
SUBMITTED FOR: PHD (HISTORY)

UNIVERSITY OF WALES, NEWPORT

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DECLARATION

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

Signed .................................................. (candidate)
Date ____________________________

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

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STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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MAP 1:

The Rev. Edmund Jones (1702–1793), the ‘Old Prophet’ of the Transh, Pontypool, is a fascinating character for many reasons, not least of which is his writing on apparitions, spirits, fairies, and magic in his *Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* (1779) and *Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales* (1780). These works were not merely written for an antiquarian purpose, but rather present a defence of Jones’s deep-seated belief in these spirits’ existence. On the surface, such a belief, professed so late in the eighteenth century, may seem ‘unenlightened’ or atavistic, but far from it, Jones’s belief was consistent with his overarching cultural worldview which was set within and influenced by the environment in which he lived. This study examines that environment in an attempt to understand the contexts and formation of Jones beliefs and writings. It begins by examining the socio-economic changes occurring in eighteenth-century north-western Monmouthshire, focusing on changes in transport and communication, industry and social composition, literacy and the availability of printed word, the medical industry, and systems of charity and welfare; and the impact of these different social elements on the way in which the supernatural was conceptualized in local culture. The second section focuses on Jones’s role as a religious figure involved in the eighteenth-century religious Revival and the state of religion in the area before turning to Jones’s theology and how this impacted on his conceptualization of spirits and their interaction with the mundane realm. The study then turns to the intellectual environment in which Jones wrote and how his works fit with contemporary intellectual trends. Finally, the thesis examines the folkloric content of Jones’s works and the ways in which all of the disparate environmental elements discussed throughout demonstrate themselves in his writings.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has been a product of more than myself, and there are more people than I can remember here who deserve my appreciation and thanks. I would like to begin by thanking my supervisors, Dr Richard Allen and Professor Raymond Howell for their support, encouragement, and assistance. It was Richard who gave me the opportunity to study in Wales, and he who suggested Edmund Jones as a possible area of research; without his patience, guidance, and support, this study would not have been possible.

There have been many academics who have been willing to give their time and energy and to offer advice and direction in this study. I would like to thank Dr Marion Löfler and Dr Catherine Charnell-White at the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth, for their advice and encouragement, Dr Robert Tyler for his help in partially translating Carol James’s thesis as well as direction in locating sources, and Dr Alun Withey, Dr Lisa Tallis, and Dr Juliette Wood for their advice and direction. Special thanks must go to Angus McBlane, whose innumerable discussions and debates with me have greatly helped with the formation of this thesis, as well as my patience and perseverance in writing it. I also must thank the staff and librarians at the National Library of Wales, Gwent Archives, and Cardiff and Newport Public libraries for their assistance and guidance in using their invaluable collections.

Lastly and most especially, my deepest gratitude goes to my family, my parents and grandparents, for their unwavering support (both moral and financial) and faith. A special thanks is reserved for my grandparents, Lew and Dee Tidd who, above everyone, have made this study possible.
CL – Cardiff Public Library

GwA – Gwent Archives

NL – Newport Public Library

NLW – National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
INTRODUCTION

Now the reader may be desirous to know whether I my self have had any experience of apparitions and agencies of spirits, who have produced so many instances of this from others, and have written with some asperity against those who deny apparitions and the agencies of spirits in the world. In answer to this, and to gratify the enquiry, I avow that my experience this way have been very great. Not only in the common way of temptation, but in an extraordinary way beyond most men, and beyond any of the ministers of the word in all Wales. Was I to write all my experiences this way, it would amount to a book of no small size; therefore I shall only write something in the general of my experiences of this sort and relate only some particulars.

Although no source in which he chronicled all of his personal encounters with the supernatural exists, knowledge of fairies and spirits in eighteenth-century Wales would be strikingly lacking without the works of the Rev. Edmund Jones, ‘the Old Prophet’ (1702–1793). An Independent preacher from Aberystwyth parish in north-west Monmouthshire, Jones is best known for his Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth (1779), which contained a notable chapter on ‘Apparitions and Agencies of the Fairies &c.’, and his Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales (1780). Thomas Rees described the latter work as ‘a very curious production, full of very strange ghost stories as no nervous person should read in the night’. These works have provided a source for later work on Welsh folk- and fairy-lore. Wirt Sikes, in his British Goblins: Welsh Folk-Lore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions (1880), used Jones extensively as a source for his section on fairies and Sir John Rhys, in his Celtic Folklore:

1 CL, MS. 2.249, Rough draft of Edmund Jones’s Apparitions of Spirits with additional materials, p. 294
Welsh and Manx (1901), directed any readers curious about fairy-lore in Monmouthshire to Jones’s works. Despite his works’ utility, however, modern historians of folklore have not given much attention to ‘the Old Prophet’. Jones is not mentioned by Guiseppe Cocchiara, who looked at the history of the study of popular antiquities and folklore on a European wide level, nor Richard Dorson, who focused on Britain, nor even Juliette Wood, who focused on Wales. This is possibly because Jones’s intention in writing was not that of a folklorist. Even though Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth was written with an antiquarian purpose in mind, his work on apparitions was motivated by his strong belief in the actual existence of ghosts, fairies, and witchcraft, connected to his religious belief, with the aim of preventing ‘the infidelity of denying the being and apparition of spirits, which tends to irreligion and atheism’. This may seem odd given that Jones wrote in the late-eighteenth century, almost a hundred years later than similar writers, notably Richard Baxter, Joseph Glanvill, and Meric Causabon. However, if this is the case, how did Jones come to believe such things?

This question is not asked incredulously. What factors helped in the formation of Jones’s thought, and how did his belief in spirits mesh with other cultural and religious beliefs and community values? In recent years, historians of the supernatural have begun to turn to areas which have been hitherto underexplored. Most notably, witchcraft historiography has increasingly looked outside its comfort zone of the witch trials to explore the post-witch trial period and focus on nations which did not experience a

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5 Even though the term ‘folklore’ was not coined until 1846, I have used it here and elsewhere to avoid confusion. Dorson, British Folklorists, p. 1.

6 [Edmund Jones], A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales ([Trefeca]: [n. pub.], 1780), title page.

significant ‘witch-craze’. Owen Davies’s groundbreaking *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture: 1736–1951* and Davies and Willem de Blécourt’s *Beyond the Witch Trials*, directed their attention towards the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries to explore how witchcraft and magic continued to be perceived in the absence of governmentally sanctioned prosecution.8 Richard Suggett’s *History of Magic and Witchcraft in Wales* and Lisa Tallis’s PhD thesis, ‘The Conjuror, the Fairy, the Devil and the Preacher: Witchcraft, Popular Magic, and Religion in Wales 1700–1905’, similarly go beyond the witch trial period, but also focus on Wales, a nation underexplored by witchcraft historiography.9 Tallis’s thesis also does not restrict itself to human magical practitioners, such as witches and cunning-folk, but also investigates other supernatural actors, most notably fairies. Indeed fairies and ghosts remain an area under-researched by historians. Works such as Owen Davies’s *The Haunted* and Dianne Purkiss’s *At the Bottom of the Garden* have begun to turn the historian’s attention to the conceptualization of these creatures of the imagination, but fairies in particular remain underexplored by historians with the emphasis being on fairies in Victorian art, literature, folkloristics, and culture.10 Finally, albeit dealing with witchcraft and demonology during the witch trials, Stuart Clark’s *Thinking with Demons* offers a useful approach to the nature of the intellectual belief in the supernatural. Employing a highly structuralist methodology (he describes the title of his work as ‘Levi-Straussian’),11 Clark has explored the relationship of demonology as a system of thought with language, science, history, religion, and politics in the early

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modern period. All of these developments have opened up areas of inquiry pertinent to a study of the Rev. Jones and his works. Jones was a Welsh author writing after witchcraft had been decriminalised, something which he criticized in his *Apparitions of Spirits.* However, his main focus was not on witchcraft but on ghosts, fairies, and other spirits, making historiography which purely or largely focuses on human magical practitioners of limited value in exploring his idiosyncratic beliefs.

Writers have continually produced works on Jones since his death. Significantly, Jones himself is supposed to have written an autobiography of the first fifty years of his life. Unfortunately this has been lost along with other invaluable material written by Jones. According to Thomas Rees, upon his death Jones bequeathed most of his library to his congregation at Ebenezer chapel in Pontnewynydd near Pontypool, and the remainder, including his manuscripts, to a nephew. This nephew did not appreciate his inheritance and sold the papers to a local grocer, from whom only a fraction was rescued by David Thomas. Still extant, in addition to a plethora of sermons, are ten diaries, a two volume ‘Spiritual Botonology’, a large manuscript of Jones’s commentary on various seventeenth-century religious authors, and, importantly, the rough draft of *Apparitions of Spirits* with additional materials on apparitions. While these works are invaluable in understanding Jones and his worldview, they naturally can only give a limited picture relative to what might have survived. The remainder of his library, the portion bequeathed to Ebenezer chapel, has survived and has recently been moved to the National Library of Wales. Comprised of some eighty volumes, mostly seventeenth-century religious texts, these, along with the information in his diaries, begin to show what works he owned and had

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access to, and annotations and other marginalia extant in them allows further insight into
Jones’s mind and opinions. 15

The somewhat haphazard survival and distribution of these primary sources can
cause significant problems in attempting to study Edmund Jones. In particular, a
considerable gap in Jones’s extant diaries from 1739 to 1768 makes it particularly difficult
to gain a full picture of his life and activities. Notably, Jones’s falling-out with Howel
Harris in the early 1740s is not represented, and, as Jones’s correspondence with Harris
does not resume until the early 1770s, a large portion of his preaching activities and
attitudes to his fellow Revivalists is also lost. What diaries have survived, however,
present an invaluable source. They provide insight into his preaching and itinerancy, as
they list, month by month, the places at which he preached and the subjects preached
upon. The diaries also serve as records of the growth and maintenance of his
congregations, as he lists those who have newly entered into communion with him each
year. He has even constructed horoscopes for many of those in his congregations,
including himself, illustrating his interest in astrology, something which greatly
compliments his belief in spirits and the medicinal efficacy of herbs attested to in other
sources. 16 They also offer insight into his economic position, as they record money and
goods received by him as well as money he gave or lent to others. Additionally, books
which he acquired or wished to acquire are listed, along with where or from whom he
received them as well as those which he lent out to others. This gives a fuller picture of his
reading and interests and that of others in his community. He has also, in all extant diaries
after 1768, included a section on the ‘Sayings and doings of Erroneous Men’ which, in
addition to insight into the various faults and follies of his co-religionists, illustrate his
own sense of morality and theology. 17 This commentary on the contemporary religious
environment and other religious figures, is also greatly illustrated by his correspondence

(1975–6), 233–43.
16 NLW, MSS. 7022A, 7023A, 7024A, 7028A.
17 NLW, MSS. 7025–1730A.
with Howel Harris, in which he often advises on the form and nature of revivalism and his
relationship to other revivalists. His diaries also, at times, allude to significant events in his
life, most notably the death of his ‘dear spouse’ on 1 August 1770 which affected him
deeper.\textsuperscript{18} Thus, when the summation of all this invaluable material is viewed, it only
makes more lamentable other diaries’ loss.

Notwithstanding those manuscripts written by Jones which have been lost, those
which survive offer significant insight into his thought and belief, but are often
underutilized, scattered as they are in several libraries throughout Wales. In particular, his
two volume ‘Spiritual Botonology’, held in Newport Public Library, and writings by him
discussing over seventy different seventeenth-century religious writers, held in the
National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, have not been used by the vast majority of
historians and biographers who have written about Jones.\textsuperscript{19} In his ‘Spiritual Botonology’,
Jones discussed over a hundred different herbs and plant, including descriptions of them,
their uses, most notably their medicinal uses, and, importantly, discussing what religious
meaning and significance they represent. In this last faculty (which is the main theme of
the work), insight can be garnered into Jones’s views on the divine and somewhat
typological nature of creation and God’s presence and design in all things.\textsuperscript{20} As such, it is
interesting to read it alongside \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, as it deeply compliments the
worldview displayed in that work. Further filling out Jones’s religious belief and theology,
in addition to his published and unpublished sermons, is his commentary on seventeenth-
century religious writers. Part of the intention of this work was to provide a more lasting
record of, as well as a guide to, the writings of that period. As such, Jones provided a
summary of the arguments and theology of each work before providing his own

\textsuperscript{18} NLW, MS. 7026A.
\textsuperscript{19} The exception is the recent Welsh language PhD thesis by Carol James. Carol James, ‘Edmund Jones Yr
\textsuperscript{20} NL, MS. M350 012 JON H.C.
concerning the religious issues about which he was passionate, such as infant baptism, Calvinism, and church doctrine, it also illustrates Jones’s access to such works as well as some interesting commentary on the period, such as his praise of Oliver Cromwell and criticism of the Stuart kings. Thus these works highlight aspects of Jones’s belief, helping to guide and inform a religious reading of his more well-known writings.

Unfortunately, also potentially lost to time is the ‘lost’ work of Edmund Jones, a previous study on apparitions supposed to have been published in 1767. The tradition that this work existed can be seen in a letter sent to the editor of *Bye-Gones* in 1891. However, William Haines, who responded to this enquiry, doubted that the earlier work ever existed. John Harvey, in his recent study of Jones’s writings on apparitions, has professed to have ‘found’ this lost work and additional material supplied in his edited collection of Jones’s work is supposed to have come from the 1767 edition. In support of this he notes that Jones used the words ‘the sequel’ in the beginning of his 1780 text, ostensibly referring to the 1767 work, and draws on a manuscript in the National Library of Wales by Edward Ifor Williams for its content. The words ‘the sequel’, however, most likely refer to ‘the text which follows’ and are not an allusion to an earlier work, especially as Jones used the phrase in exactly the same way twice in the preface to his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*. Moreover, Harvey is drawing from NLW, MS. 16161B which is a transcription of Cardiff Library MS. 2.249. In the original manuscript the additional materials are located after the content published in 1780 (and thus probably written after it), written in a handwriting which resembles Jones’s later diaries, and sometimes refer to

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21 NLW, MS. 17054D.
25 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. ii. In the *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* Jones wrote, ‘it is reasonable to believe that some parts of it must more visibly shew his creating excellencies than others. And of all others those formed into Mountains and Valleys claim the precedence in this respect. An instance of which is sufficiently shewed in the Parish of Aberystwyth; as described in the sequel.’ And then later: ‘At the same time I think I may venture to say, that the sequel brings to light many rare discoveries both natural, and spiritual, which no sober, curious reader will despise’. Edmund Jones, *Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* (Trevecka: [N. Pub.], 1779), pp. v, vii.
dates after 1780. This suggests that he was probably older when he wrote it.\textsuperscript{26} Leaving aside the question of whether the 1767 work ever existed (absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, and many works from the period have not survived), it is safe to say that the ‘lost’ Edmund Jones work remains, at the least, lost.

While Cardiff Library MS. 2.249 cannot be regarded as a prequel to \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, it can perhaps be regarded as a sequel or even continuation of its published counterpart. Indeed, the style and substance of the manuscript gives no indication that it was not intended to be read or even published. As such, the accounts and commentary in it have largely been used in this thesis in a similar way to those in \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}. There are some notable differences between the two works however. For instance, the Devil (or rather ‘something belonging to the devil’) appears only once in \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, but in the manuscript the Devil appears several times, including some interesting encounters between him and Jones’s wife.\textsuperscript{27} As this reference to his wife alludes to, the manuscript also gives several accounts of Jones’s own interactions with malicious spirits. These also occur in his published works, most notably in the relation of his childhood experience of fairies in \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth},\textsuperscript{28} but here they are more varied and common.\textsuperscript{29} Despite these slight difference however, the two works largely mirror one another with similar accounts and similar commentary. These accounts and commentary, however, are not mere recitations of those found in the published work and thus expand and inform the content and form of Jones’s belief.

A small but steady interest in Jones’s life has persisted since his death. The \textit{Gentleman’s Magazine} provided an obituary notice which remarked that

\begin{quote}
his faith and his manners were on the strictest model of the genuine Puritans, of which he probably may be the last, his imagination had received an early bias from his romantic neighbourhood, of which he was a native; and he strenuously maintained the antient British opinions, of spirits
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{26} CL, MS. 2.249.
\textsuperscript{27} Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 69–70; CL, CM. 2.249, pp. 306–8.
\textsuperscript{28} Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth}, pp. 75–7.
\textsuperscript{29} CL, MS. 2.249, pp. 295–303.
\end{flushright}
swarming in the atmosphere, and assisting or impeding the minutest actions of men.  

In the months following his death, an anonymous acquaintance penned a biography of him for the *Evangelical Magazine*, containing useful insights into his personal life, including his deep feelings for his wife, as well as anecdotes about his life which help to inform the modern reader about his character and illustrate his interactions with, and perceptions by, his contemporaries.  

Interest continued into the nineteenth century as Jones’s *Apparitions of Spirits*, which had originally been published anonymously, was edited and republished by E. Lewis, this time bearing Jones’s name.  

While re-popularising the work and making it more accessible, it also served to confuse matters as illustrated by Wirt Sikes’s thumbnail biography of Jones in his *British Goblins*. Based on the 1813 publication, Sikes claimed that Jones lived ‘in the first years of the [nineteenth] century’, even going so far as to ‘correct’ Thomas Keightley’s (accurate) assertion that *Apparitions of Spirits* was published in ‘the latter half of the eighteenth century’. A more accurate biography came soon after in a section of Thomas Rees’s *History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales*, which has become a major touchstone for most biographical information on ‘the Old Prophet’ as it drew on Jones’s diaries, correspondences, sermons, and published works.  

Around the same time as the work of Sikes and Rees, an anonymous author published an article entitled ‘Monmouthshire Apparitions’. Importantly, this work not only drew on printed accounts of Jones, but also attested to and included stories from the vibrant local folk-tradition concerning him, including stories of his prescience, charitable activities and generosity, and the encounters he and his wife had with evil spirits and the Devil. Two twentieth-century biographies of Jones again have used textual and oral

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30 Gentleman’s Magazine, 63: 2 (1793), 1153.
31 Anon., ‘The Rev. EDMUND JONES, late Minister of Ebenezer Chapel, near Pontipool, in the Parish of Trevathin, South Wales’, *Evangelical Magazine* (May, 1794), 177–85.
32 Edmund Jones, *Relation of Apparitions of Spirits, In the County of Monmouth and the Principality of Wales* (Newport: E. Lewis, 1813).
sources. Edgar Phillips’s (Trefin) *Edmund Jones ‘The Old Prophet’* (1949) and J. Glyndwr Harris’s similarly entitled *Edmund Jones: The Old Prophet* (1987), relate rather full pictures of Edmund Jones’s life, inducing his religious, social, and private life as well as his work on spirits and supposed prophetic powers. Despite the similarities there are some differences as Harris’s work tends to focus a bit more on his involvement with Ebenezer chapel, something which is understandable as it was published by the congregation.36 Phillips’s work, for its part, has its own idiosyncrasies, most notably a section which credits Jones’s prophetic powers to ‘second sight’, citing advances in modern science in the field of E.S.P.!.37 Recently, Carol James has written a Welsh-language PhD thesis, ‘Edmund Jones Yr “Hen Broffwyd” (1702–1793): Gweinidog, Hanesydd, Ysbyrdegydd’ (2001). The work is largely biographical, looking at Jones’s role as a religious figure, naturalist, antiquarian and historian, and a believer in and writer on apparitions, and seeks to ‘restore Edmund Jones’s place within the history of the period, not only within congregationalism and religion but within Welsh history itself in the eighteenth century’.38 As such it does not focus overmuch on any of these roles, but rather seeks to place Jones in the historical, religious, and intellectual contexts of eighteenth-century Wales.

John Harvey’s *Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales* (2004), in contrast to these earlier works, focuses on Jones’s work on apparitions itself, editing together Jones’s published accounts from *Apparitions of Spirits* along with additional unpublished materials from NLW, MS. 16161B. As discussed above, he claims these to be from the ‘lost’ Edmund Jones work of 1767. Prior to his edition of Jones’s material, however, Harvey has supplied a lengthy introduction which investigates the work’s contents and contexts. Although containing some biographical information, Harvey has focused on the theological foundations of Jones’s views on spirits and the aesthetic qualities of his accounts, offering contextualization from Protestant theology as well as

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38 James, ‘Edmund Jones Yr “Hen Broffwyd” (1702–1793)’, p. ii.
contrasts with antiquarians and late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Romantic and
Gothic authors and artists. In doing so, Harvey appreciates Jones's *Apparitions of Spirits*
as a work in and of itself, describing Jones’s approach and style and how it can be
compared and contrasted with works in similar genres both before and after it.\(^{39}\)

In this study, the central argument is that Jones’s work on apparitions can only be
fully understood and appreciated by taking a holistic view of the social, religious,
intellectual, and cultural contexts in which it was written. These were not books written in
isolation, or with academic detachment. Only through understanding the contexts of
Jones’s life and the formation of his worldview can the nature of his belief in spirits be
understood and only by understanding this belief can the way in which he wrote about
apparitions and fairies be appreciated. It is easy to view his beliefs as erroneous, or as
misguided religious enthusiasm, but to do so detracts from their deep significance and
validity to Jones’s life. It is similarly easy to ignore the fact that Jones did truly believe in
his portrayal of the supernatural and view his writings as folkloric or antiquarian
collections of supernatural accounts, but this would remove their very importance to Jones
and their *raison d'être*. The only way to approach the content of Jones’s works is as
beliefs held steadfastly by Jones and his community, and to ignore the question of whether
ghosts, fairies, or witches actually ‘exist’.\(^{40}\) Only then can the relationship between the
belief in spirits and other beliefs in Jones’s worldview be assessed, and the way which that
worldview impacted upon, or was complemented by, his daily existence be examined.

In looking at the factors contributing to the formulation of Jones’s spiritual
worldview three main themes will be considered: the socio-economic environment of
Jones’s community, his religion and his participation in the eighteenth-century religious
Revival, and the intellectual climate broadly contemporary to Jones’s work. These will
then be related to the cultural and folkloric content of Jones’s accounts. These divisions

\(^{39}\) Harvey, *Appearance of Evil*, pp. 1–37.
\(^{40}\) See Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, pp. 4–10.
may seem arbitrary, but for justifiable reasons of practicality and the unique nature of Jones’s life, this is the approach that has been taken. For instance, it may seem dubious or even dangerous to remove the role of religion from the social contexts of the community; yet Jones’s role as a religious figure was such that religion and revivalism require a full and separate section in order to be fully appreciated. Similarly, given the religious nature of the intellectual tradition to which Jones belonged, it may seem unnecessary to separate this into a section on the intellectual environment. However, the intellectual culture of the eighteenth century was changing and Jones’s writing can be contrasted with other, more ‘modern’, approaches to folklore and the supernatural offered by Romanticism or antiquarianism. Finally, all of these categories have significant overlap with one another, with Jones’s religious belief impinging on how he interacted with others in his community and how he interpreted the writings of his contemporaries. These overlaps only serve to underline the interconnected nature of the different aspects of Jones’s life and how they all combined to inform and formulate his belief in spirits, fairies, and magic.

The first two chapters investigate the socio-economic environment of Jones’s community. Chapter One is concerned with the changing nature of industry and social composition, advancements in transportation and communications networks, increases in literacy and the availability of printed materials, changes in medical practice, and systems of charity and reciprocity in north-west Monmouthshire. The next chapter turns attention to the way in which this society shaped the community’s belief in spirits, and how allusions to the nature of society are portrayed in Jones’s accounts. In assessing the socio-economic nature of eighteenth-century north-west Monmouthshire, the third volume of the *Gwent County History* has been particularly useful as has John Gwyn Davies’s PhD thesis, ‘Industrial Society in North-West Monmouthshire 1750–1851’ (1980). Similarly, in examining the nature of medicine in the period, Alun Withey’s *Physick and the Family*

(2011) is especially insightful. Local poor relief records have also been greatly utilized, as have probate records. In assessing the culture and the availability of cultural amenities in the area, newspapers are extremely useful, yet the lack of ‘Welsh’ newspapers in the eighteenth century has led to Welsh historians not using what is available to their full potential. In these chapters the *Glocester Journal* has been frequently used, providing interesting insights into the nature of community life in eighteenth-century Monmouthshire.

Chapters Three and Four consider religious observance, the prevailing theology, and Jones’s involvement in the eighteenth-century religious Revival. As R. Tudur Jones remarked, ‘In its early days it was Edmund Jones who was the most powerful force in support of the Revival among the Independents. He was the nearest thing they had to a bishop.’ For this fact, as well as the obvious reason that Jones’s works were written with religious motives, Jones’s life and writings cannot be fully understood without reference to his religious beliefs and relationship with revivalism. Chapter Three begins by examining the religious composition of north-west Monmouthshire, drawing heavily on Bishop’s Visitations Questions and Answers returns and Jones’s own assessments, before exploring Jones’s involvement in the Revival and his relationship with revivalist leaders. In this, it draws heavily on the work of David Ceri Jones and Eryn White, as well as Jones’s diaries and correspondences with other religious figures. Chapter Four focuses on Jones’s theology, using his religious writings to inform his theological worldview. Importantly, in addition to discussing Jones’s religious cosmology and views on providence and religious symbolism, this chapter argues that far from being ‘unenlightened’ or ‘counter-

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Enlightenment' the epistemology of revivalists like Jones, which allowed him to believe in apparitions, was highly empirical and therefore similar to the Lockean epistemology of Enlightened culture. This allowed Jones to write about fairies and spirits in a way which, though out of step with accepted Enlightenment culture, was, nonetheless, highly 'rational'.

The last two chapters examine the intellectual environment in which Jones wrote, and scrutinise supernatural folklore in eighteenth-century north-west Monmouthshire as demonstrated in Jones’s works. Chapter Five begins with an examination of the ‘anti-Sadducee’ writers of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, and Jones’s relationship to them. It then turns to the relationship between eighteenth century intellectual culture and the belief in ghosts, fairies, and magic, including Enlightenment polite scepticism, Romanticism and the Gothic movement, and antiquarianism. It ends with an examination of polite and intellectual culture in eighteenth-century Wales and places Jones’s works within the contexts of contemporary Welsh writers. The final chapter investigates the folkloric subject matter of Jones’s writings and compares it to other Welsh folklorists to explore the nature of supernatural folk-belief in eighteenth-century Wales. The chapter is divided into sections on general evil spirits, human magical practitioners, the Devil, ghosts, death portents, and fairies. Each examines Jones’s accounts of the supernatural in these categories and compares them with other folkloric materials which are available. In this concluding chapter, these folkloric beliefs are viewed with some reference to the social and intellectual environment, religious beliefs, and local cultural characteristics to show how all of these disparate factors converge in Jones’s treatment of the supernatural.

Finally, a note needs to be made about the spelling of Welsh place-names. A multiplicity of spellings of some names (i.e Trefddyn, Trefethin, Trevethin or Trevecka, Trevecca, Trefeca) can often lead to confusion, especially in dealing with historical sources. In this work, Monmouthshire place-names conform to the spellings utilized in the
third volume of the *Gwent County History* (2009). Where place-names are not present in that volume (i.e. those outside of Monmouthshire), their spelling conforms to those found in Elwyn Davies’s *Rhestr o Enwau Lleoedd* (1958). Spellings in quoted materials, however, have been retained from their original sources.

This study then, is not purely biographical, social, religious, intellectual, or cultural, but rather a combination of all these things. Jones’s works cannot be understood without reference to his life. *Apparitions of Spirits* and the other materials on ghosts, fairies, and magic, are written as highly personal testimonials to Jones’s own belief. Far from being irrational, the belief in spirits was an integral part of a sophisticated and detailed worldview which made sense within the contexts of the socio-economic, religious, and intellectual environment of which Jones was a part. As Joseph Glanvill wrote in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, ‘These Things hang together in a Chain of Connection . . . and ‘tis but a happy Chance, if he, that hath lost one Link, holds another.’ In his belief in spirits, Jones was not atavistic, or out of touch with contemporary culture, but rather it was exactly the environment of the eighteenth century which made his belief in spirits not only possible, but plausible.

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The works of the Rev. Edmund Jones certainly cannot be read purely outside of their religious and intellectual contexts, but Jones’s conceptualizations of apparitions and spirits were intimately tied to his interactions with society and his beliefs and value systems arising from idiosyncratic socio-economic community situations. Indeed, details of person and place are vital to Jones’s relations, especially with regards to the actions and intentions of the perceived spirits and their believability. Thus, only with an appreciation of the social and economic landscape can the experiences of Jones and his informants be placed in their proper contexts. This first chapter seeks to describe that landscape, considering the conditions of, and changes in, the population, industry, communication and transportation, education and medicine, and consumer culture and welfare in north-west Monmouthshire at the time of Jones’s writing. The overarching trend in this period appears as change, particularly in the economy and the degree of interconnectivity with the people and ideas outside of the immediate community. The nature of this change would have profound effects on the culture of Jones’s community and his perception of apparitions.

Jones’s community can perhaps be conceived of as a large one, as he regularly undertook impressive preaching itinerancies throughout not only north and south Wales but also Herefordshire and Gloucestershire; a habit which he kept up at least until he was eighty-seven and probably later. Jones may not have travelled as far afield as some other

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1 NLW, MS. 7030A. Edmund Jones diary for 1789. Although this diary reveals that Jones was extremely active late in life, it does show some evidence that the years had taken their toll as the size and darkness of
revivalists, but his travels still brought him into intimate contact with diverse communities, individuals, and ideas. However, Jones was not nomadic or homeless. Born on 1 April 1702, he was raised on the small farm Penllwyn in Aberystwyth parish in western Monmouthshire (the subject of one of his books) and he began preaching to the Independent congregation at Pen-maen in Mynyddislwyn parish between 1721 and 1724. He also administered the sacrament at Ebbw Vale in 1739. In 1740, he and his wife, Mary, moved from where they had been living in Mynyddislwyn to a house at the Transh, near Pontypool, in Trevethin parish. It is commonly supposed that he lived there until his death — thus his being known as Edmund Jones of the Transh — with the nonconformist historian Thomas Rees remarking that he ‘dwelt there the remaining years of his life’. However, Jones himself wrote that he had to endure a noisy spirit ‘in the house in the space of 12 years (for so long I and my dear excellent spouse dwelt in that house)’. While it is unknown where he moved next, and it is possible that his new residence was also in or near the Transh, it is clear he did not dwell in the same house until his death. In 1741, he established his own congregation at Ebenezer chapel in Pontnewynydd and helped pay for it by giving £30 of his total wealth of £40 as well as an additional £15 from the proceeds of selling off part of his personal library to finish the project. The chapel was so-called in response to a prophecy by the ‘Old Prophet’ that his successor would be named Ebenezer.

The letters, when compared to the diary from 1780 (NLW, MS. 7029A), show that either his eyesight or fine-motor skills (or both) were deteriorating.


4 CL, MS. 2.249, rough draft of Edmund Jones’s Apparition of Spirits, p. 300. Even Harvey, who includes Jones’s statement about only living there for twelve years, describes the Transh as ‘where they [Jones and his wife] lived for the remainder of their lives’. See John Harvey (ed.), The Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), pp. 12, 120.

5 Rees, Protestant Nonconformity, p. 404.

When Jones died in 1793, his body joined that of his wife in the chapel’s churchyard.\(^8\)

Thus, from birth to death, Edmund Jones can be associated with one locality: that of north-western Monmouthshire and the neighbourhood of Pontypool in particular. Through the investigation of the socio-economic dynamics of that area, and Jones’s place within it, various insights can be gleaned into the foundation and formation of Jones’s thought.

Unfortunately, determining the socio-economic background of Edmund Jones’s area is difficult. The first official census was undertaken in 1801, eight years after Jones’s death in 1793. To further complicate things, the construction of a major canal, which was begun in 1792, was completed in 1798 and, as one branch of it connected Newport to Pontnewynydd, it must have had a significant effect on the commerce, industry, composition, and population of north-west Monmouthshire in the time between Jones’s death and date of the census.\(^9\)

The 1794 survey and analysis of Monmouthshire’s agricultural basis by John Fox suggests that it had a population of approximately 39,000.\(^10\)

In their study of the population in early modern Monmouthshire, Brinley Jones and Colin Thomas have identified two sets of estimates for the 1700 and mid-eighteenth century Monmouthshire population, both are ‘based, in different ways, on the information which John Rickman, the supervisor of the first census, persuaded the parish clergy to extract for him from eighteenth-century registers’. The first gives 39,700 for 1700 and a projected estimate of 40,600 by the middle of the eighteenth century. The second gives 26,467 and 29,524 for those same dates. They note that the latter is more in line with their tentative estimates based on the difficult to interpret 1676 ‘Compton’ Census and their own computations based on analysis of parish registers indicate slight growth over the first half of the century ‘which could well have been in the region of slightly less than 30,000 for

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the county by mid-century'. When compared to John Fox’s estimate of 39,000 in the 1790s, the lower number would indicate a dramatic population increase of almost 10,000 people over a period of forty years, while the higher figure would indicate a more stagnant or declining population. However, both figures would indicate a great degree of population growth at the turn of the nineteenth century to match the 45,582 population recorded in the 1801 census. They note that the model indicating a more stagnant population early in the eighteenth century with rapid population growth in the later part of the century (they identify this period of faster growth as beginning in the mid-1740s) is more in line with the general British trend and seems to have been the case for most of Monmouthshire as well.12

The parishes of Trevethin, Aberystruth, Bedwellty, Mynyddislwyn, and St Woolos accounted for fourteen percent of Monmouthshire’s 1801 population and half of the growth in the following decade.13 With the exception of St Woolos, which is located in Newport, these parishes were all in the north-west of the county and Jones lived in three of these parishes. At the time he was writing this wider area was experiencing a period of rapid growth, significantly from in-migration to the industrial centres.14 However, Jones shows Aberystwyth parish as declining in population in the third quarter of the eighteenth century with several of its approximately 150 houses either uninhabited or lived in by only one or two people. Moreover, he calculated that the population was less than 500.15 As John Gwyn Davies has noted, given Jones’s estimate and what limited evidence can be drawn from parish records, Aberystwyth and Bedwellty did not experience the rapid growth

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13 Ibid., p. 204.
15 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 60.
indicated elsewhere in the county until the very end of the century. By 1801, however, the population of Aberystyth showed a sixty-one percent increase over Jones’s 1779 estimation with a high percentage of males living there, indicating this rise to be largely a result of industrial in-migration.\textsuperscript{16}

Of course, the fact that Monmouthshire generally, and the north-west specifically, were experiencing population growth whilst the remoter parishes in that region experienced decline, need not be contradictory. The fact that Jones lived in at least three different parishes during his lifetime shows that movement between the parishes within the area may have been, to a certain extent, fluid as people could move between the different industrial enterprises such as ironworks which rose and declined at various places in the area at various times. Moreover, Aberystyth remained a fairly agricultural parish, albeit with some sporadic industrial development, and its decreasing population could be symptomatic of a shift from rural to urban dwelling in this part of the county. Indeed, Brinley Jones and Colin Tomas note that in Aberystyth and Mynyddislywn ‘baptisms significantly outnumbered burials to imply strong natural population increase, whereas, on this evidence (comparison of baptism and burial rates) at least, any growth in nearby communities must have depended upon in-migration’.\textsuperscript{17} This surplus of births over deaths combined with a declining population in Aberystyth adds further support to the view that inter-parish movement was occurring: people were being born there, but they were not necessarily dying there. Jones’s own habitation in Trevethin rather than in Aberystyth or Mynyddislywn can perhaps be seen as being in congruence with this. Although it should be noted that members of the clergy were more mobile than other members of society,\textsuperscript{18} Jones’s Independency meant that, to a certain extent, he was freer than representatives of the official church to choose where he preached and established congregations. This movement to Trevethin (whilst maintaining congregations in Aberystyth) could be in

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\item[\textsuperscript{16}] Davies, ‘Industrial Society in North-West Monmouthshire’, p. 69.
\item[\textsuperscript{17}] Jones and Thomas, ‘Population’, p. 217. For instance, Aberystyth had a surplus of 101 baptisms over burials in the period 1726–1800, whilst Trevethin had a deficit of 389. Ibid. p. 218.
\item[\textsuperscript{18}] See Ibid., p. 227.
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response to shifts in population and the movements of others to this area. He went were he saw an increasing need. Demographical change is then apparent in the county with the movement of people responding to economic changes, and although a clear model of growth is not the case, especially for the parishes of Aberystyth and Bedwellty, such change would have notably affected dynamics of community and belonging.

Just as these fluctuations and increases in population were not uniform or consistent, the nature of social order and employment also differed within the region. The semi-urban and more industrialized area of Pontypool and Trevethin parish can be contrasted with the quasi-rural and sporadically industrialized natures of Aberystyth, Bedwellty, and Mynyddislwyn in social make-up and interaction. Jones described Aberystyth as sparsely populated, with several of its houses ‘without Inhabitants, in others only one women, in others two persons, and in others but three or four; tho’ there are some large Families’. There were no towns or villages in the parish and houses were ‘scattered here and there in the bottom and sides of the Valleys’ with some ‘on the backs of the South ends of the Beacon Mountain, and Mount Kelliau’, and settlement was more concentrated in the south of the parish. In terms of social composition Jones states that there were ‘not many Gentlemen’s Estates in the Parish, but some very substantial, and many small Freeholds; so that in the Election of a Parliament Man some years ago there were no less than fifty Votes in this small Parish’.

The parish of Aberystyth, as well as Bedwellty, remained fairly agrarian throughout this period. An iron furnace erected in Bedwellty in 1739 closed after only a short period, and similarly the large ironworks completed in Aberystyth in 1795 was closed after only a year. Two other works were also in business in the Ebbw Fawr Valley mid-century and c. 1760 a small coal burning ironworks was established on the Sirhowy

19 Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystyth*, p. 60.
20 Ibid., p. 50; Davies, ‘Industrial Society in North-West Monmouthshire’, p. 211.
22 Davies, ‘Industrial Society in North-West Monmouthshire’, p. 17.
River in northern Bedwellty. According to Davies, 'it was the need for munitions during the Seven Years War and the American War of Independence which first led capitalists to seriously consider the potential of the area.' Also significant was the rise of using coke, instead of charcoal, in ironworks during the middle of the century which led to the development of coal extraction. This industry had hitherto been a small-scale endeavour for use locally and for sale in the markets at Abergavenny, Hereford, and Brecon by farmers in exchange for lime. In 1735, coal works were established in Aberystwyth and the changes in the working habits of these more mountainous parishes reveals the sporadic nature of industrial expansion. With works rising and falling, subject to economic demand in part prompted by war and changes in technology, the associated changes in population and employment were certainly not homogenous or necessarily substantial across both time and geography.

In contrast to Aberystwyth, in the parish of Trevethin the town of Pontypool had been in existence since at least the fifteenth century and by the eighteenth century there was a weekly market held there on Saturdays. Mineral extraction and related industrial concerns in the area also had a much more established history, particularly with the ironworks which had been in existence from the mid-sixteenth century. By the early- to mid-seventeenth century coal mines had been established and in the eighteenth century a tinplating industry was in operation (although it ceased operation by the 1780s) as was the manufacture of Japanware. Between 1715 and 1717, the Pontypool iron-furnace was

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24 Davies, 'Industrial Society in North-West Monmouthshire', p. 18.
25 Ibid., p. 17.
putting out 400 tons a year and the iron-forge was producing 350 tons; by 1736 the latter was producing around 600 tons per annum.\(^\text{30}\) As coal played an increasing part in iron production in the mid-eighteenth century, coal works were in operation in Pant-Teg parish in addition to those in Trevethin, Aberystwyth and Bedwellty.\(^\text{31}\) Japanware manufacturing does not seem to have operated on the scale of the ironworks or coal production (the latter also significantly smaller than the former), but it does seem to have been considered the major product of Pontypool for a period in the late-eighteenth century as well as a matter of local pride.\(^\text{32}\) As the authors of the Modern Universal British Traveller noted, 'the inhabitants carry on a great trade in japanning of tin mugs, by which many hands are employed, and considerable sums of money brought annually into the place'.\(^\text{33}\) Still, as was the case with the neighbouring parishes, the industries around Pontypool waxed and waned (although perhaps to a lesser degree) depending on the technology employed and the caprice of the market. This then was not a period of linear progression towards the industrial landscape of nineteenth-century south Wales, but an ebb and flow of change affecting population, demographic, economy, and culture.

The fluctuations in regional migration relevant to employment opportunities and industrial developments were not simply a case of moving between farm and furnace. Industry attracted outsiders, and particularly in the early stages of industrial development some of the skilled and specialist work of the iron industry was carried out by men who were brought into the area by the industrialists themselves and who had experience outside of the locality, notably across the border in England, although from the middle of the

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\(^\text{30}\) It is possible that the production of the Llanelly forge, which was owned by Hanburys who also owned the Pontypool industries, was linked to this last figure of 600 tons. The Llanelly furnace and forge produced 400 tons and 120 tons a year respectively between 1715 and 1717. Evans, 'Early Industrial Development', p. 372.

\(^\text{31}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{32}\) John Evans notes that '[t]he business in Pontypool never seems to have been more than a cottage industry even though its products were known throughout the county for their quality'. Japanware seems to have briefly become the town's main product, particularly after the death of Major John Hanbury, owner of the iron industries in Pontypool. It took a considerable time for his estate and business interests to be sorted out and this impacted on the running of the ironworks. Ibid., p. 371.

\(^\text{33}\) Burlington, Rees, and Murray, Modern Universal British Traveller, p. 150.
eighteenth century they could increasingly draw this skilled labour from those working at Merthyr. Similarly, the japanning industry seemed to prefer to hire black-plate workers, painters, japanners, and varnishers from outside of Wales, especially from Birmingham. By 1801 both the age and sex demographics of the ironworking areas indicate a great deal of in-migration by young men seeking employment. Even those drawn from neighbouring parishes and Welsh counties would bring their own idiosyncratic cultures and experiences with them into the area resulting in a more diverse demographic. That this inter-parish movement was perhaps seen as acceptable or even normal can be seen in Trevethin parish’s poor relief records. Under the poor laws, a parish was only obliged to pay relief to those who had legal settlement within its borders, as well as those who had legal settlement there but lived in another parish, and consequentially if an outsider fell on hard times they could appeal to that person’s home parish for payment or removal.

Bearing this in mind, it is significant that Trevethin provided welfare on several occasions to those which it itself labelled as outsiders. John Edmund from ‘Heriford’ received £2 2s. as relief and 5s. was paid to ‘person by pass’ in 1772, probably a traveller. A person referred to as ‘Abergavenny woman’ (probably Mary Lewis of Abergavenny) even received a yearly pension and had her burial expenses paid out of the parish purse in 1770. This illustrates a community that was tolerant of, or even used to, providing for outsiders who had come to live within their borders. Still these young men, who migrated into the area, would have been unlikely to have integrated smoothly into the community or even to have desired to do so. A difference in the culture of the works themselves, with its disparate experiences and rhythms of time, both in the working day and working season,

in addition to variation of origins, would have served an initial barrier, as would a lack of local, especially familial, ties.

The issue of language naturally impacted upon the nature of community inclusion and cohesion. Welsh was the primary mode of communication in eighteenth-century western Monmouthshire, something to which Archbishop Coxe attested:

> The Welsh language is more prevalent than is usually supposed: in the north-eastern, eastern, and south-eastern parts, the English tongue is in common use; but in the south-western, western, and north-western districts, the Welsh, excepting in the towns, is generally spoken. The natives of the midland parts are accustomed to both languages: in several places divine service is performed wholly in Welsh, in others in English, and in some alternately in both. The natives of the western parts, which are sequestered and mountainous, unwillingly hold intercourse with the English, retain their ancient prejudices, and still brand them with the name of Saxons.\(^{38}\)

However, Sian Rhiannon Williams has noted that even in the latter part of the eighteenth century ‘the proximity of the area to the borderlands and the prevalence of religious Dissent meant that certain groups were in contact with the English language, especially in and around Pontypool’. Furthermore, she observed that even into the early-nineteenth century the relatively small groups of English speaking migrants ‘kept themselves separate from the majority of the workmen who were Welsh speaking’.\(^{39}\) The existence of English individuals and even families connected to industry in the vicinity of Pontypool, such as the Hanburys and the Allgoods, and even the skilled workers they brought into the area, would not have been enough to switch the dominate language of the region from Welsh to English. Edmund Jones’s primary language and that of his community was Welsh. John Gwynfor Jones has identified Aberystwyth as a ‘thoroughly Welsh part of the county’.\(^{40}\) In 1813, out of 128 places of worship mentioned in parochial returns only eleven were still entirely Welsh-speaking, these were Llanddewi Fach, Pant-teg, Mamheilad, Aberystwyth, Llanhilledd, Bedwellty, Mynyddislwyn, Henllys, St Bride’s Wentloog, Risca, and


Coedcenyw, all in the west of the county and two of which were parishes where Jones lived. Jones himself, in the introduction to his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, apologises for ‘some Wallecisms, in my manner of expression’, and describes the impact of the translation of the Bible into Welsh on the parish. Pontnewynydd was similarly Welsh-speaking and services at Jones’s Ebenezer Chapel were conducted solely in Welsh until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Be this as it may, English was not unknown to Jones and his community, and even if his daily speech and most of his sermons were delivered through the medium of Welsh, Jones’s diaries, correspondences, major works, and most of his published works generally were in English – a trend very much in keeping with general eighteenth-century practice. Even popularly, the language of religious service could, to some extent, reflect the presence of lingual diversity. Even though in 1771, 1774, and 1781 the majority of northwest Monmouthshire parishes administered official church services in Welsh, Trevethin provided every fourth Sunday service in English. Since the Acts of Union, English had become the official language in both the political and legal spheres. However, when dealing with monolingual Welsh speakers certain exceptions to this rule were sometimes made. In the 1771 Monmouthshire election, Valentine Morris of Piercefield published his electoral address not only in English but also in Welsh and John Morgan responded in kind, even commissioning William Williams to write a Welsh election song criticizing

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43 Ibid, p. 91. John Gwynfor Jones claims that Edmund Jones ‘ignored the role of the vernacular in his native parish. On one occasion, when briefly tracing events leading to the publication of the Bible in English (in 1539), he stated that illiteracy prevented all but a small number from reading it, without making any specific reference to monoglotism.’ See Jones, ‘Language, Literature and Education’, p. 302. It is true that the Rev. Jones failed to mention what language is spoken in Aberystwyth, probably because he felt it would have been obvious to his contemporaries that it was Welsh. In fact, he noted that, ‘The Reformation somewhat began in King Henry the Eighth’s time when the Bible was translated into English, but this favour could only reach such Welsh as understood English, and could read the Bible, which, it may be, were not many.’ What follows is actually a history of the Bible’s translation into Welsh, not English. See Jones, *History of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, pp. 91–2.
45 See White, ‘Established Church, Dissent and the Welsh Language’, p. 265.
46 NLW, MS. LL/QA/5, 7, 9. Llandaff Bishop’s Visitations questions and answers for 1771, 1774, and 1781.
Morris for having dared to challenge the Morgans.47 The duality of languages with their separate spheres led to them being viewed with different cultural values and meanings. As Geraint H. Jenkins, Richard Suggett, and Eryn M. White have pointed out, ‘in the world of commerce, English had unquestionably become the language of advancement’.48 Thus English carried connotations of politeness and advancement, and it is little wonder that Jones, despite his strong sense of Welsh identity, would choose the medium of English to make his works both intelligible and amenable to the maximum audience.49

As illustrated by Jones’s choice of language in writing, connected to the issue of language was the transmission of knowledge in printed form. Although publication in the medium of Welsh increased dramatically in the eighteenth century, the majority of these publications were, especially in the early part of the century, religious, particularly devotional, in nature.50 Many types of publication of cultural significance such as newspapers and the majority of periodicals were available only in English. Although there would be no newspaper in Wales until the publishing of the *Cambrian* in 1804,51 south Wales was widely serviced by several papers from the English marches, most notably the *Glocester Journal* (est. 1722) and *Hereford Journal* (est. 1770), as well as various papers from Bristol, Bath, and, of course, London (Jones mentions the *Bristol Gazette* and *London Evening Post* specifically).52 Both the *Glocester Journal* and *Hereford Journal* had distinct and palpable Welsh presences within their pages, often carrying news items and advertisements for goods, services, events, organizations, and political elections for Monmouthshire, Glamorgan, Breconshire, Carmarthenshire, and Cardiganshire. In 1740

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49 Ibid., pp. 79–82, 94–8.
the *Glocester Journal* advertised both the publication of materials pertinent to the
discovery of the descendants of Madoc living on the American continent and Theophilus
Evans’s popular *Drych Y Prif Oesoedd*, in 1779 it advertised ‘A WELSH ALMANAK for
the Year 1780 by Cain Jones’ which was to be sold in Brecon, Abergavenny, Carmarthen,
Swansea, and Newport, and 1780 saw an advertisement written in Welsh addressed ‘AT Y
BEIRDD CYMREIG’ (to the Welsh poets). ⁵³ Hannah Barker has discussed how catering
for local issues and appeal was a common element of the late-eighteenth century
provincial press as it helped to endear the paper to a local readership. ⁵⁴ The fact that these
papers carried such overtly Welsh or particularly Monmouthshire-oriented elements shows
that they were consciously cultivating a readership across the Severn whilst the
advertisements placed in these papers by residents of Monmouthshire and the rest of south
Wales shows that there was a big enough readership in that area for them to feel they
would get a substantial and appropriate response. The fact that the readers of
Monmouthshire relied on the papers of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire for their news
should not be overlooked. The sense of interconnectivity and the influx of new ideas and
opinions, already implicit in the very reading of the news, would have only been
intensified by papers which so consciously addressed both English and Welsh audiences.
The cosmopolitanism of eighteenth-century polite culture would have helped in the
standardizing of cultural norms and discourse as it cut across the cultural divide of Offa’s
Dyke bringing the opinions of different linguistic and cultural groups into a dialogue, even
if the different linguistic and cultural background of its audiences would have enacted
different ‘readings’ of its contents.

As the above mentioned advertisements suggest, newspapers were not the only
printed materials which were becoming available at this time. Almanacs were widely
available in north-west Monmouthshire with Pontypool as a place of distribution for John

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⁵³ *Glocester Journal*, 4 March 1739/40, 28 October 1740, 8 November 1779, 20 March 1780.
Rhydderch’s almanacs in the early eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{55} Edmund Jones’s journals are kept in a variety of almanacs (in one case two different almanacs have been combined) which have had extra pages inserted on which to write and then rebound. These almanacs include the \textit{Poor Robin}; \textit{Merlinus Liberatus}; \textit{Merlinius Anglicus Junior: or, the Starry Messenger}; \textit{ATLAΣ OYPA ‘NIOΣ The Coelestial Atlas or, A New Ephemeris}; and \textit{Tymmhorol, ac wybrenawl Newyddion Neu Almanack Newydd}.\textsuperscript{56} This diversity of titles may illustrate either an availability or lack of availability, as they show the wide range of titles available, while at the same time potentially alluding to an inability to acquire the same almanac consistently. Moreover, the Welsh language almanac utilized by Jones shows the bilingual publication and availability of almanacs. Almanacs were very popular amongst the lower orders, especially farmers: in the period between 1660 and 1730 they constituted roughly 15 percent of the Welsh titles published.\textsuperscript{57} In addition to astrological calendars, they contained lists of fairs and markets, advice and instruction in politics, agriculture, literacy and numeracy, and religious issues, and sundry advertisements amongst other things. As such, they gave access to the wealth of knowledge immediately useful to their readership both general, and in the case of lists of fairs and markets, tied to the community and the practical needs of certain professions. Providing a calendar of seasonal and annual holidays, and advising on times to plant and harvest, as well as notable events and anniversaries, could provide a sense of belonging. Geraint H. Jenkins noted that almanacs ‘reflected the traditional superstitions and magical practices which were dear to the hearts of many Welshmen’.\textsuperscript{58} However, the beliefs espoused in the almanac, like those in other printed mediums, portrayed a system of thought which, while no doubt viewed as ‘superstitious’ by some, would not have exactly aligned with traditional, regional, folk-

\textsuperscript{55} Jenkins, \textit{Literature, Religion and Society}, p. 249.
\textsuperscript{56} NLW, MSS. 7021–7030A.
\textsuperscript{57} Jenkins, \textit{Literature, Religion and Society}, p. 53.
beliefs. As such they, like any other homogenizing cultural force, could act to alter local belief-systems.\(^{59}\)

The *Glocester Journal* also carried advertisements for the *Gentleman's Magazine, or Trader's Monthly Intelligencer*, which was established in 1731.\(^{60}\) The magazine has been described as the most successful of its day and not long after its publication the alternative title was dropped, perhaps reflecting the desires of its readers amongst the middling orders to be viewed more as ‘gentlemen’ and less as ‘traders’.\(^{61}\) It was immensely popular; with 9,000 copies a month being produced by 1734 and 15,000 a month a decade later, and its pages carried a vast range of information including political and current affairs, advice to aspiring and amateur antiquarians, cultural and social commentary, medical advice, stock prices, mathematical problems, and obituaries.\(^{62}\) Other monthlies soon appeared, including the *London Magazine* which is specifically mentioned in Jones’s 1778 diary and the *Town and Country Magazine*, which is quoted in *Apparitions of Spirits*.\(^{63}\) Jones is also known to have had direct experience with the *Gentleman's Magazine* as his *History of the Parish of Aberystruth* was at least partially based on a questionnaire meant to aid local antiquarians in the magazine for April 1755.\(^{64}\)

As for how Jones might have accessed the magazine, it was one of the many things advertised by the *Glocester Journal* as being available from ‘the men who carry the news’.\(^{65}\) Other titles included *A History of Executions; ONANIA: or, The heinous Sin of Self-Pollution; Poems on Several Subjects Written by Stephen Duck* along with *the Campden Wonder, or the most strange and unparalell’d Account that ever was printed or heard of; The Young Psalm-Singer’s Guide; A curious Collection of Old Ballads: To which is added several Scotch Songs; The Ladies Diversition: Or, a new Way of Fortune-

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\(^{59}\) This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

\(^{60}\) *Glocester Journal*, 2 February 1730/1.


\(^{62}\) Ibid., p. 91.

\(^{63}\) NLW, MS. 7028A; Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, pp. 61–3.


\(^{65}\) *Glocester Journal*, 2 February 1730/1.
Telling by Coffee-Grounds; and A Continuation of the Reverend Mr Whitefield’s Journal along with several sermons by Whitefield. This diverse list of titles on everything from a moralizing treatise on masturbation to an account of paranormal activity appended to a group of poems, to a collection of Methodist sermons, shows the breadth of areas of knowledge which was available to eighteenth-century readers for acquisition and perusal.

Even outside the immediate area there were major commercial centres where many more books could be purchased and Jones specifically mentions purchasing books in Bristol. In terms of Jones’s area itself, a printing press was established in Pontypool in 1740 by Samuel and Felix Farley of Bristol, the first in the county. It closed after only two years of operation, placing it among a number of other short-lived publication ventures in the early years of Welsh printing. The notable Baptist the Rev. Miles Harry was instrumental in the setting up of the press and Eiluned Rees described the venture as owing its existence to ‘the Nonconformist upsurge of the time’. The books and pamphlets published there were religious in nature, the first of which was a Welsh translation of the Rev. John Gammon’s *CHRIST, a Christian Life: or, a Practical Discourse on a Believer’s Life* which was followed by ‘Several other Pieces of Divinity’, including Welsh translations of George Whitefield’s sermons, a Baptist catechism, and Welsh hymnals. In addition to books to be bought, there were also books to be borrowed. In 1711, for instance, Major John Hanbury helped to introduce a parochial library in Trevethin church. Jones himself possessed a very sizable library: what is still extant of it is comprised of some eighty volumes, but as not all of the books mentioned in his diaries as being in his possession nor his own published (and unpublished) works are counted in that

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66 Glocester Journal, 2 June 1730, 11 August 1730, 24 November 1730, 15 July 1740.
67 NLW, MS. 7027A.
71 Lloyd, *Pontypool the Heart of the Valley*, p. 20.
collection, it is obviously a mere portion of what he had.\textsuperscript{72} What is more, Jones's diaries show that he was very free with his collection, lending many books to others in his community, indicating both a desire for them and an ability to read them amongst others.\textsuperscript{73} He also records elsewhere that there were a good number of books from the previous century which survived in the area and most of his own extant library was published in the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{74}

In addition to the widening availability of printed materials in the eighteenth century, the ability to access them in terms of literacy was also on the rise. Of course, universal literacy was not necessary for the community to utilize printed materials. David Cressy has emphasized the presentist nature of histories which overstress the advantages of literacy (or rather disadvantages of illiteracy) in historical contexts pointing out the superfluous nature of literacy to many in the early modern period.\textsuperscript{75} Moreover, he has pointed out that lack of literacy did not necessarily equate to a lack of engagement with literate culture: "the possession of literacy did not remove one from the culture of speech and action, nor did illiteracy necessarily bar one from the culture of script and print".\textsuperscript{76} Services were available for those who needed to write but could not, and books were even written by dictation. Similarly, proclamations were usually read aloud as well as printed, town criers provided information relevant to those in the community even if it was printed in newspapers and broadsheets, and news was often read aloud to the literate and illiterate alike by literate members of the community in alehouses and by literate family members in households.\textsuperscript{77} It is not a stretch to suppose that printed materials such as newspapers and sermons being read aloud might also involve translation in the event the works largely

\textsuperscript{73} NLW, MSS. 7021–7030A.
\textsuperscript{74} Watts, 'Edmund Jones Library', NLW, MS. 17054D, p. 131.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. 311.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid. See also Barker, \textit{Newspapers, Politics, and Public Opinion}, pp. 27–32.
available (especially in the case of newspapers) were written in a language incomprehensible to a large portion of the audience. Even if a work was not read aloud, the ideas or information in that work (if they were sufficiently interesting or distasteful to the initial reader) would pass into the discourse of conversation and pass along that way, perhaps without even reference to the initial source. To show that the interaction with printed mediums in western Monmouthshire by the illiterate or semi-literate is not a mere hypothetical, a type of printed material, newspaper advertisements, can be a valuable source. To a certain extent newspapers are an interactive media (albeit a limited one), insofar as readers can become writers through the printing of letters to the editor or else the placing of advertisements. It is interesting therefore that an advertisement appeared in a 1779 *Glocester Journal* by one John James of Abergavenny declaring that his wife Anne ‘hath refused to cohabit and live with [him], preferring to live with her Mother, who doth harbour and entertain her contrary to [his] Will and Desire’ and that therefore he would not ‘pay any Debts she may contract from the date hereof’. The content of the advertisement is fairly unremarkable – such advertisements were common in the period – but it is significant that it is signed ‘The Mark X of John James’.\(^{78}\) It is safe to say that James himself could not write in any language (his signature would be the same in Welsh as in English) and thus this was written on his behalf. We can discern nothing about James’s ability to read as reading and writing were separate skills nor do we know if he was conversant in English as the scribe could very well have translated as he wrote. However, it is clear that the semi-literate could participate in a wider printed discourse nevertheless.

Jones himself was only taught basic literacy. Writing under his pseudonym of Solomon Owen Caradoc, in his sermon on *The Leaves of the Tree of Life* he gave some information about ‘the author’ generally taken to mean himself: ‘He hath been bred up only to Husbandry and looking after Cattle and Sheep, and although, He was not in any

\(^{78}\) *Glocester Journal*, 22 February 1779.
University, or Academy; nor was a instructed in any of the Liberal Sciences: Yet was a
great Lover of Books, buying and borrowing as much as he could come at. \(^79\) In the
account he gives of the life of his mother in *History of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, Jones
explained the rationale behind his lack of further and more formal education. As a child
his parents' friends thinking him 'studiously inclin'd, and less wild' than other children
suggested sending him to 'some great school, to be brought up for the ministry'. One night
at supper, a young Jones 'having a devilish heart' refused to say grace and so his parents
determined that he was not fit for a religious calling. \(^80\) However, with basic literacy
instilled and Jones's voracious appetite for information, he became very well-read and
knowledgeable, this knowledge being mainly self-taught. His wide breadth of subject
knowledge, as demonstrated by the books referenced in his diaries and published and
unpublished works, illustrates the plethora of printed materials available to instruct and
teach to those with literacy and a desire to learn.

The emphasis on literacy implicit in Protestant theology, coupled with the desire to
bring reformed manners, morals and polite demeanour to the lower orders led to the
establishment of charitable bodies which hoped to educate and improve the lives of the
Welsh in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Contrasting the charity school
movement in Wales from those in other part of Great Britain, M. G. Jones noted that,

> It was not concerned with attempts to condition the children of the poor for
> their work in life, nor to instruct them in the blessings of an alien
civilization, nor to rescue them from the toils of Rome. It was concerned
> chiefly, and almost exclusively, with the desire to save the souls of the
> Welsh people. \(^81\)

One of the earliest of these, the Welsh Trust, which was established in 1674 by Thomas
Gouge, the ejected minister of St Sepulchre, Southwark, distributed pious literature in the
Welsh language such as translations of the New Testament and *The Whole Duty of Man*.

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\(^79\) Solomon Owen Caradoc [Edmund Jones], *The Leaves of the Tree of Life: or the Nations heal'd by the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (Carmarthen: Samuel Lewis, 1745), p. ix.


and in 1678 alone distributed 5,185 books to poor Welsh readers.\(^\text{82}\) Accompanying this, the Trust financed the translation and publication of other religious literature in Welsh, including 8,000 copies of a 1678 edition of the Welsh Bible which was sold in Wales for 4s.2 d.\(^\text{83}\) Gouge and the Trust were based in London and the funds came from wealthy Londoners who were beneficently inclined along with a number of Welsh subscribers.\(^\text{84}\) Importantly, the Welsh Trust also set up charity schools which taught pious virtues and literacy of the Bible and devout works to Welsh children, along with writing and the casting of accounts to boys. By August 1675, over eighty schools had been established throughout Wales, teaching 2,225 pupils in every county except Merionethshire, with a heavier concentration in south Wales and along the border.\(^\text{85}\) Among these, twelve schools were established by the Trust in Monmouthshire, followed in 1678 by eleven more, mainly in urban areas and mainly organized by parish churches.\(^\text{86}\) However, this teaching was done through the medium of English: perhaps not the most effective strategy and something which did not sit well with several of those active in the Welsh Trust, most notably Stephen Hughes who did a great amount of translation and dissemination work for them.\(^\text{87}\) Moreover, although initially funding for the project came from Anglicans and Dissenters alike, an element of religious Dissent in the Trust led to voices of disapproval amongst the Anglican community and after Gouge’s death in 1681 the Welsh Trust ceased operation.\(^\text{88}\)

In 1699 a branch of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) launched a series of charity schools across Wales. It is significant than in the


first meeting of the Society on 8 March of that year, four out of the five in attendance had some Welsh connection.\textsuperscript{89} In doing this, the S.P.C.K. can seen to have been building on the foundation laid by the Trust and thirty of its first schools were set up in places where Trust schools had been established.\textsuperscript{90} These schools taught religious virtues and literacy. In some cases, the casting of accounts and sometimes more practical subjects, such as agriculture for boys or weaving for girls, were taught, but in the main the emphasis was on literacy with an aim towards saving souls rather than preparation for later employment.\textsuperscript{91} A high standard of education was maintained through regular inspections of the schools by the Society’s agents, who reported to London once or twice a year.\textsuperscript{92} Some resistance or indifference to the schools was encountered from the public, as poor children were needed to labour with their families, particularly during the harvest, and at times the schools provided clothing and maintenance money to parents in order to encourage their children’s attendance.\textsuperscript{93} Like the Welsh Trust, teaching was, in the main, done though the medium of English, although some schools in north Wales did provide instruction in Welsh.\textsuperscript{94} Seven schools were set up in Monmouthshire between 1707 and 1722 along with libraries at Caerleon, Trevethin, Chepstow, and Monmouth, and the Society also gave funds to other charity schools such as a coeducational school in Caerleon, as well as schools at Bedwellty, Llanfihangel Ystum Llywern, Skenfrith, and Tryleg.\textsuperscript{95} Connected to the desire to educate, the S.P.C.K. also built on the translation and publication efforts of the Trust,

\textsuperscript{93} Jones, \textit{Charity School Movement}, pp. 292–3.
\textsuperscript{95} Jones, ‘Language, Literature and Education’, p. 299.
republishing some of their books while works such as a Welsh translation of *The Practice of Piety* were being produced. Significantly, the S.P.C.K. also produced and sold 10,000 copies of a new edition of the Welsh Bible in 1718 and followed this with a second edition in 1727. However, the S.P.C.K. was overtly Anglican and following the Schism Act in 1714 those Nonconformists who had hitherto been amenable to the S.P.C.K.’s efforts began to draw away from it. The schools were also thought to have connections to Jacobite ideas and, after the 1715 Jacobite rising, support dwindled further. One of the main problems with both the Welsh Trust schools and those of the S.P.C.K., laudable efforts though they were, was their attitude towards the Welsh language in teaching. As Geraint H. Jenkins has noted,

> it is plain that the policy of the Welsh Trust and the S.P.C.K. of distributing religious literature in Welsh was essentially a short-term expedient calculated to save the souls of those monoglot Welshmen who were poised on the brink of everlasting damnation; they believed their more enduring function to be the rearing of a new generation of English-speakers in the Principality.

This policy was not without its critics, especially those who saw little philosophical difference between monoglot Welshmen reading Scriptures and saying prayers in Latin and in English. Despite this, the schools did promote literacy, albeit in English, and gave a broader access to ideas and social opportunities.

In the 1730s Griffith Jones, rector of Llanddowror between 1716 and 1761 and sometime teacher under the S.P.C.K. in Laugharne, launched a system of circulating charity schools which taught basic literacy and religious principles to the lower orders in the Welsh language. In 1731, he wrote to the S.P.C.K. expressing concern about a sickness (‘a Nervous kind of feavour’) which was afflicting the area of Llanddowror, and

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100 It should be noted that in those areas where English was the dominant language it was often taught instead of Welsh. Mary Clement, ‘The Welsh Circulating Schools’, in Williams and Hughes (eds), *The History of Education in Wales*, pp. 57–69 (p. 62); Jones, *Charity School Movement*, p. 312; White, ‘Popular Education and the Welsh Language’, p. 329.
his fears that many were dying without knowledge of religion. Because of this he requested forty or fifty small Welsh Bibles in order to teach pupil of all ages literacy in Welsh. By 1737 or 1738 this had developed into a system of circulating schools. The schools hardly provided a well-rounded liberal arts education (writing and arithmetic were seen as superfluous) and they usually did not remain in an area longer than three months during the winter, so as to make them less disruptive to those pupils who were needed for labour; but they were local and accessible to the masses meaning that they were able to help increase literacy rates in Wales. The publication Welch Piety served as an organ for the schools, publishing their rationale, letters about them from instructors and ministers, and a record of the places in which they were held as well as the number of those in attendance. In the first issue, Griffith Jones noted that in many of the schools ‘the adult People made about Two Thirds of the Scholars; of whom were several aged Women, who could not see without Spectacles, Two or Three about the Age of Sixty Years’. Furthermore, most of the instructors taught at night ‘about twice or thrice as many as they had in their schools by Day’ reflecting the desire of adults who had other commitments during normal school hours to learn.

First arriving in eastern Glamorgan (Gelli-gaer) and western Monmouthshire (Bedwellty) in 1738, the schools seem to have visited the parishes of Aberystrum, Trevethin, Mynyddislwn, Bedwellty, and Pant-teg fairly regularly, and in the winter of 1751–2 a school was set up in the Transh which taught 49 pupils, although those who

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101 Clement, Correspondence and Minutes of the S.P.C.K., p. 163; R. T. Jenkins, Gruffydd Jones Llanddowror 1683–1771 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1930), p. 41
105 Ibid.
attended at night may not have been included in this number. According to W. T. R. Pryce, schools in Monmouthshire accounted for eight percent of the total number of schools in Wales in the period 1738–1740 an over ten percent in 1771–1777. Moreover, in terms of the growth of the schools, thirty percent of new schools established in the period 1761–1770 and just over twenty-nine percent of new schools in 1771–1777 were in Monmouthshire. Edmund Jones, though not a teacher or pupil himself, undoubtedly had contact with the schools and their teachers. He even heard two ghost stories from ‘T. J.’ of Breconshire, ‘one of the schoolmasters of the Circulating Welsh Charity Schools’. The schools’ waning in popularity in the 1740s was possibly due to their association with Methodism, a movement with which Edmund Jones was closely allied. The Methodist leader Daniel Rowland was converted by one of Griffith Jones’s sermons and Howel Harris both taught in the schools and encouraged his followers to learn at them. Following Griffith Jones’s death in 1761 the schools did not cease operation and the responsibility for their upkeep passed to Madam Bridget Bevan who also had been a supporter of the S.P.C.K. charity schools. When she died in 1779 she left the schools £10,000, but her will was contested and during the 1780s the schools ceased to operate.

Apart from the more national educational initiatives, there were also local opportunities for schooling. Jones himself received his education from the Aberystyth curate, Howell Prosser, a man who had once witnessed a fairy funeral. It was not uncommon for the local curate to establish a small school for the children of the parish to instruct them in literacy and the tenets of religion. Indeed, the established church took a

111 Jones, History of the Parish of Aberystyth, p. 73.
particular interest in popular education, as is shown in the inclusion of a specific question about the availability of charity or public schools in bishops’ visitations. In Abergavenny, a free school established in the reign of Henry VIII provided education to the children of the town, along with ‘three or four male ones for teaching Children their Letters reading and writing’. In 1780 the town of Usk placed an advertisement in the *Glocester Journal* seeking a writing master who was ‘sufficiently capable of writing in the different Hands, and teaching Arithmetic and Accounts in all its Branches, in a masterly Manner’. This person was to teach ‘the Youth of certain parishes belonging to a certain Charity’, and the advertisement went on to explain that this teacher would ‘receive very great Advantages in other Respects, in teaching and instructing Youth from other parts of the Neighbourhood of Uske, not included in the said Charity.’ In Llanfihangel Llantarnam the annual interest of an invested £50, provided learning to five poor children and in Machen, Catherine Morgan left £2 a year for the education of two boys. Some schools also taught children from outside of their own parishes. A free school in Basaleg, established by Rowland Morgan, was open not only to all children from that parish, but also those from Henllys and Risca. Similarly, in 1729 Anne Alsworth established a girls’ school in Eglwysilan in Glamorgan which also served the children of Bedwas parish in Monmouthshire. Some schools were also kept by Nonconformists, such as those in Baptist meeting-houses in Llanwenarth and Trevethin. A number of these schools, which were for or available to the poor, did more than instil basic literacy. At the charity school in Caerleon, which instructed twenty boys and ten girls, the children began school at the age of eight. At fourteen the boys were apprenticed out ‘to trades they choose themselves or their Parents for them; and have each £8 to give before them except some

112 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/2, 5, 7, 9, 11.
113 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/2, 5, 7, 9, 11.
114 *Glocester Journal*, 12 June 1780.
115 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/9, 11.
116 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/5, 7, 9, 11.
117 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/5, 9, 11.
118 NLW, MSS. LL/QA/2, 7.
small Deductions for Stamps and Writings’. If they succeeded at their apprenticeships, they received ‘at the Expiration of it 6£ to buy tools &c.’. Similarly, at fourteen the girls were ‘put out to service, and at the years end & upon their good Behaviour receive 4£’.\textsuperscript{119} In Abergavenny, an advertisement in 1779 seeking a master for the workhouse stated that the candidate must be ‘capable of instructing the Youth therein, in Reading and Writing; and if he has been bred up to some Branch in the Linen or Wollen Manufactory, the more eligible’, showing a desire that such practical skills were taught, so as to prevent them from further poverty and dependence on the parish.\textsuperscript{120}

Along with its usefulness relative to the poor in producing productive, pious and moral members of society, eighteenth-century polite society had a growing appreciation of education as a commercial commodity. According to David Cressy’s study of literacy in early modern England, the abilities to read and write were ‘closely and consistently associated with social and economic position’.\textsuperscript{121} Moreover, John Money has pointed out that ‘eighteenth-century demand for instruction in good penmanship reflected much more than the practical fact that this was both vital to commerce and government and still comparatively scarce’, it also was ‘driven by pleasurable curiosity and by aspirations to urbanity’.\textsuperscript{122} Much of this taste for the fruits of learning was part of a culture of politeness amongst the burgeoning middling orders and the private education market altered accordingly. Throughout the early modern period the affluent had sent their children across the border to receive their education through the medium of English and many who could afford it, no doubt, continued to do so in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{123} However, across England smaller private institutions became extremely widespread. These schools were established quickly and sometimes withered equally quickly as the personal initiative of

\textsuperscript{119} NLW, MS. LL/QA/9.
\textsuperscript{120} Glocester Journal, 5 July 1779.
\textsuperscript{121} Cressy, ‘Literacy in Context’, p. 315.
\textsuperscript{123} Jones, ‘Language Literature and Education’, p. 295.
the schoolmaster and the demand of the public waxed and waned. They could be set up relatively cheaply and could offer the types of curriculum in vogue and demand without the constraints of traditional bylaws which restricted the older grammar schools.\textsuperscript{124} Of course, the fleeting nature of these schools makes a complete inventory of their extent impossible to construct and newspaper advertisements are perhaps the best source for evidence of their existence.\textsuperscript{125} The fact that many of these schools had provisions for boarders (especially as this was a ready source of revenue) meant that though located in England, schools could and did have Welsh students. However, that these type of schools were located on both sides of Offa's Dyke can be seen in an advertisement from the \emph{Glocester Journal} wherein Tudor Price respectfully informed the public that he intended to open a school at Llandeilo Gresynni in northern Monmouthshire on 8 January 1780 ‘for the instruction of Youth in Reading, English Grammar, Writing, Arithmetic in all its different Branches, the Use of the Globes, Latin, Greek, &c.; and be ready for the Reception of Boarders on modest Terms, where the strictest Attention will be paid to Healthy Learning; and Morals of those committed to his Care.’\textsuperscript{126} Moreover, the following year he made specific note in his advertisement that ‘Adult Persons’ were to be instructed at the school ‘in the House’.\textsuperscript{127}

This wider access to knowledge, both in the proliferation of printed materials and educational provision, would have informed and influenced people’s ideas, giving them wider contact with diverse and sometimes divergent information and opinions. One area of enlightened knowledge which is often seen as impacting negatively upon popular beliefs is medicine. The relationship between modernized and professionalized medicine and more traditional forms of healing will be discussed further in the next chapter, but, like education, the nature of medicine and medical provision were shifting in this period. Local healers and cunning-folk continued to operate in the region: Jones mentions two – Rissiart

\textsuperscript{124} Langford, \emph{A Polite and Commercial People}, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.; Money, ‘Teaching in the Market-Place’, p. 343.
\textsuperscript{126} \emph{Glocester Journal}, 11 January 1779.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 10 January 1780.
Cap Dee and Charles Hugh – in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*, but the new breed of more ‘modern’ medical practitioners also increasingly began to practice in the area in this period. One of the earliest to ‘professionally’ tend to the medical needs of Pontypool residents (apart from traditional practitioners) was the apothecary Elisha Beadles (1670–1734), a member of the prominent Quaker family from the Pant in Llanfihangel Ystern Llywern who learned his craft in a term of indenture to John Stanfield of Welshpool. Also active in the area in the mid-eighteenth century was the apothecary William Read of Pontymoel (1716–1769), whose patients included both elites like John Hanbury and the poor on behalf of the vestry. William Williams, Pantycelyn, who wrote an elegy for Read, contended that there was no better doctor in all the thirteen counties of Wales. There were also health professionals who serviced the population of western Monmouthshire who were not necessarily based there. Between August and September 1730, Mr Taylor ‘Surgeon, Ocultist, &c. of Bristol’ was practicing his skill in Monmouth. Taylor specialized in curing the blind and deaf and earlier in 1730 he was supposed to have cured one Sarah Beadles ‘who had been perfectly Blind for several Years’. Much less popular was Valentine Martin, a ‘Quack Doctor, about 30 Years of Age, who pretends to great Knowledge and Skill in Physick and Surgery’ who earned enough ire from the Pontypool people for them to put out an advertisement against him, warning others ‘not to give Credit to, or be impos’d upon by, such strolling Imposters’. Martin had left town in the middle of the night, leaving his patients ‘in a most miserable languishing Condition, some of whom are young, and so disabled by his unskilful Management, that they’ll never be able to get their Bread’.

131 Glocester Journal, 9 September 1730.
132 Ibid., 1 April 1740.
Methods of self-medication were also changing. More ‘traditional’ herbal and household remedies continued to be relevant, as is shown by the many uses for herbs noted in Edmund Jones’s unpublished ‘Spiritual Botonology’ – a two volume manuscript in which he described the physical attributes of many plants, their medicinal uses, and what can be inferred about the nature of God and His works from them – as well as the recipes published in almanacs and newspapers. However, in addition to this a variety of wonder drugs and tinctures became widely available in the period. On a single page of the *Glocester Journal* on 11 January 1779 eight separate medicines were advertised: Calcined Magnesia; Dr Smyth’s Restorative Medicine; Dr Anderson’s pills, or Pills of many Virtues; Dr Moore’s Chalybeate Elixir, or Restorative Drop; Maredant’s Drops; Dr James’s Powder; Dr Anderson’s only Genuine Scots Pills; and Spilsbury’s Drops. In terms of availability, Dr Robert Baton’s Balsalmick Styptick, which was ‘a certain Cure for any outward Bleedings and fresh wounds; and no less certain Relied against inward Bleedings, viz. Spitting and Vomiting Blood, bleeding from the Nose, Bloody Flux &c . . . also of great Efficacy against Female Weakness’, was sold ‘at the Printing Office in Gloucester, and by the Men that carry the News’. Alternatively, if a patient did not want to wait for the drug, some potions could be accessed locally. Both the Abergavenny based apothecary, N. Humphreys, and the Usk apothecary, John Watkins, sold ‘Mrs Joanna Stephens’s Medicines for the Stone and Gravel’. In all, when these new wonder drugs and medical practitioners were combined with more traditional alternatives, a plethora of medical options and potentially views arise.

The expansion of literate discourse and medical thought can be seen as relating to Monmouthshire communities’ interconnectivity with other areas locally, nationally, and even internationally. Indeed, even in more spatial/geographic terms, developments like the improvement of roads and the provision of some public and mail coaches were also

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133 NL, MS. M350 012 JON H. C. For examples of remedies printed in newspapers see *Glocester Journal*, 29 December 1730, 5 January 1730/31.
134 *Glocester Journal*, 2 June 1730.
135 Ibid., 28 October 1740, 11 November 1740.
facilitating greater connectivity to the outside world, even if not necessarily revolutionizing access to travel. Roads in early modern Monmouthshire were notoriously bad. In 1801 Archdeacon Coxe commented about the ‘remoteness of the country, and the bad state of the roads before the formation of turnpikes’, noting that the old Roman roads had largely disappeared owing to the ‘bogginess of the soil’, the ‘frequent inundations which have swept away all traces of human art’, the ‘cultivated state of . . . parts of the country,’ and the ‘pitching the roads and pathways, and of planting of hedge-rows on broad and high embankments, the foundations of which are generally formed with large stones.’ 136 Coxe remarked on an example of the ruder type of road as one joining onto the highroad from Newport to Chepstow at Crick: a ‘narrow hollow way . . . its depth and narrowness, and the height of the hedges on each side’ exhibiting the kind of roads which were ‘so common in Monmouthshire before the construction of turnpikes’. 137 These roads were so bad that in 1757 the ‘Carmarthen Carriers to London’ placed an advertisement in the Gloucester Journal desiring ‘the Gentlemen in the Counties of Carmarthen, Brecon, and Monmouthshire, will have the Roads made passable for Waggons’. 138

In 1755 a turnpike trust had been established by a number of local officials, gentlemen, and MPs for the improvement of the roads, but its activities faced opposition from members of the gentry, and it was not until 1758 that an effective Turnpike Act was established for both Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire, creating seven turnpike districts and enabling the construction and improvement of the roads, one of which was the Pontypool Turnpike Trust. 139 The trusts were given powers to appropriate lands up to 100 yards from the existing road and not near a house as well as building materials from waste or common land, or else to purchase them. 140 Besides the repairing and improvement of

137 Ibid., pp. 13–14.
138 Gloucester Journal, 26 April 1757.
the roads, the turnpike trusts also set about marking the road with milestones. Apart from the benefits to transport and communication, these would have increased the awareness of the areas’ interconnectivity to London and the rest of the kingdom by serving as geographical symbols and reminders of those other areas, their direction, and distance. Even if such travel remained difficult and expensive, people on the roads were reminded where those other places were and that it was possible to travel to them. Unfortunately, the minute-book for the Pontypool Turnpike Trust is not extant, but a series of five deeds issued by the trust between 1767 and 1768 are, and each document records a loan of £200 provided by John Hanbury to the trust.141 As the surveyors of the highway for Trevethin parish spent only £61 10s. 3¾d. in the same years, some substantial work must have been undertaken.142 Moreover, the tollbooths themselves were able to raise a substantial amount of money: for instance, the Caerleon District tollbooths raised £230 11d. in 1778 ‘above the Expense of collecting them’.143 Additionally, as Robert Weeks has pointed out, drovers were less likely to use turnpike roads and thus carriages and carts could travel along these with fewer encumbrances.144 Although it did bring a great deal of improvement to the transportation networks of the area, it was not a cure-all or a revolution for the roads. The major change in transport in Monmouthshire began the year before Jones’s death in 1792 with an act of parliament enabling the building of a canal and tramroads to facilitate the transportation of mineral resources from north-west Monmouthshire to Newport in the south.145 However, significant as this canal was, it occurred too late for consideration here.

Roads were not the only change in transportation and communication in this period. The mail service was vital in linking the people of Monmouthshire both to each other and the outside world as was the establishment of coaches travelling from these

142 GwA, D/PA 13.50.
143 *Glocester Journal*, 8 February 1779.
145 Anon., ‘An Act for making and maintaining a Navigable Cut or canal from or from some place near Pontnewynydd, into the River Usk, at or near the Town of Newport . . . and for making and maintaining Rail Ways or Stone Roads, from such cuts or Canals to several Iron Works and Mines in the Counties of Monmouth and Brecknock’ (London: Clark Eyre and Andrew Strahan, 1792), p. 2619.
more remote areas to the cultural metropolis of London. The first regularly scheduled mail coach for south Wales, running from Carmarthen to London, did not begin operation until 1785, following the introduction of specially designed mail coaches the previous year, but a series of official ‘post towns’ had been established in Monmouthshire as far back as 1602.146 There was, of course, mail being carried, one way or another, between Monmouthshire and the other counties of south Wales and England in Jones’s day, both officially and by drovers and other itinerate people, as is shown by his correspondence with George Whitefield, Howel Harris, and John Wesley, and by the fact that he received both books and money from London.147 Official passenger coach travel happened sooner than official mail coaches, with the first scheduled coach leaving Agincourt Square, Monmouth, for London on 4 November 1763 and the first scheduled coach between Chepstow and London in 1773.148 This does not mean that there was not earlier transport. The above mentioned address requesting the gentlemen of south Wales to repair the roads in 1757 was by the ‘Carmarthen Carriers to London’ attempting to ‘keep that Stage, with Waggons, constantly when the Roads are made sufficient for that Purpose; by which Means all Gentlemen, Tradesmen, and others, will always find Conveyance for all Sorts of Carriage, large as well as Horse-Carriage.’149

Despite all this, travel was less than easy, especially in the wooded and mountainous upland region of north-west Monmouthshire. Still, the nature of travel and geography is vital to the understanding of Edmund Jones and his works. Jones is known for his impressive itinerancy around Wales and the borders, in which he persisted until extremely late in life. His diary for 1778, when he was seventy-six, records preaching in

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146 Weeks, ‘Transport and Communications’, p. 244.
147 See, for example, Rees, Protestant Nonconformity, pp. 336–343, and NLW, CMA Trevecka MSS. 119, 162, 173, 243, 362, 636, 2704, 2706, 2715, and 2724. Jones’s Diary for 1773 (NLW, MS. 7027A) records books ‘had of John Thorton Esq’ as well as several from Wesley. One of the pages of Jones’s diary for 1780 (NLW, MS. 7029A) has the words ‘Direct for Lady H. at Spaw fields London’ on it and the diary for 1778 (NLW, MS. 7028A) has ‘To John Thorton Esq to be left with mr Crawfurd no 2 Church ally Lothbury’ on its cover.
149 Glocester Journal, 26 April 1757.
Radnorshire, Breconshire, Herefordshire, Glamorgan, and, of course, Monmouthshire, and other diaries and writings reveal even wider travels.\textsuperscript{150} John Harvey has remarked on Jones’s ‘fascination with the physical characteristics of landscape, and his facility in conveying their palpable presence’.\textsuperscript{151} As will be discussed in Chapter Four, Jones perceived the landscape itself to be representative of the characteristics of God and religion.\textsuperscript{152} Similarly, in his accounts of apparitions, minute and exact details of place and topography are usually attended to and form a vital part of their narrative. Moreover, Harvey has further noted the importance of travel in Jones’s work: ‘the majority of communications between humans and apparitions mentioned in Jones’s accounts involve adult males of the lower orders, travelling in the landscape at night’.\textsuperscript{153} Indeed some spirits, such as phantom coaches, phantom riders, and the ‘old woman of the mountain’ were relevant to, and preyed specifically on, travellers.\textsuperscript{154}

Even the very structuring of Jones’s narrative style in his works is intimately related to concepts of place, travel, and geography. This tying to place is readily apparent in Jones’s \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth}, which, in addition to focusing on the geographical construct of the parish, concerned itself with issues such as the interaction between the different spatial areas of the valleys in that parish. A narrative of travel is also implicit in his \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}. In her review of Harvey’s edition of Jones, \textit{The Appearance of Evil}, Kathryn Brammall pointed out that in his reorganization of the accounts ‘we lose the sense of geographic meandering and the resultant cultural interaction that was so much a part of Jones’s exploration of his Wales.’\textsuperscript{155} Harvey has placed the accounts in alphabetical order depending on place and attempted to group those

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{150} NLW, MS. 7028A.
\item \textsuperscript{151} Harvey, \textit{Appearance of Evil}, p. 19.
\item \textsuperscript{152} Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth}, pp. 11–49.
\item \textsuperscript{153} Harvey, \textit{Appearance of Evil}, p. 26. Jones notes this, and attributed the preponderance of apparitions to the lower orders to the fact that they were more likely than their social superiors to be travelling alone in such places at such times. See CL, MS. 2.249, p. 276.
\item \textsuperscript{154} See Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 24–7.
\end{itemize}
with similar content within those places together, stating that ‘this is in contrast to their rather haphazard arrangement in the previous editions’. However, instead of being ‘haphazard’, Jones’s accounts are organized geographically, as one travelling through Wales. He begins in Aberystwyth parish, moving south towards Newport, before travelling back northward through Monmouthshire. He then jumps the length of Wales, moving up to Anglesey, before following a southward organization through the counties of north Wales towards Breconshire, where he moves westward through Cardiganshire to Pembrokeshire, before turning back towards Monmouthshire via Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan. In this Jones is perhaps mirroring the organization of a tour or travel journal. What is readily apparent is that for Jones, a connection to place, landscape, and travel was vital to his worldview and the nature of his works.

This sense of place in Jones’s accounts is augmented by details of people, both as informants and subjects. Whilst details of religion and religiosity stand out as the most prominent descriptors of these people, details of occupation and social rank and position are also important, as they situate the actors and participants relative to one another and, to some extent, Jones within societal settings. As John Harvey has emphasised,

Uncommonly for this type of collection, the witnesses and relaters were representative of broad social strata . . . Thus whereas collected accounts of ghosts usually reflect the experiences of the gentry, Jones’s work uniquely, described the religious imagination of predominantly the lower orders, many of whom were (like himself) Dissenters. The narratives are vignettes of their habitual way of life at home and in the field, eating, journeying, working, worshiping, conjuring, resting, sleeping, dying, and burying.

To take Jones’s section on Aberystwyth in his Apparitions of Spirits as an example, of the people mentioned whose occupation or social status were stated there is a farrier, a weaver, two gypsy women, a ‘poor man’, two farm labourers, the chief servant of a

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156 Harvey, Appearance of Evil, pp. 39–40.
157 There are some exceptions where Jones diverts from this geographical categorization and discusses stories from different areas but with similar content together. See, Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 49–51, 65–7, 74–6, 78–9, 89–90.
158 Harvey, p. 2.
household, and a landowning woman. 159 Eighteenth-century society remained, as it had been throughout the early modern period, an ordered one, with the moneyed gentry, great and small, presiding at the top down to the poor paupers at the bottom, with yeomen, husbandmen, and labourers in between. This social ladder was not merely based on economic terms (although it would be foolish to downplay the part of economics in it) but also reflected participation in cultural activities, perceptions, and appearances. The development of ‘polite society’ and the consumer revolution of the late-eighteenth century has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent decades, however its effects on Welsh life have not been addressed to the same extent as, say, provincial England. However, in Wales too, social standing and perception were tied to the material trappings and social activities and pursuits of polite society. Moreover, as Paul Langford has argued, ‘this debasement of gentility is one of the clearest signs of social change in the eighteenth century, the mark of a fundamental transformation . . . Nothing unified the middling orders so much as their passion for aping the manners and morals of the gentry more strictly defined, as soon as they possessed the material means to do so.’ 160 Related to this is Jones’s assertion that amongst the disbelievers in apparitions and fairies were ‘many indeed of the Gentry, and some others in imitation of them’. 161

Some idea of people’s material trappings can be gained from investigation of probate records. Of course these can be problematic, as only those in certain socio-economic conditions would have left such evidence behind and not all wills are overly detailed or extant. These records, can at best only give a partial view of contemporary material culture. Still, they can be useful. For instance, the 1754 inventory of the possessions of Morgan Williams, a yeoman from Pontypool, contains goods like a silver watch, a silver tankard, 2 large silver spoons, six tea spoons and tea tongs, a clock and case, a box and looking glass, wines and ‘spiritouse Liquors’, a £30 mortgage, rent from

159 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 1–11.
161 Jones, History of the Parish of Aberystwith, p. 83 (emphasis added).
William Llewellyn (£9), Rees Phillip (£5 10s.), and Charles Phillips (£9 10s.), and £21 12s. ‘Due from Capel Hanbury Esq. for Cord Wood’. It is also interesting that the appraisers of his estate were Miles Harry, a Baptist minister from Pontypool, and Nathaniel Beadles, an apothecary also from Pontypool. \(^{162}\) Beadles was wealthy, possessing property in Pant-teg and Mamheilad parishes, and in the town of Caerleon in addition to Pontypool. His will specifically mentions a mahogany tea table, bureau, and chest of drawers, coffee and tea utensils, and multiple looking glasses. \(^{163}\) Such wealth of material culture was not universal however: the victualler Andrew Mooney, of the same town, left behind more modest possessions including six feather beds, a chest of drawers ‘with a looking glass’, and a clock. \(^{164}\) The more remote parish of Aberystwyth, in contrast, presents a different picture. The majority of eighteenth-century probate records for this parish pertain to the ‘yeomanry’, perhaps reflecting the more agrarian nature of the area. The majority of possessions being left are modest, albeit with some quality items, like feather beds as opposed to chaff beds, being fairly common. \(^{165}\) The will of Thomas Edmund, a yeoman, also listed elbow chairs, \(^{166}\) and that of John Watkins, also a yeoman, listed ‘one huchister chest’ and ‘one panel chest’; plated spurs, a saddle, and a whip; a razor and hone; and books. \(^{167}\) Books were also present in the inventories of the possessions of Walter James, blacksmith, and William David, cooper, \(^{168}\) and Edmund Jones, yeoman, possessed a clock. \(^{169}\)

Association of quality household goods like those made of silver with wealth go largely without saying, however some other of these items may require further context. As

\(^{162}\) NLW, LL/1754/118 I, Inventory of the goods of Morgan Williams, yeoman, Pontypool, 1754.
\(^{163}\) NLW, LL/1800/125 W, Will of Nathaniel Beadles, apothecary, Pontypool, 1800.
\(^{164}\) NLW, LL/1727/236 I. Inventory of Andrew Mooney, victualler, Pontypool, 1727.
\(^{165}\) See, for example, NLW, LL/1743/12 I, Inventory of Henry Williams, yeoman, Aberystwyth, 1743; NLW, LL/1737/15 W, Will of Richard Lewis, weaver, Aberystwyth, 1737; NLW, LL/1788/4 W, Will of Thomas Edmund, yeoman, Aberystwyth, 1788; NLW, LL/1758/12 W, Will of Thomas Williams, yeoman, Aberystwyth, 1758.
\(^{166}\) NLW, LL/1788/4 W.
\(^{167}\) NLW, LL/1791/8 W, Will of John Watkins, yeoman, Aberystwyth, 1791.
\(^{168}\) NLW, LL/1733/4 I, Inventory of Walter James, blacksmith, Aberystwyth, 1733; NLW, LL/1747/18 I, Inventory of William David, cooper, Aberystwyth, 1747.
\(^{169}\) This is not the Rev. Edmund Jones. NLW, LL/1790/6 W, Will of Edmund Jones, yeoman, Aberystwyth, 1790.
T. H. Breen explained ‘we are dealing here with perceptions, with cultural readings, with attempts by people of different background and experience not only to interpret the eighteenth-century consumer economy, but also their place within it’. Types of furniture were illustrative of certain values: items like feather beds show a desire for increased comfort while furniture made of expensive and exotic wood like mahogany would show off wealth and sophistication of taste. Consumption of tea or coffee is naturally illustrated by the ownership of associated utensils, as is the social activity of drinking such beverages as distinct from other forms of social drinking like the consumption of alcohol. Looking glasses were decorative and an indicator of status as well as being demonstrative of a heightened sense of care about one’s personal appearance. Clocks and watches demonstrated a sense of time and the coordination of schedule both in their own day-to-day lives and with others in the community. Moreover, as Andrew Mooney’s clock is mentioned as being ‘in ye Hall’ it implies that there was a decorative element to the timepiece as such a location would be a good one to show it off to visitors. Moreover, the residents of the area around Pontypool were not just potential consumers of polite material culture imported from elsewhere, but also producers of it. The tinplating and japanware industry of Pontypool has already been mentioned above. Japanware was, of course, desired for its aesthetic value, and, according to Coxe, the quality of the Pontypool output was ‘long unrivalled’. In addition to this, a notable family of makers of high-end clocks, the Vaughans, lived and operated in Pontypool. Charles Vaughan set up his business in the late 1730s, but he does not seem to have employed any formal apprentices,

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172 Coxe, Historical Tour of Monmouthshire, II, p. 234.
and for one reason or another, the business closed down toward the very end of the century.\textsuperscript{173}

The culture of eighteenth-century polite society was more than mere material trappings, and the activities and diversions of this culture were also available in Monmouthshire. Some evidence of tea drinking has already been shown in the probate records, and references to wine and spirits in the same records allude to drinking of another sort; both of which were social diversions of the period. Horseracing was another common pleasure indulged in by the genteel orders and an annual race seems to have been run at Monmouth. Additionally, with the races were ‘all the Diversions and elegant Entertainments as usual . . . suitable to so great an Appearance of Persons of Quality, Gentlemen and Ladies, that are expected at this meeting’ including ‘Balls, Assemblies, and Ordinaries’.\textsuperscript{174} Cockfighting was also quite common and the pages of the \textit{Glocester Journal} often announced matches between the gentlemen of Monmouthshire and those of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Breconshire, and Glamorgan.\textsuperscript{175} Additionally, in his work on apparitions, Jones also referred to other cultural practices and pastimes such as bowling or playing cards.\textsuperscript{176} Jones’s views on such vain pursuits and material trappings were largely negative and following chapters will discuss his condemnation of them on religious grounds as well as the interventions by spirits in order to discourage people from participating in them. However, Jones did not view all leisure pursuits and interests of the eighteenth-century middling sorts with condemnation. Botany and gardening were popular at the time and Jones’s interest in them is shown in his ‘Spiritual Botonology’. The plants described in the work were not merely of field and forest, but also domestic and cultivated with Jones remarking specifically on gardens in the area, such as those of the Rev. Edward


\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Glocester Journal}, 10 August 1731, 12 August 1740.

\textsuperscript{175} For example see \textit{Glocester Journal}, 27 May 1740, 20 May 1749/50.

\textsuperscript{176} For example see CL, MS. 2.249, pp. 215–6; Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 14–16.
Davies and Mr Hanbury. These activities could serve to bring people together in social interactions, but they also aided in the formulation of social perceptions and indications of status, which, to some extent, set them apart.

In contrast to this, Edmund Jones’s meagre income relegated to him a place further down the economic scale, even if his position of social importance and intellectual pursuits meant that his societal position could not be estimated by economics alone. His annual salary was just £10, not at all a substantial sum, but roughly the same as described by John Fox as being the wages of a ‘tolerably expert husbandman’ in late-eighteenth century Monmouthshire. Interestingly, in his Miscellaneous Companions, the first volume of which was a tour of south Wales, William Matthews gave an inventory of the belongings of a Welsh curate living in Jeffreyston in Pembrokeshire which he described as surrounded by ‘the collieries which produce stone coal, commonly known among malt-makers in England by the name of Tenby coal’. The curate’s possessions were apparently the seventy-one texts which comprised his library, a bed, a table, three empty chests, three broken chairs, a pair of breeches and a hat. Significantly, the priest’s salary was under £10 a year and his possessions were, according to Mathews, considered in Wales ‘neither small nor uncostly for a curate’, although it is probable that he was writing somewhat hyperbolically and derisively and it should be remembered that the penury of Welsh curates in the period was a common stereotype. However, Jones’s possessions seem to have exceeded his: the Transh had multiple floors and rooms, and his library was much more substantial. In understanding Jones’s financial position therefore, it needs to be appreciated that for the lower orders there were economic systems in place which could supplement basic income (or lack thereof) to some extent.

178 Fox, Agriculture of the County of Monmouth, p. 128.
182 See Watts, ‘Edmund Jones Library’.
In the eighteenth century there was a system of reciprocity alongside the basic work and trade exchanges of the market economy in the form of poor relief and support to those in need. Steven King, in his regional study of English poor relief between 1700 and 1850, has employed the idea of an ‘economy of makeshifts’, wherein different modes of relief including, but not limited to, public welfare, private charity (both by groups and individuals), and familial and neighbourly support combined to supplement the income of those in need. In his study of poor relief in early modern Monmouthshire, Richard Allen has shown how by the eighteenth century poor relief was widespread in the county. Each case of relief was considered carefully by the parish overseers of the poor and distinctions were usually made between the victims of fortune and those whose misfortune was in part due to their own fault, and between the deserving and undeserving poor, a judgement usually measured by the metric of acceptable social behaviour. The degree and nature of relief varied largely with locality, but usually relief was fairly sophisticated, providing not only money, but basic amenities like clothing or medical care and could even provide support for people to look after their incapacitated relatives.

In Trevethin parish the most standard form of relief was in the form of monetary weekly stipends which varied from 6d. to 2s. depending on year and need. These seemed to serve as a base rate to which goods and emergency funds were added when required. Shoes and clothing such as stockings, shirts, breeches, and petticoats were common provisions, both in finished forms and unfinished materials which were tailored by the recipient or another local person. Medical aid was also common. In 1772, 5s. 3d. was given to Charles Jones ‘for curing the ague’. Similarly, in 1776, 2s. was paid for lodging for William Barkley’s wife ‘under Doctor Lewis’s care’ and 1s. 6d. was paid to the doctor for

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185 GwA, MS. D/PA 13.50, 24 April 1772.
her medicine.\footnote{Ibid., 30 April 1776.} In the event of death, funeral expenses were paid by the parish and, in addition to the service, coffin, shrouding, and burial, ale was often provided, ostensibly to give the deceased a proper send off. Provisions for children were also made. For example, in 1775 the parish spent 1s. on a warrant to apprehend the reputed father of Ann Roth’s illegitimate child.\footnote{Ibid., 2 May 1775.} Parents were often paid on behalf of their children, or else other adults if the parents were deceased. Thus, Henry Harris was paid ‘for attending David Saunders s son in part’.\footnote{Ibid., 22 April 1771.} Apprenticeships and terms of indenture were also secured, ostensibly to prevent the children’s continued reliance on the parish in later life; such as those provided in 1776 for both ‘Jeffra’s daughter’ and ‘Perigo’s son’.\footnote{Ibid., 30 April 1776.} Some of the items given are very telling as they indicate an alteration in the local economy of makeshifts. John Evan has pointed out that as the iron industry grew in the late-eighteenth century, the owners of the ironworks took out leases on the iron and coal. This meant, on the one hand, that as more coal was produced and shipped, it became more widely available. On the other hand, this meant that people who lived where the coal was mined, and had been previously allowed to take coal for their own use, now had to purchase it from the ironmasters.\footnote{Evans, ‘Early Industrial Development’, p. 374.} It is, therefore, not insignificant that the accounts of the overseers of the poor often record the provision of coal to the poor. Finally, in addition to all of these more seemingly practical provisions, there were also supplementary donations such as 1s. paid for a pint of brandy for Thomas Lewis.\footnote{GwA, MS. D/PA 13.50, 16 April 1770.} This could be for some practical or ‘medicinal’ purpose, but as it is listed amongst a series of benefices for Mary Morgan ‘stranger’, including conveying her out of the parish, it could have been some form of payment in kind for his help in the management of Mary, although this is not made explicit.
Some of the matters of the actual administration of poor relief had a bearing on the local economy and social interaction. In addition to what might be considered handouts, the poor were also given opportunities to earn extra money, either in working for the overseers of the highways or the churchwardens. In 1768, one of the Trevethin churchwardens paid various people a total of 6s. 8d. for the removal of twelve hedgehogs, three badgers, an ‘oaughter’ and a ‘wile cat’. The badging of the poor was a common practice, especially after the 1697 statute made it mandatory for all deserving recipients of relief. Badges identified the poor as a separate entity and in that way probably helped to foster some sense of nascent ‘class consciousness’; as such it has often been viewed as humiliating and marginalizing. However, badging could also be seen an acceptance or even endorsement by the community as being ‘worthy’ of relief. Whatever the case, many did object to the badges and the sense of dependence and subordination they implied. That badging was employed in the Pontypool area is clear from the Trevethin overseer’s accounts which record the purchase of nine badges in 1773 and thirteen in 1775 as well as several purchases of lesser or unspecified amounts in other years. Residence was another factor relating to the social implications of poverty and belonging to the community. Under the strict letter of the law, the impoverished were the responsibility of the parish in which they had legal settlement. If a person fell on hard times away from their legal place of residency, they would be removed to their home parish if possible and, if not, their expenses would be covered by that parish. A parish where a person did not have legal settlement had no obligation to care for that person, whether they were deserving of relief or not. Thus, it is no surprise to find entries like that of 1769 which paid 17s. 10d. to ‘the overseer of Christchurch parish Towards the Relief of John Lewis and

192 Ibid., 18 April 1768.
194 GwA, MS. D/PA 13.50, 7 April 1769, 20 April 1773, April 18, 1774, 2 May 1775. See also Allen, ‘Administration of Poor Relief’, p. 277.
other Charges’ as well as 2s. for the overseer to journey to see Lewis. However, as was discussed above, poor relief was often provided to outsiders in this period nevertheless, perhaps reflecting a growing acceptance of people’s movements.

In addition to the legally sanctioned relief of the poor, private individuals also sought to alleviate the plight of the worse off. In his will, the apothecary Elisha Beadles gave

Evan Beavans of Panteag, Richd Hanbury of Pontmoyal, Thomas Ridley of Pontpool Jn° Jones of Trevethin, Paul Philips of Lanvihangel, And Benjamin Thomas of Momhillad the sum of five pounds to be distributed by y° or y° majority of y° to those y° are real objects of Charity who do meet to pform divine worship to almighty God amongst us y° Christian people called Quakers who’ meeting house at Pontymoyl.

Similarly, in Aberystyth, Jones remarked that ‘the number of their poor is fewer than in some neighbouring Parishes and there are Legacies left for them’. One of these was left by Anthony Bonner, a rector of Llanwenarth in the reign of Charles II, and consisted of a field which provided £2 a year ‘except when the field is overflowed by the river’. The other which Jones lists was left by Richard Edmund, ‘a virtuous man’, and consisted originally of £2 a year but by Jones’s time it had been reduced to 20s. a year. There were also those who, while not leaving legacies which paid out annually, left money or goods to be distributed amongst the parish poor at the time of their decease. Jane Andrews of Aberystyth left 20s. to the poor upon her death as well as any corn or oatmeal which happened to be in her house when she died. Similarly, in August 1770, Jones himself distributed ‘bread to the poor of the parish &c the worth of one guinea, at my spouse’s desire before her death’. In addition to the benefices of the deceased, there were groups of people like the subscribers to ‘the Fund established for the Relief of Widows and Orphans of necessitous Clergymen in the County of Monmouth’ which set up

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195 GwA, MS. D/PA 13.50, 7 April 1769.
196 NLW, LL/1734/123 W, Will of Elisha Beadles, Apothecary, Pontypool, 1734.
197 Jones, History of the Parish of Aberystyth, p. 61.
198 Ibid. See also NLW, LL/1663/75 W, Will of Anthony Bonner, minister, Llanwenarth, 1663.
199 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystyth, pp. 61–2.
200 NLW, LL/1771/5 W, Will of Jane Andrew, widow, Aberystyth, 1771.
201 NLW, MS. 7026 A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1770.
complementary provision for the deserving poor.\textsuperscript{202} All of this existed alongside and in congruence with official parish welfare as well as neighbourly gifts and lending.

Edmund Jones was never exactly financially secure. His annual income for most of his life, as was stated above, was around £10, a portion of which was supplied by the Congregational and Presbyterian funds, and according to an anonymous friend writing for the \textit{Evangelical Magazine} shortly after Jones’s death, he ‘frequently wanted the comforts and sometimes even the necessities of life’.\textsuperscript{203} This paucity of income was not unusual, but was, nevertheless, not really enough to live on in the period and certainly not to support Jones’s thirst for reading and knowledge, and thus was further supplemented by gifts and donations. This was not from parish welfare, but rather goods and money beneficently given to him by members of his local and religious community. Thus, Jones’s own situation with local and interpersonal welfare provisions is significant within the community and warrants discussion. After looking at the gifts of his benefactors, it is easier to see how Jones was able to afford his large library on so small a salary. In one case, a list of some thirteen people helped him to buy the four volume Du Shin’s \textit{Ecclesiastical History} for £4 10s.\textsuperscript{204} Sometimes gifts were large: when Jones was in Abergavenny on 24 June 1739, J. Nicholas Esq. gave him £5, an ‘extraordinary supply from the Presbiterian Fund’, and, unknown to him, ‘Mrs James’ put 5s. into his pocket.\textsuperscript{205} Anonymous or secret donations do not seem to have been out of the ordinary including £6 from ‘benefactor incognito’.\textsuperscript{206} He also received gifts in kind, such as the two pairs of gloves and a pocket handkerchief from Mr James of Abergavenny as well as two books from Gabriel Harris.\textsuperscript{207}

Additionally, entries in his diary such ‘August 10 at Monmouth Mr Howell Harris gave me 15sh to bestow upon good uses or as I pleased Blessed be God’ and ‘Mrs

\textsuperscript{202} \textit{Glocester Journal}, 21 June 1779.

\textsuperscript{203} Anon. ‘The Rev. Edmund Jones, late Minister of Ebenezer Chapel’, p. 181. See Also NLW, MS. 7029.

\textsuperscript{204} NLW, MS. 7023A.

\textsuperscript{205} NLW, MS. 7024A.

\textsuperscript{206} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid.
Vaughan gave me a Guinea to bestow upon good when in Wales out of wch she allows 5 shillings [for Jones’s own use]’ indicate that Jones was not only a recipient but also a dispenser of charity. In this, mirroring the philosophy of other dispensers of welfare, he distinguished reasons and circumstances for some of his giving as when he gave 6d. to a woman who had lost ‘3 cows and a heifer with the flood’. Thus, he clearly saw her as a worthy object of charity. Moreover, he also gave gifts in kind such as books, Welsh Bibles, and tobacco. Both in his giving and receiving, Jones was, as will be discussed more fully in Chapter Four, adopting a somewhat providential view of substance and charity. Both Jones and his wife had a Christian view of their duty to give to the less fortunate and a ‘the lord will provide’ attitude to their own worldly provision as is illustrated in several folkloric or biographical accounts. For instance, once, when walking home from one of his preaching tours, he happened upon a poor man, mostly naked and freezing with cold. Having no money on his person, he took off his own shirt as well as other articles of clothing and gave them to the poor man. On another occasion, when a beneficence which Jones regularly received, and on which he much depended, was withheld, another preacher, albeit without knowledge of Jones’s troubles, felt ‘unaccountable anxiety concerning him’ and made provisions for Jones’s plight to be alleviated. Significantly, the adoption of this attitude demonstrates the degree to which Jones’s religious views permeated even this aspect of his social interactions as well as his attitude towards his own financial security and position. Still, such exchange, giving and receiving, of goods out of charity might have had motives rooted in religious principles, but it also served to further cement the community together through a connection of mutual dependence based on reciprocity. In this, Jones’s position as a receiver and especially as a giver would have helped to reflect and foster his importance in society.

208 Ibid.
209 NLW, MS. 7023 A.
210 Anon. ‘The Rev. Edmund Jones, late Minister of Ebenezer Chapel’, p. 182. For a similar account, see Chapter Four below.
211 Ibid., pp. 182–3.
It should be remembered that embedded in his community as Jones was, he was also apart from it. His frequent itinerancies throughout the hill and valleys of Wales and the borders brought him new and different experiences both through his isolation from, and interaction with, others, as did his interaction with ideas in the books of his library. Wider Wales in the eighteenth century is difficult to generalize. The small geographical range of most people’s experience still provided somewhat diverse and idiosyncratic cultures and conditions relative to the natures of local economic environments, such as the standing and nature of local gentry or the type of industry or agriculture engaged in, modes of community and living, and historical memory. Furthermore, notwithstanding the distribution of English speaking communities throughout Wales, such as those in the Glamorgan, Pembrokeshire, and Radnorshire, the nature of Welsh spoken, for instance in north and south Wales, also differed. 212

In agrarian areas, husbandry and the sale of cattle remained, as it had throughout the early modern period, the main means of income. The decline of the practice of transhumance (moving between upland and lowland areas seasonally), excepting in some areas of Caernarfonshire, led to changes in both modes of living as well as more effective farming methods. Similarly, more prosperous farmers in areas with good soil and climate began to adopt new farming techniques such as crop rotation, better methods of fertilising, and the growing of root vegetables such as potatoes and turnips. Such interest in improvement was partially facilitated by the establishment of agricultural societies, the first in Breconshire in 1755, followed in the 1770s and 1780s by others in Carmarthenshire, Glamorgan, Cardiganshire, and Pembrokeshire. However, such improvements were often dependent on the enthusiasm of particular farmers and landowners. Moreover, most Welsh farms in the period remained small and dependent on more traditional methods and crops, particularly in upland areas and the less fertile regions.

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of west Wales. 213 Many Welsh husbandmen also turned to shepherding instead of cattle rearing both for meat, and for wool. The nature of the Welsh wool and textile industry also changed in some areas in the period, particularly in Montgomeryshire, Merionethshire, and Denbighshire, prompted by increased demand as suppliers of cloth for slaves in the American colonies and the West Indies and for soldiers during the American War of Independence, as well as by the waning of the monopoly of the Shrewsbury Draper’s Company which had dominated the exportation of Welsh wool throughout the early modern period.214

In terms of industrial development, this was obviously dictated by effort, distribution of ore, and methods of mining and forging. In addition to the coal and iron industry in the south east, copper dominated industrial efforts in the south west, particularly in the Neath and Swansea areas, and as well as in Anglesey and Flintshire. Lead was also mined in Flintshire and Cardiganshire, and the slate industry in north-west Wales developed rapidly from the 1780s.215 Moreover, facilitated by and facilitating these agricultural and industrial developments was the growth of towns, particularly Swansea and Merthyr Tudful, which in turn, in part, led to the expansion of polite society and the middling orders. This development of taste further facilitated the growth of sea-side towns as popular retreats, such as in Abergele, Rhyl, and Aberystwyth, although it should be remembered that Welsh towns, even the prosperous Swansea, did not match the population or cultural amenities of their English counterparts in the period.216 Many of the other factors which have been referred to in connection with north-west Monmouthshire affected the rest of Wales as well. The charity schools were a Wales-wide phenomenon

and from the 1750 Wales experienced the establishment of turnpike roads.\textsuperscript{217} The border newspapers, as discussed above, also attempted, at least in their writing, to service a wider Welsh audience. However, this development, urbanity, politeness, and industrialization was not uniform throughout the nation: turnpike roads only reached certain places, schools frequented some areas more than others, and towns and communities differed in degree of interconnectivity, size, and importance. But Jones's experiences in north-west Monmouthshire were also not homogenous. His residency in Aberystruth, Mynyddislwyn, and Trevethin, placed him in the context of the quasi-urban and rural, the agricultural and industrial, and even, to some extent with Welsh and English speaking. Travelling throughout Wales, he became well acquainted with other areas and their people and culture, but through his experience of diverse social situations at home, albeit in a measure distinct and different from those in other areas, he could perhaps view and interpret the desperate communities of Wales through a paradigm formulated in the hills and valleys of north-west Monmouthshire. Visiting an agrarian community in Radnorshire, or an industrial one in western Glamorgan, he could make it relatable and understandable within his own, local microcosm.\textsuperscript{218}

The society of north-west Monmouthshire left an indelible mark on Jones's thought. The apparitions and other supernatural interactions were bound to the social setting in which they took place and the people who experienced them. The social experiences of the participants in Jones's accounts varied relative to economic wealth, exposure to printed materials and literate culture, perceptions of medicine and health, material culture, and interactions with those outside their immediate communities through travel or relocation. The very nature of the region's geography and economic development meant that there was a great degree of variation even between the more mountainous and


\textsuperscript{218} Evidence of this can perhaps be seen in sections of \textit{Apparitions of Spirits} where he compares or groups together examples from other parts of Wales with those from his own locality. See for instance, Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 49–51, 65–7, 74–6, 78–9, 89–90.
agrarian parish of Aberystwyth and the quasi-urban and semi-industrialised area of

Pontypool. Pontypool itself was not yet, as Coxe would describe it in 1801,

a large staggering place, containing 250 houses, and 1500 souls. Several
neat habitations, and numerous shops, present an appearance of thriving
prosperity, notwithstanding the dusky aspect of the town, occasioned by
the adjacent forges. The inhabitants derive great support from the iron
works and collieries, and have recently benefited by the trade of the
canal.219

David Williams’s 1796 conclusions are probably nearer the mark. Williams described the

burgeoning industrial marvel being formed in the district and declared that on the banks of

the Pontypool-Newport Canal will soon arise ‘a second Birmingham, or a second

Sheffield’. However,

no disposition appears in the natives of the district to adopt the habits of

manufactories [. . .] Manufactories, however they may add to the public
wealth, certainly degrade and brutalize the people; and managed as they
are, on principles of monopoly, a species of slavery is their constant effect
[. . .] The pleasure of visiting these hills, and contemplating the vast
preparations for circulating wealth, is not therefore unmingled with
sorrow [. . .] The sources of their innocence and happiness, which
remained unaffected by the ambition of Rome, and the ferocity of Saxon
and Norman warriors, will be penetrated and destroyed by the rapacity
and immorality of manufacturing institutions.220

Pontypool, and the rest of the region, was not yet changed, but it was changing; the wheels
of industry had been put in motion and eighteenth-century culture dictated that progress
would have its way. Still, economic approaches to poverty had remained locally based
with traditional conceptions of deserving and undeserving poor driving charity. The
community was still deeply interpersonal even as it was becoming more complex and
diverse. North-west Monmouthshire was becoming increasingly interconnected with the
outside world through improved transportation and communication networks, the
standardization of the culture of polite society, increases in the dissemination and
accessibility of information, and changes in medical practice. Jones did not write his
works in a changed society, but a changing one: one which had not dismissed his views,

but also one where structural changes began to make those views less applicable. Jones’s society was straddling one of the border lines of modernity and it had a dramatic effect on his thoughts and beliefs, something which is evident in the vehement arguments made in his works on apparitions, magic, and fairies.
II

Belief in a Changing Society: The Example of Eighteenth-Century North-West Monmouthshire

The socio-economic environment of eighteenth-century north-west Monmouthshire had an impact on both the form and content of Edmund Jones's beliefs in apparitions, spirits, and fairies. It cannot be counted as coincident that on the cusp of significant industrialization in the area Jones recorded a vision of fairies mining coal. More abstractly, the forms and methods of interaction within the community, as well as the modes of living and associated values derived therefrom would have impacted upon how people imagined community dynamics of 'self' and 'other'. Jones's place within his own community was somewhat 'liminal', existing both as an important actor within it, and as something apart from it, both in his itinerancy and his role as a religious outsider. This rather distinctive position within his own community gave him somewhat unique views on those outside mundane society. His normative values and views of his social environment influenced the roles and activities of divine and malign actors to whom he ascribed 'good' and 'evil' natures. To that end, it should be no surprise that he related a plethora of accounts related to values associated with the reformation of manners. Moreover, even though, as will be discussed in later chapters, the methodology and 'learning' of enlightenment thought was not necessarily anathematic to the belief in supernatural and preternatural agents and occurrences, the ethos of enlightenment and its influence on public discourse were. Therefore the development of a public sphere of discourse coupled with the growth of

1 [Edmund Jones], A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales ([Trefeca]: [n. pub.], 1780), p. 8.
2 Ibid.
literacy exposed members of the community to new ideas and interpretations of events which influenced and altered their perceptions of ghosts, witches, fairies and the like. This chapter, therefore, sets out to examine influences of the socio-economic developments described in the last chapter on the types of folk-beliefs which Jones related in his works. In this, diverse factors need to be investigated such as the function of beliefs in reinforcing cultural values and neighbourly practice within the changing social structure, the effects of migration into the community by outsiders, the continued role of magical practitioners in the community, their relationship with changes in conceptions of medicine and medical practice, and the influence of diversifying ideas and ideals brought about through better communications networks, increases in literacy, and the development of a public sphere of discourse.

In his ground-breaking work, *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture 1736–1951*, Owen Davies has posited that to explain the decline in witchcraft beliefs in nineteenth-century England and Wales ‘we must look to the changing structure of community and lifestyle patterns’, particularly the decline of the ‘self-sufficient, subsistence rural culture and the formation of a new dependency culture wholly reliant upon external agencies for its economic survival, social organization and governance’. This is not to suggest that early modern communities had existed purely as islands unto themselves, but rather that a modern decline in the necessity of economic interconnectivity with one’s neighbours and community, coupled with the rise of individualism and consumer culture as well as the decrease in the immediate risks associated with reliance on the household production of food, led to structural changes which did not readily support the belief in witchcraft. To this end, Davies has outlined ‘five interrelated circumstances’ which he supposes ‘effectively hampered the mechanisms that had produced accusations of witchcraft within any given community’, namely: ‘communal instability’, the ‘decline of self-governance

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and the intrusion of state and local government’, ‘separation from livestock and food production’, the rise of ‘personal security and state welfare’, and the ‘shifting balance of population from rural to urban’. Davies’s argument is similar to that of J. Geraint Jenkins who explored the effects of changes in the technology used in farming in south Cardiganshire since 1945. He posited that these led to fairly drastic changes in community cohesion, cooperation, and interconnectivity, as well as cultural shifts away from traditional modes of life as Welsh speaking families left agriculture and increases in tourism and other connections to external communities facilitated the expansion of religious and social diversity. It is also reminiscent of Gareth W. Williams who has shown how, at the turn of the twentieth century, Cardiganshire experienced these same shifts in the agricultural society and economy. Along with the introduction of a professional police force and changes in language dynamics and literacy, these shifts were contemporary to and causations of the deterioration of traditional modes of life, rituals, and beliefs including ideas of the supernatural. Similarly, Bob Bushaway, in his discussions of ‘alternative belief’ in nineteenth century England noted that these beliefs were based upon the relationship of individual to place, the natural world, the working environment, human life and the supernatural. Belief was largely phenomenological and observation and experience were its principal components. Events which occurred during an individual’s life were interpreted against a consistent structure whilst magic itself was largely left to key specialists in the rural community... Alternative belief was essentially anthropocentric and interconnected rather than merely fatalistic. It was based upon a direct and interconnected relationship between the events of human life and those of the natural and supernatural worlds.

Although these examples point to more modern developments, there is still applicability to Jones and his society. As has been shown, although the northern area of

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5 Ibid., pp. 286–91.
Monmouthshire and Glamorgan was still industrializing, it was, nonetheless, changing and transforming. Current witchcraft historiography has steadily moved away from the idea of linear and continuous decline of belief in favour of a belief system which changed and transformed with changing social environments. Even superficially, it is apparent that the changes in the socio-economic environment of north-west Monmouthshire affected the way in which the supernatural world was perceived. As was shown in the last chapter, the area was undergoing industrial transformations and the development of mineral extraction endeavours. It is significant (albeit perhaps not surprising) therefore, that Jones reports that ‘W.E. of Havodavel going a journey upon the Brecon mountain, much above four score years ago, before sun setting, saw by his way side the perfect likeness of a Coal race, where really there was none.’ This, Jones asserted, was an ‘Agency of the Fairies upon his visive faculty’.

As were known for their powers of prescience, perhaps when the story was recorded in the late-eighteenth century the fairies could be seen as foreseeing the area’s industrial development. Even if not, the account shows supernatural agents being ascribed activities similar to their mundane observers. More abstractly, Richard Suggett has noted that, in relation to Welsh cunning-folk of the eighteenth century, ‘the magic book had assumed greater significance as an indispensable prop’. This can perhaps be seen as significantly linked to the growth of the cultural importance of books and writing so that as the text became more entrenched in the cultural lives of the inhabitants it gained a corresponding importance in their perception of magic. Thus even on the surface, for an explanation of a society’s views on the magical and preternatural the historian can look to its social and economic situation. After all, as Claude Lévi-Strauss pointed out in his work on structural anthropology, social groups, to achieve their reciprocal ordering, need to call upon orders of different types, corresponding to a field external to object reality and which we call the ‘supernatural’. These ‘thought of’ orders cannot be checked against the experience to which they refer, since they are one and

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9 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 8.
the same as this experience. Therefore we are in a position of studying them only in their relationships with the other types of 'lived in' orders.\textsuperscript{11}

A functionalist approach to the material can also prove useful in assessing the folkloric accounts related by Jones. In his classic essay, William R. Bascom posited four functions of folklore to the society in which it was found: an outlet for fantasy in which people can experience or discuss repressed or prohibited desires; validating the culture in which it is found by offering explanations for rituals and institutions; educating, indoctrinating, or acculturating members of the community about the society in which they live and its social values; and reinforcing or maintaining conformity to community values and acceptable pattern of behaviour. After admitting that these functions could be classified differently or else subdivided he added that they can be considered as grouped together under the single function of maintaining the stability of culture. Viewed thus, the folklore operates within a society to insure conformity to the accepted cultural norms, and continuity from generation to generation through its rôle in education and the extent to which it mirrors culture. To the extent to which folklore contrasts with the accepted norms and offers socially acceptable forms of release through amusement or humor and through creative imagination and fantasy, it tends to preserve the institutions from direct attack and change.\textsuperscript{12}

Jones's accounts frequently contain a moral element, or else reinforce social values of good neighbourliness. This is expected as Jones compiled his works with a clear religious and moral objective in mind: the very purpose of the work is, in a sense, to reinforce the beliefs, values, and institutions of the Christian cosmos. He did not, understandably, include accounts which reinforced cultural values by contradicting them as such a course would appear to him counterproductive. By looking at the cultural values and social circumstances surrounding Jones, the purpose and function of the supernatural beliefs and how they manifested themselves can be better understood in context. However, functionalism as an explanation of, or approach to, the material has significant shortcomings. For one thing it cannot adequately account for the origins of belief. The

social or value-laden functions of fairies do not explain why fairies in particular fulfilled that role which could also be accomplished by other supernatural explanations like ghosts or divine providence, or else mundane ones like practicality or utilitarianism. As Keith Thomas pointed out, ‘it was not guilt about turning old women from the door which generated the concept of witchcraft, any more than it was a declining sense of guilt which led to its decay’. In this, transformations or decline in belief are similarly inadequately accounted for. While conceptions of witchcraft can be seen as socially redundant with changes in systems of charity, community administration, or values related to individual liberty versus community control and cohesion, it cannot account for beliefs in ghosts or fairies which do not decline in the same way, or else at what point these new social elements ‘take over’ the social function of witchcraft to a degree which led to the latter’s decline. As Elliot Oring argued, functionalism offers ‘interpretation of sociocultural phenomena rather than genuine explanation’. Still, the anthropological approaches offered by structuralism and functionalism, while not without significant shortcomings and drawbacks, can illustrate the social contexts and offer cultural interpretations of the beliefs discussed.

One element showing social cohesion in north-west Monmouthshire in the period was the system of communal welfare and reciprocity. That such a system can be linked to communal ideas about supernatural agents can be readily seen in the example of the classic beggar witch. As Keith Thomas pointed out in regard to the Elizabethan Poor Law,

Nothing did more to make the moral duties of the householder ambiguous. On the one hand the State forbade indiscriminate begging; on the other it continued to uphold the responsibility of the inhabitants of each parish for their own poor, even allowing begging within the parish, if permitted by the overseers. The clergy from the pulpit continued to insist on the moral duty of charity, although many local authorities now forbade householders to give alms at the door.

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In this he notes that, amongst these social and economic changes ‘witch-beliefs helped to uphold the traditional obligations of charity and neighbourliness’.\(^{16}\) The anxiety of a person over failing to do their neighbourly duty to the less fortunate in society could produce feelings of guilt towards that other person which could, in turn, develop into suspicions of witchcraft should some ill befall the first party. Indeed, the beggar witch survived in Monmouthshire, amongst other places, beyond the introduction of the 1834 New Poor Law and into the early twentieth century. As late as 1937, T. A. Davies recorded a story about a lady who cursed a man’s horses when she was denied a swede at Penyclawdd.\(^{17}\)

In this vein, Jones recorded the story of two gypsies who visited Janet Francis, the wife of Lewis Thomas, while he was away from home. These two were ‘bold and very importunate for this and that which they wanted’, but she did not give in to their requests and told them to leave, ‘which they refused to do till she took down a stick and threatening to beat them’, they left ‘muttering and threatening revenge.’ Some nights after the confrontation the couple heard a sound ‘like a boul rowling above stairs from the upper end of the chamber to the middle of the room, and stopping a while, and then rowling down to the foot of the stairs’. The next morning, Francis found ‘the print of a bare foot without a Toe dipt in soot’. Soon after that, in rather stereotypical fashion, when attempting to make butter, they were unsuccessful and so boiled the cream ‘having a notion it would torment the Witch, and they were no more disturbed in that way’.\(^{18}\) This fits the pattern as outlined by Thomas: there is a failure to give followed by an event and misfortune which is immediately ascribed to the denied party. It is unfortunate that Jones does not tell what was requested by the accused, as Thomas notes that ‘the punishment often fitted the crime’, meaning that the occurrence of maleficium was usually in some

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 564.
\(^{18}\) Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 4.
way related to the requested item.\textsuperscript{19} Perhaps the women had requested milk or butter, or else perhaps the relaters had fallen back on the very common manifestation of failing to churn butter demonstrating cultural knowledge of this standard motif.\textsuperscript{20}

There are also other issues related to the dispensing of charity that impacted upon views of the supernatural. Policies, such as the badging of the poor, could produce new or more blatant socio-economic dynamics of identity within and belonging to the community. Steve Hindle has suggested that the original intention of badging the poor had the potential to make the badge a mark of approval: those who were badged could show that they were ‘worthy’ of alms. However by the end of the seventeenth century the badge had developed into a thing of shame and stigma that marked out those who were dependent on the parish for the means of life.\textsuperscript{21} The eighteenth century was a period of consumption and property, marked by that statement of John Locke that ‘Government has no other end than the preservation of Property’.\textsuperscript{22} The dynamic of ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, and the fear of the rabble by the propertied, could produce an idea of the impoverished ‘other’ and fear of theft as well as guilt over the unequal distribution of wealth or resentment over having to share one’s hard-earned capital.\textsuperscript{23} This dependent ‘other’ would have been more visible and thus, in a sense, more present, in those places where badging was in practice, such as Trevethin parish.\textsuperscript{24} Additionally, as has been mentioned in the last chapter, Trevethin gave charity to those who could not actually claim right of settlement within it. In the 1770s, John Edmund of Hereford and a woman named regularly as ‘Abergavenny woman’ received assistance from the parish purse on several occasions.\textsuperscript{25} Such people, insofar as they existed peripheral to society both in economic situation and origin, would have

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{19} Thomas, \textit{Religion and the Decline of Magic}, p. 554.
\bibitem{20} Ibid., p. 437.
\bibitem{24} GwA, MS. D/PA 13.50, Trevethin Churchwardens’ Accounts, Overseers’ Accounts, and Surveyor of the Highways’ Accounts 1767–1789, 7 April 1769, 20 April 1773, April 18, 1774, 2 May 1775.
\bibitem{25} Ibid., 7 April 1769, 16 April 1770, 24 April 1772, 18 April 1774.
\end{thebibliography}
potentially exacerbated anxieties and feelings of resentment or else complicated issues of morality in giving.

Issues of morality concerning property and its abuse certainly do find a place in Jones's accounts. David Ziles, a 'substantial Freeholder' of Bedwellty in the late-seventeenth century, often experienced instances of intrusion by witches who 'were very mischievous, destroying the milk, &c'. The issue was resolved after Hopkin David, allegedly a Quaker who was staying at the house, caught the witches in the shape of cats and asked them for their names, which they provided, and afterwards did not trouble the houses 'for they had betrayed themselves, and were in danger of punishment'. In another case, Thomas Cadogan of Llanfihangel Llantarnam, 'who had a large Estate, nearly reaching from the mountain to the river, and yet saw it not enough . . . removed his landmarks . . . farther off into the land of a Widow woman'. After his death the ill he had done 'was a trouble to him' and he appeared to a woman, instructing her to tell the relevant parties of this wrong and rectify it. However, this was apparently not enough punishment and 'he had no son but three daughters to inherit his Estate. But as if the judgment of God followed the oppression, they were ill married, and the Estate is gone from the family.' In general terms, this account relates to the decline of a particular estate, relevant to the character of the estate holder, and illustrates issues of land possession and ownership in the period. This was a clear divine punishment for the violation of rights of property, made all the worse for the offence being committed against a widow. What is interesting is that supernatural punishment of the offender was only accomplished after his death and not by the offended party. In contrast to the diabolical re-enforcement of community values of the beggar-witch, this was divinely sanctioned, and while it fulfilled the same function, this

26 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 12.
27 Ibid., p. 43. See also NLW LL/1697/85 B, Bond for the possessions of Thomas Cadogan, Llanfrechfa, 1697. Thomas is recorded as having to pay recusancy fines for his wife Kathryn, a Quaker, between 1677 and 1685, which could also have contributed to the decline of his estate. See Richard C. Allen, 'The Society of Friends in Wales: The Case of Monmouthshire c.1654–1836', unpublished University of Wales, Aberystwyth PhD thesis, 1999, pp. 245–6.
difference could be seen as structurally necessitated by the ignorance of the wronged party and the social position of Cadogan.

As such, the account of Thomas Cadogan bridges the type of story where a supernatural actor enacts retribution for abuse or injustice caused by the victim, and the type of story where a spirit cannot rest because of some hoarded or hidden property. This latter type of story is extremely common in Jones's works, with him relating no fewer than fifteen accounts of this type. The things hidden varied in form and worth from some razors hidden in a wall to money in the amount of several hundred pounds.\(^{28}\) The usual pattern followed is that the apparition appeared to a person, sometimes repeatedly, until the person spoke to them. The person was then told of the hidden object and instructed to remove it and sometimes to destroy it, usually by casting it into a body of water. This being done, the spirit departed and was usually not heard from again. Though the destruction of the goods (usually money) by throwing them into water was not without exception, Jones does give some explanation for it, stating that it was either ‘out of envy that others do enjoy what they are depriv’d of’ or else because they foresaw that ‘what they have gathered amiss, and used amiss, will be yet used amiss, it may be more amiss’. Their motivations in the latter reason were not wholly for the salvation of the new possessor, as such ill use would ‘effect upon themselves by way of punishment for providing means to make others more wicked and more miserable than otherwise they would have been’.\(^{29}\) The items which troubled the spirit were usually either money or made of iron. Whilst this unease to ghosts caused by iron perhaps mirrored the aversion of the fairies to the same substance, Jones remarks that the reason that hoarded iron in particular caused spirits to be disquieted remained ‘a mystery’ which ‘cannot be understood by men upon earth’, mostly because the ‘spirits of eternity both angels and men, good and bad are very short in their accounts

\(^{28}\) For example, see CL, MS. 2.249, rough draft of Edmund Jones’s *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 237; Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, pp. 64–7.

\(^{29}\) Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 67.
of the other life'. Despite the fact that as a rule the hoarded items were iron or money and must be disposed of by the human actor, the very first account which Jones gives in his *Apparitions of Spirits* provides an exception to both of these generalizations. In it, the deceased Morgan Lewis appeared to Walter John Harry of Aberystwyth, bidding him remove some wool he had concealed in the wall of the house. Already this demonstrates a deviation from the norm, in that wool is not metal, but Lewis further chose that ‘these bottoms of Wool should be of use to others rather than be of no use; tho’ he neither charged them to make use of them, nor forbid their doing it, but left it to their choice’. Moreover, there are two accounts in which the money or iron was kept by the finder. In 1764, George Griffith, who was a member of the Carmarthenshire Militia, was disturbed by the ghost of a German mariner and instructed to find some hidden clothes, iron, and money, which he kept for his own use. In another account from Carmarthenshire a boy named Gregory, who was ‘less in his senses’ than his siblings, conversed with a spirit and was told of hidden money which was found and used.

The distinctions between the items hidden and the way in which the spirit requested they be treated may be of some importance in relation to community views on the accumulation and use of wealth. Max Weber’s well-known model of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism can shed light on this issue. The somewhat paradoxical relationship between the abhorrence of luxury and its related sins on the one hand, and the desire to serve God on earth by working diligently and reaping the fruits of such labours, can illustrate why such concerns over property might arise. As Weber noted,

This worldly Protestant asceticism . . . acted powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of possessions; it restricted consumption, especially of luxuries. On the other hand, it had the psychological effect of freeing the

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30 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 238.
33 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 320.
34 While it may be problematic to employ Weber’s argument in a more universal manner, that is, as a model explicating a corollary relationship between Protestantism and Capitalism, it has been employed here because of its applicability to the nature of the source materials as a useful model or lens through which to view them.
acquisition of goods from the inhibitions of traditionalistic ethics. It broke the bonds of the impulse of acquisition in that it not only legalized it, but . . . looked upon it as directly willed by God. The campaign against the temptations of the flesh, and the dependence on external things, was . . . not a struggle against the rational acquisition, but against the irrational use of wealth.\(^{35}\)

Thus to work at a job and enjoy the fruits of labour was permitted or even encouraged, however the excess enjoyment of wealth, and especially the enjoyment of wealth that was not earned, was discouraged. This hoarding of money or property where it could not be used, such as the money hidden after one’s death, would be such an ‘irrational use’. Jones can be seen as exhibiting these principles. In his writing about seventeenth-century religious authors he recommended that the money of the wealthy would be better spent in the reprinting of such works rather than ‘in horse-racing as some do? In over dressing their sinful perishing bodies as others do? And in hording more than needs for their children, to make them greater sinners in this world, and more miserable in eternity as others do?’\(^{36}\)

Wealth should be used in the service of God and man, not in vain pursuits. This last remark about hoarding money is significant as it can perhaps illustrate why the money hidden by spirits was to be destroyed or cast aside, and why the wool could or should be used: the money was not earned and could contribute to the vices of luxury and idleness. The wool, on the other hand, was a useful commodity which could not be used in this way and would be a benefit to the finders. Moreover, at least in the case of Gregory, the money was a ‘means of enriching that family’, which, with the presence of a son with some disability, was likely to be in response to a real need and not an abetment to luxury and avarice.\(^{37}\)

The warning against miserliness and luxury implicit in these accounts may be betraying a conflict of values. Paul Langford has noted that even the internal decorations of tradesmen and shopkeepers of 1760s and 1770s ‘would have surprised their parents and


\(^{37}\) CL, MS. 2.249, p. 320.
astonished their grandparents. It is a measure of the transformation that few of them would have been found even in aristocratic households half a century earlier.38 Richard C. Allen has investigated the confrontation between traditional Quaker values and the allure of eighteenth-century popular culture in north-east England, arguing that Quakers went so far as to ‘construct a counter culture to the burgeoning consumer society of the eighteenth century’.39 Eryn White has also looked at Welsh Methodism’s relationship to the consumer revolution of the eighteenth century and has shown that despite having ‘little opposition to the concept of profit’ and interacting with consumerism especially in the form of the book trade, Methodists warned their members against the danger of luxury, overindulgence, and worldliness.40 Similarly, Jones’s values were affronted by developments in consumer society and the stories of the destruction of money hidden by spirits carried with it a moral injunction on the way in which wealth was perceived and treated.

Of course, hidden treasure and the sudden acquisition of windfall wealth are commonly associated with fairies. As Diane Purkiss notes, fairies are linked to treasure for three reasons: their association with places of antiquity (and thus ancient forgotten treasure), the dead (and thus the knowledge of the dead), and wild places, especially underground places and caves (where such treasure was free for the taking). Moreover she explains that ‘literary fairies get richer and richer as the seventeenth-century aristocrats got further and further into debt’, a process which was mirrored by their folkloric counterparts.41 The fairy realm is traditionally opulent in Welsh fairy-lore. In the account related by Gerald of Wales, when the monk Elidurus was in fairy-land as a boy, it was a

rich subterranean realm where he played with a ball of gold. In the story of St Collen’s encounter with the fairy king Gwyn ap Nudd, the saint visits the fairy in a fair castle full of troops and minstrels, where the king sits on a throne of solid gold, and is offered a magnificent feast. The entire thing turns out to be an illusion however, and disappears when the saint sprinkles holy water around himself. Moreover, Wirt Sikes, in his late-nineteenth-century account of Welsh folklore, gives several accounts of monetary fairy gifts to mortals. In most instances these gifts disappeared or lost their worth if anyone was told of their existence. In Breconshire, the fairies gave loaves of bread which turned to toadstools if they were not eaten in darkness and secrecy. In Glamorgan a small boy named Guto Bach was said to travel to the hills to look after the sheep and bring back half crowns and fine clothes which turned out to be bits of paper when shown to others. In Anglesey, another boy found money on a bridge every day until he amassed enough money that his father grew suspicious and forced the boy to tell him where he got it, after which he found no more. In Monmouthshire, W. Howells noted in 1831 that ‘in some places, particularly in the lower parts of Monmouthshire, there existed till lately a notion among the dairy maids, that the fairies paid occasional visits to their dairies, but were not so liberal as in former days, when they never skimmed their milkpans without remunerating them with a silver penny, which was placed in some conspicuous place for the maid.’ Jones includes his own story which he received in 1760. Ann William Francis of Bassaleg saw the fairies dancing one night in a wood near her house and brought them a pail of water. The next time she went to the place she found a shilling, and for a while after she continued to find money on the spot until she had twenty-one shillings. Then her mother grew inquisitive and the girl was forced to tell of the occurrence, after which she found no further money. Jones goes on to remark

44 Ibid., pp. 119–21.
I could not learn in what reign the money was coined, but was told it was no late coin. We have heard of other places where some persons had money from the fairies, and an instance of it in this parish. Sometimes Silver sixpences, but most commonly copper money, it must be money lost and hid by men.  

The story of Anne William Francis may also bring up issues of the relationship between the supernatural and community values of morality. A girl who receives a shilling for performing nightly ‘services’ for the ‘fairies’ in the dark woods near her house about which she does not want to tell her mother (or anyone else) certainly raises some eyebrows. However, she is not alone in those who potentially used supernatural stories to keep up appearances. There is a story of the Rev. Jones’s brother and some other young men who went hunting in the area of Llangatwg Crickhowell in Breconshire. While taking a rest a hare started up near them, their dogs gave chase, and they followed them to the cellar of Richard the tailor’s pub. Jones remarks that Llangatwg was at that time ‘very infamous for Witches in all the Country round, and this Man among the rest was believed to be one, and one who resorted to the company of fairies’. It being late, although the men suspected the hare to really be Richard (because of his reputation and the location of their chase’s end) and the chase a ruse to force them to stay at his pub, they decided to stay there nonetheless. However they did not shy from voicing their opinions and when Jones’s brother got up to relieve himself outside the others attempted to dissuade him from it. He did not heed their warnings and after going out did not return that night, causing the party to abuse and threaten Richard. The next morning ‘not very early’, Jones’s brother returned ‘looking bad’ and told them that he had been traveling all night in unknown, rough ways, and did not know where he was, until early that day, he saw himself at Twyn Gwllliw, near the entrance into Newport Town, where he helped a Man, from Risga, to raise a load of Coal which had fallen from his Horse. Suddenly after he became insensible, and was brought back into the place from which he had been taken.

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46 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 34.
a distance which Jones gave as about twenty miles. While the trip certainly would not have been possible on foot without supernatural aid, another possible explanation of the night’s events comes to mind: stepping outside after drinking more alcohol than was perhaps good for him, Jones’s brother certainly could have lost his way and probably had, what seemed to his mind, several adventures. After possibly awakening and finding his way back to the pub he probably did look ‘bad’ and a story of bewitchment, especially with a ready scapegoat at hand, certainly could be a way of saving face.

Polite social or religious judgements on immorality, be it in the form of sexual impropriety or excess drunkenness, could have put extra pressures on the individual to have an acceptable version of events, especially if the person came from a family of strict nonconformists and his brother was a preacher. Although the Society for the Reformation of Manners had been disbanded in the late-1730s and a renewed national campaign for morality would not occur until the 1780s, Langford notes that by the 1760s and 1770s “Reformation of Manners” was in the air again. Additionally, the spirit of religious revivalism in the area with its heavy emphasis on clean, godly living would have made the inhabitants more acutely aware of their conduct. The revivalists preached forcibly and emotively on the ill effects of sin on the soul at those events which they perceived as promoting vice. It is little surprise therefore that in addition to stories which potentially cover for immoral acts, many of the accounts in Jones’s works contain a moral imperative or lesson. This lesson could be related to Jones’s religious outlook, such as warnings against tempting the Devil, suicide, or playing ball on Sunday, but they also often refer to values associated with good neighbourliness. Still, it should be remembered, as Peter Narváez points out,

Undoubtedly it has been normative in the not-so-distant past for narrators, protagonists, and community residents to totally believe that fairies were directly responsible for the common occurrence of people getting lost in

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48 Langford, Polite and Commercial People, pp. 128, 499.
unknown space. In such instances fairies did not provide an alibi so much as a reasonable, comprehensible cause. Given either possibility, fairies have furnished one of the few culturally sanctioned explanations available for temporal disjuncture and embarrassment, an acceptable rationale everyone has been familiar with.  

The concept of good neighbourliness and its connection to witchcraft was not only limited to the denial of charity in the sense discussed already, but also the violation of traditional rights, or even verbal or physical abuse by the victim against the witch. As should already be apparent, Jones provided several examples of supernatural events re-enforcing community values, however some additional examples may prove useful. Two Baptists, William Daniel and William John Rees, along with Thomas Lewis, all of Aberystruth parish, were working in Basaleg as coopers. While they were working they were often bothered by a boy who was the son of a reputed witch in the area. One day, being annoyed by him, they told him to carry a large stone to the smith, saying that they had borrowed it to weigh their bread, but really just using it to play a trick on him and get him away from them for a while. While the boy was employed in this task he met his older brother who pointed out that they had tricked him, but they went to the smith anyway to make sure, where they were informed by the smith that he had lent no such stone. While they were talking about it, the village parson came by who also pointed out the wrong that had been done to the boy. The boy duly went home and informed his mother of the trick. Not long after, while Daniel, Rees, and Lewis were working, stones began to fall amongst them, striking them and the vessels around them. Rees went outside and read the Bible, but a stone struck the Bible and tore it ‘without tearing off any word, or even a letter out of it’. They began to discuss it and ‘thought at first that the Parson used magick spells against them, till they called to mind that the boy’s mother was a reputed witch, and they changed their minds’. Soon after they noticed a hare nearby and chased it into some brakes and briars. They sent a dog after it, but the dog returned terrified, which strengthened their

convictions that it was the witch. Lewis then took up a rod and beat the brush until the hare ran out and away. A few days later they saw the woman and ‘greatly abused her in words, and did cast stones after her and her son’. 52

It is interesting that at first they thought of the parson as a likely candidate and perhaps it is as an explanation of this that his hearing about the abuse at the smithy is mentioned. In any event, this would give motive for the supernatural retribution: the parson might have been protecting a person of his own parish against those from another community who had moved into the area. The parson may also have been, or been perceived as being, relatively learned, something of significance in eighteenth-century magical practitioners. 53 Ultimately their suspicions remained with the elderly woman, who was more directly wronged by their actions. The trick they played on the boy was small, but sufficient to produce feelings of guilt and resentment by violation of neighbourly practice, something which may have been exacerbated by their status as foreigners to the area. However, community morals were not only re-enforced by the actions of a wronged, malevolent human actor and many of the stories related by Jones involve spiritual or diabolic punishment of immoral or un-neighbourly acts.

Near the beginning of the eighteenth century Margret Richard of Pant-teg, an unmarried woman, fell pregnant with the child of Samuel Richard from Glamorgan. He promised to marry her, but when he did not turn up at the church she ‘fell on her knees and prayed God he might neither have rest in this world nor in that which was to come’. After his death, his spirit haunted her wherever she went and although others did not see him, his presence was evidenced several times, such as when she placed a jug of milk roughly on a table and ‘the milk would not spill upon the table, nor even move in the pail’. Finally she decided to speak to him and he asked her to forgive him. She did so and he did not trouble her any more. Jones remarks that this account is a ‘lesson against fornication, and a

53 The connection between learning, literacy, and magic will be discussed later. See Suggett, Magic and Witchcraft, p. 87; Owen Davies, ‘Cunning-Folk in England and Wales during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’, Rural History, 8: 1 (1997), 91–107 (93).
warning to people not to deal amiss with one another, in this life, from the world of spirits'.

The moral of the story is complicated and double sided. On the one hand, extramarital relations were not uncommon. Merry Wiesner has shown that nearly one-half of brides in the early modern period were pregnant before their wedding night. However, in addition to the moral-religious injunctions against fornication, illegitimate children could be a burden on the community, especially if the mother and child were likely to depend on the parish for support. This is not to mention the social stigma related to extra-marital sexual relations. The practice of ‘bundling’ (caru yn y gwely or courting in bed) seems to have persisted in Wales as late as the early twentieth century and though it was viewed as acceptable by the general populace until at least the turn of the nineteenth century, there is evidence that in the late-eighteenth century it was a potential subject of criticism by English commentators and something of an embarrassment to polite and morally minded Welshmen. Responding in 1796 to the writer of a Welsh tour who criticized the practice, Theophilus Jones argued that

That a favoured Welsh lover has not occasionally – or even frequently – had access to the bed-side of his mistress; – that he has frequently said soft things to her upon that bed, and that nothing improper followed that permission, cannot be denied: but that it is a general custom to settle the preliminaries of a more lasting connection in bed, is so distant from the fact, that it scarcely requires a serious refutation.

While the illegitimate pregnancy and an unwillingness to marry were certainly the most apparent perceived social wrong in this account, it was not the cause of the haunting itself. The actual cause was the public cursing of Samuel by Margret. The haunting itself

54 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 37–9.
58 CYMRO [Theophilus Jones], ‘Cursory Remarks on Welsh Tours or Travels’, Cambrian Register for the Year 1796, II (1799), 421–54 (429). See also Hywel M. Davies, ‘Wales in English Travel Writing 1791–8: The Welsh Critique of Theophilus Jones,’ Welsh History Review, 23:3 (June, 2007), 65–93 (73–4); Stevens, Welsh Courting Customs, p. 87.
was a punishment for Samuel, but it is also one for Margret and just as he wronged her, she wronged him as well. Margret is haunted, a form of supernatural retribution, for having cursed and harboured ill feelings towards her erstwhile lover. While modern historiography is somewhat reticent to psychoanalyse these accounts (and rightly so),\textsuperscript{59} it is plausible that Margret harboured feelings of guilt and also grief for her perceived culpability in the man’s death and inability to rest in the afterlife, leading her to visualise him as a manifestation of her guilt. Additionally, she had a shared culpability in her copulation with Samuel. Whilst the cultural values and perceptions placed blame for Samuel’s actions and his failings in his obligations on his head, and her desire for revenge was, to some extent, culturally sanctioned, she also had a degree of guilt both in the shared action and her failure in her obligation to forgive. When she finally formally forgave him and in effect revoked her curse, she was able to let go of those feelings and the vision, as a symptom of those unresolved emotions, disappeared.\textsuperscript{60} Such manifestations of grief, guilt, and other emotions in apparitions had clear and obvious cultural antecedents: most notably in Shakespeare’s ghosts of Banquo, Caesar, and King Hamlet. Something similar can be seen in the case of Ursula Powel, who ‘mourned excessively, and continued to do so unmeasurably’ after the untimely death of her partner just before their marriage:

At last when she was in bed she saw him come, and he seemed to lie on the bed side, and she felt his face as she thought as cold as stone. And he desired her to mourn for him no more, that he was where it was the will of God he should be, without telling her where he was, and departed; and she ceased her mourning.\textsuperscript{61}

The vision of her love could similarly have been a way of externalizing her feelings of grief so that they could be resolved, the implication being that her grief was perceived as being above and beyond the social norms, and such a traumatic psychological experience was necessary for her to deal properly with the loss. Alternatively, such a story could help


\textsuperscript{61} CL, MS. 2.249, p. 246.
to rationalise her return to social and community life following her fiancé’s decease. The end of her mourning period was validated by the approval and direction of the person for whom she mourned. Whatever the case, the supernatural involvement can be seen as resulting from anxiety over normative community values or practice.

These social issues and values may help to explain the ‘function’ of folklore in its cultural setting and it is easy to suppose that such supernatural tales served a dual purpose of explanation and re-enforcement of the community. However, as has been pointed out, what a functionalist approach does not adequately account for is transformations of society and belief. The influx of new people and new ideas, the creation of a public sphere of discourse, and the changes in employment and economy linked to the process of industrialisation, not to mention the cultural influences of things like the Revival, ‘Enlightenment’, or the consumer revolution, all would have had an enormous impact upon the ways in which people interacted with one another and the environment and their worldview. Most of the beliefs in supernatural entities and actors lasted through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, albeit sometimes altering in form and strength; and many, if not most of the community morals, values, needs, and prohibitions addressed by the supernatural stories would not have changed overmuch over time. Poverty, charity, illegitimate pregnancy, and grief or guilt at someone’s death are not exclusive to Jones’s time. Thus, to understand the particular form and perception of the supernatural in his community, attention needs to be paid to the particular structure and changes within the community. Many of these changes would have produced a more heterogeneous culture with more diverse perspectives, adversely affecting the cultural continuity of the community.

The process of in-migration and the greater facilitation of movement by toll roads and coaches would have made communities more transient as people could move from place to place based on employment opportunities or other socio-economic factors. As industrial efforts developed in the area and drew outsiders with the lure of potential
employment, the communities of north-west Monmouthshire would be faced with more and more unknown people in their midst. Sian Rhiannon Williams has noted that in the early process of industrial development, those English speaking skilled workers who came into the area usually did not mix with the indigenous Welsh-speaking population, and whilst these would have been less likely to receive assistance from the parish, they would present another ‘other’ within the community which could provide a ready group to serve as supernatural scapegoat for social anxieties. Of course, at the same time they would have brought in divergent cultural ideas concerning preternatural and folk-beliefs which could have weakened or otherwise altered those held by others in the area. However, it is notable that several of the accounts recorded by Jones involved outsiders in the community: the men who were attacked by rocks by the witch in Basaleg were from Aberystwyth, and the father of Margaret Richard of Pant-teg’s illegitimate child was from Glamorgan. As Narváez pointed out in a study of fairy stories amongst Newfoundland berry pickers, ‘specific folkloric mechanisms . . . established proxemic boundaries on the cognitive maps of community residents, boundaries which demarcated geographical areas of purity, liminality, and danger’. Similarly, in his social history of ghosts, Owen Davies also remarked on the liminality of apparitions of the dead. However, the liminal quality of the supernatural was not only geographical, but also social, with those with magical powers often existing on the periphery of society, either spatially or as one who ‘stands out’ in the community.

Romani gypsies were a particular peripheral group with definite supernatural associations: partially ascribed by others and partially cultivated by themselves, and, as Suggett has pointed out, ‘in the eighteenth century gypsies were associated with south

63 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 226.
64 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 38.
65 Narváez, ‘Newfoundland Berry Pickers “In the Fairies”’, p. 337.
66 Davies, Haunted, pp. 45–6.
Wales'. Their itinerancy and temporary encampment outside of but proximal to a community made them de facto outsiders to whatever area they visited. Their lack of permanent, sedentary employment led to their being viewed as vagabonds or even thieves. As Lisa Tallis has pointed out, gypsy women ‘would earn their dividends through begging and fortune telling or ‘witchio’ (bewitching), supernatural talents that were interrelated with regard to gypsies.’ Moreover, obtaining money by telling fortunes or other magical practice furthered the view of them as a danger to society as they were seen as cheating the gullible. One of the worst of their methods was the ‘hokkano baro’ or ‘great trick’ wherein they claimed they required some valuable object of their client for their magic to work and then absconded with the property.

Such magical practices were not unheard of amongst other magical practitioners such as other travelling fortune tellers and conjurors, or even local cunning-men. However, gypsy fortune tellers were more likely to experience discrimination than others. They tended not to be as learned or literate as their settled counterparts and they were perceived as even less belonging to the society by reason of both their itinerancy and their racial difference. As the example given by Jones above shows, they were also commonly associated with witches and even fairies. For example, according to some versions of the story, the notorious seventeenth-century witches of Llanddona, Anglesey, were supposed to have descended from a shipwrecked gypsy. In this association with the witch, the gypsies’ own claims of magical ability, combined with their questionable reputations and status as ‘other’, are key. As regards the gypsy and the fairy, they could be perceived as sharing several qualities. The gypsies’ and fairies’ colourful appearance and love of music and dance may have, according to Tallis, ‘in addition to their liminal positions in society

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71 Ibid., 107.
... resulted in a simple case of mistaken identity'. 72 She notes that ‘what needs to be borne in mind is the marginal nature of both fairies and gypsies in society. Their existence and reality were undoubted, but their characteristics, supernatural or secluded, place them on the periphery of Welsh society where they are acknowledged and accepted, but cautiously treated nevertheless.' 73 The presence of gypsies in their interactions with a community could help to re-enforce communal fears and beliefs concerning the existence of malevolent magical actors, both human and fairy. As the previously cited example of Jones and the gypsy witches shows, 74 interactions with them could follow the standard pattern of the beggar witch and, though not part of the community, violations of the practice of good neighbourliness could result in guilt and anxiety manifesting itself in suspected witchcraft.

These outsiders carried their own connotation of ‘otherness’ which compounded to their perception as magical, but the communities themselves usually had their own resident magical practitioners. There were, certainly, areas particularly associated with witches as Jones’s comments on Llangatwg Crickhowell show, 75 but Suggett has suggested that ‘few Welsh communities seem to have been without a suspected witch in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries’. 76 More ‘central’ to the community was the local cunning-man or woman (dyn hysbys). They acted in multiple roles: from helping to locate stolen goods or thieves, to detecting and countering witchcraft, to healing and love charms. 77 Looking at one of these roles – that of detecting criminals and locating lost or stolen items – can illustrate their continued importance to the eighteenth-century Welsh community. In this, Great Sessions cases can be of great use, as cunning-folk were sometimes consulted by those seeking information about a crime which is subsequently reported in the court case, or else themselves prosecuted for obtaining money by false

72 Tallis, ‘The Conjuror, the Fairy, the Devil and the Preacher’, pp. 238–9, 255.
73 Ibid., p. 238.
74 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 4.
75 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 81.
76 Suggett, Magic and Witchcraft, p. 107.
pretences. In 1740, Robert Darcy of Wrexham was prosecuted for fraudulently obtaining money for advice on the case of some linen yarn which was stolen from Edward Phillips. Initially, Elizabeth Davies and Cathrine Taylor went to Darcy to see if he could advise on the theft. Darcy said that he was

noe conjurer but that he could tell by the Planets who stole the yarn, and then produced a pack of play cards and bid [Cathrine] cut them [which] she did and then laid the cards in several parcels upon the table, and then said that it was a black man that stooped in the shoulders and that used to troubeled the said Elizabeth Phillips [Edward’s wife] . . . for favours, was the person that stole the yarn, but that he would not tell them any more without money. 79

When Edward and Elizabeth Phillips went and paid him sixpence he could tell them no more, but told them to come again the following Monday and if he had not discovered any more information by then he would make the thief ‘uneasy in his mind and trouble him for three moons afterwards’. 80 Even though the fact that Darcy was prosecuted gives the impression that he was seen as a fake, it should be remembered that there was still sufficient faith in magical practitioners to consult him in the first place and that disillusion with one cunning-man would not necessarily equate to disillusionment in all cunning-folk.

As Suggett has noted, ‘even if individual conjurers were regarded as charlatans this did not shake the belief that somewhere . . . there was a conjurer with genuine powers.’ 81 In 1763 David Lloyd, along with his wife Elizabeth and son John of Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, Glamorgan, accused Morgan William of murdering Benjamin Price, using information gleaned from a visit to the local cunning-man as evidence. 82 Moreover, the mere threat of going to a cunning-man could be enough to elicit a thief’s confession, as in a case of 1788, when John Price of Radnorshire threatened to ask a local conjurer to mark the thief who had stolen £6 13s. 6d from him. Soon after, one of Price’s servants, Mary Jones, who had recently treated herself to new bedding and a tea kettle, left his service ‘tho’ he used all

78 Owen Davies, ‘Cunning-Folk in England and Wales’, 104.
79 NLW, Great Sessions 4/47/3/27.
80 NLW, Great Sessions 4/47/3/29.
81 Suggett, Witchcraft and Magic, p. 97. See also Davies, ‘Cunning-Folk in England and Wales’, 103.
Lawful means to diswade her from it'. Thus, throughout the eighteenth century in Wales, considerable stock continued to be put into the powers of cunning-folk, and they continued to be consulted in the solving of crimes.

The cunning-folk’s trade often required a certain liminality which distinguished them from others in society. As Suggett has noted, ‘it was characteristic that those who consulted conjurers would often travel considerable distances while (presumably) ignoring other magical specialists nearer home’. The association of the ‘other’ outside one’s own community with magical ability certainly facilitated a cunning-man’s credibility, but even within their own community magical practitioners were often something of outsiders. In the eighteenth century, learning, and particularly an association with books, usually was essential to the practitioner’s résumé. This may not have been essential, however, as in his biography it is noted of the English borders conjuror Dick Spot (Richard Morris) that ‘in all his travels he never carried a book’. He seems nonetheless to have had a reputation for knowledge, and even occult knowledge: ‘his observations of life obviated and removed the necessity of applying to books . . . but [he] possessed every thing, as it were, by intuitive knowledge’. Conjurers in Jones’s accounts often had similar associations with learning. The haunting at the Trwyn farmhouse in Mynyddislwyn parish, dated by Jones as occurring around the turn of the eighteenth century, was supposed to have started because Harry Job, who was ‘a scholar, and brought up his son to be a considerable scholar’ inadvertently conjured the spirit while performing ‘some Magic Spells’. Similarly, David Llwyd or ‘Sir David’, a curate and a physician who lived near Ysbyty Ystwyth in Cardiganshire, was turned out of his curacy for ‘being known to deal in the Magic-art’. He was supposed to have learned magic ‘privately in Oxford in the profane time of

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83 NLW, Great Sessions 4/529/9/23.
85 Ibid., p. 86–8; Davies, ‘Cunning-Folk in England and Wales’, 93.
87 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 22.
88 Ibid., p. 68.
Charles the Second'. This reputation for learning would have set the magical practitioner somewhat apart from the rest of society. Still, in a time of increased literacy, it would be wrong to think of the cunning-man as the only literate person administering his skill to those who could not read. In fact cunning-folk seem to have usually been of the same class as their clients: artisans and tradesmen.

Cunning-folk were seen as possessing specialised and esoteric knowledge which enabled and equipped them to perform their occult services for their clients and which set them apart from them. Additionally, though their clientele were also literate in the main, there was a definite degree of theatrics which served to reinforce the perception of the cunning-man as learned. Cunning-folk usually made some presentation of their personal magic books. For instance, the famous Harrieses of Cwrtycadno, Carmarthenshire, in the nineteenth century, were said to have had a large, black, padlocked book which was placed on the table during consultations and supposed to contain not only arcane knowledge but demons. Writing was also an essential skill for the conjurer as they often wrote out charms for the protection of a person or their property which would be concealed somewhere in a building. In addition to the specialist knowledge of charms and charm formulas required to write them, the charms were often made more unintelligible by writing in cursive script and usually not in Welsh, but in English and/or Latin. A charm found in a bottle in a farmhouse near Devil’s Bridge in Cardiganshire for the preservation of Richard Davies’s mare from witchcraft, was not only written in a mixture of English and Latin, but also contained magical symbols which would have added to the appearance

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89 Ibid., p. 71.
92 Suggett, Witchcraft and Magic, pp. 111–12.
93 Ibid., p. 111.
of occult knowledge such as a descending abracadabra, a seal taken from Reginald Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, and several lines of astrological symbols.\(^{94}\)

In addition to esoteric or idiosyncratic knowledge, cunning-folk often sought to distinguish themselves in more apparent ways. As Owen Davies notes ‘when it came to generating a reputation, presenting a distinctive personal appearance was one basic way of attracting attention, and a theatrical flourish helped to present an air of the unusual’, adding that ‘the often conspicuous appearance of cunning-folk belies any notion that they were secretive people, constantly fearful of prosecution’.\(^{95}\) This eccentric appearance was often accomplished by peculiar dress, such as conjurors’ robes or bright colours, or else by some physical characteristic.\(^{96}\) The conjurer Dick Spot, mentioned above, was so called for a large black mark on his face.\(^{97}\) Similarly, in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, Jones discussed two cunning-men, one of whom was known as ‘Rissiart Cap Dee’, ‘because he wore a black Cap’.\(^{98}\) Though a black cap is not particularly unusual *per se* (although the implication is that it was a notable black hat), this conjurer was identified by his attire nonetheless. He also had an association with those living on the margins or outside of the community – namely the fairies – and it was implied that this was facilitated by where he lived: as Jones observed, ‘He lived at the foot of Rhyw Coelbren, and there was a large hole in the side of the Thatch of his House, thro’ which the people believed he went out, at night to the Fairies, and came in from them at night; but he pretended it was that he might see the Stars at night.’\(^{99}\) However, Rissiart Cap Dee also illustrates some of the dangers which came with such liminality and association with the supernatural. When attending to a man who had been stricken by the fairies, the man ‘took up a pound weight stone, which was by the Bed side, and threw it at the Infernal Charmer, with all his might,'

\(^{95}\) Davies, ‘Cunning-Folk in England and Wales’, 98.
\(^{96}\) Ibid; Suggett, *Witchcraft and Magic*, p. 98.
\(^{97}\) *The Life and Mysterious Transactions of Richard Morris*, p. 4.
\(^{98}\) Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, p. 70.
\(^{99}\) Ibid., p. 71.
with this saying “Thou old villain wast one of the worst of them to hurt me,” for he had seen him among them acting his part against him.\textsuperscript{100}

Interestingly, it can be argued that Jones’s own idiosyncratic position within the community meant that he too was perhaps perceived as having supernatural associations. A rather singular account was reported to and recorded by Samuel Pratt in his \textit{Gleanings through Wales, Holland and Westphalia} (1795). His informant, who introduced him to Jones remarked,

I have known him run on about the fairies, till he has foamed at the mouth like a mad dog, and sworn that there were then a thousand [fairies] in the room with him, visible only to himself, on account of his great respect for them, and I remember once, on our townsfolk laughing at him, in one of these fairy-fits, he, fell into a passion, and said, he would make these little mischiefs pinch and haunt them by day and night, for their tauntings; and, as sure as you are alive, continued my guide, upon two of the company snapping their fingers, and saying, they neither cared for him, nor the fairies, he made them both repent it: for that very night, and all the next day, the poor men were so tormented by these little devils, God forgive me, that they were obliged to make interest with Parson [Jones] the gentleman we have just left, to get them off the premises.\textsuperscript{101}

Pratt was definitely given to exaggeration in his criticism of the Welsh, with their superstition being a favourite target,\textsuperscript{102} but his depiction of Jones as not only an over-zealous believer in fairies, but also a co-conspirator with them, while undoubtedly erroneous (the use of fairies or familiar spirits was one of the worst sins to Jones) does go far in giving evidence both of the belief in spirits in the area and perceptions of Jones himself. For one thing, ridicule of Jones and his beliefs clearly indicate that the belief in fairies was certainly not as strong as Jones would have liked. Still, that those who criticized him then experienced supernatural misfortune which they blamed on Jones would allude to the same model of supernatural retribution of a wronged party that has been discussed above. Moreover, Jones possessed certain characteristics which may have

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{101} Samuel Pratt, \textit{Gleanings through Wales, Holland and Westphalia} (3 vols, London: T.N. Longman and L.B. Sebley, 1795), I, p. 138. Although Pratt does not name the preacher, he has been identified as Edmund Jones in Davies, ‘Wales in English Travel Writing’, 76.

\textsuperscript{102} See Pratt, \textit{Gleanings}, I, pp. 135–65, for his criticism of fairy beliefs in the Pontypool area. Pratt was one of the authors criticized by Theophilus Jones [CYMRO] in his ‘Cursory Remarks on Welsh Tours or Travels’, 423–35. See also Davies, ‘Wales in English Travel Writing’, 71–8.
made him seem like a person with supernatural abilities or the power to invoke supernatural creatures. Jones occupied a somewhat liminal position within his community. He changed his parish of residence several times throughout his lifetime and was itinerant in his preaching. He was well-read and self-educated with an obvious knowledge of the supernatural, as is clearly evidenced in his written works. He also possessed a great body of knowledge of herbal-lore, recorded in his ‘Spiritual Botonology’, 103 as well as astrology, as shown by the writing of horoscopes for himself and others in his community. 104 Also, in addition to mere knowledge of spirits, he had several personal encounters and confrontations with spirits and fairies, with his own home at the Transh being troubled by a notable and prolonged haunting. 105 Add in that he would have been, at this time, an elderly widower living alone in relative poverty surrounded by books, and Jones himself takes on many, if not most, of the superficial characteristics of a magical practitioner, something with which he would not have identified. Still, his identification as such by those who criticized his belief in fairies reveals a complex dynamic of belief.

Contributing to this complex dynamic are two factors which in the traditional historiography have been seen as contributing to the decline in the belief in magic and witchcraft: advances in medicine, and the dissemination of knowledge, most notably in education. 106 As was discussed in the previous chapter, north-west Monmouthshire in the eighteenth century had access to contemporary medical care through both settled medical professionals and itinerant physicians. 107 In congress with this, more traditional forms of medicine such as herbalists, charms, and cunning-folk persisted and often complimented ‘modern’ medicine. Indeed ‘orthodox’ and ‘unorthodox’ medical practitioners should

106 Elmer, ‘Science, Medicine and Witchcraft’.
perhaps not be viewed as clearly mutually exclusive or binary opposites.¹⁰⁸ Many cunning-folk were doctors, and many doctors practiced methods associated with cunning-folk.

Examining a patient’s water was an antiquated technique, largely discontinued by medical professionals in the period, but still in practice by traditional healers and cunning-folk.¹⁰⁹ Jones recorded that the cunning-man Charles Hugh diagnosed diseases by looking at urine. However, the diarist William Thomas of Michaelston-super-Ely, near St Fagans, Glamorgan, also recorded that William Read, the Trevethin apothecary, was ‘a man of great judgment concerning man and to cast urine in our parts, and numbers resorting from England and Wales to him daily’. He was taught the skill by his uncle, John William Bevan of Pontypool, ‘that great urinal Doctor’.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, the cunning-man consulted in the murder of Benjamin Price was a ‘clap Surgeon’.¹¹¹ It was also presumably a Pontypool doctor (‘he of Pontypool’) who informed Thomas Philip in 1781 that ‘he was witched’.¹¹² The most famous example of combination doctor and dyn hysbys is John Harries of Cwrtycadno (1785–1839) who, it has been suggested, was a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons at Edinburgh or else attended Oxford, although there is a lack of documentary evidence to support this.¹¹³

Alongside these medical practitioners, be they ‘professional’ or ‘magical’, there was also a continued use of home remedies and herbal-lore. Almanacs, books, and newspapers sometimes printed remedies for common ailments which the reader could use themselves or recommend to or share with neighbours or relatives.¹¹⁴ The 1729 Poor Robin Almanac, in which Jones kept his diary for that year, printed ‘An Excellent cure for worms’:

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¹¹² *Diary of William Thomas*, p. 303.


Take a Crust of Brown Bread in the morning fasting and chew it, but let none go down, and when the Taste of it is mostly gone put it out and put in more, repeat the Operation till all the Worms in your Belly be drawn to the upper part of your Stomach by the Smell of the Bread, in hopes to be fed; when they are all holding up their open Mouths to get Bread, toss down a large Noggin of Brandy and choak them all to death, and they will every one be kill'd Nemine Contradicente.  

Similarly, in December 1730, the *Gloucester Journal* published an ‘infallible cure for the Bite of a Mad Dog’ and followed it a week later in January 1730/1 with a recipe for ‘a bolus for a cold’ adding after it ‘to such constitutions as cannot be provoked to sweat, opening a Vein, or a gentle Purge, will be of great Service’. Jones compiled a ‘Spiritual Botonology’ containing his description of the properties and uses of over a hundred different plants and what they showed about the nature of God. Included in his description of most of them is some instruction of their use in cures. However, there is evidence that Jones felt that such cures were, like apparitions, going out of fashion with contemporaries.

In his commentary on the herb Devil’s-bit scabious he remarked that

> The root in powder, for the devil did not take all the root away, provokes sweat, and is good for diseases of the lungs. And if devil envies every useful herb, there are 10000’s of them in the world to give him constant vexation; however for his comfort and content, the modern Physicians for the most part despise herbs, and the Devil’s bit more than many: But it is a herb of virtue, and worthy of a better name. 

Different opinions regarding the efficacy or inefficacy of different medical techniques, while not ending traditional or ‘unorthodox’ forms of medical treatment, would have raised issues of their validity. Jones, for one, certainly felt that the traditional use of herbs was under attack. Thus while the differing medical ideologies present in society did co-exist or even facilitate one another, with ‘magical’ medical practitioners dealing with cases that ‘orthodox’ healers could not, such a heterogeneous mixture would have produced a wide range of cultural opinions within society.

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115 NLW, MS. 7021A, Edmund Jones diary for 1729.
116 *Gloucester Journal*, 29 December 1730, 5 January 1730/1.
117 The herb was so called because the Devil was supposed to have bitten off most of the root.
This diversity of cultural opinions would have only been further complicated by the dissemination of knowledge through education and the emerging public sphere. While, as will be discussed in later chapters, the Enlightenment myth of learning and science bringing an end to ‘superstitious’ beliefs was certainly erroneous, and Jones’s own beliefs, rather than being atavistic, actually can be seen as working in the same grain as certain elements of Enlightenment thought; the zeitgeist of Enlightenment, with its hostility towards such folk-beliefs, must be borne in mind. There certainly was a contemporary cultural perception that, as W. Howells put it, ‘the beatific rays of Wisdom, have gleamed through the dark clouds of Ignorance and Superstition . . . and the march of Intellect, has made its welcome appearance . . . even amongst the mountains and valleys of Wales’. Thus, while discussion of the tone and content of the intellectual discourse over the supernatural in the period and its bearing on Jones’s personal views do not find a place in the present chapter, the issue of widened access to such discourse and the impact of heterogeneous views on issues related to folk-belief and their impact on community perceptions do merit discussion.

In his seminal work on the development and transformations of the bourgeois ‘public sphere’, Jürgen Habermas pointed out the idiosyncratic social conception of a ‘public’ as brought about by the structure and nature of Enlightenment liberal capitalism and governance. He described such a public sphere as

the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people’s public use of their reason.

He further remarks that discussion within such a public ‘presupposed the problematization of areas that until then had not been questioned. The domain of “common concern” which

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120 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), p. 27.
was the object of public critical attention remained a preserve in which church and state authorities had the monopoly.\footnote{Ibid., 36.} While Habermas's approach to the phenomenon is obviously political, the idea of public discourse and access through a 'public sphere' also has ramifications for ideas about the supernatural. Jonathan Barry has looked at both the private and public discourse surrounding a case of witchcraft at the Lamb Inn in Bristol in 1761, suggesting that the hostility of the press and public discourse to the belief in spirits led to a type of 'public infidelity' despite private belief.\footnote{Jonathan Barry, 'Public Infidelity and Private Belief?' The Discourse of Spirits in Enlightenment Bristol', in Owen Davies and Willem de Blécourt (eds), Beyond the Witch Trials: Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment Europe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 117–43 (pp. 118–23).} Jones's \textit{Apparitions of Spirits} can be seen as evidence of this hostile publishing environment as he felt the need to publish it anonymously.

Although the press itself did not debate the reality or unreality of issues like witchcraft overmuch,\footnote{Davies, \textit{Witchcraft Magic and Culture}, p. 9.} some notable cases of supernatural activity did appear in the press. While Willem de Blécourt has argued that

> Although nineteenth-century articles on witchcraft were obviously meant to ridicule the 'stupid superstitions' that ought not to be part of 'our enlightened era', it has to be assumed that they do not only contain exceptional cases. To the reporters (often locals, albeit of a different class), any eruption of witchcraft was itself an excess. Comparison of the accounts with each other, as well as with the later folklore records, also leads to the conclusion that the last century's newspapers present 'normal' witchcraft, if not in all the desired details. \footnote{Willem de Blécourt, 'On the Continuation of Witchcraft', in Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (eds), \textit{Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 335–52 (pp. 344–5).}

Owen Davies, noted for the previous century that, 'eighteenth-century newspapers are enormously frustrating when it comes to researching witchcraft and magic. Such beliefs were obviously widespread during the century, but this is little reflected in the newspapers.'\footnote{Owen Davies, 'Newspapers and the Popular Belief in Witchcraft and Magic in the Modern Period', \textit{Journal of British Studies}, 37: 2 (April, 1998), 139–65 (142).} As reasons for this he cites the argument of Bob Bushaway that such beliefs were so widespread in the period that they were not considered newsworthy, the fact that reporters were fairly sparse and liable to miss such events, and that provincial
papers usually preferred to publish items of national import over local affairs. Accordingly he notes that it was only with the expansion of the provincial press in the nineteenth century and the increase in interest in local affairs that items on popular beliefs became more widespread. Be this as it may, some pieces on witchcraft and hauntings did find their way into the provincial press. In February 1730/1, the *Glocester Journal* included an example: ‘Both City and Country having been for several Days past amused with different Accounts of the late Apparition at Perth, we have thought proper to publish the following Narrative, carefully taken down from the Missive of a Gentleman of unexceptional Honour and Veracity.’ There followed an account wherein the spirit of David Sutor appeared in the form of a dog to William Sutor and confessed to a murder, directing William to the spot where the body was buried. It is interesting that this account does not seem to be particularly noteworthy or unusual. In fact, it would have been at home in Jones’s own work, thus demonstrating that though sparse, such coverage did occur. However, even when these accounts did appear they would bring such beliefs to the fore and, depending on the discourse surrounding them, perhaps make the reader question or examine their own beliefs on the topic.

Even when discussions were not necessarily hostile to (or even were supportive of) supernatural beliefs they may still have complicated the issues of folk-belief. Even popular books, like almanacs with their emphasis on astrology, would have presented a more standardized belief than the folk-belief itself. Intellectual tracts on the supernatural similarly would have usually differed from local beliefs: it is well established that intellectual views on demonology and maleficium differed from popular conceptions of apparitions and witchcraft even if both ‘elite’ and ‘lay’ ideas had a similar cultural background. Jones’s work can again serve as example, as though his accounts were popularly informed, they were presented and interpreted within Jones’s own religious and

intellectual context. Those examples of specific hauntings which were relayed (and supported) by newspapers could also complicate things. In January 1730/1, the *Glocester Journal* reported that a fiddler who had been playing in Broadway in Gloucestershire was on his way home when he decided to slip into a barn to take a nap. Soon after, a man and woman came in and 'became familiar with each other'. As soon as they finished, he began playing the 'Tune of the Black Joke', which they took to be the Devil playing 'a Tune to the Dance they had been at' and both ran out 'the Woman without her Hoop, and the Man without his Breeches'. The fiddler had found some money and a watch in the man's breeches and had them 'cry'd, but no body owns them'. 128 The tone of the article is clearly humorous, both in the fact that the couple were caught 'with their pants down' (literally) and, perhaps, their implied credulity. However, it is not inherently hostile to the belief in the Devil's apparition, although this clearly turned out to be a false alarm, and readers could perhaps find support for their own beliefs in the fact that they were held by others.

Even those elements in printed culture which would not have had a deleterious effect on local beliefs or even reinforced a belief in the supernatural could have altered people's perceptions. As literacy and access to printed materials increased, readers came into contact with a variety of conceptions and frameworks pertaining to witchcraft, magic, apparitions, and fairies which they could incorporate into their own worldview. This was not merely an eighteenth-century issue: anytime a culture came in contact with another there was potential for transmission of ideas. Suggett notes that the first usage of the English loan word 'wits' appears with other grammatical forms in William Salesbury’s 1547 Welsh-English dictionary. He argues that 'linguistic evidence suggests that the structure of popular occult categories was changing in sixteenth-century Wales' and the 'borrowing of the English word 'witch' and its related forms suggests concern and interest in a new form of witchcraft', namely one which extant Welsh words were unable to

128 *Glocester Journal*, 16 January 1730/1.
symbolise. Moreover, Tallis in discussing T. P.’s 1711 *Cas gan Gythraul* argued that ‘including the English term in brackets, which T. P. does also for the plural (witchod) . . . suggests that the idea of a maleficent witch was at this time a relatively unknown concept in Wales and did not conform to the archetypical Welsh witch’. The specific conceptualisation of a malevolent human with the power to enact supernatural harm, which is particularly conveyed by the English term ‘witch’, may have been imported into Wales.

In the eighteenth century there is even more evidence of cultural transmission. The fact that cunning-men were increasingly associated with books may have had an effect on the content of their practice. Charms are a good example of this, as in the eighteenth and nineteenth century they were usually written in English or Latin – not Welsh. This may have been associated with the occult or mysterious, as most monoglot Welshmen would not have been able read the charms, thus making them seem more mystical. That the charms bore the influence of written (probably English) texts is already evident in one which has been discussed above, with its seal from Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft* as well as a descending abracadabra. Another, probably late-eighteenth- or early-nineteenth-century charm which was found wrapped in a stocking at Gelli Bach, in Glyn Ceiriog, Denbighshire, is written in English and contains a Tetragramaton. Finally, two early-nineteenth-century charms found together in Montgomeryshire, one in English and the other in Latin contain astrological symbols and the names of angels, written both in Latin script and in the symbols found in Scot’s *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. In addition to the

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130 Tallis, ‘The Conjuror, the Fairy, the Devil and the Preacher’, pp. 44–5.
131 This is not to say that Welsh lacked the concept of the ‘witch’ in every sense of the word, there was the signifier ‘rheibwyr’, and verb ‘rheibio’ which could translate as ‘witch’ and ‘to bewitch’ respectively but these carried connotations greed or to snatch away one’s substance related to their etymology from the Latin *rapio*. There was also the concept of the ‘evil eye’ signified by ‘llygad-dynmC which is associated with a malevolent human actor. However, the signified of witch, in the early modern sense of the concept, was felt to require a new loan signifier to adequately represent it. See Suggett, *Witchcraft and Magic*, p. 22.
132 Ibid., p.111.
133 NLW, MS. 5563 C.
134 NLW, MS. 6746 C, Charm against witchcraft.
135 NLW, MS. 1248 D, Charm against witchcraft; Scot, *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, p. 231.
practice of magical specialists, there may also be evidence of the transmission or re-
oralisation of a localised folkloric belief in the period in the example of the *canwyllau
corff* or corpse candles. These were lights which appeared around the home or room of a
person who was soon to die and then moved along the course which the body would take
to the cemetery before hovering over the burial place.\(^{136}\) Jones recorded several accounts
of these apparitions and noted that these types of apparitions were native to the diocese of
St Davids almost exclusively, resulting from either the eponymous saint or one of the
bishops of that diocese praying that the inhabitants might have some advanced sign of
their demise and thus have their faith in the world hereafter strengthened.\(^ {137}\) He does,
however, say that they were sometimes seen elsewhere, he himself having seen one in
Wrexham.\(^ {138}\) Interestingly, both Peter Roberts in his 1819 *Cambrian Popular Antiquities
of Wales* and W. Howells in his 1831 *Cambrian Superstitions* discuss corpse candles, but
neither makes this geographical distinction, although Howells does allude to it, but then
follows with accounts from elsewhere undermining this supposition.\(^ {139}\) It is entirely
possible that neither felt it bore mentioning, or in the haste of collecting they did not
realize the geographical distribution, but it is also possible that in the intervening period
between the mid- to late-eighteenth century when Jones encountered the belief, and the
early-nineteenth century, diverse factors, such as migration and even the publication of
*Apparitions of Spirits*, spread the belief outside of the original diocese. Adding to this
theory, Elias Owen in his late-nineteenth-century work on the folklore of north Wales
noted that he had heard of corpse candles in ‘various parts of Wales’, and while he
includes the origin of them as St David’s, he remarked that ‘originally it was confined to

\(^ {136}\) See Howells, *Cambrian Superstitions*, pp. 59–62; Peter Roberts, *Cambrian Popular Antiquities of Wales*
\(^ {138}\) Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 96.
62.

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his diocese’, the implication being that this was no longer the case.\textsuperscript{140} As the transmission of knowledge from community to community was further facilitated by the increase of literacy and publication, combined with the influx of new people to the area and the improvement in transportation, ideas about the supernatural from different personal and cultural backgrounds came into contact with one another, potentially altering local beliefs.

Thus the socio-cultural environment of eighteenth-century Monmouthshire provided a complex backdrop to folk-beliefs. As Keith Thomas pointed out,

\begin{quote}
We cannot study belief-systems in a void; we have to determine what gives them their social credibility. If it remains true that the content of such beliefs cannot be explained by psychological reductionism or by sociological functionalism, it is also true that changes in belief are very difficult to account for in structuralist terms. To understand why men’s basic assumptions change it is insufficient to expose the inner logic of their systems of thought; we have also to take account of the relationship of those systems to the external social context, modified through human awareness of that context may be the persistence of antique categories of thought.\textsuperscript{141}
\end{quote}

In the context of Jones’s contemporary society, there were diverse social factors which both complemented and complicated traditional folk-beliefs. Institutions of giving and charity in addition to values of good neighbourliness facilitated circumstances which supported the belief in the supernatural. The plethora of accounts collected by Jones in his works attests to this. However, the diffusion of knowledge in the spirit of ‘Enlightenment’ combined with changes in medical knowledge and the medical profession brought in divergent views on traditional beliefs. This is attested to by Jones’s anxiety over attacks on herbal-lore and the belief in witchcraft, apparitions, and fairies which prompted his writing. In all, the changing nature of society in eighteenth-century north-west Monmouthshire impacted upon traditional beliefs, both giving opportunity for continuance whilst creating a more complicated culture of ideas, including greater leeway for types of belief and even disbelief.

\textsuperscript{141} Thomas, ‘Anthropology of Religion and Magic II’, 103.
The 10\textsuperscript{th} day of May 1771 two men, who were acquaintance and relations; the one who shall be named Docilius, ie a teachable man: the other who shall be named Lucilius, a man of light and knowledge, and of a capacity, and aptness to instruct, met together; and after salutation had the following conversation.

Docilius said, My friend Lucilius! it is the opinion of many whose Judgments ought not to be slighted, that you have been a man of great study, and therefore of some considerable attainments in the knowledge of things natural and spiritual; and particularly that you have a gift beyond many, to spiritualise God’s works of creation, the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air; and the trees, and the herbs growing out of the earth, &c; therefore as the Queen of Sheba came to try the wisdom of Solomon, and to be instructed by him, I am come to see how far the report concerning you is true, and to be instructed by you; And if you are disposed to gratify me, my desire is to hear you about some of the trees, or herbs of the earth; especially if you can do it in the poetick stile, for the sake of the convenient brevity belonging to it; and some advantage also in the expression beyond the prose way. And if you add rhime to the blank verse, it will add to the pleasure, and the obligation you will put upon me.\textsuperscript{1}

These lines, written at the beginning of Edmund Jones’s unpublished ‘Spiritual Botonology’, can be taken as an allegory concerning his position within the eighteenth-century Welsh religious environment. In the mid-eighteenth century, south Wales experienced the enthusiasm of the Methodist Revival. Jones’s position within this Revival was largely one of enthusiasm, encouragement, and support for the movement’s propensity to attract people to religion, whilst maintaining a strong allegiance to the Nonconformist religion to which he belonged. Jones’s seniority to those of this nascent movement (albeit a position he held outside of Methodism) manifested itself largely as an

\textsuperscript{1} NL, M350 012 JON H.C., Edmund Jones, ‘Spiritual Botonology’, 2 vols, i, pp. 8–9.
experienced mentor. Even his epithet of ‘the Old Prophet’ alludes to this relationship. The nature of a prophet implies venerability and great knowledge which he gives to those who believe in him. Moreover, the prophet is forward looking to the future of God’s works in the world whilst implying some connection to the past, something which is reinforced by the adjective ‘old’. He is therefore a character caught between two times, the past and the future. Edmund Jones was a man located between the ‘Old Dissent’ of the seventeenth century and the ‘New’ Nonconformity of the nineteenth.

Some Welsh religious historiography has tended to focus on a nineteenth-century vision of a land of chapel goers, employing a ‘Methodist view of history’ to look backward from this vantage point in assessing the Revival and pre-Revival period. In this it seems to take the word of William Williams, Pantycelyn, that there was neither presbyter nor priest in Wales before the arrival of Howel Harris, a statement which Jones understandably found highly offensive. Geraint H. Jenkins has criticized the tendency of historians of the Revival to adopt this approach, noting three points regarding it:

The first is that much effort has gone into the study of the founding fathers of Calvinistic Methodism, and this has given rise to a dangerous and misleading mystique about the providentially-inspired rôle of the early Methodist leaders . . . The second point is that the cataclysmic effect of Methodism has been exaggerated . . . The third point is that by gazing at pre-revival Wales through Methodist spectacles our understanding of the period is distorted.

In the nineteenth century, Welsh Nonconformity experienced rapid growth: Nonconformists built new chapels at an average of one every eight days between 1800 and 1850 and by 1851, if not before, Nonconformity was clearly becoming a dominant force in Wales. As Nonconformity was perceived as flourishing particularly in Welsh-speaking areas, an association was made between Welshness and Nonconformist religion. Such a relationship was augmented by the 1847 Brad y Llyfrau Gleision (Treason of the Blue

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2 NLW, MS. 7027A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1773.
5 Ibid., p. 30.
Books) which also served more closely to ally Calvinistic Methodism to the rest of Welsh Nonconformity. Moreover, Eryn White has noted that Calvinistic Methodism was undoubtedly a Welsh movement. As a Protestant faith, it had the rare distinction of being able to claim to be conceived, born and bred in Wales. Its cradle was the impoverished diocese of St David’s. It was nurtured by the growth of literacy and publication which characterised the period. Unlike Protestantism in the sixteenth century or Puritanism in the seventeenth it was not imposed from the outside, despite its affiliation with the English movement. Its Welsh credentials were unimpeachable.

However, while the nineteenth century was the time when Nonconformity both grew rapidly and augmented its Welsh credentials, R. Tudur Jones has described the period between 1735 and 1785 as a ‘period of preparation’, noting that ‘it was those men who continued their ministry through these years who were largely responsible for the triumphs of the period that followed’. Edmund Jones was one of these men and this chapter will explore not only the nature of religion in eighteenth-century Monmouthshire and the impact of the Revival on this, but also Jones’s relationship with revivalism.

As part of his involvement with the religious Revival of the eighteenth century, Jones was not only a man who bridged the gap between old and new religious groups, but was also involved in an event which involved several nations and spanned the Atlantic Ocean. Jones’s circle of personal religious acquaintances, correspondents, and colleagues was not limited to Welsh revivalists such as Howel Harris, but also included prominent English religious figures notably George Whitefield, John and Charles Wesley, and Lady Selina Hastings. Jones did not, like Whitefield and the Wesley brothers, cross the Atlantic to preach in the American colonies, but he did cross over into the English border counties as well as further afield in England. He also participated in the international nature of the

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Revival by writing accounts of the state of religion in his locality and as well as wider Wales for the benefit of those outside of the nation. But like many Cambrian revivalists, he felt that his calling was to serve a spiritual need closer to home and to this end he undertook great circuits of itinerant preaching throughout not only south-east Wales, but also the north and west as well, preaching at meeting houses, societies, private houses, and more public or occupational places like furnaces.

As was discussed in Chapter One, Jones’s local ministrations began in his early twenties when he began preaching to the Independent congregation at Pen-maen in Mynyddislwyn parish. In 1738 a ‘great revival of Religion, which extended more or less to every Valley in [Aberystruth] Parish; but more abundantly in Ebwy-vawr’ began, which Jones remarked occurred not only, ‘yet chiefly from the Instrumentality of my unworthy self’. It was in this year that Jones invited the Methodist exhorter Howel Harris into Monmouthshire so that they might ‘attack the devils Intrest & advance our Lords Intrest’. As a result of Harris’s preaching and the spirit of religious Revival, ‘many joined in the Parish Church, some with the Baptists, and some with the Independents, especially from Ebwy-vawr’. The enthusiasm in this last valley was such that ‘[t]here were but seven of about thirty six Houses in the Valley and perhaps not so many, into which the word of God did not enter and make some impression; so that the number of people apparently well disposed to religion, far exceeded the number of those that were not’. By 1739 Jones had himself begun to branch out, by administering the sacrament in

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13 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 119, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 10 August 1738.
15 Ibid., p. 104.
Ebbw Vale. 16 Two years later, in 1741, he established his own congregation in Pontnewynydd in Trevethin, building Ebenezer chapel to house it. 17 Jones noted in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, that between 1720 and 1739 was a period of growth for the congregation at Pen-maen with over a hundred people joining during that time. 18 Conversely, he remarked that ‘[t]his increase was not so much in the Congregation at Aber-tilery, the Baptists prevailing in that neighbourhood; by means of the popular preaching of Mr. Enoch Francis, and Mr. Morgan Griffith among them’. 19 However, he observed that at this same time the congregation in Ebbw Fawr was experiencing growth, which prompted his going there to administer the sacrament. This was, according to Jones, the beginning of that congregation. 20 In 1764 he established a congregation at Penllwyn, his birthplace. In its initial stages it had only eleven communicants, but by 1779 its numbers had risen so that it boasted almost thirty in its congregation. Conversely, by 1779 the congregation in Ebbw Fawr was highly diminished and nearly extinct if not actually extinct. 21 As is partially illustrated by the decline of the congregation at Ebbw Fawr, by the time Jones wrote *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* (1779) the fires of the Revival seem to have abated somewhat in the area, as elsewhere. Of the state of religion in Aberystwyth parish in the late 1770s, Jones remarked that there were

No Papists, no Methodists, and but one Quaker. They are all Church-men or Dissenters. And among these who make a profession, there are no Socinians, Arians, Arminians, or Antinomians; but the Evangelick Principles, commonly called Calvinism, is more or less strictly Preached and Professed by them. Nor are there any professed Atheists, Deists, &c. among those who are profane, and are most alienated from Religion, in the Parish whose number is not great. The number of Communicants among the Dissenters, especially the Independents, is much less than it hath been. Indeed the number of the Inhabitants is much less than it hath been in time past; for which it is not easy to give a full reason. The number of Communicants in the Parish Church, if I mistake not, are rather more than twenty in number. The Baptists are more numerous. Our Independents, who

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., p. 110.
communicate in the Parish, are not thirty; So that all these professors together will not much exceed four-score; in a number of people, I think, not amounting to 500 in all.\textsuperscript{22}

It is noteworthy that the somewhat early increase of the congregation at Pen-maen, most of it predating Jones’s 1738 invitation to Harris, alludes to the myriad of factors impacting upon the ebb and flow of religion in the period. In addition to a general statement that this was due to the fact that ‘the LORD returned and visited this church’, Jones noted that Pen-maen in the period attracted several popular preachers, with James Davies of Merthyr Tudful prominent among them, which effected this change. This was in contrast to the previous fortunes of the congregation. In 1694 John Harris of Carmarthenshire had preached there and, being popular, the congregation had grown. However he was excommunicated for drunkenness and Pen-maen spent some years in choosing a new minister, during which time they lost eleven members to the Baptists. They eventually settled on David Williams, who turned out to be ‘no popular preacher’ and the congregation dwindled further until 1720. Unfortunately, Jones does not give an indication as to why he and others began preaching at Pen-maen in that period, as Williams remained the pastor there until his death in the 1750s.\textsuperscript{23} Still, this does not mean that Revivalism did not play a part, as Jones noted in discussing his 1738 invitation to Harris and the resulting increase in religion that ‘from thence the Church at Penmaen much increased’.\textsuperscript{24} It does show that this was one of several factors and that in addition to revivalist enthusiasm, the fortunes of specific congregations were also affected by, for instance, the individual popularity and personality of their ministers, or else competition from other local Nonconformist congregations, in this case the Baptists at Abertyleri.

In the Bishop’s Visitation Questions and Answers return for 1774, David Jones, the Anglican curate who served Aberystruth and Llanhiledd parishes, reported that in Aberystruth there were

\begin{footnotes}
\item[22] Ibid., p. 109.
\item[23] Ibid., pp. 98–9.
\item[24] Ibid., p. 103.
\end{footnotes}
Presbyterians, Independent, Anabaptists, Quakers. Nineteen Presbyterians five Independants thirty four Anabaptists. No other places of Divine worship than what is used by the above mentioned sects. The Teacher of the Presbyterians is Edmund Jones, the teacher of the Anabaptists one Edmund Watkins and Evan Harry and Morris Jones and [Galen?] Morgan they are licensed they are greater this last year than formerly by the leading of Morris Jones whom they reckon famous for preaching.25

This seems to roughly accord with Jones’s own account, if Jones’s Independent congregation is identified as the Presbyterians and if it is allowed that Jones’s congregation at Penllwyn could have increased by around ten between 1774 and 1779.26 Yet by 1781, the curate noted that whilst there were ‘many Presbyterians and Anabaptists’, there was ‘No Presbyterian teacher here’.27

This and Jones’s account allude to the strength of the Baptists in the parish, something which appears to have been true for north-west Monmouthshire generally as they seem to have constituted the dominant Nonconformist denomination there. This is notable in Llanwenarth in 1774 where the only school was run by the Baptists.28 In 1771, the Rector of that parish noted that there were ‘Anabaptists, to near half the number of the Inhabitants in Lanwenarth and the Chapelry, – two great meeting houses – One in each Place – Licensed I believe – Little or no Difference in Number since I have resided.’29 As the 1763 visitation refers to Aberystruth as the chaplaincy of Llanwenarth, it is likely that ‘Chalpelry’ here refers to Aberystwith, even though Aberystwith had its own entry in subsequent Bishop’s Visitation returns.30 In fact the 1771 return for Aberystwith remarked that ‘We have some Presbyterians no Independents some Anabaptists we have their

25 NLW, MS. LL/QA/7, Llandaff Visitations Q&A 1774.
26 This identification of Edmund Jones as a ‘Presbyterian’ should probably be seen as the subjective perception of the curate. As John Morgan-Guy has remarked, ‘How correct it would be at this time to think or speak of ‘denominations’ in the modern sense is open to debate. It is worth suggesting that the parish clergy drew a distinction as they perceived it between ‘presbyterian’, that is, the congregations of ‘old’ dissent other than the Baptists, and ‘independent’, being the relatively new phenomenon, as a result of the ‘Great Awakening’ of what was to become Calvinistic Methodism.’ See John Morgan-Guy, ‘Religion and Belief, 1660–1780’ in Madeleine Gray and Prys Morgan (eds), *The Gwent County History, Volume 3: The Making of Monmouthshire, 1536–1780* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2009), pp. 146–73 (p. 157).
27 NLW, MS. LL/QA/9, Llandaff Visitations Q&A 1781.
28 NLW, MS. LL/QA/7.
29 NLW, MS. LL/QA/5, Llandaff Visitations Q&A 1771.
30 NLW, MS. LL/QA/2, Llandaff visitations Q&A 1763.
meeting house in the Parish. They have three score communicants they don’t increase.\textsuperscript{31} The visitations of 1781, 1784, and 1788 all record the numbers of Baptists in the parish as ‘much the same as usual’ showing a steady, but prominent number of Baptists in Llanwenarth and Aberystruth parishes in the late-eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{32} Similarly, Mynyddislwyn parish, in which the Independent congregation at Pen-maen was located, also had a place of worship for Baptists but the Independent congregation there seems to have been more sizable.\textsuperscript{33} Jones’s Ebenezer chapel was in Trevethin. In 1771, the curate of that parish gave the following account:

There may be 40 or 50 Presbyterians, rather more than that number of Anabaptists, between 30 and 40 Quakers perhaps, but no Independents, and perhaps 10 to 20 Methodists. There are some amongst all these Sects that are of the middle class. Miles Harris is the name of the Anabaptist Minister, and Edmund Jones is the Name of the Presbyterian Minister. The Number of Each sect may be somewhat about the same for 2 years back, I can’t account further back.\textsuperscript{34} By 1781, although the numbers within the respective congregations do not seem to have altered much, a third Baptist meeting house had been built, perhaps reflecting growth in other nearby parishes.\textsuperscript{35} It is noteworthy that in nearby Pant-teg parish in 1774, the curate noted that ‘there is an Independent, Anabaptist and a Quaker’s Meeting House in the Parish – There are but three or four of each sect residing there – the sd Meeting Houses are filled from the Neighbouring Parishes and Town of Pontypool’.\textsuperscript{36} By 1784, the number of Baptists in Trevethin had increased to sixty.\textsuperscript{37}

North-western Monmouthshire seems generally to have been an area of activity for Nonconformists in the county, especially Baptists. John Morgan-Guy has claimed that, as a whole, Monmouthshire saw little overall increase in Nonconformity in the eighteenth century, but the areas of its greatest strength were the parishes of Bedwellty.

\textsuperscript{31} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5.
\textsuperscript{32} NLW, MS. LL/QA/9; NLW, MS. LL/QA/11; Llandaff Visitations Q&A 1784; NLW, MS. LL/QA/13, Llandaff Visitations Q&A 1788.
\textsuperscript{33} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5; NLW, MS. LL/QA/7; NLW, MS. LL/QA/11.
\textsuperscript{34} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5.
\textsuperscript{35} NLW, MS. LL/QA/9.
\textsuperscript{36} NLW, MS. LL/QA/7.
\textsuperscript{37} NLW, MS. LL/QA/11.
Mynyddislwyn, Aberystwyth, and Llanwenarth, along with the towns of Newport, Chepstow, and Abergavenny. Nonconformists in the north-west maintained a vibrant culture and an entrenched position within these communities. Pontypool had several established Quaker families of social importance such as the Hanburys, Allgoods, and Beadleses. The Baptist preacher Miles Harry was also of social significance, instrumental as he was in setting up the short-lived printing press at Pontypool. Jones’s interaction with Harry illustrates the vitality of Nonconformity in the area as it was with him that he engaged in a notable debate over infant baptism, with Jones arguing in favour of it. In his final argument, Jones claimed that infant baptism was right because the spirit had informed him so. Harry’s response was that it must have been an evil spirit. Jones was also summoned before the Bishop’s consistory court for an argument he had with an unnamed Baptist, presumably within the churchyard:

for being abused by an Anabaptist, in his fervent zeal against infant baptism with such terms as these, Thou art a mountebank, a seller of false ware, meaning that I preached false doctrine. A deceiver of souls: none can tell how much evil thou hast done, so he called my ministerial successes, which at that time was not little. A barking dog: a preacher of my backside &c, which provoking me to call him a rascal, a hypocrite &c which I own was wrong, for this he put me in the Bishop’s Court, where I was condemned unheard to pay near 2 pounds. I did not indeed make my appearance there, well knowing that they wanted not to hear my arguments in my own defence, but to receive my money: From such a discipline as this is, one may seriously say, Libera nos Domine!

This theological debate and involvement and visibility within the community were in addition to, albeit somewhat congruent with, the activities of the Revival. Still, while

38 Morgan-Guy, ‘Religion and Belief’, p. 156. E. T. Davies notes that ‘there would seem to have been no great increase in Welsh Nonconformity in its home county during the eighteenth century’, and even that ‘it is probable that Nonconformity actually lost ground in Monmouthshire from 1700 to 1800’. E. T. Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1965), p. 13.
41 J. Glyndwr Harris, Edmund Jones: The Old Prophet (Pontnewynydd: Ebenezer Church, 1987), pp. 56-7.
42 NLW, MS. 17054D, Edmund Jones on Seventeenth Century Religious Writings, p. 172. Unfortunately, although many records from this period have survived, documents pertaining to this case do not seem to be extant. There is a case in 1717, where an Edmund Jones was accused of calling John George a ‘God damn son of a whore’ and a ‘son of a bitch’, but this Edmund Jones is described as being from Christchurch and married to a woman named Elizabeth. The case is also too early, as Jones describes having been preaching with some success before the events in question. Nevertheless, it gives an image of some of the colourful language which could be used in such cases. NLW, MS. LL/CC/G 94, Consistory court record, defamation, George Jones against Edmund Jones and Elizabeth Jones.
Nonconformity definitely had an established presence in north-west Monmouthshire in the eightheenth century, it was certainly not at a strength matching that which it had in the nineteenth century: the Church of England remained the religious provider of most people.

This centrality of the Anglican Church to the people of eighteenth-century south-east Wales is difficult to appraise if attendance figures or the number of communicants is held as a baseline of its influence. In 1763, Abergavenny parish contained somewhere between 300 and 350 families, however, the curate reported that only thirty to forty people received the sacrament monthly, with about as many more receiving it at the major festivals. Even allowing for the sizable numbers of Nonconformists and the few Catholics in the parish, this is a poor showing. Local Anglican ministers also sometimes had trouble in getting members of their congregation to send their children and servants to be catechised. The curate of Goetre parish in 1774 wrote that

I am much at a loss in the performance of this branch of my duty, having had no regular School in this parish for some time, till lately there was an English one erected whereby I shall be enabled to catechise the Scholars, as the parishioners will not be prevailed upon to send their Children and Servants to be instructed in such a manner as the rubrick requires: Nor will they be obedient enough to come, & especially the latter.

Parishioners may have been deterred by the fact that the catechism was usually taught in English, its occasional or annual nature, or else they did not regard it as a pressing concern, but the tone of disappointment on the part of the clergy is consistent in the returns. However, even if parishioners actively participated in ceremonies or worship less than their ministers would have liked, the parish church did remain an important part of the communities of eighteenth-century south Wales. As Eryn White has shown, the official church remained dominant, as it was ingrained in the lives of most people by tradition and faith. It was associated with the life-cycle, as most people were christened within the parish church at birth and interred in the parish churchyard after death.

Throughout most of the eighteenth century this was true for most Nonconformists as well.

43 NLW, MS. LL/QA/2.
44 NLW, MS. LL/QA/7.
The church and churchyard was also a common meeting place for the people of a community.⁴⁵ That even Nonconformists met there can be shown by the fact that Jones’s confrontation with the unnamed Baptist took place in the churchyard.

In addition to mere meetings, conversations, and even confrontations, the churchyard was also often a scene of revelry and communal assembly. Local celebrations were often held there as were sporting events and competitions such as ball games or cock-fights.⁴⁶ Most noteworthy were the celebrations of the gwyl mabsant (parish wake), celebrating the patron saint of the parish church, which featured drinking, dancing, games, and other revelry.⁴⁷ The ecclesiastical unit of the parish provided an area with which one might identify oneself, especially in the popular intra-parish football matches of the eighteenth century. This feeling of local identity was even further entrenched as the geographical boundaries had remained largely the same since before the Reformation.⁴⁸ The ecclesiastical parish and its officials as a geographical unit were also responsible for many of the social mechanics of eighteenth-century community life, such as the administration of poor relief and the upkeep of the roads, both of which were undertaken on the parish level. Eighteenth-century Welsh curates also often provided schools for the education of local children, such as Howell Prosser who taught Edmund Jones.⁴⁹ Thus while many, if not most, people did not actively participate in the local official church, either through non-attendance or non-conformity, the church still played a vital and active role in the everyday lives of those in the community.

Be this as it may, historians have largely criticised the mismanagement of the Church in south Wales, often suggesting that it was an inefficient and ineffectual

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⁴⁸ Morgan-Guy, ‘Religion and Belief’, p. 146.
administrative body. Notably, from 1727 to 1870, not a single Welsh speaker was appointed to a Welsh bishopric.\textsuperscript{50} The Welsh dioceses, particularly the Diocese of Llandaff, within which most of Monmouthshire fell, were also extremely impoverished.\textsuperscript{51} This poverty was translated downward to the local level so that in the eighteenth century the poor curates of south Wales became a stereotype.\textsuperscript{52} As a result of this poverty, pluralism was rampant in the diocese.\textsuperscript{53} The curate of Trevethin parish in 1771 noted that ‘The stipend is so small that the Curate is olig’d to serve two churches besides. Therefore can serve this but once a Day.’\textsuperscript{54} These two other churches were those at Pant-teg and Manheilad. The curate of Mynyddislwyn also served Bedwellty; Aberystwith and Llanhiledd were served by the same man; as were Bassage, Risca, and Henllys.\textsuperscript{55} As the Trevethin curate noted, the distance between these charges usually meant that services could only be held once every Sunday instead of twice as was suggested in the Bishops’ visitations.\textsuperscript{56} In addition to this, sermons were often given even less often.\textsuperscript{57} Even though Bedwas parish had service twice a Sunday, sermons were only read fortnightly.\textsuperscript{58} Even when divine service was performed, its intelligibility to its hearers could also be an issue.\textsuperscript{59} In Bedwas, while most of the service was held in Welsh, the ‘Psalms and Responses are generally read in English, especially at Morning Service.’ In Trevethin, service was held partly in Welsh and partly in English and in Llanelen, the first Sunday of every month had a service in English with the rest of the services in Welsh.\textsuperscript{60} Moreover, it seems that the rector of Llanwenarth may have been uncomfortable with or unable to speak Welsh, noting that, ‘As the greater part of the Inhabitants near the Mother Church understand

\textsuperscript{50} Jenkins, Foundations of Modern Wales, p. 343.
\textsuperscript{51} Jenkins, Literature, Religion and Society, pp. 2-6; Glanmor Williams et al., The Welsh Church From Reformation to Disestablishment 1603–1920 (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 83.
\textsuperscript{52} Williams et al., The Welsh Church, pp. 106–9; Peter Lord, Words with Pictures: Welsh Images and Images of Wales in the Popular Press, 1640–1860 (Aberystwith: Planet, 1995), pp. 69–70.
\textsuperscript{53} Williams et al., The Welsh Church, p. 109; Jenkins, Religion Literature and Society, pp. 6–7.
\textsuperscript{54} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{57} Jenkins, Literature Religion and Society, pp. 11–12.
\textsuperscript{58} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5.
\textsuperscript{59} Jenkins, Literature, Religion and Society, pp. 9–11.
\textsuperscript{60} NLW, MS. LL/QA/5.
English, I am very much engaged in Duty, with them. And, as the Roads, and weather permits, once or twice a Month, at the Chapel; when I have begun to Catechise the Children.61 As this Chapel was Aberystwyth, and as this area was primarily if not totally Welsh speaking, the rector’s preference for the English tongue may have been a reason for employing a curate to work in Aberystwyth, in addition to the vastness of the parish. However, local priests were attempting to cater for an increasingly linguistically diverse population and, even if some of the eighteenth-century Welsh clergy have been accused of overcompensating in favour of English, most services seem to have reflected the linguistic conditions of the area.62 Of course, even if this bilingualism may reflect a desire for general accessibility, there is little doubt that English services or parts of services would have been unintelligible to monoglot Welshmen and vice versa.63

These inadequacies of the established church may account for the strength of Nonconformity and the effectiveness of the Revival in south Wales. Nonconformity, by its very nature, was not fettered by the same administrative difficulties as the established church, which would have to wait until 1836 before parliamentary action was taken to adjust to the changing nature of society.64 Writing about the Blaenau area of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan during early industrial expansion, E. T. Davies has pointed out,

Up to 1819, with the exception of Blaenavon, this area, with a rapidly increasing population, was divided into large upland parishes which had been formed in the Middle Ages, and, to make matters worse, they were served in all cases, except in Aberdare and Merthyr Tydfil, by churches built on top of mountains: Bedwelly, Trevethin, Aberystwyth, Mynyddislwyn, and Llanhilledd; while the new communities were settling in the beds of the valleys, being ministered to by the scores of Nonconformist chapels which were being built.65

61 NLW, MS. LL/QA/2.
62 Jenkins, Literature, Religion and Society, p. 11; Williams et al., The Welsh Church, pp. 143–4.
64 Davies, Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales, p. 23.
65 Ibid., p. 24.
Although discussing a period after that which is considered here, Davies alludes to the inflexibility of the established church. Nonconformists were better able to establish chapels where there was a potential congregation in need of them; and while the established church was subject to established parish boundaries for the location of its churches, Nonconformists were not exactly beholden to the same geographical delineations. Multiple congregations were sometimes located in the same parish, or else worshipers might attend a chapel which was nearby but across parish borders. Jones’s parents, while living in Aberystwith parish, worshipped in Mynyddislwyn, while Jones was involved in the establishment of two congregations in Aberystwith at Ebbw Fawr and Penllwyn. Pant-teg’s Nonconformist meeting houses were clearly located within that parish merely for the convenience of those in the surrounding parishes and the town of Pontypool. Nonconformity was therefore able to cater to local need in a more efficient way. This was perhaps especially true for communities like the Independents who placed administrative authority at the level of the congregation.

Nonconformity was not, however, without its own problems. Financially, Nonconformist ministers often found themselves faced with penury similar to or worse than their Anglican counterparts. The Congregationalist and Presbyterian funds provided some assistance to Nonconformist congregations both in the setting up and building of meeting houses and in supplemental pay to ministers. These had existed as the Common Fund, established in 1690, prior to the doctrinal split between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists which led to a breakdown of the so-called ‘Happy Union’ in 1695 when the two groups set up their own funding bodies to aid their respective preachers.  

As W. T. Owen remarked with regard to the Congregational Fund Board, ‘donations from the Board must have reached the home of most Welsh Independent ministers . . . and

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judging from ample evidence of the period they must have been very welcome'. 67 However, the doctrinal split does not seem to have precluded Jones from receiving financial support from both bodies. For a period his salary was just £3 from his congregation which was supplemented by a further £3 from the Congregational Fund Board. 68 He even noted in his 1780 diary that on 22 January he received ‘3 pounds from the Independent fund wch was to be sent last year but neglected’. 69 However on 24 June 1739 he received £5 ‘at [Abergavenny] by the hands of J Nicholas Esq as an extraordinary supply from the [Presbyterian] Fund’. 70 Similarly, bodies like the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) were responsible for providing Bibles and devotional tracts to Welsh preachers, 71 and it was probably in association with the S.P.C.K. or a similar organization that John Thornton Esq. sent Jones two dozen Welsh Bibles, two dozen English Bibles, two dozen copies of ‘Allen of Conversion’, two dozen hymnals, two dozen small Testaments, and five dozen copies of ‘The Duty of Believing [in Christ]’ from London in 1773. 72 Still, despite the financial assistance available, many Nonconformists, like Jones, received a mere pittance for their services and had to settle for a somewhat impoverished lifestyle, supplemented by the beneficence of philanthropists in the community. 73 Still other ministers found it beneficial to supplement their duties with other work, or else to become independently wealthy through inheritance or marriage. 74

Nonconformists were also barred from holding public office and obtaining degrees at the country’s universities. This latter obstruction proved a barrier to old Nonconformity, especially Presbyterianism and Congregationalism, with the premium which it placed on learning and education. To that end, Nonconformists set about providing their own means

68 Ibid.
69 NLW, MS. 7029A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1780.
70 NLW, MS. 7024A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1739.
72 NLW, MS. 7027A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1773.
of education through the establishment of academies. These taught both theological and secular subjects, including the latest in Enlightenment thought and scientific knowledge, and thus developed a reputation for free and progressive thinking. Due to the breadth of education available and the lack of Welsh universities, they were not only attended by those seeking a career in the ministry. 75 This development was both a blessing and a curse as such academies were sometimes viewed as breeding grounds for religious controversy and rational dissent. 76 By the mid-eighteenth century, eyebrows were raised about the perceived Arminian and possibly Arian tendencies of those teaching at the Independent academy at Carmarthen amongst its funders at the Congregationalist Board. This resulted in divisions in the academy, with the portion funded by the Congregationalist Board being removed to Abergavenny whilst the other half remained at Carmarthen funded by the Presbyterian Board. 77 Even after this split, the academy at Carmarthen continued to be seen as a hotspot of the dissemination of Arminian ideas. 78 Jones perhaps had the Carmarthen academy in mind when he wrote that 'so many pestilent Hereticks, Deists, Socinians, Arians, Arminians, Antinomians, &c.' had been 'sent forth out of these Schools to Plague the Church of GOD'. 79 Outside of the academies, there were further theological divisions in Congregationalism. In the 1730s, Arminianism spread in Cardiganshire amongst the Independents of Jenkin Jones’s Llwynrhydowen Chapel (the first Arminian Chapel in Wales) and in the congregation at Ciliau Aeron. In the latter the Arminianism of the majority caused a schism, with the Calvinist minority forming Neuadd-Iwyd church in 1760. Similar divisions occurred at Cefnarthen church in Carmarthenshire in 1740 and Cwm-y-glo church in Merthyr Tudful in Glamorgan in 1747. 80 Against this backdrop it is easy to see why Edmund Jones felt he had to defend the tenets of Calvinism with such zeal.

76 Watts, Dissenters, pp. 370–1.
77 Jones, Congregationalism, pp. 99–100.
78 Ibid., p. 106.
79 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 148.
80 Jones, Congregationalism, pp. 105–6.
With its emphasis on intellectually theological issues, Nonconformity was sometimes criticised for its torpidity, but this charge was more often brought against the established church. Derec Llwyd Morgan, has noted how this view is somewhat reflected in historical writings about Nonconformity in the period: R. Tudur Jones’s chapter on Congregationalism from 1689–1760 is entitled ‘A Long Summer’s Day’, and Michael Watts’s chapter covering 1690–1730 is called ‘A Plain Called Ease’.\(^{81}\) The perception is that after securing a degree of toleration in 1689, Nonconformists gave more attention to maintaining this status, enjoying a respite from hard fighting for acceptance, and disputing theological points amongst themselves than vehement public proselytising.\(^{82}\) The criticism of quietude came especially from those, like Howel Harris, William Williams, Pantycelyn, and Edmund Jones himself, who longed for a revival of religious fervour. Indeed, Harris alluded to a slumber over the land – The generality of people spent the LORD’s day contrary to the Laws of GOD and man; it being by none rightly observed; – neither had any one, whom I knew, the true knowledge of that GOD whom we pretended to worship. No sooner was the worship over, on the LORD’s day, than the conduct of the people discovered that the heart was entirely alienated from all that was good.\(^{83}\)

This sentiment, as will be seen in this chapter, was echoed by Jones: for what other reason would he have invited Harris to come to Monmouthshire in 1738?

Historians of the Revival in Wales have, understandably, tended to focus on the role of the Methodists. David Ceri Jones, in his ground-breaking work on the international nature of the Revival in Wales, has also discussed its inter-denominational aspect, which was very much tied in with its internationalism.\(^{84}\) R. Tudur Jones has pointed out that ‘In its early days it was Edmund Jones who was the most powerful force in support of the

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\(^{82}\) Morgan, \textit{Great Awakening}, p. 41.

\(^{83}\) Anon., \textit{A Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris, Esq; Extracted from Papers Written by Himself. To which is added a Concise Collection of his Letters from the Year 1738, to 1772} (Trevecka: [n. pub.] 1791), p. 19.

Revival among the Independents', something to which Jones alluded when he claimed that the Revival in north-west Monmouthshire was begun largely by the actions of his 'unworthy self'. Some of the first hints at what was to become the Great Awakening in the American Colonies were a series of sermons in 1734 by a Congregationalist minister, Jonathan Edwards. In 1737, Edwards popularised the evangelism of his efforts in *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton*, a work which was quickly reprinted in England at the end of that year, carrying an introduction by the prominent Nonconformists Issac Watts and John Guyse. That this book became popular with Welsh revivalists can be seen in the fact that by 1738 Harris had read Edwards's work and discussed it with Rowland. The Revival's very origins with Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the Colonies, Presbyterians in Scotland, Anglicans in England and Wales (notwithstanding the doctrinal differences between Calvinists and Wesleyans), and Moravians and Lutherans in Germany make it easy to understand how evangelically-minded Nonconformists like Edmund Jones could participate.

Moreover and understandably, bridge building between these different groups was an important activity in the early days of the Revival. Both Howel Harris and George Whitefield took a judicious approach in determining with whom they associated. In his extensive preaching in the American colonies, Whitefield had to walk a fine line between the Presbyterianism of some areas and the Congregationalism of others whilst in Scotland he placed his backing behind a small group of Church of Scotland evangelicals rather than the 'Associate Presbytery' of Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine who may have proven more divisive. Of Harris, David Ceri Jones has written, 'His trusted friendships with individuals from all factions of the revival enabled him to act as broker between them, and there can be little doubt that his efforts helped to prevent the revival from fragmenting still.

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85 Jones, *Congregationalism*, p. 111
86 Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*, p. 103.
88 Ibid., pp. 161–2.
further through the petty jealousies and theological rivalries of its main protagonists. 89

When divisions between the Methodists and the Moravians led the former to distance themselves from the Fetter Lane Society in London and many of the latter to leave the Tabernacle Society in London in the 1740s, Harris, despite his misgivings about the Moravian doctrine of ‘stillness’, continued his contact with them and in the later 1740s attempted several times to effect reconciliation between them and the Methodists. 90

One of the main ‘petty jealousies and theological rivalries’ threatening Methodism was the division between the Calvinism of Whitefield and Harris on the one hand and the Arminianism of the Wesley brothers on the other. The breach between the Calvinist and Arminian branches of Methodism began to come to a head when Whitefield conducted a preaching tour in the American colonies in 1740 and 1741, leaving John Wesley in charge of his congregations. It was at this time that Wesley chose to preach against Calvinism at the society in Bristol and expel Calvinist minded Methodists. He also chose, in 1740, to publish his sermon on Free Grace in which he publicly denounced High Calvinism. Upon his return in 1741, Whitefield publicly responded with A Letter to the Rev. Mr John Wesley: In answer to his Sermon Entitled ‘Free Grace’. Howel Harris had attempted to keep the peace in Whitefield’s absence and despite a private falling out with Charles Wesley, both he and Whitefield managed to keep lines of communication open with John so that in March 1742, John Wesley and Howel Harris met during one of Wesley’s preaching tours in Wales and reached something of a reconciliation. A further meeting was held on 5 February 1743 with the aim of resolving differences between the then three strands of the English and Welsh Revivals: the Calvinists, Wesleyans, and the Moravians. The Moravians declined to attend, but this meeting marks the end of Calvinist/Wesleyan overt animosities for some time. However, as a result of the divisions in the early 1740s, Harris’s brand of Welsh Methodism, as well as Whitefield’s brand of English Methodism,

89 Ibid., pp. 173.
90 Ibid., pp. 164–73.
became codified as Calvinistic. This was augmented at Watford, near Caerphilly, in January 1743 at the first Joint Association of English and Welsh Methodism.\textsuperscript{91}

This cordiality was maintained in part by the matronage of the Countess of Huntington. After the original conflict and initial reconciliation of the early 1740s, the Countess remained most closely allied to the Wesleys.\textsuperscript{92} However, by 1744 she was in regular contact with Whitefield and upon his return from the American colonies in 1748 he moved closer to her, becoming one of her chaplains in September of that year. This marked her movement to the Calvinist wing of the Revival, but it did not mean a breaking of ties with the Wesleys. John preached in her house in early 1749, and in 1750 he, Whitefield, and Harris affected an exchange of pulpits, apparently with her influence. In 1759, at a time of fear of French invasion, both Wesley and Whitefield preached in a series of prayer meetings at the Countess’s home in London.\textsuperscript{93} The 1760s saw continued cooperation between the two factions, such as Charles Wesley’s preaching at Lady Huntington’s chapels, Methodists with Arminian leanings holding positions at her college at Trefeca, and Whitefield even attending Wesley’s conference in August 1767 and preaching for him thereafter.\textsuperscript{94} However, at the turn of the 1770s Methodism was plunged again into doctrinal controversy. In 1768 six Calvinist Methodists were expelled from St Edmund Hall, Oxford, and both sides began responding to this and each other with the publication of pamphlets. Then in August 1770, the 27\textsuperscript{th} Conference of Wesleyan Methodism issued their minutes in which they confirmed in no uncertain terms their allegiance to Arminianism. In November, Whitefield died and although Wesley preached his funeral sermon, the divisions were clear and the two factions continued their battle.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., pp. 174–90, 204–17; David Ceri Jones, “‘We are of Calvinistical Principles’: How Calvinist was early Calvinistic Methodism?" \textit{Welsh Journal of Religious History}, 4 (2009), 37–54 (47–52); Watts, \textit{Dissenters}, pp. 428–31.
\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., pp. 32, 38–41.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., pp. 235–40.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., pp. 256–60; Watts, \textit{Dissenters}, pp. 431–2.
Edmund Jones, while not a Methodist, made his feelings known on the matter. In the spring of 1740, he had met with Harris and wrote that he had preached at Bryn-mawr ‘where God helped me I hope to prevent at last the further growth of Arminianism’. That he had the Wesleyan branch of Methodism in mind can be shown as he continues, ‘Mr Wesley had said that since his being in Wales that he had half convinced or at least staggered Mr Howell Harris’ and ‘I desire that my friends in Wales would not be over fond of this man for I have some suspicion of him that he is not right’. In 1741, he wrote praising the work that both Whitefield and Harris were doing in London and was ‘glad that the followers of the Wesleys come over to you, and wish the truth may crush all errors’.

In October 1741, John Wesley preached at Pontypool and recorded that ‘A clergyman stopped me in the first street; and a few more found me out soon after, whose love I did not find to be cooled at all by the bitter adversaries who had been among them. True pains had been set them against my brother and me by men who know not what manner of spirit they are of.’ According to A. H. Williams, one of these ‘bitter adversaries’ was probably Edmund Jones, although the evidence for this is merely circumstantial. Still, Jones’s attitude towards the Wesleys seems to have abated after a while and he records receiving books from Wesley in 1773, even after the theological controversies of the 1770s. However, it is noteworthy that Jones inserted himself into these controversies despite not being a Methodist. Perhaps he saw the debate as doctrinal and revivalist, and thus superseding denomination, relying on his position as the initial inviter of Harris into Monmouthshire and seniority to Harris (both in age and his position as a licensed preacher instead of a lay exhorter) in order to add weight to his advice.

96 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 243, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 9 May 1740.
97 Ibid.
98 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
100 Ibid., p. 9, n. 1.
101 NLW, MS. 7027A.
Another divisive issue amongst revivalists was the Methodists’ reluctance to leave the Church of England, something which strained relations with Nonconformists at times and a stance which was strongly defended by Harris in a 1747 letter to Jones. The Methodists, for their part, felt that aligning themselves with the Nonconformists would marginalize their cause. Also, as Nonconformity was by no means in the majority, they felt that there was a bigger harvest to be had amongst the established religion. However, apart from this more pragmatic approach, the original religious allegiances of the main Methodist leaders should be remembered: Daniel Rowland was an Anglican curate, Howel Harris received his conversion at an Anglican communion, George Whitefield was ordained as an Anglican deacon. While the Revival was certainly interdenominational, what would be called the Methodist branch of it grew out of, and was intended to be a revival within, the official church, something which was keenly remembered by its leaders. Still, there were reasons why it would be understandable that Nonconformists would feel an affinity towards these men. Methodism, in many ways, may have seemed a throw-back to the zealfulness of ‘Old Dissent’. Theologically too, the Calvinism of the Welsh Methodists did not overtly differ from the Calvinism of Independents like Jones. However, as Watts has described, there are reasons why the type of evangelical Revival which took place in the Church did not take place to the same extent within Nonconformity. Nonconformity had inherited, with its very ‘nonconformist’ nature, a separatist and exclusivist tendency which, in many instances, precluded it from

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102 CMA Trevecka 1695, Howell Harris to Edmund Jones, 7 September 1747.
103 Jones, Glorious Work in the World, pp. 150–1; Watts, Dissenters, pp. 441–2.
104 Watts, Dissenters, pp. 396–8.
105 Morgan, Great Awakening, pp. 20–1.
106 David Ceri Jones has shown that the Calvinism of both Whitefield and Harris was a carefully contemplated philosophy, which was judiciously weighed in their minds to maximize applicability to their followers, agreement with the theology of the official Church, and guard against Arminianism whilst not straying too close to Antinomianism, nor making their evangelism redundant or futile. Jones, “‘We are of Calvinistical Principles’”.

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reaching out to those outside its community.  

According to Watts 'no early-eighteenth-century Dissenter regarded the world as his parish'.

Many had been recruited to Methodism for the reason that it filled a void in their religious lives, and thus felt reluctant to continue worshiping with and receiving communion from the curates and priests who were the source of their initial discontent. It is little wonder, therefore, that Methodist societies sometimes went over to Nonconformity. In 1742, Howel Harris wrote to George Whitefield that one of the Methodist societies had become Nonconformist 'without mentioning a word to others of us, showing also a very bad Spirit, using all means to draw all over to them, calling us false Teachers railing against the Church'. One of the first Welsh Calvinist Methodist societies established in south Wales was at Groes-wen in Glamorgan in 1742. However, as early as 1745, it was already looking to administer its own sacrament and quickly became a Congregationalist meeting. Moreover, Edmund Jones mentions that Morgan John Lewis, who was converted in the wave of evangelism following Howel Harris's arrival in north-west Monmouthshire in 1738, became a Methodist exhorter and eventually a 'pastor to a number of Methodists'. In 1756, Lewis was ordained as an Independent preacher and his society, located at New Inn, also became an Independent meeting. Similarly in 1745, the Methodist exhorter Milbourn Bloom was ordained as an assistant minister to the Independent Congregation at Pant-teg. Thus with Nonconformists often reaping the returns of Methodist preaching, it is little wonder that Howel Harris began to lose his patience with some Nonconformists.

108 Ibid., p. 439.
110 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 546, Howel Harris to George Whitefield, 30 April 1742.
111 Watts, Dissenters, 446.
112 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 106; Jones, Congregationalism, p. 115.
113 Jones, Congregationalism, p. 115.
If in the 1740s Harris was losing patience with the Nonconformists, Nonconformists were also losing patience with him. On 1 October 1740, a ‘Society of Ministers’ met, which aimed to better bring together and perhaps organize Welsh revivalist efforts. Edmund Jones was in attendance, but when Harris preached that evening on ‘assurance and liberty’, Jones found some of his comments on the doctrine of assurance and perfection to be somewhat anathematic to his own beliefs. As will be discussed below, Jones’s Calvinism and that of the Calvinistic Methodists did not differ overtly, however the emotive nature of much of Harris’s theology, with its particular emphasis on the certainty of salvation, made many Nonconformists uncomfortable. This precipitated a ‘loss of love’ between the two men which seems to have lasted almost three decades. Moreover, in 1741, Jones wrote to Harris remarking that he was

glad Mr Whitefield hath born his honest and bold testimony against the lukewarmness and worldliness of Dissenters, and against the loose walking and levity of some of their members. There was the greatest need in the world of it, but Mr Whitefield doth it in a prudent, though yet home manner; and had you, dear brother, done this with less passion, and intemperance of spirit and with more prudence and distinction, observing a regard to their persons, you might have done much good; but as it was I fear it did little good.

It should be noted here, that while Jones allowed Whitefield’s criticism of Nonconformity (perhaps as it reflected much of his own criticism), he objected to Harris’s tone and delivery. Uncertain of his authority in the Welsh Revival, made uneasy by his lack of ordination, and possessing a desire to lead, Harris could often be cutting and blunt in his criticism as well as egotistical in his delivery. According to Geraint Tudur, ‘owing to Harris’s inability to moderate his expressions and to show diplomacy in his treatment of others, men like . . . Edmund Jones were being alienated’.

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115 Tutor, Howell Harris, pp. 74-5.
116 Jones, Congregationalism, p. 112.
117 Tutor, Howell Harris, p. 75. There is also a perceivable gap in communications between the two men from the late-1740s to the early 1770s, although it should be remembered that some documents could simply not be extant.
118 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
119 Tudur, Howell Harris, p. 77; Jones, Congregationalism, p. 113.
However, it should be noted that Jones too had a forceful personality and a fiery temper. The letter quoted above is long, and throughout it Jones berated Harris for his allowance of exhorters who were not ordained, his association with Baptists, and especially for his preaching on ‘free grace’. This being said, some attempt was made on both sides for a moderation of animosities. In the same letter, Jones praises Harris’s ministerial success and complains that he is despised on all sides, couching his language with humility and even asking for Harris’s assistance in setting up a meetinghouse. Interestingly, in 1743, Harris wrote to George Whitefield that ‘Mr Edm’d Jones has set up that meeting house we spoke of at Trevecka – two of our Brethren joined, & more I suppose will but I believe they will see it is not right’. For Harris’s part, he wrote to Jones in 1742 stating, ‘I feel I would not willingly offend you, and when I don’t feel true brotherly Love to you as a Christian, and true Respect as a minister of Christ, Tis my Burthen. I know I am not worthy to wash your feet; This is the thought of my Heart I think of you. Tho to some wise Ende, our Dear Lord suffers us now to differ in some of our thoughts of lesser things.’ Whilst this certainly has a conciliatory note in it, the remarks about not loving or respecting Jones at times probably did little to rebuild bridges. Still, as late as 1744, when journeying through Pontypool with Whitefield, Harris stated that he felt united and respectful towards Jones. However, although relations between the two seem to have remained chilly throughout much of the middle of the eightieth century, they do seem to have reconciled prior to Harris’s death in 1773.

Despite this, Jones tended generally to hold a preferred, if not always acrimonious, position within the hearts of the Methodists for much of the Revival; especially after some hurts had been given time to heal and emotions to cool. As has been stated, he corresponded with Howel Harris, Lady Huntington, George Whitefield, and John Wesley. Although it is difficult to assess how constant his involvement was through the middle

120 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
121 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 919, Howel Harris to George Whitefield, 13 July 1743.
122 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 636, Howell Harris to Edmund Jones, 10 September 1742.
years of the century as a crucial gap in his diaries (1739–1768) somewhat complicates things; it is apparent that he had a good deal of involvement both prior to 1741 and again from the 1770s onward. Moreover, even supposing that Jones’s falling out with Harris lasted thirty years, it should perhaps be remembered that respecting someone and liking or agreeing with them are not necessarily synonymous, and that even if Jones was not on friendly terms with Methodist leaders, that did not preclude him from participating in the Revival. While in England in 1739, prior to their falling out, Harris even left Jones, along with some others, in charge of his societies in Wales. Jones wrote to Harris reporting that he had been

about your (Harris’s) societies as a watch to see both how they did & whether the devil was attempting to mischief them or no & Blessed be God I found all well & your mother & aunt were well I have been in a society at your mother’s house & met with God’s presence towards the latter end of the opportunity I hope I made the journey according to the will of God as well as at your request for I have not had as much of God’s presence in any journey I made these 7 years.

Indeed, this was not the only occasion when Jones visited or spoke at Methodist societies, as the record of his preaching activities listed in his diaries often mentions societies. Some of these may not have been Methodist societies, such as 28 September 1739 when he preached to a ‘society of young women’ in Gloucester, but many, if not most, undoubtedly were. Interestingly, as late as 1744, John Jacob of Llanfihangel Llantarnam, wrote to Harris that a member of his society, William George, did not want his child baptised by the Church of England and thus that Jones was to perform the ceremony, noting that ‘we do think that this will not be not much offence to no body’ and begging Harris’s advice. Moreover, later in life, Jones regularly preached at Howel Harris’s

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124 Ibid., p. 70.
125 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 162, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 21 May 1739.
126 NLW, MS. 7024A.
127 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 1213, John Jacob to Howel Harris, 14 August, 1744.
community at Trefeca and Lady Huntington’s training college there. In July 1773 alone he
did so no less than eleven times.\textsuperscript{128}

Jones’s participation in the evangelical efforts of the Methodists may not have
been entirely selfless. As has been shown, it was not uncommon for Methodist societies to
become Independent. In 1742, while complaining of Nonconformists drawing their
societies away, Harris wrote to Whitefield that Edmund Jones, on whom they had
depended ‘also suffers himself to be led for some time past by a party Spirit, setting up
Congregations, and either directly or indirectly drawing our friends to him contrary to his
former Principles’.\textsuperscript{129} The following year, Harris furthered this view in writing to
Whitefield ‘I think these things are much encouraged as I am informed by [dear] Mr
Edmund Jones – I fear he & most of our Dissenting Brethren really think it their duty to
draw all they can from ye church to them.’\textsuperscript{130} Indeed, Thomas Rees records that Jones was
one of the most successful in affecting such a transformation: ‘Sagaciously foreseeing to
what the measures adopted by Harries and his clerical Methodists were leading, he
anticipated them by forming three or four of the societies, over which he had influence,
into Independent churches.’\textsuperscript{131} This being said, that he preached at the college to students
goes far in showing the respect with which he was regarded in Methodist circles even until
his last days.

Jones used this position of respect to provide advice and counsel to the nascent
movement. His authority and acceptance was probably due, to a great extent, to the
strength of his personal religiosity, his frequent interaction with not only the divine but the
entirety of the spirit world, and his perceived powers of prophesy in addition to his overt
enthusiasm for, and participation in, the Revival. That he took an active part in
commenting on the issues involved in the doctrinal disputes of the early 1740s has already

\textsuperscript{128} NLW, MS. 7027A. It should be noted that although this was the month in which Harris died, all of
Jones’s preaching there took place prior to his death and at several times he notes that his preaching was
performed at ‘Mr Harris’s’.

\textsuperscript{129} NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 546.

\textsuperscript{130} NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka, 878, Howel Harris to George Whitefield, 25 May 1743.

\textsuperscript{131} Rees, Protestant Nonconformity, p. 356; See also Tudur, Howell Harris, p. 104.
been shown. Similarly, it has also been demonstrated that Jones felt he could remark on
the comments which Whitefield made about the ‘lukewarmness’ of the Nonconformists,
and cautioned Harris on the ineffectiveness of the abrasiveness of his similar remarks. In
1741 he cautioned Harris in a mentoring tone to ‘guard people from Antinomian error
when you lead them into the doctrine of free grace, for that is a rock where many have
split; and when they become Antinomians, they will readily turn Anabaptists’. Even this
tone was nothing to the frankness with which he cautioned Howel Harries against the
increase in the number of lay preachers amongst the Methodists writing,

Though indeed, while all of us allow you to exhort though unordained, and
not called in the usual way, but called extraordinarily, yet we cannot still
allow of others going on without a rule; much more that there should be a
succession of them still rising up; for this may be a means of bringing an
unnecessary persecution upon the church of God, and of shutting the door
of liberty in this nation.

The use of lay preachers was not the only regular practice of the Methodists of
which Jones disapproved. Like evangelical religious groups both before and after them,
the Methodists were sometimes given over to undue enthusiasm, such as jumping,
shaking, or shouting out. Many outsiders, and indeed many Nonconformists, viewed these
displays with disapproval and derision. Even Methodist leaders were taken aback by
these outbursts: Whitefield criticized them in Wesley’s followers before experiencing
them during his own preaching and Wesley even went so far as to ascribe them to the
Devil’s influence. Though he does not directly remark on such manifestations in
response to his own preaching, it is possible that Jones experienced them as well, as in
1741 Elizabeth James wrote to Howel Harris that her daughter had heard Jones speak and
when he ‘went to administer the ordinance she allmost fell down in a fit’. His attitude
towards such manifestations can be seen as nuanced. That he disapproved of them is easily
seen. In his diary in 1778 he referred to two Cardiganshire women who ‘followed the

132 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
133 Ibid.
134 Jones, Congregationalism, p. 113; Morgan, Great Awakening, pp. 25–6.
135 Watts, Dissenters, pp. 410–13; Morgan, Great Awakening, p. 25.
136 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 345, Elizabeth James to Howel Harris, 24 June 1741.
societies & did jump & keep a noise above the rest’ as ‘whores to the great scandal of jumping’. He also remarked that ‘A young woman who was for jumping at Croes wen & being but gently advised by mr W. Edwards the minister to forbear left Croes wen & was received at Langan– & going to service was got with child by her master & cannot as yet be delivered the doctor fearing it is a worm’, implying that ‘jumping’ led to sexual impropriety. Similarly he reported that ‘Lewis Evans of Montgomeryshire exhorter an honest good spirited man told me the jumping among the Methodists is almost gone down & it is good news.’ However, as will be discussed in more fully the next chapter, the interaction of the supernatural or divine and the mundane featured prominently, if not supremely, in Jones’s worldview. Indeed, even if he did not approve of public displays he certainly did believe in, and even praise, private visitations of the spirit. In 1741 he wrote to Howel Harris that his wife had ‘had the presence of the Lord last Thursday, from about 10 o’ clock till about sunset, in such a manner as made her cry and wonderfully, so that I never in my life saw the like before’. Thus it was perhaps not a complete doubting of divine influence which made Jones disapprove of the public outbursts, but rather their mass, wild, and public nature which opened the movement up to ridicule as well as a lack of personal conviction of their divine inspiration.

Jones’s own religious practice was undoubtedly emotive. R. Tudur Jones describes Edmund Jones as the forerunner of a new breed of Congregationalist preachers: ‘All were energetic and zealous. Not all of them were as convinced as their predecessors of the value of education and scholarship, but all placed a heavy emphasis on the need for personal conversion and for constant evangelism.’ Jones clearly valued learning and education and even though his formal education was minimal, he, as was discussed in Chapter One,

137 NLW, MS. 7028A.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
140 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
141 Jones, Congregationalism, p. 117.
read and studied with diligence and vigour.¹⁴² This is perhaps why he voiced an objection to Harris about the number of lay preachers swelling the Methodist ranks. Be that as it may, Jones was still pioneering a new type of ministry amongst the Independents which heavily mirrored, if not fed on, the type of ministry utilised by the Methodists. In the eighteenth century singing during services was still novel. As Watts has argued, ‘it was not until Isaac Watts published his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in 1707 that the advocates of congregational hymn-singing had an effective weapon with which to overcome the objections of their opponents’.¹⁴³ The popularity of Watts’s hymnology was such that by the time of his death in 1748 seven editions of his psalms and sixteen editions of his hymns had been published.¹⁴⁴ Jones’s diaries reveal that he acquired new hymnals fairly frequently.¹⁴⁵ In his visit to Harris’s societies in Breconshire in 1739 Jones visited the society at Tredwstan where he heard them singing Watts’s 84th Psalm. At this, he reported ‘my soul began to warm and kindle, and a sweet weeping ensued. I laid my head on the pulpit, choosing while so that they would not see me. I had not gone far in the sermon, but the presence of God stirred my soul to speak vehemently to the people, and they were affected.’¹⁴⁶ That he was so overcome by emotion in his service should not be understated. Nor was this an isolated incident since, in 1772, he observed the members of the congregation at Groes-wen singing psalms and hymns at his congregation. By Jones’s account it was a moving experience for all and he declared, ‘Blessed be to God for his unspeakable gift.’¹⁴⁷

Hymns were popular with Methodists. The chapels of Lady Huntington’s connection had their own hymn book and Charles Wesley wrote many hymns, some of which, such as ‘Hark! The Herald Angels Sing’, are still popular today. Jones acquired a

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¹⁴² See Morgan, *Great Awakening*, p. 111.
¹⁴³ Watts, *Dissenters*, p. 311.
¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 312.
¹⁴⁵ NLW, MSS 7024A, 7027A, 7028A, 7029A.
¹⁴⁶ NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 162.
¹⁴⁷ NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 2724, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 19 September 1772.
copy of Wesley’s hymns in 1739. Moreover, early in Harris’s career in 1736, John Games, the precentor at Talgarth church, went about his area teaching people to sing the Psalms. Harris ‘laid hold of this opportunity, when he had done teaching them to sing, I would give them a word of exhortation, and thereby many were brought under convictions, and many religious Societies were by these means formed’. Daniel Rowlands also wrote hymns, but the Welsh hymn writer par excellence was William Williams, Pantycelyn. Williams, however, was merely the most successful amongst a plethora of both Methodist and Nonconformist hymnists in the period, such as Dafydd William, Dafydd Jones, Dafydd Morys, Morgan Rhys, Morris Griffith, John Thomas, and John Richard. Many Independents expressed a reluctance to accept this new mode of worship, fearing that the songs would supplant the place of the scriptures in the hearts of worshipers. By the final quarter of the seventeenth century, some Nonconformist congregations had adopted singing as a component of worship, particularly among English Independents, and Strict Baptists, but others continued to oppose it strictly, some even arguing against the singing of psalms. However, as the eighteenth century progressed singing became more and more popular. Undoubtedly, this was, in part, due to their popularity amongst Methodists, however Welsh Independents had their own hymn writers, notably Dafydd Jones, Caeo. A drover and member of the Independent congregation at Crug-y-bar in Carmarthenshire, Jones undertook the translation of the hymns of Isaac Watts in his Salmau Dafydd (1753, 1766), Caniadau Dwyfol (1771), and Hymnau a Chaniadau Ysprydol (1775), as well as the publication of his own compositions in three volumes entitled Difyrrwch i ’r Pererinion (1763, 1764, 1770).

148 NLW, MS. 7024A.
149 A Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris, pp. 23–4. See also Tudur, Howell Harris, pp. 32–3.
151 Jones, Congregationalism, p. 123.
152 Jones, Congregationalism, pp. 122–5.
153 Morgan, Great Awakening, p. 269.
154 Jones, Congregationalism, pp. 122–3.
According to Brynley F. Roberts, Dafydd Jones’s hymns reflected much of the folk-poetry with which he had been acquainted before his conversion, describing themes of love and joy which attested to the somewhat jovial nature which he is described as possessing. This was not uncommon and other hymnists of the period also used familiar poetic styles, metres and themes in their work, even sometimes producing strikingly similar compositions. The point of such hymns was to make their message memorable and relatable, to be sure, but song had a particular relationship to revivalism. The beautiful and emotive nature of hymns, with their ability to express joy or lamentation in a powerful way, lent itself well to such an emotive movement. As Derec Llwyd Morgan notes, ‘the greatest cultural favour done to the followers of this Christ was to enable literature to express the psychological response to his gift’. For a group often perceived as being so overcome with emotion that they ‘jumped’ or cried out, singing was perhaps a more acceptable way of channelling their feelings. In more than this, however, hymns were able to reflect the particular nature of revivalism. In their substance, they often chose themes from the Song of Songs, which expressed a personal and passionate love for Christ, or else spoke of wanderers or pilgrims such as the tribulations of Exodus, which reflected the hardships faced by Christ’s followers amongst ‘worldly’ people. Finally, hymns could reflect both the deeply personal nature of conversion within revivalism as well as its shared experience. The personalisation of the singer, through either the frequent use of the first person or else discussion of an intimate relationship with God and the experience of conversion, gave striking reliability and resonance to the individual singer, whilst the shared experience of singing validated this personal experience by giving it communal expression. When societies or congregations recited a famous hymn by Watts, a

156 Ibid., pp. 127–9; Morgan, Great Awakening, pp. 282–3,288–90.
157 Morgan, Great Awakening, pp. 278–9.
multitude of voices sang ‘When I survey the wondrous Cross’, making its emotions and message simultaneously individualised and shared.

Edmund Jones realized that dry sermons and scriptures were not the only means of reaching minds and hearts and touching souls. The hundreds of sermons which Jones preached yearly, both at home and in his itinerancy, show that he did not disregard the older form of service and Geraint H. Jenkins has discussed the Welsh love of sermons as an aspect of divine worship.\(^{160}\) Jones’s manner of preaching was not extremely popular as he is described as having a weak voice and slow delivery.\(^{161}\) His sermons also tended to follow a rigid but simple outline, with the regular repetition of key points. It was, above all, his goal that his discourse should prove intelligible to his audience, noting that ‘Men of learning and much reading, indeed are sometimes under a temptation to despise or but little regard such plain performances; without considering that they are so much the more useful to common readers, who receive the greatest benefit, by reading the most plain and earnest discourses’.\(^{162}\) In his ‘Spiritual Botonology’ a different strategy can be seen. As is shown in the example at the beginning of this chapter, Jones sought to expound upon the biological and spiritual properties and virtues of different plants. What is more he does so not only in prose but ‘in the poetick stile, for the sake of the convenient brevity belonging to it; and some advantage also in the expression beyond the prose way. And if you add rhime to the blank verse, it will add to the pleasure, and the obligation you will put upon me.’\(^{163}\) The two volume manuscript consists of a series of descriptions of and religious expositions on different plants in prose followed by simple poetic summaries of the information. Moreover, he comments elsewhere, ‘What but a gingle of words makes poetry so delightful? a little musick in the sound of words, may help to raise attention, and help remembrance of good things; and if so, it is useful, and should not be blamed.

\(^{162}\) NLW, MS. 17054D, p. 250.
\(^{163}\) NL, M350 012 JON H.C., I, pp. 8–9.
especially where a man’s gift, naturally leads him so to express himself.' Thus the message was conveyed through a medium which was accessible and memorable to its receivers.

Theologically too, Jones did not differ overmuch from others in the Calvinistic wing of the Revival. Jones’s theology can perhaps best be seen in one of his unpublished works containing his reviews of, and views upon, over seventy different seventeenth-century religious authors. It is clear from his comments in this work that Jones’s nonconformity did not denote an utter rejection of all aspects of the established church, although he clearly felt that too much of Catholicism remained in it. He wrote that

in truth the Calvinist discipline is the very true church discipline, the very mean between the popish excess of Church power, and Erastianism, wch is a denial of all ecclesiastical government. I deny not but the strictness of discipline might be the occasion of Erastianism, but that the Church of England discipline is the mean between extreams, or the right discipline, is but a fancy, and remains yet to be proved. The Church indeed reformed very clean from the papists as to fundamental doctrines, but retained too much of the discipline and yet her discipline, such as it is, as well as her doctrine, forms her constitution.

Jones did not object to the official theology of Anglicanism per se, but found its administrative structure and ceremony objectionable. He was also ever on guard against Arminianism. Against it he argued that if

God hath a most importunate desire to save all men; It seems he most importunately desires what he shall not have; He willeth and cannot have his will. But I do not wonder much that they who make the grace of God, the humble servant of proud free will, do make God himself a humble beggar to man; and deny his sovereignty. That to punish poor man pierces God with extremity of grief and sorrow, as if God had no manner of delight in his works of Justice, [...] or as if man’s just misery, should destroy God’s happiness. That the doctrine of absolute decrees is inconsistent with man’s duty; as if God’s purpose to make us good, and to give us means to do good, should hinder us from doing good; wch is just as if a rich man’s putting a stock under a bankrupt’s hands, to begin the world anew, should hinder his trading and growing rich. See the folly of Arminianism [...] To make God merciful to their mind, they take away his sovereignty, and in a manner ungod him; such is the perverseness of man’s will, and the pride of his nature.

164 NLW, MS. 17054D, p. 280.
165 Ibid., p. 171.
166 Ibid., pp. 776–77.
However, like Whitefield and Harris, he strove to walk the middle path of Calvinism avoiding both Arminianism and Antinomianism. He cautioned Harris about the dangers of the latter as quoted above. He further noted that ‘if believers are justified by faith, as the scripture saith plainly they are, it is going too far to say that they have no hand in their own justification; they have this hand at least, they actively receive their justification.’

Thus, Jones’s Calvinism was a moderated form and his religious practice was enthusiastic and emotive like that of the Calvinist Methodists. It is little wonder that they got along.

There may have been, or appeared to have been another factor endearing the revivalists to Jones. Jones was, like other Nonconformists, very much enamoured with the evangelists of the seventeenth century. As Geraint H. Jenkins has noted, ‘eighteenth century Congregationalists were . . . deeply conscious of their historical roots and of their debt to Puritan saints in the Cromwellian period.’ Derec Llwyd Morgan similarly has written that the ‘eighteenth century as a whole looked to the seventeenth century for guidance’, and indeed many seventeenth century religious works were translated or republished in the eighteenth century. Moreover, as will be discussed below in Chapter Five, Jones’s belief in and desire to prove the existence of apparitions was based on a philosophy which had its height in the late-seventeenth century. Of the mid-seventeenth century, Jones wrote in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*

Now was Wales greatly enlightened, and many were converted unto GOD, by the preaching of many of those Ministers, who after the manner of our Saviour went about doing good. Among other places the Parish of Aberystruth was visited by several Eminent preachers: By Messrs. Walter Cradock, Jenkin Jones, Morgan Lloyd, Vavasor Powel, Ambrose Moston, Henry Maurice, Anthony Thomas, &c. And the Hand of the LORD was with them, and they turned many unto the LORD.

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More interesting was what Jones had to say about the Civil Wars and the Protectorate:

This great light the Annotations of the Assembly’s did shine forth in the time of Oliver Lord Protector in the time of whose government the God of God in England arrived to the height of its glory even as the Jewish Church did in the time of Solomon especially in the beginning of their times There were never in England either before or such learned godly and able divines as there were then Then lived those great lights wch cultivated divinity to the height Dr Owen Dr Manton Dr Goodwin messieurs Flavel Charnock and many others The prelates of the Church of England had not so much zeal as to give these helps to their people to help them to understand the word of God and the way of salvation.171

He also called the ‘Puritans, whom K. James persecuted’, ‘the best people in the land’, 172 and Oliver Cromwell himself ‘a notable instrument of providence raised up to be a deliverer to God’s persecuted people’. 173 Jones looked back to what he saw as a glorious time for the Christian religion in Britain.

These opinions were not entirely shared by the Methodists. It should be remembered that the Methodists viewed themselves in terms of a ‘Revival’ of religion, or, more tellingly, as a ‘Great Awakening’ (Y Deffroad Mawr), from religious slumber. As such while some Methodists admired or even praised seventeenth-century religious figures and acknowledged their contributions, they could not claim the same direct lineage from, or continuation of, seventeenth-century Dissent as Jones. 174 However, even if many of the revivalists did not look back to the Old Dissenters in the same way that Jones did, there were definite similarities between them and their evangelic predecessors. Their itinerancy, their zeal, their emphasis on conversion and divine experience, their exclusivism, and their contemporaries’ hostility towards them all may have seemed to Jones, as it did to others at the time, a mirror of times past. It was not without reason that Theophilus Evans ended his History of Modern Enthusiasm (1752) with the Methodists. 175 Within the Revival, Jones’s

171 NLW, MS. 17054D, p. 651.
172 Ibid., p. 508.
173 Ibid., p. 713.
atavism did not seem out of place, but can be seen as looking forward to a more religious future.

Another aspect of the Revival which mirrored earlier Dissent was its moral exclusivism. Whilst the revivalists had a desire to convert the maximum number of people, they were also demanding in the moral standards to which they held their members. Welsh Calvinistic Methodists were required, in addition to publicly ascribing to the tenets of Calvinism, to give evidence of their conversion as well as lead a decent and wholesome life, which had to be attested to at local meetings. Howel Harris's account of his own life demonstrates this. The process of his conversion ‘made me actually to drop my acquaintance with all ranks of people, and to reject offers that were made to raise my fortune in the world. I sold what I had and gave it to the poor, and among the rest such clothes as I thought too gay for a Christian.’ Harris was extremely critical of the society in which he lived. Describing the common activities undertaken on Sundays after worship he wrote that ‘all family worship being utterly laid aside (except among some of the Dissenters) while an universal deluge of swearing, lying, reviling, drunkenness, fighting, and gaming had over-spread the country’. He was proactive in his denouncement of these activities. While visiting Longtown, Herefordshire, in 1739, there was a feast, to which he noticed many young people going. He attempted to dissuade them but felt compelled by God to go alone to the feast and denounce it:

before I came to the great crowd, I came to a few who were together at their diversion, to these I took occasion to speak, on account of one of them swearing, and while I was speaking with these, the news went to the great crowd that I was there, and they ran up by hundreds, till, I believe, the LORD gave me courage to attack the Devil in his own quarters – and made my face as a flint – supplying me with proper matters; and especially when I saw some Gentlemen and Ladies coming up, I was made stronger to humble their pride – I was also moved to apply home to the Minister of the parish, and two Justices that were present, asking how they countenanced pride, swearing, and drunkenness, &c.

176 Watts, Dissenters, p. 445.
177 A Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris, p. 18.
178 Ibid., p. 19.
179 Ibid., pp. 35–6.
Harris was sometimes boldly provocative in his combating of immorality. When, just a few days after the confrontation in Longtown, he had the Riot Act read against him by Capel Hanbury in Pontypool, he replied by asking if the Riot Act was also read at cock matches.  

Harris’s disapproval was very much shared by Jones. Jones wrote to Harris in 1741, telling him  

I am fully of your mind, dear brother, that there are but few that wholly come out from the world to follow after Christ. But there is a cursed conformity to it; and the fear of being counted fools makes men conform to some of the world’s principles, and self love, and self seeking make them conform to its practices; not considering that according to men’s conformity or nonconformity to the world, they are conformable to, or dissenters from Christ, and consequentially good or bad.  

Of Jones’s extant diaries, all after 1768 carry sections on the ‘Sayings & Doings of Erroneous Men’. These sections are where Jones registered his displeasure with the theological errors, accusations against him and his fellow revivalists, and moral failings of his contemporaries. In 1778 he recorded an accusation of drunkenness against a group a Pembrokeshire Methodists and Wesleyans. Their meeting was  

in a rich Farmers house but the man & woman of the house being often guilty of drunkenness & being often warned & not forbearing the preachers refused to go there any longer & then the Wesleyans came in last xtmass at the harvest feast at that house it is asserted that many some say the major part of them were drunk Among these were 4 young persons whom they had drawn into their society & about 17 of their prefect men in bands & covenant were there & some of them drunk where is [the] perfection but it is Wesleyan perfection i e pretended perf[ection] or no perfection  

Similarly, he was told by ‘a sober man amongst the Methodists’ that most of the Caernarfonshire Methodist exhorters were drunkards. It should be noticed that these, like most singled out in Jones’s ‘Sayings & Doings of Erroneous Men’ were people of religion. This could perhaps be seen as reflecting the higher standards to which Jones held such people as well as a commentary on the progress of religion, and a scrutiny of the

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180 Ibid., p. 37.  
181 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.  
182 NLW, MS. 7025A–7030A.  
183 NLW, MS. 7028A.  
184 Ibid.
morality of coreligionists and members of other denominations. While these accounts
denounce drunkenness, Jones was not a teetotaller. In 1772, Jones wrote to Howel Harris,
'I remember we had some delightful conversations together in yr house, esp when
speaking abt Sampson my heart rejoiced as it were thro wind & partially it was thro a little
wine too, wch the apostle allows; beyond whose allowance indeed we may not go.'\textsuperscript{185}
Moreover in speaking of hops in his 'Spiritual Botonology' and the effects of beer he stated,

This alteration for the better in the heart, will have an influence upon the
practice; and so it will in the way of evil and drunkenness [. . .] But as the
consequences of drinking are eternally good or eternally evil, the drink and
everything in it, will be eternally remembered; with joy and gratitude by
them that have used it well, but with sorrow by them that have abus’d the
drink and hops.\textsuperscript{186}

Jones clearly felt that moderation and not complete abstinence was appropriate. But it was
not only the evils of drink against which Jones cautioned. Elsewhere in discussing the
worthiness of seventeenth-century religious works he wrote,

How much better would it be for a gentleman to be at the charge of
reprinting a 1000 of these books to be given and sold, than to spend so
much in horse-racing as some do? In over dressing their sinful perishing
bodies as others do? And in hording more than needs for their children, to
make them greater sinners in this world, and more miserable in eternity as
others do?\textsuperscript{187}

Indeed, in additional material collected with the rough draft of his \textit{Apparitions of Spirits} he
spoke against the evils of cockfighting noting that 'may we not, Justly think, that the devil
hath a great hand in promoting this Inhuman Cruel reproachable recreation out of revenge
to this bird of the day, who cuts him short in his night walks and exercises?'\textsuperscript{188}

With their chastisement of their contemporaries, along with their desire to make
the world their parish, it is little surprise that revivalists faced resistance and outright

\textsuperscript{185} NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 2715.
\textsuperscript{186} NL, M350 012 JON H.C., II, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{187} NLW, MS. 17054D, pp. 511--2.
\textsuperscript{188} CL, MS. 2.249 p. 278.
hostility. On 19 October 1739, John Wesley called the people of Newport ‘the most insensible, ill-behaved people I have ever seen in Wales’, reporting that during his sermon an old man ‘cursed and swore almost incessantly and towards the conclusion took up a great stone, which he many times attempted to throw. But that he could not do.’ Harris described similar dangers. In summer 1740 he was preaching in Monmouthshire

At Newport the Mob raised on with the utmost rage and fury, – they have torn both my coat-sleeves, and one quite off, and took away my peruke... having little silence, I discoursed on, but soon they hallowed again, and pelted me with apples and dirt, slinging stones in the utmost rage about me, I had one blow on my forehead, which caused a rising with little blood... When we came to Caerleon everything seemed calm and quiet, whilst Brother Steward prayed and discoursed sweetly by the Market-house; but when I began to discourse after him, then they began to roar most horribly, pelting us with dung and dirt, throwing eggs, plumbstones, and other hard substances even in our faces, and hallowed so loud as to drown out my voice entirely – Brother Steward had a furious blow on his right eye, which caused him much anguish, and as it affected his left, he was obliged to be led by the hand blindfold for some days, – till at last he became totally blind of it.

However, it was not only mobs which the exhorters faced. As has been mentioned above, Harris was read the Riot Act in Pontypool in 1739 by Capel Hanbury. He then went to the constable and posted bail, but not without protesting that ‘if his Majesty knew how loyal and harmless we were, that he would not love you the better for suppressing us’. However when he appeared at the Monmouth Assizes ‘the LORD, though without my knowledge, had animated many friends, and brought them from several parts, as London, Gloucester and Wales, &c. to stand by me: but the Magistrates, after consulting about the affair, thought it not expedient to appear against me; and so I was dismissed’. Jones may have been involved in saving Harris from prosecution. In May 1739, Jones wrote a letter to Harris advising him that

190 Williams, John Wesley in Wales, p. 5.
191 A Brief Account of the Life of Howell Harris, pp. 44–5. ‘Brother Seward’ refers to William Seward (1711–1740) who was George Whitefield’s chief publicist before his premature death. See Tudur, Howell Harris, pp. 136–47.
192 Ibid., pp. 37–41.
the warrant against you is come to nothing. Counsellor Gwynne would not meddle with it, nor any of the Justices, except the clergy Justices, and Price Davies especially was observed your adversary; but they were discouraged, and seem to be ashamed of it. Parson James of Llanamwch, who was so active against you, narrowly escaped drowning some time ago, which deserves notice.\(^{193}\)

Similarly, he wrote again in July conveying ‘some good news relating to your late trouble’. Thomas Morgan, the Lord Lieutenant of Monmouthshire, had intervened after being approached by Fowler Walker who had advocated on Harris’s behalf and had said that ‘if he should see Capel H he would speak to him & if he could not see him he expected to see his brother Charles H & he would see what could be done in it Justice Nicholas also went to speak with him.\(^{194}\)

In the face of all these trials the revivalists soldiered on. Hardship was built into the very nature of the Revival, something which was attested to clearly in the elegy by William Williams, Pantycelyn on George Whitefield:

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\begin{align*}
&\text{The undaunted youth yet unacquainted stood} \\
&\text{The rage and danger of the foaming flood;} \\
&\text{Tho’ winds and waves together did combine,} \\
&\text{To dash his faith, and frustrate his design;} \\
&\text{To quench his zeal, his spirits to dismay,} \\
&\text{And wholly ‘raise his generous plan away:} \\
&\text{Grace stood its ground, and grace his spirits bore} \\
&\text{Serene, and firm unto the Indian shore;} \\
&\text{And here he travell’s, here he endur’d} \\
&\text{The greatest hardships, and was yet secur’d;} \\
&\text{Thro howling wilds were ravening wolves devour,} \\
&\text{Where tygers stray, and hoary lions roar;} \\
&\text{Where foaming tides o’erwhelm the foggy strand,} \\
&\text{And winds collect enormous heaps of sand;} \\
&\text{Where thunders roam, where fiery lightnings blaze,} \\
&\text{And rocks are rent, and dreadful storms deface;} \\
&\text{Where Indians wander, rudely to and fro,} \\
&\text{Rush on, and murder oftentimes their foe.} \\
&\text{Here thro’ all dangers the courageous youth} \\
&\text{Press’d and proclam’d the blessed gospel truth.}\(^{195}\)
\end{align*}
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\(^{193}\) NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 162.
\(^{194}\) NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 173. For this case, see also, Tudur, Howell Harris, pp.59–61.
It is, of course, unlikely that Whitefield met tigers and lions, except if it was the North American mountain lion, but the tenor of God’s work triumphing against all odds and against all hardships was common to the Revival. As John Walsh has noted, it certainly behoved revivalists to be hyperbolic in describing the perils of their ministry as the danger made their perseverance more significant and added further legitimacy to their victories by making them hard-won: ‘The more luridly the peril was depicted, the more striking could be portrayed the special providences which preserved the faithful Christian.’

It does not seem that Jones faced precisely the same kind of abuse experienced by the Methodists. This is perhaps because he came from an established Nonconformist tradition which was, since 1689, legally tolerated. His public disagreements with Baptists over infant baptism have been discussed above. He was also offended in 1778 when John Rowlands, the curate of Bedwellty and Mynyddislwyn, spoke publicly against the Act of Toleration saying that it was ‘the cause of much mischief or to [that] purpose’, privately responding by insinuating that he was ‘charged with lewd attempts upon diverse women married & unmarried’. He also perceived insult as coming from the Methodists themselves. In 1773 he heard from Evan Williams of Bridgend that a Methodist exhorter had called Nonconformists ‘the Devil’s chamber pot’. He was further personally (and understandably) offended at William Williams’s statement in his elegy on Howel Harris that there was neither presbyter nor priest in Wales before the coming of Harris, remarking ‘such a charity of some Methodists!’ adding ‘A wonder how [this] man c[oul]d say he who himself born of & educated among Dissenter if [the] Methodists will not give over hard censuring as [they] do God will by degrees desert them & then [that they] become weak & of little use’. Jones, however, does not seem to have been above rebuke even amongst other Independents. He wrote to Harris in August 1741,

197 NLW, MS. 7028A.
198 NLW, MS. 7027A.
199 Ibid.
I wish some of the sound Dissenting ministers, separated from the erroneous and loose Dissenters; but perhaps it will come to that. Both the ministers of Pen-main deny that there is any need of discipline among them, and call my attempt of discipline by the opprobrious names of rigid, punctilious, and novel customs, upbraiding my new friends, but tell me that I had as well or better, or to that purpose, have accord with my old friends, &c."^200

Thus from the similarity in formal theology, approach to worship, evangelism, emotiveness, views on social morality, and feeling of labouring in God’s service against great odds, not to mention Jones’s love of the seventeenth-century evangelists, it is easy to see why Jones would have felt an affinity towards other participants in the Revival. As has been discussed above, David Ceri Jones has shown how the Welsh Revival was part of a wider evangelical Revival which spanned the Atlantic world. Edmund Jones’s participation in this larger Revival is slightly surprising. Jones did undertake large and punishing itinerancies around Wales and the borders until admirably late in life. In his latest extant diary, dated 1789, which would be the year he turned eighty-seven, he preached from 405 pieces of scripture in different localities around Wales.^201 He did not, however, travel to the American colonies as did Whitefield and the Wesleys, nor even as substantially in England, as did Harris. Jones clearly, like many Welsh revivalists, felt he was needed closer to home. It does seem that he perhaps, at times, felt he was not doing enough. In writing to Howel Harris in 1741 about his and Whitefield’s successes he lamented, ‘Oh! How wonderful are you both honoured, while I am of so little use that I cannot but mourn over it, and be ashamed of myself, though I do, from time to time, offer my services to God’s cause, and ask him what will He have me do for Him.’^202 Jones did, however, participate in the internationalism of the Revival in the same way many other revivalists did. As David Ceri Jones has pointed out the Welsh Methodists drew on the common forces that were coursing throughout the wider evangelical movement, and channelled their energies into amplifying their collective understanding of genuine evangelical experience. For the

^200 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
^201 NLW, MS. 7030A.
^202 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
historian of the evangelical revival, these means of communication are the entry point into the world of a substantial body of mid-eighteenth-century evangelicals.\textsuperscript{203}

The modernizing communications networks, which have been discussed in Chapter One, enabled news to readily spread between the different participants in the Revival and allowed its members to feel involved in an entirely new way. By relating their experiences in letters, diaries, and periodicals these could be expressed to a wider audience while others experiencing their own spiritual awakening could check their conversions and experiences against those of others. These then could work on multiple levels: by allowing a personal reading to inform personal religiosity it had meaning for the individual, but by conveying news of congregations in distant communities and even continents they underlined the international nature of the Revival and added a sense of religious solidarity.\textsuperscript{204} It is little surprise, therefore, that the same letter in which Jones expressed his regret that he could not be of more use in doing God’s work opened with an appeal for news from Harris regarding Whitefield’s recent trip to Scotland.\textsuperscript{205} As has been observed, in addition to Harris, Jones was in regular correspondence with Whitefield and Lady Huntington, two of the main facilitators of the Revival’s connectivity, and his 1780 diary has ‘Direct for Lady H. at Spaw fields London’ written in it.\textsuperscript{206} Moreover, as has also already been noted, in 1773, Jones received several books from John Wesley and one of the accounts of apparitions found in Jones’s \textit{Apparitions of Spirits} was also published in \textit{An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley’s Journal from May 14, 1768 to Sept. 1, 1770}.\textsuperscript{207} More interesting is that an E. Jones of Pontypool published an account of the state of religion in Wales in the \textit{Glasgow Weekly History} in 1742, thus participating in the

\textsuperscript{205} NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362.
\textsuperscript{206} NLW, MS. 7029A.
\textsuperscript{207} NLW, MS. 7027A; Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 110; John Wesley, \textit{An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley’s Journal from May 14, 1768 to Sept. 1, 1770} (London: Rev. Mr. Wesley’s Preaching-Houses, 1790), pp. 4–19.
exchange of information as a reporter and not a mere receiver of news on an international scale. 208

It can be seen that Jones had an active and vibrant place within the history of the eighteenth-century religious Revival in Wales. His position within this period of evangelism was one of cooperation and alliance fed by a commonality of purpose and ideals as well as the perceived need for religious renewal in his community. With his fellow Nonconformists relatively few in number, he allied himself with members of the established church who recognised a similar deficiency in the way which that body operated popularly. This movement was highly eighteenth century in character, with its reliance on literacy and the development of a public sphere of communications and publications, but for Jones its zeal, fervour, and extent perhaps hearkened back to the more vibrant and proactive religion of seventeenth-century evangelicals. It was therefore, for Jones, a movement which encapsulated both his attachment to and respect for the history of evangelic and ‘heroic’ Dissent, and his hopes for a bright religious present and future. In it he could appropriately own the epithet of ‘the Old Prophet’, both in his looking back to and attempting to be a part of an age gone by and in his hopes and aspirations for an age yet to come. Moreover, as shall be shown, the emphatic and supernatural religious environment of the Revival, as well as the beliefs of those he communed with as a part of it, provided a neat backdrop to his belief in the intervention of the divine and preternatural in mundane affairs, including his belief in apparitions and fairies. But despite all their similarities, Jones never had any desire to forsake Congregationalism for Methodism. He remained, until the end of his life, a Nonconformist. In doing so, he became a forerunner of a new kind of Independent preacher and helped to herald in a new era for Welsh Nonconformity. In the period following Jones’s death, Nonconformity, of which Welsh Calvinistic Methodism became a prominent part, came to dominate the Welsh religious

208 Rees, Protestant Nonconformity, pp. 359-62.
field. Thus the words with which Jones ended the section of his *Account of the Parish of Aberystyth* pertaining to Religion in that parish were perhaps appropriate:

Together with the relation of the time past and present, I would express my desire and hope, that the true religion will remain in *Aberystyth* unto the end of time . . . I hope there will be a revival of Religion in this Parish in the next Century, and the next to that: and when the happy *Millennium* comes, which is not many Generations off, then the work will be Great and Universal, and continue long towards the end of time: and in this hope I will venture to sing. 209

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IV
EDMUND JONES’S THEOLOGY, REVIVALISM, AND THE BELIEF IN SPIRITS

As Edmund Jones wrote Apparitions of Spirits to ‘prevent Saddaceism, and Atheism in some; to confirm others in the belief of Eternity and the World to come, and incline them the more to a preparation of it’, it is clear that his religious beliefs largely shaped and prompted his belief in fairies, apparitions, and magic. Why this should be so is not so self-evident. In a time of increased rationalisation of the natural world, when witchcraft had itself been decriminalised and religious officials no longer wrote as freely and openly about the supernatural, why and how did Jones write so boldly on such things? Part of the answer most certainly lies in the culture of the religious Revival. Jones was not the only revivalist to write on such things, and Thomas Rees noted that ‘John Wesley would, without the least hesitation, have believed every story in his book’. Some contemporaries even went so far to equate the enthusiasm of revivalists with the enthusiasm of the witch trial period and with superstition. The primacy placed on experience and revelation by revivalists, in Jones’s worldview, could provide a rationalism which accommodated the miraculous and the demonic. The religious lens through which Jones surveyed God’s

1 [Edmund Jones], A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales ([Trefeca]: [n. pub.], 1780), p. vi.
creation, based on empirical experience of both the supernatural and mundane, led him to view all things as manifestations of divine will, power, and glory. This is revealed in his ‘Spiritual Botonology’ – a metaphysical reading of the natural world as a revelation of divine creation imbued with religious meaning. Similarly, his work on apparitions approaches the supernatural on the same terms: fairies and ghosts are seen as manifestations of divinely created beings which reveal the nature of the interworking of God’s will and the integration of this will with humanity and the terrestrial world. All things, from the smallest herb to the greatest archangel, were, for Jones, within a single cosmos, negating in his conception any difference between religio and sciencia. All knowledge was manifestly religious knowledge as nothing existed or occurred without God’s will and intention giving all experience religious meaning for those who could interpret it. Such a view of scientific knowledge and creation as augmenting religious understanding was conservative at best and was read by contemporaries and later readers as atavistic; however, within the cultural contexts of revivalism it was accommodated and even fostered. As has been shown in the previous chapter, Jones’s own revivalism drew on a romanticism for the enthusiasts of the previous century, and Jones’s belief in apparitions certainly would have been augmented by the reading of works by the likes of Richard Baxter, Meric Casaubon, and Cotton Mather, but they also had resonance with eighteenth-century writers, most notably John Wesley, and thus Jones’s beliefs and writings were significantly formed by his views on religious revivalism. In exploring this, three areas of interest emerge: namely the nature of Jones’s theology, the impact of revivalism upon this theology and worldview, and his treatment of spirits, especially the use he made of them in his writings. In the first of these is seen a complex religious

5 The influence of seventeenth-century works on Jones’s own will be discussed in Chapter Five below. For the influence of works on spirits with the intention of combating Saduceeism in the late-seventeenth century on Jones’s works see Jenkins, ‘Popular Beliefs in Wales from the Restoration to Methodism’, 443, and John Harvey (ed.), The Appearance of Evil: Apparitions of Spirits in Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), pp. 1–37 (p. 6). For a succinct discussion of the intent behind the belief in spirits in these seventeenth-century books see Jo Bath and John Newton, ‘“Sensible Proof of Spirits”: Ghost Belief during the Later Seventeenth Century’, Folklore, 117: 1 (April, 2006), 1–14 (especially 4–5).
worldview, imbued with meaning and symbolism. The impact of revivalism, with its emphasis on experience, gave further support to this belief and way of looking at the world. Finally, Jones’s approach to his accounts of fairies, spirits, and magic reveals not only the placing of such beliefs within a religious framework, but also the adaption and assertion of a theology which could accommodate such experiences and how to make sense of them.

Jones certainly saw God’s will writ large in the world around him. Examples of this stand out in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*. In concluding his section on the geography of the parish he provided a sermon-like section showing that ‘FROM this GEOGRAPHICAL account, many Inferences and SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS of Great Importance offer themselves to observation, and should be observed; as the knowledge of Nature in every BRANCH should be SUBSERVIENT to Divinity’. His appreciation of the mountains, valleys, and waters of the parish, instead of participating in burgeoning Romanticism, displayed a religious account of the creation as a ‘large and Mighty proof of the being of GOD, against the most Capital unbelief of Atheism’. That all the landscape was constructed with such perfect direction and design, so as to render it picturesque, useful and inhabitable, was proof of the being, power, wisdom, goodness, eternity, unchangeableness, justice, holiness, patience, and forbearance of God. Alongside this were several moral injunctions such as ‘From the Earth and Mountains on every side giving way to the Motion of the Waters, the lesser in great numbers into the greater, the greater into the Sea, we may, and should learn, that the world should, and must give way to the motion of the Grace to glory and perfection.’

Almost the entirety of Jones’s ‘Spiritual Botonology’ operates on the same principles: in seeing evidence of God’s attributes in the plants of the earth. In dealing with the herb pilewort he noted that it has

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7 Ibid., pp. 41-50.
no evil scent to disgrace the herb and flower, but good, sufficient to commend it; and is a sign of virtue. Small pleasure indeed to the nose, more to the eye; but tis more than that, tis a medicine both for the King's evil, and for the piles especially; in ointment; so that you may see in it, more than the power and wisdom of God, even his goodness to man’s body, and foresight of the fall, the cause of sickness: yea his kindness to the uncomely, most uncomely part of the body; wch indeed he created, as well as the comely parts; wch therefore he regards, and to wch he shews his regard even in this herb called Pilewort.

He described the lesser blue bell as ‘a bell made of the glorious Colour of the Heavens, wch makes this dry barren bank where it grows more respectable; for it bears the heaven coloured bell; wch shews that man when he flourishes in youth should be heavenly, and bear a resemblance to the heavens above him morally’. One of the most striking allegories comes in his description of the herb fennel. This herb, he noted, becomes ripe in the sixth month of the year in Wales, but he supposed that ‘things were sooner ripe in the typical land of Canaan, than in the northern countries’, and thus fennel would ripen in the fifth month in those places. This flourishing of the herb in the fifth or sixth month of the year, he claimed, is representative of the flourishing of the early church in the fifth century as well as the Welsh age of saints in the sixth century! Thus, for Jones, every part of God’s creation, down to the smallest herbs, gave evidence and support to his religion. More relevant to the contemporary religious environment, Jones noted in his Account of the Parish of Aberystmth that a white cloud, which formed a bow from one mountain to another, was observed by several people including himself, saying that this was a sign of the divine sanction for the religious Revival in Aberystruth in the late 1730s:

I know that some Philosophers make this to be a Phænomenon merely natural, nothing ominous, but formed only by contrary Winds gently blowing towards each other; which, it may be, might sometimes be the case, tho’ very unlikely; and yet those Winds might be directed by a superior agency, to appear at certain times, and in certain places as Omens of future good . . . The Scripture speaks often of ominous signs of good and bad, in times past; and are they all ceased? Are not signs and Omens, of great things to come, reasonable, as they cause great things to be more

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9 Ibid., p. 45.
10 Ibid., pp. 53–5.
mined when they come, whether they be good or evil? and us to be more prepared for them, before they come? It is interesting that Jones included a possible physical explanation for the sign, but has trouble in accepting its coincidental nature, preferring an answer which addresses the question of ‘why’ as much as ‘how’. It is this premium placed on ‘why’ which makes Jones’s religious understanding of the natural world significant as it imbues the ordinary with extraordinary cause and purpose. Whether he accepted natural explanations for events is less important than the meaning he placed on the events themselves.

Jones saw these signs of approval for and prescience of God’s holy community as having precedent in the Scriptures and to that end published no less than five typological sermons. In his 1753 sermon on *The Miraculous Increase of Jacob’s Flock opened and applied, from Genesis XXX.25 to the End*, he explained that Jacob’s attainment of a flock through changing their colour from brown to speckled through the use of speckled branches placed in their water troughs was representative of and foretold Christ’s ‘flock’ obtained by the use of scripture which turned souls from dark to speckled (‘these mixt Colours of white and black in *Jacob’s Flock* then represented the mixt Condition of God’s People in the World’). Similarly, in *Sampson’s Hair: an Eminent Representation of the Church of God: In two Parts*, Jones read the symbol of Sampson’s hair as another prescient allegory for Christ’s Church: ‘seeing GOD created man’s head to represent his Son as head of his Church, was it not as proper that the hair growing out of the head and standing in it, should as well represent the church of which Christ is the head; and be so made as to be fit to represent it in many and great particulars?’ Thus, for Jones, just as divinely inspired natural events foretold revivalism and the prospering of God’s holy

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12 *Harvey, Appearance of Evil*, p. 12.
13 Samuel Owen Caradoc [Edmund Jones], *The Miraculous Increase of Jacob’s Flock opened and applied, from Genesis XXX.25 to the End* (London: Edmund Jones, 1753), p. 80.

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community on earth, the Old Testament had foretold the New, not only though verses which blatantly prophesied Christ’s coming, but allegories and signs which refer not only to the time of the Bible, but also later Christianity.

Jones allowed divine or supernatural intervention and symbolism to act on his day-to-day personal and professional life. Dreams have always held a supernatural wonder, especially through the revelation of symbolical or prescient knowledge, from biblical examples such as the explanation of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream by Daniel 15 to the modern psychoanalytic interpretation of dreams. For eighteenth-century Christians, dreams were a familiar way of conveying knowledge of God and religion as is shown in John Bunyan’s immensely popular Pilgrim’s Progress from this World to that which is to come, Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream. 16 Jones clearly held this belief that dreams could convey divine inspiration. On 20 March Jones’s pseudonymous self, Samuel Owen Caradoc, learned the heads of his sermon on The Leaves of the Tree of Life: or the Nations heal’d by the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a dream ‘and although He often awaked in that Interval of Time; yet He still would dream of it. And saith also, that He had very pleasant Thoughts upon it when awake. And when he rose, He wrote down the subject, as far as his Memory and Understanding reach’d.’ 17 On 24 January 1768 Jones preached on Heb. 10: 4, 5, 6, having dreamt of it the night before. 18 Similarly, on 28 July 1778 he preached on Deuteronomy 29: 1–3, ‘of wch I dreamed the night before that I was preparing much to preach from it.’ 19 Jones’s sleep must have been troubled in early 1789 as he recorded on 18 January, ‘I dreamed I saw an old book the life of some very bad man & in it a sermon of some good man upon [Psal] 41.11.’ Then a week later (25 January) he dreamed he was describing the religious principle of election to ‘Da[vid Williams] of Watford now dead’ who seemed to approve of it and of Jones’s assistance and

15 Dan. 2: 1–45.
17 Solomon Owen Caradoc [Edmund Jones], The Leaves of the Tree of Life: or, The Nations heal’d by the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Carmarthen: Samuel Lewis, 1745), p. v.
18 NLW, MS. 7025A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1768.
19 NLW, MS. 7028A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1778.
perseverance and whose ‘eyes it seems now are opened . . . to see [the] truth he denied on
earth’. On 23 September 1789, he dreamed ‘pretty much of the 49th chap of Isaiah 7 9
verse &c.’. It is not surprising that he also gave credence to the dreams of others. In his
Apparitions of Spirits Jones recorded the dream of the eminent and influential dissenting
divine and hymnist Phillip Doddridge wherein his soul was transported by an angel to
heaven where he met Christ and reviewed his life.

Jones also wrote about waking visitations of the spirit. On 7 August 1741 he wrote
to Howel Harris relating that his wife had

had the presence of the Lord last Thursday, from about ten o’clock till
about sunset, in such a manner as made her cry out wonderfully, so that I
never in my life saw the like before, tells me positively that the Lord will
yet raise my head, and will yet own me to cast a light about me; and which
I cannot but believe, because God was immediately with my dear spouse,
yea, and she tells me God will help in building up the meeting-house, and
when it is finished, give His presence in it.

This was not the first time that Mrs Jones had had such a revelation. Once ‘being grieved
by her relations in a matter upon wch her future subsistence in the world much depended,
she took it to heart, and went to lie upon the bed. But the Lord [literally] . . . sent his
angels to comfort her.’ The Joneses adopted a ‘the Lord will provide’ attitude and saw
themselves as in God’s care even in times of poverty. Shortly after her angelic visitation a
London gentlewoman sent her clothes and money. Another example of providential
provision comes from an anonymous biographer of Jones a year after his death. One day
his friends gave him some money to buy malt so that he could make beer for the winter,
but walking through a poor district on his way home and seeing the sufferings of those
who were there, he distributed the whole of his money to them instead. When he got home
and told his wife what he had done, she applauded his generosity and then showed him a

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20 NLW, MS. 7030A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1789.
21 Ibid.
22 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 130–2.
23 NLW, MS. CMA Trevecka 362, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 7 August 1741.
24 CL, MS. 2.249, Rough draft of Edmund Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 362.
25 Ibid., p. 363.
large sack of malt already standing behind the door: God had rewarded his kindness by sending one of his neighbours to provide the needed grain free of charge.  

One of the most interesting accounts of God providing a sign directly to ‘the Old Prophet’ can be seen in a folk-legend concerning Jones recorded by Edgar Phillips. In Llangatwg, Breconshire, a congregation had outgrown the barn in which it worshipped and sought to build a meeting house, for which two congregation members had donated land, resulting in a disagreement over on whose land it was to be built. Jones visited the divided congregation and they appealed to his guidance, upon which he shouted for them to kneel and began to pray for upwards of three quarters of an hour, at which some elderly members pleaded with him to know how long they were to kneel. His reply was ‘Until I get a revelation from Heaven to answer my prayer!’ and continued to pray for half an hour until he led the way out calling for them to follow. He then proceeded to march relentlessly up and down a hill until the congregation then, exhausted, asked him how long they were to do this. His reply, similar to the last, was ‘Until I receive a reply from above.’ Upon the next ascent a bird fluttered down from a tree and settled on Jones’s shoulder. This was interpreted as a sign from above and the meeting house was duly erected on the site of the tree. This was not Jones’s only religiously notable interaction with animals. According to Phillips there are other stories where birds revealed knowledge to ‘the Old Prophet’ and once a rabbit even took refuge from a stoat on Jones’s shoulder. Moreover, in his *Apparitions of Spirits*, Jones recorded that a Carmarthenshire man named Rees David, a godly man at whose death, according to Jones, people heard the singing of angels, had a dove settle upon his bier before his burial. About this Jones remarked in response to potential critics: ‘Do the Ravens and bird of the Corps appear and make noise before the death of many which cannot come to pass without the agency of some Spirits,  

28 Ibid., p. 20.
because the birds of themselves know nothing of death and burial. And might not a Dove appear in a significant manner, and as a good sign of this man’s happiness? 29

Birds and other animals have traditionally played a role in Christian, and particularly Welsh, folklore and hagiography. 30 St Carannog was shown where to build a church by a dove which he followed after noticing that it carried off wood shaving whittled from his staff and Sts Brynach and Dyfrid were both told by angels to build where they found a white sow with her litter. More locally, St Gwynllyw was told in a dream to found a church on the spot where he found a white ox with a black spot on its forehead on a hill by a river, the requisite location of which was the site of St Woolos Cathedral in Newport. 31 In Monmouthshire folklore, a dove and a raven fought over the liver of Jack o’ Kent to see if his soul would go to God or Satan. 32 More resembling the hagiographic motif involving the foundation of churches and Jones’s own experience at Llangatwg, in Cilgwrrwg parish in eastern Monmouthshire the location of a church was determined by wise man who yoked two heifers together and let them wander, building where they stopped. 33 That stories of Jones mirrored such hagiographic and folkloric motifs should not be understated as it gives interesting insight into perceptions of him. The view which Jones presents of himself in much of his writings is one of a significant religious figure, augmented by his interactions with the supernatural. In some folklore pertaining to him this is built upon, and the inclusion of religious and somewhat supernatural elements, particularly in the narrative link with the lives of Welsh saints,

29 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 109-10.
illustrates a worldview which compliments, or at least has an affinity to, Jones’s own with regard to signs and the supernatural.

Signs of God’s will and approbation need not have been so airy, nebulous, or natural: God could speak with more bold and blatant statements as well as forms in clouds, plants, and the landscape. Writing to Howel Harris about Harris’s legal troubles in Pontypool in 1739, Jones advised him that ‘Parson James of Llanamwch who was active against you narrowly escaped drowning sometime agoe wch deserved notice’. This near fatal incident showed God’s displeasure at those who would work against Harris’s ministrations. In his diary for 1780 he described a similar incident with more tragic endings:

In the day of the great meeting At the collegde at Trefecca the 23d of Aug there was one Thomas Vaughan who lived in the neighbourhood who made a great mokery in the meeting calling one a thief the other a whore &c And he was the worst in the place A stranger in the meeting observing asked some about him who was & was told who he was & that he was going back in the world upon wch he replyd that is not all that will come upon him for the Judgm of God will come upon him and the 16 of 7ber he was drowned in the river Wye near the new built bridge wch some gentleman the other side the river observing that he omitted going to the Bridge calld upon him not to pass the river but to go to the bridge but he wd not the horse wd have brot him over & had nearly brot him out but he struck the horse on the head till it tumbled down till its feet were up He then called upon them to help him for Gods sake 3 times but they cd not help him He drowned the poor beast with himself so mischievous are wicked men to themselves & [their] fellow creatures . . . Here is one malignant persecutor removed by [the will?] of G[od] for a warning to others. Jones’s interpretation of the event as a just punishment by a wrathful God enacted as a clear ‘warning’ to others could be read positively as an approval for the Methodists working at Trefecca. It is perhaps significant that he read this not as a case of punishment by the Devil or his agents (malign spirits or witches) but as divinely orchestrated, as it gives a view of misfortune which is important. Jones clearly did not necessarily associate fortune with godliness and misfortune with the demonic, but rather the drawing of lines between the Christian community, which was fostered and protected not only by Christ’s

34 NLW, MS. CMA Trefecca 162, Edmund Jones to Howel Harris, 21 May 1739.
35 NLW, MS. 7029A.
blessing but also his terrible punishment of those who opposed it on the one hand, and those unbelievers and maligners who would work against it on the other.

Such a sign of Godly displeasure could even occur after the person’s death. An English Deist moved to Swansea and ‘corrupted several people, and disgusted others, who were grieved at his blasphemies against the scripture, and scriptural men’. Divine judgment reached him as he ‘thot’ himself to death, but the people in his community would not bury his blasphemous body in the ground and instead sought to throw him in the sea, but ‘as if the sea would not have him it cast him back upon the sand. The people threw him into the sea again, the sea again rejected him, and then they buried him in the sand. Indeed his unclean body defiled both the water and the earth about it, as being full of sin, and under the curse of God.’ \(^{36}\) For observers, the fact that the sea, one of God’s creations, actively rejected the body of the Deist which then poisoned both land and water showed his patent sinfulness and reinforced the necessity and goodness of religion.

This manifested divine anger was not only reserved for the outspoken opponents of revivalism. In 1780 Jones recorded that a Breconshire clergyman was ‘a sabbath breaker’ who was ‘playing ball & retreating back & lifting up his hands to strike he fell backward with his head on a small piked stone wch cleft his head and he died’. Like the previously discussed drowning, his death ‘was a judgment of God on a notorious breaker of his law’. \(^{37}\) This, like many examples of divine or demonic intervention in human affairs related by Jones, focuses around the reformation of manners. He noted that ‘about eighty years ago’ a man named John Jenkin from Abertylei hanged himself in a hayloft and Jeremiah James, ‘a serious godly man’, saw an apparition of a man carry Jenkin off, presumably to Hell. About this Jones remarked, ‘O that men would beware of satan the leader to hell, and not follow him to eternal destruction ... self-murders make the greatest

\(^{36}\) CL, MS. 2.249, p. 267.
\(^{37}\) NLW, MS. 7029A.
speed, and take the shortest way to hell.’ 38 In another account, a giant apparition resembling, in succession, a large man, a ‘Mastiff-dog’, and a blazing fire ‘as large as a small field’, appeared to W. J. of Risca, ‘a great Sabbath breaker’, who thereafter amended his ways and lived a more reformed life. 39 Similarly, a ‘lamentable groaning noise’ haunted attendants of a wake in Bedwelly on account of two ‘profane men’ who spent their time playing cards and ‘swearing very badly’. Only after much pleading and persuasion from the rest of the party did the men desist and the haunting end. Jones noted that ‘The thing was reported about, and had good effect to prevent this wicked practice in that neighbourhood and about unto this day.’ 40

In additional material written in a rough draft of *Apparitions of Spirits* Jones recorded a story about Mathew Howell of Bedwelly who went to play ‘bawl and pins’ on Sunday night with a neighbour named Edmund Thomas. When the two men went to bowl, they heard the sound of ‘young pigs dancing and thumping the ground’, which was accompanied by an apparition of the pigs. Terrified, they both ran home. When Howell’s father heard the story, ‘who before was angry with his son for breaking the Sabbath, and seeing a miraculous sign against it, he offered to strike him with a staff, and he narrowly escaped a severe blow. He took warning and gave over bowing on the Lord’s day.’ 41

Jones’s commentary on this last case is interesting:

Here some may wonder how evil spirits can act at any time to prevent sin, as in many instances we find they have done? The answer must be, that the spirits of the kingdom of darkness are not all equally bad, tho none of them good, and cannot do any good from right principals to good ends, but indirectly on some selfish principles or other some of them are too malignant to do any kind of good, but only to be Instruments of Justice in the punishment of men; like the flesh of the Asp, the Dipsas, the Drine, the Rattle Snake, the Macas, of whose flesh no medicine can be made; they are so poisonous. But the flesh of vipers, and other serpents are of use in medicine; to some of the serpents of hell, thro the ruling power and virtue of God’s Providence are Indirectly of some use in the Kingdom of God . . . It might be the spirit of a dead relation in the kingdom of darkness, who might give this warning against Sabbath breaking; tho none of the worst

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39 Ibid., pp. 32–3.
40 Ibid., pp. 14–16.
41 CL, MS. 2.249, pp. 215–16.
sort of the spirits of darkness, for it did not appear in the shape of dogs creatures wholly unclean, but of young pigs but half wholly unclean, but of God’s law Levit 11-7.42

Several things stand out here: that evil spirits ‘cannot do any good from right principals to good ends, but indirectly on some selfish principles’ and that ‘some of the serpents of hell, thro the ruling power and virtue of God’s Providence are Indirectly of some use in the Kingdom of God’. To these statements, the ideas of degrees of evil spirits is crucial (‘the spirits of the kingdom of darkness are not all equally bad’) as it underlines the idea, not of a necessarily harsh dialectical opposition of good and evil, but of a hierarchical or incremental scale of goodness and evilness: God and Satan were binary opposites, but between them even creatures of lesser darkness could be instruments of divine goodness or justice. As such, this logic serves to help rationalize these accounts within Jones’s revised theology. This is particularly interesting when viewed next to Jones’s argument that Christ could not have descended into Hell after his crucifixion:

For had Christ gone to hell, it would rather be an argument that we might go there, than that it should hinder our going there; for the saints, who are his body so closely united to him, go where ever he goeth, Rev 14.4. they follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth: But they do not go to hell, therefore Christ never went there. Christ’s going to hell also, would look like opening a door of hope to the damned to come out from thence. Wherever the saviour goes, salvation goes; but no salvation goes to hell; therefore the saviour never was there. The saviour’s going to hell, and no salvation gone to hell sounds odd. Had the saviour gone to hell, it would have broken hell to pieces, and spoiled it.43

Christ’s radical goodness is thus dialectically and radically opposed to the inherent evil of Hell, and Hell’s damned denizens are anathematic to the very idea of salvation. However, it would seem that God’s omnipotence stretched even to the use of Hell’s creatures for his own ends.44 Jones’s strong sense of Calvinism made God’s omnipotence paramount, as is evidenced by his argument against Arminianism as limiting His power. This passage

42 Ibid., pp. 216–7.
43 NLW, MS. 17054D, Edmund Jones on Seventeenth Century Religious Writings, p. 527.
44 Jones also objected to the notion that ‘God had no other end in making his creatures, and in looking after them, but to do good to all his creatures at all times’, noting that ‘This is not true with respect to the angels that fell, and the damned and, besides he forgot, that the ultimate end of all God’s works is his own glory, and therefore is said to have made all things for himself, Prov 16. 4. And for his own pleasure and delight Rev 4. 11’, Ibid., p. 216.
would even seem to go so far as to disagree with the Apostles’ Creed with its line that He
‘descended into Hell’, and thus Jones seems to hold reasonability and theological
rationality above even this strain of orthodoxy. In this, Jones is not going against the
accounts of the Gospels but rather received religion, and he is enabled to do so by his
powers of reasoning augmented by the experiences of otherworldly spirits which he
records.

In discussing the tendency of fairies to appear with one prominent among them,
Jones noted that ‘this taller spirit may be a principal one and a manager among them’. Hell
is described in Matt. 12:26\(^{45}\) as a kingdom and thus, Jones argued, contains its own
divinely prescribed order:

For as God’s works of mercy so also his works of Justice and punishment
are orderly on earth and in hell, from the surface of it to the bottom of it;
otherwise the stronger and crueler devils and damned would oppress the
weaker among them; for whatever may be without and about them, there is
nothing [within] them, neither mercy or justice to restrain them from this
. . . And the God of all excellencies will have everlasting glory from his
government of hell; something even from his goodness; indeed only of the
negative sort in hell, for but for Gods wise and just government in it, hell
would be worse than it is. It is indeed a state of perfect misery, but it would
be still worse for a greater oppression and cruelty in it, wch is prevented by
the justice of God, wch measures the punishment of the wicked wch he
hath taken into his own hands, and leaves it not to be managed according to
the wills of the devils and the damned; for everyone is to receive in hell
according to what he hath done in the flesh: and none even in hell is at
liberty to alter it, to add to it, or diminish from it. And as Gods government
in hell certainly prevents a greater misery, here is something of God’s
goodness reaching downward into hell.\(^{46}\)

It is interesting that Jones here reasserts the scriptural approbation for a divinely regulated
natural governing order, whereas elsewhere he seems to almost argue against the divine
right of kings, especially with regards to the Stuart kings. In his manuscript discussing the
works of seventeenth-century religious writers, he argues against the doctrine of passive
obedience

wch at once condemns all the steps wch the magistrates of the kingdom
took to preserve the protestant religion in the nation; and their liberty both

\(^{45}\) ‘And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?’ (KJV).
\(^{46}\) CL, MS. 2.249, pp. 287–8.
spiritual and temporal; and to oppose the steps wch K. Charles the first was
taking to enslave them, steps wch directly opened the way to bring Popery
back into the nation, to enslave us both souls and bodies; wch certainly had
been the case sometime or other, if no resistance had been made against
their methods. 47

Submission to such kings, who were opposed to the protestant, evangelical religion of
Jones, was an affront to God. Oliver Cromwell, on the other hand, he saw as a 'notable
instrument of providence'. 48 The sufferings of those in the Church of England was
of their own making; a rod wch they had made for themselves, wch they
were under no necessity to make unless the devil and their own corruption
made it necessary: yet I observe that these bitter Church bigots, are
generally so ignorant and blind, that they will rather indirectly charge their
sufferings upon the providence of God, who doth not without cause afflict,
or willingly grieve the children of men Lam 3. 33. than own their sins to be
the cause of their affliction; as all good people; and they who call
themselves the Church of God, yea the most apostolick, and the nearest
unto the primitive Church of any in the world, should do. The Jewish
Church when she was in her captivity ownd her sins, and justified the Lord
under her affliction, as the book of Lamentation plainly shews us. 49

Such an apparent paradox (for divine governing order but against passive obedience) is
interesting as it highlights the way in which Jones sought to rationalize two apparently
different issues surrounding governance. However, such a mismanagement of government
in the nation need not refute a divine governing order as it should be remembered that
providence could, Job-like, test the religiosity and holiness of the nation.

The visible hand of 'providence' influenced much of Jones's living theology.

Writing about its application and breadth within Elizabethan and Stuart English
Protestantism, Alexandra Walsham described providence as 'a learned technical term for
an elaborate theological doctrine which they used as an evocative shorthand for the
powerful spiritual presence they detected within and around them'. 50 Moreover, Françoise
Deconinck-Brossard has discussed how both the 'provisional and the rational,
"enlightened" approaches to disaster long existed side by side in the religious discourse on

47 NLW, MS. 17054D, p. 362. See also pp. 194–5, 270–1, 279, 287–8, 341, 362–3, 369–74, 386, 401, 508,
651, 761–2.
48 Ibid., p. 713.
49 Ibid., p. 287.
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public calamities’ in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France and England.\(^{51}\) It is readily apparent that Jones shared this worldview. His experiences of everything from the morphology of the landscape to deaths of neighbours and even (perhaps especially) the apparitions of spirits displayed the interworking of God’s will with His creation and thus from all experience theological knowledge could be gained. Commenting on the haunting of the foul-mouthed, card-playing wake attendees described above, Jones argued that

> Our parliament is busy in seeking the welfare of this kingdom. It is to be wished they would extend their virtue against this wicked dangerous recreation. But alas, it doth not enough appear that they are careful to prevent sin and profanes, which is the only thing that can prevent the ruin of this kingdom, whose welfare they continually seek, and study in another way; tho’ after all this the only way to prevent it, is to prevent all manner of sin and profaneness, as far as can be done . . . It is a wonder to many, how so many wise and clear sighted men in other things cannot see this. They are men of learning, readers of histories, and cannot but see that sin hath been the ruin of empires, kingdoms, families, and particular persons.\(^{52}\)

The sinfulness of the people, which necessitated the perceived need for moral reform in the eighteenth century, was the divine cause of its troubles and its resolution would be its salvation.

As for other seemingly antiquated systems of thought, Geraint H. Jenkins has discussed the perseverance of astrology and a Ptolemaic conception of the universe in Wales.\(^{53}\) Jones’s belief in astrology and, by extension, of a mechanistic and intelligent design for the universe is blatantly apparent. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Jones can clearly be seen to be participating in the ‘enlightened’ tradition of scientific inquiry which sought to reveal the power and glory of God, as well as religious truth, through studying His creation. In this vein, Jones noted in the preface to his ‘Spiritual Botonology’ that ‘His glory therefore ought to come from every part, and kind of creation

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\(^{53}\) Jenkins, ‘Popular Beliefs in Wales’, especially 462.
work; from the vegetable part of the creation therefore, from trees and herbs, all herbs, his
 glory should come; as much of God, something of all his excellences appear in them.\footnote{NL, M350 12 JON H.C., I, p. 3.}

The ‘Spiritual Botonology’ itself is rife with what may be considered a ‘pre-modern’ view
of the medicinal efficacy of herbs and other plants.\footnote{Alun Withey has noted ‘Humoral medicine meshed easily with these religious concepts of sickness and also made sense as a worldview, involving observations of nature and the ways in which the natural world tied in with the human body.’ Alun Withey, \textit{Physick and the Family: Health, Medicine and Care in Wales, 1600–1780} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 43.} Thus he notes that pompion, ‘tho
upon the dunghill, and nourished out of it; yet the fruit is eatable, loosens the belly, may
be good for a \textit{hot} stomach; being a \textit{cold} fruit: and the leaves wet in vinegar good to be
applied to \textit{hot} inflammations’.\footnote{NL, M350 12 JON H.C., II, pp. 23–1. (My italics).} Akin to this was Jones’s belief in astrology. His diaries
were kept in various almanacs and a few contain horoscopes drawn by Jones. At least one,
from 1732, seems to have pertained to Jones himself, with most others seemingly for
children born within Jones’s community or congregation.\footnote{NLW, MSS. 7022A, 7023A, 7024A, 7028A, Edmund Jones diaries for 1731, 1732, 1739, and 1778.} However, it should be noticed
that, although these systems of thought can be seen as ‘traditional’ or ‘antiquated’, they
were reinforced, nonetheless, by an observation of causes and effects which could have
 accorded with eighteenth century empirical inquiry.

It is clear that Jones saw apparitions as just as commonplace as signs in the
landscape, animals, plants, stars, and dreams. Each of these things were as divinely caused
and controlled as the others and if the ‘supernatural’ had as real and actual being as the
more ‘natural’ events, they were just as subject to, and indicative of, divine approbation.
John Harvey has commented on the aesthetics of Jones’s work on spirits pointing out a
difference between Jones’s more earthy discourse and the sensationalism and
extravagance of the Gothic and Romantic writers and painters. His spirits were described
in the ‘same matter-of-fact way as he did the backdrop to their appearance, in the majority
of cases, a landscape’. Moreover, he ‘strove to suggest not the transcendence of the
witness’s experience but the plausibility of the apparition’s presence by association with
an actual place'.

In addition to the credibility and believability afforded by Jones’s simple straightforward style and the placement of the spirits in the rural landscape, these things also helped to underscore the ‘everyday’ nature of these events within Jones’s conception of the world. Conversely, Jones’s imbuing of ‘everyday’ occurrences with supernatural signification, via particular providence, served to elevate them to the same sphere as more supernatural events like apparitions. By both making the natural supernatural and the supernatural everyday, Jones placed them on similar, if not the same, plane.

On the surface, such beliefs in astrology, herbal-lore, providence, and especially apparitions still may seem backward or even atavistic; however it should not be overlooked that Jones’s use of such things was based upon an observation of the world which was empirical. Madeleine Gray has observed the textuality of late-medieval Welsh ecclesiastical iconography which allowed for a ‘reading’ of scriptural and hagiographic knowledge amongst a semi-‘literate’, or ‘illiterate’ populace. Jones can be seen as employing a similar ‘reading’ of the ‘textuality’ of the landscape and events. Jones noted in his ‘Spiritual Botonology’ that philosophy ‘unconnected with divinity is out of place because of the relation between them’ and thus he does not dismiss natural philosophy, but rather employs its epistemology to the understanding of divinity. This can be seen in his offering of a physical explanation for the cloud formation which represented the success of the Revival, even if he dismissed the coincidental implications of it. Thus, while a scriptural knowledge formed a basis for his theology, a ‘scriptural reading’ of experience based upon an ‘Enlightened’ empirical evidence served to give it further form and meaning.

Enlightenment in eighteenth-century England was tied into the complex ethos of religious institutions and particularly Protestantism, especially when the influence of

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58 Harvey, Appearance of Evil, p. 16.
thinkers like John Locke on the universities and dissenting academies is considered. The relevance of Enlightenment thought, individualism, and scepticism is easily apparent in rational dissent, such as the rise of anti-Trinitarianism, Deism, and Unitarianism.

'Enlightenment' has been often equated with the advancement of secularism, especially in the rationalist deist movement. However, in addition to religion enjoying a more full relationship within the so-called 'age of reason' including discontinuities of epistemology, it is possible or even correct to see deism as less of a radical or heavy-hitting force in the history of eighteenth-century intellectualism. In the traditional historiography, the Methodist Revival has been viewed as reactionary or even anathematic to the Enlightened ethos. Far from this, revivalism can be seen as operating and participating in the broad empirical and rational paradigm of Enlightenment. In fact, David Bebbington has shown that the primacy of empirical investigation in experiencing God, optimism, doctrinal moderation, ethicism, pragmatism, taste, educational proliferation, and moral and popular reform to revivalism all had great resonance with the dominant progressivist Enlightened project. To this could be added such things as the personalization of religious experience which had great resonance to individualism as well as the projection of this individual experience into the public sphere in periodicals like the Weekly History and the Arminian Magazine by revivalists.

This personalization can be seen in things like the publications of conversion narratives. The publication of these narratives and their disparate forums of discussion

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have been discussed in the previous chapter. Writing about this, David Ceri Jones has noted that

whilst all revivalists gave allegiance to the summaries of orthodox belief contained in the various official doctrinal statements of the particular Church or denomination to which they belonged, the single most important unifying factor was not theological but experiential – an experience of the New Birth underpinned by a shared understanding of the conversion process.  

To that end, letters and journals were published so as to accumulate a variety of similar stories by which those experiencing this New Birth could test their own conversion and build on the sense of community that afforded. It is striking that this methodology was similar to that utilized by Edmund Jones in his writing on spirits. Jones’s work is full of personalised accounts with the names or initials and the character of the informants provided. This had similarities to the late-seventeenth century writers which Jones can be seen as following, but the emphasis and its similitude to conversion accounts being published contemporary to him cannot be coincidental. The conversion narratives and other accounts were given as exemplars of religious experience, and so too were Jones’s spirit accounts. From them acceptable religious and moral behaviour could be inferred as well as the means to attempt to distinguish ‘true’ spirit accounts from ‘false’ ones. As conversion narratives could aid in instructing people on the meaning of their experience and construct a community of believers, so too could the published experiences of apparitions.

The point still remains uncertain as to whether this constituted participation in an ‘Enlightened’ system of thought. It all depends on the reading of ‘Enlightenment’ which is employed. Focusing on the writings of the philosophes, with their overwhelming anticlericalism and perceived (by both historians and contemporaries) heterodoxy, the eighteenth century can be seen as the burgeoning of a secularising ‘Enlightenment project’

65 See Chapter Five below where Jones’s work is compared with those of late-seventeenth century writers.
which finds its completion in modern secularism.\textsuperscript{66} However, this oversimplified explanation would make the forces of piety and religiosity in eighteenth-century Britain paradoxical, backwards, or reactionary when, in reality, both intellectual rationalisation and religious reform and enthusiasm took place on the same intellectual landscape. This is not to conflate Revival with Enlightenment by some revisionist apology for religiosity or else to proclaim that there was no difference between so-called ‘rational dissent’ and its critics amongst revivalists. Jones was very much setting himself against the perceived forces of secularisation in all of his works, and deists in particular, who held ‘Reason’ as God ‘in the place of God’s Spirit the guide to all truth; and which they put in place of Scripture’, he regarded as ‘worse than the ancient Sadducees’.\textsuperscript{67} Nor is this to say that the revivalists drew directly or exactly on the epistemology of the philosophes to inform their own. Mark T. Mealey has argued that, despite a thorough reading of \textit{Essay Concerning Human Understanding}, Wesley’s epistemology was not Lockean \textit{per se} noting that ‘Wesley’s apparent “empiricism” is not a modern, Lockean empiricism, which restricts knowledge to the contents of the senses. Rather, Wesley’s apparent “empiricism” has its roots in the classical Aristotelian tradition.’\textsuperscript{68} However, Richard E. Brantley has argued that despite Wesley’s quasi-Aristotelian reading of Locke, his theological philosophy concerning both natural and religious epistemology was to a great extent Brownean and Lockean, especially with its empirical basis for knowledge, its view of the mind as \textit{tabula rasa}, its emphasis on plain and allegorical as opposed to metaphorical language, and its acknowledgement of the limits of human understanding.\textsuperscript{69} As he puts it,

\begin{quote}
Far from being mystical, anti-intellectual, or wrong-headed, Wesley’s recognition of reason’s limit is sufficiently Brownean and sufficiently Lockean insofar as he advocates constant and quasi-sensationalistic contact with the data base of spiritual experience: the influx of grace, for him, is
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{66} Bebbington, ‘Revival and Enlightenment’, pp. 17–18.
\textsuperscript{67} Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. iii.
\textsuperscript{69} Brantley, \textit{Locke, Wesley, and the Method of English Romanticism}. 171
non-rational but not antirational; and since it is more or less analogous to sense impression, it is more or less in line with an important component of Lockean methodology.  

Similarly, Norman Fiering has argued that the basis of the New England revivalist Jonathan Edwards’s thought was not, contrary to traditional supposition, Lockean in formulation or foundation. He sees Edwards’s thought as having a largely theological origin and based on ideas prevalent in the ethos of late-seventeenth century thought. In fact, he notes that Edwards’s philosophical idealism or immaterialism, his occasional theory of causation, his conception of intuitively certain spiritual and moral knowledge (the sense of the heart), his assumptions that the created universe is perfectly orderly and harmonious and governed by nearly invariable laws, his psychological determinism, and many other Edwardsian notions were assembled out of elements of thought and belief that did not depend in any way on Locke’s *Essay*.  

He gives primacy to the ideas of Malebranche and Henry More in Edwards’s conceptualisation, and notes that though not a Cartesian, Edwards was also not an English Empiricist à la mode Locke and Newton but rather was more closely allied to theocentric, rationalist metaphysicians. Be this as it may, he does note that Edward’s reading of Locke did perhaps have an impact upon his views on perception via subjective or mental empiricism, but ‘Edwards arrived at the belief that bodies were spirit before he concluded that they were also mental. The resistance presented by a material object was an ontological characteristic of bodies in Edwards’s thinking before it was perceptual characteristic.’ Therefore he concludes that that Edwards ‘studied Locke’s *Essay*, was stimulated by it, and learned from it is not an issue’. Leon Chai has discussed the limits of Enlightenment epistemology via an examination of Edwards’s thought by a comparison with the empiricism of Locke, the idealism of Malebranche, and the ideas of causation in Leibnitz, positing both affinity and difference with Edwards’s thoughts and each of these.

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70 Ibid., p. 69.  
72 Ibid., p. 91.  
73 Ibid., p. 92.
Interestingly, in his preface he notes that ‘My emphasis now shifted from trying to prove affinity of ideas to trying to establish a similarity in method or approaches. Indeed it now seemed to me that the crucial affinity lay in philosophical approaches, rather than in particular concepts.’ The problem here, as it was with John Wesley, was not so much establishing an exact similitude of the revivalists with the ideas of Enlightenment philosophers, but rather examining their brand of theologically based philosophy within the ethos of Enlightenment. Just because Edwards’s and Wesley’s thought were not exactly either positively influenced by or negatively reactionary to such ideas does not mean that they were not participating within the same discourse. What is important is that these religious figures engaged with a discussion of empiricism, epistemology, or ontology regardless of whether it was Lockean, Malebranchean, Cartesian, or Newtonian. It should also be noted that Jones himself owned An Abridgment of Mr. Locke’s Essay Concerning Humane Understanding from which he could have drawn much of methodological empiricism apparent in his writing about apparitions. Although not as extensively annotated as some other books in his personal library, there is a good amount of marginalia, consisting of asterisks and ‘n’s, presumably denoting points which Jones felt were important to Locke’s argument and those which he found noteworthy for his own purposes, and illustrate that Jones was not only aware of, but also made special note of Locke’s empirical epistemology.

At the end of the day, even if the empiricism and rationalism of the revivalists can be seen as diverging from those of the philosophes in manners such as a sixth supernatural or faith-based sense through which empirical evidence of God and religion could be based, or else the use of scripture-based reason instead of worldly reason, they were employing these ‘senses’ and ‘reason’ to evaluate experience and knowledge in a way similar to that

in which other ‘Enlightened’ figures used five sense based empiricism and ‘rational’ reason. Jones displayed this use of empiricism in an account of an apparition which appeared to David Thomas of Pontmelin in Breconshire in 1769 saying that this was a ‘proof of the being of evil spirits to 3 of his senses. His ears, his eyes, and feeling by a lasting impression’. Rationalisation of another account can be seen in Jones’s dealing with the Pwca’r Trwyn where he notes that ‘being aware that some things may be added in the report, and other things altered from what they really were, I choose not to relate all that I heard, but what I judge most likely to be true’. What follows is not, in fact, the traditional telling of the story of the Pwca, but rather a ‘poltergeist’ type haunting by what Jones terms a ‘familiar spirit’. However, whilst this link between revivalism and Enlightenment empiricism and rationality may be discernible in retrospect, the perceived dialectical opposition between enthusiastic religion which was seen as characterising the Revival and perceived secularising scepticism of ‘Enlightened’ philosophes produced the opinion, both amongst contemporaries and later historians, that revivalists were overtly credulous and superstitious. The belief in disembodied spirits and other apparitions, although ‘reasonably’ provable within an ‘Enlightened’ empirical paradigm, as demonstrated by the work of Jones, was seen as anathematic, at least within the public image of ‘Enlightened’ thought, to both reason and sense. As will be shown in Chapter Five, the Welsh polite intellectual sphere imbibed this view to a great extent.

To the present discussion Theophilus Evans’s History of Modern Enthusiasm (1752) is particularly interesting. Evans was a stark Anglican with a dislike of Nonconformists and Methodists. In his popular Drych y Prif Oesoedd (1716), Evans

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76 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 242. This ‘lasting impression’ can be seen as pertaining to an emotive or ‘religious’ sense.
77 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 19.
gave a nationalistic version of Welsh history, coupled with a defence of the correctness and supremacy of the Church of England.\footnote{Jenkins, \textit{Foundations of Modern Wales}, pp. 246–8; Gwyn Thomas, ‘Two Prize Writers: Ellis Wynne and Theophilus Evans’, in Branwen Jarvis (ed.), \textit{A Guide to Welsh Literature c. 1700–1800} (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp. 45–63 (pp. 54–62).} The \textit{History} is similarly a robust argument for the orthodoxy of the established church against Nonconformity and enthusiasm. In the preface he set out his work as an argument against the growth of rational dissent via a critique of its perceived extreme opposite: namely ‘enthusiastic’ religion as embodied by Methodism.\footnote{Theophilus Evans, \textit{The History of Modern Enthusiasm, from the Reformation to the Present Times} (London: W. Owen and W. Clarke, 1752), pp. iii–vi; See also, Geraint H. Jenkins, \textit{The Foundations of Modern Wales: 1642–1780} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 326–7, 352; Prys Morgan, \textit{The Eighteenth Century Renaissance} (Llandybie: Christopher Davies), p. 48.} Although only the last of his eight chapters deals specifically with Methodism \textit{per se}, his constant, not-so-subtle hints and allusions leave little doubt that he considered his commentary on Quakers and Fifth Monarchists to apply to this contemporary religious movement as well. Bearing this in mind, the chapter on the ‘National Phrenzy that possessed both Old and New England for a Season in prosecuting, torturing, and executing so many Men and Women, (more especially the Aged and Decrepit of the latter Sex) for the supposed Crime of Witchcraft’ is particularly notable.\footnote{Evans, \textit{History of Modern Enthusiasm}, p. 28.} Although at the end of the chapter, Evans stated that he did not ‘deny there may be real Witches in the common Acceptation of the Word, i.e. such as have a communication with evil spirits, and deserve to be capitally punished’ (perhaps a bold or ‘credulous’ statement in and of itself in the 1750s), he leaves little doubt that he thought that the witch-craze was highly erroneous and ‘barbarous’ in its mistaken zeal.\footnote{Ibid., p. 33.} Elsewhere he also seems to attest to some manner of belief in evil spirits, as it is to these that he ascribed some of the ‘enthusiast’s’ behaviour.\footnote{For example, see Ibid., pp. 41–2 wherein he discussed Quakerism in terms of possession.} Although superstition and credulity was only one of many faults with which Evans associated enthusiasm and by extension Methodism,\footnote{He saw enthusiasm as a popish plot to undermine the true and official religion. See Ibid., pp. 42–3, for his discussion of how Quakerism was a Roman Catholic plot.} it is obvious that he considered it a prominent one. Thus, even if Evans’s orthodox theology
led him not to entirely doubt the existence of evil spirits and even witches of a sort, it was clear that he associated Methodism, and by extension revivalism, with the type of irrational zeal which he saw in the ‘witch-craze’. Namely it was superstition in the etymological sense of *superstition*, or an excess fear of the supernatural.

A clearer association of Methodism with ‘superstition’ and ‘credulity’ came in the 1762 print by William Hogarth entitled ‘A Medley - Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism’. In it a preacher stands in the pulpit, apparently in full rhapsody of sermon whilst holding aloft a figure of a stereotypical witch in one hand and a devil in the other, his wig falling back to reveal a Jesuit’s traditional haircut and his robe opened to show a clown’s costume. In front of the pulpit is a woman giving birth to a litter of hares (an allusion to Mary Toft who many believed had given birth to rabbits), a boy vomiting pins (a common symptom of demonic possession), two lovers who are apparently too enamoured with one another to pay attention to their surroundings, and a man who has fallen asleep being prodded by an imp. Prevalent in the foreground is a copy of King James I’s *Daemonology* and Whitefield’s *Journals*, the latter in a basket resting on the former. Behind the congregation (all of whom are in various states of religious ecstasy) a Turk smoking a pipe peers (apparently with satisfaction) through the chapel window. Even the chandelier hanging in the chapel has the appearance of a demonic face with gaping, fanged jaws. These not-so-subtle allusions perhaps do not need much explanation. It is clear that Hogarth, an Anglican, similarly saw the enthusiasm of the Methodists as a ‘plot’, opening the doors to Roman Catholicism and even Islam. However, he gave the most prominence (at least to the modern eye) to the various signs of Methodist credulity about possession, witchcraft, and the preternatural. To this, the juxtaposition of Whitefield’s and James I’s respective works speaks volumes.

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As Owen Davies has shown, this view of Methodism as propping up discredited and ‘unenlightened’ superstitions was a common one amongst contemporaries, and in fact Methodists or those with Methodist leanings were associated with incidents such as the Lamb Inn witchcraft incident in Bristol in 1761–2 in which the daughters of the innkeeper Richard Giles appeared to be possessed, not to mention the ecstatic physical manifestations of the ‘spirit’ which sometimes accompanied revivalist preaching.\textsuperscript{87} Moreover, as will be discussed below, Wesley and his \textit{Arminian Magazine} were ardent supporters of the belief in witchcraft and apparitions.\textsuperscript{88} However, Methodism was not exactly a unified movement, and especially as the movement moved into and through the nineteenth century, it distanced itself from such insinuations of credulity.\textsuperscript{89} Charles Wesley, while certainly holding a strong belief in particular providence and signs, distrusted revelation in visions and dreams and did not write on apparitions and witches like his brother. Henry D. Rack has noted that the way Charles was contrasted with his brother

might partly be accounted for by the fact that Charles did not issue such a huge quantity of publications and polemical letters debating miracles and the supernatural. But the absence of references in Charles’s journal, his expressed distaste for dreams and visions, and his reaction to the convulsions suggest that he lacked his brother’s fascination with wonders of this kind. It may also be significant, however, that the wide-ranging curiosity about a great variety of sights and subjects, so evident in John Wesley’s journal, is almost entirely absent from Charles’s journal and letters.\textsuperscript{90}

However, he concludes that ‘both brothers despite their differences on particular issues, viewed the world as perpetually open to divine or diabolical intervention. Both, too, believed that they were provisionally guided and aided, and subject to the judgment of

\textsuperscript{87} Davies, ‘Methodism and Belief in Magic’, 256. For the Lamb Inn case, see also Jonathan Barry, ‘Public infidelity and private belief? The discourse of spirits in Enlightenment Bristol’, in Owen Davies and Willem de Blécourt (eds), \textit{Beyond the Witch Trials: Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment Europe} (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 118–43.

\textsuperscript{88} Davies, ‘Methodism and Belief in Magic’, 254–5.

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 257–63.

Moreover, Davies has demonstrated that there is, among other things, no clear geographic correlation between Methodism and incidents of ‘superstitious’ practice, and that Methodists were far from the only promoters or tolerators of ‘antiquated’ belief structures at the time. Thus, in the case of undesirable beliefs, the Methodist exhorters may have perhaps been more scapegoats than sole perpetrators.

Be this as it may, these accusations were certainly not without basis. The supernatural was for John Wesley, as it was for Jones, part and parcel of religious experience. He opposed the disbelief in witchcraft implicit in the 1736 Witchcraft Act and he included accounts of apparitions and witchcraft in his *Arminian Magazine*. In fact, Jones and Wesley both recorded one of the same stories, Wesley in one of his journals which was later published, and Jones in his *Apparitions of Spirits*: the story of a young woman, Elizabeth Hobson, in Sunderland (presumably a Methodist herself) who had encounters with apparitions of several recently deceased family members, friends, and acquaintances, receiving advice from them and aiding several in ‘passing on’. In the preface to this account, Jones recorded that

Having received a manuscript of this account of it, sent to me by a Gentleman and a Lawyer; I brought it to be put in the Press; when I brought it to the Press, I was told by a friend, that he thought the Rev. Mr. John Wesley had published that account in one of his Writings; If it is so, I should be glad to have seen it, because from Mr. Wesley’s own hand, the account must be perfectly free from mistakes, which I doubt, this manuscript is not; some gaps being perceivable in it, which might come to pass through the forgetfulness of the relater, or neglect of the enquirer or transcriber. But being unwilling to omit so notable piece of history, and that the book may come into many hands who have not seen Mr. Wesley’s account, I venture to make it publick.

What is more, Wesley’s rationale for the publishing of the account is similar to the rationale behind Jones’s work: ‘that if but one account of the intercourse of men with separate Spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air (Deism, Atheism, Materialism)

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91 Ibid., 79.
92 Davies, ‘Methodism and Belief in Magic’, 257–63.
falls to the ground'. That Wesley and Jones published highly similar versions of the same account should not be undervalued. As was shown in the last chapter, Jones and Wesley differed fundamentally on a vital point of religion, namely Jones’s Calvinism versus Wesley’s Arminianism, with Jones firmly siding with Harris and Whitefield in the theological divides of the early 1740s. However it is clear that Jones found an ally in Wesley on the issue of spirits and this is perhaps one of the reasons Jones received several books from and by Wesley in 1773.

In Wesley’s adolescence, an event occurred at his home which probably influenced his belief in the supernatural greatly. Just like Jones’s home at the Transh, Wesley’s familial home was visited by a noisy haunting in the winter of 1716/17. The haunting manifested itself in the form of knockings, footsteps going up and down stairs as well as other sounds of an unseen person moving around, and once an apparition of a headless badger. Wesley’s sister Emily believed the disturbance to be result of witches: a nearby town had had problems with witches about a year previously and Wesley’s father, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, has recently preached against consulting with cunning-men, something which may have offended the ‘magical community’ prompting retribution. She believed the badger-like creature to have been the witch in its animal form. In this, Emily’s beliefs were akin to local folk-belief. Samuel, however, took a more intellectual-cum-theological view of the situation. He regarded the disturbance to result from an evil spirit, sent by the Devil to test his and his family’s faith. Thus, although the two views had a similar supernatural basis, they were nonetheless quite different and can be seen as representing ‘high’ and ‘low’ views of the same situation. Owen Davies has alluded to John’s views of the event, noting that his were in between that of his father and sister: he believed in the

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96 Wesley, *An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley’s Journal*, p. 5.
97 NLW, MS 7027A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1773.
reality of witchcraft but events were interpreted within his own religious beliefs, ascribing their root cause to the Devil rather than the witches themselves.\(^98\)

Jones also re-interpreted supernatural events within his own religious paradigm and, in fact, this can be seen in the story of Elizabeth Hobson which he shared with Wesley. Jones discussed ‘some gaps being perceivable in it’\(^99\) and at the end of his relation of the contents of the manuscript he added

I have some suspicion that the three last Apparitions but one, was that of her brother John, who was displeas’d with her for delaying to have the matter decided about the house, and not an Apparition of her Grandfather who seemed pleas’d with her; tho’ he spoke not. Tho’ the Copy doth not say it was her Brother, which seems the more likely thing; but how this came to be overlooked I cannot well tell. One would be satisfied to know which, because it is not good to wrong the dead, who is either in heaven or in hell. It must be one or the other of the two, but most likely it was the Spirit of her Brother whom the following Letter calls her old friend and visitant; who afterward appear’d to her at Boyldon hill, about the same affair, tho’ the Copy speaks as if it was the Spirit of her Grandfather. Likely it was some forgetfulness in the Copier; but I am not sure.\(^100\)

He then went on to append to the manuscript account the text of a letter ‘from some friend of hers to another’.\(^101\) The use of multiple sources for a single account, the application of reason to amend some issues Jones finds with the story, and the acknowledgement of another account of the story printed by a fellow religious source all show the careful and academic consideration which Jones applied to the stories he recorded.

He also used reasoning to discern the believable from the unbelievable in the story of the Pwcca’r Trwyn as has been alluded to above. According to the traditional folklore, a pwcca is supposed to have taken up residency at y Trwyn farmhouse near Abercarn where he did household work in exchange for milk and bread left out for him by a servant girl at night. One night the girl, feeling mischievous, ate the bread and milk, leaving either only the crusts or a bowl of stale urine used in dying wool instead. The pwcca punished her by lifting her into the air or kicking her. He then turned up at another farm in the area called

\(^99\) Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 110.
\(^100\) Ibid., p. 122.
\(^101\) Ibid., pp. 122–3.
Hafod yr Ynys where he befriended another servant girl and helped her with her spinning, but would never allow her to see him or know his name. One night she pretended to leave, but really stayed and listened to him work. Thus she found out his name (Gwarwyn-a-throt) and confronted him with it, leading to his leaving. He then appeared at yet another farmhouse in the area where he befriended a servant named Moses and helped with the work. However, Moses became a soldier and left to fight in the Wars of the Roses where he died. In his friend’s absence the pwcca began causing mischief and eventually a cunning-man from near Caerleon came to lay him in the Red Sea.  

Jones does not tell it exactly the same way. According to him the spirit came to y Trwyn some time before Christmas in a year around the beginning of the eighteenth century and left on Easter Wednesday the following year. He relates that the spirit claimed to have come from ‘Pwl y Gasseg’ (Mare’s Pit) in the nearby mountains, but does not relate any further stories of the spirit following its departure from the farmhouse. The patriarch of the house at this time was Job John Harry, who lived there with his sons Harry and David Job. The haunting began with ‘poltergeist’ activity such as knocking on the door and being invisible when it was answered, once speaking to the door’s answerer ‘upon which they were much terrified’. Once a man, T. E., brought a gun to shoot it, but the spirit had foreknowledge of this and told Job of it on his way to the house. Upon Job’s arrival stones were flung by the spirit at T. E. striking him and no one else, even when others stood in the way. He also spoke out of the oven and struck the cupboard with stones ‘the marks of which’ Jones remarks ‘were to be seen (if they are not there still)’. After some time they grew ‘fearless and bold to speak to the spirit. His speeches and actings were a recreation to them – seeing he was a familiar kind of spirit which did not hurt them, and informed them of some things which they did not know.’ His favourite person was apparently Harry Job who was a scholar and kept a school for some time before becoming

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a Church of England clergyman and Jones claims that it was by Harry’s use of ‘some magic spells (yet without the design of bringing the spirit there, but for some other, idle purpose)’ that the spirit came to be there. When he departed he bid Job farewell, saying he went ‘Where God pleases’. 103

It is interesting that here Jones is relating a story which is also found in the folk-record but altering it radically. In fact he never called the spirit by the name of ‘pwcca’ and it is only by the existence of the tale in later folklore collections that the story (and its alterations) is identifiable at all. On the one hand this may raise some questions about Jones’s work as a reliable source for folklore at all, but, on the other, it demonstrates the emphasis which Jones placed on the believability of the accounts he was relaying. In it a somewhat strange mixture is discernible. Folklore is providing the content and subject matter but theology and scripture based rationality are giving it form. Similarly, while ideologically religious and even ‘superstitious’ by both contemporary and modern standards, the story’s relation is methodologically ‘enlightened’ in its empiricism and ‘rationality’. Note, for example, the assertion that the marks on the cupboard were possibly still visible. Jones’s dating of the story as ‘about fourscore years ago’ is also significant as Jones placed the incident in the memorable past making it more relevant and applicable to his design. 104 He even noted that although he heard the story by virtue of it spreading ‘very far, and was in every man’s mouth for a long time; and is still remembered and spoken of at times,’ he discussed the events with David Job, who frequented the Independent meeting house of Pen-maen where Jones occasionally preached, and who ‘owned the substance of what was reported’. 105 Thus, in addition to its folkloric record and transmission orally via folk-memory, Jones further validated it by providing an eyewitness. This eyewitness, moreover, is given credibility by his Independent religiosity.

103 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 19-21.
104 Ibid., p. 19.
105 Ibid., p. 21.
providing an affinity and thus trustworthiness to Jones which contrasts with the Anglicanism of Harry Job who was supposed to have conjured the spirit in the first place.

In this the model of ‘popular religion’ as advanced by Karen Jolly can prove useful. In her study of elf-charms in late-Saxon England, Jolly has proposed an inclusive model whereby the term ‘popular religion’ encapsulates the religion held by the ‘majority’ of people including both Christianised folk-beliefs and practices and ‘official’ religion. As such it does not participate in the dichotomy between ‘elite’ and ‘popular’ but rather brings both within an overarching system. In this, ‘Christian’ and ‘folkloric’ influences interact, act upon one another, and combine in a symbiotic way.106 Similarly, David Elton Gay has noted in his chapter on the Christianity of incantations that

no Christian culture, from the earliest Christian communities of late antiquity to those of traditional northern European culture, lacks an incantation corpus. And in these incantation traditions reference to Christian texts, rituals and beliefs – whether biblical texts, saints’ lives or other types of literature and liturgy – is a constant. In fact, the incantations, whether explicitly Christian or not, derive their authority as instruments of power in the ongoing battle against the demonic precisely because of their necessity in Christian supernatural belief.107

He goes on to conclude that ‘belief in demons and the use of charms is not a measure of how un-Christian a believer is, but rather a measure of how fully that believer is engaged in the Christian world-view’.108

For Jones it was the same: as a member of the local community he naturally absorbed the beliefs and legends which surrounded him, but his religiosity, and especially the formal Christianity he held as a religious leader, provided a refined template in which to place those beliefs. The entire discourse of the Welsh folklore to which Jones was exposed was ‘Christian’ in form and belief, intimately tied to a lay religious worldview. Jones, however, had a more ‘refined’ or professional theology from his role as a religious authority and therefore the folklore needed to be re-interpreted by him to fit his altered

108 Ibid., p. 44.
theology. In short, the content and subject manner were folkloric and traditional, but they were pruned and proved in a more 'religious' way. Thus he could believe in the pwcca, but he refined and regulated that belief so that the imp became a familiar spirit as spoken of in Scripture. In this way too could fairies and other sprites be incorporated within a Christian cosmos and took their place as evil denizens of Hell. This should not be seen as a departure from either 'traditional' or 'formal religious' understanding and indeed Jones's thoughts would have found resonance in both spheres; but rather as a making sense of things using both the evidence of folklore and the theory of theology.

Jones's views on and recording of spirits were intimately tied to his theology, with the influence of revivalism having a significant impact. Jones displayed a highly religious view of the world with the influence of God as a constant. In addition to the signs of divinity in things like geographical formations, miracles, dreams, and signs from atmospheric formations, the heavens, and animals, part of this constant influence took the form of interventions of spirits with the mundane realm. This required a complex metaphysical conception of things like the nature of good and evil beyond the basic binary opposition between Christ and Satan so as to account for the potential 'saving' aspect of the warning imparted by evil apparitions. To prove the validity of ghosts, fairies, witches, and other spirits as a part of this conception he utilized an 'enlightened' methodology via the ethos of revivalism. In order to make his case in this manner, Jones needed to provide as many personalized examples as possible from reliable sources based on sensory experiences. These examples also needed to make 'reasonable' sense within a coherent theological paradigm. Provided that his examples were sufficiently 'provable' however, many, if not most, of the apparitions he described could be 'read' spiritually so as to illustrate the nature of God's will and desire.
EDMUND JONES’S BELIEF IN APPARITIONS AND THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY INTELLECTUAL ENVIRONMENT

The intellectual climate of the eighteenth century was extremely complex. The myth that those almighty gods of the Enlightenment, ‘Progress’ and ‘Reason’ effectively drove out all remnants of belief in the preternatural is already shown to be problematic by the mere existence of Edmund Jones’s works on apparitions and fairies, as well as by the new types of belief in such spiritual beings by Spiritualists and Theosophists in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. That being said, it was definitely the period when that myth came into being. Moreover, the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries saw a shift in the discourse about creatures like ghosts and fairies away from the subject of their being or non-being as well as the rise of their more abstract use in romanticist literature and as an acceptable subject of study for popular antiquarians. However, just as the argument for or against apparitions and witches was not as mainstream as it had been in the seventeenth century, the study of what would, after 1846, come to be called folklore was still fairly nascent, as was the literary and artistic culture of faerie that would come to prominence with the Victorians.¹ Therefore, a more holistic approach to the period is necessary, not only focusing on the debate over the existence or non-existence of supernatural creatures and events, but also the ways in which those things are discussed (or not discussed) amongst the educated in general. A broad view of both the discourses and non-discourses surrounding the topic is needed.

The most logical place to start an examination of the intellectual context of Jones’s works is clearly an examination of the intellectual tradition to which he considered himself most closely allied. Luckily, Jones pointed clearly to one intellectual tradition in particular in the ‘Preface’ to his *Apparitions of Spirits*:

many authors have accidentally mentioned the *Apparitions of Spirits* in treating directly of other matters, and several authors of note and credit have directly wrote of these things; as Glanvil, Baxter, Burton, Morton, &c, And who can read Schaffer’s history of Lapland, Martin’s description of the Western Islands of Scotland, Duncan, Campbel, &c. and question *Apparitions?* Also the complete history of Witchcraft in two Vol. 12mo. small Print, and very compendious; written by a nameless, but very sound judicious and learned Author, exceedingly well read, both in ancient and modern history of Heathens and Christians, Papists and Protestants?\(^2\)

In accordance with this, Geraint H. Jenkins and John Harvey have both pointed out that Jones based many of his ideas on those of Joseph Glanvill’s *Sadducismus Triumphatus* which was variously published in 1681, 1689, 1700, and 1726.\(^3\) Glanvill was one of a number of prominent scientifically and theologically minded writers, including the Cambridge Platonist Henry More, the Scottish mathematician George Sinclair, the Nonconformist theologian Richard Baxter, and the Anglican scholar Meric Casaubon, who, in the latter decades of the seventeenth century, sought to reinforce the foundations of the Christian religion by proving the existence of spirits.\(^4\) Glanvill wrote in the preface to *Sadducismus Triumphatus* that works proving the existence of witches, ghosts and the like were ‘too seasonable and necessary for our age, in which Atheism is begun in Sadducism’:\(^5\) And those that dare not bluntly say, There is NO GOD, content themselves (for a fair Step and *Introduction*) to deny there are Spirits or Witches.\(^6\) The most well-

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\(^2\) [Edmund Jones], *A Relation of Apparitions of Spirits, in the Principality of Wales* (n.p.; [n.pub.], 1780), p. iv.


\(^5\) The term ‘Sadducism’ or ‘Saduceism’ alludes to the Jewish sect active at the time of Christ which denied the immortality of the soul and the existence of angels. See Matt 22: 23–32; Mark 12:18–27; and Acts 23: 6–10.

known summation of his argument is that ‘These Things hang together in a Chain of Connection . . . and ‘tis but a happy Chance, if he, that hath lost one Link, holds another. So that the Vitals of Religion being so much interested in this Subject, it will not be an unnecessary Employment, particularly to discourse it.’ 7

Glanvill was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and he and his fellow writers were very much in tune with the paradigms of the Scientific Revolution. This may, to the modern mind, make their defence of the supernatural seem oxymoronic. An historical conception of ‘progress’ inherited from the Enlightenment which was fermented and distilled by nineteenth and early-twentieth century historians of science and philosophy, has tended to view treatises dealing with magic and witchcraft as antithetic to science and as credulous and traditionalist anomalies which opposed the epistemological transformations toward modernity. 8 However, as G. MacDonald Ross has pointed out, in the seventeenth century ‘for every unsuperstitious philosopher’, notably Hobbes, Pascal, Descartes, Malebranche, Locke, Spinozza, or Bale, there is a Campanella, Fludd, Kircher, Comenius, Henry More, Cudworth, or F. M. van Helmont. Moreover, whereas ‘the first list is nearly exhaustive, the second is only a small, random selection’. 9

The value of scientific study of the supernatural was alluded to by the so-called ‘father of the Scientific Revolution’ himself, Francis Bacon. In The Advancement of Learning (1605), Bacon wrote,

Neither am I of the opinion, in this history of marvels, that superstitious narrations of sorceries, witchcrafts, dreams, divinations, and the like, where there is an assurance and clear evidence of the fact, be all together excluded. For it is not yet known in what cases and how far effects attributed to superstition do participate of natural causes: and therefore howsoever the practice of such things is to be condemned, yet from the

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7 Ibid., p. 67.
speculation and consideration of them light may be taken, not only for the
discerning of the offences, but for the further disclosing of nature.\textsuperscript{10}

However, he insisted that such topics should be 'sorted by themselves, and not be mingled
with the narrations which are merely and sincerely natural'.\textsuperscript{11} This last point holds with
Bacon's distinction between the study of reason, which pertains to the observable and
knowable natural philosophy, and faith, which pertains to the unknowable realm of
religion and the supernatural.\textsuperscript{12} This idea was advanced perhaps most notably in John
Locke's \textit{An Essay Concerning Human Understanding} (1690) in which he explained that
knowledge of things outside of the mundane realm is necessarily limited by our own
understanding. In fact, in discussing the lack of human ability to comprehend the
knowledge of angels he wrote

\begin{quote}
I beg my reader's pardon, for laying before him so wild a fancy, concerning
the ways of perception in beings above us: but how extravagant soever it
be, I doubt whether we can imagine anything about the knowledge of
angels, but after this manner some way or other, in proportion to what we
find and observe in ourselves. And though we cannot but allow, that the
infinite power and wisdom of God, may frame creatures without a thousand
other faculties, and ways of perceiving things without them, than we have;
yet our thoughts can go no further than our own, so impossible it is for us to
enlarge our very guesses beyond the ideas received from our own sensation
and reflection. \textit{The supposition at least, that angels do sometimes assume}
\textit{bodies, need not startle us, since some of the most ancient, and most
learned Fathers of the Church seemed to believe, that they had bodies: and
this is certain, that their state and way of existence is unknown to us.}\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

Locke can here be seen to be reacting partially against the Hobbesian and Cartesian
philosophies which maintained a strict materialism: the same philosophies which the anti-
Sadducees opposed. In many ways Cartesian scepticism laid the foundation for modern
thought. In the second meditation of his \textit{Meditations on First Philosophy} (1641),
Descartes implied a distinct difference between the idea of the body (and thus the

\begin{thebibliography}{13}
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\bibitem{11} Ibid.
\bibitem{12} See Jeffrey Barnouw, 'The Separation of Reason and Faith in Bacon and Hobbes, and Leibniz's
\bibitem{13} John Locke, \textit{An Essay Concerning Human Understanding}, ed. by Roger Woolhouse (London: Penguin
Bibliographical Society}, 11: 3–4 (1975–6), 233–43 (239), and Chapter Four above.
\end{thebibliography}
material) and the realm of thought (the spiritual). Moreover, in *Principles of Philosophy* (1644) he stated the impossibility of the existence of a vacuum, for (he contended) all space is necessarily filled by some form of matter. From this he reasoned that

the matter of heaven does not differ from that of the earth: and even if there were countless worlds in all, it would be impossible for them not to all be of one and the same [kind of] matter. And therefore, there cannot be several worlds, but only one: because we clearly understand that this matter . . . now occupies all the conceivable space in which those other worlds would have to be.

In consequence, Descartes came very close to making the whole of existence (including the denizens of heaven and hell) ontologically materialistic. Furthermore, in the same work he reduced all of the operations of the mind (which he equates to the *animus*), including sensation and emotion, to the effects of material motions acting upon the brain.

Thus, even though a distinction between the spiritual and the material was maintained from the *Meditations*, the soul moved dangerously close to the mundane.

It would take no less of a controversialist than Thomas Hobbes to take the final plunge and declare all spirits and God himself corporeal. What is more, Hobbes used his philosophy to directly attack contemporary ideas about ghosts and witchcraft. He supposed the pagan religions of antiquity which worshiped ‘satyrs, fawns, nymphs, and the like’, and the contemporary opinions ‘that rude people have of fairies, ghosts, and goblins, and of the power of witches’ to be the products of ‘ignorance of how to distinguish dreams, and other strong fancies, from vision and sense.’ He continued to write:

as for Witches, I think not that their witchcraft is any real power; but yet that they are justly punished, for the false belief they have, that they can do such mischief; joined with their purpose to do it if they can: their trade

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16 Ibid., pp 176–82.
being nearer to a new religion than to a craft or science. And for fairies and walking ghosts, the opinion of them has I think been on purpose, either taught, or not confuted, to keep in credit the use of exorcism, of crosses, of holy water, and other such inventions of ghostly men. Nevertheless there is no doubt, but God can make unnatural apparitions: but that he does it so often, as men need to fear such things, more that they fear the stay, or change, of the course of nature, which he also can stay or change, is no point of Christian faith.  

For Hobbes, the liberation from superstition was a liberation of the people from those ‘ghostly men’ of the Church who used false beliefs to oppress and control. Moreover, witchcraft was not to be opposed for the reality of its effects but for its intent (the malevolence of the maleficium) and for its antipathy to the Christian religion. As Moody E. Prior pointed out, Hobbes became either a poster boy or a straw man for the very ideas which the likes of Glanvill opposed and, in fact, Hobbesian philosophy became a model for works written in opposition to the anti-Sadducees.

It is slightly ironic therefore, that, as Keith Hutchison and Stuart Clark have shown, some of these very epistemological shifts which were seen as opposing the supernatural made possible the arguments used by Glanvill and others. The scepticism which was employed most notably in Descartes Meditations shook up accepted certainties and broke down old distinctions between the manifest and the occult. In ‘constructive scepticism’ absolute scientific certainty of all the world’s workings was acknowledged as impossible, but the best possible understanding was seen as acceptable. The method of hypothesis and experiment could be used to test the boundaries between the natural and supernatural, the knowable and the unknowable, by subjecting occult phenomena to the same testing as the mundane. Moreover, it is arguable that a strict materialism made anomalies and external intervention by the spiritual more apparent and detectable, and thus

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19 Ibid.
it was a matter of attempting to prove how the supernatural and natural might interact. Most important of all, however, is the fact that these tracts on the existence of apparitions and witchcraft were, in and of themselves, designed to be highly philosophical and, above all, scientific.

Clark has shown that the investigation of metaphysical phenomena by the anti-Sadducees was based largely on the methodology of the ‘natural histories’ then in scientific vogue. The works were often highly empirical, being based on accounts of preternatural occurrences collected or investigated by the author. For instance, Glanvill personally investigated and included in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus* an account of the ‘Drummer of Tedworth,’ perhaps one of the most infamous hauntings of his time, in which what would now be termed poltergeist activity was attributed to witchcraft. The sheer range of the types of accounts employed by these scholars can be seen in Henry More’s *An Antidote against Atheisme* (1653) which included accounts of charms, fairies, ghosts, all aspects of witchcraft (their familiars, Sabbaths, transformation into animals, etc.), and even the Pied Piper, from both history (including antiquity) and the late-seventeenth century, and from as diverse places as Spain, Lapland, and Britain. More refrained from relying on the biblical accounts normally employed in vindications of witchcraft and apparitions noting that ‘the Atheist will boggle more at whatever is fetch’d from established religion’. In Glanvill’s words, these writers included these accounts not because they ‘delight in telling stories’ but rather as *Arguments for the conformation of a Truth* which hath indeed been attested by multitudes of the like Evidences in all times and places. But things remote, or long past, are either not believed, or forgotten: whereas these being fresh and near, and attended with all the circumstances of credibility, it may be expected they should have the more success upon the obstinacy of unbelievers.

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26 Ibid., unpaginated.
In their minds, even though a great number of the accounts of witches and ghosts might be fraudulent or mistaken, ‘a single relation for an Affirmative, sufficiently confirmed and attested, is worth a thousand tales of forgery and imposture’. 28

More than just empirical, these works sought to take the epistemological middle ground between ‘credulity and incredulity’ or ‘atheism and enthusiasm’. Meric Casaubon thought it indeterminable whether overt incredulity or excessive credulity was ‘most dangerous, or blamable; but as the particular object of either is, so may the one be more or less than the other. But I must confess, the business of incredulity did more run in my head at this time, because of the times so set upon Atheism.’ 29 Similarly More began his Antidote against Atheisme with ‘Atheisme and Enthusiasme though they seeme so extremely opposite one another, yet in many ways they do very nearly agree. For to say nothing of their joynt conspiracy against the true knowledge of God and Religion, they are commonly entertain’d, though successively, in the same Complexion.’ 30 In this way, these writers sought to keep to a middle ground of belief which would be acceptable, both religiously and scientifically, to the greatest number of people. In this, they were often forced to dismiss some elements of traditional belief in the supernatural as implausible, but it strengthened their position by demonstrating that they were rationally testing occult phenomena against the known laws of science.

Even at first sight it is clear that the Rev. Jones held this same logic. As has been noted already, the main purpose of Apparitions of Spirits was blatantly stated in its very title: ‘to confute and to prevent the infidelity of denying the being and Apparition of Spirits; which tends to Irreligion and Atheism.’ 31 Moreover, in the ‘Conclusions Inferred from these Accounts’ Jones asked:

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28 Ibid., p. 87.
30 More, Antidote against Atheisme, unpaginated.
31 Jones, Apparition of Spirits, extended title.
And are not all these numerous instances together sufficient to convince all
the Sadducees and Atheistical men of the age, or any age in the time to
come, of the being of Spirits, and of their appearance in the world? Surely
one would think they are, and that it is monstrously unreasonable to believe
the contrary [. . .] And should not the being of Spirits be believed, attested
by more than three score witnesses which carry in them plain undeniable
marks of the judgment and sincerity of the writer?32

Jones’s account was clearly a response to Hobbesian materialism. He maintained the
spiritual and incorporeal nature of God and spirits, and supposed that, though immaterial,
spirits could use the material substance around them to appear.33 In his Account of the
Parish of Aberystyth he even responded directly to Cartesian atomism. Writing on the
beauty and design of Aberystyth’s geography he asked who ‘can think that all these [sic]
things together, or any one of them could come to pass by chance! Or that the Earth, and
this part of it among the rest, should be formed by a fortuitous concourse of Atoms, as the
French Philosopher Descarters dreamed!’34 Moreover, Jones voiced a desire in his
Apparitions of Spirits to stay in the middle ground between excessive credulity and
incredulity.35 This can be seen in the examples cited in the last chapter, such as Jones’s
treatment of the Pwcca’r Trwyn where he interrogated the accounts which he received in
order to distinguish what was believable or unbelievable in them.36

Still, Jones did not do this to the extent of More or Casaubon. In fact, that Jones’s
work lacks the lengthy and intense philosophical discussions on the scientific nature and
plausibility of the preternatural is its biggest difference from the seventeenth-century
studies. Instead of complicated philosophical arguments over the nature and behaviour of
matter and spirits, Jones seems to have relied on the sheer weight and volume of his many

32 Ibid., pp. 102–3.
33 Ibid., p. iii, v.
34 Edmund Jones, A Geographical, Historical, and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystyth
(Trevecka: [n.pub.], 1779), p. 42. Compare with this statement from Glanvill: ‘If the notion of a spirit be
absurd as it is pretended, that of a GOD and a SOUL distinct from matter, and immortal, are likewise
absurdities. And then that the World was jumbled into this elegant and orderly Fabrick by chance; and that
our Souls are only parts of matter that came together we know not whence or how, and shall again shortly be
dissolv’d into those loose Atoms that compound them; That all our concepions are but the thrusting of one
part of matter against another, and the Idea’s of our minds but mere blind and casual motions. These, and a
thousand more the grossest impossibilities and absurdities . . . will be sad certainties and demonstrations.’
Glanvill, Sadducismus Triumphatus, p. 69.
35 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 103.
empirical accounts to carry his basic premise. These accounts were gathered both from testimonies by reliable sources (together with an account of their character and religiosity to prove it) and from Jones's own experience. Instead of debating spiritual ontology, he was much more likely to draw moral inferences from his collected stories. Thus, when a devil carries off the soul of a suicide victim to hell, it demonstrates to Jones the sinful nature of this act. That is not to say that Jones's work was entirely out of touch with 'scientific' thought. The *Account of the Parish of Aberystwith* was partially modelled on a questionnaire in the April 1755 *Gentleman's Magazine* designed to help would-be antiquarians write parish histories. What is more, it is also faintly reminiscent of Robert Burton's early-eighteenth century *The History of the Principality of Wales*, which also contained several accounts of apparitions.

Thus, Jones has been identified relative to the intellectual tradition to which he most closely corresponds; however it is not one with which he is coeval. It is not enough to identify how he thought, but also why he thought that way and how that system of thought was received generally. Paradigmatic shifts between the time of writers with whom Jones most clearly agrees and his own time must be taken into account and their implications explored. To this end the 1736 Witchcraft Act (9 Geo. II., c. 5) is a convenient place to start. For one thing, it is one of the very few more contemporary things to which Jones directly refers in his *Apparitions of Spirits*: 'Had his Majesty King George the II. read the history of Witchcraft, and known as much as we do in some parts of Wales, he would not have called upon his parliament to determine that there are no such things as Witches, and his parliament would have hardly complemented him therein.' Ian Bostridge has investigated the political issues pertaining to witchcraft in the lead up to 1736. The defence of witchcraft following the Restoration by writers such as Glanvill,

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37 Ibid., pp. 8–9.
More, and Casaubon, as well as similar defences in the early eighteenth century, were aimed at producing religious and later political cohesion against the crime of witchcraft; something which helped to keep church and state affairs intertwined. However, through the 1720s, the issue of witchcraft became increasingly partisan and equated with 'highflyers and Tory extremists'. Then in the 1730s, differences between Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, and parliament over ecclesiastical matters, culminating in his break with Robert Walpole over the Quaker's Relief Bill, led to a rise in animosity towards the Church. Thus, as Bostridge put it, 'The repeal of the witchcraft act in early 1736 might have been seen as an indication that . . . high-church pretensions were being expelled from the body politic.' Most important for the current discussion, the purpose of Jones's work had become politically defunct almost half a century before he wrote it. This, of course, does not mean that the issue of witchcraft automatically became less important to the general public: beliefs do not die with legislation and it is clear from the works of Jones and others that the existence of witchcraft, fairies, and ghosts was retained amongst the common people in much of Britain into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. What it does mean, however, is that such discourse had become unfashionable in the public sphere.

Unfortunately, this does not get very far in explaining why Jones wrote his works when he did. If they were a response to paradigmatic shifts in the first half of the century, why would he write them in 1779 and 1780? As to why he chose the approach he did, it seems to arise more out of Jones's admiration for the writers of the seventeenth century than his ignorance of the eighteenth. He compiled a large manuscript in which he discussed over seventy different seventeenth and early-eighteenth century theological authors which, although he was certainly critical of religious views which differed from

42 Bostridge, 'Witchcraft Repealed', p. 315.
43 Ibid., pp. 315–18.
his own, illustrates a great reverence for the divines of the previous century. 44 He considered it very fortunate that ‘so many of the good old Author’s of the last century, have tumbled from London into the farthest parts of Wales, to help to preserve knowledge among the remnant of the ancient Britains’. 45 It is clear that Jones admired the writing of this period. The ‘Vindication of the Following Text’ of _Apparitions of Spirits_ contains a long quote from Morgan Llwyd, the seventeenth-century Independent preacher and sometime Fifth Monarchist from Wrexham. 46 In Jones’s _Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth_, Llwyd is described as being ‘famous thro’ all Wales for his great knowledge, and prophetick spirit’ and noted as predicting the decline in the ‘Apparitions of Fairies, and other spirits of Hell’ as a result of the spreading of the ‘light of the Gospel’. 47 Moreover, of the around eighty books catalogued by Trevor Watts as being in Jones’s extant library, the vast majority were published in the seventeenth century, less than ten were published after 1750 and nine were published before 1600. 48

The answer to why Jones chose the time he did likely lies in the temperament of Jones’s own community and the perceived state of religion, as have been discussed in the previous chapters. The belief in fairies, ghosts, and witches amongst common people in Jones’s society was probably either declining or at least being viewed with a bit more scepticism due to the forces of urbanisation and industrialisation. Unfortunately, even though there are diaries extant for the years of 1778 and 1780, neither directly states the motivations behind publication. This may be because the factors which determined the timing of Jones’s writing were of a personal and not strictly environmental nature and occurred almost a decade earlier. On 1 August 1770, Mary Jones, Edmund’s ‘dear spouse’, died. The loss of his wife deeply affected Jones. According to an anonymous biographer writing a year after Jones’s death ‘though she died about twenty years before him, he

44 NLW, MS. 17054D, Edmund Jones on Seventeenth Century Religious Writings.
46 Jones, _Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth_, p. vii.
47 Ibid., pp. 84–5, 120.
scarcely ever mentioned her name but tears involuntarily flowed to his eyes'. After her death, Edmund did not take a break from preaching and on 2 August, he preached on '2d Gen 23. 1, 2. Abraham’s Morn, & weeping for Sarah'. He spent the remainder of the month preaching almost exclusively from the book of Job: clearly the lessons of that book provided comfort for him, which is a testament to simply how passionately he reacted to his loss. In the beginning of the diary for 1770 he notes below the list of new communicants that he took them as a comfort at the loss of his wife. Diaries for 1771 and 1772 are not extant, but the diary for 1773, three years after her death, is insightful. Like the 1770 diary, after the list of new communicants, Jones has written: ‘The most and best about the time of the year that my dear spouse died as if God would still to fill up her place; & to shew his respect to his beloved child,’ and on the first of August he preached from ‘Acts 26.6,7,8. of the resurect’ in memory of his ‘dear spouse’.

If the death of Mary is seen as one of the most important events in Jones’s life, his writings should be read in context of it. In 1768, Jones’s records in his diary a list of sixty-eight ‘herbs I had as I think some special assistance to write poetically on’. If this date and the date of 1771, which is the setting of Jones’s ‘Spiritual Botonolgy’, are taken as dates for that manuscript’s writing, then Jones would have been writing on herbs and their medicinal qualities contemporaneous with Mary’s death. Unfortunately he does not comment in his diaries on his wife’s physical condition, but it is plausible that this marked interest in the healing powers of herbs was in some part prompted by Mary Jones’s declining health. However, the ‘Spiritual Botonology’ seems to have been abandoned (several sections are clearly unfinished), possibly around the time Jones’s turned his attention to apparitions and spirits. Of course, as many of the accounts in Jones works

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49 Anon., 'The Rev. EDMUND JONES, late Minister of Ebenezer Chapel, near Pontipool, in the Parish of Trevathin, South Wales', The Evangelical Magazine (May, 1794), 177–85 (178).
50 NLW, MS. 7026A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1770.
51 NLW, MS. 7027A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1773.
clearly show, Jones had a lifelong interest in apparitions, but it is possible that the death of his wife made him turn his attention even more to the world of spirits and the hereafter.

Complementing this was a general degree of anxiety over the moral, spiritual, and religious tenor of the society in which he perceived himself as living. Illustrative of this, a section containing the ‘sayings and doings of erroneous men’ was included in every extant diary from 1768 onwards, usually containing complaints of the inappropriate behaviour or heretical beliefs of preachers and parishioners throughout England and Wales, and this might be emblematic of a growing unease or even disgust with the state of religion on the part of Jones.53 As discussed in the last chapter, with this came his participation in the religious Revival and the connections between revivalist religion and the belief in spirits, both real and perceived. As Owen Davies noted, in the eighteenth century ‘Methodism became almost synonymous with credulity in the supernatural’.54 It has already been pointed out that John Wesley and Jones shared the account of the haunted girl in Sunderland, which Jones wrote about in the second section of his Apparitions of Spirits and Wesley published in his Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley’s Journal from May 14, 1768 to Sept. 1, 1770.55 It is evident that Jones could find in Methodism a return to more traditional values of Nonconformity, such as evangelicalism, a belief in the spiritual realm, and, in the case of Welsh Methodism, Calvinism.

This should, of course, not be read as Edmund Jones and the Methodists against the whole of the ‘Enlightened’ community. Jonathan Barry has pointed out both that ‘public discourse may be only an approximate guide to private belief, dependent on the rules of public debate’ and that ‘those very rules of public debate may themselves have

53 See NLW MSS 7025–7030A, Edmund Jones’s diaries for 1768, 1770, 1773, 1778, 1780, and 1789.
moulded private belief, at least in the longer term’. 56 If this is the case, although the
dominant discourse in the eighteenth-century public sphere was marked by a lack of
discussion of the preternatural, this may not equate to a lack of debate or even belief
amongst the educated members of society. In fact, Jones seems to have been aware that he
was writing on a topic which was not normally discussed in the public sphere by the very
fact that Apparitions of Spirits was published anonymously, the place of publication not
even being given. This is odd as it is apparent from Jones’s diary for 1780 that both
Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth and Apparitions of Spirits were printed at Trefeca but
this was only shown to be the place of publication on the title page of the former work. 57
Moreover, the ‘Vindication to the following Treatise’ for Apparitions of Spirits stated that
‘some have been so weak, inconsiderate, and unjust as to censure his account of
Apparitions in the Parish of Aberystwyth; Persons neither capable of receiving reasons for
it or of giving any just reasons against it.’ 58 Jones seems even to have known that the
accounts of apparitions in the Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth might have attracted
such censure, as he devoted a third of his ‘Preface’ to the work to justify their inclusion. 59
Thus Jones showed an awareness of the grain of educated discussion even if he was
working against it.

To further illustrate the complexities of the acceptability of the discussion of spirits
in the public and private spheres, the examples of Samuel Johnson and James Boswell can
be employed. In 1773, the pair set off on a tour of the Hebrides of Scotland. Johnson used
the opportunity to both attempt to test the validity of James Macpherson’s Ossianic poetry
(of which he was a principal critic) as well as to observe the habits and modes of living of

56 Jonathan Barry, ‘Public Infidelity and Private Belief? The Discourse of Spirits in Enlightenment Bristol’,
in Owen Davies and Willem de Blecourt (eds), Beyond the Witch Trials: Witchcraft and Magic in
Enlightenment Europe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 117–43 (p. 120).
57 NLW, MS. 7029A. ‘Paid at Treweca 3 Guineas for 6 Rheams of paper to print 200 of the account of
Apparitions in Wales: & 16 shillings for marble paper to cover them. & 5 shill for the carriage of the paper
in all £4 4 sh & 24 sh of [the] print of [the] 1st sheet in all £5 8sh’.
58 This, as well as Jones’s distinctive writing style, rendered his anonymity a moot point for anyone familiar
with his Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. vii.
the Scottish islanders. This naturally included an observation of any ‘superstition’
prevalent there. After remarking on different species of fairies and charms Johnson turned
his attention to the question of Second Sight; for, in his words, the subject needed study so
that ‘the truth should be established or the fallacy detected’. 60 However, the most
interesting words on this subject for the present discussion come from Boswell:

I beg leave now to say something upon second sight, of which I have
related two instances, as they impressed my mind at the time. I own, I
returned from the Hebrides with a considerable degree of faith in the many
stories of that kind which I heard with a too early acquiescence, without
any close examination of the evidence: but, since that time, my belief in
those stories has been much weakened, by reflecting on the careless
inaccuracy of narrative in common matters, from which we may certainly
conclude that there may be the same in what is more extraordinary. 61

These comments, as part of a larger work written in the rather informal style of a tour were
quite different from Jones’s full-fledged account of ghosts and fairies. Moreover, while
Jones’s Account of the Parish of Aberystwith may have been written in an acceptable style
for the intellectual climate of the times, being structured as an antiquarian work covering a
wide variety of subjects, Boswell’s cautious scepticism and insistence on carefully
scrutinizing accounts which seem fabulous is very different from Jones’s outright belief in
the supernatural. What is most important is that this passage allows an insight into a
debate on the preternatural occurring within an educated mind. Johnson himself thought
there was need to investigate the truth of supernatural tales, and it is perhaps this which
got him branded with the charge of credulity with regard to the famous Cock Lane
Ghost. 62 This was an incident in 1762 of a supposed knocking ghost which turned out to
be faked by an adolescent girl. It received a great deal of public attention and attracted the

60 Samuel Johnson, Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, in R. W. Chapman (ed.) Johnson’s Journey
to the Western Islands of Scotland and Boswell’s Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924) pp. 1–149 (p. 97).
61 James Boswell, Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D, in Chapman, Johnson’s
Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and Boswell’s Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel
Johnson, LL.D, pp. 151–447 (pp. 423–4).
62 See Davies, Haunted, p. 125.
notice of several notable figures, including Johnson. Rushing to the defence of his friend, Boswell wrote in his *Life of Johnson*,

> He has been ignorantly misrepresented as weakly credulous upon that subject; and therefore, though I feel an inclination to distain and treat with silent contempt so foolish a notion concerning my illustrious friend, yet as I find it has gained ground, it is necessary to refute it. The real fact then is that Johnson had a very philosophical mind, and such a rational respect for testimony as to make him submit his understanding to what was authentically proved, though he could not comprehend why it was so. Being thus disposed he was willing to enquire into the truth of any relation of supernatural agency, a general belief of which has prevailed in all nations and ages. But so far was he from being the dupe of implicit faith that he examined the matter with a jealous attention, and no man was more ready to refute its falsehood when he had discovered it.

From this, a general view of the acceptable parameters of discourse can be seen. It seems as if it was perfectly acceptable for Johnson to be open and philosophical about the unknown; however outright acceptance of, or excessive preoccupation with, the supernatural was seen as a step too far for the ‘Enlightened’ mind. Jones’s works would, of course, not fit within these limits.

There were, however, by the latter part of the eighteenth century, ways in which things like fairies and ghosts could be discussed outside of the general debate based on belief and reality. Painters, poets, and antiquarians often dealt with the subject of the preternatural in ways which were not necessarily connected to their own belief or disbelief in them. By removing the question of existence or non-existence and looking at the virtues and attributes of the idea of preternatural stories and creatures independent of their being, scholars were able to contemplate their origin and socio-cultural purpose: an endeavour which would help lead to the establishment of social sciences of anthropology and folklore in the mid-nineteenth century. The abstraction of ghosts and spectres allowed them to be used as conceptual artistic tools to explore ideas of the sublime and terrifying. The abstraction of fairies allowed them to become personifications of the untamed, the natural.

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63 See Ibid., pp. 81–3.
and the idyllic. Most importantly, viewing these beliefs independent of their veracity enabled them to be discussed in a (more) inoffensive way.\footnote{It should be noted that Richard E. Brantley has argued that the mentality and ideology of English Romanticism was heavily tied to the legacy of both John Locke and John Wesley, although it should also be noted that he is not writing specifically about the Wesleyan belief in, or Romantic use of, the preternatural. He argues, ‘The Method of John Wesley i.e., his progress from empiricism through quasi-empirical apprehension to faith, applies, \textit{mutatis mutandis}, to Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats. Their crossovers from observation of nature through imagination to poetic faith, in other words, are more than merely reminiscent of Wesley’s relation to John Locke. I argue here that the Lockean-Wesleyan continuum is background to, if not context for, Romantic thought and expression.’ See Richard E. Brantley, \textit{Locke, Wesley, and the Method of English Romanticism} (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1984), p. 129.}

In 1765, Henry Walpole published the first gothic novel: \textit{The Castle of Otranto}. Attempting to explore the aesthetics of the sublime expounded in Edmund Burke’s \textit{Philosophical Enquiry into our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful}, the story is filled with supernatural and inexplicable occurrences ranging from the startling to the absolutely absurd (the first event of the book involves a giant helmet falling from the sky and crushing the antagonist’s son) and a number of pessimistic plot-twists which now seem clichéd. As the first essay into a genre, it set many precedents: a damsel or two in distress, her would be lover/saviour, a domineering male villain with both good and evil qualities, a setting in a medieval Catholic country, and, of course, ample helpings of the supernatural. However, not all writers who would follow in this tradition would be as comfortable with leaving supernatural phenomena unexplained as Walpole. Ann Radcliffe’s 1794 novel \textit{The Mysteries of Udolpho} contains many events which seemed inexplicable until the truth was revealed and their natural explanation presented. In one notable occurrence, the ‘haunting’ is discovered in an almost ‘Scooby Doo’ fashion to be caused by a gang of pirates who were hiding out at an old abandoned castle.\footnote{Ann Radcliffe, \textit{The Mysteries of Udolpho}, ed. by Bonamy Dobrée (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 631–6.}

It further appears that Radcliffe was conscious of the controversial nature of relating ghost stories as she included a debate between two characters that were staying at the castle about

\begin{quote}
Whether the spirit, after it has quitted the body, is ever permitted to revisit the earth; and if it is, whether it was possible for spirits to become visible to the sense. The Baron was of opinion, that the first was probable, and the last was possible, and he endeavourd to justify this opinion by respectable authorities, both ancient and modern, which he quoted. The Count,
\end{quote}
however, was decidedly against him, and a long conversation ensued, in which the usual arguments on these subjects were on both sides brought forward with skill, and discussed with candour, but without converting either party to the opinion of his opponent. The effect of their conversation on their auditors was various. Though the Count had much the superiority of the Baron in point of argument, he had considerably fewer adherents; for that love so natural to the human mind, of whatever is able to distend its faculties with wonder and astonishment, attached the majority of the company to the side of the Baron; and though many of the Count’s propositions were unanswerable, his opponents were inclined to believe this the consequence of their own want of knowledge, on so abstract a subject, rather than that arguments did not exist, which were forcible enough to conquer his. 67

At the complete opposite end of the spectrum from this was Mathew Lewis’s The Monk (1796), which could be considered shocking even by modern standards. It is interesting to see how some of the instances in this book resemble folkloric ghost stories used by Jones. In the side story of ‘the bleeding nun’ one of the main characters is transported by a ghost many miles in a very short amount of time and then haunted by her until he employs ‘The Wandering Jew’ who, in a scene reminiscent of the eighteenth-century German Romantic writer Friedrich Schiller’s Der Geisterseher (1789), speaks to the spectre and gets her to reveal the reason behind the haunting. As it turns out, her bones lay unburied and when they are interred the hauntings cease. 68 Jones’s works contained several stories wherein people were transported by spirits through the air, such as one of a young man who was transported to Philadelphia and back by a spirit so that he could dispose of a box of money which she had left in a house there, and the account of his brother’s journey from Breconshire to outside of Newport during his run-in with Richard the tailor. 69 Jones also discussed several men in Newport who abused the remains of the dead: two of them digging up a skull for a drunken bet and a third who was thought to ‘use a dead man’s skull to no good purpose’. 70 The first two were punished by a spiritually induced whirlwind and the third by an apparition who appeared with a skull, with which he struck

67 Ibid., pp. 549–50.
69 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 57–60; Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, pp. 80–2. The account of the young man transported to Pennsylvania is described in more detail in Chapter Six below.
70 The second case probably alludes to necromancy. Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 35–6
the abuser violently in the face. Of this, Jones remarked that 'they who have gone thro' the troubles of life ought to rest in their graves until the resurrection and the last judgement', indicating that a disinterred body predicated a disturbed spirit. What is important here is that Lewis is using examples from folk-culture similar to Jones; however his work is more acceptable than Jones's because he is using them to entertain rather than as a matter of serious investigation and instruction.

Fairies, like ghosts, were a subject of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century literature and art, and the way in which they were conceptualized in this period left indelible marks on the Victorian, and thus modern, conceptions of sprites. K. M. Briggs has shown that Alexander Pope's 1712 poem 'The Rape of the Lock' was the first example of modern insect-winged fairies. Late-eighteenth-century fairy paintings such as Henry Fuseli's 'Titania and Bottom' (1780–90) and 'Titania's Awakening' (1785–95) quite clearly influenced Victorian works like Sir Joseph Noel Paton's 'The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania' (1849) and 'The Reconciliation of Oberon and Titania' (1847). Nicola Bown has described the fairy of the Romantic period as 'a figure associated with nature, with magic and with romance; it is tiny and beautiful and possessed butterfly wings' and while it resembled, in part, both the fairies of Shakespeare and those of folk-culture, it was a 'very different creature'. The fairies of Romanticism were not, then, the fairies of folklore, nor did they necessarily need to be. The service they provided was in being abstract. Their activities could be used to personify the idyllic life of leisure which was unburdened by urban or even civilized constraints as in these lines from Coleridge's 1793 poem 'Song of the Pixies':

When fades the Moon in all shadowy-pale,
And scuds the cloud before the gale,
Ere morn with living gems bedight,
Purples the East with streaky light,

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71 Ibid.
72 Ibid., p. 36.
We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dews
Clad in robes of rainbow hues:
Or sport amid the rosy gleam
Sooth'd by the distant-tinkling team,
While lusty Labour scouting sorrow
Bids the Dame a Glad good-Morrow,
Who Jogs the accustom'd road along,
And paces cheery to her cheering song.
But not our filmy pinion
We scorch amid the blaze of day,
When Noontide's fiery-tressed minion
Flashes the fervid ray.
Aye from the sultry heat
We to the Cave retreat
O'ercanopied by huge roots intertwined
With wildest texture, blacken'd o'er with age:
Round then their mantle green with ivies bind,
Beneath whose foliage pale
Fann'd by the unfrequent gale
We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage. 75

Or else the fairy might symbolize some force, natural or supernatural that the poet was attempting to control as in Blake's 'The Fairy':

From the leaves I sprung;
He leap'd from the spray
To flee away;
But in my hat caught.
He soon shall be taught.
Let him laugh, let him cry,
He's my Butterfly;
For I've pulled out the sting
Of the marriage-ring. 76

Erasmus Darwin even employed the preternatural of Rosicrucianism and classical mythology in his poem 'The Botanical Garden' which discussed such ideas as the nature and effects of heat on matter, the properties of 'inflammable air' (hydrogen), and even early concepts of evolution. In defence of this he claimed that

The Rosicrucian doctrine of Gnomes, Sylphs, Nymphs, and Salamanders, affords proper machinery for a philosophic poem; as it is probable that they are originally the names of hieroglyphic figures of the Elements, or of Genii presiding over their operations. The Fairies of more modern days seems to have been derived from them, and to have inherited their powers. 77

Ultimately, the fairy acted as a creature of imagination and allowed poets to personify ideas and concepts, so that they could be better explored.

Popular antiquities had, by the time Jones was writing, long been the concern of antiquarians who would often look to local customs and beliefs for clues to the past. What is more, to a large extent antiquarian studies had their roots in the Scientific Revolution and the interests of the Royal Society just like the anti-Sadducees. As Rosemary Sweet has noted, ‘the two sciences of natural history and antiquities explicated both the past and the present using the same method of inquiry. [. . .] Dual membership, [in both the Royal Society and Society of Antiquaries] denoted by the initials FRAS, was commonplace and election to one society generally followed rapidly upon election to the other.’ 78 It will be remembered from earlier in this chapter that Jones’s own Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth was modelled on an antiquarian questionnaire from the Gentleman’s Magazine. However, the main difference which separated Jones from the mainstream discourse of eighteenth-century antiquarians was the matter of belief: antiquarians could study the socio-cultural origins and purposes of superstition in an abstract way which Jones could not. What is important about Jones within the context of popular antiquities is that he provided useful ethnographic insight into eighteenth-century folk-belief which was used by later nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century folklorists like Wirt Sikes and Sir John Rhys. In fact, Sikes, writing in 1880, noted that Jones’s books were ‘referred to by most writers on folk-lore who have attempted any account of Welsh superstitions during the past half-century’. 79

Jones was not only an eighteenth-century writer but more specifically a Welsh eighteenth-century writer. This is significant as it is arguable that Welsh authors, or

authors writing from a 'Welsh' perspective in the eighteenth century, were more likely to either avoid and ignore the subject of the supernatural, or else attempt to discuss superstition in such a way that could not be seen as emblematic of Welshness: that is to say, they were, to some extent, self-conscious about being labelled as credulous or superstitious Welshmen. It is clear that Jones was conscious of his nationality in his writing in a way which was not just merely circumstantial. The very focus of his two major works on Aberystwyth parish and Wales specifically, goes a good step in showing this, as do certain comments in praise of the Welsh scattered throughout his works. In his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* he claims that the inhabitants of the parish 'seem, as Welshmen in general to have a kind of Innate virtue, which upon close, wise, and kind dealing soon appears,' but which he warns can easily be corrupted. However, this is often obscured by the fact that above and beyond his identity with the Welsh was his identity as a Calvinist and it is this that sets the colour and tone of most of his work. In discussing the rebellion of Owain Glyndŵr, Jones remarked that the Welsh were foolish to try to 'shake off the Saxon Yoke, before they had repented of their sins'. The reason for this needed repentance in Jones's view seems mainly to have been 'the darkness of Popery' which had settled on Wales. This inclusion of Glyndŵr may have been in reaction to Thomas Pennant, who, in his *Tours in Wales* (1778), resurrected the leader in a new role as a hero of the Welsh, making discussion of him topical. Jones had obtained a copy of Pennant's work in 1778, the year before he published *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*. Still, it is significant that Jones used terms like 'Saxon yoke' here and 'Ancient Britains' both in the same work and in his manuscript volume on seventeenth-

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80 That is, in some way attempting to act as a spokesperson for or as representative of the Welsh or else which in any way can be seen as consciously taking a pro-Welsh approach.
83 Ibid., p. 86.
85 NLW, MS. 7028A.
century writers, as it shows an awareness of the language used by Welsh writers in establishing otherness from the English.\(^{86}\) However, it is evident that the difference between Catholic and Protestant supersedes that between Welsh and English in Jones’s mind. It remains to be seen then, whether Jones was conscious of the need to justify the subject matter of his works relative to Wales and his Welsh identity.

In several of his published works, Prys Morgan has shown that in the long eighteenth century, Wales underwent a process of distillation, formulation, and sometimes even invention of national tradition and identity.\(^{87}\) By the eighteenth century, the Welsh were somewhat lacking in a self-image that was both distinct to themselves and wholly positive. The Welsh past, including heroes like King Arthur, had to some extent been taken over by King Henry VII during and after the War of the Roses in the formation of a new Anglo-centric Britishness, and during the Tudor period scholars, notably Polydore Vergil, dismantled Geoffrey of Monmouth’s historical account which had given the Welsh a noble origin in the Trojan Brutus. Even the Welsh pride in their ancient claims to primitive Christianity was annexed during the Reformation by the Anglican Church.\(^{88}\) As Morgan has pointed out, the consequence was that the Welsh ‘no longer appeared to have a distinct history, but only traditions which were either discredited or merely contributory to English traditions’.\(^{89}\) This would naturally have had a demoralizing effect on the Welsh.

The Welsh had also endured a steady stream of literary and pictorial abuse from the English for centuries. Even as far back as the twelfth century, Gerald of Wales, who can perhaps be seen as writing from a somewhat ‘English’ perspective, or at least the

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\(^{89}\) Morgan, *Eighteenth Century Renaissance*, p. 17.
somewhat ‘extra-Welsh’ perspective of one who had spent time outside of Wales and presented the view of a visitor or traveller, had portrayed the Welsh as a rustic, bellicose people who lived in the woods and were prone to theft and sexual deviance. By the early-sixteenth century the stereotype of the Welshman as dull, poor, dirty, and prone to engage in stealing had already emerged, and, after a period of distillation and augmentation during the Civil Wars and Interregnum, ‘Poor Taffy’ rode his goat (for he could not afford a horse) with his leek, toasted cheese, red herring, and pedigree going all the way back to the flood, to a position as a recognizable figure of satire by the late-seventeenth century. A particularly offensive critique of the Welsh was undertaken by W. R. (probably William Richards) in his Wallography; or the Britton Describ’d (1682). In this work the Welsh were portrayed as a poor race of simpletons, prone to theft and inhabiting the very ‘testicles’ of Britain, their claim to being the aborigines of the British Isles being compared to the same status of ‘Crab-lice’. Of the Welsh language W. R. wrote ‘their Native Gibberish is usually prattled throughout the whole of Taphydome except in their Market Towns, whose Inhabitants being a little rais’d, and (as it were) pufft up into Bubbles above the ordinary Scum do begin to despise it’. 

One common negative attribute of the Welsh was their supposed superstition. This idea also goes back as early as the twelfth century and Gerald of Wales’s Journey through Wales, which featured many miraculous and fantastic occurrences including the story of a priest who made his way into fairyland in his boyhood, the habits and behaviour of Welsh soothsayers, and several demon possessions and hauntings. Joep Leerssen has discussed how, in his works on Ireland, Gerald similarly emphasized the fantastical and miraculous,
and how this helped to emphasize the strangeness and otherness of Ireland or, by extension into the contexts of the present discussion, Wales (although it should be noted that Gerald’s treatment of the Irish and the Welsh varied greatly). Shakespeare too, often associated the Welsh with superstition. The ‘great magician, damn’d [Owen] Glendower,’ in ‘King Henry IV Part 1’, boasted of his conjuring abilities and the earthquakes which portended his birth, while Hotspur mocked the Welsh love of prophesy. In ‘Merry Wives of Windsor’, it is the ‘Welsh fairy’ which Falstaff fears will ‘transform [him] to a piece of cheese’. Moreover, Queen Elizabeth’s Welsh philosopher and magician John Dee may have been the inspiration for Prospero in ‘The Tempest’. Ever a work to slight the Welsh on all fronts, Wallography commented that the Welsh were famous for ‘the study of Wizzardism’. Finally, Richard Suggett has shown that Welsh magical connotations in the popular mind went so far as for people accused of witchcraft in England to be associated with the Welsh, either by themselves or others. Even into the nineteenth century, Englishmen were common users of Welsh cunning-men and magical wells.

In the long eighteenth century, the Welsh were able to use new ideological tools, such as the conceptions of sublimity, the picturesque, primitivism, and the importance of antiquity, all of which were gathering a certain premium at this time, to better their own image. Under the skilful paintbrush of Richard Wilson, the Welsh landscape, which had thitherto been seen as harsh and unattractive, was transformed into a sublime example of Romantic beauty. As Morgan put it, ‘the shift in sensibility towards the curious, the remote, the wild, the untamed or the sublime, was something affecting many parts of European society, but it had particular significance for Scotland, Switzerland and Wales.

98 W. R., Wallography, p. 95.
Very gradually the Welsh began to see that their land could be an object of pride.\textsuperscript{100} Morgan has further noted that Jones was one of the first to come around to this view in his \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystruth}, notably in the section ‘Of the Pleasant Places in the Parish of Aberystruth’.\textsuperscript{101} Jones discussed the beauty of the landscape in other places in the book as well, as in Y Domen Fawr which he described as ‘a Grand affecting prospect’ which he had often looked on ‘with delight’,\textsuperscript{102} but this section he devoted specifically to picturesque scenes. In it, he not only described the beauty of the scenes from houses built amongst the hills and mountains of ‘the Marches in Monmouthshire, and of many other Counties and parts of Counties’, but actually stated the superiority of such places to ‘richer Counties, where the grounds are moist and dirty about their houses and Barns, no Walls about their Courts, no Tables of stone to floor their Houses, and to lead them through their Courts, the Trees fewer, no clear wholesome Springs of water near them, nor the delightful prospects of Hills and Mountains’.\textsuperscript{103} However, while these descriptions accord with the late-eighteenth century opinions about the picturesque, they were motivated by his religious beliefs, as they showed the work of God.\textsuperscript{104}

Similarly, Wales was given a new origin myth in 1703 in the Breton scholar Paul Pezron’s \textit{The Antiquities of Nations} wherein he classed Welsh, alongside Breton, as a Celtic language: ‘the Language of the Posterity of Gomer, Japhet’s Eldest Son, and the Nephew of Shem, the Language of those Princes called Saturn and Jupiter, who passed for great Deities among the Ancients’.\textsuperscript{105} The view of the Welsh as ‘Celts’ was expanded (although without the mythological and Old Testament trappings) in 1709 by the Welsh antiquarian Edward Lhuyd in his \textit{Archæologia Britannica} which gave a more scientific philological basis to this claim. These things not only gave the Welsh a new beginning and

\textsuperscript{100} Morgan, \textit{Eighteenth Century Renaissance}, pp. 105–6.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., p. 106; Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystruth}, pp. 56–9.
\textsuperscript{102} Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystruth}, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p. 58.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., pp. 41–50.
\textsuperscript{105} Paul Pezron, \textit{The Antiquities of Nations More Particularly the Celts or Gauls, Taken to be Originally the same People as our Ancient Britains}, trans. by David Jones (London: Printed by R. Janeway, for S. Ballard and R. Burrough, 1706), pp. xii–xiii.
a new nobility for their language, but also a stronger interest in their antiquity. For example, Henry Rowlands in his *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* (1723) placed the headquarters of the ancient druids firmly on his home island of Anglesey and, using an origin myth similar to Pezron’s, asserted that their religion had derived from the same antediluvian religion as the Christian patriarchs. Jones himself was largely critical of pre-Christian antiquity, mostly because it was pre-Christian and thus pagan, but he did remark in his *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth* that it was ‘clear to one that understands the language, that the ancient Britains were very observant of things of nature, and very wise in their naming of things; tho’ very few of the modern generation do mind and observe it’. Of course, this one statement in isolation should not be over exaggerated, but it does show some consideration of such things by Jones.

As has been indicated already, however, Welsh writers did not seem to have felt that discourse on fairies was acceptable. A great deal of this was probably just the general lack of debate over the preternatural that marked educated discussion in the eighteenth century. However, part of it could have originated out of self-consciousness. In discussing the male rise and female fall of interest in fairies in the late-eighteenth century, Bown has pointed out that ‘the claim of reason’s supremacy which is at the Enlightenment’s centre had little new to give to men’ as they were already considered to be rational creatures. Women, on the other hand, were associated with things like emotion, tradition, and superstition which Enlightenment thinkers saw as ‘enemies to reason, or obstacles to the discovery of truth’. Arguments over ‘gendering the Celt’ aside, the basic argument that those already accused of being superstitious will abstain from making public statements on subjects connected with superstitious beliefs seems plausible.

Indeed, not only was Wales culturally associated with ‘superstition’, but as a nation its ‘Enlightened’ credentials were also perceived as debatable. As R. J. W. Evans

108 The rise in male interest Bown is referring to is Romanticism. Bown, *Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature*, p. 17.
has noted in attempting to answer the question ‘Was there a Welsh Enlightenment?’ the
very asking of which allows the possibility that the answer could be ‘no’),

Those of Welsh origin who participated in [enlightened culture], even (or particularly) if they were notables like Richard Price or David Williams or Sir William Jones, lived elsewhere, mainly London. They would hardly be perceived at all as Welsh; nor would Welshness have much direct relevance to them either, at least in respect of their enlightened activities. On the other hand, Wales itself was arguably ... an unenlightened world. It witnessed during these years change, revival, even renaissance. But those occurrences were chiefly sui generis, or at least apprehended as such, a private debate about changing national values. 109

However, as was emphasised in Chapter Three above, discussion of ‘Enlightenment’ which focuses solely on ‘great thinkers’, radicals, and secularists has been moved away from by historians, notably Roy Porter and including Evans, in favour of a more broad and inclusive conceptualisation of participation in an empirical epistemology, the development of a public sphere of discourse, changes in concepts of politeness and taste, interest and advancement in the study of history and science, toleration, education, and the idea of national identity and patriotism. 110

In this broader definition Wales finds its place. The eighteenth century saw the establishment of London-based Welsh societies, notably The Society of Ancient Britons, the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion, and the Gwyneddigion Society. The language, history, and origins of the Welsh, as has been shown above, also occupied a great amount of interest, with Druidism a prominent component of it. 111 Science and antiquarianism were also present. Thomas Pennant, whose Tours in Wales has been mentioned above, was a skilled naturalist, and his British Zoology (1766) was published by the Cymmrodorion Society. 112 However, as Colin Kidd has pointed out ‘one of the

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112 Evans, ‘Was there a Welsh Enlightenment?’, p. 149.
problems of Welsh intellectual history in the age of Enlightenment . . . concerns the difficulty of defining its scope'. 113 Wales at this time lacked national institutions, such as universities or a capital and thus most of these ‘Welsh’ intellectual figures had English connections. Edward Lhuyd was born in Shropshire and educated at Oxford. Richard Morris, of the Morris brothers of Anglesey, major patrons of Welsh learning and publishing, and the societies listed above were in London-based. Thus while Welshmen and Welsh subjects certainly found a place in Enlightenment culture, and even intellectual Enlightenment culture, Wales could continue to be perceived as less ‘Enlightened’ by its eastern neighbour.

Whatever the case, the Welsh had a clear intellectual example to follow in scepticism over the supernatural in Edward Lhuyd. In his work on the translation and revision of the Welsh sections of Camden’s *Britannia* for Edmund Gibson, Lhuyd wrote of holy wells that he was ‘of their opinion who thinks we pay too much regard to such frivolous superstitions when we use arguments to confute them’. 114 Similarly in Harlech, Lhuyd encountered a supposed case of witchcraft: a mysterious fire swept in from the sea, burning buildings, grass, and hay but not harming any animal or person, except those who ate the grass that the fire had touched, which would poison them. After some consideration, Lhuyd settled on an explanation of the ignition of gasses released by the decaying bodies of a great number of African locusts which had drowned off the coast of Wales. He does not seem to have been convinced of the veracity of this hypothesis, but it is clear that even a dubious natural answer to the problem was preferable to the supernatural one of witchcraft. 115

113 Kidd, ‘Wales, the Enlightenment and the New British History’, 218.
115 Ibid., pp. 70–1. See also Chapter Six below.
Jones did identify a group of Welshmen in the second part of his *Apparitions of Spirits* which he seems to have thought sympathetic to his aim in publishing accounts of spirits in Wales:

And who will blame the Honourable Cymmrodorion Society in London, composed of some Nobility, members of Parliament, great members of Gentry, many Clergymen, in all, several Hundreds, who, among other curious parts of knowledge from Wales, desire the account of Apparitions, in the Printed account of this great, and Honourable society: so here is a fair call of Providence for this kind of work from the Press.\footnote{Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 111.}

There is, however, no evidence that Jones or his book were in any way connected to the society, especially as the Cymmrodorion Society does not appear amongst a good number of benefactors for the work listed in Jones’s diary for 1780.\footnote{See NLW, MS. 7029A. ‘Money recieved this year: Jan 22d the 3 pounds from the Independent fund wch was to be sent last year but neglected Half a guinea from the Revd mr T Saunders. March 21 Recieved 10£ from mr Thornton of London. 22d 10sh 6 of Revd mr Saunders to purchase a Rheap of paper to print the account of apparitions wm Powel & thomas Parry each 5 sh to help printing Mr wms of Coomb 8 sh- Mrs Jones of Pencerrig half a guinea. mrs Hannah Jones 5sh 6d Mr Phillips 5sh Eliz Powel 10sh 6 to print a book of apparitions John wms 2sh wm [mredith] 2sh 6d Mrs Bevan 5sh – Miss Walker 2 sh. 6d. Mrs Morgan the Tanner 2sh- Mrs Harris 2sh- Capt Price of Watford 5sh- Mr Rees of Usk half a guinea May 13th & Mrs Anne Griffiths of Usk 10sh 6d. May the Lord greatly reward them. May 20 had 2 Guineas From Dr Web from London Blessed be God. 2sh 6d At Cymmar. Mr M of c Havod 2 sh-6d. Lanvabon half a crown X wen 2sh- Mrs Price of Watford 2 sh Mr Price of [Dadlevdy] 2sh-6d Ben Wats 2sh 6d of Acc of Aberystwyth Psh. Mrs Rees of St Peer half a guinea & I gave her 2 of the acct of Aberystwyth Psh. 10sh-6d At Pen Cerrig for 5 of the account of Aberystwyth Psh & a guinea at the same place 8ber the 2d. ‘Money recieved to help printing Revd t £ 10s 6d Thomas Parry 5sh- & wm Powel 5sh- Revd Mr Philips tutor of the Colledge at Trevecca 5sh- Mrs Hannah Jones 5sh- Eliz Powel of Aberystwyth half a guinea Recieved the 3£ [n] c Independent Fund in 9ber.’} The constitution of Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion contained a heading for ‘Quæries of the Invisible World’ under which were listed a number of points pertaining to prophetic dreams, knockers, fairy funerals, and corpse candles, among its many subjects to be considered for discussion. However no publications on the subject (unless Jones’s *Apparitions of Spirits* is to be counted) seem to have been produced.\footnote{See NLW, MS. 7029A. ‘Money recieved this year: Jan 22d the 3 pounds from the Independent fund wch was to be sent last year but neglected Half a guinea from the Revd mr T Saunders. March 21 Recieved 10£ from mr Thornton of London. 22d 10sh 6 of Revd mr Saunders to purchase a Rheap of paper to print the account of apparitions wm Powel & thomas Parry each 5 sh to help printing Mr wms of Coomb 8 sh- Mrs Jones of Pencerrig half a guinea. mrs Hannah Jones 5sh 6d Mr Phillips 5sh Eliz Powel 10sh 6 to print a book of apparitions John wms 2sh wm [mredith] 2sh 6d Mrs Bevan 5sh – Miss Walker 2 sh. 6d. Mrs Morgan the Tanner 2sh- Mrs Harris 2sh- Capt Price of Watford 5sh- Mr Rees of Usk half a guinea May 13th & Mrs Anne Griffiths of Usk 10sh 6d. May the Lord greatly reward them. May 20 had 2 Guineas From Dr Web from London Blessed be God. 2sh 6d At Cymmar. Mr M of c Havod 2 sh-6d. Lanvabon half a crown X wen 2sh- Mrs Price of Watford 2 sh Mr Price of [Dadlevdy] 2sh-6d Ben Wats 2sh 6d of Acc of Aberystwyth Psh. Mrs Rees of St Peer half a guinea & I gave her 2 of the acct of Aberystwyth Psh. 10sh-6d At Pen Cerrig for 5 of the account of Aberystwyth Psh & a guinea at the same place 8ber the 2d. ‘Money recieved to help printing Revd t £ 10s 6d Thomas Parry 5sh- & wm Powel 5sh- Revd Mr Philips tutor of the Colledge at Trevecca 5sh- Mrs Hannah Jones 5sh- Eliz Powel of Aberystwyth half a guinea Recieved the 3£ [n] c Independent Fund in 9ber.’} Of course, too much should not be read into this as the society produced relatively few publications in the period in question.\footnote{[Anon.], *Constitutions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion* (London: [n. pub.] 1755), p. 37.}

Lewis Morris of Anglesey, who was instrumental in the formation of the Cymmrodorion, was probably responsible for the inclusion of this heading in the
constitution. His correspondence with his brothers, Richard and William, reveals an interest in the preternatural. In 1754 he wrote to William enquiring about both what appears to be an instance of what would today be called poltergeist activity, as well as the nature of a species of fairies known as knockers. These are supposed to work and live in mines and assist men in finding ore. He ends the letter with,

The word supernatural used amongst us is nonsense; there is nothing supernatural for the degree of all beings from the vegetative life to the archangel are natural, real, absolute creatures made by God’s own hands, and all their actions, motions, and qualities are natural. Doth not the fire burn a stick into ashes as natural as the air or water dissolves salt? and yet fire when out of action is invisible and impalpable, but where is the home or country of fire? Where also is the home and country of Knockers? 120

Later, in 1760, Lewis wrote to Richard about a sprite called a ‘bwgan’ which seems to have been responsible for some fairly violent cases of poltergeist activity. 121 Further illustrating his awareness of the supernatural of folk-belief, Lewis Morris also recorded two Welsh charms in his personal copy of Henry Rowland’s *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* which he described as ‘relicks of Druidism’. 122 Be that as it may, it has already been shown that there was quite a difference between private conversation amongst scholars and debates in societies on the one hand, and publishing works for the public sphere on the other. Some insight into Lewis Morris’s reluctance to publicly profess belief in the supernatural can be seen in the comments on the incredible nature of the miracles in British hagiography in his posthumously published *Celtic Remains* (1878). After attributing such credulity to monkish superstition and absolving the Welsh bards of any involvement, Lewis continued ‘if our British monks have had a more fertile invention in writing these miracles than other dull nations, it only shews they were greater masters of their trade’. 123

Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) similarly attributed superstition in Wales to monkish Catholicism, writing in his *Poems Lyric and Pastoral* (1794) that

> Whatever of fable and superstition may be found in the *Welsh poetical manuscripts* of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries must not be attributed to *Bardism*; for, about that time, the Monks retained in their *monasteries* many *Poets*, [not *Bards*] that were ready and willing enough to *do the work of their masters*; and they did it."124

Iolo’s assertion that superstition was bred in the monasteries was related to his defence of bardism. Iolo had invented an elaborate bardic tradition, which he claimed had survived in unbroken succession from the ancient druids all the way down to himself and which included his own invented alphabet, an elaborately contrived oral tradition, and vast stores of druidic wisdom which reflected Iolo’s own political and religious ideals.125 Iolo held that the druids had believed in a religion which was close to his own Unitarianism and ‘no more inimical to Christianity than the religion of Noah, Job, or Abraham’.126 As this religion had necessarily influenced the primitive British church, this church had ‘kept up a perpetual war with the *Church of Rome*, and from it experienced much persecution’.127 Jones would, to some extent, have agreed with Iolo’s assessment of Catholicism, even if he would have regarded his druids to have been pagans. For example, Jones, in discussing why so many apparitions were seen in Wales, wrote that the Welsh ‘having lost the light of the true religion in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries of Christianity, and received Popery in its stead, it became dark night upon them; and then these spirits of darkness became more bold and Intruding; and the people . . . made them welcome in their houses, and . . . made a covenant with Hell’.128 Thus, although Jones did not attribute the belief in the

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125 For the cultural and personal context behind Iolo’s formation of his version of bardism, see generally Catheryn A. Charnell-White, *Bardic Circles: National, Regional and Personal Identity in the Bardic Vision of Iolo Morganwg* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007).
127 Ibid.
supernatural to Catholicism, he did attribute the strength of supernatural creatures’
existence to the foothold they were able to gain during the ‘darkness of Popery’. 129

As free of superstition as Iolo portrayed his version of druidism to be, the man
himself has been recorded as relating fairy stories to the narrator of Charles Redwood’s
*The Vale of Glamorgan: Scenes and Tales Among the Welsh* (1839). Marion Löfler has
identified the ‘Iolo the Bard’ of Redwood’s book as Iolo Morganwg. 130 Redwood was a
patron of Iolo and a trustee to his will. 131 Over thirty pages of his book are devoted to
discussion of Iolo and his stories which include a tale of being led by an *ignis fatuus* into
‘The Valley of the Gloom’, the story of the Ychain Bannog and the Afanc, and a relation
about a ‘torrent spectre’. The first and last of these tales is told as being experienced by the
bard personally and thus imply belief, at least for Iolo the character if not the real Iolo.132
Redwood, a Quaker, wrote the book as a first person narration in which the main character
met various people in his community which assured him of the existence of supernatural
beings such as ghosts, spectral dogs, corpse candles, and fairies. As such, it seems to be a
book very similar to Jones’s *Apparitions of Spirits*, albeit of a much more approachable
nature, perhaps for a more democratic readership. Whereas Jones’s work is clearly
intended to be instructive to the general populace, he can perhaps be seen to be focusing
on the gentry, nobility, and others with polite aspirations which he sees as particularly
prone to disbelief in spirits and who would have found the list of empirical accounts in his
*Apparitions of Spirits* more scientific than Redwood’s much more readable narrative
approach. 133 Moreover, Iolo can be shown to have been familiar with Jones’s *Account of
the Parish of Aberystwith* both by an entry in his notebook, in which cites it and notes the

129 Ibid., p.86.
130 Marion Löfler, *The Literary and Historical Legacy of Iolo Morganwg 1826–1926* (Cardiff: University
131 NLW, 21286E, no. 1013, Iolo Morganwg to Taliesin Williams, 8 November 1824, in Geraint H. Jenkins,
Ffion Mair Jones, and David Ceri Jones (eds), *The Correspondence of Iolo Morganwg* (3 vols, Cardiff:
132 Charles Redwood, *The Vale of Glamorgan: Scenes and Tales Among the Welsh* (London: Saunders and
Otley, 1839), pp. 227–49.
pages on which Jones discussed apparitions, and in two letters from the publisher and bookseller Evan Williams, one which asked Iolo to send him a copy of the book, which he describes as containing a ‘whimsical & particular account of the tylwyth teg, or the fairies’, because he could not find it in London, and a second which thanked Iolo for providing it.\(^{134}\)

There is at least one Welsh writer who did comment directly on Jones’s works: Theophilus Jones. As was discussed in Chapter Two, in his 1795 *Gleanings through Wales, Holland and Westphalia*, Samuel Pratt described meeting a certain preacher who was known to ‘run on about the fairies, till he has foamed at the mouth like a mad dog’ somewhere in the area of Pontypool.\(^{135}\) The preacher had apparently just published a book on the subject of the fair folk and Pratt found this as good a point in his tour as any to comment at some length on the Welsh addiction to fairies.\(^{136}\) According to him, there was ‘not a more general received opinion throughout the principality than that of the existence of fairies’.\(^{137}\) Pratt’s tour, including these comments, was one among several with which Theophilus Jones took umbrage in his ‘Cursory Remarks on Welsh Tours or Travels,’ which he penned under the name of CYMRO for *The Cambrian Register* in 1796. Theophilus took it upon himself to correct the many misconceptions of Wales found in travel journals, usually to Wales’s benefit, but also, just to be honest, sometimes to its discredit. Above all, he seems to have stressed the similarities between the Welsh and English as civilized Britons, even while acknowledging some Welsh particulars.\(^{138}\) In response to Pratt’s remarks he wrote

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\(^{137}\) Ibid., p. 135.

\(^{138}\) Davies, ‘Wales in English Travel Writing’.
if there had been such a clergyman as he describes, either in Glamorganshire, or in the neighbourhood of Pontypool, he certainly would have done right to have consulted his credit in concealing his name; and, at present, it is as completely unknown as his book; which one may venture to say the little folks have never yet permitted him to publish. That there are silly, weak people in all countries, every man who has travelled must be convinced: and that there may be many of the lower kind of people in Wales, as well as England, who believe in ghosts, goblins, and fairies, I know full well: but that there is a greater proportion in the former than the latter . . . I have found no reason to affirm. 139

Theophilus Jones clearly felt that if there was superstition in Wales, it was not particular to it. There is evidence for this same kind of logic in Edmund Jones’s own Apparition of Spirits, albeit he did not see the belief in the supernatural as a point of detraction:

To prevent some wrong thought that may arise in some English readers, that Wales is a hellish place where so many Apparitions have been seen, as far worse than England, I freely assert that there is so much religion, and so many good and virtuous people in Wales, at least in South Wales, as in any Country, or part of a Country, in great Britain, of its bigness, or it may be in the world; – and also that there is reason to think that the same kind of accounts might be had in England, (excepting those of the Corps Candles peculiar to Wales) if persons minded it and made enquiry; of this I myself, when I was in England, very many years ago, had experience, even then when I made no enquiry, yet heard several accounts of that nature; which makes me justly believe, that, if I had made enquiry, I should certainly hear many more. 140

Theophilus’s association with Edmund’s works, however, would not end with this comment as, in his History of the County of Brecknock (1805), he used ‘the Old Prophet’s’ Account of the Parish of Aberystruth as a source in his own discussion of Welsh fairies. This time, the argument that the Welsh have ‘no more superstition or credulity than falls to the lot of the humble inhabitants of an equal tract of land in any other part of the kingdom’ was again used, but for this work he had a new weapon in his arsenal. 141 In 1770, an English translation of Paul Henri Mallet’s Northern Antiquities was published, providing Anglophone readers with their first translation of the Poetic or Elder Edda. Comparing the descriptions of dwarfs given by Mallet with those of fairies provided by Edmund Jones,

139 CYMRO [Theophilus Jones], ‘Cursory Remarks on Welsh Tours or Travels’, Cambrian Register for the Year 1796, II (1799), 421–54 (433).
140 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, 110.
Theophilus concluded that ‘Fairies are undoubtedly of Gothic origin . . . from the Goths the superstition spread, with their arms, among the nations whom they subdued and enslaved.’ Although never actually expressly stated, the logical conclusion of this argument blames the English for the genesis of Welsh fairy superstition.

In Theophilus Jones it is possible to see parameters of acceptable discourse on the preternatural. Although he did refer to Edmund Jones as the ‘sad historian’, Theophilus was much more comfortable with the idea of Edmund embedding stories about fairies within a larger account than he was with an entire book on the subject. In fact, he was more than happy to not only cite Jones in a footnote, but also state his name in the actual text. What is more, the fact that Theophilus felt it acceptable to discuss fairies in his county history in the more abstract way of discussing their nature and origin independent of their actual being, shows that the issue with Edmund Jones’s narrative was not so much its subject matter, but his enthusiasm and perceived credulity.

Intellectually, Edmund Jones seems to be caught between two centuries. He put forward opinions and a form of discourse well-suited for the late-seventeenth century in the late-eighteenth century. In one sense this could be seen as supporting the idea of Jones as an outmoded, outdated, and out-of-touch elderly amateur scholar from a small town in Monmouthshire, holding onto opinions contemporary with his youth even after the world had moved on. However, the fact that the Apparitions of Spirits was written anonymously can perhaps indicate that Jones knew his work was not going to be well received. Also, his Account of the Parish of Aberystruth appears to have been seen as more acceptable in scholarly opinions, even if he did feel as if he needed to justify the inclusion of fairy and ghost stories in the ‘Preface’. Even if his enthusiasm and credulity were outdated in the overarching scholarly discourse (which does not mean they were necessarily as outdated in private thought) the methodology employed was much more modern. What is more, that

142 Ibid., p. 285.
143 Ibid.
144 Ibid.
Jones was familiar with contemporary scholarly thought is evident from his use of a questionnaire from the Gentleman's Magazine as a rough model for his Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth and from the fact that he referred to the Constitutions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion in his Apparitions of Spirits. However, he felt strongly about the need for a spiritual and moral reformation in the land, and it is perhaps this which prompted him to look to the seventeenth century for examples. Thus, from an evaluation of the intellectual climate of the time and the approach and structure of Jones's works, it appears that if they do not sit comfortably in their chronological surroundings there is a strong likelihood that it was more from design than ignorance.
VI
INTERROGATING THE EVIDENCE: SPIRITS, FOLKLORE, AND CULTURE

Discussion has thus far focused on the different factors impacting upon the nature and form of Edmund Jones's belief in apparitions, fairies, and magical practitioners, including the socio-economic environment of his community, revivalism and his religious beliefs, and the tenor and attitudes of the intellectual influences upon him and the environment of public discourse. In this, the content of supernatural folk-belief in Jones's community, and to what extent it was reflected in Jones's writings, has been left largely unexplored. As should be apparent from Chapter Five, this is difficult to gauge due to the uniqueness of Jones's work amongst contemporary Welsh writers. Moreover, as Chapter Two sought to establish the impact of contemporary social and economic factors on belief, caution is required concerning questions of cultural continuity, especially when comparing Jones to sources from the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, after changes in community and the economy had been wrought by advancements in south Wales industry. Thus, investigating the content of folk-belief in Jones's community involves some delicate and tricky mental gymnastics: the content gives context to assessing the impact of the environmental factors which have been already discussed, while at the same time the impacts of these factors need to be borne in mind when attempting to determine the content. This chapter therefore seeks to examine two main issues: what folk-belief in Jones's community was like and how his own position influenced his perceptions of it. In

this it will be necessary to place the information in Jones’s works alongside those of other Welsh folklore materials, as well as other folkloric, historical, and anthropological studies. The beliefs can be grouped roughly into several categories: magical practitioners, apparitions of the Devil, ghosts and spirits, death portents, and fairies. Such divisions are ultimately arbitrary, as these categories all overlap a good deal, but they serve to make the material more approachable and easier to analyse. Where differences are apparent between Jones’s accounts and other sources, causes and explanations can be sought in the various factors which have been discussed in the previous chapters. Only through examining the social, economic, religious, and intellectual alongside the cultural can an assessment of Jones’s beliefs and writings be made.

Problems of Definition

Although it is easy to approach the material by breaking it into different classes and types of apparitions, any such classification runs a risk of being necessarily arbitrary and indistinct. There are many accounts of demonic or devil-like activity which are not necessarily linked to the Devil, human practitioners, fairies, or departed human spirits, such as apparitions of lights and fires, strange figures, or mysterious animals. These ill-defined apparitions of ‘evil spirits’ could be, and sometimes are, classified as ghosts, fairies, occurrences of witchcraft, or demonic activity but Jones does not explicitly label many of them. Of course, this is perhaps not surprising as Jones is not writing for antiquarian or folkloristic purposes and did not need the more ‘scientific’ classification systems of later writers like Thomas Keightley or Wirt Sikes. The reasons for this are easily apparent: far from trying to explain and study the belief in such things, Jones took their existence as his starting point and their true natures as incomprehensible to mundane minds. Moreover, his lack of clear classification is more reflective of the folklore itself than any heady and (often) arbitrary system of distinctions. Keightley himself expressed awareness of this.
It cannot be expected that our classifications should vie in accuracy and
determinateness with those of natural science. The human imagination, of
which these beings are the offspring, works not, at least that we can
discover, like nature, by fixed and invariable laws; and it would be hard
indeed to exact from the Fairy historian the rigid distinction of classes and
orders which we expect from the botanist or chemist. The various species
so run into and are confounded with one another; the actions and attributes
of one kind are so frequently ascribed to another, that scarcely have we
begun to erect our system, when we find the foundation crumbling under
our feet.  

Sikes, echoing Keightley’s classification system, also echoes these sentiments, stating that
‘fairies being creatures of the imagination, it is not possible to classify them by fixed and
immutable rules’. 3

This lack of classification and the nebulous and overlapping nature of terms are
perhaps central to the very conceptualization of the apparitions in Jones’s work. It alludes,
however, to a potentially immensely complex conceptualization insofar as it can perhaps
be argued that some apparitions in their very nature defied distinct linguistic
conceptualization. On the most basic level, this is evident in the common refusal to ‘name’
certain types of apparitions, such as referring to the Devil as ‘Old Nick’ or fairies as ‘y
Tylwyth Teg’ or ‘Bendith eu Mamau’, but this merely shows the replacement of one name
or term for another ‘inoffensive’ name or term, and not necessarily a linguistic confusion
or lack of conceptualization. Stuart Clark has argued that the ‘linguistic turn’ is vital to the
study of early modern witchcraft. Concepts like ‘witchcraft’ and ‘superstition’ need to be
viewed within their linguistic and cultural contexts. 4 Rather than necessarily referring to
signs within any type of ‘objective reality’ as such, they are culturally conceived signifiers
referring to culturally conceived signifieds. These evil spirits can perhaps be thought of in
the same way; although their cultural meaning is harder to conceptualize. It is interesting
that there are several places where Jones attributes an occurrence to a particular type of
spirit when it could just as easily and logically be attributed to another type, such as

3 Wirt Sikes, British Goblins: Welsh Folk-lore, Fairy Mythology, Legends and Traditions (2nd edn, London:
Sampson Low, 1880), p. 11.
4 Stuart Clark, Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe (Oxford: Oxford
something displaying the attributes, abilities, and activities of a ghost being referred to as a fairy, or vice versa; or else lacking any identification outside of the nebulous ‘evil spirit’. Thus, the only viable classification system for these accounts must come from Jones himself, regarding what he refers to as ghosts, fairies, witches, etc., and not presupposing accepted definitions or classifications. Where alternate identification is given by others’ writings to the same apparitions described in Jones’s work, these do bear notice, but there is definite danger in ‘correcting’ what Jones records.

A few examples may serve to better illustrate this. While there are many accounts of the origins of fairies, Jones specifically links them with the dead when he remarks that they were the ‘disembodied Spirits of men who lived and died without the enjoyment of the means of grace and Salvation, as Pagans and others’. The view that fairies are analogous with the dead is a common motif. Crossover in the activities of ghosts and fairies can be seen in the ‘old woman of the mountain’ who led travellers (including Jones) astray on Llanhilledd Mountain and the Black Mountains. She was said to be the ghost of Juan White, a reputed witch who had lived in the area. Being ‘fairy led’ and losing one’s way is a commonly blamed on the fairies and further connection is provided when Jones notes that in order to get rid of the old woman, a man pulled out a knife, something which will also drive away fairies. Sikes even chose to include the story of the old lady in his section about fairies rather than his section about ghosts. Similarly, as has been noted in Chapter Four, the account which Jones gives of the haunting at the Trwyn farmhouse is usually referred to as the Pwcca’r Trwyn and identified as a fairy or fairy-like, but he regards the presence as ‘one of those sort of Spirits which the Scripture in several places
calls familiar Spirits'. The difference between fairies and familiar spirits can be seen to be as arbitrary and permeable as that between fairies and the dead, especially in the way that both interacted with human magical practitioners. Just as spirits were conjured to do the bidding of the magician or witch, so too could fairies be conjured up, especially in matters concerning the finding of treasure.

With these nebulous and permeable distinctions between types of spirits, the great mass of more miscellaneous fantastical supernatural apparitions, such as strange lights, fires, and anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures, become extremely interesting, both where Jones names them as particular types of supernatural occurrences and where he does not. An occurrence in Machen parish demonstrated many of the different types of appearances usual to these stories. Around 1748, J. W. James was going on horseback with a woman ‘whom he pretended to court’ from Bedwas toward Risca church when they saw the appearance of a boy walking before them ‘before they came over against Certwyn Machen hill, the east side of it facing the Parish of Risca’. They soon discerned that it was not a real boy ‘but a hellish dangerous boy as it soon appeared; for while they looked upon it, they could see it suddenly putting his head between his legs, and transforming into a ball of light’ which moved rapidly uphill towards the top of Machen mountain. Soon after they heard a ‘jingling sound of Iron, and . . . saw many great Stone-horses with some darkness about them, as it were drawing some Load between them, till they came to Pont y meister bridge, and somewhat beyond it, and then turned to a cross lane leading towards a house where a man newly dead was’. As if this was not enough, a little farther on they saw ‘the earth cleaving and opening, and out of the pit came up a Pillar or beam of fire very shining, and waving in the air’. The light of this fire made an ‘impression upon the young woman’s Handkerchief of a yellow colour’ which was seen by many people including

11 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 21.
Jones's niece. With the amount of detail present in this account it may seem surprising that Jones does not seek to unpack the specific symbolism or nature of the boy, the horses, or the fiery shapes. The places and paths taken by the apparitions are carefully and minutely noted, and lasting proof of the occurrence is not only given, but attested to by one of Jones's relations. There is some moral purpose served by the account – James had intended to 'debauch' the young woman and was prevented by the apparitions – but, as opposed to some other accounts given by Jones, the details of the apparitions themselves in all their exactness supersede the purpose and meaning of the tale.\textsuperscript{13}

An account from Llanfihangel Llantarnam is even more devoid of explanation or analysis and a good deal less spectacular, but is told with the same minute detail. Edward Frank, who 'had been to mend his shoes', heard something walking towards him and saw 'some big, tall, dark thing, without any regular shape', but being able to ask, 'In the name of God what is here?' it disappeared. Soon after this he felt terrified, 'so that he felt not his cloaths about him' and then saw between himself and the hedge 'two dun coloured things like posts' which scared him so much that he had to go and lean on a cow for support. Here Jones even relates that the cow 'stay'd for him, smelt him and suffered him to lean upon her'. He then called at the home of a woman with whom he was acquainted, but was unable, because of his fear, to tell her who he was and she did not recognise his voice, but eventually she let him in because she could tell he was distressed. The source is given as 'Abraham Lewis, a wise religious man, who lodged in the same house with this young man', however, oddly, no indication is given about the religious convictions or morality of the subject of the story and no moral or religious reason is given for the apparitions. Moreover, far from being classified, it is not even named as an evil spirit and the reader is left with the reaction of the observer to the apparition as the only means of drawing such conclusions.\textsuperscript{14} Two accounts from Pembrokeshire and Mynyddislwyn parish, textually

\textsuperscript{13}Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 31–2.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 37.
juxtaposed in Jones’s book, also mirror this type of apparition. D. W. saw the ‘likeness of a man, but could not see his arms, and he was without a hat, at some distance from him, going round about him three or four times, and at the same distance from him’. He attempted to speak to it several times, but to no avail, and he eventually gave way to it. This was apparently the wrong thing to do and as he went on his terror increased. When he reached to top of the hill and looked back he saw a ball of fire where it had been. About this Jones notes that ‘the extraordinary Apparitions of evil Spirits have often been signs of trouble to those that saw them; so it came to pass upon this man with a witness’, but he does not elaborate on this.\textsuperscript{15} He then relates that a young woman was travelling by night when she became terrified, ‘so that she felt not her cloaths about her’ and then saw a ball of sometimes blue and sometimes green fire ‘as large as a pompion, skipping before her, out of which came forth flames about half a yard long’. Sometimes it went by her side, and sometimes behind her, sometimes it disappeared and then reappeared. This was all so terrifying that ‘she felt not the ground under her feet, nor the weight of her own body’. When she came into the town it decreased to the size of a tennis ball and then entered into a shop. After this she ‘hath met with uncommon troubles, occasioned by her obstinacy, disobedience to parents, and a fiery temper’.\textsuperscript{16} After these accounts, Jones added some rather odd remarks about the directionality of the spirits’ movements:

I did not remember to ask her whether the living fiery bowl . . . receded back by her left side, and passed forward by her right; or the contrary way. I also wish I had asked Mr W. whether the spectre which turned about him, began to turn on the East side of him, and went forward from the East to the North, from the North to the West, and from thence to the East, or was it the contrary way; for I have observed that the very circumstances of some apparitions bore a resemblance of the circumstances of the evils to come.\textsuperscript{17}

Even though there are obvious religious connotations connected to the symbolism of the inherent good of the right-hand side and evil of the left-hand side, these warnings of things to come are still more nebulous and indistinct than apparitions of fairies which foretold

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., pp. 77–8.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p. 78.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp. 78–9.
misfortune in a more precise way, or corpse candles which had a more precise reading. In fact, a more nebulous reading and a preference for detail over meaning seem to prevail in all of these stories more than in accounts which are blatantly labelled as ‘ghosts’ or ‘fairies’.

These extraordinary apparitions of evil spirits to some extent seem to defy exact definition, but it is interesting that there are three accounts in Jones’s work which appear to be in this category, but are each precisely associated with witchcraft, fairies, or deceased humans. First, in Harlech in 1694, blue fires appeared over a series of two months which burned hay, corn, and the thatch on houses but nothing else. Jones noted that ‘some, most of the learned, call’d it a Meteor which came from the sea on the Carnarvon side’, but ‘the people gave another account of it in former days; that it was an effect of witchcraft, which is the most likely thing, as it cannot be accounted from nature’. It is very likely that Jones encountered this account from Edward Lhwyd’s revision and additions to Camden’s *Britannia*, wherein Lhwyd, while noting that the locals attributed it to witchcraft, believed that gases arising from the decomposing bodies of locusts were to blame. Camden’s *Britannia* is listed as a book Jones wished to acquire in 1739. Next, in Bedwellty parish in July 1760 a group of people who were making hay in a field called y Weirglodd Fawr Dafolog saw an ‘innumerable company of sheep, or somewhat like them, over a hill, called Keven Rhychdir . . . about a quarter of a mile distant’. They then saw them soon after about a half a mile off and a final time about half an hour before sunset. Moreover, ‘They all saw them at the same time, but all of them did not see them in the same manner, but in different forms. Two of these persons saw them like sheep, some saw them like grey-hounds, some like swine, some like naked Infants.’ At the end of the account Jones does not credit the apparition to mere ‘evil spirits’, but

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18 Ibid., pp. 51–2.
20 NLW, MS. 7024A, Edmund Jones’s diary for 1739.
rather calls it a 'notable appearance of the Fairies'. Finally, in Neuadd, Breconshire, in 1767, Walter Watkins saw a 'whitish kind of light' near Taf Fechan chapel which 'increased in size until it was as big as a church tower, and decreased again till it became as small as a star, and then it would increase to the former largeness'. Oddly 'he felt no fear' and called his parents out to see it. Sometime after, a man was ploughing a field near the chapel and unearthed a large stone chest 'and in it the jaw-bone of a man, a large one, for it encompassed the chin of the plower; and it had the cleverest set of Teeth that any man could have; and an earthen Jug which was empty, supposed to hold the murdered man's blood'. After this it was remembered that a man named Phillip Watkins had suddenly disappeared and his wife, supposing that he was dead had remarried. A while after this, she met a 'wandering sort of man, who used to be between the two houses' and asked him if he had heard any news to which he jokingly replied that Phillip Watkins 'was come home, and was well'. Soon after she fell ill and died, even though he told her his statement was in jest. Jones remarked that 'after this the light was no more seen near the Chapel, tho' often seen before'. In all three of these accounts the identification of the apparition as a certain type comes at the end and, with the exception of the disembodied spirit which is identified as such by the finding of human remains, there is no indication as to why it is that type of apparition rather than the general 'evil spirit' of the previous accounts. However, in all of these accounts, the identification as a particular type of apparition was given by the informant and does not seem to have been merely Jones's conjecture. Still it is interesting that in these cases, Jones takes the word of the informant and agrees with the classification.

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22 Ibid., pp. 55–7.
Magical Practitioners

Human magical practitioners are the category of supernatural activity which has been most investigated by historians, with the witch and the witch trials predominant in this area. The reasons for this are easy to see. However, the supernatural human actor is perhaps the category least discussed by Jones himself, with the witch the least well represented within this category. In her study of witchcraft and fairies in early modern Europe, focusing on Hungary, Éva Pócs has posited three classifications or types of witches: ‘type A’ or the neighbourhood or social witch associated with malificium arising from conflict within the community, ‘type B’ or the person with expertise in magic or sorcery, including healers, seers, or cunning-folk, and ‘type C’ or the witch as a purely supernatural actor. These types could and did overlap, but she remarks

The expression of personal conflict within a community through type A witchcraft only occurs in certain socioeconomic circumstances – that is, in self-sufficient serf village communities whose inhabitants rely upon each other. Types B and C are not simply necessarily induced by social and neighborhood conflicts; indeed type C is often solely and exclusively related to the tensions between the human and supernatural worlds.

The model of the beggar witch falls under the heading of ‘type A’ and, as was shown in Chapter Two, most of the accounts referred to as ‘witchcraft’ within Jones’s accounts, such as the gypsies who bewitched Janet Francis in Aberystruth and the old woman who caused stones to be thrown at the group of coopers working in Basaleg, conform to this model. The examples of the witches who frequented the home of David Ziles in Bedwelly and of Richard, a tailor from Llangatwg Crickhowell in Breconshire, who was supposed to have led a group of young men from Aberystruth, including Jones’s brother, astray, and to have caused Jones’s brother to be magically transported through the air, are

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23 See Jonathan Barry and Owen Davies (eds), Witchcraft Historiography (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
25 Ibid., p. 11.
26 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 4; CL, MS. 2.249, Rough draft of Edmund Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 226–9.
more difficult to categorize.\textsuperscript{27} In the case of the former there is insufficient context to establish the witches as 'type A' or 'B', although they do, to some extent, conform to 'type C' as they are introduced as abstract 'witches' acting against the home until Hopkin David forces them to reveal their names. Still, Ziles's description as a 'substantial freeholder' can perhaps allude to some type of conflict over socio-economic inequality with the witches themselves. Moreover, the first witch names herself as 'Ellor-Sir-Gare, i.e. 'Carmarthenshire Eleanor' and thus identifies herself as an outsider to the Bedwellty community, a possible point of community tension.\textsuperscript{28} In the second example, Richard was 'believed to be' a witch, and thus would perhaps conform to 'type B', but the party from Aberystryth was 'very free in their suspicions and reflections upon him' and after Jones's brother disappeared they 'became uneasy' and 'abusive in Language to the Man of the House; threatening to burn the House if my Brother did not return'.\textsuperscript{29} In so doing they violated community conventions of guest/host (or customer/host) relations, something that was probably exacerbated by their positions as outsiders to the community. While these examples conform to 'types C' and 'B' respectively, they both can perhaps be seen as also having elements of 'type A' and are therefore linked to socio-economic relations within the community.

Another element apparent in three out of these four examples is the belief that the witches transformed themselves into hares or other animals. This belief is not particular to Wales and can rather be seen as conforming to the transnational conceptualisation of the early modern witch. In the period of the witch trials, Keith Thomas labelled it, along with the witches' sabbath and flying on broomsticks, as something more common to intellectual or continental conceptualisations, although he does provide two examples of accounts

\textsuperscript{27} Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 12; Edmund Jones, \textit{Geographical, Historical and Religious Account of the Parish of Aberystryth} (Trevecca, [n. Pub.], 1779), pp. 80–2. See Chapter Two above.

\textsuperscript{28} Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{29} Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystryth}, p. 81.
containing references to shape-shifting.\textsuperscript{30} Owen Davies, writing about the period after the 1736 Witchcraft Act, referred to the belief that witches could transform into animals as ‘the most common and ubiquitous motif in witch legends’.\textsuperscript{31} The fact that the few accounts of witches referred to by Jones conformed to stereotypical archetypes prevalent in the early modern and modern periods, can perhaps allude to his familiarity with the intellectual and religious conceptualization of witchcraft. Richard Suggett has shown linguistically that it is possible that the standardised conceptualisation of the ‘type A’ witch was imported into Wales from England while words for ‘type B’ and ‘C’ can be seen as being extant natively.\textsuperscript{32} Jones’s accounts probably do reflect beliefs prevalent in his community insofar as those beliefs can be seen as cultural imports.

There is the question of the paucity of accounts of witches in Jones’s works which could indicate that he encountered few stories of witchcraft and thus translate into a lack of belief. That the popular belief in witchcraft did not cease or even radically decline after 1736 is now established within witchcraft historiography,\textsuperscript{33} and in the case of Monmouthshire is evidenced by records of witches persisting into the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{34} There is a strong argument that if Jones had known of more occurrences of witchcraft he would have included them, but lack of accounts does not necessarily translate into a lack of belief. For instance, although the belief in fairies was certainly strong, it would not be argued that only those who encountered fairies believed in them. Jones attested to the

widespread belief in and fears concerning witchcraft in addition to specific accounts when he referred to Llangatwg Crickhowell as ‘very infamous for Witches in all the Country round’.\textsuperscript{35} He also lost no opportunity in defending the belief in witchcraft, blatantly chastising George II and Parliament for the 1736 Witchcraft Act.\textsuperscript{36} The real and perhaps excessive (as perceived by others in the community) belief in witches as held by Jones is illustrated in a humorous folk-tale related by Edgar Phillips:

> On one occasion he refused point-blank to pray at the bedside of an old crone who was supposed to be dying, as he felt convinced that... she had sold her soul to the devil, and as a witch had nothing but hellfire awaiting her. When reproached for his timidity and cowardice by one of his elders, he agreed to come and sit on the doorstep while the other went to pray. Hearing his friend’s fervent prayer, Edmund forgot his fears and began to chant ‘Amen’ and ‘Bendigedig!’ at the top of his voice, until, to his horror a huge black mastiff came to the window, placed his paws on the sill, and began to howl in the most heart-rending manner... such a demonstration was too much for him, and, jumping to his feet, he yelled ‘Come Thomas bach, Old Nick has come to fetch her!’ On breaking off his prayer, the elder went to the door, where he could see the frightened minister hurtling down the steep street of Crumlyn, followed by an equally frightened mastiff.\textsuperscript{37}

Of course, the limited number of accounts of witchcraft is perhaps not surprising insofar as Jones’s \textit{Apparitions of Spirits} is written primarily about apparitions of spirits. Ghosts, visions, apparitions of the Devil, and fairies (as Jones conceived them), all fit comfortably under this heading, but what of witches? The use of familiars or association with fairies were common in the witch trials in England and Scotland, and the concept was even introduced in the case of the first execution for witchcraft in Wales in 1594, although Suggett has suggested that ‘some of the participants would have known of the sensational pamphlets reporting witchcraft trials in England, which placed special emphasis on the relationship between witches and their familiar spirits’.\textsuperscript{38} Indeed, Owen Davies remarks that the belief in spirits related to witches is ‘virtually absent from the Welsh folklore

\textsuperscript{35} Jones, \textit{Account of the Parish of Aberystruth}, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{36} Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 12–13.
\textsuperscript{38} Suggett, \textit{Witchcraft and Magic}, p. 31.
Jones does seem to use this association between witches, spirits, and the Devil to justify their place within his works. He clearly remarks that the gypsy witch in Aberystwith was ‘in compact with the Devil’. Moreover, it was spirits which carried Jones’s brother through the air, presumably by order of Richard the tailor, and in Bassaleg it can perhaps be assumed that the rocks were thrown by a spirit. However, this latter case is interesting as spirit involvement is not actually alluded to within the narrative itself, but only added at the end in Jones’s commentary that ‘witches often in former times transformed into a hare like appearance who had power to employ an evil spirit as the witch of Endor had to raise one . . . to play tricks upon these men’ and calls the account ‘another strong proof of the being of spirits against the opposite Infidelity’. In its narrative form, the involvement of spirits is an addition by Jones, perhaps by way of a religiously motivated explanation or justification, and not actually part of folk-belief per se. In light of Jones’s focus on spirits, the limited number of references to witches could actually reflect a prevalence of belief rather than paucity insofar as Jones saw them as important or relevant enough to include at all.

In comparison to witches, cunning-folk and conjurors have a greater presence in Jones’s works, albeit still a smaller place than spirits and fairies. This is perhaps because of the freer association of such people with spirits and fairies. In Aberystwith parish, Rissiart Cap Dee was supposed to go out ‘at night to visit the Fairies’ and Charles Hugh of Llangybi ‘was very famous in the Country for his cures, and knowledge of things at a distance; which he could not possibly know without conversing with evil Spirits’. Similarly, Sir David Llwyd of Ysbyty Ystwyth in Cardiganshire once sent a boy to fetch his magic book which he had left in another place. On the way the boy opened the book and called forth an evil spirit which he commanded to throw stones out of and back into a river in order to occupy it until Sir David came looking for him and ‘commanded the

39 Davies, Witchcraft Magic and Culture, p. 181.
40 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 4.
41 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 230.
42 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwith, p. 71.
familiar Spirit back into the book'. The act of conjuration itself naturally involved spirits or devils. John Jenkin, a school-master and conjurer from Pembrokeshire, conjured several ‘fallen angels of hell’ to ascertain the identity of a thief. Similarly a tailor/conjuror from Carmarthenshire called up a devil to show a gentleman. As was shown in Chapter Two, cunning-folk maintained an important role in eighteenth century Welsh communities. In fact, although Suggett alludes to the continued prevalence of witches in the period, his chapter on the long eighteenth century focuses mainly on the role and nature of cunning-folk and conjurers, remarking that ‘conjurors dominated popular interest in magic and healing in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries’. This popularity, along with the evil and demonic associations, could be one reason why Jones included so many accounts: witches were an apparent social ill, unlike cunning-folk who provided social services.

From a religious perspective, any magical activity was an implicit pact with the Devil, and the cunning-man’s customers were included in that pact. As Stuart Clark remarks, Wales is a region that scarcely registers in the historiography of the so-called witch craze; and, indeed, very few trials for maleficent sorcery appear in the (surviving) judicial records. Yet for two hundred years or more Welsh clerics complained of the ‘witchcraft’ that, in their opinion, permeated the beliefs and lives of its people – a witchcraft consisting of appeals for help to (what in one text are called) wizards, astrologers, soothsayers, fortune-tellers, conjurors, charmers, and magicians.

Welsh examples of this are evident in Robert Holland’s Dau Gymro yn Taring (c. 1595) and T. P.’s Cas gan Gythraul (1711). In Jones’s discussion of these magical practitioners he is keen to emphasise the damning aspects of conjuration, citing especially

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43 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 71.
44 Ibid., pp. 72–3.
46 Suggett, Witchcraft and Magic, p. 84.
47 See Clark, Thinking with Demons, pp. 456–71.
Leviticus 19: 31.\textsuperscript{50} He remarked that Charles Hugh was ‘said to be an affable Man, and cheerful; ‘tis then a pity he should be in alliance with Hell, and an Agent in the Kingdom of darkness’. \textsuperscript{51} In another case in Bedwelty, the sheep of William David Richard of Rumney were made invisible to a thief by ‘a dealer in the black Art’, about which Jones stated that it was ‘a pretty punishment for a thief, – if it did not come from an evil cause’. \textsuperscript{52} It was not only to caution against such practices that Jones discussed these magical practitioners. Stories of conjuration illustrated a proof of spirits which was intimately bound up with human social interactions. As Jones remarked, ‘If it was not an evil thing to make a circle, and cause an evil spirit to appear, one could have wished an atheist a Deist or a Sadducee to be in the circle to be convinced of his infidelity; it being better for him to be convinced by any means than to live and die in the capital heresy of denying the being of spirits, and the resurrection.’\textsuperscript{53}

The Devil

Human practitioners are not the only category of supernatural folk-belief which is perhaps underrepresented in Jones’s accounts. As John Harvey has pointed out,

In contrast to his predecessors, Jones includes few accounts describing an apparition of the devil (Satan, as distinct from lesser devils) and none of the sensual concomitants, like the foul sulphurous smell of brimstone often said to accompany demonic presence. Absent, too, is any reference to individual possessions . . . and the more unsavoury manifestations associated with it, such as individuals vomiting substantial quantities of pins, nails, spoons, handles, glass, hair or lumps of meat. Nor does Jones include accounts of sexual fraternisation between devils and young girls; or the base, if picturesque practice of ‘kissing Satan’s arse’; or the shocking bodily contortions and vexations attributed to witches.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{50} 'Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.' (KJV).
\textsuperscript{51} Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystyth, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{52} Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{53} CL, MS. 2.249, p. 241.
For the force perceived as being behind so many of Jones’s accounts, that ‘Old Nick’ makes so few direct appearances is perhaps down to the difference between folk and religious conceptions of him. In Welsh folklore the Devil is portrayed as a dim-witted but powerful being, often tricked by the quick-witted Welshman. The most famous Monmouthshire example is Jack o’ Kent who made a pact with the Devil in exchange for extraordinary abilities and who was often challenged by the Devil and came out on top. Once when he was crossing a field, the Devil asked him if he would take the tops or bottoms of the crops growing there. Jack chose the bottoms, which was fortunate as it was a field of turnips. The next time the Devil chose bottoms, but as it was a field of wheat, Jack won again. In the end, the Devil said he would take him whether he was buried inside a church or without, but Jack got the last laugh as he was interred in the wall.55

It is easy to see why Jones would not seek to include Jack’s exploits in his accounts, as it would undermine the Devil’s powers and seriousness. It is extremely interesting therefore that Jones actually includes an example of this type. A tailor, returning drunkenly from a fair, met a man on horseback who asked him to make a suit, saying that he would come by his shop so that the tailor could take his measurements. Although intoxicated, the tailor noted that the man had the feet of a horse, and thus was ‘something belonging to the devil’. He consulted Sir David Llwyd who instructed him to delay the demonic man by measuring him but not standing in front of him as long as possible and that Sir David would then come and take care of him. He did as Sir David said and when Sir David came back he looked at the strange man and ‘said to him, What is your business here? Go away, and he went away.’56 As Lisa Tallis has commented

Such tales convey Satan’s vulnerability in the face of a quick-thinking Welshman, as opposed to his traditional omnipotence. But these accounts also offer insight into the types of people who supposedly encountered the Devil. The significance of the . . . characters is that they are craftsmen, suggesting that these demonic encounters were a means by which the

56 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 69–70.
craftsman elevated himself and his craft to a respectable and efficient position. Overcoming the most powerful adversary of God by utilizing the skills of your trade would have been a sure way of asserting independence and credibility.  

This account, with its narrative, folk-tale style, is somewhat unique in Jones’s works. As will be apparent below in the discussion of Jones’s treatment of fairies, he tends to stay away from such accounts, in favour of more believable stories. As was shown in Chapter Four in the discussion of the Pwcca’r Trwyn, even when a clear narrative tradition existed for an account Jones often altered it to make it believable within his religious framework. However, the only alteration which he made to this story was that the Devil was instead ‘something belonging to the Devil’, which, although a significant change, does not detract overmuch from the narrative. As such, Sir David is able to dismiss the Devil with seemingly little effort, which is surprising as he himself was ‘in covenant with hell’ and the tailor was a ‘profane man and a drunkard’. Such lack of alterations could come from reluctance to amend the account of the Rev. Thomas Lewis, the local curate and ‘a man of undoubted piety and veracity’, or else that the folk-motif of the craftsman outwitting the Devil was so prevalent as to seem plausible to Jones despite its possible religious ramifications.

Jones and his wife also combated the Devil on several occasions. On returning to Monmouthshire after one of his preaching tours, Jones slept at a friend’s house in a room which was ‘known to be an unfriendly place’ where the ‘enemy violently came upon’ him:

I heard him say in my ear. Here the devil comes in his strength (and that was true) He made a noise by my face such as is made when a man opens his mouth wide and draws his breath, as if he would swallow something. He also made a sound over me like to that of dry leather, and by my left ear a sound something the squeaking of a pig. the Cloathes moved upon me and my flesh trembled, and the terror was so great that I sweated under the great diabolical influence. This however awakened me to pray unto the Lord of all, wch otherwise I would not have done at that time; and after some time the cock crowed, and I had rest.

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57 Tallis, ‘The Conjurer, the Fairy, the Devil and the Preacher’, p. 163.
58 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 69, 71.
In order to combat the Devil on a subsequent occasion he placed the cock in the room with him.\textsuperscript{60} Another time when Jones was on a long preaching tour in north Wales, the Devil often troubled his wife. One night, while at prayer, ‘desiring the Lord to help [Jones] to pull dull down the devils kingdom . . . He spoke in her ear. Why dost thou pray against the devil was it not God who made the devil? She answered in the midst of prayer, no; God made thee an angel, thou madest thy self a devil and went on.’\textsuperscript{61} Another time, also while she was praying, he attacked her and scratched her back violently. He also appeared in the form of a dog and lay on her feet in bed while she heard the sound of the nailing of a coffin in the next room.\textsuperscript{62} However through all this she resisted him.

Jones also relates some instances of others’ encounters with the Devil. A ship captain travelling from Wales to Bristol bid the wind to blow, but that being nonresponsive, bid the Devil to blow. This raised a tempest and he quickly had to change his tune and urged those on board to pray. Accordingly, their prayers soon quelled the storm. About this Jones was eager to reinforce the dangers of dealing with the Devil, observing that ‘he at first wanted the devils help, but the devil being too rough a helper and more like a destroyer like many of his sort then wanted the help of God to keep him from the devil’.\textsuperscript{63} In Bedwas parish, Henry William Hugh, a schoolmaster, was out with his dog one night walking towards home when he saw a man ‘of somewhat odd figure’ at which he and the dog felt terror. When he approached nearer to the place the man become two men and he surmised that it was the Devil. In contemplating what to say he ‘thought of Jam. 4.7. Resist the devil and he will flee from you, but his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth, and he could by no means say anything’. This was not the end of it, as ‘When he came just to the place of the apparition, it changed into a large pillar of fire

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. Jones remarks elsewhere that the cock, a bird which heralded the day and thus stood as a symbol for light, could drive away the spirits of darkness. See Ibid., p. 278; and Chapter Three above.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p. 306.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., pp. 306–7.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., p. 237.
terrible to look upon." When they got home Hugh was very terrified, but the dog was so frightened that he thrust his head into a pot and could not get it out until they broke it open with a hatchet. Jones remarked that the Devil saw and heard all that was said and done here, and I doubt rejoiced at it, it being his own evil work. And doth he not rejoice in his own evil work? Sure he doth, for who will do what they have no delight in? If this evil spirit rejoiced in this piece of work he carried the news to such other devils who are not in the deepest misery to make them a cold bitterish recreation in their dark comfortless state.

Hugh, however, continued unconverted and therefore in a state of alienation from God, notwithstanding this apparition from the world of spirits; such is the strength of original sin and the human corruption, wch nothing can conquer but the special grace of God." It is not surprising therefore, that this unconverted man could not drive away the Devil. The same was true for a curate who was a deist. On his way home late one night his horse stopped at a spot near 'Ynis Erwith where people were often discomposed by an unnatural fear' and felt something on the horse behind him which turned out to be the Devil. The horse began to run wildly and he felt 'himself heavily pressd, and almost out of breath, and could do nothing but endeavour all he could to keep on horseback till the beast came home in a sweat.' In contrast to Hugh however, this poor deist was convinced and converted by the apparition. It is perhaps interesting that all of these accounts of the Devil, excluding the first one involving the tailor, came from the additional materials in the manuscript rough draft of his Apparitions of Spirits and not the published work itself.

**Ghosts**

In the early modern period, it was often argued that apparitions of ghosts were not in actuality visitations by departed human spirits, but rather illusions created by the Devil to deceive the gullible. Even if it was allowed that some ghosts were departed spirits, the

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64 Ibid., p. 219.
65 Ibid., p. 221.
66 Ibid., p. 222.
67 Ibid., pp. 282–3.
powers of the ‘great deceiver’ still meant that many could be diabolic illusions. 68 In Jones’s works, however, when a person saw a ghost, he believed they saw the disembodied spirit of the dead. He does note the ability of these to deceive, as in the case of Elizabeth Hobson from Sunderland, Durham, which he shared with John Wesley. 69 Her brother John appeared to her often in 1767 and 1768 concerning a house which had been bequeathed to her, by her grandfather, but having legal troubles in obtaining it had given up. Concerning the same affair, on 21 October and 32 November 1768, her grandfather appeared to her. About this Jones wrote that he had some suspicions that these latter apparitions were of ‘her brother John, who as displeas’d with her for delaying to have the matter decided about the house, and not an Apparition of her Grandfather who seemed pleas’d with her; tho’ he spoke not. Tho’ the Copy doth not say it was her Brother, which seems the more likely thing; but how this came to be overlooked I cannot well tell.’ 70 Of course, it is unclear if Jones is blaming the copyist for writing ‘Grandfather’ when he meant ‘Brother’ or if it was her brother appearing as her grandfather, but as spirits often assume different forms in Jones’s work, the latter is certainly possible. An account where the spirit of a man appeared as a light has been referenced above. 71 Similarly, ghosts could appear in the form of animals. In an account of a Scottish ghost, which was published in the Glocester Journal in 1730/1 and which was referred to in Chapter Two, the spirit appeared as a dog because that was the instrument which he used to murder another man. 72 Jones received an account from Anglesey in 1771 about an Anglican clergyman who, several times in passing by an artificial circle between Amlwch village and St Elian Church, encountered a violent spirit in the form of a greyhound which pulled him from his horse and beat him. However, one time when he passed by on foot he observed that the spirit was in actuality chained to the spot, and so, being careful to remain out of reach, he

69 See Chapter Four above.
70 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 122.
71 Ibid., pp. 55–7.
72 Glocester Journal, 9 February 1730/1.
questioned it and found out that it was the spirit of a man who had hidden a silver-groat which was intended for payment to the church under a rock. The clergyman went and found the money and paid it and the spirit troubled him no more. However, most spirits in Jones’s accounts appear in their previous human guise, and about this last account Jones even notes that ‘there is something off in the relation, but I believe it as I had it from a person who I am sure would not knowingly tell an untruth, or otherwise than as he had it.’

Many of the ghosts appeared to people they had formerly known and were immediately recognised as such, although there were sometimes alterations. The man who impregnated Margaret Richard of Pant-teg and jilted her at the altar, ‘before she forgave him, he seemed to have but half arms, but after she forgave him, he seemed to have full arms, and bare up to his elbows’. As Owen Davies has noted, although eighteenth-century ghosts did sometimes appear in burial dress, they usually appeared in the clothes they wore whilst living, noting that clothing was related to personal appearance and thus to personal identity. The weaver Morgan Lewis, who had hidden some bottoms of wool in his home in Aberystwyth, appeared to Walter John Harry ‘with a candle in his hand, and a white woollen Cap upon his head, and the dress he wore in his life time’. On the other hand, there are many cases where the person experiencing the haunting did not in fact know, or even know of, the identity of the spirit haunting them, although they are always informed of this identity during or after the occurrence. This element of identity seems to have been almost crucial to the definition of a spirit as a ghost. As it will be remembered, Jones saw other evil spirits, such as fairies or even occasionally familiar spirits, as disembodied human spirits who had died without the grace of God. But whilst it was impossible to tell whose spirits these fairies and ‘evil spirits’ were, ghosts could be

73 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 45–6.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid., p. 39.
76 Davies, Haunted, pp. 19–20, 33.
77 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 2.
78 See, for instance, Ibid., pp. 49–50.
explained by the death or circumstances of a certain person, who was usually identifiable by name. The case of the luminescent ghost described at the beginning of this chapter is illustrative of this point as it was the discovery of the jawbone and the remembrance of Phillip Watkins’s disappearance which led to the identification of the spirit as a ghost.79

How ghosts appeared was a point of debate throughout the early modern period, perhaps culminating in the explanations of Spiritualism. For Jones it was an important thing to establish, as it would lend further credibility to the argument he was seeking to prove, but it is interesting that outside of the introduction he does not touch much upon the subject, focusing more on the numerous empirical demonstrations of the actuality of sprits’ reality. Still his explanation is surprisingly scant, noting only that ‘I know Spirits are invisible without making use of some matter proper to their condition to appear in, but who can say they never do this and prove it?’80 Related to this, he remarked that the touch of the spirit of Margaret Richard’s erstwhile lover was ‘like moist moss’.81 This statement is complicated, presupposing the dualistic existence of spirit and matter, as well as the ability of spirit to animistically act upon matter. It also, tellingly, treats this as an almost accepted truth, placing the burden of proof upon the critic to disprove it. Moreover, it is reminiscent of the Neoplatonic arguments put forth by Henry More in his Immortality of the Soul (1659). More suggested that the ‘Spißitude of the Aire . . . may contribute something to the frequency of these Spectra, is rationall enough, For it being more thick, is the more easily reduced to a visible consistency: but must be shaped, not by the fancy of the Spectatour, (for that were a monstrous power) but by the Imagination of the Spirit that actuates its own Vehicle of that gross Aire’.82 However More, and others following him, related the ability of a spirit to appear to the existence of their moral bodies and the moisture arising therefrom.83

79 Ibid., pp. 55–7.
80 Ibid., p. iii.
81 Ibid., p. 39.
83 Ibid.; Davies, Haunted, p. 39.
This obviously put a time restriction on how long after death a spirit could appear. Significantly, Jones’s accounts do not seem to conform to this restriction, but there were other conceptual and less ‘scientific’ restrictions as well. The dependence of ghosts on identity and relationship to the past meant that they were reliant on the historical knowledge and conceptualization of the observer rooted both in the landscape and community memory.  

Owen Davies notes that apparitions of Roman soldiers are a ‘modern phenomenon’, with the earliest accounts he has found occurring in the early-twentieth century. He attributes this to “‘swords and sandals” film epics, and the inclusion of the Roman invasion in school curricula’. It is interesting therefore that Jones records a personal encounter with what is supposed to be a Roman ghost. When travelling he stopped in Cybidiog in Pembrokeshire where he had heard of a gravestone wch had Latin letters upon it. When I went to seek for it, it was taken from the grave and put over a hog sty belonging to Mr Perkins of Rhadland. I crept into the hog sty with a candle in my hand to blacken the letters with the flame of it to make them legible. Mr Perkins a friendly affable man seeing my curiosity said, that for the satisfaction of the curious it should be taken off that I might read the stone writing in an easier posture. I opposed his removing it, but in vain, the words upon the stone seemed to me to be Valentine Raave. meaning that the ground under it was the grave of Valentinus Raavus, For the name being Inscribed in the genitive case Implying Sepultus the grave. this was the name of a Roman, And shews that the Romans extended to west Wales.

That night while Jones was sleeping, an invisible evil spirit disturbed his sleep and ‘caused such a terror as caused me to sweat and my flesh to tremble all night until the cock crowed. I believe it was because I meddled with the dead man’s grave stone, and likely it was his spirit that troubled me.’ It is perhaps significant that Jones did not actually see the ghost, but it is certain that his personal antiquarian knowledge concerning the gravestone informed his interpretation of it.

The ghosts in Jones’s accounts all appear for some purpose. This is not merely because of Jones’s religious and moral intentions: most ghosts appeared for a reason. In

85 Ibid., p. 42.
86 CL, MS. 2.249, p. 296.
87 Ibid., p. 297.
1880, Wirt Sikes noted that ‘spectres which are animated by a sense of duty are more frequently met than any others’. Some of these appeared to redress some moral wrong done to them. Jones’s Roman fits into this category, as did a couple of accounts of spirits who appeared in response to abuse of their skulls. The most common purpose of the apparition, as was discussed in Chapter Two, was to dispense of money or some other object which they had hidden during their lifetime. It is significant that in these stories, the objects of the ghostly visits do not seek the hidden treasure for personal gain, but are usually ordered to destroy it. Sikes claims that these types of stories were ‘an illustration, according to the popular belief, of the wickedness of hiding anything, however trifling its value – a practice strongly condemned by the Welsh peasantry’. Many examples of this have already been given, but one example from Breconshire is particularly interesting. In it, a spirit appeared to a young man in the form of a ‘well dressed woman’, and eventually he attempted to speak to her, but, being afraid, she told him not to fear and that he needed to travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and remove from a house a box containing £200 in half-crowns, instructing him to meet her the next Friday night. He told some of his neighbours and word of this reached the local curate who organized a prayer meeting for that Friday at which they desired his presence. He went along, but upon leaving, the spirit lifted him up and threw him into a river, criticizing him for having told others. She again told him not to fear and that she would not hurt him as she had not specifically forbidden him from telling the others. She then transported him to the house in Philadelphia where he retrieved the box and then was taken to a black sea, wherein he cast the box before she took him back. She then said she was free and told him ‘some secret thing’. ‘He was three days and three nights in this mysterious journey; which they only in the other world can

89 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 35–6. See also Chapter Five above.
90 Some exceptions have been noted in Chapter 2. See Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, pp. 2, 83–4; CL, MS. 2.249, p. 320.
91 Sikes, *British Goblins*, p. 156.
fully understand . . . when he came home he could hardly speak, and his skin was somewhat like leather; he can hardly look in any man’s face, and look’s rather sickly.  

This account is particularly noteworthy as it seems to deviate somewhat from the usual model. Both William Howells in 1813 and Sikes in 1880 recorded a standardized pattern for dealing with spirits. They must be enjoined to speak in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost and to reveal their business. The ghost would then relate its request, during which the hearer should not interrupt, though afterwards some questions were permitted, although they must be pertinent and not asked out of mere curiosity. Conversely, in this case, although it is somewhat unusual even for Jones’s accounts, it is the spirit which actually speaks first. Jones does not remark upon this, and while there is a general pattern apparent in Jones, it still deviates, at times, from that of the nineteenth-century sources. While a spirit is always addressed ‘in the name of God’, it is not necessarily done in the names of the three persons of the trinity as the later sources maintain it must be done. This does not seem to be Jones altering the account, as if he had, they would be more likely to follow a set pattern and not deviate from one another. It is possible, therefore, that the standardized formula was a nineteenth-century phenomenon, either imposed by the ‘scientific’ nature of nineteenth-century folkloristics or as a result of cultural homogenization brought about by increased literacy and greater facilitation of movement and communication. Sikes also noted that the hidden money had to be cast in a river, and ought to be thrown downstream and not upstream, something with which Jones’s account again does not conform, as the box is thrown in a stationary body of water. It is also interesting that in recording this specific account, although certainly using Jones as the source, Sikes claims that the spirit itself did not transport the man but rather employed the use of fairies, specifically the ‘boobach’ noting that ‘the fairies of Wales are

92 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 57–8.
93 W. Howells, Cambrian Superstitions (Tipton: Longman & co., 1831), p. 14; Sikes, British Goblins, pp. 148–9. It is highly probable that Sikes is utilizing Howells’s text in this instance although he does not cite Howells.
94 Sikes, British Goblins, p. 151.
indeed frequently found to be on the best of terms with the ghosts. Their races have much in common, and so many of their practices are alike that one is not always absolutely sure whether he is dealing with a fairy or a spectre, until some test-point crops up'. 95 Jones, however, relates that it was the spirit itself which carried the man, positing that perhaps spirits are not 'subject to the pressure of the Atmosphere as bodies are, and therefore inconceivably stronger' and that 'disembodied Spirits are vastly stronger out of the body, then they can possibly be in it, because it is a load about the Spirit'. 96 Jones is in agreement with Howells insofar as the spirits tend not to reveal information about their lot in the afterlife to the subjects of hauntings, 97 noting that this was because 'the strong corruption which corrupts every thing would be sure to make some ill use of larger and more particular knowledge of the things of the other world'. 98

**Death Portents**

Related to these spirits of the deceased are a set of beliefs, common to Welsh folklore, in spirits which were connected to death, particularly those which foretold death. One of the best known of these, the corpse candle, has been discussed at some length in Chapter Two. These were, as will be remembered, lights which appeared preceding a person’s death which moved along the path which the corpse would take on the way to burial, and which usually varied in size depending on the person (a large one symbolizing an adult and a small one a child or infant). 99 Sikes further added that some believed a white light symbolized a woman, and a red one, a man. 100 Jones does not seem to have made this distinction, and although he transcribes an account which was received from Morris Griffith of Pembrokeshire in 1777 which features a red light which foretells a death and moves towards the churchyard in his section which focuses on death portents, he does

95 Ibid., p. 157.
98 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 60.
100 Sikes, *British Goblins*, p. 239.
not mention the sex of the deceased.\textsuperscript{101} These candles also varied in form, sometimes appearing just as a light, sometimes as the individual, and sometimes as a full funeral procession. Howells recorded that if a person looked back after having passed by the candle they would see the corpse and the party accompanying it.\textsuperscript{102} Jones recorded several singular appearances of these apparitions. Some, for fear of looking at it too intently, saw only a shadow but some ‘said that some dark shadow of a man carried the Candle along, holding it between his three fore Fingers over against his face. . . But some others have seen the likeness of a Candle being carried in a skull.’ He goes on to add that ‘there is nothing unreasonable or unlikely in either of these representations.’\textsuperscript{103} The light was also supposed to sometimes appear out of the nose or mouth of the soon to be deceased, and Jones also records an account of this type.\textsuperscript{104} The corpse candles exhibited strange properties with regard to distance. The corpse candle which Joshua Coslet saw in Llandeilo Fawr parish in Carmarthenshire was a ‘small light when near him, but increasing as it went farther from him.’\textsuperscript{105} It was furthermore inadvisable to hinder the path of, or touch, a corpse candle in its progress. It was, according to Jones, ‘the common opinion, doubtless from some experience of it, that if a man should wantonly strike it, he should be struck down by it, but if one touches it unawares, he should pass on unhurt.’\textsuperscript{106}

These visual forebodings had their audible counterpart in the cyhyraeth. These were doleful, moaning noises, resembling the sounds of a man before death, which were heard preceding a burial, and often followed the course of the corpse on its way to the grave. Jones notes that they were ‘heard before the deaths of many, and most apt to be heard before foul weather’. The sound was heard first at a distance and then nearer, and finally very close, being loudest at a distance and then softer, but no less terrible at the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[101] Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, pp. 89–90.  
\item[103] Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 86.  
\item[104] Ibid., p.82.  
\item[105] Ibid.  
\item[106] Ibid., p. 86. 
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last. He discussed both the cyhyraeth and the corpse candles in his section on Carmarthenshire, noting that they were both most indigenous to this area and calls them ‘a double testimony of the being of spirits, and the Immortality of the soul’. There are reasons why death portents like these (and as shall be shown there were even more examples and types) appealed to Jones. They illustrated not only evidence of spiritual existence but also the soul’s immortality giving them a utility in conversion and instruction. Indeed, he notes that they were not as likely to be seen or heard in his own time because ‘the gospel which brings life and immortality to light . . . makes these things far less necessary than before’. The deep awareness of death extant in Jones’s eschatology could be found in these apparitions and thus they served a specific religious function, one which was being further fulfilled by the spread of religious knowledge in the Revival. The corpse candle itself enjoyed a certain vogue as a particularly ‘Welsh’ apparition, partly because of its particularity to that nation, but also perhaps because of its association with Wales’s patron saint. The Honourable Cymmrodorion Society’s Constitutions, which Jones mentions in Apparitions of Spirits specifically listed corpse candles amongst its types of preternatural manifestations to be discussed. The cyhyraeth has a similar association with David, insofar as Jones recorded (and he is echoed by Sikes) that the cyhyraeth was more often heard in the ‘Commots or Hundred of Ynis-Cenin; reason may be because Non, the mother of St David . . . lived in these parts’. However, it is possible that the further association of the corpse candle with Wales was partially caused by the cyhyraeth’s superficial association with the Irish banshee, giving it a ‘Celtic’ rather than a particularly ‘Welsh’ connotation. With the nineteenth-century influx

107 Ibid., p. 93.
108 Ibid., p. 94.
109 Ibid., p. 96.
111 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 95; See also Sikes, British Goblins, p. 221.
of Irish immigrants, and the banshee with them, there was further potential for confusion or assimilation.\textsuperscript{112}

A third and well-known type of death portent was the c\textsuperscript{w}n annwn, or ‘dogs of the otherworld’, which Jones variously names as ‘c\textsuperscript{w}n bendith eu mammau’ and ‘c\textsuperscript{w}n wybir’ (‘dogs of the fairies’, ‘sky dogs’).\textsuperscript{113} These spectral dogs, which were heard before death hunting souls, bear definite similarity to the furious host/hunt motif common to many European cultures, in which the members of the ghostly hunt are often departed souls themselves, usually of those who died in some liminal circumstance such as unbaptized infants and those who died at twilight, or else the souls of wicked men. They were often led by some important historic or folkloric figure such as King Arthur, or, in the Welsh case, Gwyn ap Nudd or Arawn, King of Annwn.\textsuperscript{114} In association with Arawn, they find description in the first branch of the Mabinogion when Pwyll encounters them: ‘they were a gleaning shining white, and their ears were red. And as the whiteness of the dogs shown so did the redness of their ears.’\textsuperscript{115} However, in one of Jones’s accounts they are described as ‘finely spotted with white and black’.\textsuperscript{116} Although there are several accounts of these dogs in Jones’s work, there are also many other spectral dogs and hell hounds which should perhaps not be identified as the c\textsuperscript{w}n annwn as such, which Jones seems to treat as more of an auditory than a visual phenomenon. He recorded an account of them hunting, but the entire experience is only heard. An acquaintance of Jones, out walking one night, heard ‘a hunting in the air, and as if they overtook something which they hunted after, and being overtaken made a miserable cry among them, and seemed to escape; but overtaken again, made the same dismal cry; and again escaped, and followed after till out of

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\item[113] Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 92.
\item[115] [Anon.] \textit{The Mabinogion}, trans. by Sioned Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 3.
\item[116] Jones, \textit{Apparitions of Spirits}, p. 91.
\end{itemize}
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hearing'. As the number three is known to be of importance in regards to the supernatural, both religious and folkloric, it is interesting that the quarry is thrice set upon and escapes, just as the cyhryaeth is heard three times. Moreover, the cŵn annwn exhibit the same peculiar properties with regard to distance as the previous two portents namely: 'the nearer they were to a man, the less their voice was, like that of small Beagles, and the farther the louder: and sometimes like the voice of a great Hound sounding among them, like that of a blood-hound; a deep hollow voice'. A concept of inversion is also common to early modern intellectual views of witchcraft, as the witch and the demonic were seen as the dialectical opposite of good community and religion. This inversion of physics, however, bears more resemblance to the bending of time and space found in encounters with the fairies. The defiance of normal phenomena associated with distance and sound highlights the unnatural and thus other-than-natural nature of these encounters.

Fairies

Foretelling death or other misfortune was one of the most common activities which Jones recorded as the fairies performing, but as opposed to the somewhat standardized manifestations of the corpse candles, cyhyraeth, and cŵn annwn, the fairies generally were more specific and graphic in the events they foretold. Of course, as has been seen above in the most basic questions of characterisation, there are certainly problems in stating anything categorically. One of the most common ways in which fairies appeared, according to Jones, was in the form of phantom funerals. These funerals usually mimicked funerals to come, even down to the appearance of the people involved and, like the corpse candles, the exact course that the body would take on the way to burial. One particularly complex appearance of a fairy funeral from Aberystwyth, which Jones also

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117 Ibid.
118 Ibid., p. 90.
120 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 70.
remarks was the last known in that parish, occurred about thirty-four years before his writing. Two men mowing in the fields belonging to the widow of Edmund Miles saw a marriage company crossing the field. At one point it met and passed by Mrs Miles's chief servant without his perceiving them. This foretold not only the death of Mrs Miles, but the marriage of her daughter, who was her heiress after the death of her brother-in-law, to that chief servant. In his section on Carmarthen, wherein he mostly discussed the death portents described above, he also described a fairy funeral (which he explicitly names as such) in which a man, lying in the lane, observed a procession where one of the fairies leapt over his legs, only to have a member of an actual funeral party do the same not much later. In the same section, he begins an account with 'The fore knowledge of these Corpse-Candle Spirits concerning deaths and burials is wonderful, particular as the following instance will show.' However, in the account itself he describes how a man heard a funeral procession pass by him and felt someone place her arm on his shoulder, saying 'Rhys bach, pa fodd yr ych chwi' ('Dear Rhys, how are you?'), and then soon after had an actual funeral mimic the experience. This sounds more like a fairy funeral than a corpse candle, especially as 'he saw nothing'.

Despite these confusions, in general the forebodings of the fairies tended to be more specific with other portents being more formulaic. Thus, a man of Aberystwyth heard 'as if some people were speaking one to another at some distance from him; and when he hearkened more attentively, he presently heard like the falling of a tree, which seemed to break other trees as it fell, and after that a weak voice like the voice of a person in pain and misery'. The man fell out of a tree and died not long after and Jones concluded that the voices had been those of the fairies, who imitated the sounds connected with his death. He also recorded a more allegorical example of general spiritual prescience of death wherein those attending Edward Lloyd of Llangurig parish in Montgomeryshire in 1712,
who was sick, heard a voice say 'Ymae Nenbren y Ty yn craccio; i.e. the uppermost beam of the house, the Rafter at the top cracketh; then soon after, Fe dorr yn y man; i.e. It will presently break; and soon after heard the same voice say, Dynafeyyn tori; i.e. There it breaks; just when he died'. 125 In his different works he discusses different means of attaining knowledge of these events by fairies and spirits generally. In his Account of the Parish of Aberystruth, he remarks about fairies’ prescience that ‘it cannot be supposed that either God himself or his Angels discovered this to these Spirits of darkness . . . They must therefore have this knowledge from the position of the Stars at the time of Birth, and their influence, which they perfectly understand beyond what mortal Men can do.’ 126 Conversely, in his Account of Apparitions of Spirits, he stated that ‘We cannot see that [spirits] can have such knowledge from the influence of the Stars, tho’ they have an influence upon the lives and deaths of men, whatever many say to the contrary; and where else these Spirits of darkness have this particular knowledge will remain a secret in the present life’. 127 This difference, or perhaps inconsistency, is difficult to interpret as the close publication dates of the two works somewhat precludes the supposition that Jones simply changed his mind, nor is there anything to indicate that that was the case. It may simply be a particular attribute or perhaps limitation of fairies as a result of their specific spiritual state which cut them off from the knowledge accessible to other spirits. This, however, is not expressly stated.

The fairies’ connections to human mortality and misfortune were tied to their larger religious and social function. Chapter Two has discussed the role of the supernatural in reinforcing social mores and limits. The example of Ann William Francis from Basaleg who received money for bringing water to dancing fairies works on multiple moral levels, both on the superficial level of the importance of doing kind turns and in the potential

125 Ibid., p. 52. The same account is recorded in Howells, Cambrian Superstitions, p. 65. Although he may have read this in Jones he does not cite him and his account is more generalized saying that ‘In some parts of North Wales, a voice has been heard when the husband of a house has been quitting for immortality’.
126 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystruth, p. 72.
127 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 90.
cover-up of illicit acts. Similarly, whilst ghost stories warned against hoarding money or other objects, fairies fulfilled the opposite function as any wealth received from the fairies ceased to appear or even disappeared if bragged about. Thus the two together promoted a median of acceptable behaviour regarding wealth. Fairies also reinforced good housekeeping by going into houses at night, especially when the weather was unpleasant. As a result, people would leave out water for them and make sure that the house was clean and no items which might offend them, like a knife or iron instrument, was left out.

There were ill-consequences which could occur if the house was not acceptable. Sir John Rhys recorded a story from one of Lady Llanover’s gardeners that a family who lived in the area used to be very kind to the fairies and leave out bread and milk for them near the fire. One night a servant left a bowl full of urine for them instead. The fairies took great offence at this and cursed him so that there would always be an ‘idiot’ in his family, something which the informant declared to be true. Moreover, about receiving money from the fairies, Sikes noted that

the virtues of hospitality and generosity were no doubt fostered by [this]. If any one was favoured by the fairies in this manner, the immediate explanation was, that he had done a good turn to them, generally without suspecting who they were. The virtues of neatness, in young girls and servants, were encouraged by the like notions; the belief that a fairy will leave money only on a clean-kept hob, could tend to nothing more directly. It was also made a condition of pleasing the Tylwyth Teg that the hearth should be carefully swept and the pails left full of water . . . Here is seen a precaution against fire in the clean-swept hearth and the provision of filled water-pails.

Fairies did not only affect the values of the household in terms of cleanliness, but also in terms of familial and parental virtues. The fairies would also enter houses to steal away children and replace them with changelings. Jones related that the fairies succeeded in stealing the son of Edmund John Williams of the Church Valley in Aberystwyth ‘leaving an Ideot in his stead’. There was ‘something diabolical in his aspect, but more of this in his

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128 Ibid., p. 34.
129 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 77.
131 Sikes, British Goblins, p. 125.
motion and voice; for his motions were mad, and he made very disagreeable screaming sounds, which frightened some strangers who passed by’. The child’s complexion was of ‘a dark tawny colour’ and he lived until he was around ten or twelve years old, which was ‘longer than such children used to live’. 132 The characteristics of such children resemble certain congenital or childhood disorders and the explanation of changelingism could have been a way of externalizing the issue and absolving the parents of the seemingly inexplicable but perceived culpability for the child’s condition. 133 Notably, Joyce Underwood Munro has examined the medical manifestations of ‘failure to thrive’, the symptoms of which mirror many of the characteristics of the changeling, and links their causation to lack of parental love and emotional support. 134 This function of the threat of changelings as reinforcing familial love is shown in some of the folkloric precautions against the stealing of children. Some, such as the placing of knife or a pair of tongs in the crib, follow from general fairy beliefs; in this case the fairy aversion to iron, even if the very act of taking such an action was precluded by an interest, on the part of the parents, in protecting the child. However others, such as the placing of an item belonging to the father in the crib, baptism (which symbolised the acceptance of the child), and especially the constant need to have someone with and watching the child, show the need for the parents to form a close emotional bond with the baby. 135 However, the surest defence against a child being stolen, as is already implied in baptism, was piety and religion, and it was this which prevented the taking away of a child from Jennet Francis of Ebbw Fawr. 136 This importance of religion in the household, as emphasized by Jones, perhaps accorded with the focus on devotional religiosity implicit in eighteenth-century Protestantism and

132 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, pp. 79–80.
136 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 79. See also Sikes, British Goblins, pp. 62–3.
revivalism. Moreover, faith in God was the best defence against fairies in general. In his *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*, Jones noted that 'the Apparitions of Fairies, and of other spirits of Hell . . . have very much ceased in Wales, since the light of the Gospel; and Religion hath so much prevailed'.¹³⁷ Howells gave a strikingly similar statement: 'It is said they were not partial at all to the Gospel, and that they left Monmouthshire on account of there being so much preaching, praying to, and praising God.'¹³⁸ In this, fairies reinforced Jones’s religious views in two ways: on the one hand, the belief in them was tied in its essence to the belief in God, and if they were believed to exist, faith in God was a vital protection against them.

In more than just function, fairies were a part of, although apart from, the community. This is because they, more than any other species of spirit, comprised their own community which interacted with human society. Although Jones regarded them as evil spirits of hell, he acknowledged that 'some were so ignorant as to think them . . . to be some happy spirits, because they had musick, and dancing among them'.¹³⁹ Jones’s own experience with the fairies shows this proclivity for dancing:

> It seemed to me as if they had been lately dancing, and that there was a Musician among them. Among the rest, over against the door, I well remember the resemblance of a fair woman with a high crown Hat, and a red Jacket, who made a better appearance than the rest, and whom I think they seemed to honour. I still have a pretty clear idea of her white Face, and well formed countenance: The men wore white Cravats; and I always think they were the perfect resemblance of persons who lived in the world before my time.¹⁴⁰

According to him their music was ‘low and pleasant, but none could ever learn the tune’. Howells, however, remarked that ‘[t]here are . . . many well composed Welsh songs, said to have been sung by fairies’, and both he and Peter Roberts included songs called *Cany Tylwyth Teg* in their works.¹⁴¹ Indeed, although Jones recorded that a girl from Ship Inn in

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¹³⁷ Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*, p. 84.
¹³⁸ Howells, *Cambrian Superstitions*, p. 137.
¹³⁹ Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystruth*, p. 78.
¹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 75–6.
Pontypool, who danced often with the fairies, ‘learned none of their Tunes’, he remarked that ‘yet there is in the Country a Tune, called the Tune of the Fairies’. Jones noted that when the fairies danced, they usually appeared like children. In his relation of the girl from Ship Inn, they are described as ‘like children’ wearing ‘blue and green aprons, all of small stature, and all looked oldish’. This is not unusual, as Rhys in his *Celtic Folklore* describes the fairies of Llanfabon in eastern Glamorgan as being ‘remarkable on account of their ugliness’. By way of explanation for their appearance, Jones notes that they might well look old ‘having their existence long before, none on earth knows how long’ and that beauty does not become such spirits of darkness. Even in their fun, fairies could be dangerous and he further noted that

> When they appeared like dancing Companies, they were desirous to entice persons into their company, and some were drawn among them and remained among them some time; usually a whole year; as did Edmund William Rees, a Man whom I well knew, and was a Neighbour, who came back at the year’s end, and looked very bad. But either they were not able to give much account of themselves or they durst not give it, only said they had been dancing, and that the time was short. But there were some others who went with them at night and returned some times at night, and sometimes the next morning; especially those persons who took upon them to cure hurts received from the Fairies.

Although the fairies dancing, stealing children, and foretelling death were certainly the most common apparitions, they do not fully convey the depth and level of interaction between the human and fairy communities. They seem to have had a full existence, including settlements and economy. Jones’s personal vision of the fairies set them in a sheepfold where there really was none. He remarked that, ‘It was sometime, before I could be persuaded that there was no fold in that place. There is indeed the ruins of some small Edifice in that place, most likely a fold, but so old that the stones are swallowed up, and almost wholly crusted over with earth and grass.’ This alludes to shepherding as a fairy

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142 Jones, *Apparitions of Spirits*, p. 50.
143 Ibid., p. 49.
144 Rhys, *Celtic Folklore*, I, p. 262.
146 Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth*, p. 70.
147 Ibid., p. 76.
profession, an idea which is backed by the vision of fairy sheep in Bedwellty in July 1760 described above. Moreover, John Jacob, a tailor from that same parish, when walking late at night found himself suddenly in 'a Town, and the resemblance of Shops, as there are in Towns, which all of a sudden vanished; and he saw where he was, and came to a neighbour's house'. As was pointed out in Chapter Two, the fairies of the area even participated in the coal trade, W. E. of Hafod-y-dafol having seen upon the Beacon Mountain 'the perfect likeness of a Coal race, where really there was none. Where many people were very busy: some cutting the Coal, some carrying it to fill the sacks, some rising the loads upon the horses backs, &c.' In addition to professions and towns, the fairies also had ranks and statuses within their own communities. Jones’s vision of the fairies notes one whom he thought 'they seemed to honour'. Discussing a group of dancing fairies from Glamorgan, Jones remarked that fairies 'used to appear with one taller than the rest among them . . . This taller spirit may be a principal one and a manager among them.' Indeed, the idea of fairy royalty is not uncommon, appearing in many fairytales and folkloric accounts, such as Queen Mab, Oberon and Titania, and the Welsh fairy king Gwyn ap Nudd. In short, the fairy community largely mirrored the community perceiving it.

This is certainly not coincident. Fairies as external but parallel imagined ‘others’ could serve as a canvas on which to project the ideals, both optimistic and terrifying, of the observer. Thus, in a way, fairies, like the other spirits discussed here, can potentially tell more about the society perceiving them than about themselves. Carol G. Silver has shown that Victorian art, literature, and folkloristics utilized fairies to externalize and discuss concerns about race and empire, female sexuality, and the lower classes. Similarly, Nicola Bowen has argued that the fairy in Victorian culture ‘provided a relief
from and a consolation to Victorians' overwhelming consciousness of the modernity of their world'. Though both of these deal with Victorians, Georgian Wales had its own ideals and questions. Whilst there are accounts in Jones’s works of fairies giving money, they are not characterised by opulence and riches, but rather personify a simple life which was fast disappearing. Although Jones does not focus overmuch on music and dancing (possibly for religious or moral reasons), it is obvious even from his accounts that these were an important part of eighteenth-century Welsh fairy-lore. In a Wales which was industrializing at the expense of leisure time, it is plausible that the temptation of dancing fairies was a nostalgic longing for past pursuits. In fact, Diane Purkiss has noted that fairies ‘associate themselves with places linked with a past that is visibly disappearing’. Jones’s fairies, with their ‘old fashioned’ appearance, represented a simple past, tied to the landscape and the people.

Finally, perhaps even more important than the types of fairies Jones does talk about, are the types he does not. Writing generally on the natures of British fairies, Katherine Briggs noted that

In Wales there seem again to be a variety of shapes for the fairies. The Bendith y Mamau belong to the ordinary fairy pattern; dancing, singing, stealing children and visiting human houses. The fairy wives are perhaps particularly characteristic of Wales, rising out of lakes, won by gifts of bread and cheese, and often bringing dowries of fairy cattle. The fairy wife is an universal concept, but the particular form she takes in Wales is characteristic . . . In Wales there are a great number of tales of the magical passage of time in Fairyland, and of men who crumble into dust on their return. This particular motif is more common in Wales than in stories of the same type elsewhere.

It is interesting that Briggs has singled out two types of stories as being particularly prevalent in Wales: namely the aquatic fairy bride and the youth who is transported to fairyland, sometimes for centuries, and only returns to die. Indeed, even a cursory perusal of the stories collected by the Welsh folklorists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries


reveals an abundance of precisely those types of stories singled out by Briggs as being prominent in Wales. Sikes devoted a chapter to each of these types of story with similar stories appearing in other chapters of the work, and the first chapter of Rhys’ s *Celtic Folklore* concerns ‘Undine’s Kymric Sisters’.

On the one hand, Jones’s failure to record the aquatic fairy bride story, at least, could perhaps result from it not being extant in the eighteenth-century Monmouthshire folk-record. If this was the case, it is perhaps understandable that in other parts of Wales, his Monmouthshire based perception of fairy-lore would preclude him from taking notice of or believing the story even if he encountered it elsewhere. Indeed, there is a startling lack of evidence in other sources that such stories existed in Monmouthshire, with neither Sikes nor Rhys relating a single Monmouthshire example. This could perhaps simply reflect a lack of suitable Monmouthshire lakes or that they felt that they had found enough examples from other areas and did not need Monmouthshire examples, but it is implausible that one with as scientific an approach as Rhys would neglect to include such examples if he knew of them. Still, even had Jones heard such stories, it is understandable that he would not include them. Silver has argued that it should not be seen as coincidence that ‘Victorian preoccupation with fairy brides reached its zenith in the 1880s and ‘90s, when the debates on other issues pertaining to women . . . were also escalating’. In this, the nineteenth-century commentaries on them ‘constitute a sociocultural history of the spectrum of Victorian attitudes toward women and marriage’. The concerns for Jones were different. This is not to downplay issues of gender, family, and sexuality in the period, but had Jones dealt with this type of story, the issue of copulation with spirits of hell would have been paramount to him. Above all this, however, is the issue of the story’s narrative style. Jones does not, with the exception of the Devil and the tailor story told

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158 Silver, *Strange and Secret Peoples*, p. 89.
159 Ibid., p. 95.
above, tend to relate narratives which follow standard narrative folk-motifs: their merit, to some extent relies on their brief, matter-of-fact style, instead of ‘good’ story telling.  

This issue of tales where men are transported to fairyland for hundreds of years and return only to die is more complicated. The more moderate form of the story mentioned by Jones, with the return after a year or a year and a day, is obviously another version of the same motif. However, Jones gives other accounts which are of interest when juxtaposed with the more extreme version of the tale. Firstly, there are stories where people enter a fairy revelry and are not taken. The girl from the Ship Inn in Pontypool who danced with the fairies on the way to and from school did so without being trapped in their circle, but they did dislocate her leg out of displeasure when she stopped going to dance with them. Perhaps more unusual is the story of two brothers from Cwmcelyn, near Aberystwyth, who heard fairies downstairs in their house one night. The one brother wished to go down to get a drink and despite his brother’s attempts to dissuade him, went anyway and passed through the dancing fairies and back without harm. Secondly, it is apparent that Jones did not have a problem with relating accounts in which people died as a result of encounters with the fairies. He noted several times that people often died as a result of offending the fairies by cutting down their favourite oak trees. Of greater relevance perhaps is the story where John Jacobs of Bedwellty found himself in a fairy town; albeit only there momentarily, he withered and died soon after. All this shows that themes and occurrences relevant to that type of tale were not unknown to Jones, but the issue of time remains. This problem of time is perhaps related to subjects of space and place and overt plausibility in Jones’s works. As John Harvey has pointed out, in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Romantic fairy paintings, the ‘setting of the apparition is often Romantic, visionary, otherworldly, or otherwise fantastic. In contrast,

160 See Harvey, Appearance of Evil, p. 16.
161 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 70.
162 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 49–50.
163 Jones, Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth, p. 79.
164 Ibid. 77, Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 41.
165 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, pp. 13–14.
Jones strove to suggest not the transcendence of the witness’s experience but the plausibility of the apparition’s presence by association with an actual place. Just as Jones’s apparitions were usually tied to specific personal observers, in actual places, they also needed to be tied to actual time and that time needed to be believable and memorable. Although some accounts go back as far as the seventeenth century, most occur in the eighteenth and thus in the memorable past, making them more immediate to the contemporary reader’s mind. A story spanning centuries simply would not have been as poignant.

The last type of fairy which Jones does not discuss is further tied to the social and economic circumstances of Jones’s contemporary community. One of the types of fairies listed as of interest in the Constitutions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion was Knockers, a species of fairies which inhabited mines. It is interesting, therefore, that despite their mention in this document, with which Jones was familiar, and his mention of the fairy coal race, he did not relate any accounts of fairies in mines. This may be indicative of the stage of industrial flux in which north-west Monmouthshire was at the time Jones was writing: coal was gaining importance, but not yet the main driver in the economy. Along these lines, it is no surprise that Sikes, with his intimate attachment to the Cardiff docks and the late-nineteenth-century Glamorgan coal industry, discusses this species of fairies. Jones’s one recorded foray into fairyland is similarly telling of socio-economic circumstance: the fairies live in a town with ‘the resemblance of Shops, as there are in Towns’. As has been said, fairies and fairyland naturally reflect the idealised perception of the observers. The medieval encounter between St Collin and Gwyn ap Nudd takes place in a splendid medieval castle. The nineteenth-century story of ‘Iolo the Bard’ in Charles Redwood’s The Vale of Glamorgan (1839) takes place in the ‘Valley

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166 Harvey, Appearance of Evil, p. 16.
167 Constitutions of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion, p. 37.
170 Sikes, British Goblins, pp. 7–8; Briggs, Fairies in Tradition and Literature, pp. 15–16.
of the Glooms'; a dream-like landscape which fits Harvey's description of 'Romantic, visionary, otherworldly, or otherwise fantastic'. Jones's fairyland, however, reflects the semi-urban existence of the observer, with a telling depiction of commerce, just as his coal race and sheepfold reflect occupations familiar to the observer. The fairy-realm as a lived and 'real' experience drew on and even mirrored its contemporary surrounding and the imagination and ideals of its human counterparts.

Conclusion

Jones's works on apparitions should not be viewed as simply works of either popular antiquities or religious commentary, but as both, along with a deep insight into the socio-economic situation of his contemporary community. The spirits and other supernatural activities were embedded in the social fabric. Many of them reinforced the social mores, values, and boundaries of the community, illustrating or prohibiting behaviours which were connected to personal interactions. More than this, the appearance and activities of different spirits were tied to social views of them, and the nature of the community itself. Ghosts, for instance, were reliant on the observer's perception and knowledge of the past in order to be conceived. Spirits, and their interaction with the world, were also reliant on a religious ontology which allowed them to exist. Jones's own religious views dictated what he saw as believable and possible for the spirits to be and do. Moreover, he saw their existence as a vital point for religious belief, and thus his promotion and proof of this belief was tied to his evangelism. In this he was following an intellectual tradition prominent in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, but one which was to some extent shared by revivalists like John Wesley. The emphasis on empiricism and personal experience, in both revivalism and Enlightenment thought, is apparent throughout Jones's works, and they impact upon the importance of proof and

plausibility to him. In short, it is only through looking at all of the different influences on Jones — social, religious, and intellectual — that we can fully appreciate the nature and content of his work.
CONCLUSION

‘How defective would the sacred Book of God, the Bible be, without all the accounts of Spirits contained in it?’¹ Thus Edmund Jones asked at the end of his ‘Rebuke to Infidels and Atheists’ in his Apparitions of Spirits. Similarly, this study has asked how defective would an understanding of Jones’s belief in and writings on spirits be without an understanding of Jones himself; or rather it has posited that such an understanding would be defective. In attempting to examine this belief, three main subjects have been discussed: the socio-economic environment of north-west Monmouthshire in which Jones lived, the religious environment in which he participated, and the intellectual environment in which he wrote. These three subjects have then each been related to apparitions which Jones wrote about and the way in which he wrote about them. The final chapter turned its attention to the apparitions, spirits, fairies, and magical practitioners, elucidating their nature and behaviour relative to Jones, his writing, and his environment. The conclusion gleaned from all this is that all of these factors both formed and informed his works.

In terms of north-west Monmouthshire, Chapter One showed that the eighteenth century was one of change. Industrial development, the movements of people and the creation of turnpike roads, greater literacy, the development of a public sphere in the form of increased access to published books, periodicals, and newspapers, changes in medical care and the medical profession, and some elements of polite and consumer culture,

¹ [Edmund Jones], Relation of Apparitions of Spirits in the Principality of Wales ([Trefeca]: [n. pub.], 1780), p. vi.
resulted in a culture which both served to challenge and augment elements of folk-belief. Witches reinforced community mores of good neighbourliness and charitable giving, ghosts cautioned against miserliness and the hoarding of wealth, while fairies gave gifts which ceased or even disappeared if spoken about, discouraging people from bragging about money. Belief in the supernatural also played a part in the formulations of communal boundaries, be they moral, or social conceptions of ‘self’ and ‘other’. It is perhaps not coincident that so many of Jones’s accounts concerned outsiders to the community, such as the gypsies which acted against Lewis Thomas and Jennet Francis; nor that they discourage immoral behaviour such as the terrible apparitions which prevented J. W. James from ‘debauching’ his female companion. At the same time, in terms of medicine, although newer forms of care and treatment such as professional physicians and wonder drugs and tinctures became more widespread, they existed alongside more traditional options such as cunning-folk and herbal remedies. Indeed, cunning-folk were common features of most communities and the most pervasive type of magical practitioner in Jones’s work. Still, Jones himself perceived that more traditional remedies like herbs were falling out of fashion. Similarly, as literate discourse expanded, it had the potential to simultaneously challenge, reinforce, and homogenise cultural beliefs. In all, this forged the form and function of folk-belief, and the changing attitudes and challenges to the supernatural that often accompanied these changes gave Jones a reason to urge his fellows to believe.

Jones’s relationship with revivalism, although not always cordial, helped to formulate a religious epistemology which facilitated his belief in spirits as well as an evangelical need to proselytise that belief and, in part, a medium or form with which to present it. The premium placed on personal experience by revivalist religiosity helped to create a quasi-empirical epistemology, somewhat correlating with Lockean-philosophy,

2 Jones, Apparitions of Spirits, p. 4.
3 Ibid., pp. 31–2.
based, in part, on a kind of faith-based ‘sixth sense’ of feeling from which religious knowledge could be gathered. Personal experiences of conversion and God were then shared between believers through a network of conversion narratives and other writings via a network of letters, diaries, religious publications, and revivalist periodicals, such as the Arminian Magazine or Weekly History. In his work on apparitions, the reality of spirits was validated by personal experience which informed theology and belief. Particular attention was paid to the person experiencing the account, their religiosity and veracity, and the impression which the encounter had upon them. As such, the accounts amount to a collection of individual narratives resembling, to a certain degree, the types of writing found in the conversion narratives and other personal testimonials of revivalist literature. Placed together in the text, they confirm and reinforce one another to form a fuller view of spirits, magic, and apparitions based on experience. Moreover, as has been stated several times in this study, Jones’s work on apparitions was written from a religious point of view and for a religious purpose. As such, the experiences were incorporated within a religious worldview and reinforced religious values and ideals. Jones saw the existence of spirits as integral to the existence of God and Christianity, and thus his work sought to prove their existence to reinforce religiosity and, ultimately, save souls.

In emphasising the intimate and necessary connection between the belief in spirits and the belief in God, Jones identified himself with an intellectual tradition of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century, typified by the work of Joseph Glanville, Henry More, George Sinclair, Richard Baxter, and Meric Casaubon. Jones was not the only revivalist to ascribe to this view and John Wesley also wrote from this perspective in one of his published diaries. However, within eighteenth century intellectual and polite public discourse, the enthusiastic belief in fairies, to a great extent, had fallen out of fashion. Other modes of conceptualisation and expression relative to spirits, beliefs, and fairies

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emerged in the form of Romanticism, the Gothic movement, and the study of popular antiquities. Moreover, fairies and other spirits were rarely discussed at all within Welsh public discourse, although they did appear in more ‘private’ writings such as correspondence of the Morris brothers and as a point for possible discussion in the Constitutions of the Honourable Society of Cymrmodorion. When fairies were discussed, Welsh writers often sought to dismiss or excuse the belief of their countrymen, with Iolo Morganwg blaming the ‘superstititious’ elements of Welsh manuscripts on Catholic monks and Theophilus Evans emphasising that if Welshmen were superstitious, they were no more so than other nations, and even suggesting that the belief in fairies had its origins among ‘Gothic’ peoples, indicating the English. Although Jones felt it necessary to state that Wales was not a ‘hellish’ place, more haunted than England, and that there were as many ‘good and virtuous people in Wales’ as anywhere else in Great Britain, his work unabashedly argues for the reality and belief in apparitions. However, he was to a certain extent aware of his cultural and intellectual surroundings. Account of the Parish of Aberystwyth was written in the form of a parish history and roughly based on a questionnaire from the April 1755 Gentlemen’s Magazine. Apparitions of Spirits was published anonymously, conscious of the criticism it would invite; and took special care in emphasizing the empirical nature of its many accounts. Moreover, both tend to be reactionary, defensive, and argumentative, conscious of the tenor of the intellectual culture in which he was writing.

These three factors, the socio-economic, religious, and intellectual environments, impacted upon Jones’s beliefs in spirits, but they were given a template for construction by the folkloric beliefs of eighteenth-century Wales. Jones may have imposed his religious ideology on the accounts which he recorded, but at the same time they can give intriguing insight into wider Welsh supernatural belief in the period. The uniqueness of Jones’s work, being one of the only and fullest accounts of eighteenth-century Welsh beliefs concerning fairies, ghosts, spirits, and magical practitioners, can provide a view of these beliefs in Welsh culture, if the idiosyncratic influences affecting Jones’s writing can be taken into account. Fairies may be described by Jones as dark denizens of hell, but they are still presented as wearing bright clothes and enjoying music and dancing. Indeed although he emphasises their fallen nature, Jones’s fairies still present a mixed picture of pleasant and jovial as well as dark and dangerous. By attempting to classify his accounts, their complex and heterogeneous natures become apparent, as some of them defy neat and exact labels or definitions. As with the forms his fairies and spirits took, their type is also dictated by the accounts which Jones received from others. Instead of a work dominated by dramatic possessions, witches, or ‘poltergeist’ activity (although the last two do play a part), fairies, ghosts, and generic apparitions play a larger role, along with particularly Welsh examples such as the cŵn annwn, canwyllau corff, and cyhyraeth. Thus with such rich material present in his works, when the influences impacting upon Jones’s writing and his own voice, biases, and direction are identified, his accounts can begin to be dissected and examined, allowing a unique and intriguing insight into eighteenth-century Welsh folk-belief.

Unfortunately, an insight is all that is available. The historian of folk-culture is perpetually plagued by the limited nature of access to lost oral cultures and the inherent biases and views of the source materials. Jones’s writings on apparitions, as rich and detailed as they are, only present a fraction of what might have existed. Moreover, attempting to identify an author in his text is immensely complicated and impossible to do
in anything approaching an absolute degree. However, even in attempting to do so unique and important elements can be identified and a fuller view be gained. Jones’s life, like all lives, was immensely complex, and the limited existence of sources, most notably the loss of his autobiography and most of his diaries, is to be deeply lamented. In this study, only three main aspects of his life have been examined, and further study is needed into his ‘Spiritual Botonology’ and work on seventeenth-century religious writers in particular. However, the aspects examined were, arguably, the most important, and the ones most reflected in his writings in apparitions.

In his work *Celtic Folklore: Welsh and Manx*, Sir John Rhys wrote

> I take it for granted that no liberally educated man or woman of the present day requires to be instructed as to the value of the study of history in all its aspects, or to be told that folklore cannot be justly called trivial, seeing that it has to do with the history of the race – in a wider sense, I may say with the history of the human mind and the record of its development.\(^\text{10}\)

Reading past the parlance and theory of early twentieth century folkloristics, the point which Rhys is making resonates within this study. Examining the folkloric beliefs of eighteenth century society serves to expand the historical view of the period and further our understanding of systems of belief and thought. Historians such as Owen Davies and Willem de Blécourt, have begun the investigation into witchcraft, magic, and the supernatural after 1736, and this is immensely useful in furthering our conceptualisation of both the period and belief in the supernatural.\(^\text{11}\) This also serves to break down the conceptualisation of a dialectical opposition between different elements of eighteenth-century thought, such as that between ‘Enlightenment’ and ‘revivalism’, or, indeed, ‘Enlightenment’ and ‘superstition’. Jones’s worldview was complex, deliberated, and studiously informed. Within this worldview spirits, apparitions, fairies, and magic formed

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a significant and integral part, but their presence in it was ‘reasonable’ to Jones, and consistent with his religious, social, cultural, and intellectual views and experiences.
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