Then," Gazooka, p. 62.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>43</sup> "Little Fury," Gazooka, p. 132.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 133-134.

<sup>45</sup> The Keep, pp. 125-126.

<sup>46</sup> A Hatful of Humours, p. 68.

<sup>47</sup> A Few Selected Exits, p. 55.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

## CHAPTER V

- <sup>1</sup>Gwyn Jones, ed. Welsh Short Stories, p. xiii.
- <sup>2</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 144.
- <sup>3</sup>Vide Max Eastman, Enjoyment of Laughter (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1937).
- <sup>4</sup>Athene Seyler and Stephen Haggard, The Craft of Comedy (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1943), pp. 10-11.
- <sup>5</sup>Gwyn Thomas, A Point of Order (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1956), p. 139.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 206.
- <sup>7</sup>A Hatful of Humours, p. 136.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 67; vide The Good Patch, pp. 173-174.
- <sup>9</sup>Gwyn Thomas, cited in The Dragon Has Two Tongues, pp. 109-110.
- <sup>10</sup>Gwyn Thomas, "Oscar," Where Did I Put My Pity? Folk Tales from the Modern Welsh (London: Progress Publishing Company, Ltd., 1946), p. 16.
- <sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 17.
- <sup>12</sup>Vide Kingsley Widmer, The Literary Rebel (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965), p. 83.
- <sup>13</sup>A Few Selected Exits, pp. 53-54.
- <sup>14</sup>A Point of Order, p. 204.

## CONCLUSION

<sup>1</sup>Cynghanedd means "harmony," and patterns a line by the echoing of both consonantal and vowel sounds. In cynghanedd sain there is alliteration and rhyme within the line; in cynghanedd lusg there is internal rhyme only; and in the third division, cynghanedd gytsain, there is multiple alliteration. In simple terms, it may be defined as 'word music.'

<sup>2</sup>R. S. Thomas, "Llenyddiaeth Eingl-Gymreig," Y Fflam (Bala) No. 11 (Awst [August] 1952), pp. 7-9.

<sup>3</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup>A Few Selected Exits, pp. 53-54; A Point of Order, pp. 98-99.

<sup>5</sup>A Welsh Eye, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-33.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>9</sup>A Few Selected Exits, pp. 58-59.

<sup>10</sup>The Dragon Has Two Tongues, pp. 122-123.

<sup>11</sup>A Hatful of Humours, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 82-83.

<sup>16</sup>Gwyn Thomas, The World Cannot Hear You, p. 22.

<sup>17</sup>From The Times Literary Supplement, London, April 25, 1924, in G. M. Trevelyan, History of England, p. 683.

<sup>18</sup>Gwyn Thomas, All Things Betray Thee, p. 69.

<sup>19</sup>Gwyn Jones, ed. Welsh Short Stories, p. xiii.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Historic, Geographic, Social and Economic Background

- Borrow, George. Wild Wales, Its People, Language and Scenery, intro. Cecil Price, ed. J. B. Foreman. London: Collins, 1955. First published London, 1862.
- Cottrell, Leonard. Seeing Roman Britain. London: Evan Brothers, Ltd., 1956.
- Edwards, A. Trystan. Merthyr, Rhondda and "The Valleys." London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1958.
- Edwards, H. W. J. The Good Patch, intro. Arthur Bryant. London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1938.
- Garlick, Raymond. "Teaching English in the Schools of Wales," The Teacher in Wales, May, 1962.
- Griffith, [Llewelyn] Wyn. The Welsh, 2nd ed. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1964.
- Jones, Jack. Unfinished Journey. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938.
- Lewis, Peter and Eiluned. The Land of Wales, 3rd ed. London: B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1964.
- Lindsey, Jack. Arthur and his Times: Britain in the Dark Ages. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1959.
- Morgan, Gerald. The Dragon's Tongue, The fortunes of the Welsh language. Narberth: The Triskel Press, 1966.
- Morton, H. V. In Search of Wales. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1932.
- Phillips, Sir Thomas. Wales: The Language, Social Condition, Moral Character, and Religious Opinions of the People, Considered in their Relation to Education: with some Account of the Provision made for Education in other parts of the Kingdom. London: John W. Parker, 1849.
- Rees, [Sir] J[ames] F[rederick]. The Problem of Wales and other Essays, intro. David Williams. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, s.d. [1963].



Rees, [Sir] J[ames] F[rederick]. Studies in Welsh History, Collected Papers, Lectures, and Reviews, 2nd ed. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1965.

Rowse, A. L. The Expansion of Elizabethan England. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1955.

Trevelyan, George Macaulay. History of England. London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1945.

Wales: A Physical, Historical and Regional Geography, ed. E. G. Bowen. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1957.

Wales Through the Ages, ed. A. J. Roderick, Vol. II. Llandybie: Christopher Davies (Publishers) Ltd., 1960.

Williams, David. A History of Modern Wales. London: John Murray, 1950.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Rebecca Riots, A Study in Agrarian Discontent. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955.

#### Newspapers

Times, London, June 6, June 7, June 9, June 11, June 23, August 9, 1831.

#### Welsh Literary Background

Bell, Sir Harold Idris. The Development of Welsh Poetry. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1936.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Nature of Poetry as Conceived by the Welsh Bards, "The Taylorian Lecture, 1955." Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Welsh Literary Renaissance of the Twentieth Century," Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture, Proceedings of the British Academy 1953. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Evans, B. Ifor. "Wales," in the series "The Collective Genius of English Literature," The Author, Vol. LX, No. 1. London, Autumn, 1949.

Jones, Gwyn. Welsh Legends and Folk-Tales. London: Oxford University Press, 1955.

Llewellyn, Richard. How Green was my Valley. London: World Books, 1941.

Parry, Thomas. A History of Welsh Literature, trans. Sir Harold Idris Bell. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1955.

Rhys, Keidrych. "Contemporary Welsh Literature," (ii), The British Annual of Literature, Vol. 3, 1946.

Welsh Voices, An Anthology of New Poetry from Wales, ed. Bryn Griffiths. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1967.

Williams, Gwyn. An Introduction to Welsh Poetry. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Burning Tree. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1956.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Rent That's Due to Love. London: Editions Poetry London, 1950.

#### Criticism and Background of Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing

Davies, Aneirin Talfan. "A Question of Language," Yr Einion ('The Welsh Anvil'), Vol. V, 1953.

Evans, George Ewart, ed. Welsh Short Stories. London: Faber and Faber, 1959.

Griffith, L[lewelyn] Wyn. "A Note on the 'Anglo-Welsh'," Wales, New Series 1, 1943.

Jenkins, D. C. Writing in Twentieth Century Wales: A Defense of the Anglo-Welsh. Doctoral Dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1956.

Jones, Bobi. "The Anglo-Welsh," Dock Leaves, Vol. 3, No. 10, 1953.

Jones, Brynmor. A Bibliography of Anglo-Welsh Literature, 1900-1965. Thesis submitted for Fellowship of the Library Association, London, 1966.

Jones, Glyn. The Dragon Has Two Tongues, Essays on Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing. London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Three Anglo-Welsh Prose Writers," Rann, No. 19, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Y Llenorion Eingl-Gymreig," Taliesin, Vol. 9, s.d.

Jones, Gwyn. "Language, Style and Anglo-Welsh," Essays and Studies (1953), ed. Geoffrey Bullough. London: John Murray, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The New Anglo-Welsh," Yr Einion, Vol. I, 1949.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. Welsh Short Stories. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

Jones, John Gwilym. "No Man's Land," Lookout (U.C.N.W., Bangor), November 21, 1961.

Jones, Noel A. "The Anglo-Welsh," Dock Leaves, Vol. 4, No. 11, 1953.

Lewis, Saunders. Is There an Anglo-Welsh Literature? Cardiff: University of Wales Guild of Graduates, 1939.

Lloyd, D. Tecwyn. "Dail Y Pren Pwdr," Barn, Rhagfyr [December], 1962.

Merchant, William Moelwyn. "The Relevance Of the Anglo-Welsh," Wales, New Series 1, 1943.

Some Contemporary Anglo-Welsh Writers. Cardiff: City of Cardiff Public Libraries, s.d.

Stephens, Meic. "Crumbs from the Black Swans," Lookout (U.C.N.W., Bangor), December, 1961.

Thomas, R. S. "Llenyddiaeth Eingl-Gymreig," Y Fflam, No. 11, Awst [August], 1952.

#### Works of Gwyn Thomas

All Things Betray Thee. London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1949. [American title Leaves in the Wind].

The Alone to the Alone. London: Nicholson and Watson, 1948. [American title Venus and the Voters].

The Dark Philosophers. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1947.

A Few Selected Exits. London: Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers) Ltd., 1968.

A Frost on my Frolic. London: Victor Gollancz, 1953.

Gazooka and Other Stories. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1957.

A Hatful of Humours. Letchworth, Herts: The Schoolmaster Publishing Co. Ltd., s.d. [1965].

"Jackie the Jumper," in J. C. Trewin, ed., Plays of the Year, Vol. 26 [1962-1963]. London: Elek Books Ltd., 1963.

"The Keep," Plays of the Year, ed. J. C. Trewin, Vol. 24. London: Elek Books, 1961.

The Love Man. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1958. [American title The Wolf at Dusk].

A Point of Order. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1956.

Ring Delirium 123. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1960.

The Stranger at my Side. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1954.

Venus and the Voters. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1948. [English title The Alone to the Alone].

A Welsh Eye. Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Greene Press, 1965. [First published in London, 1964].

Where Did I Put My Pity? Folk Tales from the Modern Welsh. London: Progress Publishing Co. Ltd., 1946.

A Wolf at Dusk. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1959. [English title The Love Man].

The World Cannot Hear You, A Comedy of Ancient Desires. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1952. [First published in 1951].

In addition to the above, Gwyn Thomas was a regular contributor to Punch, 1952-1968. Most of the short stories published under the title Ring Delirium 123 first appeared in this periodical. During the 1960's, Thomas wrote a series of 5,000 word essays for the American publication Holiday. Much of his work has been for television and radio.

### Other Sources

#### Non-fiction

Catling, Patrick Skene. "Funny Men," Punch, May 4, 1960. Contains a review of Gwyn Thomas, Ring Delirium 123.

Composers on Music, An Anthology of Composers' Writings from Palestrina to Copland, ed. Sam Morgenstern. U.S.A.: Bonanza Books, 1956.

Douglas, Wallace. The Character of Prose. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1959.

Eastman, Max. Enjoyment of Laughter. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1937.

Eiseley, Loren. The Immense Journey. New York: Random House, Inc., 1946.

- Freud, Sigmund. Civilization and its Discontents, trans. Joan Riviere. The International Psycho-Analytical Library; ed. Ernest Jones, No. 17. London: The Hogarth Press Ltd., 1930.
- Hunter, Guy. South-East Asia--Race, Culture and Nation. London: Oxford University Press, 1966. Published for the Institute of Race Relations, London.
- Leavis, Frank Raymond. The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948.
- Progoff, Ira. Depth Psychology and Modern Man. New York: Julian Press Inc., 1959.
- Rilke, Rainer Maria. Letters to a Young Poet, trans. M. D. Herter Norton. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1954.
- Rubinoff, Lionel. Human Nature and the Pornography of Power. Seven Radio Talks on C.B.C. F.M. Network, March 20-May 1, 1967.
- Sand, Maurice. The History of Harlequinade. 2 Vols., New York; London: Benjamin Blom Inc., s.d.
- Seyler, Athene, and Stephen Haggard. The Craft of Comedy. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1943.
- Tindall, William York. Forces in Modern British Literature. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947.
- Widmer, Kingsley. The Literary Rebel. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965.

#### Fiction

- Böll, Heinrich. The Clown, trans. L. Vennewitz. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. Works, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957.
- Dickens, Charles. Hard Times. London: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- Disraeli, Benjamin. Sybil: or the Two Nations. 2 Vols. London: M. Walter Dunne, 1904.
- Gaskell, Mrs. Mary Barton. London: Bliss Sands and Co., 1898.
- Mann, Thomas. The Magic Mountain, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter. New York: Knopf [1927].

Orwell, George. Nineteen Eighty-Four. London: Secker and Warburg, 1949.

Rilke, Rainer Maria. Sonnets to Orpheus, trans. M. D. Herter Norton.  
New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Inc., 1942.

\_\_\_\_\_. Selected Works, Vol. 1, trans. G. Craig Houston. Norfolk,  
Conn.: New Directions Books, 1960.

Ruiz, Juan. The Book of Good Love, trans. Elisha Kent Kane; intro. John  
Esten Keller. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press,  
1968.

Shakespeare, William. Complete Works. 2 Vols. New York: Nelson and  
Doubleday, Inc., s.d.