THE BATTLE OF THE SITES:
A NATIONAL MUSEUM FOR WALES

Thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Leicester

by

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This study has examined the progress towards a national museum for Wales; the perception of museums in the civic and national context; and the changes in this perception under the influence of alternative cultural and political agendas. To understand the perception of museums in the contending towns, the history of the relevant societies and their museums and their place in the civic environment, has been examined. With a greater certainty of a grant for a national museum in the early years of the twentieth century, the place of the museum in the civic and national arena took on a new role. This change in the status of the museum has been studied in the context of a growing sense of Welsh nationalism along with the differing political activities in the contending towns. The decision concerning the location of the national museum lay with the central government in London. The activities of this political operation has been examined as has the reaction to the decision in Wales. The purpose of this historiography has been to evidence the use of these museums - in particular, the proposed national museum for Wales - as instruments by people and organisations in the achieving of their various aims. To those with civic ambition the possession of the national museum would be symbolic of the capital of the Principality. Possession of the national museum, therefore, would bring commensurate status and power. To the civic leaders of Cardiff, the museum was an instrument in their drive for civic hegemony.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Newport City Council for allowing me to pursue this work and for the funding during the early years. My colleagues within the Museum and Heritage Service - particularly Bob Trett, Mike Lewis, Rachael Anderton and Annette Wells - have provided encouragement. Staff in the Newport Reference Library have been very helpful in obtaining documents and papers and other publications through inter-library loan; I would like to thank Alex Jarvis and Jo Edwards in particular. I would also like to thank Louise Carey of the Library of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales who was very helpful. The staff of Cardiff Reference Library, Cardiff Local Studies Library, Swansea Reference Library and the National Library of Wales have all been helpful and efficient. My thanks go to the staff of the Glamorgan Records Office and the Public Records Office. Bernice Cardy and Michael Gibbs of the Swansea Museum Service have been particularly helpful, as has Tom Sharpe of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales who smoothed my access to the De la Beche papers. I am grateful to my sister Heather Campbell who gave me much support and sensible advice. Derek Richards proof-read the text for which many thanks. My thanks to Zeljka Whittaker who helped with sources and discussions on nationalism in general. Olwyn Jones has been a source of encouragement and support during some difficult times in the process of this work for which I will always be grateful. Finally, I am extremely grateful to Simon Knell who guided my work over the years and was a constant source of sound advice and encouragement; he had confidence in my work when I had little confidence in myself. Without Simon’s support this thesis would never have reached fruition. Thanks Simon.
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ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAAS</td>
<td>British Association for the Advancement of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>County Borough of Cardiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>County Borough of Swansea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Cardiff County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLSL</td>
<td>Cardiff Local Studies Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>Cardiff Naturalists’ Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD</td>
<td>Diaries of Lewis Western Dillwyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DlaB</td>
<td>H. T. De la Beche correspondence collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRO</td>
<td>Glamorgan Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>Monmouthshire Merlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLW</td>
<td>National Library of Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMGW</td>
<td>National Museums and Galleries of Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMW</td>
<td>National Museum of Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RISW</td>
<td>Royal Institution of South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLSS</td>
<td>Swansea Literary and Scientific Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>Swansea Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLI</td>
<td>Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRL</td>
<td>Swansea Reference Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>Swansea Scientific Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWDN</td>
<td>South Wales Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>Western Mail</td>
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CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1802
Lewis Weston Dillwyn arrives in Swansea to take control of the Cambrian Pottery purchased for him by his father.

1804
The *Cambrian*, first English language newspaper in Wales launched
L. W. Dillwyn elected FRS at the early age of 26.

1809
The Bristol Institution established.

1810
John Vivian opens the first of his copper-smelting furnaces at Hafod.

1811
Separation of the Welsh Methodists from the Church of England

1812
Vivian & Sons offer £1,000 reward to anyone who can invent a remedy for the pollution from their copper works. This interested Michael Faraday and Sir Humphrey Davy.

1818
L W Dillwyn High Sheriff of Glamorgan.

1821
Swansea the first town in Wales to be lit by gas.
‘The Cambrian Institution for the Encouragement of Pursuits in Geology, Mineralogy and Natural History’ established in Swansea
1822
J H Vivian elected MP for Swansea. Re-elected until 1855.

1823
Paviland Cave excavated by Wm Buckland, L W Dillwyn, John Traherne and Miss Talbot.

1826
'Swansea Tradesman’s and Mechanics’ Institution’ established - the first in Wales
'Cardiff Mechanics’ Institute’ established

1831
C R M Talbot elected FRS
William Edmund Logan moves to Swansea as accountant to the Forest Copper Company. The importance of the South Wales coalfield to his industry starts his interest in geology.
Establishment of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, first meeting in York.

1832
The Great Reform Act - increased Welsh representation in Parliament from 27 to 32.
Indictment of Copper Works as a nuisance.
L W Dillwyn elected MP for Glamorgan

1835
The Municipal Corporation Act
Ordnance Geological Survey established with Henry De la Beche as Director.
'Neath Museum and Society for Promoting the Arts and Sciences’ established
'Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institution’ established
August - SPLI Museum open for Swansea Regatta
1837
Talbot family, Margam Castle, opens a new dock on the River Afon creating Port Talbot.
L W Dillwyn does not stand for re-election to Parliament.
Geological Survey moves into South Wales, based at Swansea

1838
Royal patronage conveyed on Swansea Philosophical and Literary Society and the name changes to Royal Institution of South Wales.
24th Aug - Foundation stone laid for the RISW building.

1839
Bute West Dock, Cardiff opened - contributes to the success of Cardiff as the major coal exporting port
Lewis Western Dillwyn, elected Mayor of Swansea.

1840
John Gwyn Jeffreys elected FRS
William Robert Grove elected FRS.

1841
‘Cardiff Mechanics’ Institute’ established.

1845
‘Swansea Literary and Scientific Society’ established.

1846
Cambrian Archaeological Society established.
1847

RISW AGM; proposal for the Royal Institution of South Wales society to be elevated to a College in 2 forms; 1- similar to Royal Society conferring Fellowships and; 2- higher education establishment for conferring Diplomas.

Publication of the ‘Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales’ which attacked the social and religious habits of the Welsh. Became known as the ‘Treachery of the Blue Books’ (Brad y Llyfrau Gleision) after the blue binding of the reports.

1848

Cardiff Mechanics’ Institute reconstituted as the Cardiff Athenaeum and Mechanics’ Institute.

Aug - BAAS meets in Swansea. L W Dillwyn a Vice President.

1850

South Wales Railway extends to Swansea.

1851

SLSS AGM - a proposal to incorporate the SLSS with the RISW. This is rejected at the 1852 AGM

Religious census shows the majority of Welsh church-goers are non-conformists.

1856

Welsh national anthem composed by Evan James, a weaver from Pontypridd.

1857

The Swansea Literary and Scientific Society dissolved

RISW proposes a School of Sciences but this did not progress.

RISW creates Associate membership

Cardiff Athenaeum and Mechanics’ Institute closes.
1858
Rhymney Valley railway opens for the transportation of coal.
Bute East Dock opens in Cardiff for coal export.
National Eisteddfod, Llangollen, discusses a possible national institution for the storage of Welsh manuscripts and documents

1859
South Dock Swansea opens

1860
Cardiff Corporation - proposal to adopt the Libraries Act lost by 1 vote.

1861
Cardiff - promotion to raise funds by public subscription for a Free Library and Museum

1862
Cardiff Corporation adopt the Free Libraries Act and take over the Library and Museum.

1863
Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution closes

1864
Cardiff Library and Museum moves to rented rooms in the YMCA building in St Mary Street.

1867
Reform Act widens franchise and increases representation of Wales in Parliament.
‘Cardiff Naturalists’ Society’ established to support the museum in Cardiff.
Cardiff - Rate of 1d in the £ made by way of grant to the Free Library.
Rev Thomas Rees proposes the library of the RISW as the location for a national library

1868
General elections. Majority of Liberal MP’s for the first time in Wales - 21 Libs, 12 Conservatives.

1869
*Western Mail* launched in Cardiff.
Cambrian Archaeological Association discuss the possibility of a national museum at their Bridgend meeting.

1870
The Cardiff Museum opens for a few hours per week.
Carnarvon proposes the Castle as a possible national museum

1871
The Cardiff Museum extends to the whole of the top floor of the YMCA building.
Swansea opens its first public library.

1872
First University college formed in Wales at Aberystwyth.

1873
Aberystwyth College begins collecting Welsh books and manuscripts.

1874
Roath Basin, Cardiff opens.

1875
Proposal for the relocation of the Royal Institution of South Wales
1876
John Storrie appointed part-time Curator of Cardiff Museum; the Museum to be opened 30 hours a week. He resigns 6 months later

1877
F W Rudler proposes a National Museum of Wales based at Aberystwyth.
'Swansea Geological Society' established

1878
John Storrie appointed first full-time Curator of Cardiff Museum.

1879
John Storrie resigns as Curator of Cardiff Museum.
Matthew Cochrane appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum.
Cardiff Free Library Committee reorganise the Museum Sub-committee so that the management of the Museum is now under 9 people, 6 of whom are members of CNS. Prior to this the management was wholly with members of CNS. Tenby propose their museum as the location for a national museum.
'Swansea Geological Society' changes its name to 'Swansea Scientific Society'.

1880
Matthew Cochrane resigns as Curator of Cardiff Museum
A. C. Cruttwell appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum. He resigns 10 months later.
Aug/Sept, BAAS meeting in Swansea
27th Oct, Cardiff - foundation stone laid for a new Library, Museum and Schools for Science and Art.
Re-organisation of the National Eisteddfod.

1881
John Storrie appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum.
Sunday Closing Act - first legislation in modern times dealing exclusively with
Wales.

Aberdare Report on education in Wales - called for network of secondary schools and two more university colleges.

Cardiff Council resolve to secure the proposed University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire for Cardiff - the first ‘Battle of the Sites’.

Prince of Wales Dock, Swansea opens.

John Storrie reappointed Curator of Cardiff Museum.

1882

The Cardiff Library, Museum, Science and Art Schools move into the new building in the Hayes.

Draft scheme for the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire submitted to Mr Mundella, Minister of Public Education. Arbitrators selected to decide between Cardiff and Swansea.

1883

Arbitrators select Cardiff as the site for the new University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire.

1884

University College, Bangor opens.

Reform Act, redistribution of boundaries and addition of four Welsh seats in Parliament.

1885

The Society for the Utilisation of the Welsh Language founded and helped in the passing of the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889.

Cardiff Town Clerk reports that the Council has no power to veto or control the proceedings of the Free Library and Museums Committee.
1886
*Cymru Fydd* (Young Wales) League formed within the Liberal Party to press for home rule for Wales.

1887
CNS draw up a petition requesting more space for the Museum. As a result, the Science and Art Schools moved elsewhere and the Museum occupy that space.

1888
Local Government Act

1889
Welsh Intermediate Education Act passed allowing the new county councils to finance secondary education from the rates.

1890
The issue of a national museum for Wales first raised in Parliament

1891
National Institutions (Wales) Bill; Alfred Thomas MP for Carnarvonshire fails to get this Bill through Parliament.

1892
National Institutions (Wales) Bill; Alfred Thomas MP for Carnarvonshire fails to get this Bill through Parliament again.

1893
Cardiff adopts the Museums and Gymnasium Act 1891 and the Museum is administratively separated from the Library with its own committee.
John Storrie resigns as Curator of Cardiff Museum.
John Ward FSA appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum.
Eisteddfod, Pontypridd - Brynmor Jones proposes a national museum for Wales. Herbert Lewis MP for Flint Boroughs, places Notice of Motion in Parliament claiming a share of the Museum grant for Wales. This fails to reach the House due to lack of support.

1894
Park Place, Cardiff identified as new site for Cardiff Museum.

1896
The Cwmru Fydd league collapses after a meeting in Newport. Alfred Thomas MP for Glamorgan East, succeeds in raising a Motion in the House for a share of the Museum grant for Wales. The Motion is carried.

1897
Cardiff submits application for City status

1898
Cardiff Corporation purchases Cathays Park from the Marquis of Bute to build the Civic Centre - the first purpose-built in Britain - and as a possible site for a national museum.
Herbert Lewis MP raises the question of a share of the Museum grant for Wales again in Parliament. The Motion is lost.
Select Committee of the Museums of the Science and Art Department suggest expanding the loan system of the South Kensington Museum to Wales.

1899
Cardiff Corporation distributes a document to all the governing bodies in Wales advocating the establishment of a national museum for Wales.
Herbert Lewis MP raises the proposed national museum for Wales during the debate on the Museum Estimates in Parliament.
1901
Cardiff Cymmrodorion Society urges Cardiff Corporation to take a more active approach in ensuring the national museum for Wales be located in Cardiff.
Cardiff Corporation distributes a Memorial inviting governing authorities in Wales to petition the Government for a national museum for Wales.
Cardiff Museum changes its name to, 'The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities'.
'Swansea Welsh Society' established.

1902
Swansea Welsh Society present a deputation to the Borough of Swansea to adopt the Museums and Gymnasiums Act (1891) to establish a municipal museum with a view to the location of a national museum for Wales in Swansea.
Meeting between Corporation of Swansea and the Royal Institution of South Wales society to discuss the possibility of the Corporation taking over the Museum of the RISW as a municipal museum.
Swansea adopts the Museum and Gymnasiums Act (1891) but does not set rate.
RISW opens its refurbished galleries.
Cardiff Corporation memorialise all public institutions in Wales to petition Parliament for a national museum for Wales, its location to be determined by arbitration.
Cardiff submits application for City status.

1903
William Jones MP for Carnarvonshire raises the proposed national museum for Wales in Parliament.
Meeting of Welsh MPs to discuss the proposed national museum for Wales.
Welsh MPs form a sub-committee under Sir Isambard Owen to investigate the possibility of a national museum for Wales.
1904

Sir Isambard Owen reports back to the Welsh MPs on his findings relating to a national museum for Wales. His proposals include costs of building and annual maintenance, the separation of the museum and library, and their locations to be determined by arbitration.

Sir William Anson, Secretary to the Board of Education, visits Aberystwyth and Cardiff and reports to Austen Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, that these two towns would seem to be the most appropriate locations of the library and museum respectively.

1905

Appointment of the Privy Council Committee to determine the locations of the national museum and library of Wales.

Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Carnarvon and Swansea submit Memorials for the location of the national museum and/or library to be located in their towns.

10th June Report of the Committee of the Privy Council - announcement that the National Museum was to be in Cardiff and the National Library in Aberystwyth.

October - Cardiff gains city status.

1906

General election returns all Liberal MP's in Wales.

1912

Foundation stone of the National Museum of Wales laid by King George V and Queen Mary.

1927

The National Museum of Wales opens to the public.
On the 8th June 1905, the Committee of the Privy Council announced its decision to site the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff and the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. It was a decision which brought disappointment and recriminations to some and satisfaction to others. Aberystwyth had bid for the National Library and achieved its aim. Carnarvon and Swansea had supported the siting of the National Library in Aberystwyth but failed to acquire the National Museum for their towns. Cardiff had bid for both institutions and was disappointed at losing the National Library. The decision was the culmination of a long period of debate and political manoeuvring which rose to a final few years of intense activity. This, then, was the 'prehistory' of the National Museum - the period within which the concept of a national museum was constructed and possessed. This prehistory forms the subject of this thesis. And that subject is revealed through a study of the evolving science culture of South Wales. This in turn has two aspects: the social history of natural history and the museology of science.

The Social History of Natural History

This battle for the museum needs to be understood in the context of the growth and development of the associated social groups in the relevant towns of South Wales. This activity was dominated by the study of natural history during the nineteenth century and led to the establishment of learned societies and museums. It is a field of investigation which has attracted much attention from researchers over the last forty years. David Allen's pioneering work revealed a culture of natural history activity that drew the middle classes in particular into a growing network of learned societies with certain key individuals playing a particularly significant role. It is primarily the

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1 Allen (1976; 1977; 1987; 1993, 1994). A number of other authors have taken a view of the history of Victorian natural history with different emphases, for example; Barber (1980) concentrates on the period 1850-1870; Merrill (1989) discusses natural history and links with literature and art; Ritvo (1987) discusses the social history of animals and their relation to humans in Victorian society, a relationship which affected their study; and Pyenson and Sheets-Pyenson (1999) take an international view of scientific institutions including scientific (continued...)
study of botany that Allen uses to illustrate this social activity, botanists having a more identifiable communication structure in their systems of specimen exchanges and species mapping. Allen’s early work concentrates on the societies and individuals themselves without relating this to the political or civic environment within which they existed or the formation of museums. Other workers, as well as Allen himself, have used this groundwork to move on to more specific areas of analysis.

Simon Knell studied fossil collecting in early nineteenth-century Yorkshire in order to reveal the social culture of ambition and meritocratic progress bound up with the practise of geology. The ambitions were towards a greater understanding of the natural world and the contribution to personal, societal and civic status. The possession of key specimens and collections imbued a status on the owner, be that individual or society, “the reputation one might acquire from the supposedly scientific and therefore culturally meritorious occupation of fossil collecting could contribute significantly to one’s social standing”. The search for symbols of status through scientific activity are reflected in this study of the rival towns of South Wales. In both studies, the arrival of the Geological Survey impacted on the activities and social and scientific ambitions of local philosophers giving them opportunities for advancement - John Phillips in Yorkshire and William Logan in South Wales.

Anne Secord has concentrated on the investigation of the natural history activities of the working classes. She has revealed a group who demonstrate significant involvement in the study of natural history but who were excluded from established

\[\text{(...continued)}\]

societies and museums. For a statistical history of learned and scientific societies, see Cohen, Hansel and May (1954). For a discussion on the range of voluntary societies and associations in this period, see Morris (1990)

Knell (1997; 2000)
Knell (2000) p.325
Secord, A. (1994a; 1994b; 1996)
societies and their publications:

"Fearful of the ability of the working class to appropriate knowledge for its own ends, the middle class increasingly rendered working-class scientific activity politically neutral through control over printed texts"5

Such exclusion of any recognition of their work was further exacerbated by the convention of anonymity in the literature.6 Marginal activity in scientific investigation has also been examined by Paul Elliott from a social sciences perspective.7 As well as the activities of artisans, he examines the roles played by other marginal groups - women, dissenters and immigrants - in the spread of scientific study and the way in which this inspired other intellectual activities across all groups in society. Whilst the investigation of artisan scientific work is not a significant part of this thesis, Secord's and Elliott's observations of the dominance of the upper and middle classes in natural history activity, in Secord's case in the northwest of England, is reflected in this area of South Wales.

Much history of science concentrates on experimental activity in the laboratory. Secord drew this examination out into a less obvious location - the pub. Further analysis of the different spaces where the activities relating to the natural sciences took place has been studied by Dorinda Outram and Samuel Alberti.8 They have analysed individual and group activities, the location of these activities, and their links to other aspects of society and culture. Outram contends that, "little attention has been paid to the 'spaces' of science which lie outside the built environment".9 Alberti attends to this by examining the spaces of field as well as laboratory and museum in late nineteenth century Yorkshire. He adopts what he describes as an

5Ibid p299
6For a discussion on objectivity in scientific texts and the subsequent anonymity of contributors, see Shapin and Schaffer(1985)
7Elliott(2003)
8Outram(1996); Alberti(2000, 2002)

3
'ecological' approach to his study, examining the interconnected links between practitioners of science and their civic community. The spaces where natural history took place in South Wales will be examined here and will include the field, the lecture room, the society meeting place, and the museum. As with Alberti, the links between these sites and their social and civic community will be studied.

The collective science activity in one nineteenth century town, Manchester, has been studied by Kargon. This study of science in the civic space includes the literary and philosophical societies and the university, as well as the science practised within the purview of the developing municipal authority, and the network that enmeshed these institutions. As with Alberti, Kargon examines, "... the 'ecology' of the scientific institutions of the city", their aims and practices and composition which, "... provide a setting for the practice and dissemination of science". This examination of natural history activity within a single municipal area is reflected in the activities in South Wales - particularly Cardiff.

The literary and philosophical societies flourished in the early nineteenth century under a range of guises and, as has been discussed, their activities have been examined most significantly by Allen and, in Manchester, by Kargon. More recently, Alberti and Knell have examined the literary and philosophical societies of Yorkshire illustrating the range of activities relating to the natural sciences including collecting, lectures and laboratory work as well as the establishment of the

---

10 Adopting this biological analogy, with his use of Miall as the protagonist, his method could be better described as 'auto-ecological'.

11 Outram also considers the 'domestic' space in science, many curators having living quarters within, or adjacent to, their professional space. Although the Curator of the Royal Institution of South Wales in Swansea had living quarters in the building, his occupation was more of a caretaker than as a curator in the sense of Albert Gunther at the British Museum or Richard Owen at the British Museum(Natural History). Any discussion of the 'domestic' space of science in this context would not be appropriate.

12 Kargon(1977). See also Neve(1983) for a discussion of the scientific activity in Bristol, focussing on the Bristol Institution, in the first half of the nineteenth century.

13 Ibid p5

14 Op.cit
This thesis will also examine the range of activities undertaken by the local natural history organisations in Swansea and Cardiff for which the social structures illuminated by these studies form appropriate models. It is the work of Allen and Alberti which has particular relevance in its study of the social history of the learned societies, their structure and activities, and their place in the civic environment.

Museology

Museums as we understand them today are a product of modern European culture; repositories of the tangible evidence of human physical and intellectual development; a three-dimensional articulation and aggrandisement of human cultural progress. During their development, museums have been seen to have a range of different purposes. Individuals, societies and states have seen museums as instruments to be used in the manipulation of status and power; they could reflect the knowledge and achievement of their creator and imbue upon them such status and power. They could also present to the gaze the epitome of cultural achievement to be revered and aspired to - to serve as an example of the rewards of human intellectual endeavour. In the hands of a ruling elite, museums could be used to adjust the history of a nation giving a biased representation of the status held by individuals in the society. The growth in museum creation during the nineteenth century was partly driven by the role of the museum as an instrument in the social manipulation of the lower classes by the political administration - a respectable alternative to the low tavern or gin-palace; an example to be followed; a reinforcement of the social class status system.

It is the use of museums as instruments in the hands of political administrations with

\[\text{\textsuperscript{15}}\text{Alberti}(2003); \text{Knell}(1997, 2000)\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\text{For example,} \text{Hooper-Greenhill}(1992); \text{Findlen}(1994); \text{Bennett}(1995)\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\text{For example} \text{Cannizzo}(1987); \text{Wallis}(1994); \text{Lira}(1999,2002)\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\text{For example;} \text{Greenwood}(1888) \text{p.389}; \text{Bennett}(1995) \text{pp17-25, 48-58, 99-102.}\]
a view to augmenting civic status that is the concern of this study. Here I examine how the town of Cardiff in Wales saw the acquisition of the national museum for Wales towards the end of the nineteenth century as further supporting evidence in their claim for city and capital status, using the proposal for the future presence of the museum as an instrument in their drive for civic hegemony. This mirrored a previous 'Battle of the Sites' for a national institution - the University College of South Wales in 1883 - as discussed by Roderick, which was also an acrimonious battle won by Cardiff.

There have been a number of histories of individual museums, notably in the last quarter of the twentieth century to celebrate the institutions' centenaries. These histories have, of necessity, been chronological with additional biographies of protagonists and descriptions of significant collections. Whilst these studies provide an essential groundwork to understanding institutions, actors and collections, they tend to avoid establishing a richer social or civic context. Of the museum histories relating to Swansea and Cardiff, it is the work of Bassett on the National Museum of Wales which has the most relevance to this thesis. He gives a broad introduction to the early museums in Cardiff before embarking on a detailed study of the National Museum from the date of its being, 1905, the point at which this thesis ends.

Knowledge of the world imbues status and power on the possessor, and collections and museums can be seen as tangible indicators of the possession of such knowledge. Possession assumes permission to investigate and gain further knowledge. In the early nineteenth century in Swansea, scientific knowledge was held by the landed and upper middle classes who assumed permission to investigate nature, as the case study of the excavation of the Paviland Cave illustrates. The

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formation of philosophical societies after 1820 - and the formation of their museums - allowed the middle classes the opportunity to assume possession by association and to advance their standing in society. This began the shift, in terms of possession, from the social elite to a wider community, although this remained within a select group. As will be discussed, in Cardiff there was no social elite assuming possession of nature. The social and commercial structure was different to Swansea, so it was the middle classes who were able to investigate science and form a philosophical society. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, possession had shifted to the municipal authority ostensibly opening up the knowledge to the whole community. By contrast, in Swansea, the museum remained in the possession of a select group, the Royal Institution of South Wales, and did not pass to the municipal authority. This had serious implications in the battle for the new national museum as the municipal authority could not claim direct possession of the scientific knowledge resident in the town. This study will examine the societies and their museums in Swansea and Cardiff to illustrate the significance of their rather different approaches to the possession of nature.

I have taken cognisance of a number of studies which have examined the cultural history of museums and how museums and their collections have been used in the manipulation of status and power. Although none of these studies have proved a direct model, relevant parallel elements have been used in the development of the study. Paula Findlen’s study22 of museums and their development in Renaissance Italy identifies the museum as an instrument in the examination of nature and a signifier of the status of the collector - the collectors purporting to be the creators of the philosophies which allowed them to define the nature of the world that surrounded them. Giuseppe Olmi also points out the prestige that could be gained from a collection in seventeenth century Italy:

"Not only did the creation and enrichment of a museum constitute an occupation worthy of a nobleman; they were also means of acquiring renown

22Findlen(1994)
and prestige and of turning the owner's home into an almost obligatory sight for everyone ..... the effort of showing them round personally well repaid by the reflected glory."  

The museum in Findlen's study was the space within which the social culture and self-knowledge of the collector could be articulated. The possession of this knowledge, encapsulated in the museum, gave the collector status and control. Access to this knowledge was through the collector alone allowing them control of the critical defining elements of culture and their place in the social structure.

Museums articulated the paradigms by which the natural world was understood. Encapsulating the natural world in a museum demonstrated a power over nature, a power which, by inference and association, could be transferred to the collector. The sixteenth century collectors in Italy articulated the Aristotelian paradigm of natural philosophy. The aspirations of these Aristotelian philosophers for their museums as circumambient, encyclopaedic representations of nature was challenged as the new Baconian paradigm of natural history as empirical experiment took hold, the museums becoming stages for the engagement with these new philosophies.

In Jorgen Hein's study of Danish royal collecting and the different functions of the treasure chamber and the kunstkammer, reference is made to the status imbued on the collector:

"A 'treasure chamber' refers to an accumulation of valuable objects under royal or princely control. It is arranged with pomp and splendour and is accessible only to a chosen few... the treasure chamber did not pursue a didactic or aesthetic ideal. The goal was instead to lend the Emperor divine status by glorifying the Habsburgs as the champions of Christendom against..."  

23 Olmi (1985) p.13, although the primary discussion in his paper is the nature of natural history in these museums.

24 Hein (2002)
The significant differences between the treasure chamber and the kunstkammer were that the treasure chamber could act as a capital reserve in the possession of the royal household whereas the kunstkammer’s function was the structuring and imparting of knowledge. As Hein points out there were also differences in the conditions of access to the different collections:

"While both the kunstkammer and the apartments in Rosenborg [one of the royal palaces] were open to guided tours in return for payment, it required 'special' permission to see the regalia until 1922"26

With Eilean Hooper-Greenhill's study27 of the development of museums using the framework of Foucault's epistemic interpretation of European intellectual history, the use of collections as instruments in the articulation of status and power is discussed in relation to the Medici family collections of fifteenth century Florence and the Kunstkammers of northern Europe in the late sixteenth century. The Medici family used architecture and objects to present their perceived position in society to the gaze:

"... the 'prince' was not a hereditary ruler, and he therefore had to use persuasive power, symbol, and propaganda to establish his position of superiority. This was achieved through the emergence of new articulations of the old practices of treasure-gathering and patronage, combined with a new use of the past, largely effected through the collection and reuse of material things."28

26Hein(2002) p188
27Hooper-Greenhill(1992)
28Hooper-Greenhill(1992) p71
In her reinterpretation of the role of the Kunstkammer as an articulation of the art of memory, Hooper-Greenhill makes reference to the status reflected in the collections of the Habsburg princes and the political ramifications of their control of access. Visitors were expected to bring gifts for placement in the Kunstkammer which reflected the status and power of the prince:

"In colluding and assisting in the accumulation of the material that represented not only the world, but also the place within it of the prince, so the subject colluded and concurred with the power the prince laid claim to."29

Tony Bennett,30 gives another Foucaultian interpretation of the history of museums, taking a wider and, more international, view. Whilst Hooper-Greenhill traces the development of museums through the cabinet and kunstkammer, Bennett brings the travelling fair and exhibition into the discussion. Travelling fairs and exhibitions, he argues, share a similar function to museums in the regulation of the visitor and the control of the knowledge communicated. He uses this argument to illustrate the change in cultural control in the nineteenth century from the private to governmental:

"... the public museum exemplified the development of a new 'governmental' relation to culture in which works of high culture were treated as instruments that could be enlisted in new ways for new tasks of social management."31

This marks the shift, in Foucaultian terms, from the juridico-discursive to the governmental, the governmental having a broader range of aims in its pursuit of control than the private, or 'sovereign', whose sole aim is the pursuit of singular, absolute power.

29Hooper-Greenhill(1992) p103
30Bennett(1995)
31Ibid p.6
The examination of individual municipal museums, their establishment and links with their social and civic environments have been the subject of studies by Katherine Hill and Samuel Alberti. Hill illuminates the control held by the middle classes over the municipal museums in her study of Liverpool and Preston during the second half of the nineteenth century. Not only did the study find that the controlling class used the museum as a demonstration of their status, but it also allowed them to reinforce their own perceptions of middle class by giving them the medium through which to exercise recognised middle class pursuits. In the process of this study, Hill examines the development of these municipal museums, the institutions and displays, and their roles in the civic environment. Alberti makes a similar study of the learned societies and museums of Newcastle, Sheffield and Manchester in the nineteenth century. As with Hill, he finds the same social groups in control of collections, societies and museums from private through to municipal, "... if anything the local middle-class elite strengthened their grip during this time". In the process of his study he analyses the societies and museums in the chosen towns and their relationships with the social and civic structures.

Despite being outside the period of this study, it is Findlen’s and Hooper-Greenhill’s examination of the museum as an instrument for the aggrandisement of the collector which is relevant here, the power and status imbued by the collector is in parallel with the power and status sought by Cardiff. And the work of Hill and Alberti has particular relevance in the study of the relationship of museums and the civic culture in the nineteenth century.

Proposals for a national museum for Wales had been made since the middle of the nineteenth century by a number of organisations and people. This catalogue of proposals will be traced from primary sources and their motivations discussed. It could be expected that the desire for such a nationalistic icon would generate a

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32 Hill (1996); Alberti (2002). See also Morrison (1996) for a discussion on the politics of patronage in Glasgow Corporation in relation to the development of municipal art collections.

wealth of nationalistic feelings in Wales. This will be examined and the extent to which nationalism had any influence on the outcome will be discussed.

Although initial pressure for a national museum came from Wales, the decision was made within the central Governmental system. The history of representation in Parliament, the political process which brought the decision about, and the extent to which the contemporary existence of museums had any significant influence will be examined using primary sources.

The period under study here (1830-1905) is longer than would be anticipated in a thesis of this kind. This is necessary due to the differing periods of active development of the societies and museums within the main towns of South Wales. A number of studies have taken a prosopographical approach to the analysis of natural history culture. This was not appropriate in this thesis due to the period investigated. A small number of protagonists will feature in the analyses of the different societies but none survive through the whole period of study.

The national museum and the national library were often coupled together in the move towards the establishment of the institutions. This thesis is concerned primarily with the national museum, but takes cognisance of the moves for the national library where activities relate also to the national museum.

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34 For example, Louis Miall in the case of Alberti (2000) and John Phillips in the case of Knell (1997). For a discussion of prosopography as a research technique in the history of natural history, see Allen (1990); in the history of science, see Thakray and Shapin (1974).

THE IDEA OF A NATIONAL MUSEUM FOR WALES

Whilst the period of most intense activity towards the acquisition of the national museum for Wales was in the six years up to 1905, the move towards this end had begun many years before and had been expressed through a range of specialist interest groups concerned with Welsh culture, science, antiquities and literature.

The scientific societies in Wales were based in geographical regions within Wales - sometimes including border counties of England. Their focus of attention was more often the natural region that gave them definition rather than the political boundary of town or county. This did not prevent some societies having pretensions of influence beyond their boundaries; for example, the Royal Institution of South Wales suggests a greater area of responsibility than the part of Glamorgan around Swansea that was actually defined in their constitution. Whilst there was little in the natural environment of Wales that could signify an exclusive ‘Welshness’, there was more in the sphere of cultural antiquities.¹

The antiquarian societies had a concern for the culture of Wales as a country separate from the rest of the British Isles and were more inclined to see the growth of museums as a necessity in the care and exhibition of the Welsh heritage and culture. One society covering the whole Principality, the Cambrian Archaeological Association, first raised the issue in 1846 when discussing the study and preservation of national antiquities.² The society was concerned about the well-being of antiquities in the Principality and saw threats from two main areas - those that were positively against preservation and those that attempted to improve, update and modify objects and monuments. Those positively against were divided into three classes. The first were owners of historic properties which were either allowed to fall

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¹A view also expressed by Brynmor Jones MP in his address to the Cymroborion Section of the National Eisteddfod in 1893, “It obviously, having regard to the contiguity of Wales and England, cannot be to any large extent a distinctively Welsh department.” Jones, B. 1893, “A national museum for Wales” Proceedings of the Cymroborion Section of the National Eisteddfod, The Annual Report of the National Eisteddfod Association, Pontypridd pp58-66
²Archaeologia Cambrensis 1846 pp10-12
into ruin, or were pulled down to "... erect some gew-gaw in its stead". The second were government or municipal corporations who inflicted the same fate on historic properties but without the restraining effect of "... family pride and private honour which may act upon individuals." The third class were the private speculators and public companies who destroyed antiquities for the purpose of building canals, railroads or factories. This group were considered the most "obnoxious" for "... what care they for the monuments of the country? The object of their devotion is money." Those who attempted to improve and modify "... the beautifiers, the repairers, the new-builders, and all that category of well meaning, yet oft-times misled, individuals" were considered more honest in their intentions but no less destructive to the past. At this time the concern was more that antiquarian objects were being destroyed, than that they might be taken out of Wales to collectors in England, or even to the British Museum.

The Cambrians advocated that antiquarian societies should be formed in all of the twelve major towns in Wales "... for the gentry to meet within and to enroll themselves into a body for this desirable purpose", and that these societies should establish a museum for the reception of local antiquities. "... The great desideratum, however, would be an association for the whole of the Principality, acting in concord with a more general association for the whole empire, yet devoting itself to the special cultivation of Welsh antiquities". Whilst the Association was not at that stage promoting the idea of a national museum for Wales, it was identifying the need for museums as storehouses for antiquities. This would later develop into a desire for a national museum with the growth of nationalistic feelings during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

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3 Ibid p 10
4 Ibid p 10
5 Ibid p 10
6 Ibid p 10
7 Ibid p 11
8 Ibid pp 11-12

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The Cambrian Archaeological Association did not raise this issue again until 1869 when it met for their annual meeting in Bridgend. The President pointed out that both Dublin and Edinburgh had museums responsible for the care of their national antiquities and the British Museum had been collecting material of a more national nature. Wales did not have such a museum to care for antiquities relating to the Principality and "...Wales ought to make an effort to have a collection of its own". This renewed interest in a national museum could well have been prompted by an increase in Welsh nationalism and a recent call for a national library located in Swansea. In 1868, the representation of Welsh Liberalism in Parliament increased with the election of twenty three MPs. They began taking up issues of particular relevance to Wales in Parliament - particularly the disestablishment of the Welsh church - which contributed to the growing sense of Welsh identity. The greater number of Welsh MPs created a greater Welsh presence in Parliament. The moves towards legislation relating exclusively to Wales helped in the growing awareness in Wales of a sense of Welshness that could achieve a degree of exclusiveness from England. A proposal for a national library for Wales had been made in 1867 in Swansea at a public lecture by Rev. Thomas Rees, an eminent congregational minister and historian, who advocated the library of the Royal Institution as the core and its location.

However, in terms of museums, the aim here is still more the storage of objects in a central location - a storehouse of antiquities - rather than a national icon interpreting the culture and history of Wales. The location, in the absence of a capital city, was not obvious but, the President said "... nor was the difficulty of deciding where it should be placed ... insurmountable ".

The political benefits of the location of the national institution were swiftly

9Archaeologia Cambrensis 1869 p428
10For Welsh political activity at this time see Morgan, K. O. (1995), Jones, I. G. (1988)
11Ibid p428
identified by the Mayor, and Deputy Constable, of Carnarvon,\footnote{The spelling of Carmarvon used here is the contemporary spelling used by the Councillors and officers of the Borough in their Memorial in support of their bid for the National Museum of Wales.} Sir Llewellyn Turner,\footnote{Sir Llewellyn Turner (1823-1903) High Sherriff of Carnarvonshire 1886-87} who wrote to the Cambrian Archaeological Association for its meeting the following year, 1870, at Holyhead.\footnote{Archaeologia Cambrensis 1870 p366} Carnarvon Castle, he suggested, would be an ideal location for a national museum. Despite the Association's opinion that Carnarvon was not a particularly inspiring location and that "... anything that tends to enliven the deadly monotony of the town, is much to be praised as a sensible step in the right direction",\footnote{Archaeologia Cambrensis 1870 pp342-343, This was not in response to the proposal for the hosting of the National Museum but in response to the news that promenade concerts given by the Carnarvonshire Militia were to be held in the grounds of the Castle. However, their opinion of the attractions on offer at Carnarvon still has relevance.} the meeting approved the proposed plan and stated that the Association would do all in its power to promote its success. However, it was also noted that, although the Castle possessed one or two objects of great interest and value, it "... can hardly be considered a museum".\footnote{Ibid p366}

Support for its status as a museum was voiced in a letter to the editor of \textit{Archaeologia Cambrensis} where it was stated that the museum was not restricted to antiquities and that a great deal of work had been done towards providing a convenient repository for the collection of the Natural History Society. Floors in two stories of the Castle called the 'Royal Apartments' had been restored and a further three hundred and fifty pounds was required to complete and "... it is presumed that arrangements to include provision for Welsh antiquities will form also part of the plan".\footnote{"Avonensis" 1871 'The museum at Carnarvon Castle', letter to the Editor, Archaeologia Cambrensis pp281-282.} Clearly, natural history was the dominant concern for Carnarvon with antiquities being an added consideration for the benefit of supporting their claim for the national museum through the Cambrian Archaeological Association.
The proposal for a national museum that came from the natural history community was from F. W. Rudler who was Professor of Natural Philosophy at University College Aberystwyth from 1875 to 1879. This post in Aberystwyth was a break in an otherwise long career at the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, London. He had been invited to read a paper before the Cymmrodorion Society in 1876 and had chosen a subject on which he had considerable experience - natural history museums - and, bearing in mind the Cymmrodorion's request that the subject "...should also bear in some way upon the welfare of Wales, and thus be brought fairly within the sympathies of this Society", Rudler chose to suggest the formation of a national museum for Wales "...to illustrate Cambrian natural history". He would have been aware that the Aberystwyth College had begun to collect Welsh books and manuscripts in 1873 with a view to establishing a national library for Wales so a national museum would be a logical proposal. His subsequent discussion, however, had more to do with regional museums than with an argument for a national museum. Although Rudler was a Professor at a Welsh University he was not Welsh; he had been in Aberystwyth little over a year so probably viewed Wales as a large region of England, a view that was generally held well into the twentieth century.

He quotes Edward Forbes "... when a naturalist goes from one country to another, his first enquiry is for local collections ... to see ... the productions of the region he is visiting". And it is the regional approach to museums that Rudler argues, but more as a larger version of a local museum than as a distinct national museum for the Principality. All his examples are from the local museums in England such as Ipswich and Worcester rather than the national museums of Scotland and Ireland.

18Frederick William Rudler(1840-1915)
19At the Museum of Practical Geology from 1861-1876 and then from 1879-1902 completing his career as the Curator and Librarian.
20Rudler, F. W., 1877, pp17-18
22Rudler does include the Museum of Economic Geology as an example of display layout, but this is a specialist subject museum rather than a national museum depicting the natural and cultural history of a country (continued...)

17
"In forming such a museum," Rudler proposes "the one great object to be kept in view must be that of collecting, arranging, and exhibiting all the natural productions of the Principality".\textsuperscript{23} Such a gathering-in of specimens certainly illustrates the presence or absence of species within the defined political boundary but it does not necessarily articulate a natural science 'Welshness' which might reinforce a cultural exclusiveness as an argument for a national museum.

And, according to Rudler, the 'local' collection would not be enough. In order to set the local collection in context a 'general' collection was required to counteract the tendency of "...narrow and vitiated views". This general collection would be more for the interest of the "...casual visitor and less-advanced student", rather than the keen naturalist. But the emphasis on the general, particularly for the casual visitor, does little to support the argument for a national museum created to illustrate a natural identity of the Principality.

Rudler was right when he asserted that "...there can be no doubt that Wales does not at present possess a natural history museum which can be compared with those of many of the larger centres of population in England, say Liverpool or Manchester, Leeds or Bristol".\textsuperscript{24} The most favoured locality for the proposed national museum was, understandably, to be Aberystwyth in the view of Rudler. He argued, with some justification, that many museum projects were reliant on the drive and enthusiasm of a very few individuals, or even just one person. It could not be appropriate to allow a national museum to be exposed to such a contingency and this could be remedied by affiliating the institution to a large educational establishment. Aberystwyth was the only University in Wales at this time so there was no competition here. The University at Aberystwyth would always have staff qualified in the natural sciences to assist and advise the curator of the museum. The pleasant surroundings of

\textsuperscript{22}(...continued)

and so is not appropriate for inclusion in this discussion.

\textsuperscript{23}Rudler, 1877, p18

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid p36
Aberystwyth would provide a "clean and cheerful"\textsuperscript{25} situation for the students and visiting scholars, and the many thousands of visitors who came to the resort during the season would benefit from the instruction and recreation the museum would afford. Just a few years earlier in 1873, the University College of Aberystwyth had begun collecting Welsh manuscripts and books with aspirations for a national library of Wales so Rudler may well have had this in mind in proposing Aberystwyth as a national museum. Aberystwyth town may not have had serious civic ambitions but the University could well have seen itself as the centre of Welsh culture - the centre of intellectual cultural nationalism.

Carnarvon still considered the Castle as a suitable location for the national museum but by 1879 concern was expressed about the access to the collections. By this date the collection was within the castle walls and difficult to access. The museum had, some years earlier, been placed in a house in the town under the care of a Keeper. However, it had then been removed and the collection distributed amongst a number of people and there was a concern that some of the objects had been lost. What now existed in the Castle was regarded as high in value, but the ownership was in some doubt "... if they are to be kept where they are, care should be taken to prevent their becoming the property of the Constable of the Castle".\textsuperscript{26} Sir Llewellyn Turner, who was by then the Constable, responded that "... the Museum has not been dispersed, but was kept together at my personal expense, with no less than three removals; the last one of the three to the Castle where it remains". Turner had been disappointed at the response to his appeal for financial support thirty years before in the setting up of the museum in the Castle, just three pounds sixteen shillings being donated from the three counties comprising the area. He saw this as an unfortunate lack of interest in the antiquities of Wales "... in a country where ... more patriotism is talked than elsewhere".\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid p35
\textsuperscript{26}Archaeologia Cambrensis 1879 p251
\textsuperscript{27}Archaeologia Cambrensis 1890 p251
The editor of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* agreed and suggested that, although it was a great pity that Wales had no national museum in which to display its antiquities, the likelihood of its happening was remote "... judging from the apathy displayed by so-called patriotic Welshmen". It was reiterated that the local societies should ensure the well-being of their local antiquities and that if, as in the case of Carnarvon, they "...do not value their local antiquities sufficiently to preserve them where they are at present, it would be well to send the whole collection to the British Museum".28 However, the people of Wales could point to a financial expression of patriotism in that one hundred thousand donations of two shillings and sixpence supported the first University College in Wales at Aberystwyth in 1872.29 The disputed ownership, uncertain future and restricted access to the antiquities in Carnarvon would have resulted in some understandable caution in donating monies but it does not follow that a national museum for Wales with certainty of future and access would not receive support from the "patriotic Welshmen".

A 'Trustee' of the Tenby Museum was prompted, in 1879, by the discussion in the *Archaeologia Cambrensis* concerning Carnarvon's claims to promote the candidacy of their Museum for consideration as the site of a national museum.30 Support for the principle of a national museum was on the basis that the many antiquities that were gathered together for display and discussion at the annual meeting of the Cambrian Archaeological Association "...instead of being absorbed in a national collection, are again scattered to their previous owners, and perhaps eventually go to the dustbin", and, "... Ireland and Scotland already possess collections of national antiquities of great value, and it is exceedingly discreditable to the Principality that it lags so far behind in the march of civilisation".31

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28J.R.A ibid p251
29For the support of the University College, Aberystwyth by the 'ordinary' people of Wales, see Ellis (1972).
31Ibid p154
Tenby did not see their own museum being subsumed into the national collection; it was, however, able to offer a large upper room of the museum with the potential for extension. Their own museum had a collection of local materials "... formed on a scientific basis", covering archaeology and natural history and it was intended to affiliate the museum with the Pembrokeshire Field Club. The collections were particularly strong in geology with a good representation of local Pleistocene material. Other natural history collections comprised mainly birds and their eggs. There was a small number of archaeological objects covering a wide period with some material from the neolithic and bronze age through to Roman and Mediaeval. The collection of remains from coastal caves including human bones and artefacts was still being added to by two of their members who continued their explorations in the region.

Their museum had only been established for a few months and yet seemed to be on a sound financial footing, the income from the sixpenny entrance fee covering most costs. As a result, Tenby was prepared to allow the proposed national museum space at no rental on the assumption that the entrance fee would still be levied for entry to the Tenby Museum section. Apart from the existing museum and its collections, Tenby claimed a number of other points in its favour as the location for the national museum. The explorations and excavations conducted in the area proved that it was "... in a district rich in antiquities of every kind". The old town walls with early domestic and military architecture provided visual evidence of the town's historical associations which would be "... the most appropriate surroundings for a museum of this kind". Being on the south coast of Wales, Tenby was a fashionable resort all year round with "... a constant influx of fresh visitors ... likely to counteract the tendency to stagnation, which is so detrimental to most museums". A curator lived next door to the museum, who was clearly the caretaker and attendant in this case, as "... other gentlemen resident in Tenby would help to arrange and superintend the

\[\text{\textsuperscript{32}}\text{Ibid p154} \]
collections". Tenby's aspirations for hosting the national museum made no further progress and they did not submit a memorial to the Privy Council Committee at the time the location of the museum and library was discussed in 1905.

Another museum to become involved in the debate at this time was the Powys-Land Museum in Welshpool. It had opened on 5th October 1874 with its location being the subject of some discussion. Some of the members of the Powys-Land Club had considered that the most appropriate location would be Shrewsbury, the old capital of Powys, where a museum already existed and there was the possibility of amalgamation. The Cambrian Archaeological Association had seen the establishment of the Museum as a consequence of their plea in 1846 for local museums for the preservation of local antiquities in Wales. In their Annual Report for 1879-80, the Association noted "... the Museum in Welshpool; not only the most valuable in Wales, but in some respects the only one". They dismissed the Museum at Carnarvon due to its inaccessibility to the public; the Museum of the Royal Institution in Swansea as possessing little by way of antiquarian interest; the Museum at Lampeter College as a private institution; and made no mention of the Cardiff Museum at all. Cardiff Museum was dominated by natural science collections and had little by way of antiquities to excite the notice of the Cambrians. The museum of the Powys-Land Club being identified as the only museum with the potential to fulfil their desire for a central museum for the antiquities of Wales:

"None of these can supply what is wanted, viz., a general and central museum for Welsh antiquities. The nearest approach to one is ready at hand in Welshpool, and could be made to answer the purpose at a small cost."
By 1890 Carnarvon was still not meeting the wishes and aims of the Cambrian Archaeological Association in the acquisition and care of local antiquities. A writer to the *North Wales Chronicle* observed that cinerary urns discovered at Penmaenmawr had been secured by Chester Museum. Penmaenmawr is just 18 miles up the coast from Carnarvon whilst it is 45 miles from Chester. In proclaiming the need for a national museum the writer says "... this is really too bad .... the urns should not have been allowed to leave the Principality ... the country has for too long a time been robbed of its witnesses of a historic and prehistoric past". Even by 1903 the museum activity at Carnarvon still failed to impress the Museums Association:

"Without showing any great enthusiasm in the cause of museums, the town council of Carnarvon have taken steps to acquire the collections of coins, local antiquities etc., in Carnarvon Castle, to form the nucleus of a museum. One member of the council very wisely suggested that it would be better to let the collections go to the University College at Bangor, where some good use could be made of them."  

This troubled museum history did not deter the Carnarvon Corporation from later submitting a Memorial for the site of the national museum for Wales.

The National Eisteddfod - the focus of Welsh culture - had first discussed the possibility of a national museum for Wales at their Llangollen Eisteddfod in 1858, although this was more as an archive for Welsh manuscripts and books. However, little further substantial discussion is recorded until 1893 when the subject was

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38 An Antiquarian’ 19th July 1890, *North Wales Chronicle* quoted in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1890 pp335-336
40 Whalley, G. H., 1858, “A national building” *Cambrian Journal* pp 297-301
raised by Brynmor Jones MP under the auspices of the Cymmrodorion section of the Eisteddfod at Pontypridd. Jones considered a national museum as part of their expression of Welshness:

"I see no reason why we in Wales should not emulate the example of other races, and indeed the very attempt will aid us in our striving after national unity"43

However, he was concerned that the degree of national identity manifest through artefacts might not be seen to warrant a national museum:

"It will be said there is no raison d'être for a Welsh Museum; that putting aside Welsh manuscripts and a few archaeological survivals and curiosities, there are no objects or things distinctly Welsh which require a separate institution or separate means for their preservation"44

But he argued that, whilst the political links with England had been seamless over the previous few centuries, this did not mean that the social, economic, religious or cultural distinctions were equally contiguous. The Welsh people had a history distinct from the English people and a national museum would celebrate this difference.

Jones’ perception of a national museum was based on the British Museum - with a museum, archive and library all in the same building - with the addition of an art gallery. As well as antiquities, Jones believed that the museum should have a department of natural sciences, a department he considered important even though it "... will not indeed be of the same public interest as those to which I have been

41MP for East Glamorgan. Later Sir David Brynmor Jones, MP for Swansea District 1895 until 1914 when he was appointed Master of Lunacy.
43ibid p59
44ibid p60
referring". His emphasis on the arts and culture of Wales in the body of his paper reflected the focus of the Eisteddfod, the stage where this discussion was enacted.

He saw the museum as the means through which the working classes may be educated in the arts and culture of Wales:

"... the artisan and the collier and the agricultural labourer may be trained to look on the relics of the past and the masterpieces of art, not with 'brute unconscious gaze' but with a seeing and understanding eye"46

He also believed that the people of Wales should be introduced to fine art at an early age "... it is idle to expect that children, never brought into contact with the masterpieces of painting, can appreciate great things"47 so that the balance of achievement between the performing and fine arts demonstrated at the Eisteddfod could be improved.

The paper met with responses from Dr Vachell and T H Thomas of Cardiff who both put forward the virtues of Cardiff Museum and its collections without actually suggesting that it should form the nucleus of a national institution. Cllr E Thomas 'Cochfarf'48 pointed out that the only way a national museum could be established was through a government grant and he felt that "... if Mr Herbert Lewis, Mr Brynmor Jones, and other members were to co-operate in this matter, it would be an easy matter"49 Up to this point, most of the arguments for a national museum had come from the cultural and scientific organisations in Wales. With the need for a government grant, and the concern for its location, the arguments took on a more political note. This will be discussed in chapter 6.

45Ibid p63
46Ibid p59
47Ibid p63
48The bardic title of Cllr E Thomas referring to his red beard.
49Ibid p65
The Cambrian Archaeological Association again discussed the need for a national museum in 1901 when the location was the main issue of concern:

"In the time to come we may, perhaps, have so far composed our local contentions as to be able to decide harmoniously and unitedly on the most suitable place for what may be termed the National Museum for Wales."\(^{50}\)

No proposal for a location is made and the report goes on to encourage the fostering of local museums, and it is in this context and not as a possible national museum that the Welshpool Museum is raised as an example:

"As a Montgomeryshire man I am glad to feel that in this respect also we of this county can hold our own, for in the Powys-Land Museum and Gallery of Art, at Welshpool, we have a local collection that is, I believe, second to none in the Principality, both as regards its objects and its contents."\(^{51}\)

Welshpool did not submit a Memorial to the Privy Council to bid for the location of the national museum.

Llanelly was also considering the preparation of a bid for the site of the national museum and library for Wales in 1905. Mr B. Evans of Llangennech Park was prepared to offer the site free plus £1,000 should Llanelly be selected. If Llanelly was not successful, Mr Evans agreed to hand over the £1,000 to Swansea should they be selected.\(^{52}\) In the event, Llanelly did not submit a Memorial to bid for the national institutions.

Early proposals, from both the science and antiquarian communities, saw the

\(^{50}\) *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1902, p.47; report of Inaugural Address given by the President, Lieut.-Col. E. Pryce-Jones at a public meeting held 30th July 1901, Newtown, Powys.

\(^{51}\) Ibid

\(^{52}\) *Museums Journal* Vol VI pp359-360, April 1905; *Western Mail* 9th March 1905
museum as a storehouse of objects - a central reference point of particular value to visiting philosophers. Antiquarians initially urged the setting up of local museums to save local antiquities but this was later extended to a central repository for the retention of objects within Wales itself. A growing sense of nationalism after the 1868 election prompted the idea of a national museum for Wales, but the lack of a capital city clouded the focus of the drive for a national museum and diverted attention from the primary aim of gaining the national institution itself. This problem would be exploited by Parliament when the arguments for a national museum were being debated in the House. This will be discussed in chapter 6.

Carnarvon had a poor reputation for museum provision but clearly saw the potential for status and power that a national museum would bring. Tenby had just opened their museum and offered space for a national collection with some enthusiasm - so long as it was kept separate from their own museum. Tenby’s offer more likely reflected an enthusiasm for museums rather than a political desire for status and power. Of these early runners, only Carnarvon eventually submitted a Memorial for the museum.

Nationalism and the Movement for a National Museum for Wales

A nation state can possess a range of nationalistic icons - palace, parliament, civil administration offices, university and museum. Wales did not have a monarchy so did not have a palace. Similarly, there was no separate parliamentary system or civil machine and the university system had grown variously without the focus of a centre. In the tangible expression of the growing sense of nationalism in Wales through the latter part of the nineteenth century, a national museum would be one of the few options available. However, the active striving for a national museum came from people more interested in museums than partisan nationalists. And in the absence of a nation capital, the arguments centred on which town was the most

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53When the Prince of Wales came to visit he had no place to stay - he was always a guest in his own country.
appropriate to possess such a national icon. To those with civic ambition the possession of the national museum would be symbolic of the capital of the Principality. Possession of the national museum, therefore, would bring commensurate status and power.

There is a significant absence of partisan nationalism in this drive for a national museum. An in-depth analysis of the reasons for this is outside the parameters of this study but may be due to a range of social and political issues which reflected the perceived construct of the Welsh nation. In the ‘Battle of the Sites’ the final decision was taken by the agencies of Parliament - physically and intellectually outside any influence of perceived nationalism. An interpretation of nationalism was not featured in the criteria laid down for the grant, and the only aspect of nationalism that played any part in the process of evaluation by central Government of the respective Memorials was an incidental reference to the Welsh language in the case of the national library. The focus of this study is the way in which the prospect of a national museum was used as an instrument by civic organisations, and Cardiff Corporation in particular, in the drive for civic advancement. However, it is important to have an understanding of the nature of Welsh nationalism at this time in order to place the call for a national museum in context.

Writers such as Anthony Smith(1986) argue an ethnic origin to nationalism through myths, culture and language. Modernists such as Eric J. Hobsbawm(1983) and Benedict Anderson(1991) argue that nationalism was primarily a Post Enlightenment phenomena, particularly following the French Revolution, the concept of the ‘people’s’ social group, being composed of individuals able to decide their own destiny, evolved into the nation state with the gradual enfranchisement of the ‘people’ into a body of citizens constituted into forms of self-governance. It is the ethnic theory of Smith which seems to fit the Welsh pattern of nationalistic development, the changes being more of degree than kind - that the more modern Welsh nationalism of the late nineteenth century was influenced by its earlier ethnic identity.
An understanding and recognition of Welshness was extant in the writings of St Gildas in the 6th century, the Venerable Bede in the 8th century, and reinforced through the works of Geraldus Cambrensis in the 12th century. It was kept alive through Welsh poetry and prose throughout the Middle Ages supported by the translation of the Bible into Welsh and the growth of Welsh-language nonconformity. However, there was no homogeneity in the understanding of Welshness throughout the geographical region. The ethnic Welshness existing in Wales up to the mid nineteenth century was located in the rural areas with peasant-style farming communities and a land-owning squirearchy. It was here that the language and cultural traditions remained - but predominantly amongst the lower classes. The gentry, despite their Welsh ancestry, had become anglicized; they spoke English rather than Welsh; they had gone to England for their education; and they belonged to the Anglican church. With the development of industry in the south east centred around the south Wales coalfield; the rapid growth of large urban communities; and the commensurate growth in the middle classes, a more Post Enlightenment nationalism began to grow. The ethnic Welshness remained in the rural areas of the north and the differences between the north and the south became more defined as the nineteenth century progressed.

The perception of nationalism exists as much in opposition to the 'other' as to a recognition of the self. In the case of Wales the 'other' is England, 'Welshness' being a manifestation of the contrast between the two countries. At the time of this 'Battle of the Sites' this was viewed as a shared culture with other Celtic countries, the Welsh language, religious practise, and, to a lesser extent, an intellectually contested geographical boundary.

Wales saw itself as one of the six Celtic Nations along with the Breton, Cornish, Irish, Manx and Gaelic having resisted invasion, with varying degrees of success,

54For an overview of the troubled history of Wales up to the nineteenth century, see for example Morgan and Thomas (1984) chapters 2 and 3.

55For a discussion of Welshness, see, for example, R. R. Davies (2003)
from Romans, Saxons and Normans to retain an exclusivity from England. The exclusiveness of culture was celebrated in the Eisteddfodau which took place locally through the 19th century with poetry, prose and music. In 1880/81 the National Eisteddfod movement was completely reorganised becoming an annual event alternating between the North and South of Wales. A greater level of professionalism prevailed in organisation and content with emphasis on strict-metre verse and choral competitions giving a more powerful status to Welsh culture. This did not preclude some criticism of the Bardic creations based on Iolo Morganwg’s unsubstantiated interpretations of Druidic ceremonies. The growth in the importance of the annual Eisteddfod reflected the growing sense of Welsh identity during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Eisteddfodau were instrumental in the celebration of the Welsh language. The healthy state of the language compared to Gaelic in Scotland or Erse in Ireland in the late 19th century was due in large part to the containment of the language in Wales during the industrial expansion. The language had been strongest in the rural areas, there being few towns of any note or size until the 1860’s. Welsh speakers more often emigrated from the country to the town as industries grew rather than emigrating to England. This resulted in a concentration of the language and its use rather than its dispersal and dilution. In 1885 the Society for the Utilisation of the Welsh Language was formed to promote the composition, grammar and translation of Welsh and particularly its adoption as a recognised subject in schools. Although Welsh continued to be the language of the lower classes, it became increasingly the language of Welsh intellectuals with a pride in Welsh culture. Western Dillwyn of Swansea composed the ‘Swansea Address’ to be presented to the King in 1821. He was insistent that the Address should be in Welsh claiming, “...the right of all his Majesty’s subjects to address him in their own language”. Dillwyn was not Welsh

56 ‘Iolo Morganwg’, a pseudonym of Edward Williams (1747-1826), a Welsh poet and stonemason whose nationalistic enthusiasm for recreating Welsh culture sometimes took him to one side of actuality.

57 DD 23rd February 1821
by birth, not moving to Wales until he was 24 years old, and, as Randall points out, it is unclear whether Dillwyn understood Welsh; however, there are a number of entries in the diaries which strongly suggest that he did not. Nonetheless, he clearly supported the use of Welsh and arranged for his eldest son John to take lessons in the language and, whilst an MP, "...voted in the majority of 74 to 64 for limiting all clerical appointments in Wales to those who can speak Welsh". The language of business, commerce and administration - and the middle and upper classes who held office in these functions - was English.

The Welsh language dominated Welsh nonconformity. In the early nineteenth century, Welsh nonconformity matched the English dissenters following revivals of the Methodist and, in particular, Baptist movements. Calvinist Methodists, Baptists, Independents and Wesleyans created strong centres for social and cultural activities conducted in the Welsh language. This held together the Welsh-speaking population in a sense of Welshness, encouraged by charismatic, nationalistic-minded preachers who attained cult status in their tours of the chapels. One event which drew the religious and non-religious Welsh together in a mutual sense of Welsh nationalism was the publication of the report on the state of education in Wales in 1847. This report made denigrating attacks on the moral and religious activities of the Welsh which caused some outrage in an episode which became known as the 'Treachery of the Blue Books' (Brad y Llyfrau Gleision) because of the blue binding of the report. The nonconformist movement and their places of worship was seen to represent the sense of Welsh nationalism - to be Welsh was to be nonconformist - with the Anglican church an English outsider. The focus of active Welsh nationalism at this time was more on disestablishment from the Anglican church than political

Randall(1963)

DD 22nd November 1818 “Having failed in an attempt to get an English service performed, we have determined to attend the Welsh service ... Mr Williams, however, read part of the service, and gave us a short abstract of his sermon in English.”

DD 19th February 1819

DD 11th October 1836

Reports of the Commission of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales (Accounts and Papers 1847 vol.27)
There was no collective political focus to the sense of Welsh nationalism. The Welsh lacked the oppression suffered by other small states in Europe, contrarily recognising the social and commercial benefits of the association with England. The politicisation of the Cymru Fydd (Young Wales) League within the Liberal Party was the closest Wales came to a campaign for home rule at this time. David Lloyd George, Liberal MP for Carnarvon, was prominent in this movement and instrumental in the merging of the Cymru Fydd League with the North Wales Liberal Federation in 1895. Ultimate success was dependant on a merger with the South but at a meeting in Newport in 1896 the aspirations of these nationalists came to an acrimonious end signifying the growing rivalry and lack of trust between North and South Wales. Although the elections of 1868 had significantly increased the number of Welsh MPs at Parliament, their activities focussed on legislation relating to Wales within the United Kingdom rather than any form of separatism. They moved to gain disestablishment from the Anglican church, although this was not achieved until 1920, and brought the first legislation relating to Wales in the Sunday Closing Act of 1881. A separatist movement did not arise in any strength until the middle of the twentieth century.

Communication throughout Wales was difficult and complex and industrialisation had not brought any improvement to this. The transport infrastructure had been designed to improve communication with England rather than within Wales itself. It was still easier for society and business meetings to take place in one of the Marcher towns like Shrewsbury or Hereford rather than in a Welsh town, and London or Bristol were still seen as the effective business metropolises of Wales. However, the mercantile classes understood the personal and commercial benefits of being associated with a cultural and educational metropolis as much as a business metropolis.

In the intellectual battle for power, museums have a place beyond the aspirations of
those scientific and antiquarian philosophers whose parameters only extend to the interpretation of a particular cultural field. More political intellectuals see a shaping of the past as a route to the shaping of their futures, the museum having a central role in this construct - another icon of control and influence. Museums are often used as authenticators in articulating the formalised construct of a nation. The interpretations of the past through artefacts, narratives and graphics give an 'official' history which influences the social and political contextual relationships of the present, particularly where there is an implied absence of interpretive contestation. The very existence of a museum can, therefore, be iconic in itself - an implication of the authority of a collective memory in time and space,

"... in the formalization, institutionalization and professionalization of collective memory, specific images of Welshness have prevailed. Most evident in the museum function these images have been slow to erode and difficult to challenge." 65

Thus, it could be expected that partisan nationalistic influences would be at work on the acquisition of a national museum for Wales.

However, as has been discussed, there is a significant absence of partisan nationalism in this drive for a national museum which may be due to a range of social and political issues which reflected the perceived construct of the Welsh nation. Wales was not as separate from England as was Scotland or Ireland; it had no separate legal or political administrative system. Nor did it have the history of oppression and conflict with other states which would generate a more overt sense of national exclusiveness. The Welsh-speaking Welsh tended to be concentrated in rural areas and were less concerned with the political activities of the towns.

63For example Bennett(1995) pp141-146
64For example, Cannizzono(1987); Lira (1999,2001, 2002); Wallis(1994).
65Adamson (1999) p67. The interpretation of Welsh identity in the Museums and Galleries of Wales is still under discussion today, see Mason (2005)
Newspapers were predominantly in English, the Welsh news publications being produced by the churches, the content dominated by religious articles. The larger towns in the south were administrated by a growing middle class with a more cosmopolitan outlook, often with strong business, intellectual or family links with England, any sense of nationalism being coloured by this broader experience.  

Welsh ethnicity was set in the countryside, elements moving to the towns during the industrial revolution. The claim for the nationalistic heart of Wales was a battleground of entrenching rivalries between north and south and town and country and, particularly as far as the north was concerned, it was usurped by Cardiff’s anglicised urban intellectuals - the Mayor of Carnarvon campaigned vigorously to stop the national museum of Wales going to the south. Occasionally, this rivalry within Wales spilled into the Parliamentary debates. For example, in the 1896 debate, Sir Osborne Morgan representing the North Wales constituency of Denbighshire, E., was accused by the Member for Cardiff, Mr J M Maclean, of stating that the MP’s representing the large South Wales towns, "... only represented the English Colonies planted in the country; that the real Wales was to be found in the mountains".  

During these debates in Parliament, nationalism was an issue only in the sense of the wish to achieve parity with Scotland and Ireland, "... Welshmen did not grudge Scotland and Ireland their grants. But they said they were as distinct a nationality as these countries". Any nationalism expressed was of a non-partisan nature, "... a kind of Welsh Nationalism in which the representatives of Wales were all agreed, and the question raised by this Motion belonged to that kind of Nationalism". 

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66Museums Journal, April 1905, p359.  
67Mr J M Maclean 21st February 1896 Hansard 4th series Vol.44 Col.844  
68Sir G Osborne Morgan 21st February 1896 Hansard 4th Series Vol.44 Col.846  
69Herbert Lewis, ibid p839. The Motion; "That in the opinion of this House, it is unjust that Wales should receive no share of the Museum Grants of the United Kingdom, and that it is expedient to make provision similar to that made for Scotland and Ireland for the expenditure of a due share of the Museum Grants in Wales" Mr Alfred Thomas MP for Glamorgan, E., ibid p836
Carnarvon demonstrated the greatest nationalistic fervour in its Memorial citing the town's Celtic credentials as its primary claim, whilst Cardiff played a more political hand, laying more emphasis on its superior financial credibility and a position as the capital of Wales in all but name. It would be the Political system in London which would have the power to grant capital status and Cardiff’s restrained nationalism in its bid for two nationalistic icons, the library and museum, demonstrated the instrumental nature of these institutions in their broader agenda.

When the possibility of a government grant for a national museum became a firm possibility by the end of the nineteenth century, just two protagonists - Swansea and Cardiff - were believed to be contenders for the location. Swansea and Cardiff had differing histories in terms of their scientific, cultural and museum activity leading to this point as the following two chapters will illustrate.
SWANSEA - THE SCIENTIFIC METROPOLIS OF WALES

With a population of 10,117 at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Swansea was the largest town in South Wales. Cardiff, Neath and Newport however, were small villages with an average of about two thousand inhabitants (Fig 1). Swansea’s industry was dominated by the processing of metals and the associated mining of coal. Located on the edge of the South Wales coalfield on the estuary of the River Tawe, with its dock system, Swansea was a natural centre for the processing of ores. Copper smelting was the main industry which had grown in importance from the middle of the eighteenth century to the point where Swansea was producing 55% of the world’s copper by the middle of the nineteenth century. The output came from over six hundred furnaces located over the lower Swansea valley. This industrial activity sat comfortably with Swansea’s other function as a fashionable seaside resort. Swansea developed the range of facilities necessary to attract fashionable visitors including Assembly Rooms and a theatre. With such a range of industry and recognition of leisure and cultural credibility, Swansea regarded itself as, “...the first town in the Principality” in 1823. Another organisation which added cultural credibility to the town was the Royal Institution of South Wales.

Swansea Philosophers

As well as being the largest town, Swansea dominated scientific activity in South Wales during the first half of the nineteenth century. It held a high concentration of male and female natural philosophers belonging to the gentry, a far greater number than anywhere else in this area, who had links to scientific activity in London and

1801 Census. Within 20 years Merthyr Tydfill had overtaken Swansea as the most populous town due to the high number of workers needed for the mining and iron trades.

Cardiff 1,870, Neath 2,502, Newport 1,135 in 1801 Census. For discussions on the population in Wales, see Thomas, B. (1960), Jones, P. N. (1988)

For a discussion of the copper industry in Swansea see Rees (1981 and 2000)

New Swansea Guide 1823, Swansea

See Miskell (2003) for a discussion of the Royal Institution contributing to the status of Swansea.
Oxford. They formed a web of mutual interest with scientific, political and marriage connections.

Lewis Western Dillwyn (1778-1855), was at the centre of this scientific microcosm. He was a landowner and industrialist whose interest in land acquisition, pushed his industrial activities - he was the owner of the Cambrian Pottery into second place. His interest in the pottery was scientific and he conducted a number of experiments in the firing of various clay mixes. He later passed the pottery on to his second son, Lewis Llewellyn. Dillwyn took an active part in the political life of the town and held a number of positions commensurate with a gentleman of his social standing. He was High Sheriff for Glamorgan in 1818, a magistrate, an MP for Glamorgan in 1832, an Alderman, and Mayor of Swansea in 1839. Dillwyn seems to have been comfortable with his place in society; he mixed with people of similar and higher social status with ease and had the confidence to refuse the, politically motivated, offer of a Baronetcy in 1837.

He had great enthusiasm for science and made frequent reference to scientific matters in his diaries. He was a member of the Geological Society and a Fellow of both the Royal and Linnean Societies and, whilst he recognised and patronised local scientific activity, his own focus was on the elevated scientific circles of London. Hardly a year went by without him making at least two visits to the capital where he attended meetings and met and dined with his scientific friends including Sir William Hooker, Sir Joseph Banks, Michael Faraday, Sir Humphrey Davy, Sir

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6 Dictionary of Welsh Biography 1959

7 Western Dillwyn took control of the 'Cambrian Pottery', Swansea in 1802, a company purchased for him by his father. The original owner of the pottery, George Haynes, retained a three-tenth’s interest in the firm and taught Dillwyn the business until he, Haynes, left in 1810. For the next seven years Dillwyn carried on producing pottery in partnership with Timothy Bevington. In 1814 he also took over the Nantgarw China works and produced Swansea china with Billingsly and Walker, the original founders. For an overview of the Cambrian Pottery, Dillwyn and his troubled relationship with Haynes, see Hallesy(1995)

8 DD 13th and 15th July 1837
Roderick Murchison and Henry De la Beche. He also took in the London collections, meeting Cuvier whilst visiting Dr W E Leach at the British Museum. Amongst these collections were those available for purchase and he frequently took the opportunity of augmenting his own collections:

"Called on Sir Jos. Banks and went to Bullocks sale where I bought some South Sea Curiosities etc. ... spent most of the day in looking over and purchasing part of Mr Samouelles's Collection of insects .... went to see Mrs Bligh's Cabinet of Shells which is for sale at Mrs Mawes's. It is extremely beautiful and not dear at the price asked for it, which is 700 guineas".

On his way to or from London he would often visit Oxford to see William Buckland. He published a number of natural history works on conchology, entomology and botany including a book with his friend Dawson Turner, father-in-law of Sir William Hooker.

His social circle in the Swansea area included people who had a similar mix of scientific, land and industrial interests to himself. Notable amongst these were the Talbot family. Christopher Rice Mansel ("Kit") Talbot (1803-1890), was also an MP for Glamorgan, the Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan in 1848 and a Fellow of the Royal Society. His mother, Lady Mary Cole, was in correspondence with Buckland on

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9Sir William Hooker(1785-1865), Professor of Botany at Glasgow University and Director of Kew Gardens(1841); Sir Joseph Banks(1743-1820), botanist, President of the Royal Society; Michael Faraday(1791-1867), chemist at the Royal Institution, London; Sir Humphrey Davy(1778-1829), chemist at the Royal Institution, London; Sir Roderick Impey Murchison(1792-1871), geologist; Henry De la Beche(1796-1855), geologist, Director of the Geological Survey.

10DD 5th July, 12th November, 1st December 1819. Two months before examining Mrs Bligh's shells he had purchased seven houses and three cottages for a total of £630, which illustrates the then value of shell cabinets.

11"At ½ past 9 went to Buckland's and there unexpectedly found a large geological party at breakfast viz.- W Conybeare, Halifax, the 2 Duncans, Kidd, Vernon, Cleaver, Lyell, Woodcock, Miller etc". DD 19th November 1823


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geological and botanical issues. She, and a number of her seven daughters were part of the great circle of people that Buckland enthused and nurtured on his geological travels. One daughter, Emma Talbot, married Dillwyn’s first son, John Dillwyn-Llewelyn (1810-1882), who followed his father’s interest in science. An enthusiastic botanist, he was a Fellow of the Linnean Society and the Royal Society. He had an active interest in other sciences and collaborated with the physicist Sir Charles Wheatstone in his work on the electric telegraph and also with his cousin by marriage, William Henry Fox Talbot, on aspects of the development of the photographic process. He was High Sheriff of Glamorgan in 1835.

Charlotte, the youngest daughter of Lady Mary Cole, married Rev John Montgomery Traherne (1788-1860) who belonged to a wealthy Glamorgan family which could trace its ancestry back to the sixteenth century. He considered himself to be a gentleman and an aristocrat, although he was slightly to one side of the main family line. He was equally interested in science and antiquities becoming a Fellow of the Royal and Linnean Societies, the Society of Antiquaries and a member of the Geological Society. The extent of his original contributions to science are unknown as his work is claimed as anonymous or under a pseudonym. However, amongst his friends were many of the leading men of science of the day including Sir Joseph Banks, W. D. Conybeare, Thomas Beddoes, Sir Humphrey Davy and William Buckland as well as his scientific neighbours the Dillwyns and the Talbots.

Dillwyn’s second son, Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn (1814-1892) married Elizabeth De la Beche, daughter of the Geological Survey Director, Henry T De la Beche, and worked on the development of the Cambrian Pottery introducing the designs which

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14 See, for example, R. Morris (1980), I. M. Jones (1990)

15 “John Traherne had for several years made repeated proposals to Miss C Talbot and had again[sic] been refused within the last 10 days. Mary had been instructed by Lady Mary [Cole] to prepare her and about ½ past 10 he unexpectedly arrived, and before Dinner time her acceptance of him was announced.” (DD, 7th November 1829)

16 For a short history of the life of Traherne, see Denning, 1967; and Nicholas, 1874 pp185-6.

17 Anonymity was an accepted convention at this time, see Shapin and Shaffer (1985)
became known as Etruscan Ware.

Dillwyn's industrialist friend John Henry Vivian (1785-1855) was also an MP for Swansea. He experimented on the properties of copper and was in correspondence with Michael Faraday and Sir Humphrey Davy at the Royal Institution. It was this work, and these contacts, for which he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society:

"...I thought it best to go at once to Sir Humphrey Davy about the FRS. He said you not only had the right but ought to put them that you were really and truly a fellow and that your name would appear on the next list of members - which list he shewed me a proof of."

He had family and business links with the copper mining industry in Cornwall and had contributed to the Journal of the Cornwall Geological Society before moving to Swansea. Joseph Carne, the editor of the Journal, was anxious that Vivian would continue to contribute, "... the first volume was enriched with several of your papers, I should be sorry for another to issue from the press without your name on it".

Dillwyn, as a magistrate, took a significant part in the withdrawal of litigation for pollution, brought by others, against the Hafod Copper smelting company owned by Vivian. This level of industrial activity had a detrimental effect on the Swansea environment. The chemical fumes - mainly arsenic and sulphur dioxide - from the copper smelting process destroyed vegetation and blighted the lives of the inhabitants. Vivian made some effort to reduce the levels of pollution. Sir Humphrey Davy, Michael Faraday and Dr William Wollaston came to visit and offer suggestions and Dillwyn supported his work on abating the smoke and persuaded litigants to withdraw Bills of Indictment against the Company. Dillwyn, and fellow industrialists, William Crawshay and Anthony Hill formed a committee with the

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19 Letter from Joseph Carne, Penzance to J. H. Vivian, Swansea 27th April 1822. Vivian Papers A165 (NLW)
power to award £1,000 to whoever could find a solution to the problem of the pollution. Vivian's father, John Vivian, still mining copper in Cornwall, joined in the concern suggesting that "... by the smoke passing through a long horizontal flue, a great part of the sulphur and arsenic would be deposited." He was also concerned that the smelting works were seen as targets by people seeking compensation:

"I see no reason why smelting works and copper mines are not fair objects of legislative protection against the proceedings of malevolence for the purposes of getting money"

John Henry's son, Henry Hussey Vivian, was to patent many new metal production processes making Swansea one of the largest metallurgical centres in the country during most of the nineteenth century. His contribution to the industrial wealth of the area was recognised in his becoming the first Baron Swansea in 1893. For the industrialists such as Vivian, scientific connection was driven as much by the need for the development of business as it was by personal interest.

These social, political and marriage connections, and links with national scientific figures, gave an interdependence of activity which can be illustrated by the excavations at the Paviland Cave on the Gower. The presence of teeth and bones in the cave had been part of local knowledge for a considerable time, but it was the interest generated by William Buckland's stirring interpretation of the Kirkdale excavation of 1821 that prompted the first concerted investigation. William Buckland visited Kirkdale Cave in December 1821 when most of the excavation had been done by William Salmond, George Young, William Eastmead and John

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20 Diary of Lewis Western Dillwyn (hereafter DD) 17th October 1821, 26th & 27th July 1822.

21 Letter from John Vivian, Cornwall to J H Vivian, Swansea, 6th January 1820 Vivian Papers A744.

For a discussion of the Cornwall branch of the Vivian family and their copper mining interests see Cook (1996). The Cornwall and West Devon mining landscape has been nominated as a World Heritage Site, document submitted 24th January 2005

22 Letter from John Vivian, Cornwall to J H Vivian, Swansea, 24th January 1822 Vivian Papers A781
Gibson. Buckland was able to examine a large number of the bone specimens and estimated that more than seventy five hyenas had occupied the cave and that they were about one third larger than the species then found on the African continent. His subsequent paper read at the Royal Society during the February of 1822 giving his graphic interpretation of the animal life of a previous age was enthusiastically reported in the press of the day.

The press reports of Buckland’s cave finds and interpretations elicited a less enthusiastic response from a correspondent to The Cambrian who, observing that Buckland mentions similar evidence from the Crawley Rocks, Oxwich Bay near Swansea, “...would wish to know where Mr Buckland discovered Crawley Rocks near Swansea, and in whose cabinet these interesting organic remains are to be found.” This correspondent’s sense of local possession had been severely violated by the visiting geologist. The writer was clearly someone who was not in the same social circle as Dillwyn or the Talbots whose sharing of knowledge reinforced their confidence in the local possession of nature and their scientific standing. Had they been of this circle, they would have been aware that the specimens from the Crawley Rocks had been excavated in 1792 and had been in the Talbot’s cabinet ever since.

Indeed, Buckland’s knowledge of the bones from the Crawley Rocks came from the Misses Talbot who had been reminded of these finds by the Kirkdale Cavern publicity. They wrote to inform him and his request for examples of the specimens was acceded to, but further investigation was impossible as the fissure had been destroyed soon after the original discovery through quarrying. In the appendix to his paper on the Kirkdale Cavern, Buckland mentions the specimens being in the Talbot’s collection and includes a list of the different species the bones represent.

However, the press reports sufficiently motivated two brothers named Davies, a

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24 Cambrian 5th April 1822
25 Buckland (1822) pp208-209
surgeon and a curate of Reynoldston, to explore Paviland Cave in the following summer. There are two entrances to the Paviland Cave, or Goat Hole as it is sometimes called, both partway up a steep cliff overlooking the sea on the Gower Peninsular about fifteen miles west of Swansea. The upper entrance descends steeply, as a narrow chimney, and opens into the roof of the cavern. The lower entrance gives access to the main floor which is high enough not to be flooded in other than the severest of winter storms. They found there a molar tooth of an elephant along with part of a curved tusk which they re-buried, perhaps realising the limitations of their scientific knowledge and their presence on Talbot land. Dillwyn, the Misses Talbot and Rev. John Traherne had no such hesitation in excavating the bones in the cave. Their membership of the local scientific elite as collectors and connoisseurs permitted them to excavate the bones; the cave being on land belonging to the Talbots afforded them even more tangible permission to explore. Nonetheless, it is clear that they deferred to Buckland's scientific superiority in the excavations and subsequent investigations.

Dillwyn had been in Oxford during the February of 1822 where he spent some time with Buckland and attended the lectures on the 'Kirby Cavern'. Dillwyn, Miss Talbot and Rev. John Traherne explored the cave on the 27th December 1822 when they found bones of elephants, or mammoths as they are subsequently classified. The following day, Dillwyn and Miss Talbot returned to the cave and, "...brought away a great quantity of bones" which were taken to Penrice Castle. Buckland was concerned that he was not able to be at the initial excavation and wrote asking for very specific details of the finds and their circumstances in the cave. This letter to Miss Talbot clearly demonstrates the structural methodology he was using in his

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26 In his diaries LWD states (Thursday 14th February 1822) that he, "...attended a lecture by Buckland on Kirby[sic] Cavern, and afterwards dined in Hall at Corpus as the guest of Mr Hamer." The previous day he had spent unpacking geological specimens with Buckland and others. On the following Saturday, 16th February, he attended the concluding talk by Buckland on the 'Kirby' Cavern. He spent the following Tuesday and Wednesday morning with Buckland before setting off for Swansea on Friday 22nd February. Buckland must have left for London on the afternoon of the 20th to get to London to present his paper on the 21st as stated in the Philosophical Transactions (Buckland, 1822).

27 DD 27th December 1822
cave investigations. Buckland may have been scientifically thorough in his
cave investigations but this did not preclude his suggesting some time later that Lady
Mary Cole could, "...get up a romance about her [the Red Lady], a witch etc." 29

Buckland arrived from Derbyshire on the 18th January 1823 and, accompanied by
John Traherne and Dillwyn, were "...engaged together Geologically nearly all day". 30
The Monday, 20th, saw Dillwyn at Penrice Castle with the Talbots - an opportunity
to examine their finds from the cave and specimens from the Crawley Rocks. On the
morning of the 21st January Buckland left early for the Paviland Cave, Dillwyn,
Traherne and Miss Talbot followed on later. They excavated throughout the day
finding the teeth and bones of elephant [mammoth], rhinoceros, bear, hyena, wolf,
fox, horse, ox, different species of deer, rats, sheep, birds and a human.

This human skeleton was incomplete with only part of the left side surviving, the
right side and the skull and vertebrae missing. The remains were beneath about six
inches of earth in, what Buckland observed was, "...the usual position of burial and
in their natural order of contact". 31 The remaining bones were stained in a dark,
brick-red colour, this colour extending about half an inch into the earth immediately
surrounding them. Buckland surmised that the substance causing this stain must
have been used to cover the body at the time of burial. His first instinct was that the
skeleton was that of a man, possibly that of an excise man who had been murdered
whilst investigating smuggling activity along the coast. However, the presence of
such female decoration as rings and ivory rods led him to change his mind and
pronounce 'him' a woman. Subsequent investigations of the specimens and further
excavations by others much later led to a revised interpretation of the site including

28 Buckland to Miss Talbot 31st December 1822 DlaB Papers (166)
29 Buckland to Lady Mary Cole 15th February 1823 DlaB (167). For an examination of
Buckland's humour as a strategy in the analysis and presentation of palaeoanthropological
specimens in an Anglican dominated environment, with particular reference to the Red Lady
of Paviland, see Sommer(2004)
30 DD 18th January 1823
31 Reliquiae Diluvianae quoted in Gordon, (1894)
the conclusion that Buckland’s instincts were right and that the ‘Red Lady’ was indeed male.\textsuperscript{32}

This was clearly the first excavation of this human skeleton. The grave goods buried with the body were completely undisturbed, the collection of small \textit{Nerita littoralis} shells at the place where a small pocket might have been were, “in a state of great decay, and falling to dust on the slightest pressure”, and the fragments of ivory, “crumbling to pieces ... at the slightest touch”. The archaeological significance of the “small flint, the edges of which had been chipped off, as if by striking a light”\textsuperscript{33} was not recognised by Buckland straight away. He was of the opinion, as were most others, that humans could not have existed contemporaneously with the ‘antediluvian’ animals whose remains were found in the cave. When the Rev. Hey. Knight of Newton Nottage investigated the cave later in the year, he found more of these flint implements which Buckland surmised could be used as knives, but primarily for cutting the ivory rods rather than the cutting of flesh from the animal bones.

Following their excavation of the Paviland Cave, the party moved on to visit Hounds Hole and Deborah Cave. These two small caves were close by and a number of mammal bones contemporary with Paviland were also found there. Human bone remains had been found in the vicinity before in 1810 and 1813.\textsuperscript{34} Buckland also visited the Bacon and Minchin Holes in July 1831 and Caswell Bay in July 1832 with W D Conybeare, J Gwyn Jeffreys and L W Dillwyn.\textsuperscript{35}


\textsuperscript{33} Gordon, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{34}DD Appendix located in diary between 4\textsuperscript{th} November and 7\textsuperscript{th} November1821. Buckland gathered this information on cave bone deposits together in the publication of his “\textit{Reliquiae Diluvianae}” of 1823.

\textsuperscript{35}DD July 1831, 2\textsuperscript{nd} July 1832. Rev. William Daniel Conybeare(1787-1857), geologist, Rector of Sully and Dean of Llandaff; J Gwyn Jeffreys(1809-1885), solicitor and conchologist
Although this was about the time of the foundation of the Cambrian Institution in Swansea, they were at no time involved in this excavation. This elite social and scientific circle of Swansea reinforced their dominance of scientific activity through their links with national scientific figures. Further possession was demonstrated with the loan of some Paviland Cave finds to the museum of the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institute in 1835, the label clearly defining ownership.

Establishing the Places of Science

At a public meeting held on 18th October 1821, it was resolved to form a scientific institution which had the full title of 'The Cambrian Institution for the Encouragement of Pursuits in Geology, Mineralogy and Natural History'. Its formation emulated similar societies established in Liverpool, Manchester, Bath, Newcastle and Penzance and aimed to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge amongst the land-owners, agriculturalists and miners as well as the local and visiting philosophers. Literary and philosophical societies emanated from earlier, local, 'gentlemen’s' societies that had been popular in the eighteenth century located in towns all over the country such as Oxford, Spalding, London and Peterborough. These new societies had more ambitious aims creating lecture and meeting rooms, libraries and museums, and publishing regular transactions of their lectures and discoveries. Bristol had the closest of these societies to Swansea and this had been established in 1805. It is likely that the Bristol Institution provided the model for Swansea - the commercial links with Bristol were well established. Perhaps no point on the globe, it was claimed, contained more valuable stores of wealth than the rocks and mountains of the Principality with the extensive South Wales coalfield and the beds of iron and limestone so important in the established local manufacturing processes. Further investigations and the dissemination of the knowledge gained could only be an advantage in furthering these activities.

36 Oxford Philosophical Society established 1651, Spalding Gentleman's Society established 1710, Royal Institution, London established 1799, Peterborough Philosophical Society established 1730. For a discussion on Literary and Philosophical societies, see Allen(1976) pp142-3; Knell(1997)p1

37 The Cambrian 18th January 1822
The Institution was seen as a great advantage to the town. A public library with a suitable range of volumes combined with a well-arranged museum illustrating the different branches of natural history would add much respectability to the town providing a source of "rational pleasure" to the local inhabitants as well as being an attraction for visiting naturalists. It was decided that meetings would take place every two to four weeks when donations of specimens and books would be presented and recent developments in science could be raised and discussed, possibly illustrated with experiments.

It was acknowledged that the museum would not have the same opportunities as Bristol or Liverpool to gather the range of foreign material that would be available through those large port towns. Nor would Swansea compare with the larger English towns in the wealth available for the purchase of the most expensive scientific volumes. However, it was decided that their object, as a provincial scientific establishment, should be the gathering and dissemination of local knowledge. Their declared aim was to gather under one roof a collection that was of importance and interest regarding the natural history of Wales. In common with other similar societies they extended their interest to the history, antiquities and literature of their area whilst their primary interest lay with science.

At the first meeting the Chairman, Dr Collins, the Portreeve of Swansea, presented a number of volumes on scientific subjects and Dr Wilkinson presented a geological collection primarily of the rocks and fossils of the Bath area indicating the significance of transfer of collections from the private cabinet to the more public domain of the Institution. The timing ensured maximum publicity for the donor, the recognition of his possession of knowledge through the ownership of the collection and his giving access to that knowledge through the donation of the collection to a wider social group. The Cambrian Institution met again in March 1822 at the

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38 The Cambrian 13th April 1822, letter to the editor.
39 Ibid.
40 A port town chief burgess or magistrate similar to a mayor.
Mackworth Arms where Dr Collins as Portreeve was able to offer the society the use of a room at the Town Hall for future meetings.

Spaces for science were also created for the artisan and working classes. 'Swansea Tradesman’s and Mechanic’s Institution' was the first Mechanics’ Institute established in Wales - in 1826. The Mechanics’ Institute movement in Wales was driven by the middle classes, a stratum in Welsh society that was growing with the development of industry and commerce in the early nineteenth century. The object of the Mechanic’s Institute was, “...the instruction of the members in the principles of the arts they practice, and in the various branches of science and useful knowledge”. The Institute was established with these aims in mind, but it was understood that the outcome of such education would be the appropriate improvement of the working classes, and subsequent commercial benefit, as perceived by the middle classes. This was reiterated by J. H. Moggridge at his inaugural address at the first full meeting held at the Town Hall, Swansea on Thursday 7th December 1826. Here he stated that it was “...absolutely necessary” for work to be done in the workplace and that food and goods were produced. The Mechanics’ Institute was being established to ensure that this work “... should be better performed than heretofore”, that such goods and services would be produced more efficiently and more cheaply for the consumer. And socially he believed that the Institute provided a medium through which the working classes could be released from poverty through education and advancement, for “when the people are wretchedly poor, crimes multiply, property is endangered, and all are unhappy”.

A series of lectures was planned at the Free School in Goat Street on arithmetic, mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, geography and mineralogy. Fees were eight shillings a year with two thirds of the administering committee members being of the

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41 For studies of Mechanics’ Institutes in South Wales and their place in education, see Evans(1965) and Roderick (1991). For a more contemporary discussion on Mechanics’ Institutes, see Hole(1853)

42Moggridge, J. H. 1827 “Introductory Discourse delivered at the Town-Hall, in Swansea, at the First Meeting of the Tradesman’s and Mechanic’s Institute for that Town and Neighbourhood” 7th December 1826, Swansea. Reports in the Cambrian 8/9th December 1826, 17th March 1827, 24th March 1827
working class. The Institution grew to a membership of 200-300 people with a library of 100 reference books, but despite such a promising beginning it soon declined. Its demise was a source of regret to a correspondent to the *Cambrian* just six years later:

"Under the auspices of the late 'Mechanic's Institution' at Swansea (of which, unhappily, there is not a vestige visible), what an impetus was given to scientific research, and to the more unassuming employment - reading; and what a mass of information was thrown on the minds of the members of that Institution by the splendid and lucid lectures of Mr Byers and Mr Moggridge." 43

This regret was supported by a member of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge:

"A few years ago Swansea possessed a Tradesman's and Mechanic's Society - of which for some time from two to three hundred individuals were members. ... It is a subject of real and general regret that such an institution should have languished and become ineffective. ... The library, consisting of one hundred volumes is entire, having been preserved with landable [sic] zeal and care for future use." 44

The perceived fall in moral behaviour amongst the working classes was again the impetus for this desire for a suitable educational establishment which would

"... transplant the demoralized scores of our young men from the pestiferous and spoiling strongholds of the tavern and gambling room within the magic and elevating reach of inducement to live soberly, morally, and rationally in

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43 'Fideus' letter to the Editor, *The Cambrian* 25th January 1833
44 Member of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, letter to the Editor *The Cambrian* 1st February 1833
their generation....".45

However not all responses were encouraging, "Alas! Good Fideus your appeal has not been the first, and in order to make it the last, your only course is to form the Institution yourself, and to enlist your immediate friends in the good cause."46

Three years later further efforts were made to rekindle interest in the Institution. Lectures were again organised in the Free School in Goat Street and membership started with 230 people and a small library of 64 books.47 The lack of primary education of the working class members hampered progress and associated day schools were started to solve the problem. As well as the lectures in Goat Street, the members of the Institution were admitted to the lectures of the Royal Institution of South Wales. Despite the support of Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn, the Swansea Tradesman’s and Mechanic’s Institute fell into decline, the last recorded meeting being at the Royal Institution in April 1847. Further efforts to revive the Mechanics’ Institute were made the following year but met with no success.48

As well as supporting the Mechanics’ Institutes in south Wales, the middle classes needed their own institution for the pursuance of their own activities. Swansea’s close neighbour Neath established ‘The Neath Museum and Society for Promoting the Arts and Sciences’, in May 1835. The object of this Neath society was declared, "...to form a depository for specimens in the various branches of natural history, works of art, ancient and modern coins and medals, models, casts and works of general interest."49 The members of the society paid an annual subscription of 1 guinea which also made them share holders of the Institution. Membership was carefully controlled with three quarters of the vote of members present at the

45 Fideus’ op.cit.
46 J.J.S.’ letter to the Editor The Cambrian 1st February 1833
47 Silurian 18th January 1840, Cambrian 29th November 1842
48 Cambrian 17th March 1848
49 The Cambrian 1st May 1835
meeting being required for successful election.

The prime function of the society was seen to be the establishment of a museum and the acquisition of specimens for display - the name, 'museum', in the title of the society emphasised their sense of purpose. Their first meeting was supported by Conybeare and J. E. Bechino,\textsuperscript{50} described in the \textit{Cambrian} as, "...two individuals whose names will add lustre to the Society, and give it an importance of no ordinary character."\textsuperscript{51}

By their meeting of 2\textsuperscript{nd} June 1835, tangible support from significant local people had begun to arrive, Dillwyn had donated books on botany and entomology; Bechino had promised a collection of a series of English plants; E. L. Richards had promised a geological collection; and Rev. Traherne had promised collections of geology and seals. Plans were made for the reception and display of these various collections.

The Neath Society moved swiftly into its stride with Conybeare giving an address on geology on 8\textsuperscript{th} June. He preceded his address by expressing his hope that their resulting researches would prove invaluable in many ways, to himself and other workers, "... but particularly by obtaining full and correct details as to the physical structure of the district". His own researches had enabled him to establish the main outline of the principle structures and these he displayed to the Society marked on an Ordnance Survey map. This address was in advance of a promised course of lectures due to begin within two months. These began at the end of August 1835 at Neath Town Hall; the first lecture started at 7.30pm concluding at 10.30pm and "... was listened to with most profound attention by about four hundred of the leading families and the respectable inhabitants of the town of Neath and the western parts of the county". Conybeare, at the end of his first lecture, urged the Society to build a Museum in the town to house the growing collections. Several financial

\textsuperscript{50}J E Bechino(1785-1851) Secretary of the Linnean Society. He had mining interests in south Wales and had a house in the area to keep in touch with the business. Made Colonial Secretary in Van Diemans Land in 1842

\textsuperscript{51} \textit{The Cambrian} 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1835
contributions were offered at the meeting and it was decided to establish a fund on the basis of 25/- a share. By December the Society had arranged the purchase of the Manor House, "...a large commodious building", from H. J. Grant who had also contributed £100. It was, "... contemplated to fit up this edifice for the purpose of lecturing, also for a Museum, Library and Reading Room." The Museum was established and improved over the years, Dillwyn commenting favourably upon it after a visit in 1850, "...we drove to see the Neath Museum which tho’ small is neatly kept and vastly improved."

The establishment of the Neath Society prompted Swansea to follow suit. 'The Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institute' was formed in June 1835 and within a year had a subscribing membership of 172. This Society followed the demise of the Cambrian Institution and seemed to enjoy greater success. Within three years the Institute had received Royal patronage to become the 'Royal Institution of South Wales'. This rapid growth in membership and status was, in part, a reflection of the influential people, in science and the community, who associated themselves with the society from the beginning.

The first move towards the foundation of the Institute was the drawing up of a prospectus by Mr Geo. G. Francis who managed to obtain the support of nearly fifty others. At the house of one of the most active supporters, Mr J. G. Jeffreys, a meeting was held to formulate a list of proposed rules for the governance of the Institution. An advertisement was placed in the Cambrian newspaper of the 22nd May 1835 calling a general meeting:

"A GENERAL MEETING of the SUBSCRIBERS will be held at the Town Hall on Monday, 1st June, 1835, at twelve o’clock at noon, to form the

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52 Reported in The Cambrian 4th December 1835
53DD 9th Sept 1850
54 Proceedings of the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institute 1838
55 Jeffries, J. G. 1836 Annual Report of the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institution Swansea
Committees for the ensuing year, and for other arrangements of the Society.

This Society has been established for the cultivation and advancement of the various branches of Natural History and Antiquities of the Town and Neighbourhood; for the extension and encouragement of Literature and the Fine Arts; and for the general diffusion of knowledge.

In a district so particularly rich in mineral and other natural products, and possessing so many other advantages from its present position and prospects, for the improvement of our social and intellectual system; an Institution which shall comprise and extend these advantages must be highly desirable; and no professions or apology need be offered to the public for such an undertaking.

After a General Meeting of the Subscribers shall have been held, due Notice will be given of the Society's arrangements. Several Scientific and Literary Gentlemen have offered to assist in the different departments.”

The meeting was “most numerously and respectably attended” by the local social elite and middle class, who were active devotees of science and literature.66 Once the provisional committees had been formed, a meeting was called for twelve noon the following Monday where the proposed rules of the Society were ratified.

There were a number of significant people of science connected in some way with the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Society at its beginning, many of them also having the family, social, commercial and political links already discussed. L W Dillwyn, was elected President and both his sons were connected with the Institute, John Dillwyn-Llewyn as a Vice-President and Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn as a member. Six Vice-Presidents were elected including John Henry Vivian and Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot. John Gwyn Jeffreys was an active supporter of the

66 The Cambrian 6th June 1835
establishment of the Society and the Honorary Secretary for the first year with W. E. Logan taking over this role at the first annual meeting. Conybeare was present at the first meeting of 1st June and agreed to be elected as an Honorary Member.

By their second meeting on 8th June 1835, a set of rooms in Castle Square had been acquired for the use of the Society at an annual rent of £21 for five years and, in view of the large number of subscribing members, it was possible for a further £40 to be set aside for the purchase of cases, shelves and furniture. The fitting out of the rooms as a museum took priority over the purchase of books for the library. Such was their enthusiasm that a display of specimens was open for the Swansea Regatta during the first week of August - less than three months after the Society had been formed.

The *Cambrian* newspaper was "...much struck by the neatness and scientific order of the arrangements." The displays included geology, European conchology, English and Italian insects, British birds and mammals as well as coins, antiquities and works of art. A cast of an ichthyosaur had been sent from the Bristol Institution following a letter of support from the General Committee of that organisation. This was in response to a letter from the Swansea Society's Honorary Secretary, Mr J. Gwyn Jeffreys, suggesting cooperation between the two organisations - the Swansea society was being modelled on the Bristol Institution. This link with Bristol could have been prompted by Conybeare who had helped to establish that Institution. Bristol recognised the mutual benefit of the support in the exchange of material representing the two different geographical areas.

The rules of the Society controlled access to the Institute, the subscriptions were not too high and there were few restrictions on members. The subscription was set at one

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57 Proceedings SPLI 1838 p12
58 The *Cambrian*, 8th August 1835
59 The *Cambrian*, 18th July 1835
guinea a year which is the current equivalent of about thirty five pounds - not a
precluding sum for most of the presumed membership but a substantial amount for
some. It was about 2.5 times the weekly wage paid to Mr Hugh Mahoney, the
Society’s ‘Servant’, employed at their first General Meeting. Subscribers were to
have access to the Society’s rooms every day, except Sunday, from eleven o’clock in
the morning to three in the afternoon and again from seven to nine in the evenings.
Collections and the books in the library were available for study but it was not
possible for them to be borrowed.

Subscribers could introduce the other members of their family including minors and
women. This did not mean that women were excluded from membership; women
could be members and five were listed in the first year. There was no overt exclusion
of women unlike many Victorian science societies; the Woolhope Naturalists’ Field
Club of Hereford, for example, formed in 1852, excluded women from full
membership until 1954. Inhabitants of Swansea who were non-subscribers could be
introduced once a year by subscribers and non inhabitants could be similarly
introduced as ‘strangers’, their names being entered into a Visitors Book. Within the
first year about seven hundred visitors had been introduced and signed into the Book.

The benefits of being a subscriber were access to the Society’s rooms, which
included the museum and library, and the right to attend the series of lectures. The
museum had a considerable number of specimens across the natural science
disciplines, the majority being geology. It was claimed that nearly four thousand
individual specimens were to be scientifically displayed, labelled and numbered in
the museum by the end of the first year of the Institution’s existence. Very few
botanical specimens had been acquired - just a small collection of mosses found
locally. Zoology was represented by about fifty mounted specimens of British birds
and mammals and a small range of invertebrates. The geology collection had as its
core the specimens which had been arranged by George Sowerby and had once

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Proceedings SPLI 1838 p.viii. For a discussion of Mahoney at the RISW, his relationship with
the members and the financial affair, see Gabb (1993).
belonged to the defunct Cambrian Institution.

The large number of other specimens and collections of geological material presented over the year indicated the particular popularity and advanced organisation of this branch of the natural sciences. Being on the edge of the South Wales coal field ensured a good collection of coal measure fossils and it was the need to display this collection which highlighted the lack of suitable space and necessitated the search for more spacious premises. The coal measure fossils were displayed in upright cases to save space but these were considered less suitable for the examination and study of the individual specimens than flat cases. The investigations of the Paviland Cave, which had resulted in a number fossil bones and teeth of large mammals, filled one of the display cases. As a centre for the smelting of metals, a display of ores was an important part of the mineral collection. Many of the subscribers, including JH Vivian, were involved in the smelting industry.

The purpose of the Society was expressed in the proposal in the *Cambrian* newspaper of 22nd May 1835 and reiterated in the first issue of the *Proceedings*, 1838:

“This Society has been established for the cultivation and advancement of the various branches of Natural History and Antiquities of the Town and Neighbourhood; for the extension and encouragement of Literature and the Fine Arts; and for the general diffusion of knowledge.”

Grand and worthy aims but there was no detailed suggestion as to how they were to be achieved. There was no proposal for the publication of papers or a journal, or for the presentation of papers, or for regular meetings for the exchange of information. The success of the short series of lectures which actually took place during the first year of the Society proved to be something of a surprise to the General Committee:

“Although this branch of our Report was not at first contemplated in the
arrangements of the Society, it has proved one of very general interest and attraction\textsuperscript{61}

The Society moved directly into the acquisition of premises for the formation of a Museum and, secondarily, a Library. This was clearly its prime focus. The benefits of the Society laid down in the rules revolved around access to the Museum and Library. Conybeare, at their first meeting "...recommended to the society the exertion of their best efforts in forming a Museum for the collection and exhibition of all natural productions\textsuperscript{62}

By 1838, the Swansea Philosophical and Literary Institute had applied for Royal patronage which was duly granted by letter and the society changed its name to 'The Royal Institution of South Wales'. A title which, they believed, reflected the importance of their town.\textsuperscript{63} Other institutions had also acquired this status, for example, the Royal Manchester Institution founded in 1823. Although many members of Swansea's social elite held office in the Royal Institution of South Wales, few took part in the day to day activities. Dillwyn was President but he did little more than attend some AGM's to begin with. Admittedly, he was MP for most of the early years of the society but it was not until the Royal Institution was being built that he really took an interest and became directly involved. His diaries make no mention of the society until he begins to attend the meetings of the Building Committee. It was this tangible signifier of the possession of nature that drew him in.

It was the middle class members of the society who were more actively involved in the Royal Institution and saw it as a vehicle for scientific or social advancement through learning and networking. For example, Dillwyn had earlier noted that Rev.

\textsuperscript{61} Proceedings SPLI 1838 p13
\textsuperscript{62} Reported in the "Cambrian" 6\textsuperscript{th} June 1835
\textsuperscript{63}Royal patronage was an honour sought by resort towns to enhance their status.
Dr. Wm Hewson wished to be "...associated with gentlemen". And J. Gwyn Jeffreys as Secretary and W. E. Logan and W. R. Grove as Committee members all made significant advances in science following their involvement with the Institution.

John Gwyn Jeffreys (1809-1885) was trained as a solicitor but was given early encouragement in his natural history pursuits by Lewis Western Dillwyn - Jeffreys was practically the same age as Dillwyn's eldest son John - and this was at the height of Dillwyn's enthusiasm for shells. It was Dillwyn who supported Jeffreys' paper on molluscs being published by the Linnean Society - at the time Jeffreys was just 19 - and his election as a Fellow the following year. Jeffreys soon purchased a yacht to allow him to dredge for shells at sea. Conybeare, in 1835, suggested that Jeffreys was, "...[at] the commencement of an honourable career in the annals of philosophy and literature", and this proved to be the case, being elected FRS in 1840 when he was 31 and going on to publish over one hundred papers on conchology. He was called to the Bar in London in 1856 but left the profession ten years later and moved to Hertfordshire to work full time on conchology. He produced a standard work on British shells, *British Conchology*, in five volumes from 1862 to 1869.

W. E. Logan (1798-1875) took over as Secretary of the Royal Institution of South Wales at the first AGM. He was born in Montreal, Canada of Scottish parents. He moved to Swansea in 1831 as accountant to the Forest Copper Company, a company in which his family had a financial interest. The importance of the South Wales coalfield to his industry started his interest in geology. He prepared a geological map of the local area of the south Wales coalfield which he exhibited at the British Association meeting at Liverpool. During his survey work he discovered four large specimens of *Sigillaria*, two of which were excavated and donated to the Royal

64 DD 27th February 1818
65 Reported in the *Cambrian* 6th June 1835
66 For an early biography of Logan see Harrington(1883); for a later biography see Smith, C.(2000); for Logan in Wales see Torrens(1999), Bayliffe(2001)
Late in 1837 the Geological Survey moved into South Wales with Henry T. De la Beche, the Survey's Director, setting up residence in 'Lilliput', a house near Swansea. His old friend L. W. Dillwyn was delighted that he was based in the area and invited him to dine at his home "straight away". Logan contributed to the work of the Geological Survey, as did a number of South Wales philosophers, through the preparation of geological maps working closely with De la Beche. De la Beche had seen Logan's maps of local geology at the Liverpool meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and had admired their detail and accuracy. In 1841 the opportunity arose for Logan to apply for the post of Director of the Geological Survey of Canada. His work with the Geological Survey in Wales meant that De la Beche was able to give Logan a positive testimonial, and Buckland and Sir George Murray provided the others. Logan left for Canada in 1843 to begin work on the Canadian survey and maintained a regular correspondence with De la Beche during this time. Logan's work with the Canadian Geological Survey brought him significant recognition in Canada.

William Robert Grove (1811-1896) was from a wealthy local Swansea family and his father, John Grove, was a magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant of the county of Glamorgan. Like Jeffreys, his chosen profession was the law and he was called to the bar in 1835. He suffered from some ill-health at this time which slowed his career but allowed him to indulge his enthusiasm for science and physics in particular. He first came to wide scientific notice in 1839 with his invention of the electric voltaic cell which became known as the 'Grove cell' for which he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He was very active in the business of the Royal Society and played a major role in its reform of 1847 which shifted the eligibility for Fellowship from noble birth to scientific achievement. He published many papers in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society as well as in other scientific journals.

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67 RISW Annual Reports 1838. These specimens are still on display today.
68 DD 16th December 1837
69 Logan to De la Beche 3rd December 1841, DlaB 876
70 Gray, 1896; Matheson n.d.
journals. He also published papers in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Institution of South Wales. He was elected Vice-President in 1844 and President in 1857 and 1886/8.

With the growth in membership and the flow of specimens into the museum it soon became clear that the rooms in Castle Square were inadequate for their purpose and the Council considered how to solve this problem. Here, the Council began to define the spaces required for the fulfilment of their purpose. The Museum space, for "... there is nothing more indispensable to the utility of an institution like this, than the perfect display of the specimens it contains." The laboratory and lecture space for "... an opportunity of making and preserving in order a collection of Philosophical Apparatus, fitted for the purposes of experimental lectures, as well as those of scientific observations of various kinds". They believed that a town like Swansea, "... reckoned the seventh in the kingdom for extent of trade, and surpassed by few in intelligence" would have little difficulty in finding the means to erect a suitable building. Such a building, with appropriate spaces for philosophical activity, would not only facilitate their work in South Wales but also allow them to contribute to the work of the British Association.71

They were aware that the continued success of an Institution such as theirs was dependant on the continued enthusiasm of the members "... whose tastes and inclinations lead them to an active pursuit of science." They believed that the presence of a suitable building would ensure the continuance of the Society even during times when local enthusiasm and involvement waned, "...for who is there among the votaries of science that will not feel his zeal more strongly stimulated, when he has a guarantee that the result of his labour, will enjoy a permanent durability?"72

Plans were drawn up for the new building to house the Royal Institution and a site

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71Resolution 10, 2nd AGM *RISW Annual Reports* 6th June 1837
723rd AGM *RISW Annual Reports* 2nd June 1838
obtained from the Swansea Town Council on a long lease. The estimated cost of £3,000 for the erection of the building was funded through the sale of £10 shares with a 3% return. A Building Committee was formed at a public meeting at the Town Hall on 19th April 1838 with Dillwyn in the Chair and this Committee met on a regular basis in the development of the project.73 The proposed building would have “…an external character, affording a specimen of architecture which will render the Building, at once, a credit to the Institution, and an ornament to the town.”74

By August of the same year, the Foundation Stone was laid with considerable ceremony reflecting the significance of the event as recorded by Dillwyn:

“At 12, I drove as President to a large public Breakfast, given by the Building Committee, and about 2, walked in procession and laid the first stone of the Royal Institution. It was accompanied by a Royal Salute of 21 guns, the ringing of bells, the cheers of a vast multitude and a prayer by Dr. Hewson.”75

Work on the building progressed with the “…general sentiment of gratulation and delight which fills the public mind in witnessing the progress of our projected Edifice, now rising with attractive aspect and pleasing promise”,76 and was completed in August 1840 and handed over to the Royal Institution of South Wales society on 11th September.77 The completed building adding to the tangible evidence of Swansea as the leading town in the Principality at this time.78

The Council of the Royal Institution of South Wales society decided to open to the

73DD 19th April 1838
74AGM 2nd June 1838 RISW Annual Reports
75DD 24th August 1838
76Dr Hewson, AGM 1st June 1839 RISW Reports
77DD 31st August 1840; RISW Minutes 11th September 1840. Some confusion can arise because both the Society and its building are referred to as ‘The Royal Institution of South Wales’. When referring to the Society I will use the ‘The Royal Institution of South Wales society’ where appropriate to clarify the distinction.
78See Miskell(2003) for a discussion on the part the Royal Institution of South Wales played in establishing the reputation of Swansea.
public over the Whitsun holiday of 1842. Members of the Council were present to “... see the company properly accommodated and to give any information that may be desired.” A variety of chemical, physical and mechanical experiments were demonstrated in the laboratory during the day with accompanying lectures. Dillwyn brought a selection of living plants from his collection and these were distributed about the rooms with labels as to their name and origin. It was estimated that nearly 10,000 people attended the two days, the Council hoping that many would benefit from the “... promotion of industry, morals and refinement.” Obvious satisfaction was taken when a number of boisterous young boys became quite orderly on entering the building, “... their conduct has afforded a striking proof of the advantages which this neighbourhood has derived from an extended education among the working classes,”79 referring to the activities of the Mechanics’ Institute and associated day schools under the control of the middle classes.

In 1847 the Royal Institution of South Wales society demonstrated the degree of its ambition by proposing that it should be elevated into a college: a learned association similar to the Royal Society of London, conferring Fellowships and other titles, and; a school of instruction in the higher branches of learning, having professorships and conferring diplomas of proficiency in the sciences. A committee was formed to progress the idea and a proposal formulated under the title “The Royal College of Wales”.80 However, the scheme appears to have fallen through as no further mention is made of it. This did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Institution for, that same year, they extended an invitation to host the British Association’s annual meeting and were accepted for 1848.

Dillwyn pointed out the honour being bestowed on Swansea by this visit:

“... the prospect of Swansea being raised to that rank and importance which had been conferred on those towns and cities where the British Association

79DD 16th and 17th May 1842; RISW Minutes May 1842
80RISW Minutes 5th November 1847 and 12th November 1847.
had held its meetings during past years\textsuperscript{81}

He pointed out the capital cities and other important cities already visited by the British Association:

\textquote{He thought he might attribute the advantage which would result to Swansea by that visit to the establishment of the Royal Institution; and he considered that the possession of such an institution, with its Royal patronage, fairly entitled Swansea to the name, at least in a scientific point of view, of the 'Metropolis of Wales'\textsuperscript{82}}

John Phillips, Assistant General Secretary of the British Association, attended a local meeting in Swansea in preparation for the visit. He encouraged local \textquote{gentlemen resident in the vicinity of Swansea and Neath} to prepare papers for the meeting on scientific issues relating to the area. He remarked that Swansea had a strong history of metallurgical processes and was set in an area of geological interest, \textquote{moreover it is well known that in and near Swansea, more than one department of the natural sciences had been cultivated with eminent success.}\textsuperscript{83}

A local fund was gathered to help cover the cost of the British Association meeting with the donations being published in the press - the relative generosity of the local supporters could thereby be judged. As the date of the meeting grew closer, the \textit{Cambrian} observed that, although Swansea and Neath had donated generously, there was a significant absence of support from the rest of South Wales, perhaps signifying a lack of societal scientific activity outside the influence of the Royal Institution of South Wales society.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{RISW Minutes} 1\textsuperscript{st} June 1848
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{Cambrian} 7\textsuperscript{th} July 1848
\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Cambrian} 28\textsuperscript{th} July 1848
In 1847 the annual meeting of the British Association had been held in Oxford:

"an ancient and venerable seat of academic discipline, where the very aspect of the surrounding buildings proclaimed the long residence of learned leisure and elegant taste; where, during the lapse of many centuries, science and learning have made their abode".85

Swansea was something of a contrast, a point observed by the President of the meeting, the Marquis of Northampton:

"The British Association has now arrived at a part of our Sovereign's dominions where it cannot enjoy similar advantages. Remote from the metropolis, remote from the chief seats of English learning, remote also from those great highways of communication."86

However, the President conceded that it was the aim of the British Association to take science to every part of the British Isles and there were many aspects of the area around Swansea of great interest to scientists - "Swansea still possesses some attractions" - from the range of industrial processes to the importance of the geology.87

W R Grove had played a major role in bringing the British Association to Swansea - a dinner was held in his honour at the end of the visit - and other Swansea philosophers played active roles in the meeting. L W Dillwyn was President of the Zoology and Botany Section with L L Dillwyn as Vice-President; W R Grove and J D Llewelyn were Vice-Presidents of the Chemical Section; Geo Grant Francis was Secretary of the Ethnology Section; J H Vivian was President of the Statistics Section; Starling Benson was Secretary of the Geology Section; John Gwyn Jeffreys

85Marquis of Northampton, Presidential Address, Swansea 1848, BAAS Report - 1848, p.xxxi
86Ibid pp.xxxi-xxxii
87Ibid p.xxxii
was the local Treasurer; Matthew Moggridge and D Nichol were the local Secretaries and L W Dillwyn, W R Grove and J H Vivian were Vice-Presidents of the meeting. Matthew Moggridge and Starling Benson both gave two papers and W R Grove and J Gwyn Jeffreys each gave one paper. L W Dillwyn records his daily visits to the 'wisdom' meeting and the men of science he entertained to dinner including Prof Ramsey, E R Lankester, C C Babbington, Dr Buckland, Dr Mantell, Dr L Playfair, Prof Forbes, Daubeney, Bentham, Prof J Phillips and De la Beche.88

Despite a lower attendance due to the comparative remoteness of Swansea, the British Association week was considered successful by the local press. However, the presence of the British Association allowed a contrast with the Royal Institution of South Wales society which the Cambrian considered with some criticism. "The foundation of all science" stated the Editorial, "is Geometry and Arithmetic". And little of the Royal Institution of South Wales society's activities involved these elements. Swansea had heard "men of the first order in the exercise of their scientific vocations" and had found their local society wanting by comparison:

"We sincerely trust that a remark by Dr Percy will not be lost sight of by the Council of the Royal Institution of South Wales ... namely, that the object of such Institutions should be instruction not amusement."89

Despite individuals connected with the Royal Institution of South Wales society being men of science to the extent of attracting a meeting of the British Association to a remote setting, the Institution itself was not perceived by the Cambrian to be fulfilling an appropriate educational role. For people such as L W Dillwyn, Grove and Jeffreys their scientific arena was national and even international rather than local, the local activities at the Institution being undertaken by people who could not be expected to compare with the "men of the first order" of the British Association.

88 DD 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 18th July 1848
89 Cambrian Editorial 18th August 1848.
However, the Institution had demonstrated ambitions in this educational area just the year before and a further, less academically elevated, proposal was put forward in 1857 for the establishment of a “school for the rudimentary and progressive study of some of the sciences”, but this did not progress due to lack of funds.\footnote{RISW Annual Reports 1856/7} Whilst the Royal Institution of South Wales society remained financially independent through annual subscriptions, funding would continue to be a problem in the realisation of more ambitious projects.

From the point of view of the British Association, the meeting was far from a failure despite the difficulties of communication. Indeed, the British Association returned thirty two years later in 1880.

This visit of the British Association in 1848 marked the high point of Swansea’s scientific activity. Soon the protagonists - L W Dillwyn, W R Grove, J G Jeffreys - would be lost to the scene and would not be replaced by people of such eminence or energy. The Royal Institution of South Wales was firmly established as a space for philosophical activity but the Society failed to progress, the initiative for more active work coming from alternative groups.

Later Philosophical Culture - “Stagnation”\footnote{RISW Annual Reports 1862/63}

Despite the success of the Royal Institution of South Wales society in providing lecture programmes, a laboratory and museum, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the influence of the Institution faded as the century wore on. The loss of such key figures was keenly felt. Other organisations who used the Royal Institution of South Wales’ lecture space were seen as more innovative in their activities. The Bridgend Mechanics’ Institution brought Mrs Balfour - a well known lecturer of the time - to the lecture theatre of the Royal Institution with some success. The \textit{Cambrian} was disappointed in the lack of support shown by the Institution’s Council
and compared this lecture with "...some of our own local philosophers [who] enlighten us with trite plagiarisms and flashy empiricisms."92

There were elements in Swansea society who believed that not all the scientific desires were being fulfilled. Two groups were established during the second half of the nineteenth century ostensibly to augment the range of such activities in the town - the 'Swansea Literary and Scientific Society' and the 'Swansea Geological/Scientific Society'. Both held their meetings at the Royal Institution building and were closely connected with the Royal Institution of South Wales society although the formal link never developed into full incorporation.

In 1845 the Swansea Literary and Scientific Society was established "... at which the lovers of science and literature might assemble and communicate to each other their respective observations and investigations."93 The Society had the aim of providing a forum where anybody interested in any aspect of science or literature could offer a paper, conduct an experiment or present the result of a range of observations for the Society to discuss. The sharing of information and knowledge, it was hoped, would promote the advance of science in Swansea. Thirty three members were elected, by ballot, demonstrating control of access. Numbers fell over the next few years and by 1852 membership at the meetings often failed to meet the quorum. It was thought that the lateness of the meetings - often finishing after ten in the evening - and their frequency - weekly - contributed to the fall in attendance. Also, the specialist nature of some topics presented for discussion may have put some members off. It was decided that the meetings would begin earlier and be held fortnightly to help solve this problem. It was also proposed that the Society be incorporated into the Royal Institution of South Wales but this was rejected.94 By 1857 the membership of the Society had fallen to the degree that a meeting was called to "... consider the propriety of discontinuing the meetings". At the meeting on 15th May 1857 it was

92 Cambrian 11th June 1852
93 SLSS Minutes AGM 1846.
94 SLSS Minutes AGM 1852.
decided to dissolve the Society with the financial balance being used to buy Welsh books for the library of the Royal Institution of South Wales.\textsuperscript{95}

The Swansea Geological Society was formed at a meeting on 1\textsuperscript{st} June 1877 for "...the purpose of applying all the results of modern geological enquiry to the elucidation of the Geology of this Neighbourhood; this object to be carried out by holding meetings for reading Essays and discussing them, and making Excursions, mapping the locality, and collecting illustrative specimens; also as far as possible to enrich the Museum of the Royal Institution of South Wales".\textsuperscript{96} Within the first year the membership grew to 29 and a number of evening meetings with papers and discussions were held along with 6 outdoor excursions. In 1879 it was decided to expand the activities of the Society and to change their name to the 'Swansea Scientific Society' to reflect this broader compass.

The Swansea Scientific Society grew very slowly, and certainly not at the pace envisaged, there being just 50 members after 2 years. Little progress was made until 1885 when, spurred on by the activities of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society in Cardiff and smarting from the loss to Cardiff of the University College of South Wales in the first 'Battle of the Sites' in 1883, it was decided to revitalise the Society:

"In the early part of the year 1885, some of the members of the present Committee felt that Swansea ought not, any longer, to be without a Scientific Society. Cardiff had long enjoyed the benefits of a prosperous Field Naturalists' Society, the published reports of whose researches and achievements are a credit to that town. Cardiff had also won the South Wales Classical College. It was therefore felt that Swansea people ought to bestir themselves in favour of local scientific culture, with the view of eventually securing for the Borough the establishment of a state-aided College of

\textsuperscript{95}SLSS Handwritten in the front of the bound reports.

\textsuperscript{96}Annual Report of the Swansea Geological Society 1877-8
Science and Technology”

The move for this revitalisation took place at a meeting on 25th April 1885 at the Royal Institution of South Wales building and subsequently a range of excursions and lectures was arranged which brought a substantial increase in membership. The first excursion was to the grounds of Penllergare, the home of their President John T D Llewelyn where he reiterated the desire to emulate Cardiff in the field of further education:

“Cardiff had got ahead of Swansea by obtaining the college; now this society and the townspeople must go to work and not rest satisfied until they had got a Technical College for Swansea ... what was wanted was a good Technical College where the applied sciences would be taught properly and thoroughly ...such an institution was a necessity in a great mechanical, mining and metallurgical centre like Swansea”

Two other excursions took place that year along with eight lectures. The Scientific Society continued with this pattern of events over a number of years. 1888 saw the addition of an annual Soiree with a range of exhibitions throughout the Royal Institution building. A less scientific yet formal affair where, “... dancing was engaged in by the majority of those present, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.” The success of the annual Soirees was such that in 1892 the Society took over the Albert Hall in Swansea, “... the great hall was devoted to dancing, while the lesser hall was set apart for the Conversazione proper, and the other apartments were fitted up as refreshment and retiring rooms.” Between 250 and 300 people came to the Soiree “... including representatives of the leading families of the district,” an opportunity for the middle classes to indulge in middle class activities and mix with

97Annual Report Swansea Scientific Society 1885-6
98SSS Committee Report, 1855-56, p8
99SSS Annual Report, 1887-8, p11
100SSS Annual Report 1891-2, p33
people of higher social standing.

However, ambitions rose too high when the Soiree of 1898 left the Society with a financial loss. This annual event was suspended whilst the Society recovered which it had by 1903 with a credit balance of £36. The lecture programme, however, increased to seventeen during the winter of 1899-1900.

The Swansea Scientific Society was just one of the societies that held their meetings at the Royal Institute of South Wales building. Others included the Swansea Art Society, the Swansea Camera Club, the Swansea Welsh Society and the Esperanto Club, reinforcing the Institute as a space for philosophical activity in Swansea.

Meanwhile, the Council of the Royal Institution of South Wales society was concerned about the slow growth in its membership. They decided to introduce a new category of membership in 1857 called 'Associate', with an annual fee of ten shillings. Associate members were given access to the library and newsroom in the evenings and the museum in the evenings of the summer months. This was to allow for those people who worked during the day but who wished to pursue philosophical activity in their spare time. There was also an element of social control in this scheme, with the hope that the artisans’ spare time would be “...redeemed from the chances of misappropriation.”\textsuperscript{101} However, the Council was disappointed with the results of this attempt at widening and increasing the membership, “... so few of the artizan classes have availed themselves of the educational facilities and courses of political and social information”\textsuperscript{102}, even though this artisan population in Swansea was rising.

The Council continued to take cognisance of the problems relating to membership in the following year or two when it recognised that the perception of the Institution may not be inviting to the artisan classes. It took stock of the pervading social

\textsuperscript{101}RISW Annual Reports 1857/58
\textsuperscript{102}RISW Annual Reports 1859/60
influences at the time of its founding in 1835 when “...science and literature were sealed books to the multitude, and learning was the exclusive province of the possessor of wealth and leisure.” This restriction in view “induced stagnation” and although the new Associate membership had been created to counter this, to the puzzlement of the Council, the perception had prevailed:

“It is an important and injurious error to believe or assert that the Royal Institution is essentially and unchangeably designed exclusively, or even principally, for the service of the wealthier classes, because such an impression may not only retard the progress of the Institution itself, but deter those who inconsiderately take the statement on credit, from profiting by an institution whose character and tendencies towards the intellectual and moral elevation of the working or industrial classes have received the earnest recognition of the most advanced minds of the day.”

Where mechanics’ institutes - and, in this case, special membership arrangements - were created for the working and artisan classes, they were soon taken over by middle class participants. There was a general trend for local societies to be dominated by the middle classes.

The location of the Royal Institution was also seen as detrimental to its progress. It had been originally located in a middle class residential area where many of the members lived, “... the seat of fashionable residences and promenades”, which had, by the later nineteenth century, been replaced by mercantile offices and the expanding dock and railway businesses. In 1875, Col. Grant Francis produced a paper proposing the relocation of the Royal Institution to a place more conducive to its members. In addition to location, Francis pointed out the lack of space available for the growth of the museum and the library. The value of the land around the Royal Institution had grown because of the business growth in the area so that any

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103 RISW Annual Reports 1862/63
104 See Hole (1853) p.21
extension to the building would involve costs that would be difficult for them to accommodate, especially as the number of members was not increasing. A new building in a new location would solve many of their problems. ¹⁰⁵

Francis identified a site on Walter Street which he considered appropriate. The land could be obtained on a 999 year lease at the rate of ten shillings per foot of frontage. The site of the Royal Institution was bound by an agreement with the Town Council in that it could only be used for literary or philosophical purposes. To be sold for business use would require agreement with the Town Council and this they acceded to. ¹⁰⁶ However, due to a depression in trade at that time, the hoped-for value of the site could not be realised and so the proposal was shelved. ¹⁰⁷

A further proposal was made to incorporate the museum of the Royal Institution, a public free library and a school of science and art. This was discussed by the Free Library Committee of Swansea Town Council but they came to no decision. The Council of the Royal Institution also considered the proposal and decided that it was not advisable for them to lose their individuality and their control of space despite the attraction of the possibility of a share of the product of the library rate through the Public Libraries Act. ¹⁰⁸ The Royal Institution remained in its original location and the Society kept its independent status, relying for financial support from the membership, for the rest of the period of this study.

The British Association for the Advancement of Science met again in Swansea in 1880. Since the first visit, access to Swansea was much improved. Instead of the railway finishing at Bristol with the last leg by Royal Mail coach or steam packet, there were three railway companies with services to Swansea vying for business. Much else had changed in Swansea. The Royal Institution of South Wales society,}

¹⁰⁵Col Francis, 1875 “The Question of a New Site for the Royal Institution of South Wales, Swansea”

¹⁰⁶RISW Annual Reports 1875/76

¹⁰⁷RISW Annual Reports 1876/77

¹⁰⁸RISW Annual Reports 1879/80 and 1880/81
and the scientific men associated with it, had been the focus of scientific culture in 1848. Now, although the Royal Institution was still the space where the scientific culture of Swansea was centred, the level of activity and the drive and national reputation of local individual philosophers had dimmed. In anticipation of the British Association’s visit, the Cambrian bemoaned this loss:

"... that we are sadly deficient in local men of scientific tastes with sufficient leisure to devote to the study and elucidation of purely local phenomena. All who know what took place 32 years ago, will regret the loss we have sustained by the death of such men as Dillwyn, De la Beche, Starling Benson, Colonel Wood, Dr Williams and others whose places have not been refilled."

The Editorial placed the blame for this change in “intellectual character” on the growth of trade in the town which was not considered “conducive to the development of some of the higher faculties and aptitudes of the people.”

This meeting coincided with the move of the natural history collections from the British Museum to a new home at the British Museum(Natural History) in South Kensington. The British Association had expressed concern over the administrative structure of the new Museum and this was the subject of some discussion at the meeting. The Keeper of Zoology at the new Museum, Dr Albert Gunther, gave an address on natural history museums as President of the Biology Section. He discussed the purpose of provincial and national natural history museums but avoided the political concerns of the administration of the new national institution. He expressed the opinion that the British Museum was the only national museum for Britain, and that those of Scotland and Ireland “... could never reach the same degree

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109 Editorial Cambrian 20th August 1880
110 Ibid
111 BAAS Report of the Council Swansea 1880 p.lvii
of completeness". Gunther, therefore, would not have been in support of a national museum for Wales but it was fortunate that the movement was barely in its stride or his remarks would have had greater significance.

The Swansea meeting was not considered a great success. The number of visitors was the lowest at a British Association meeting for twenty years and the nature of the papers was considered too specialised. Swansea was still thought too distant from the centres of population in England. The general public of Swansea showed little interest in the meeting, J Gwyn Jeffreys suggesting that it had clashed with the West Glamorganshire Agricultural Society Annual Show which had proved a greater attraction. Even when the vote of thanks was given to the local secretaries and treasurer, only one was present to receive it. This would not have been the case in 1848, when the Council, officers and members of the Royal Institution of South Wales at that time attended and contributed with enthusiasm; by 1880 this level of enthusiasm had died. This must have been a disappointment to the men of science originating from Swansea, Sir W Grove and J Gwyn Jeffreys, who would have memories of the heyday of Swansea’s science culture.

And by then Cardiff had grown from a small village of little importance to a populous, wealthy town with a municipal museum and a driving civic ambition.

12BAAS Reports Swansea 1880 pp.591-598
13Cambrian 3rd and 10th September 1880
Ch3. Fig.1
Population in South Wales Towns

Census Dates
1801 1811 1821 1831 1841 1851 1861 1871 1881 1891 1901

Population
0 20000 40000 60000 80000 100000 120000 140000 160000 180000

- Cardiff
- Swansea
- Neath
- Merthyr
- Newport
THE RISE OF CARDIFF - THE CIVIC METROPOLIS OF WALES

In contrast to Swansea, Cardiff was a small town in the early part of the nineteenth century; the few representatives of the social elite had no interest in the pursuit of science, and early philosophical institutions had faltering success. Cardiff, with the Castle at the centre, serviced the needs of the community in the wider agricultural hinterland. Agricultural produce was the dominant trade from the port with "... two sloops trading to Bristol on alternate weeks, carrying over wheat, oats, barley, butter, sheep and poultry; and they were found sufficient for the traffic and passengers". At this time, and for the first half of the nineteenth century, Bristol was seen as the metropolis of South Wales, most of the products were shipped to Bristol from South Wales ports and much of the related financial and commercial business was done there. As the industrial revolution began to take effect in South Wales, the iron industry, predominantly based at Merthyr, changed the nature of business at the port of Cardiff. The Glamorganshire Canal linked Cardiff with Merthyr and the use of Cardiff as an outlet for pig-iron grew during the first half of the nineteenth century, overtaking agriculture as the main trade. This trade was still short-distance to the port of Bristol and some Irish ports and, as with agriculture, the financial and commercial business was done elsewhere.

Establishing the Places of Science

The early philosophical culture in Cardiff lacked continuity and focus, particularly compared with Swansea over the same period. The first record of a Mechanics’ Institute


2 Lee(1932) has written on the early history of societies and museums in Cardiff, whilst a number of other authors; [Waldron(1880), Price(1883), Ballinger(1891), Vachell(1912), Sheen(1927), Jenkins(1957), Rees(1969) and Williams(1983)], have reviewed such history in the context of other related topics. As none of the articles have relevant references, the sources of their information cannot be known for certain. Waldron and Price were contemporary with some of the societies and held membership so their writings must have credibility; Vachell, although younger, was contemporary with the protagonists involved in these activities and would have had the benefit of their memories. And later authors had the benefit of the earlier writings - in particular Sheen’s paragraph on early societies is very similar in order of content and phrasing to that of Vachell.
in Cardiff is on 13th March 1826, the meeting being reported in the *Cambrian*.

Rees records this Institution flourishing in 1826 with the support of William Conybeare, the geologist and Rector of Sully just a few miles South West of Cardiff. Although not Welsh, Conybeare was an active geologist in South Wales during two periods of ecclesiastical appointment, Rector of Sully, from 1822 to 1836 and Dean of Llandaff, also near Cardiff, from 1845 to 1857.

At some point the Mechanics' Institute must have ceased because in October 1841 a notice in the *Monmouthshire Merlin* reports on the establishment of a new Cardiff Mechanics' Institute under the Chairmanship of Whitlock Nicholl Esq.:

"We are happy to perceive that our friends at Cardiff have succeeded in establishing a Mechanics' Institute ... there are already upwards of 140 members, who have paid up their subscriptions, and the list is increasing daily ... we should not omit to state that it is intended to have a regular course of lectures delivered in the room during the ensuing months."

These lectures began in the winter of 1841 and were well attended but, despite having the support of Mr Charles Vachell JP, a Mayor of Cardiff, Alderman and Freeman of the Borough, the Institute seems not to have been too successful, as in 1848, the Cardiff Mechanics' Institute joined the Library and Scientific Institute and was reconstituted as the Cardiff Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute. This followed the trend for such institutions to attract a wider range of people than the working classes originally targeted and for this to be recognised in a new title. Hole (1853) remarks "...that the

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1 *Cambrian* 26th March 1826. For studies of Mechanics Institutes in south Wales, see Evans (1965) and Roderick (1991).

2 Rees calls the Institution the 'Cardiff Athenaeum', a later name for a second Mechanics' Institute after reconstitution in 1848. It is most likely that he used the later name in referring this Mechanics' Institution.

3 William Daniel Conybeare (1787-1857)

4 *Monmouthshire Merlin* 23rd October 1841. Also reported in *The Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Brecon Gazette, and Merthyr Guardian* 16th October 1841

5 *Monmouthshire Merlin* 4th December 1841 and 11th December 1841

77
members of Mechanics' Institutes are, nineteen-twentieths of them, not of the class of mechanics but are connected with the higher branches of handicraft trades, or are clerks in offices, and, in many instances, young men connected with liberal professions. Mayor Vachell's grandson, Dr C T Vachell, also records the Cardiff Athenaeum and Mechanics' Institute in 1850 suggesting the support of William Conybeare, who was Dean of Llandaff at this time. Vachell also believes that Conybeare donated geological collections to this Institution. In January 1851 the Institute moved to the English Wesleyan Church in Church Street with a membership of 526 and joined the Society of Arts in 1852. However, despite this reorganisation and large membership, the Institution fell into decline, Rees recording its closure in 1857 with the library and museum collections going to the Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution. Reports at the time show a sale of the books from the library.

The Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution had been established in 1835. It was the formation of the Neath Museum and Society for Promoting the Arts and Sciences and the Royal Institute of South Wales in Swansea which prompted this response from Cardiff noted by the editor of The Cambrian who observed that this had "... proved a stimulus to our Cardiff friends, making them desirous of establishing a public library and museum in that rapidly improving town". Cardiff at this time was still only half the size of the larger, wealthier town of Swansea, but "...with the talent and intelligence..."
so amply furnished by that neighbourhood, and the energy of a few active individuals as pioneers, we cannot but anticipate a powerful rivalry of the western Institutions, which are already giving a character to the county”. It is very likely that Conybeare was involved in supporting such an institution so close to Sully as he had already supported the institutions in Swansea and Neath. Rees records the Glamorganshire Library and Scientific Institute established by 1838 in Crockherbtown and this could well be the same institution reported in *The Cambrian* in 1835. According to Rees the annual reports of the Institute were published until 1860, and probably beyond. In December 1840, William Smyth writes to Henry De la Beche, Director of the Geological Survey in South Wales, "... what time will you be able to open our Cardiff Institution”, referring, presumably, to the Library and Scientific Institute. In 1851 there is a record of this Institution calling on the Town Council for its members to be given access to the town’s records to examine evidence of the history of the town. Ballinger refers to a Glamorganshire and Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution in Crockherbtown, which included a museum, being established "...about the year 1838 and came to an end in 1867 when the collections were scattered, some finding a home in the Town Museum."

Both Waldron and Price refer to a Cardiff Literary and Scientific Institution and associated collections at number 3 Crockherbtown which ceased in 1863 due to lack of funds. In his inaugural address as President of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society on 25th January 1881, Clement Waldron remembers a Literary and Philosophical Society about twenty five years previously in Crockherbtown of which he was a member. According to Waldron this Society possessed a valuable library of books, many of which having

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13 *The Cambrian* 11th December 1835.
14 Smyth to De la Beche, 20th December 1840, *DlaB Papers* 1924
15 17th March 1851 *Cardiff Record*
16 Ballinger, J. (1891) p90
17 Waldron, Clement 1881 “Inaugural address” *Trans. CNS* Vol.XII 1880 pp1-9
18 Price (1883)
been presented by Bishop Coplestone, and "...an interesting Collection of Fossils and other Curiosities" displayed in cases in the Society's museum. At the time he joined this society it was in debt and shortly closed down, most of the contents of the library and museum eventually moving to the Cardiff Museum in St Mary Street, which opened in 1864, with some of the larger objects remaining to be found later by Peter Price when he took over of the Crockherbtown premises. It is likely that all these references relate to the one organisation and there is confusion over a variety of names.

As the second Marquess of Bute had dominated parliamentary representation until his death, so he had dominated municipal control, primarily through major business investments. During the years of the third Marquis's minority, the local trade and professional classes began to grow beyond the influence of the Estate. The Liberals were politically opposed and many of the Conservatives considered themselves independent of the Estate's influence. On his majority, the third marquess took little interest in the Cardiff part of his estates being more interested in scholarship and mysticism. His only interest in the Castle was to recreate a stage of mystic splendour along with his gothic fantasy, Castell Coch, north of Cardiff. He spent very little time in Cardiff and had but passing interest in political or business activity.

So from mid century, municipal control passed into the hands of the local community. It wasn't the landed gentry or major businessmen who became involved in the running of the town. These people were concerned with the operation of their businesses, the mining of coal, its transport via the canal or the Taff Valley Railway and its exit through the port. As most of this operation was done outside the influence of the municipal authority, they had no vested interest in the running of the town and few took any active part. Most of them lived away from the town and had little contact with it; in Daunton's words, "... these men were in but not of Cardiff, they had an office there but

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19 Waldren op.cit.
no real economic interest".21 This concentration of the economic wealth of the town in
the hands of a few disinterested people had its dangers, as remarked by a local
Councillor and proprietor of the Western mail, Lascelles Carr:

“Every man in Cardiff who has a house or shop or business depends for the
value of his investments upon the amount of shipping done at the Docks ... to
the Cardiff Chamber of Commerce the Cardiff Docks are a convenient and
economical means of carrying on their business. To the ratepayers of the town
they are an absolute necessity of existence.”22

The councillors and aldermen now in control of the municipal authority came from a
range of people associated with the commercial, financial and trade occupations that
had an interest in the development of the town. Daunton(1977) has analysed the
occupations of the members of the council and they include building, brewing, retail
trades, medicine, law, finance, shipping and coal and miscellaneous commerce.23 It was
these middle classes who sought to pursue science and to establish spaces where those
pursuits could take place to reflect their growing sense of importance.

There had been a proposal by the town Council to adopt the Libraries Act, 1855, with a
view to taking over the library and museum in 1860 but this was lost by just one vote. A
narrow margin but an indicator that the Council was not wholly behind taking financial
responsibility for a museum service despite their growing sense of civic status. A
promotion followed to raise funds by public subscription and, under this pressure, the
Council finally adopted the Act in 1862. In 1864 the Cardiff Library and Museum
moved to the rented rooms in the YMCA building in St Mary Street and a back room in
the top story was given over to the Museum with the sum of £50 spent on glass cases
and fittings. The Town Clerk applied to the Trustees of the Library and Museum in
Crockherbtown for the custody of their books and collections to be entrusted to the

21Daunton (1977) p158
22Bute MSS. XI 5, quoted in Daunton (1977) pp 155-6
23Daunton(1977) Tables 45, 46 and 48
Council and be removed to the Free Library. Waldron suggests that not all of the collections of the Society were transferred, "... when a suitable place is provided for such of the Books and Curiosities belonging to the Old Institute which have not already been handed over to the Museum, I have no doubt they will be restored to the Town".24 Peter Price, writing seventeen years after the event, remembers part of the collections of the old Literary and Scientific Institute being stored in a room at 3 Crockherbtown, a building he was leasing. The collections were transferred to the Free Library in St. Mary Street.

Although the museum was not ready to open to the public, it was in the hands of the local council which should have given it a period of stability and growth. The desire to progress the museum stimulated a period of heightened philosophical activity over the rest of the nineteenth century primarily focussed through the Cardiff Naturalists' Society.

Cardiff Naturalists' Society and the Cardiff Museum25

The Cardiff Naturalists' Society was formally established at a general meeting on 11th September 1867 where the constitution and the membership of the committees were agreed. The general meeting was preceded by two preliminary meetings. Although there is a lack of documentary evidence of these meetings, Robert Drane records the first

24Waldron(1880)

25Sheen (1927) and Salmon (1969) have written on the history of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society and Hallett (1937) has written on the history of the Biological and Geological Section. Price (1883), Waldron (1880) and Drake (1896) also discuss elements of the Society's history in the context of other topics. Sheen discusses the Society's history under the headings of its various activities, Salmon's history is, as he intimates, condensed and covers the first hundred years in just three pages, most of it post-1905. Drake, Price and Waldron were original members of the Society and are more detailed in relation to time, place and people although only covering distinct and narrow periods. Neither Sheen's, Hallett's nor Salmon's articles are referenced and this study has gone back to original or more contemporary sources. Lee (1932) has written a history of Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery as part of his article on Museums in Cardiff. In this short article, Lee covers a number of the main events in the growth of the Museum and the involvement of the members of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society and then proceeds with the growth of the National Museum of Wales. Waldron (1880), Vachell (1912) and Ward (1912) also cover elements of the history of the Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery in the context of other topics. Of necessity, this study goes into much greater detail and turns to original, or more contemporary, sources.
taking place in a small room behind his chemist’s shop in 1867. Robert Drane was a naturalist and antiquarian with a special interest in the decorative arts. He came from Norfolk to Cardiff in the 1850’s and established a business in Queen Street. His scientific interest centred around botany and ornithology. He organised botany classes which he conducted in Sophia Gardens, built up a sound collection of local birds for the Museum, and it was he who identified the Skomer Vole as a separate species. His knowledge of ceramics and discerning purchases allowed the collections of the Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery to grow in importance. He remained a prominent member of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society and acted as an Honorary Curator for the Cardiff Museum for most of its life. Drane had invited Mr Philip Robinson and Mr Rhys Jones to discuss the formation of a society with the prime objective being the support of the Borough Museum in Cardiff.

Peter Price believed that the Borough Librarian at the time, Mr Philip Robinson, was the first to suggest the establishment of a natural history society for Cardiff; he raised it with Price who was a Councillor and the Secretary of the Cardiff Free Library Committee. Price suggested that this projected society could be affiliated to the Free Library and take responsibility for the museum collections to their mutual advantage "... the society would be provided with a home and a safe depository for objects which might be collected by its agency, and be relieved of the cost of maintenance; and on the other hand, the Library Committee would be relieved of the trouble and care of the management of its Museum." Philip Robinson was concerned that there was insufficient money in his budget to prepare the Museum for opening to the public. He was a keen naturalist and author on natural history subjects and formed a deputation to his Library Committee along with James Bush and Robert Drane to propose the formation of a group of interested people to further the development of the Museum. This was accepted by the Committee in August 1867 with the sum of fifty shillings

28Peter Price (President and Treasurer), “Inaugural Address”, 24th January 1884, Trans. CNS Vol XV pp1-3
being voted for the purchase of any apparatus required.29

The second meeting of the proposed society was held on 29th August 1867 where Mr William Adams, Mr James Bush, Dr William Taylor and others joined the group and the rules and constitution were drafted. One of the prime aims of the Society was the development of the Cardiff Museum in connection with the Borough Library. A group of Honorary Curators would be formed to develop and run the Cardiff Museum through the Free Library Committee and donations made to the Museum would become the property of Cardiff Corporation. At the general meeting, 11th September 1867, William Adams was elected President, William Taylor Vice-President and Philip Robinson Honorary Secretary. William Adams (1813-1886) was born in Ebbw Vale, the son of a collier. He moved to Cardiff in 1865 as a colliery agent and mining engineer, writing a standard work on his subject, 'Science of Mining' in 1870. He was President of the Society from its foundation to 1874 and held a Vice-Presidency from that date to his death. Philip Robinson, the Librarian, moved to another town within a year and was replaced as the Honorary Secretary by R Rhys Jones. The Society began with twenty-four members and by the end of its first year of existence with regular monthly meetings, three lectures and three field meetings, there was a membership of seventy-six.

The Society’s rules and objectives clearly placed the organisation in the mould of the literary and philosophical societies. The concentration on the development of a museum and the regular meetings for discussion and lectures were seen of prime importance, indeed the need for a lecture room was carried through the life of the Society in the nineteenth century. When the Corporation were considering the building of the new museum on the Cathays Park site in 1898, the Naturalists’ Society memorialised the Corporation requesting, "... that in the plans for the new buildings there should be included a properly equipped lecture theatre, capable of seating about 600 persons".30 This philosophy differed from the comparatively new wave of field clubs which had

29 CCC Library Committee 7th August 1867.
30 Minute 1085, CCC, Museum Committee, 30th December 1898
spread throughout the British Isles, in that the field clubs concentrated on field trips without the encumbrance of a building or rooms, the business meetings and talks taking place at the, often sumptuous, dinners at some hostelry after the trip. This reduced the running costs of the clubs considerably widened the class of membership. The first field club to be established was the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club in 1831. The movement spread, mainly by personal contact, to the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club, the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club and the Malvern Field Club.\footnote{The Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club established 1846, the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club established 1852, the Malvern Field Club established 1853. For a discussion on field clubs see Allen, D E (1976) Ch.8}

It was most likely William Adams who introduced the idea of regular field trips to the Society. He had been a member of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, Hereford, for a number of years, this Club being strongly in the field club tradition. The second field trip of the Cardiff society to Crumlin Bridge and Pontypool on 19th June 1868, was a joint meeting with the Woolhope. This link was recognised during the dinner and meeting at the 'Three Cranes' when Elmes Y Steele Esq., of the Woolhope Club, pointed out that "... Mr Adams, the President, was an old member of the Woolhope Club, and he hoped, therefore, that he was not presumptuous in supposing that the Cardiff Society was in some measure the offspring of the Woolhope Club".\footnote{Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club 1868 p45} Although, strictly speaking, this may not have been the case, the Cardiff Naturalists having been formed initially by others and having a stronger focus on their meeting rooms and museum, these were early days for the Society and the pattern of activity was yet to unfold.

Regular monthly meetings were held in the designated museum room where specimens and collections were brought along for discussion. At some of the meetings members gave papers on some scientific topic and one evening was devoted to the microscope where those members who could, brought their microscopes and mounted and living objects were examined. Three field meetings were held, the first to Penylan near Cardiff where the Silurian outcrop was examined, the second to Crumlin and Pontypool with
the Woolhope, and the third to Barry Island for geology and a tour of the ruins of
Dinaspowis Castle and the grounds of Court-yr-Alla. This balance of regular monthly
indoor meetings and field trips during the summer set the pattern for the first few years
of the Society.

In the March of the first year, William Adams gave an address on the objectives of the
Society which put down the philosophy of their existence and purpose as he understood
it to be.33 He believed this should include the regular monthly meetings where papers
and lectures could be given followed by discussion, and about three field trips each
year. He referred to the plan adopted by the Woolhope Club in the division of their
geographical area into separate sections for systematic study. He believed that in their
present state, Cardiff Naturalists would not be able to cover the whole of Glamorgan so
a smaller area was proposed of about 530 square miles encompassing the full range of
interests represented in the Society. It was important, believed Adams, that they were
seen to make a positive contribution to the community of Cardiff, that the people
should benefit from the Society’s study of the geology and botany of the area, and that
the primary medium for such benefit would be through the development of the Museum
in conjunction with Cardiff Corporation.

Access to the Museum was to be open to all, with particular reference to "... the
improvement of the working man", and Adams hoped that the same level of access for
the working classes would pertain to the Society itself "... many of whom I hope to see
enrolled as members of our Society, especially when it is considered that our annual
subscription is so low as to place it within the power of all to do so" - the subscription
was five shillings per annum. However, the social divisions would have been evident
with expected levels of educational attainment as indicated by Adams - museums and
societies being able to instruct the educated, but could only "... excite a desire for
knowledge in the ignorant" - with the assumption that the ignorant were of the working
classes; "...the labourer who spends his holiday in a walk through the British Museum

33William Adams "Address on the objects of the Society" delivered at the March 1868 meeting,

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cannot fail to come away with a strong and reverential sense of the extent of knowledge possessed by his fellow-men ... he has gained a new sense - a thirst for natural knowledge - one promising to quench the thirst for beer and vicious excitement that enticed of old". So although, financially, membership and involvement in the Society was possible, there might not have been any significant melting of social barriers or attitudes. As Tholfsen puts it:

"The bourgeoisie would assist the working classes to advance themselves, but without in any way disturbing power and status relations. Workingmen were to be encouraged to strive to achieve bourgeois values, but always in a form appropriate to their station". 34

Whilst the public lecture programme was considered important, it was the Museum which was central to the Society's purpose and it was his aspirations for the development of this which were central to Adams' theme and took up most of his Presidential Address. 35 In this he quotes Edward Forbes extensively - three and a half pages out of seven and a half pages were the direct quotation on the use of museums in the improvement of the working classes through inspiration, and the value of local museums to visiting scholars. He also related Forbes' criticism of the provincial museums as depositories of unwanted curiosities with undescriptive labels, apart from the names of the donors, as an example which Cardiff should not follow. The Museum was seen as the manifestation of the work of the Society; the medium through which the Society could expound their study and understanding of their natural and cultural environment to the benefit of the people of Cardiff. The Museum was in the possession of Cardiff Corporation but the Cardiff Naturalists' Society managed the collections and created the displays through a management committee of Honorary curators affiliated to the Corporation's Free Library Committee.

34Quoted in Daunton (1977) pp178-9
35op. cit., Adams, 1868.
36Forbes(1853)
Specimens and collections had been gathered by the members of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society since its establishment. It was part of the constitution of the Society that all material so gathered would be passed to the Museum and become the property of Cardiff Corporation as Philip Robinson had intended. This influx of new collections had caused a problem of accommodation at the Museum both for storage and anticipated display, "... that valuable Institution has increased so rapidly in utility and popularity, that a larger building has become almost imperatively necessary to afford the accommodation required for the Library, Schools of Science and Art, Museum and our own Society". The hope was that the Corporation would be able to find new buildings more suited to their needs although they did commence the preparation of the display of the collections in the space available.

This want of space for the Museum was a cause of concern for the Society for the rest of the period of this study. The first Conversazione and exhibition of specimens open to the public in 1868 "... clearly showed the interest they [the public] take in such things ... I feel very much that our chief want is a Museum, in which to place the objects we collect, and where the members of the public can see what is doing ... every addition to the materials for a public museum gives as much pain as pleasure to the Society, in consequence of the town being absolutely destitute of a building, or room even, to display the treasures entrusted to the Society". The Exhibition of Fine Art held in Cardiff during 1870 was assisted by many of the members of the Society and included a representative selection from the collections. The success of this exhibition resulted in achieving some space for the museum, "The Committee of the Free Library have thrown the top floor of their building into one large room in order to be able to exhibit the numerous valuable objects now in their possession". The Cardiff Museum opened

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37 **Transactions of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society** 1867-68, Vol.1, pp 7-12

38 Adams, Wm. **Trans CNS Vol.II 1868-69**, p.27 and pp.63-4

39 Whilst the bias of this thesis is towards the sciences it is important to note that other interests were growing in representation in the Museum. The collections included fine art, decorative art and antiquities. Other researchers are examining the influence of these collections on the development of the Museum; for example, Alexandra Ward PhD, student at Cardiff University, working on the history of the archaeology collections.

to the public on 6th November 1870 in rooms on the top storey of the Free Library for a few hours per week. Whilst the opening of the Museum was welcomed, "... the most important event connected with the year's proceedings"; its limitations were already clear, "... it is to be hoped that the present room will be considered but the temporary location of the Museum, for it is already open to many objections, not the least of which is want of space". It was claimed that only half of the collections were on display and it was hoped that "... more spacious premises will elsewhere be secured, to which the rich store of scientific treasures ... together with the store almost equally large ... may be removed, to form a museum creditable to the town of Cardiff and worthy of the district of which it will be truly representative".

Although by 1871 the Museum had extended to take up the whole of the top floor of the YMCA building, the problems of space in regard to the Museum as well as the Library and Science and Art Schools proved acute and the following year a proposal was made to provide a new home for them and the Council was requested to grant facilities for the acquisition of a suitable site. This request was turned down on the basis that the Corporation had no land available for a new building nor any land they might give in exchange for such a site - a further indication of the Council's reluctance to invest in the Museum service despite the growing wealth of the town. The Society became concerned that the flow of gifts into the Museum began to fall, the want of appropriate display and storage being seen as a probable reason, "... the want of a suitable building for the accommodation of the museum is still severely felt, indeed it is only in this way that the small number of yearly additions to it can be accounted for".

However, the Cardiff Naturalists' Society used other mechanisms for the display of their collections and the demonstration of their activities. The first Conversazione took

43 Cardiff Records 1st July 1872, 9th November 1872

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place on 6th November 1868 and proved a great success and the second Conversazione of April 1873 built on the first and began with the President’s Soiree on Monday 21st. It was a grand social affair by invitation only with four hundred "... of the socially and intellectually distinguished in the town and neighbourhood". It took place in the Town Hall with an exhibition in the Assembly Room of natural history, antiquities, 'curiosities' and paintings. In the evening the entertainment was provided by local amateur musicians and singers "...in a style and spirit which gave universal satisfaction", with refreshments served at intervals. From the Tuesday, the exhibition was open to the public with lectures and demonstrations with a microscope. The event was so well attended that it was decided to extend the exhibition through to the Wednesday of the following week with continuing lectures and microscope demonstrations. On the Wednesday the Conversazione ended with a Promenade Concert. The Conversazione had been very successful in bringing to the attention of the population of Cardiff the activities of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society and promoting the Museum, and it allowed the members of the Society to demonstrate their pursuit of middle class activities. It was also a success from the financial point of view in that a small profit of £3 16s 6d. was made. Conversaziones became occasional events over the following years, their use as a vehicle for advertising the activities of the Society being gradually overtaken by the public lecture programme and the growth of the Museum.

It was in this same year, 1873, that the public lecture programme was inaugurated on scientific and literary topics. The Committee of the Society was a little uncertain about the success of this venture as they believed that public lectures had not proved too popular in Cardiff previously. However, the lectures on chemistry and geology were well received and it was decided to continue the programme in subsequent years. The Society incurred a small loss of £4 18s. 8d. for this first year which did not effect too greatly the fund that had been set up as a guarantee against loss.

The relationship between the Corporation and the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society

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"Trans CNS Vol V 1873 pp 5-6, 26-27."
concerning the museum was placed on a more formal footing in 1876 when a Museum Sub-Committee was formed under the Free Library Committee with much of the running of the museum being placed in the custody of the Society. They arranged a rota system where members acted as custodians and two members were nominated as Curators. It was hoped that this arrangement would encourage donors to present collections and specimens to the museum in the knowledge that arrangements were in place for their care. The museum was only open to the public for three hours twice a week and it was hoped that this could be increased when a paid Curator could be appointed to devote his whole time "... to the custody and improvement of the Museum." 46

This situation was partly resolved later in 1876 when John Storrie was appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum at 9d per hour, to the approbation of the Society:

"... the condition of the Museum has been during the year very considerably improved. It is now open to the public every evening of the week, and all Wednesday and Saturday; the work of labelling the objects is progressing rapidly, and members having objects to present may rely now upon their being well cared for". 47

John Storrie 48 was born in Muiryett near Glasgow in 1844. Although it is likely he came from a working class family, his ability took him to St David's School in Glasgow where he excelled in botany and geology winning a prize for the best collection of Scottish alpine plants. The geologist and author, Professor Page, took John Storrie under his wing and tutored him in geology. By 1872 he was employed in the printing section of the Western Mail in Cardiff. His interest in the natural sciences led him to


48 For a discussion of Storrie's life and work, particularly in relation to archaeology, see Beaudette (1983); for obituaries see Ward, J. 1901-2 "John Storrie" The Public Library Journal 3 pp81-84, Western Mail 3rd May 1901.
become involved in the Cardiff Naturalists' Society and he wrote a number of articles for their Transactions on geology and archaeology. He was appointed Cardiff Museum's first paid Curator in 1876, a post designed to keep the Museum open for thirty hours a week in the evenings. At nine pence an hour, it is probable that this did not suffice for the upkeep of a family, and as he was only required to keep the Museum open in the evenings, he continued working in the printing section of the Western Mail.

In 1877, just seven years since its opening under the care of the Corporation and the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society, the Museum’s significance as a symbol of the town’s status was recognised. The Honorary Curator, the Rev. W. E. Winks stated:

"In a town such as this, then, second to none in Wales for the interest which attaches to its long and varied history, its noble castle, and its ancient neighbourhood cathedral, and superior, as we are often reminded, to any other town in this part of the kingdom in regard to population and commercial enterprise, surely we have some reason to expect that if the rate is properly apportioned, we shall obtain a Museum which shall not come behind any other in the Principality."

This statement was made commensurate with the satisfaction that the Corporation was about to put into effect the plans for the new Free Library, Museum and Schools of Arts and Sciences building.

A more positive move from "... the closely-packed dingy room, on the upper floor of the Free Library in St Mary Street" towards a new building for the Free Library and Museum was made in 1877 when a committee was formed to select a site. Plans laid out by Peter Price for the building to accommodate the service were approved and a year later it was recommended that the new Free Library and Museum should be erected.

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50Waldron, Clement 1881, “Inaugural address” Trans. CNS Vol.XII p.6
on a site fronting Trinity Street and Wharton Street adjoining St. John's churchyard, a site partly occupied by the Zion Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel. An alternative proposal for the use of the old Police Station site in St. Mary Street was lost. A committee was appointed to arrange for the new building on the Trinity Street site.\textsuperscript{31}

In June 1878 Storrie left the \textit{Western Mail} and, "... there being no chance of obtaining employment at my own trade in Cardiff", he wrote to resign his post of Curator of the Museum. However, he said that he would prefer to remain in Cardiff and offered "... to place myself more fully at the disposal of the Free Library Committee, should they desire to avail themselves of my services".\textsuperscript{52} This was discussed and it was agreed to employ John Storrie on a full-time basis and he commenced his duties at once.\textsuperscript{53} However he resigned the Curatorship in February 1879 and spent some time in the south of England before returning to Cardiff.

Meanwhile, during the short curatorship of Matthew H Cochrane, a further change in the relationship between the Cardiff Naturalists' Society and the Corporation took place - a further step in the move, in terms of possession, of the Museum from the Cardiff Naturalists' Society to the Council. The Free Library Committee reorganised the Museum Sub-Committee removing the management of the Museum from the Society exclusively and reconstituted the Sub-Committee with nine people, although six were members of the Society. Although the Society members did not express overt displeasure at this reorganisation, they reiterated their history of involvement:

"When it is considered how large a share the members of this Society have taken in the formation of the Museum, it will be evident how important it is that the Society shall be adequately represented amongst the custodians"\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{31}Cardiff Records 12\textsuperscript{th} March 1877, 8\textsuperscript{th} October 1877, 9\textsuperscript{th} September 1878, 14\textsuperscript{th} October 1878, 11\textsuperscript{th} August 1879.

\textsuperscript{52}Letter quoted in the minutes \textit{CCC Free Library Committee} 14\textsuperscript{th} June 1878

\textsuperscript{53}\textit{CCC Free Library Committee} 19\textsuperscript{th} June 1878

\textsuperscript{54}Annual Report 1879, \textit{Trans.CNS} Vol.XI, p.vii
Matthew Cochrane had been appointed in February 1879 on the resignation of John Storrie but did not live up to expectations. The breaking point came in the spring of 1880 when Cochrane failed to present a report on the condition of the Museum to the Sub-Committee as required. The Committee adjourned to the Museum and "... found the Curator absent and the reptiles not placed in glass containers as instructed some months ago." The Committee considered his dismissal but Cochrane pre-empted this move in May by handing in his resignation, "... on account of his being unable to devote such attention as is necessary."

The post of paid Curator was in some jeopardy on the resignation of Cochrane with the Corporation considering discontinuing the funding of this post. The Museum Sub-Committee recommended the advertising of the post but this was turned down. However, the Cardiff Naturalists' Society "... deemed it their duty to courteously protest against such a step". The Council considered this approach from the Society and resolved that a Curator should be appointed and the post was advertised.

Such attempts at the saving of expenditure on the Museum took place frequently. Monies expended by the Honorary Curators on objects for the collection would be approved and reimbursement recommended by the Museum Sub-Committee only for this to be rescinded or referred back by the Library and Museum Committee or the full Council. Eventually, payments would be made but the delays indicate a Council not fully in support of the Museum at this time.

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55 Minutes 877 and 879 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 9th March 1880

56 "Resolved - That the minutes of the last meeting of this Committee referring to the Curator's dismissal be rescinded" (Minute 1494 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 13th July 1880); Minute 1207 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 11th May 1880

57 Minute 1211 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 11th May 1880; Minute 1192 CCC Library and Museum Committee 21st May 1880.


59 Minute 1324 CCC Library and Museum Committee 15th June 1880.

60 For example, Minute 1056 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 13th April 1880 and Minute 1039 CCC Library and Museum Committee 20th April 1880.
The Curators were aware of the superiority of Swansea in this field at that time, "... our neighbours at the other end of the County have far outstripped us in scientific and literary pursuits. They have possessed for many years a good Museum and Literary Institute, and twice have been distinguished and brought into notice by a visit of the British Association"; and "... the absence of a good museum in Cardiff has caused it to be passed over on more than one occasion". They were cognisant of the opinion of the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1880 that recommended the Powysland Museum as the central museum for Welsh antiquities as no other museum in Wales had facilities or the nucleus of a collection to match. In their listing of museums, Cardiff did not receive a mention and the Cardiff curators believed that "... such a public statement is certainly a reproach to Cardiff". This sharpened their desire to improve the museum in Cardiff in recognition of their perceived status ",... we justly pride ourselves that, with its population, wealth, and position, Cardiff may claim to be in the first rank of municipalities in Wales, but if we desire it should assert its position as a centre of intelligence and cultivation, we must exert ourselves to secure such a character for it".

On 20th July 1880, A C Cruttwell FGS FRHS was appointed Curator of the Museum on £60 per annum, his activities meeting with the approval of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society:

"Our excellent Curator, Mr Cruttwell, has done his best to encourage public interest in the Museum by the lectures which he has delivered, and has arranged all the objects there as favourably as circumstances will admit, but his task has been a difficult one and I venture to say that not one-tenth of the people of Cardiff even know of the existence of such a collection." 

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61 Report for 1879-80, Archaeologia Cambrensis 1880 p.329
62 Waldron, Clement, 1880 “Inaugural address” Trans. CNS Vol.XII pp1-9
63 Minute 1502 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 20th July 1880
64 Waldron, Clement 1881 “Inaugural address” Trans.CNS Vol.XII, p.6.
He had been a member of the Society for some time and had given a number of lectures on geology. These continued under the auspices of the Museum. He also donated a collection of Coleoptera and some geological specimens to the Museum.\(^6\) Cruttwell’s curatorship was a short one with his resignation in the spring of 1881 when he moved to Frome in Somerset, although he remained a member of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society for some time afterwards.

The foundation stone of the Museum on the Trinity Street site was laid by the Mayor, Mr Jon McConnachie on 27\(^{th}\) October 1880. Work continued on this building and the new Free Library, Museum and Science and Art Schools were opened with great civic ceremony in May 1882, the Mayor being presented with a gold medal to commemorate the event.\(^6\) Such a grand ceremony being a tangible demonstration of civic status and, therefore, the status of the people involved in the establishment of the Museum, a reinforcement of the power of the middle classes to indulge in recognised middle class activities.

John Storrie was reappointed Curator in 1881 on the resignation of A C Crutwell on a salary of £60 a year rising to £100 by increments.\(^6\) At this time a number of the members of the Committee of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society contributed to purchase for him a Life Membership of the Society in recognition of his contribution to the study of the natural sciences of the area.\(^6\) Storrie’s re-appointment was a popular one with the Society, as Peter Price later noted:

"It has been said that the greatest discovery of Sir Humphrey Davy was the discovery of Faraday, and we may say that the greatest among the benefits

\(^6\)Minutes 531 and 535 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 11\(^{th}\) January 1881.

\(^6\)Cardiff Records May 1882

\(^6\)The applicants for the post were John Storrie, S. J. Wilkinson and Francis Pratt. Storrie was already known to the Committee whereas Wilkinson wasn’t - and a Pratt as Curator of Cardiff Museum was probably considered inappropriate. (Minute 1403 CCC Museum Sub-Committee 14\(^{th}\) June 1881)

\(^6\)Fifteenth Annual Report Trans. CNS Vol.XIV 1882 p.vii
which Dr Vachell has conferred upon the museum, was the discovery of Mr Storrie, who has so efficiently continued the work which Mr Adams began.\textsuperscript{69}

It had been planned that the land adjacent to the Free Library and Museum building was to have been occupied by the Cardiff Savings' Bank. However, during 1885 it was decided that the Bank would be placed elsewhere and this allowed the land to be allocated to an extension of the Free Library when funds could be made available. In just three years the Library, Museum and Schools of Art and Science had quickly outgrown the space available and the need for expansion was pressing in order to provide a service "... commensurate with the commercial and social importance of the town."\textsuperscript{70}

Earlier in the year a proposal had been made to extend the Free Library buildings, from a fund to be raised by public subscription, but the Committee felt that the amount of space required by the various affiliated societies, which it was proposed to incorporate, would exhaust a large portion of the available ground, and after consideration it was decided that the proposed scheme was impracticable.\textsuperscript{71}

As the Society consolidated its activities and membership, a need was considered for the concentration of specialist work within the activities of the Society "... the wish has often been expressed that steps should be taken to induce members to take up systematic work",\textsuperscript{72} and the establishment of specialist groups was attempted. At first it was considered whether other specialist groups outside the Society would be appropriate but discussion amongst the interested parties came to the conclusion that existence under the umbrella organisation was the most fitting, "... it was from no desire

\textsuperscript{69}Price, Peter 1884, "Inaugural address" Trans. CNS Vol.XV pp.2-3.

\textsuperscript{70}Twenty-Fifth Annual Report, 1886-7, CCC Cardiff Free Library, Museum, and Science and Art Schools

\textsuperscript{71}Twenty-Fifth Annual Report, 1886-7, CCC Cardiff Free Library, Museum, and Science and Art Schools

\textsuperscript{72}Vachel, C T, 1887, "Inaugural Address at the opening meeting of the Microscopical and Biological Section", Trans CNS Vol XIX(part I) p102.
to sever their connection with the main body, but that something more should be added to the existing arrangements". This was in contrast to the Royal Institution of South Wales in Swansea where the more specialist groups remained outside the Society.

There was something of a chequered beginning. The Geology Section was formed in 1875 but had ceased to exist by 1880. An Astronomical Section formed in 1881 and lasted but a year. A Physical and Chemical Section formed in 1887 and disappeared by 1893. The Archaeological Section formed in 1894 and continued despite a cessation for a year in 1899-1900. The Biological and Microscopical Section was formed in 1887 and became the Biological and Geological Section in 1892 and continued. Later, in the twentieth century, a Junior Section and a Photographic Section would be formed.

The establishment of the University College in Cardiff in 1883 brought a number of academics to the town who became involved in the Society and who also wished to pursue specialist work. This was a similar broadening of scientific activity in Cardiff as has been observed by Kargon in Manchester. The University gave the Biological and Microscopical Section meeting space and access to equipment to help its progress. The Professor of Biology, Dr Newton Parker, was the Section’s first Honorary Secretary, the President being Dr C T Vachell, one of the most significant and influential members of the Society.

The main aims of the Biological and Microscope Section were the study and collection of the flora and fauna of the area and the exchange of information amongst members of the group, the specimens gathered to be given to augment the collections of the Cardiff Museum. It was also an aim to aid members in gaining an understanding of the methods of study which is where the facilities of the University were so advantageous, "...it is often difficult for anyone who takes up any branch of Biology as an amateur to get a sound knowledge of the methods of working; and as these methods often entail a considerable mess, it is not always convenient to follow them out in one’s own

73ibid
Alberti (2000 and 2003) has identified a growth in the range of scientific activities during the latter half of the nineteenth-century in Yorkshire. A similar pattern has been revealed in South Wales in Swansea and Cardiff. In Swansea a number of specialist societies were created using the appropriate spaces at the Royal Institution. However, these new societies remained separate from the membership structure of the Royal Institution of South Wales, and attempts at amalgamation never succeeded. In Cardiff the Cardiff Naturalists' Society created a range of specialist subgroups all within the Society's establishment. Some of the sub-groups occupied science spaces created at the University through science links with the academics. In Swansea the possession of science was further dissipated whereas in Cardiff possession remained within the established spaces all under the overarching civic structure.

The lack of space, and particularly the location, of the Museum and Art Gallery, was a point of concern for the visitors as well as the Curators. It was located on the top floor of the building and could only be reached via a winding staircase. A contemporary newspaper report suggested that "... nine cases out of ten would turn aside rather than undertake so much toil for a transient pleasure ... steps should be taken at once to remove the Museum and Art Gallery to some building on a level with the roadway".

The space inside the galleries was also cramped, "... the rooms are often crowded for hours, as the space for the public is extremely limited", this was most noticeable during the summer holidays when the railways brought visitors down from the valleys. Such crowded conditions affected the displays "...[the] want of space necessitates defective arrangement, and imperfect classification, and the very purpose a Museum is intended to accomplish is destroyed, and the instruction it would otherwise afford is neutralised". It was claimed that the art collections were similarly displayed inappropriately "... they are either huddled together or scattered here and there, without order, as wall space could be found. The light, or distance, at which the artist intended his work to be

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74 Parker, WN 1887, "On the objects of the Biological and Microscopical Section of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society" Trans CNS Vol.XIX (Part I) p110.
viewed is of necessity entirely disregarded ... a picture is selected from its size to fill space, no matter whether the position is adapted for the painting or not". However, despite these criticisms, the museum and art gallery was clearly very popular, "...but hundreds undertake toiling up the staircase to the top of the Free Library building on a visit to the Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery; women may be seen carrying their infants in their arms and dragging others after them".75

The need to extend the Museum and Library building continued. In order to fund an extension, it was proposed that permission should be sought from the Local Government Board for the loan of £10,000 with a repayment period of at least sixty years so that the repayments would not constrain future annual revenue budgets. The financial report of the Financial Sub-Committee stated that the income from the rate of £2,199 9s. 6d. plus fees and Government grants and other sources balanced the expenditure of £2,783 11s. 2d. The income from the rate was anticipated to increase in 1889 due to the re-assessment of the Borough to £2,489 4s. 6d. a welcome addition to the budget although, naturally, this percentage increase would not be seen in subsequent years. This proposal was referred back to the Free Library Committee to reconsider the budget implications in view of the additional plans for a number of branch libraries.76

The Special Committee re Improvements and Extensions of the Free Library, Museum, and Schools of Science and Art (often referred to as the Building Committee or Extension Committee) was established on 29th August 1889 for the control of the development of the changes to the building. All the honorary members of the Free Library Committee were authorised to attend the meetings but were not able to vote. The Local Government Board had sanctioned the loan of £10,000 and preparations

75"A New Museum and Art Gallery for Cardiff, a Suggestion for their Removal" The Cardiff Argus 30th May 1888 pp4-5.

76Minute 188, CCC Council Minutes 10th December 1888. Part of the re-assessment was that Cardiff was constituted a county in itself under the Local Government Act, 1888, and changed from a Borough Council to a County Council.
were made for the invitation to tender.77

£16,000 had been budgeted for the alterations and additions to the Free Library and Museum. The tenders that arrived in September 1891 were all in excess of this amount to some considerable degree. The highest tender was for £27,200 from D J Davies of Cardiff, and the lowest was £21,030 from E Turner & Sons of Cardiff. The consideration of the tenders was adjourned and a small sub-committee was charged with the task of discussing the lowest tender with the view of bringing it in line with budgeted sum of £16,000.78 This proved too difficult and the Council was fortunate in the arrival on the statute books of the new Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891.

The Act had had a relatively unhindered passage through the parliamentary system. When the enquiry was made, "Why do we need the Museums and Gymnasiums Act?"79 the reply was, "At present we cannot have either a museum without a Free Library Act or a gymnasium without adopting the Baths and Washhouses Act."80 An argument which met with little dissent. The Town Clerk, Mr J L Wheatley, had reported the Act to the Council at another committee meeting in the September of 1891.81 He pointed out that the Act could not apply until it had been adopted through the requisite advertisements and notices and the town could adopt the Act for either a museum or a gymnasium or both, but the total rate could not exceed a halfpenny in the pound for either. The Act could afford the opportunity for the town where the rating powers under the Libraries Act had been exhausted and there was a desire to provide and maintain a museum.

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77Minute 1917 CCC The Special Committee re Improvements of the Free Library, Museum, and Schools of Science and Art 29th August 1889; Minute 21 CCC Council Minutes October 1890; Minute 1820 CCC Free Library Building Sub-Committee 23rd May 1890; Minute 1957a CCC Free Library Building Committee 10th June 1890.
78Minute 2381 CCC The Special Committee re Improvements of the Free Library, Museum, and Schools of Science and Art 1st October 1891.
79Mr H. H. Fowler (Wolverhampton, E), Hansard Vol.CCCL 3rd Series 350, coll.1007
80Mr F. S. Powell (Wigan), ibid
81Minute 2374, CCC Parks, Open Spaces, Footpaths and Allotments, Committee 17th September 1891
J L Wheatley was the Town Clerk of Cardiff from 1879 through to beyond this period of study. He took a keen interest in the activities of the museum and acted as an Hon Curator on the Museum Committee. He was also a member of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society. Support at this administrative level proved of great advantage to the museum service during this time of office. It was Wheatley who steered through the Museums and Gymnasiums Act in Cardiff during 1893 and who prepared the presentations for the Memorial for the national museum and library to be established in Cardiff. He had a keen interest in art and had a collection of miniatures painted on ivory.\(^{82}\)

By the end of 1891 it was decided that suitable provision could not be made for a museum and art gallery at the top of the proposed new Free Library building. Added to this were the plans for an expansion of the branch library programme which would call heavily on the Free Library budgets. Such a call on budgets would make the continued maintenance of the Museum and Art Gallery difficult if not impossible. It was proposed that the Council could take advantage of the new Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, in order to raise funds through the half-penny rate allowed by this Act, and for the Museum and Art Gallery to be located then in a separate building.\(^{83}\) The adoption of the Museum and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, allowed the Museum to be separate from the Library with its own funding and administration.

The Act was adopted, so far as it related to museums, with the proviso that the amount of rate to be raised under the Act in any one year was not to exceed one farthing in the pound. Within a few years this was seen to have been a significant turning point in the history of the Museum and Art Gallery. The Curators regarded the museum as, "... confessedly the best Museum in Wales", but that "... it would be difficult to name another museum and art gallery which has made such rapid progress under adverse conditions". These 'adverse conditions' related to the inadequate funding of the service, a feature of discontent amongst the Curators and the Librarian alike:


\(^{83}\)CBC Free Library and Museum Committee 8\(^{th}\) December 1891
"... until five years ago the Museum and the Library were both maintained out of the Library rate, and it was painfully evident that both were crippled financially"84

However, a clause in the Act was identified which jeopardised the management arrangement for the Museum which the Council had with the Cardiff Naturalists' Society; regarding the "... appointing on the Committee, in whose hands the management of the Museum would be placed ... the Council will have no power to appoint Honorary Members, not being members of the Council, to act upon the Committee in conjunction with the members of the Council as at present."85

The issue of non-councillors on the Free Library and Museum Committee had arisen just a few years before in 1885 in the clarification of Council control of the Committee. At the Council meeting of 8th June 1885 a proposal was made by two Councillors for the opening of the Museum and Art Gallery on Sundays to make it easier for the working classes to visit so long as it could be funded from voluntary sources thus avoiding expenditure from the revenue budgets "...and subject to the Corporation having power to veto the proceedings of the Free Library and Museum Committee"86

This arose from the decision of the Committee to refuse a collection because one of the stipulations of the donation was that the Museum and Art Gallery should be open on Sundays and the Committee felt that to be unacceptable for practical and cost reasons. This motion failed on the casting vote of the Mayor, and the two Councillors, possibly feeling slightly aggrieved that they had lost by such a narrow margin, asked the Town Clerk to report back to Council as to whether the Corporation had the power of veto over the proceedings of the Free Library and Museum Committee.

84CCC Council 12th December 1892; Ward, J. (ed), 1898 "Cardiff Museum. Past, present, and future" The Public Library Journal No.6, April 1898, p.120

85Minute 231 CCC Council Minutes, 12th December 1892

86CCC Council Minutes 8th June 1885
J L Wheatley explained that the power of the Corporation in relation to the Free Library and Museum Committee was dependent on which Act the Committee was appointed under, the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1855, or the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1855, the members of the Committee would not need to be members of the Council and their proceedings would not require confirmation or be controlled by the Council. Under the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882 the members of the Committee would have to be members of the Council and their proceedings would have to be confirmed and controlled by the Council.

The relevant Minute did not make this absolutely clear so it was necessary to infer the intent. At the formation of the Committee power was given to appoint eleven honorary members who were not members of the Council. Here Wheatley gave his judgement:

"From the fact that power was given to appoint 11 Honorary Members not Members of the Council, it was clear that the appointment was made under Section 21 of the Public Libraries Act, 1855, and not under Sub-section 2 of Section 22 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, in which case the persons appointed must have been Members of the Council only.

Further, in the appointment of that particular Committee, no reservation that all proceedings of such Committee should be subject to the approval of the Council was made, as is done in the case of all Committees appointed under the Municipal Corporations Act.

That being so, only one conclusion could be arrived at, viz., that the Free Library Committee was appointed under the Public Libraries Act, and therefore their proceedings did not require confirmation and could not be vetoed or controlled in any way by the Council."

87 CCC Council Meeting 13th July 1885
Although the Council had the opportunity to change this by revocation and re-establishment under the Municipal Corporations Act this did not occur, no doubt the potential loss of the Honorary Curators being considered detrimental to the service.

The raising of this issue again under the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, was a cause of considerable concern. The Council had relied heavily on the efforts of the members of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society in the running of the Museum and Art Gallery and there could have been a danger that their services would be withdrawn if they were without significant administrative powers. The Committee appointed Riddle, Vaizey and Smith as Counsel to obtain an opinion on the position of non-members of Council in relation to the Act and they gave the opinion that the non-councillors were ineligible to act with the same powers as members. It was suggested that an amendment of the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, could be obtained to allow local authorities to appoint outside or honorary members who have specialist knowledge. The local MP agreed to introduce a short Bill in Parliament if requested; however, this action was not taken. Non-councillors, primarily of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, continued to be appointed to the Committee but were requested to act as Honorary Curators in a consultative capacity only, without the power to vote. This they continued to do, their relationship with the Museum, and the Council, having been well established over a number of years. They still had an involvement in the running of the Museum through the Curators Committee; they were involved in the preparation of plans for the new buildings, and they continued to collect items for the collections through the Society.

It was felt necessary to explain the title of 'Honorary Curator'. Although 'Honorary Curator' was, perhaps, the best designation that could be thought of, 'Curator' was usually considered to be one who took responsible charge of a museum collection. An 'Honorary Curator' was usually considered to be one who undertook the same duties

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88The consultation cost £2 19s. 7d., Minute 1917, CCC Museum Committee 6th March 1896.

89Minute 405 and 406 CCC Museum Committee 11th December 1895; Minute 3078 CCC Museum Committee, 5th June 1896.
but without payment. The relative status of honorary curators and curators was a consideration here:

"We generally hear of honorary curators in connection with small museums, where the funds are insufficient to command the services of a curator"

However, the Honorary Curators in connection with the Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery were part of the Curators Committee whose responsibility was more to do with the overall policy and philosophy of the Museum than having direct involvement with the care of collections. A distinction of some significance to those involved and sufficient to warrant such explanation in *The Public Library Journal* at a time when the relationship between the Honorary Curators and the Council could have been in some jeopardy.90

Another significant change in the administration of the Museum and Art Gallery with the adoption of the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, was the separation from the Free Library. The administrative separation before the physical separation created a situation where problems could arise. The Museum now had its own Museum Committee through which it related to the Council, it now paid rent for space to the Free Library Committee and had to arrange its own insurance cover for the collections. Many administrative tasks that were once shared with the Library now had to be dealt with by the Museum Curator.

John Ward91 suggested that this increase in administrative responsibility contributed to the reasons for the resignation of the Curator, John Storrie in 1893. He believed that Storrie was better suited to work in the field than as a museum administrator, that "... the routine of a curator's work must have always been irksome to him", and the increase in secretarial work meant "... his withdrawal from the Museum was ... sooner or later

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91Ward, J. 1901 op.cit. p 83
inevitable". Beaudette\textsuperscript{92} does not disagree with this but also suggests that Storrie could see the development of the Cardiff Museum from a purely local museum dealing with local collections into a museum with a wider, Welsh brief, particularly with the movement towards a national museum for Wales, and that he felt that this would detract from the work that was of interest to him; that he could foresee Cardiff would lose its own museum at the expense of a museum for the whole of Wales. However, this may be hindsight on Beaudette's part as the issue of a national museum for Wales had not been widely mooted at this time let alone its possible location in Cardiff.

Another reason could be that Storrie recognised that under the new Act, many of his colleagues from the Cardiff Naturalists' Society would no longer have a voting place on the administrative committee and he would not be able to rely on their support. Ward, who took over the Curatorship following Storrie, refers to aspects of his personality which may have contributed to the circumstances of his resignation. He is described as "... brusque ... direct, forcible, unsparing ... with a certain pugnacity and love of controversy". Storrie had handed in his notice in the April of 1885 only to withdraw his resignation within the month suggesting a volatile character.\textsuperscript{93} Ward hinted to a delicate relationship following his own appointment "... our subsequent relations, as might be expected, were a little uncertain and complex. The Museum ... was a delicate subject to touch upon with John Storrie ... officially, I, in common with those who had to do with the institution, came occasionally under the lash of his displeasure". John Storrie was clearly a complex character and J H Mathews, the archivist, when compiling the \textit{Cardiff Records} made the following comment in a footnote about him; "... a Scotsman, a self-educated, eccentric and learned scientist - a genius, in fact, of whom Cardiff will one day be proud".\textsuperscript{94} The precise reasons for Storrie's resignation are unknown and he spent his remaining years in Cardiff as a self-employed geological consultant and microscope dealer and performed some bacteriological work. He died in May 1901 from chronic

\textsuperscript{92}Beaudette(1983)

\textsuperscript{93}Minute 1137 CCC Free Library and Museum Committee 20\textsuperscript{th} April 1885; Minute 1143 CCC Special Free Library and Museum Committee 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1885.

\textsuperscript{94}Mathews, J H 1911, \textit{Cardiff Records} Cardiff

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bronchitis aged 57.\textsuperscript{95}

John Ward FSA was appointed Curator of Cardiff Museum later in the year, 1893. Ward had come from Derby and had visited Cardiff in 1891 whilst gathering information on archaeological collections in provincial museums for a series of articles in the *Antiquary*. Whilst in Cardiff he had met John Storrie and had been impressed by the lengths to which he was prepared to assist him. Ward was originally trained as a chemist but developed an interest in archaeology. His archaeological work in Cardiff included a number of excavations with the Cardiff Naturalists' Society for whom he wrote a number of reports and papers. He was also particularly skilled in model-making and a series of geological models won a silver medal at the Paris Exhibition of 1900.\textsuperscript{96}

Apart from the short curatorship of Cochrane, Ward was the first Curator to be appointed who was not originally a member of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society so his loyalties would have leant more naturally to the Corporation rather than to the Society on occasions. Although he became a member of the Society subsequent to his appointment, this independence was recognised, "... he preferred to work with the [Archaeology] Section rather as a co-opted member representing the Welsh Museum than as a direct member representing the Society."\textsuperscript{97}

It was a further mark of the gradual shift of possession of the Museum from the Society to the Corporation. Although the museum and the collections had been, technically, in the ownership of the Town Council since 1862, possession, in the sense of philosophy, policy and interpretation, had been primarily in the control of the members of the Society. The adoption of the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, the removal of the powers of non-elected members on the Museum Committee and the employment of a

\textsuperscript{95}Ward, J. 1901 “John Storrie” *The Public Library Journal* Vol.III Part 3 June 1901; Obituary *Western Mail* 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 1901 p.6

\textsuperscript{96}The Public Library Journal Vol. II Part 4, p95, 4\textsuperscript{th} October 1899; CCC Museum Committee 26\textsuperscript{th} October 1900; Minute 1541 CCC Museum Committee 22\textsuperscript{nd} February 1901.

\textsuperscript{97}Rodger, John W. 1922 “John Ward, M.A., F.S.A. - born 1856 died 1922” *Trans. CNS* Vol. LV pp.2-
Curator who did not come from the membership of the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society saw possession move more into the administration of the Council.

The problems of space were partly solved when the Museum took over the old lecture theatre of the Science and Art Schools on a temporary basis. This room was used for decorative arts and topographical prints. However, the difficulties of access to the Museum and Art Gallery and the limited accommodation meant that the Museum Committee believed that it was impossible to develop and popularize the service. The committee therefore continued to press for the Institution to be placed in a separate building. The relief of congestion was short lived as, within a year, the new extension to the Free Library meant that the museum had to give up two rooms, the laboratory of the old School Science and a large room which had been used for committee meetings. To add to this, the widening of Working Street meant that the east front of the building was set back resulting in the reduction of the main exhibition room, the Natural History Room, by one-third. On a more positive note the council had agreed that the full ½ penny rate provided for in the Museums and Gymnasiums Act of 1891 could be levied for the Museum and Art Gallery. The Museum Committee undertook to set aside the extra 1/4 penny rate to accumulate as a furnishing fund to for the new building.98

The search for a suitable site for a new museum and art gallery and its planned structure and layout occupied the Free Library and Museum Committee during the period 1891 through to 1897. As Chairman, Peter Price wrote to Sir William Lewis, the Estate Manager of the Bute Estate in 1892, asking for an interview to discuss the possibility of the purchase from the Marquess of Bute of a site in Park Place as a possible location for the new museum building.99 In 1894, the Marquess of Bute offered the Park Place site for £4,000 and the Museum Committee requested the Council purchase the site as they believed it to be "... in every respect eligible and adapted for the purpose". Their reasons for the selection of this site were:

98CCC Public Museum and Art Gallery, Annual Report 1893-4
99Minutes 2404 and 2405, CCC General Purposes Committee 4th July 1892.
"The site is central. Its close vicinity to one of the chief thoroughfares (Queen Street) renders it easy access from all parts of the town; and it is conveniently near the railway stations.

Although so near this busy street, it is sufficiently far away to be pleasantly quiet and free from dust and smoke.

It is conveniently situated for the students of the chief educational institutions of the town, being within five minute's walk of the South Wales and Monmouthshire University College and the Technical School.

Its shape, approximately square, with one side only next to the street, renders it peculiarly suitable for the purpose, since the expense of only one front will be incurred, and a maximum of space will be available for buildings designed solely from the point of view of internal convenience and effect, an important condition in museum construction.

It is large enough for the probable requirements of Cardiff for very many years. It exceeds by over 4,000 square feet the whole site of the Free Library, inclusive of the extension now in course of erection. After making due allowance for light areas, it is estimated that there will be space available for museum buildings having a total area of 27,000 square feet for the floors of the exhibition rooms."

However, the Council expressed concern that the site was too small and could restrict further development and "... whilst sympathising with the Museum Committee in their difficulty with respect to obtaining a site, suggest that the Committee make further efforts to secure a larger site." This happened at the same time that Cardiff sent a Memorial to Parliament in support of a national museum, preferably located in Cardiff. However, the procurement of a larger site proved impossible within the constraints of budget and in the May of the following year the decision was made to go ahead with the

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100 CCC Public Museum and Art Gallery, Annual Report 1893-4 p7

101 Minutes 1469 and 1470, CCC Council Minutes 9th April 1894.
Park Place site, to obtain the sanction of the Local Government Board for the borrowing of the requisite capital and to produce plans for the invitation of tenders. 102

Plans were discussed with the architect over the next year when they announced that the approximate cost for the proposed new building in accordance with all the details discussed with the Committee would be £13,500. This estimate met with the approval of the Committee and the architect was instructed to complete the plans and specifications. These were completed by October 1896 and "... the Committee be asked to take immediate steps towards the procuring of tenders for the erection of the building". 103

The situation took a significant change of direction when in February 1897, the same year in which a bid was made for city status, the Town Clerk wrote to the Museum Committee asking them whether they would prefer a space in Cathays Park for the new museum and art gallery rather than Park Place. The Council had been in negotiation with the Marquess of Bute concerning the purchase of Cathays Park as a site for a range of municipal buildings including the new Town Hall, Law Courts and the University Registry. Cathays Park was a much more attractive proposition and the Committee expressed "... a strong preference for such land as a site for Museum Buildings". 104 Lord Bute agreed the return of the Park Place site and refunded the Corporation the £4,000 originally paid for it, whilst agreeing the purchase by the Corporation of Cathays Park and an adjoining sixty acres. The Museum Committee were asked exactly where they would like the new museum and art gallery to be located in the Park and the quantity of land that was required. They initially requested the Council set aside one acre of land in the south east corner and to reserve a further quantity of land "... in case of the establishment at Cardiff of a National Museum", but later changed their choice of

102 Minutes 3209 and 3210 CCC Museum Building Committee 14th May 1895.

103 Minute 1921 CCC Special Museum Committee 1st April 1896; Minute 4395 CCC Special Museum Committee 23rd October 1896.

104 Minute 1561 CCC Special Museum Committee 12th February 1897.
location to be immediately north of the proposed municipal buildings facing towards
the Avenue.105

The Museum Curators had first become aware of the possibility of a grant for a national
museum for Wales in 1893 when they reported the discussion of the Honourable
Society of Cymmrodorion held at the National Eisteddfod at Pontypridd on this
subject.106 The curators expressed their belief that Cardiff was the "...natural and most
suitable centre for such an institution". They asked the Council's "...best and immediate
consideration of this matter, especially as at a later, but not very distant period, more
formal applications may be made to you for such influence and help as will materially
assist in promoting the object we have in view". In this same report the Curator's views
on the broader ambitions for their museum is clear, "... that Cardiff being the metropolis
of Wales, the interests of the Museum should in almost equal degree be considered as
co-extensive with the Principality".107

Whilst the proposed new site in Cathays Park was a much more favourable one it was
not without prospective problems and the Museum Committee was at pains to request
that the Corporation grant them the site free of payment because they felt that the
expense of erecting and maintaining such a museum and art gallery out of the ½ p. rate
allowed under the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, would be utterly impractical
if the cost of the site had to be derived from the same source.108 They were granted a
site of one and a half acres free of capital commitment which gave the future of the
buildings a relatively more secure financial base.109

105 Minute 2278 CCC Museum Committee 30th April 1897; Minute 3518 CCC Museum Committee 30th
July 1897.
106 This meeting is discussed on p.23
107 CCC Public Museum and Art Gallery Annual Report 1892-3 p8
108 Minute 3961 CCC Museum Committee 24th September 1897.
109 CCC Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery Annual Report October 31st 1897 p10; Minute 4516 Town
Hall Committee CCC 28th October 1897
On the abandonment of the Park Place site for the new museum and art gallery, progress was slowed by the redesign of the buildings for the new space available and the possibility of a national museum for Wales, the hope being that it would be established in Cardiff. The delay in the new museum building led to an increase in the problems of display and storage of the collections. In 1899 the Curator was instructed to find suitable accommodation somewhere in Cardiff to be used for storage and workshop purposes. Fortunately, John Ward was able to find a room for such museum purposes on the north side of the first floor of the Fish Market - a space deeply embedded in the long tradition of off-site museum stores. Ward was later able to acquire a large room on the top floor of Messrs. Proger & Sons' premises in Trinity Street for a rental of £45 per year. Proger was a prominent member of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society and a Councillor on the Museum Sub-Committee.

The Museum, Honorary Curators and the Museum Committee continued to plan for the new museum building at Cathays Park. The plans produced for the site at Park Place were abandoned because the Cathays Park site was much larger, the proposed building would have a greater number of exposed facades and it would now be possible to plan for well-lit basement spaces. Being located next to the Town Hall it was also considered important to "harmonise with their greater neighbour in dignity". All this meant that the costs for the museum on this new site would be much greater than anticipated for the Park Place site. The curators were requested to prepare new plans for the floor space, frontage, administrative blocks, art, natural history and anthropology galleries with the proviso that there should be room for extensions. The plans they produced were examined by W. E Hoyle, the Director of Manchester Museum, and modifications made following his comments. However, progress was, once again, brought to a halt as the discussions and plans for the possibility of a Government grant for a national museum of Wales - and capital and city status - took over.

110 Minute 205 CCC Museum Committee 24th November 1899; Minute 820 CCC Museum Committee 26th January 1900.

111 Annual report 1903, CCC The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts, and Antiquities p.6-7.

112 CCC Museum Committee 12th March 1900, Minute 1719; 3rd August 1900, Minute 1139
THE PROSPECT OF A NATIONAL MUSEUM FOR WALES

Cardiff

From mid-century Cardiff had grown substantially in population and wealth. The population overtook that of Swansea during the 1860’s, Cardiff’s 57,363 to Swansea’s 51,702 in the 1871 census,¹ and remained ahead through the rest of the century (Ch. 3, Fig 1). The rateable value of the property in the borough had gone from £32,000 in 1847 to £272,098 in 1877 and the commercial activity in the port, based on steamer tonnage, had increased from 153 tons to 25,780 tons over the same period.² With such an increase in size and wealth and the greater involvement of professional and trades-people in the civic administration of the town, the civic perception of Cardiff’s status as a place of some importance was inevitable. This, coupled with the growth in the sense of Welsh nationalism during the second half of the century, led to the question of the capital of the Principality, to equate with the capitals of Scotland and Ireland, becoming the subject of some conjecture and aspiration in Cardiff.³ Neil Evans has examined the growth of middle class influence and control in Cardiff and the drive for civic recognition, both within the town, and the place of the town in the Principality:

“... increasingly it was Cardiff’s position in Wales which was stressed; the emergent theme was that Cardiff was the city of the middle classes’ adoption, Wales was becoming, in a curious way, the country of its adoption. Earlier references to Cardiff as a part of England fell away and Cardiff’s elite now sought to dominate Wales.”⁴

¹This was partly the result of boundary changes but the increase was valid in the eyes of Cardiff whatever the reason.

²Cheviot 1891 “The wealth of Cardiff” The Cardiff Argus Vol. 7 No. 6 25th July 1891. In this, Cheviot is quoting from an article previously written by him/her in 1877.

³For a discussion on nationalism see pp 27-35

The Council would be aware that wealth and size were not enough in the recognition of the primacy of the town in Wales; what was required in addition was a range of symbols to demonstrate the educational and cultural substance of their society. The opportunity for Cardiff to flex these particular muscles came in 1883 when the location of the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire was being decided following the Aberdare Report of 1881. Both Cardiff and Swansea put forward bids for this College in the first 'Battle of the Sites' and, following arbitration, it was awarded to Cardiff. Dean Vaughan of Cardiff Town Council tried to soften the blow to Swansea:

“I am most anxious that the kindest consideration should be shown to the naturally wounded feelings of Swansea. It must be our first care now to try to carry with us the sympathy and cooperation of South Wales, and particularly of the rival town, which has undergone what we must feel to be a trying mortification.”

But Cardiff had gained the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, a significant symbol of educational credibility. By 1892 the annual report of the Museum and Art Gallery was referring to Cardiff as the “metropolis of Wales”, and in 1897 J. H. Mathews, the archivist, produced a report on “The Claim of Cardiff to be the Capital of Wales”. Mathews believed that there were only three towns in contention for the status of capital - Aberystwyth, Swansea and Cardiff. On the understanding that Aberystwyth was only to be considered because it was situated midway between north and south Wales, he believed that only Swansea and Cardiff were worthy of discussion and in this Mathews actually spends more time dispensing with the rival, Swansea, than putting forward strong arguments in favour of Cardiff.

Matthews stated that although Swansea was then in the county of Glamorgan it had

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5Cardiff Records 1911

6Annual Report 1892-3 CCC Public Museum and Art Gallery p.7; Mathews, J H. 1911, Cardiff Records (1897) pp264-269. The use of the term 'Welsh Metropolis' had been in some use from 1873 (Cardiff Times 5th April 1873) although it was not adopted in official council literature until much later.
not always been the case and was more historically associated with the Gower, aligned with the Duke of Beaufort rather than the Marquess of Bute, and was within the diocese of St David's rather than Llandaff. In addition, he claimed that Swansea was located in a part of South Wales which was more English than Welsh, like Pembrokeshire - 'little England beyond Wales' - whose population was descended from the Flemings following the Norman conquest and the English from across the Bristol Channel in Somerset and Devon. This claim to Swansea's lack of Welsh pedigree was, as Edwards who discusses this paper says, "... a bold, indeed a rash assertion by a partisan of Cardiff, a town which was itself becoming ever more cosmopolitan". The commercial success of Cardiff was a further claim for capital status, not only contemporarily with the memorandum, but through history, mainly based on its activities as a port. Mathews concludes that:

"This antiquity invests Cardiff with a mantle of historic dignity which, like her commercial distinction, marks her as the unquestionable premier of all the towns in Wales ... Cardiff the ancient has seen the birth of all her rivals, and the decay of not a few; Cardiff the modern, vigorous still and rejuvenescent, outstrips them all in the march of progress. No other town but Cardiff is a possible capital of Wales."

Commensurate with the drive for capital status was the drive for city status. At that time there were no cities in Wales and the drive for city and capital status were linked in that the achieving of city status could bring with it the recognition of capital status. Submissions for city status made in 1897 and 1902 were rejected on the basis that, although Cardiff was a prominent town in many respects and possibly the premier town in Wales, if it were compared to other towns in England it did not warrant such status. A further opportunity was seen when the possibility of a national museum and library for Wales was being discussed seriously. Cardiff

7Both of these nobles were descended from the Herbert family but followed different lines.
8Edwards, E. W. 1965, p.81
9Mathews, op.cit. p.269.
already had the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, and the acquisition of such national institutions as a museum and library for Wales, granted by Parliament, would add further to the claims of Cardiff for city and capital status. This increased interest in the museum service was in contrast to the earlier attitude of the Council. Ballinger, the Librarian, remarks in The Public Library Journal published by the Council, that the library and the museum were taken over by the Council in 1862 “... by the will of the ratepayers, the institution receiving little encouragement from the Council... but in spite of the apathy, and to some extent the hostility of the Council, the institution grew slowly but surely, and did some excellent work”. This lack of support was seen particularly in the way in which the service was financed through the penny rate allowed under the Libraries and Museums Act:

“... the penny rate was grudgingly given; and shorn of the odd pounds which would have made so much difference. During the first twenty years these shearings amounted to well over two thousand pounds. If for instance the rate would yield in one year £545, the Council voted £500.”

Such overt criticism of the Council through an official journal, albeit a Council of some forty years previously, was a mark of considerable discontent at the lack of support of previous Councils and the greater confidence in the contemporary administration. It had been the work of earlier societies and later the Cardiff Naturalists' Society that had developed the museum service in Cardiff which the Corporation was now planning to use in its drive for civic advancement. The issue of the national museum for Wales was referred to in every Public Museum and Art Gallery annual report from 1897 to 1905, and at least once a year in The Public Library Journal from 1898. Most of the references relate to the hope that the national museum for Wales would be located in Cardiff, and the need for a building suitable for such an institution.

10Ballinger, J. 1904 “Mr Joseph Larke Wheatley” The Public Library Journal Vol. IV. Part 5, p.79.
A further argument put forward by Cardiff for a national museum arose during this period and related to the valuable objects discovered at Rhayader in 1899 and Sully in 1900 which became classified as treasure trove and were passed to the British Museum.

On 26th May 1899, jewellery of archaeological significance was discovered in a crevice in the Carrig Gwynion Rocks near Rhayader, Radnorshire. This find was examined and duly declared treasure trove and subsequently deposited in the British Museum. It was felt that the absence of a national museum in Wales meant that such treasures would always be deposited in the British Museum depriving the people of Wales of ownership, "... a national museum would act as a net, tending to gather such objects together and to preserve them to the Welsh people". The Curator, John Ward wrote to Mr J M Maclean MP to point out the loss of treasure trove from Wales and asked him to make enquiries as to whether "... pending the establishment of a national museum for Wales, the Rhayader finds could be placed in the Cardiff Museum, as the museum of the chief town of the Principality". Maclean made enquiries and reported that he "... had learned that nothing could be done towards the establishment of a national museum until Welshmen generally were prepared to regard Cardiff as the chief town of Wales".

A similar situation arose the following year when a collection of Roman objects were found at Sully, just a few miles from Cardiff. John Ward wrote to the Lords of the Treasury on behalf of the Museum Committee to ask that "... this treasure should be deposited in the Corporation Museum and Art Gallery of this town ... the discovery created great interest, not merely in Cardiff ... but throughout South Wales, and there was expressed a strong popular-feeling that the objects should remain permanently in the district where they were found". This letter met with the response that the British Museum made a selection from the find, "... which included

12 Minute 1877 CCC Museum Committee 29th September 1899; Annual report 1899, CCC Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery p.11
all the gold objects..." and the rest was offered to Cardiff at the antiquarian value estimated at £19. 5s. 0d.. Again there was concern that such finds were being lost to Wales and "... your Committee urge this fact as a substantial reason for the establishment of a Welsh national museum, for by no other means will it be possible in the future to ensure such objects for the Principality".13

The Curators called for private donations from the wealthy inhabitants of Cardiff in order to gather enough money for the building of the planned Museum and Art Gallery in Cathays Park.14 A number of articles in *The Public Library Journal* discussed the proposed new museum and art gallery and the capital costs involved in the first phase of construction. £20,000 was the limit of expenditure available to the Museum Committee; this was far below the total estimate and paltry when compared with the costs of the museums and galleries being built, or even just extended, elsewhere in the country:

"... £20,000 will not provide Cardiff with anything more than a *second-rate municipal* museum and art gallery; yet the talk is of a *national* institution. ... there can be no question that the presence of a suitable building in Cardiff for the nucleus of a national museum would not only tend to hasten a Government grant for such an institution, but would go far to secure its location in this town."15

It was clearly stated that if the wealthy inhabitants of Cardiff believed in the purported capital status of the town then they should demonstrate their faith by following the example of James Pyke Thompson who had donated a large portion of his art collection along with the promise of money for the building of an art gallery:

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"The day will assuredly come, and it may not be far distant, when Cardiff will possess a worthy Art Gallery, one that Wales will be proud of and account as national; and the historian of that day will record with pride that one of the chief founders of its collection was James Pyke Thompson JP."\(^{16}\)

It was pointed out that such donations to the development of museum and galleries was a feature of projects in many other parts of the country:

"The only way out of the difficulty is private munificence. Surely in this great and wealthy metropolis of Wales, there are those who desire to see a Museum and Art Gallery worthy of the town, and at the same time have the means to follow the good example of the Thompson family!"\(^{17}\)

This failed to bring in the hoped-for financial support and the Curators appealed to the civic-status consciousness of the wealthy people of Cardiff:

"... Cardiff is looking for its recognition as the capital of a nation, and for its museum and art gallery to become a national institution! Will Cardiff sit contented with a second-rate municipal museum? ... why, if half of what one hears is true, there are those in South Wales who could give £20,000 as a thank-offering for wealth amassed last year!"\(^{18}\)

A plea was also put out for financial support of the planned Index Collection:

"There are those who have amassed great wealth in this district. Will not one of these - only one - gracefully acknowledge his indebtedness to the place

\(^{16}\)Ward, J. (ed) 1899 "The Pyke Thompson Collection" *The Public Library Journal* No.9, January 1899, p.19


which has afforded him a home and wealth by the gift, both novel and useful, of a MUSEUM INDEX COLLECTION.¹⁹

This also failed to elicit a favourable response, "... the trifling cheque of £1,500 or £2,000 however, which would make the proposal an accomplished fact has not yet come this way!").²⁰

As well as the building costs the future financial situation for annual running costs based on the half-penny rate still posed prospective problems. The product of a half-penny rate in Cardiff in 1902 was between £1,800 and £1,900, this compared to Bristol where the product of the same rate was £2,800. The interest payable on capital for the loan for the building would only leave about £1,100 per annum to meet all the running expenses of the museum and art gallery including wages and collections acquisition. Bristol had the added advantage that the building costs had been met by a private benefactor, Sir Henry Wills, which meant that the whole of the product from the rate could be devoted each year to the museum and art gallery. Here the curators sought support from the wealthy of Cardiff but again failed to gain any tangible response.²¹

Little progress was made until the greater political involvement, and the imminence of the National Museum grant, brought the financial and civic advantages of the institution into sharper focus.

**Swansea**

In Swansea, as with many other towns during the nineteenth century, the

¹⁹Ward, J (ed) 1900 “A Museum Index Collection” The Public Library Journal Vol.II Part 6 April 1900, p.152


concentration of administration and finance fell to improvements in public health and the relief of the poor, particularly as a result of the pollution from the copper industry. The income from civic property and land covered the cost of this until 1872 when rates had to be levied for the first time. Progress in the improvement of sanitary conditions in Swansea took a heavy toll on the authority’s budget. The revenue budget had to be supplemented by loans for capital projects and by 1900 the loan debt amounted to £1,092,968 with an annual revenue of just £167,142.22

With such a budget commitment the provision of services such as museums came low on the agenda. Even the provision of a library service did not occur until 1871 with the opening of a public library in Goat Street, some twenty one years after the first Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1850. In 1904 the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie offered to contribute to a new branch library. His offer was turned down by the Council who could not raise the match funding or bear the ensuing revenue costs. In such a financial climate, the possibility of a municipal museum was not a viable proposition - especially when the Royal Institution of South Wales society was already providing an effective museum service for the town. Pressure came from outside the civic structure.

Within six months of its formation in 1901, the Swansea Welsh Society - another local Swansea society that used the Royal Institution building for its meetings - presented a deputation to the Property and General Purpose Committee of Swansea Corporation on the question of a municipal museum as the preliminary step towards establishing a Welsh National Institution.23 The resolution stated:

"That in view of the acknowledged importance of well-equipped museums as handmaids to historical and scientific study and research and their educational possibilities as means of popular culture, this meeting desires respectfully, but earnestly, to urge on the Town Council of Swansea that it

22Figures from Alban(1990) p404
23The Committee met on Friday 3rd January 1902, Minute 2524 Swansea Borough Council
should forthwith adopt the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, with the purpose of immediately establishing a Municipal Museum of natural history and antiquities; and that it should also appoint a committee to watch the interests of Swansea with regard to the movement for the establishment by the Government of a Library and Museum for Wales. The Society first addressed themselves to the question of the municipal museum for Swansea, though it was the larger question of a national museum that primarily interested them. The members felt that it would be a good thing for the borough if Swansea were selected as the locale of such a museum, but they recognised that it would be useless for Swansea to try for the museum unless it had previously shown that it recognised the value of such an institution by establishing one of its own. They believed that what would count most in the final decision as to the site of a national museum would be the possession of a suitable nucleus for a national collection, but that a government grant would not be made for the initial founding of such a collection. But they also considered that, quite apart from the question of a national museum, the non-existence of a municipal museum was a serious deficiency in the educational activity of the town.

The Swansea Welsh Society had taken up this issue and formulated the resolution presented to the Corporation; this resolution had been endorsed by representatives of the Public Library Committee, the Council of the Royal Institution of South Wales and the Scientific Society at a public meeting held at the Royal Institution of South Wales on 8th December 1901. They all agreed that the great educational value of well-equipped museums was fully recognised by the government illustrated by the fact that all the government funded museums were under the control of the Board of Education.

On presenting this resolution to the Corporation, Mr Lleufer Thomas of the Swansea Welsh Society had taken up this issue and formulated the resolution presented to the Corporation; this resolution had been endorsed by representatives of the Public Library Committee, the Council of the Royal Institution of South Wales and the Scientific Society at a public meeting held at the Royal Institution of South Wales on 8th December 1901. They all agreed that the great educational value of well-equipped museums was fully recognised by the government illustrated by the fact that all the government funded museums were under the control of the Board of Education.
Welsh Society pointed out that the educational value of museums was recognised through Article 12 of the Code in that, so long as visits were paid during school hours under proper guidance, they were counted as school attendances. Considerable use was being made of this facility in towns with well-equipped museums. Bristol Museum had had 751 pupils and 41 masters from various elementary and higher grade schools; schools from as far afield as Neath and Crickhowell had visited Cardiff Museum; and nearly 500 children and teachers had applied for permission to visit the museum of the Royal Institution of South Wales in the previous year.

The visits discussed covered the elementary schools but Thomas proposed that the higher the students moved through the education system, the greater the need for a museum and it was important to note that Swansea was increasing the level of technical education. For such subjects as geology, mining and metallurgy there was a strong argument for a suitable museum. Swansea was described as the metallurgical capital of Wales yet it did not have a municipal museum with a collection of mineralogical specimens.

But even more important was its indirect appeal to the community at large, showing them how to learn, not from books, but by direct contact with objects, providing "... recreative study to multitudes, and in so doing surely fulfilled a noble mission - one that ought not to be under-estimated in the face of the ‘wave of criminality’ which overflows the county".

However, the Society believed that before a museum could perform that educational function it must be owned and maintained by the community and that the government had recognised this by giving municipal powers for the purpose, "... the day of the private museum, owned by a Society such as the Royal Institution of South Wales, was past". Thomas admitted that the Museum of the Royal Institution had done good work and was, "... still useful in a limited way, but its usefulness would be increased ten-fold if, by some arrangement, its contents were transferred to the Corporation".

124
Another point made by Thomas was that Swansea's further disadvantage was their ineligibility for grants in aid towards the purchase of objects and the loan of exhibits that the Board of Education made to municipally-owned museums - Cardiff had received an average of £100 a year for the last five years.

The method that the Swansea Welsh Society recommended was the Museums and Gymnasiums Act 1891, which could readily be adopted by a resolution of the Corporation after due notice. The Society claimed that all the more progressive and enlightened towns, "... boroughs where there was a strong municipal life", had museums, and most of them funded through this Act "...and it was time for Swansea to fall into line". They therefore, recommended that the Act be adopted and that negotiations should be opened with the Royal Institution of South Wales society to see whether their museum could be transferred to the Corporation. The President, Mr C A Glascodine, and ex-President, Col. Morgan, of the Royal Institution, who were both present at the deputation, expressed their opinion that there would be no objection on the part of the authorities of the Royal Institution to come to terms.

Mr Ll Thomas was concerned that, "... Cardiff were straining every nerve to obtain the Welsh National Museum", and that Swansea would stand little chance without a municipal museum of its own to offer as a nucleus. With a municipal museum Swansea could compete and, "... as a great metallurgical centre, it would have strong claims". Mr D Lleufer Thomas was a barrister with chambers in London and Swansea who encouraged Swansea to bid for the museum. He had formed the Swansea Welsh Society and led the deputation from that Society to try to persuade the Council to prepare for the national museum and to adopt the Museums and Gymnasiums Act (1891) to fund a municipal museum. Lleufer Thomas' primary concern was for the national library to be based at Aberystwyth. He had been involved with that movement for some time and prepared the Memorial for Aberystwyth for submission to the Privy Council Committee in 1905. In his encouragement to Swansea at that time "he advocated concentrating local effort on
getting the museum only. The library, he fully believed, would go to North Wales.\textsuperscript{126} Indeed, his aim was for it to go to Aberystwyth. He also maintained that the question of annual maintenance should not be a criterion. The support of a national institution through a local rate "prejudiced the national aspect of the matter and degraded it to a municipal character"\textsuperscript{124} thus undermining Cardiff's greater municipal wealth. It is tempting to speculate whether Lleufer Thomas had a genuine interest in the museum going to Swansea or whether his intention was to draw the fire of Cardiff away from Aberystwyth. I have not found documentary evidence for this.

The Town Council assured them that the deputation would, "... receive the earnest and, he hoped, early consideration of the Corporation". However, it was clear the Council was concerned that the transfer of the museum from the Royal Institution would not be without some difficulty, especially as no terms had been discussed in any detail. In view of this, it was decided not to adopt the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, straight away, but to appoint a Sub-Committee to consider the ramifications of such an adoption, either wholly or in so far as it related to the museum only.\textsuperscript{27}

Subsequently, Swansea Corporation met with representatives of the Royal Institution of South Wales society.\textsuperscript{28} The Corporation wanted to know whether the Society would, and on what terms, part with their museum to the Corporation towards the formation of a municipal museum.

Under its constitution the Royal Institution of South Wales society was a corporate body for the promotion of literature, science and art having a library, museum and collection of pictures; it had no power to transfer any portion of its possessions for

\textsuperscript{126}Western Mail 17\textsuperscript{th} February 1905
\textsuperscript{124}Western Mail 19\textsuperscript{th} April 1905
\textsuperscript{27}Minute 2524, Property and General Purposes Committee, Borough of Swansea, 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 1902.
\textsuperscript{28}Minutes of the RISW 11\textsuperscript{th} March 1902, and a short report in the Cambrian 25\textsuperscript{th} May 1902.
any purpose other than those specified. However, the transfer of the museum to Swansea Corporation for the purpose of creating a municipal museum, which would be supported by a rate and thus have the potential of further improvement and of greater benefit to the community, would fall within the remit of the constitution. The Society had concerns about handing over their collections and premises which was based on their viability and their own continuance.

The building that housed the museum and library of the Royal Institution was on land leased from the Corporation for 500 years at the annual rate of five shillings. The buildings were, in the opinion of the Institution, already inadequate for the purposes of their activities and would be even less so should the museum be moved elsewhere to form a Corporation museum. The terms of the lease placed very specific restrictions on the use of the premises - for literature, science and art - which would place the Royal Institution in a difficult position in the financial realisation of the remaining assets. The museum was a current source of income which they could ill afford to lose and any agreement which involved parting with the museum should include a release from the restrictions currently in place in the lease. Whilst the Royal Institution continued to use the premises the restrictions were not problematic in that they concurred with their own constitution. However, should the Institution relocate to new premises in order to further their work, especially if the museum were transferred, then they would have great difficulty in realising the true value of the building with such restrictions in the lease.

The Corporation offered £10,000 to settle the interest on the lease but the Royal Institution considered this an inadequate sum because, if they were to continue as a viable institution, then they would have to move into premises which were equal to, or better than, their current building. The Royal Institution had enjoyed the patronage of Queen Victoria and, more lately, King Edward VII for over sixty years which, they insisted, had brought honour and credibility to the town. The classical building that had been erected at the cost of the Institution had enhanced the architecture of the town and they felt they could not move into premises that would be seen as a
lowering of the standards set by them over many decades. The Institution believed that its presence had been a great advantage to the town and regarded its premises as, "... the finest classical building in the Principality". The building was worth an estimated £25,000 and they believed that it would not be appropriate to accept an offer of less than half this value, particularly as there would be the danger that, in future years, the financial benefit might conceivably be used by the Council for reducing the general rate rather than the betterment of the museum.

Their counter proposal suggested the sum of £17,000 on the realisation of £20,000 for the premises leaving £3,000 for the Corporation towards the establishment of a municipal museum. Should a sum greater than £20,000 be realised then the Royal Institution would retain a third of the extra and concede two thirds to the Corporation. Although it was recognised that £3,000 was not sufficient to establish a municipal museum to the same standard as that currently possessed by the Royal Institution, the money did represent £2,750 more than the Corporation’s current financial interest in the premises and would, in effect, represent a financial grant from the Institution to the Corporation.

The meeting ended with the agreement that the Corporation should assess the value of their interest in the Royal Institution’s premises and that the Corporation and the Institution should cooperate in the disposal of those premises.

The Royal Institution, unlike a number of other similar institutions throughout the country at that time, was not in a difficult position financially. The building was wholly owned by the Institution and sufficient monies were generated annually to maintain the upkeep. They were, therefore, in a strong position in the negotiations with the Corporation for the contents of the museum and the premises. The Corporation did not have sufficient capital money in its budgets for the building of new premises, or even the adaptation of existing premises for the purpose of a municipal museum and were reliant on the generosity of the Royal Institution. In

29Ibid
1897 the gross estimate for the whole of Swansea Corporation’s budget had been £104,012 and this increased annually until it reached £153,012 in 1906. Each year, Swansea exceeded its estimate by a considerable amount (£9,224 in 1904) - demonstrating the difficulty Swansea had in controlling its budgets. The Royal Institution’s concern that the financial realisation of its premises by the Council might be used to reduce the general rate was an indication of the Swansea’s financial problems. The greatest drain was the repayment of loans which made the raising of capital for the establishment of a municipal museum from scratch an unlikely possibility in relation to other demands.

The existence of the museum of the Royal Institution meant that the Corporation had not had the same pressure to establish a municipal museum as would have otherwise been the case. Their museum had fulfilled most of the desired functions of a Corporation museum including opening to the public and visits by school parties. And, whilst there was an argument for the establishment of a municipal museum with the added attraction of government grants and loans, the possibility of the placing of the national museum in Swansea with all the accompanying civic kudos, was the real motivation for action at that time. Even then, it was pressure from an organisation outside the political structure of the Corporation that initiated the discussions rather than within the Corporation itself. The Corporation adopted the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, in June 1902 but no further action was taken to raise a rate income for a municipal museum under this Act.

The premises of the Royal Institution of South Wales society was just undergoing an extensive and costly refurbishment which may have added to the reluctance of the members of the society to hand over the museum to the corporation without the assurance of a secure financial future for the museum collections and suitable arrangements which would secure the continuing independence of the Royal Institution. A new Art Gallery was constructed 60 feet long by 20 feet wide lit by

30 Western Mail 18th May 1905
31 Minute 2636, Property and General Purposes Committee, Swansea Borough Council, 11th June 1902
lantern, a space larger than the old gallery with improved wall fixings for the works of art. The old Art Gallery was converted into an extension of the existing Library giving much more space, the walls being lined with 1,200 feet of teak shelving. The old laboratory had been converted into a Nineteenth Century Museum to provide additional display space for objects other than antiquities. The cost of these conversions amounted to just over £1,000 with just under £200 coming from the Institution's revenue; just over £100 coming from member donations to the Building Fund; and the remaining £700 held in guarantee by a small number of committee members.

The opening on 30th May 1902 by the Mayor at a special Conversazione was a grand social affair attended by 300 - 400 people helping to reinforce the perceived middle class status of the membership of the Royal institution of South Wales society. At the opening of the refurbishment of the building the President, C H Glascodine stated that he was of the opinion that "... if only the Corporation would take it over, the Museum could be made as great a credit to Swansea as the municipal museum at Cardiff is to that town ... in the meantime the Council of the Institution are occupying the ground to the best of their ability". It was noted that, since their discussions with Swansea Corporation in early 1902, nothing further had been done. Glascodine regretted that the Corporation appeared to have allowed the matter to fall through:

"The Council of the Institution felt that, inasmuch as the Corporation had the power to make a small rate, and thus extend its scope and increase its value to the town, it was their duty not to stand in the light of the community. That was their sole reason for supporting the proposition, as they felt they could not, with the support at present extended to it do what was necessary in the

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32 Annual Reports RISW 1900-1901, 1901-1902; Cambrian 30th May and 6th June 1902
33 Cambrian 30th May 1902, p4
34 RISW Annual Report 1901-2; Cambrian 20th June 1902

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The Royal Institution of South Wales society had already considered their premises unsatisfactory in terms of size and location - they had proposed a move in 1875. They may well have seen this as an opportunity to move to a more favourable location with a financial arrangement in their favour - including the settling of the debt for the recent refurbishment.

The Editorial in the *Cambrian* took up the issue of a Municipal Museum the following week. Whilst the Corporation had adopted the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, the Editorial raised the question of what the next step should be. The Corporation could immediately establish a municipal museum, however, and the Editorial declared that the real reason was "... to strengthen the Corporation's hand should there be a Government grant made for the purposes of a National Library and Museum for Wales, of which grant Swansea would hope to get a share." The editorial accepted that Swansea may well have a greater chance of a share of the grant with the adoption of the Act but, "... it seems to us that something tangible can only be expected in the event of the Corporation putting its resolution into active effect by at once setting to work to establish a Municipal Museum." Without such an institution, the editorial believed, Swansea would be unlikely to get any share of such a grant or any of the smaller grants or loan exhibits available to other corporation museums. The levy of the rate was seen as a sound investment in an institution with such educational advantages. The Museum of the Royal Institution of South Wales was seen as the obvious nucleus for such a municipal museum.  

Swansea Corporation had chosen not to respond to the Memorial sent out by Cardiff early in 1902 inviting all local authorities in Wales to petition the Government for a grant for the national institutions with the location being settled by arbitration. But they did reappoint a sub-committee to deal with the establishment of a museum in

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35 *Cambrian* 20th June 1902
36 *Cambrian* 27th June 1902, p4.
the Borough in December of that year. In March 1903 the Corporation send representation to the Treasury in connection with the proposed national museum for Wales asking for due consideration to be given to Swansea. Two further moves to central government were made by Swansea that year, but then the matter rested, and in the political moves during the years up to the decision, Swansea was overshadowed by Cardiff.38

37Minute 40, Property and General Purposes Committee Swansea Borough Council 10th December 1902.

38Minutes 103, 120, 197, Property and General Purposes Committee Swansea Borough Council 9th March, 8th April, 9th September 1903
POLITICAL MOVES TOWARDS A NATIONAL MUSEUM FOR WALES

The closer the realisation of a government grant, the greater the political activity at both the Parliamentary\(^1\) and Civic levels. Here the manoeuvres for status and power took centre stage.

**Parliamentary and Civic Activity**

The question of a national museum for Wales was raised regularly in the House of Commons from 1890. The main arguments during the debates for such a museum were; the safety and well-being of collections and objects relating to Wales, the completion of the Intermediate Education system in Wales, and parity with Scotland and Ireland. The deflecting arguments from Government centred around the uncertainty of location with the lack of a capital in Wales, and the existing exhibit loan service of the South Kensington Museum.

The possibility of a national museum for Wales was raised in the House in 1890 in connection with the discovery of an ancient chalice and paten discovered in Merionethshire and claimed for the crown as treasure trove. Mr Kenyon, MP for Denbigh, asked the House whether this discovery should not lead to the realisation of the proposals for a national museum for the holding of such artefacts in Wales. In response, it was said that they were not aware of any proposals for a national museum for Wales suggesting that this had not been discussed in the House before.\(^2\) Alfred Thomas, MP for Glamorgan East, included a national museum in his proposed National Institutions (Wales) Bill which he tried to put through parliament in 1891 and 1892 but failed.\(^3\)

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\(^1\)For Welsh representation in Parliament and party political structure see Morgan, K. O. (1995) and Jones, I. G. (1988)

\(^2\)Hansard 3rd Series, Vol 345, 13th June 1890, Cols.851-852

\(^3\)The content, background and progress of this Bill and its political context is discussed by Jones, J. Graham(1990)
In 1893 Herbert Lewis, MP for Flint Boroughs in North Wales, who raised the question of a national museum for Wales most often in Parliament, placed a Notice of Motion on the Order Book of the House of Commons for a due share of the Museum Grants for Wales. This followed the paper by Brynmor Jones MP at the Cymmrodorion Section of the Pontypridd Eisteddfod and the subsequent discussion. Lewis also discussed the reasons for this Motion in an address to the Liverpool Welsh National Society in the following month. He believed that Wales was as justified in a share of this grant as Scotland and Ireland who had already benefited from such national institutions, "Wales has her nationhood, her own separate entity, her history, language, literature, antiquities."

Lewis reminded the Society of the enthusiasm of the Welsh for education and the celebration of its culture through literature and music at the annual Eisteddfod. The establishment of a permanent institution for the care of Welsh manuscripts and antiquities would, he hoped, reduce the loss of such treasures from Wales and there would be the possibility of reclaiming material from the British Museum and the Record Office. Securing the grant would not be straightforward. The Notice of Motion already laid on the Order Book was dependent on the voting system relating to Private Member’s Bills and, although Lewis hoped that support could be gained from other Welsh Members, this did not prove sufficient to bring it before the House.

Lewis asked about a share of the Museum Grant again the following year, albeit from the Reporters Gallery, during the debate on the aspect of Civil Service expenditure relating to the Arts and Sciences, which included the national museums - an annual debate which Lewis regularly used as an opportunity to raise the subject

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4 Trans. Hon Soc Cymmrodorion Session 1893-4 Report of the Council for year ending 9th November 1893. Herbert Lewis was closely associated with Thomas Edward Ellis, MP for Merioneth in the development of these proposals.

5 cf Ch.2

6 30th October 1893, 'A museum grant for Wales' quoted in Davies, W. Ll. (1937) pp.37-40

7 Ibid p.38
of a national museum for Wales. It was this budget that, at this time, was perceived to be the most appropriate for the funding of a Welsh national museum. In reply, Mr Acland, said that he believed that a museum would be provided for Wales, "later on", but he pointed out that the loan system operating for English museums was equally open to museums in Wales:

"He had no doubt some place would be found for a Central Museum, but they were unfortunately situated as to the matter of capital. He could only say that if the day arose he should be glad to apply the same systems to Wales as was applied in Edinburgh and Dublin."  

Cardiff Museum had taken advantage of this loan system from the South Kensington Museum on a number of occasions so this was a service well known in Wales. As Herbert Lewis pointed out, his request "... was not in any sense intended to imply that Wales suffered any injustice whatever in that respect; he was referring to the fact that there was no National Library, no Art Gallery, and no Museum." The issue of a capital had been raised here as a sticking point for the grant and was not to be addressed for some years in Wales.

In 1896 it was Alfred Thomas, MP for Glamorgan East who raised the question of a share of the grant once again in the House in the form of a Motion:

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is unjust that Wales should receive no share of the Museum Grants of the United Kingdom; and that it is expedient to make provision, similar to that made for Scotland and Ireland, for the expenditure of a due share of the Museum Grant in Wales."  

Thomas first pointed to the consideration of the safety of documents and collections relating to Wales, citing the loss of two large collections by fire, and collections

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8Hansard 4th Series Vol.24, 21st August 1894, Cols.216-217
9Hansard 4th Series Vol.XLIV, 1896, Col.836
being destroyed by neglect. Herbert Lewis, the seconder of the Motion, dismissed the British Museum as the natural guardian of Wales’ collections, "... it paid so little regard to Wales that it was absurd to regard the British Museum as an effective substitute for a National Museum of Wales." Sir John Lubbock, a Trustee, assured the House that the British Museum did take great interest in Welsh antiquities. However, Lewis pointed out that when such collections as the Ieuan Brydydd Hir\textsuperscript{11} collection of ancient Welsh manuscripts were to be sold, "... where was the British Museum? Why they had not a single Welsh expert ... [the collection] had been scattered to the four winds, and the British Museum had failed to save them."\textsuperscript{12}

Secondly, Thomas pointed out the importance of museum collections in the education of their artisans in order that productivity could be maintained in the face of foreign competition:

"In Wales there were two great staple industries - mining and manufactured steel and iron. In order to properly equip their mining students it was necessary that they should have the best mineralogical collections obtainable."\textsuperscript{13}

The Intermediate Education System had been established in Wales "... but the edifice would not be completed until there was a National Museum."\textsuperscript{14} JM MacLean, MP for Cardiff, Sir Osborne Morgan, MP for Denbighshire East, Herbert Roberts, MP for Denbighshire West, and Herbert Lewis concurred, with Morgan, Roberts and Lewis also pointing out that the initial stages of the introduction of the university system had been supported by ordinary Welsh working people:

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid Col.839
\textsuperscript{11}Evan Evans (Ieuan Fardd or Ieuan Brydydd Hir) 1731-1788, Curate, poet, Welsh scholar and collector of Welsh manuscripts (DWB)
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid Col.540
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid Col.837
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid Col.837
"Welshmen asked for help because they had helped themselves. Great sacrifices had been made by the Welsh people in the past for educational and literary purposes"\textsuperscript{15}

Thomas also advocated the national museum on "...the ground of national sentiment..." a point expanded by Lewis. Lewis stated that the nationalism was of a non-political nature, "...he hoped that no party spirit would be introduced into it...", it was a kind of nationalism where all the representatives of Wales were agreed in the want of a national museum. However, the topic of nationalism brought out the rivalry between the north and the south. Stanley Leighton, the MP for Oswestry, Shropshire, pointed out that "... the Welsh were a little divided amongst themselves. Antipathy was sometimes shown in South Wales to Members from North Wales who addressed meetings there." Maclean stated that Sir Osborne Morgan "... told them ... that [those] who sat for the great towns of Wales, only represented the English colonies planted in the country". The real Welsh, according to Morgan could only be found in the hills away from the towns, which prompted Maclean to suggest that "...the best site for the museum would seem to be the top of Snowdon."\textsuperscript{16}

Fortunately, Sir John Gorst\textsuperscript{17} chose not to take advantage of this overt rivalry but concentrated on the absence of a capital for the location of the institutions. He reminded them that this was an issue which had been at the heart of previous debates in the House. When the subject had been raised the previous year "...he himself asked for the capital, and he was told there would be little delay in providing it"; however, this decision had yet to be made. He had noted that the Central Board for Education in Wales was being established and he had awaited to discover the chosen location for them to meet; this he thought could indicate the most likely place for a capital and a national institution, "... but he found the Board was to meet in

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid, Roberts, Col.849. For the support of the University College, Aberystwyth, by the ordinary people of Wales, see for example, Ellis(1972).

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid Col.844

\textsuperscript{17}Sir John Gorst Member for Cambridge University and Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education
Leighton went so far as to suggest that Shrewsbury was the capital of Wales by general consent, "... the central meeting place for Welshmen ... wither the Welsh tribes went up together, if not to worship at least to talk, a sort of Welsh Jerusalem."¹⁸

Despite this being the "... great obstacle in the way of dealing with the matter...",²⁰ the question of capital and location was not to be resolved in the debate. Maclean recognised the rivalry amongst Welsh towns for the location of the national museum and took the opportunity to promote Cardiff, "... there was no town in Wales which could be compared for wealth, population and intelligence with the borough which he had the honour to represent."²¹ Lewis suggested that the national museum, art gallery and library should be located in three separate towns in Wales. Maclean considered this unworkable but agreed with all the other Welsh MP’s that the decision regarding location should not be too difficult to deal with suggesting "... there should be a conference of Welsh Members on both sides of the House to try and settle one way or the other where these institutions should be placed."²²

Lubbock believed that, for the purposes of research it was better to have one great national museum for the whole of the UK but that for educational purposes a range of smaller museums with typical collections was to be preferred. Sir J T D Llewellyn, MP for Swansea and President of the Royal Institution of South Wales, "... wished to bear testimony to the real desire there was in Wales for strengthening the museums that now existed." He pointed out that the existing local museums did indeed play an important part already in education but they, "... were starved for

¹⁸Ibid Col.850
¹⁹Ibid Col.847. Shrewsbury remains to this day a central meeting place for Welsh organisations. A compromise born of necessity.
²⁰Gorst, Ibid Col.850
²¹Ibid Col.844
²²Ibid Col.845
want of support" The Motion was carried 185 - 118; however, the indecision and disagreement amongst the Welsh Members as to location of their capital meant that the Government could delay any practical enactment.

In March 1898 Lewis reiterated the motion put to the House of Commons two years earlier by Alfred Thomas. Lewis pointed out that all the political parties in Wales were united in support on this question, as were the Education authorities. He reiterated his understanding from previous proposals to the House that the principle which underlay the Motion was accepted, but the problem still existed because of the lack of an education capital in Wales, and that once such a capital had been established, the Government would give serious consideration to a share of the Museum Grant. Lewis reminded the House of the case of the Welsh University Colleges and their establishment in 1882 when the Government made the grant for their maintenance and left the site to be determined by arbitration, the decision being accepted throughout the Principality. It was just such an arrangement that Lewis was asking the Government to do regarding his Bill, any difficulty regarding a capital could be addressed on another occasion. And whether the museum should be located in one town or, "... by adopting the suggestions which were thrown out in the course of the Debate - that the Museum, for instance, should be in one centre, the National Library in another, and the Art Gallery in a third - that is, of course, a question which will be left practically to the ultimate decision of the Government, in their wisdom, to decide".

Lewis reminded the House that the education system in Wales was nearing completion with the intermediate schools and University Colleges. In this connection

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23Ibid Col.845

24The Welsh MPs had won their argument in Parliament. If they had then brought forward a firm, costed proposal for the institutions and decided on their locations they may have achieved a decision long before 1905. The attitude of Government was more passive avoidance than outright opposition. The reasons for this lack of action by the Welsh MPs and other authorities in Wales is worthy of further research.

25Hansard 4th Series Vol 54 8th March1898, Col.1052

26Ibid
the generous altruism of the Welsh people was reiterated in the cause of education, "... thousands of working men ... have contributed out of their slender means towards the completion of the Welsh education system ... thousands of men who have absolutely no direct interest of any kind whatever in University Colleges and in intermediate schools ". All that was required to complete this education system was a national museum. There was, "... no national storehouse of any kind whatsoever ... our treasures of art and antiquity are scattered up and down the United Kingdom, while, wherever there are sales of objects of interest to Wales, there is no authority to purchase them for the sake of a Welsh Museum". The share of the Museum Grant to Scotland was £12,000 and to Ireland £22,000, "...though we do not grudge it for a single moment", and with this Motion, Lewis was asking for a proportional share for Wales.

Sir John Gorst pointed out that the Cardiff Museum had loans of objects from the South Kensington Museum as well as small grants from the budget which was voted annually by the Science and Art Department for giving financial aid to provincial museums:

"Gorst: It received a grant in 1891 and it received a grant in 1896. Lewis: How much? Gorst: £26 a year. I quite agree that the amount is small, and I would laugh, too, if Ministerial etiquette permitted me."\textsuperscript{27}

With the grant for the whole of England and Wales just £500 a year, £26 for one museum was not quite as unreasonable as at first sight but this did not bear comparison with the larger grants to Scotland and Ireland, "...it receives pretty much the same sort of share as the towns of Lancashire, Yorkshire, the Midlands, and other places". Gorst believed that the museum for which he had responsibility, the South Kensington Museum, had the function of gathering a collection of objects for circulation and dissemination to museums and schools of art throughout the country;

\textsuperscript{27}Hansard 4\textsuperscript{th} Series, Vol.54, 8\textsuperscript{th} March 1898, Col.1055
it was not like the British Museum or the National Gallery full of objects and pictures of national or cultural significance. He believed that Welsh education could be best served by the increased distribution of loan objects, perhaps from a centre in Wales, rather than the establishment of a national museum, "... I do not quite understand what the Hon. Member [Lewis] wants. Does he wish to establish in Cardiff a sort of rival museum to the Cardiff Museum?" Here the question of capital and location was raised again with Gorst intimating that Cardiff was the most appropriate:

"I find there is a very excellent museum in Cardiff, which, I suppose, I must not quite call the metropolis of Wales, but which, of all Welsh towns, is most likely to become the centre of Welsh education and Welsh industry."28

Here was a significant indication to all Welsh Members of the perception of Cardiff as a probable future capital.

Mr Wynford Philips, the Member for Pembrokeshire, tried to bring the House back to the original Motion by saying that the people of Wales did not want a perambulating museum of curiosities, "...they are asking for something very much different, and the right hon. Gentleman professes not to understand the Motion, but it is plain enough", they wanted a similar provision to Scotland and Ireland for a national museum for Wales, "...a museum that will comprise every department of Welsh life, Welsh history, and Welsh antiquity". In a final plea he continued:

"That is what we want for Wales, and that is what my right hon. Friend, the Member for Flint Boroughs [Lewis] is asking for in language which nobody can misunderstand, and it is met by the right hon. Gentleman [Gorst] coming forward here and saying that five years ago £26 was given to Cardiff ... well, I think £26 five years ago to Cardiff is not enough, and that is why my hon. Friend has brought forward this Motion, and that is why I hope it will be

28Ibid
accepted by this House.29

The Motion was put and, on division, lost - Noes 85 and Ayes 56. Lewis planned to raise the issue of a share of the Museum Grant for Wales again when the vote for the budgets for the British Museum, British Museum(Natural History), National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery were being considered in committee on 5th August 1898 but chose not to pursue this in light of the decision earlier in the year.30

The Select Committee of the Science and Art Department under its deliberations in 1898 suggested that "... the advantages of the Science and Art Collections" be extended to Wales, if possible by means of a museum and, if not, by "...a more liberal use" of the circulating system already in operation. A hand-written note in the margin of the first draft of the report again raises the issue of the location, "Wales has never yet been able to come to an agreement as to where its national museum is to be placed". 31

The second draft of this report suggests that funding for a national museum for Wales could be found by the transfer or closing of the Bethnal Green Museum although in the final document this paragraph is removed. The Department was keen to point out the efforts made in the promotion of the circulation system to Wales, but there is an observation that there were few suitable local museums in Wales to receive such circulations and, "... Cardiff had a very large loan for several years, but in 1888 it asked that the loan should not be renewed because of want of space for its

29Ibid Col.1059
30I have only one word to say with regard to this Vote. It has been my duty upon previous occasions to draw attention of the right honorable Gentlemen to the right of Wales to a share of the Museum Grant, but having regard to the recent decision of the Committee upstairs, it is unnecessary to take up the time of the House by any reference to the subject. We shall wait with interest to see what action the Government will take." Lewis, 5th August 1898, Civil Service Estimates 1898-99, Hansard 4th Series Vol 64
31Draft Second Report of the Select Committee of the Museums of the Science and Art Department, 1898, Sections 99 and 100. (PRO, ED 24/44)
Meanwhile, away from Parliament in Cardiff, at its meeting of 29th July 1898, the Museum Committee noted that on a number of occasions the question of a national museum for Wales had arisen in the House of Commons. This had been discussed by the Honorary Curators and, on their urgent recommendation, and following further discussion, the Committee stated that it was strongly of the opinion that the time had arrived when it would be wise for the Council to appoint a special committee of the members for the express purpose of furthering the claims of Cardiff as the site for the museum. They were, no doubt, encouraged by Gorst’s remarks just a few months earlier as to the value of Cardiff Museum and his intimation of future capital status for Cardiff. It was decided to deal with this issue through the Parliamentary Committee and was first dealt with at their meeting of 30th September 1898 where the Town Clerk was instructed to make inquiries and report back. Cllr E Thomas and Cllr Ward (the Chairman of the Museum Committee) were coopted onto the Parliamentary Committee for this purpose.

It was decided to enlist the assistance and support of the local Borough Member and Mr J M Maclean MP was contacted and asked to watch carefully the progress of the Report of the Select Committee of Museums of the Science and Art Department with a view to securing due recognition of Cardiff in connection with the establishment of a national museum for Wales, the Municipal Museum being proposed as, "an admiral nucleus for a National Institution". Maclean responded from the Royal Bombay Yacht Club, following a voyage taken for the improvement of his health. On his journey he had been accompanied by two other MP’s as far as Marseilles and he discussed the issue of the possible museum grant for Wales with them. He

32 Observations on the Second Report from the Select Committee on the Museums of the Department of Science and Art, 1898, paras 140 and 141, (PRO, ED24/44)
33 Minute 3367 Museum Committee, CCC 29th July 1898
34 Minute 3620 Parliamentary Committee, CCC 30th September 1898
35 Minute 567 Parliamentary Committee CCC 15th December 1898
36 Minute 882 Parliamentary Committee CCC 6th January 1899
persuaded them of the claims of Cardiff and agreed to form a strong national deputation citing the Welsh University as precedent and he undertook to meet the Duke of Devonshire and Sir John Gorst in March 1899 to press for such a grant. Later that year it was felt that all the Welsh Members of Parliament should be approached to take action on the settlement of the question of the location of a national museum for Wales.

In their gathering of support, it was felt by Cardiff Council that the views of the Principal and Council of the South Wales University College should also be sought. It was agreed that the presence of the University College added to the weight of argument for Cardiff to be the site of the national institution. It was resolved to prepare a document outlining the scheme for one national museum for Wales and for this to be distributed amongst the County Councils and other governing bodies throughout Wales for comment. The gentlemen appointed to the Scheme Committee to prepare this document included the Mayor, Councillors, Principal J V Jones representing the University College; the Town Clerk and the Honorary Curators. They recommended the establishment of a Welsh national museum, including a national library and art gallery, which would afford the same advantages and facilities as those found at the South Kensington Museum in London or the Science and Art Museums of Dublin and Edinburgh. A document was prepared advocating the establishment of a national museum and was duly distributed around the various governing bodies in Wales for comment.

The University College subsequently agreed to hand over the Salesbury Collection

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37 Minute 1111 Parliamentary Committee CCC 6th February 1899
38 Minute 2288 Museum Committee CCC 26th October 1899
39 Minute 1111 Parliamentary Committee CCC 6th February 1899; Minute 1350 Parliamentary Committee CCC 14th February 1899
40 Minutes 1353 and 1354 Parliamentary Committee CCC 17th February 1899
41 Minute 1582 Parliamentary Sub Committee CCC 3rd March 1899; Parliamentary Sub-Committee 14th March 1899.
42 Minute 1921 Parliamentary Sub-Committee CCC 14th March 1899
to the national library if sited in Cardiff. 43 Replies from a number of governing bodies arrived by the February of 1900 but no action was taken at that time and the Sub-Committee had still not convened by June when the Museum Committee urged the matter to be progressed. 44 Such delay was inevitable with other pressing Council business and with no firm promise of Government grant.

In the House of Commons, meanwhile, Lewis gave notice of a reduction of the Civil Service Estimate, "...my object in doing so is to draw attention to the unjust manner, as we regard it in Wales, in which Wales is treated in respect of the Museum Grant". 45 He wished to move a reduction in the estimates for the British Museum to the sum of £10,000 on the basis that the provision made for Welsh antiquities and manuscripts in the British Museum was inadequate, "... and that that institution ought to collect, as far as possible, all the antiquities relating to Wales, and place them in one portion of the building, where the Welsh public would be able to consult them". Lewis hoped that the Members would see his observation as an essential preliminary to the establishment of a national museum for Wales. Gorst replied, "...I have no doubt that it will receive most favourable consideration from the new Board of Education". 46

Herbert Lewis tenaciously reminded Gorst of his statement that the proposal should "...receive favourable consideration" the following year during the debate on the Museum estimates, asking whether the Board of Education had taken any steps in the course of the reorganisation which would favour Wales with a share of the Museum Grants, and, "...while successive Ministers have expressed the utmost sympathy with this desire on the part of Wales for a due and proper share of the Museum Grant, nothing practical has yet been done, and I can only hope that the right hon. Gentleman, if he is not in a position to give a definite promise, will at least

43Parliamentary Committee CCC 8th December 1899
44Minute 1332 Museum Committee CCC 23rd February 1900; Minute 706 Museum Committee CCC 29th June 1900
45Civil Service Estimates 1899-1900, 3rd August 1899, Hansard 4th Series Vol 75 Cols. 1317-18
46Civil Service Estimates 1899-1900, 4th August 1899, Hansard 4th Series Vol 75 Cols. 1505
not weaken in any respect declarations previously made by Ministers on this subject". 47

Lewis's concern for museums went beyond the Principality in this instance. He had visited a number of museums on the Continent and had been made aware that the museums in Great Britain were far behind them in presentation. The small increase from £1,000 to £1,500 for grants for provincial museums was too miserable, in his opinion, and a wealthy country like Britain should do more for local museums. Gorst's initial response had a familiar ring:

"... with regard to the question of a Welsh museum, I have often expressed the regret of the Department that it is impossible to establish a central museum in Wales until we know what the capital of Wales is. That we have never been able to ascertain". 48

However, he went on to clarify the reorganisation in the Department which meant that he no longer had any responsibility for the national museums of Scotland and Ireland; he had only the one museum for which he was responsible, the Victoria and Albert Museum, previously the South Kensington Museum in London. The National Museums of Scotland and Ireland and the British Museum came under the Department of Arts and Sciences. The plan was for the V&A to expand an element of its current service and to form the nucleus of a great number of collections which could be sent round all the local museums of Britain:

"... that, I think, is the policy to which it is far better the finances of the country should be directed than the establishment of provincial museums, which, if established at all, should be established by the people of the

47Civil Service Estimates 1900-01, 15th June 1900, Hansard 4th Series Vol 84 Col.160
48Civil Service Estimates 1900-01, 15th June 1900, Hansard 4th Series Vol 84 Cols.169-70

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With Gorst successfully side-stepping Government commitment for yet another year, this was another set-back in the move for the national institutions.

The responses to Cardiff’s Memorial of 1899 were eventually dealt with in 1901 where the Mayor and three other Councillors were appointed to consider them, although no further action was taken until later that year following pressure from the Cardiff Cymmrodorion Society. The Society sent a deputation to the Cardiff Museum Committee at their meeting in October 1901 to urge a more active approach to the establishment of a national museum for Wales and for its location in Cardiff:

"The deputation expressed their belief that the desire for the establishment of a National Museum was very general throughout Wales, but that its consummation was retarded through dissension as to its proper locale. The Cymrædrorion Society had felt that if it were more generally known that the Cardiff Museum collection was incomparably the finest nucleus in Wales for a national one it would go far to unify public opinion in this respect"

One outcome of this deputation was a meeting at the Town Hall on 5th November 1901 where this subject could be discussed. As the *Western Mail* reported:

"A stage in the slow advance for the establishment of a National Museum for Wales was marked by the representative gathering of Cymrædr educationists, art lovers, antiquaries, and folklorists, which was convened by his Worship the Mayor of Cardiff (Councillor T. Andrews), at the Town Hall, Cardiff, on Wednesday evening. His Worship ... described it as an effort to get the Welsh National Museum established in the chief town - Cardiff ... with the new

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50Minute 996 Parliamentary Committee CCC 16th January 1901
51Minute 1939, *CCC Museum Committee* 25th October 1901
University College, it would become a centre for the attraction of students from all parts of Wales and Monmouthshire.\textsuperscript{52}

At this same meeting in the Town Hall, Dr C T Vachell, Honorary Curator and member of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society, proposed that the Cardiff Museum change its name to, 'The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities', to reflect the growing national character of the collections. Mr T H Thomas explained that in the past the policy of the museum and art gallery was to collect items relating to the Cardiff district, which he defined as East Glamorgan and West Monmouthshire, but more recently the policy had changed and the curators had expanded their collecting region "... with the result that some of the collections were rapidly attaining a Welsh, that is, a national character as opposed to a local or county, character".\textsuperscript{53} This suggested name change was widely supported and later confirmed by the Town Council:\textsuperscript{54}

"... even now, without any national grant, the Cardiff authorities have set their seal, by the adoption of the name, 'The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities'."\textsuperscript{55}

The Museum Committee was designated to be the committee to further the national museum movement in Wales and given extra powers to enable it to call in outside aid if required. A Memorial was resolved to be prepared to invite the County, Municipal, and Urban District Councils, as well as the constituent Colleges of the

\textsuperscript{52}Western Mail 7\textsuperscript{th} November 1901


\textsuperscript{54}CCC Council Meeting 9\textsuperscript{th} December 1901. The report in the Public Library Journal suggests that the Cardiff Museum had no official designation before this decision, "... it does not appear that the designation of this Museum has ever been authoritatively defined", but the writer has clearly overlooked the Council decision of just a few years earlier, July 1896, when it was stated that "... the full and official designation be 'The Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery'"[Ward, J. (ed), 1901 "The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Art and Antiquities" The Public Library Journal Vol.III Part 5, p145; Minute 3081 CCC Museum Committee 3\textsuperscript{rd} July 1896].

University of Wales, to petition the Government for a grant for the national institutions and for the location to be settled by arbitration.\textsuperscript{56}

The problems of space at the British Museum dominated the debate at the Civil Service Committee in June 1902. The policy of collecting all the publications, including newspapers, from all over the country had led to the need to create more storage space outside the existing building. Many of the Members of Parliament suggested that the newspapers and similar publications relating to particular towns could be returned and stored there so they could be studied locally. Lewis saw his opportunity and put forward his proposal that, if the British Museum was running short of storage space, then a solution would be to establish a national museum for Wales and transfer all the Welsh material to that new museum "... where they could be preserved, and in course of time become part of the national history". He suggested that this would, "... not only relieve the British Museum, but give to Wales an institution she had long desired to have". Austen Chamberlain pointed out that the Treasury was responsible only for the voting of overall estimates and it was the Trustees of the Museum who had the power to allocate these monies for the different purpose.\textsuperscript{57} Such interjections into debates in the House illustrate the way Lewis in particular took every opportunity to raise the issue of a national museum for Wales.

The response to Cardiff's Memorial of early January 1902 was quick to begin with twenty one replies adopting the Memorial arriving by 27\textsuperscript{th} January and fifty eight by 22\textsuperscript{nd} February. After the initial response, the remainder of the replies came in much more slowly, the Town Clerk having to write to a number of authorities on a number of occasions to prompt a reply. By February 1903, the Town Clerk was able to produce a table to illustrate the response to the Memorial (Fig. 6.1).

\textsuperscript{56}Minutes 609, 610, 611 and 612 Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee CCC 16\textsuperscript{th} December 1901. The draft Memorial and letter to the local authorities was approved at the Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee 6\textsuperscript{th} January 1902, Minute 613

\textsuperscript{57}Civil Service Estimates 1902-03, 12\textsuperscript{th} June 1902, Hansard 4\textsuperscript{th} Series Vol 109 Cols. 547-551
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CC’s</th>
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<th>UDC’s</th>
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<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Councils petitioning for own institution*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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*Swansea*

Fig 6.1 'The Support given to this movement by the Welsh Local Authorities'58

As a result of the response the eleven Councils who had adopted the Memorial in part only were written to and informed of the situation and invited to fall into line with the majority. The Town Clerk contacted the President of the Board of Education asking to receive a deputation of Welsh representatives for the presentation of the Memorials. The Councils who had wholly adopted Cardiff’s Memorial were invited to appoint representatives to form the deputation.59 This meeting took place in April 1903 following the Parliamentary debate in March.

This 1903 debate in Parliament took progress towards a national institution a stage further by the clarification of departmental responsibilities. In previous debates, the Welsh Members had not taken cognisance of the point that the Department of Education only had responsibility for the Victoria and Albert Museum, and did not have responsibility for the funding of the British Museum or the National Museums of Scotland and Ireland, an explanation given by Gorst in June 1900. So, whilst the

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58Minute 1179 Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee CCC 18th February 1903
59Minutes 1180, 1181 Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee CCC 18th February 1903. Cardiff authorised seven Councillors as their representatives on the deputation. The Honorary Curators were also invited to join but the Corporation would not pay their expenses.
representative of the Committee for the Council of Education would express some sympathy for the establishment of a national museum for Wales, their Department did not have the power to fund such an institution. Gorst's reiteration of his idea of a museum as a centre in Wales for the extension of the exhibit circulation system of the V&A confirms this view. The Welsh Members saw the national museum, philosophically and administratively, as part of the education system in Wales as much as an institution in its own right and, with this in mind, approached the Department of Education. The only museum-related funds for museums in Wales had come from this Department.

The Motion on this occasion was presented by William Jones, MP for Carnarvonshire, and seconded by Herbert Lewis. Again, the arguments centred around the completion of the education system in Wales; the need for parity with Scotland and Ireland; and the preservation of Welsh objects in Wales. Jones noted the question of the capital and location "... and he would make that capital Cardiff, because of the enormous wealth and power of that great town, and because of its being a great industrial and railway centre." But, in accordance with the Memorial adopted by the majority of public authorities in Wales, then "... the location of such a museum should be settled by arbitration, to be instituted by Government." Three South Wales Members spoke in favour of the Motion - Major Wyndham-Quin, Glamorganshire S., Sir Alfred Thomas, Glamorganshire E., and Sir Joseph Lawrence, Monmouthshire Boroughs - all supporting the education and parity questions.

Sir William Anson, Secretary to the Board of Education, pointed out that "...in the past the Board of Education and the Welsh Members had really been at cross purposes." The Board was concerned with Wales in as much as it formed part of England and Wales - it did not regard Wales as a separate country - Scotland and Ireland were separate and fell outside their concern. The Board could offer sympathy

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60Hansard 4th Series Vol.78 Cols.350-366, 10th March 1903
61Ibid Cols.352-353
with their desire for a national institution but could not supply the necessary funding. However, Mr Hayes Fisher, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, stated that even if the Welsh could not decide upon a location they should be more clear in their aims - Parliament had no firm proposal against which to make a decision, "If the Welsh Members of Parliament really desired to make further progress with this matter they should endeavour to define and formulate their request with more accuracy." When they had formed their committee, produced a substantive scheme, and returned to Parliament then the Chancellor of the Exchequer would respond, "...with something more than sympathetic consideration." 62

On 1st April 1903, Sir Alfred Thomas MP presided over the meeting of Welsh Members of Parliament to discuss the proposed Welsh museum. The resolution for discussion was, "...that the Members for Wales (including Monmouthshire) take steps to consider the mode of dealing with the proposed museum for Wales". The Western Mail described the discussion as "desultory" whilst the South Wales Daily News was less forthright saying that "...from the subsequent discussion it became clear that there are many diverse views as to the best method of applying any grants". A letter was read from the Registrar of University College, Aberystwyth, wishing to have a place within the discussion. It would have been disconcerting for the College to see the Welsh Members discussing a possible grant without their voice being heard. A committee was subsequently formed to draw up suitable alternative schemes as to the museum's scope and constitution and to submit them to a future meeting of the Members and Peers directly connected with Wales.63

Cardiff was eager to make progress and asked Sir Edward Reed MP in May 1903 to arrange for the deputation of local authority representatives to meet an appropriate member of the government as soon as possible after Whitsuntide. Sir Edward

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62Hansard 10th March 1903 cols 361-363
63Western Mail 2nd April 1903, South Wales Daily News 2nd April 1903; Minute 1860 Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee CCC 16th April 1903; Museums Journal Vol VIII May 1904, p.375

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regretted that he had been ordered away to the south of France for his health but Sir Alfred Thomas MP would deal with the matter of the national museum in his absence. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had been contacted concerning the grant but, despite the comments in the debate the previous March, suggested that the approach should come to him through the Board of Education.

The meeting of Welsh Parliamentary Members was held in London on 14th July 1903 to discuss the question of a Government grant for a national museum for Wales. The press were not impressed with this meeting, the sub-headline of the Western Mail ran "FARCICAL MEETING IN LONDON YESTERDAY. WELSHMEN, AS USUAL, FAIL TO AGREE", with the Cambrian headline "NATIONAL MUSEUM BUSINESS BUNGLED". The South Wales Daily News remarked that Sir Isambard Owen, who had been called in to formulate a plan, spoke "... only tentatively, inasmuch as he was not cognisant of much that had been done in the matter". Owen supposed that there could be two ways to deal with any grant; to fund a central institution for the distribution of exhibits to regional museums throughout Wales; or to fund one institution for the holding of Welsh objects. Or, perhaps, the grant could fund both.

Such vagueness must have been frustrating for the Members who had been involved for many years, such as Lewis, and also for the representatives of likely host towns. Ivor James, representing Cardiff, was concerned that the division of interests would cause difficulties in obtaining the grant. Principal Roberts of Aberystwyth was keen to press the educational aspects of a national museum, of great importance to university students, and the moves already made by Aberystwyth in the establishment of a national library.

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64He was prone to gout (Western Mail 7th February 1905). This prescription was clearly before the National Health Service
65Sir Edward Reed was MP for Cardiff Town, Sir Alfred Thomas was MP for Glamorgan East.
66Minute 69 Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee CCC 18th May 1903; Minute 70 National Museum deputation Committee CCC 21st May 1903; Museums Journal Vol V1V Aug 1904 pp.70-1
At the meeting Sir Alfred Thomas MP proposed:

"That this conference approves of the proposal to obtain a museum grant of an adequate amount for Wales to be applied to the collection and safe custody of unique or rare objects of national interest, as well as to the establishment and maintenance of national collections in such localities as might best serve the interests of Welsh education and that a committee be appointed to draft a scheme for the application, control and management of such a grant, with an estimate of the financial requirements of the scheme in the initial stage."

This was seconded by Herbert Lewis MP, and a Sub-committee formed to investigate the proposals under Sir Isambard Owen. Further discussions took place particularly relating to the way the grant should be administered - University Court, Welsh Local Education Authority, the County Councils - but the meeting ended in some confusion and dissension according to the Western Mail, and "...the proceedings throughout were of an undecisive and unsatisfactory character." And the Cambrian considered the lack of firm progress gave little guidance to Swansea as to the progress they should make in relation to a municipal museum with a view to a share of any future Government grant.

The following year a deputation met with the President of the Board of Education, the Marquis of Londonderry on 20th April 1904 at a room in the Westminster Palace Hotel, London in support of the Memorial requesting a grant from the Government for a national museum for Wales with the location being decided through arbitration. Lord Londonderry responded by stating his sympathy for the issues raised, the Memorial and Deputation, showing beyond doubt that there was unanimity in Wales for promoting education in Wales by means of a national institution. The decision of

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67Sir Isambard Owen (1850-1927), Deputy Chancellor of the University of Wales from 1894.
68Cambrian 17th July 1903, p5; South Wales Daily News 15th July 1903; Western Mail 15th July 1903
69Parliamentary (Welsh Deputation) Committee CCC 28th March 1904
finance did not rest with the Board of Education but with the Treasury so it was not possible for him to give them a definite answer. However, if the Committee appointed were to come up with a suitable scheme both he and Sir William Anson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, would consider it and, if they thought it possible "...to unite Wales in one common cause by one or more Institutions", they would present the proposals to the Treasury. After this was reported in the Parliamentary Committee in Cardiff, the Mayor, Ex-Mayor and Deputy Mayor were appointed to watch over Cardiff's interests in the national institutions and they proceeded to London with the brief to confer with Sir Alfred Thomas MP and other Welsh Members.

Over several months Sir Isambard Owen had investigated the National Museums of Scotland and Ireland in order to produce a draft proposal for consideration by the Conference of Welsh Members and interested parties set up the previous year. On visiting the national museums there he had found that the institutions were virtual copies of the South Kensington Museum. He felt that this was not an appropriate model for a national museum for Wales - Wales should have a museum which illustrated the industries, geology, zoology, botany, antiquities and history of the Principality itself. This draft report was presented to the Sub-Committee on 25th April 1904 and, on this occasion, "... the most cordial unanimity characterised the deliberations", possibly due to the Members having a definite proposal to consider rather than a range of vague possibilities. Owen proposed something of a compromise in the function of the museum - he was of the opinion that one museum should be established but that it should also provide loan collections and duplicate specimens to be distributed to local museums throughout Wales. On the basis of his investigation of other national museums he had estimated building and establishment costs at about £40,000 with an annual maintenance costs of about £8,000. The question of a library had not been decided at this point, whether attached to the

70 Reported; Minute 315 Parliamentary Committee CCC 12th May 1904
71 Western Mail 10th June 1904
72 South Wales Daily News 26th April 1904
museum or as a separate institution. The other pertinent question, that of location, was also undecided, but as the South Wales Daily News remarked:

"It does not require much prescience in order to say that the selection of the locale for the museum and library combined or separate will depend very largely upon the offers of sites and buildings which may be forthcoming. The decision would probably be left to an appointed arbitrator."\(^{73}\)

Owen's draft report and scheme were adopted by the Sub-Committee to be presented to the Welsh Members of Parliament the following week.

The meeting of Welsh Members took place on 3rd May 1904 at the House of Commons. In the week since the 25th April meeting two changes had been made to the draft proposal. The estimated cost of the building of the museum had risen by £10,000, and, more significantly for interested parties in Wales, it had been decided that the library should be a separate institution.\(^{74}\) The museum was to have departments for geology, mineralogy, zoology, botany, ethnography, art, history and the industries of particular relation to Wales. The library was to collect ancient Welsh books and manuscripts and contemporary literature. The cost of the building and establishment was estimated at £30,000 and annual maintenance £8,000.\(^{75}\)

As the South Wales Daily News remarked, "... it will be observed that the two institutions are spoken of separately".\(^{76}\) Whilst this would have been very encouraging for the Aberystwyth lobby, the paper was to point out a couple of days later that:

\(^{73}\)Ibid

\(^{74}\)The reason for these significant changes is unknown. Sir Isambard Owen, as Vice Chancellor of the University of Wales, may have had sympathy for the argument of Aberystwyth University that the library should be separate and, ideally, located in Aberystwyth. Also, the Town Clerk of Cardiff, J. L. Wheatley, suggested that the University of Aberystwyth was in some financial difficulty (see p.223). This is worthy of some further investigation.

\(^{75}\)Western Mail 4th May 1904; South Wales Daily News 4th May 1904

\(^{76}\)Ibid
"Advocates of the establishment of the Welsh National Library at Aberystwyth are a little too eager to 'read in' Aberystwyth in connection with every proposal made to solve the site problem."

Sir Isambard Owen’s report was based on his observations of the Scottish and Irish national institutions where the museum and library were in close proximity. It was decided that the location of the institutions should be arrived at by an independent arbitrator appointed by the Privy Council who would take into consideration the local assistance given to the building and establishment costs.

The proposal was placed before a joint meeting of Welsh Members, Peers and representatives of the county councils on 9th June for their observations. The Mayor and the Town Clerk represented Cardiff at this meeting at the House of Commons whilst Principal Roberts represented University College Aberystwyth following a visit to Merioneth County Council to elicit their support for Aberystwyth as the site for the national library. The Mayor was concerned that it was proposed that the buildings and income of the museum and library should be vested in the Welsh Joint Committee appointed under section 17 of the Education Act, 1902, and that the locality of the museum should be determined by an arbitrator or arbitrators appointed by the Privy Council. This would suggest that control of the buildings would be out of Cardiff’s hands should the institutions come to them. The Mayor understood that the original question was to be limited to one institution in one place but he was satisfied with the explanation offered that the division of the scheme was to deal with the establishment of a museum and library separately wheresoever they were placed. The members present agreed to form a deputation to present the scheme before the Treasury.

77 "Welsh Gossip" South Wales Daily News 6th May 1904
78 Western Mail 9th June 1904
79 Minute 609 Parliamentary Committee CCC 21st June 1904
80 Western Mail 10th June 1904; South Wales Daily News 10th June 1904
The meeting subsequently took place on 23rd June where the Deputation met with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Austen Chamberlain, at the House of Commons, with the Mayor and the Town Clerk representing Cardiff, Ald. Morgan Tutton representing Swansea and Principal Roberts representing Aberystwyth. Sir Alfred Thomas MP pointed out that the unanimity of the deputation was, in itself, of some significance:

"He thought that something unique in the history of Wales had now occurred, for all sections and all parties were unanimous upon the representation that was to be made"81

This was supported by Hon G. Kenyon MP who, whilst agreeing that the scheme had all party and all Wales support, seemed to accede that neither of the institutions would be sited in the north:

"... the agitation for the museum came not from any one party or section in Wales. The deputation was truly representative of the national feeling in Wales to bring that country in to line with Scotland and other places. Speaking for himself as a North Walian, though the scheme did not include the probability of either museum or library being erected in North Wales, they were willing to give up their interests, and their right, if he might so say, for the common good of the country."82

Chamberlain hoped that this meant that there would be no future claim for duplicate institutions "... on the ground of differences between one part of Wales and another"83

Chamberlain intimated that although the current financial year could not

81 Western Mail 24th June 1904
82 South Wales Daily News 24th June 1904
83 Ibid
accommodate the funding of such a scheme, the following year was indicated as a possibility with the arbitrators being appointed by the Privy Council at an early date. The issue of local assistance in the form of money or kind was seen of great importance by Chamberlain, a point reported in the Editorial Comments of the *Western Mail*:

"... it is well for Welshmen to bear in mind that the amount of the Government grant will largely depend upon the efforts which Wales is prepared to make to assist itself. Mr Austen Chamberlain laid great stress upon the importance of local effort. It is for Cardiff and other places to interpret the Chancellors words as they think best. They must also judge whether it is competent for them at the present juncture to make promises of contributions 'in money or kind'. Cardiff has given a site for a museum in Cathays Park, and that, surely, should be taken into consideration by the arbitrators."\(^{84}\)

Following the meeting, the Town Clerk of Cardiff believed that the only claimants for the grant would be Cardiff, Swansea and Aberystwyth and, as the Chancellor had laid great stress on the issue of local assistance towards the institutions, he suggested that Cardiff would do well to consider, as soon as possible, what the town would be prepared to do on the score of finance as well as other contributions which might be included in the evidence prepared for submission to the arbitrators in support of their claim for the institutions to be located in the town.\(^{85}\)

Cardiff Council was eager to progress matters and in the January of 1905 the Town Clerk agreed to communicate with the two local MP's, Sir Edward Reed and Sir Alfred Thomas, to see whether it would be advisable to ask the Chancellor to appoint the arbitrators at an early date to settle the question of the location of the

\(^{84}\)"Editorial Comments" *Western Mail* 24\(^{th}\) June 1904

\(^{85}\)Minute 1099 Parliamentary Committee *CCC* 2\(^{nd}\) July 1904; *Western Mail* 24\(^{th}\) June 1904; *South Wales Daily News* 24\(^{th}\) June 1904
institutions. A Sub-Committee was also formed to investigate the level of local financial support that could be relied upon and, "... to make a public appeal for financial aid as a factor to the securing of the proposed Buildings for the Metropolis of Wales".86 Before any action could be taken on this, however, an announcement in the press declared the appointment of the Committee of the Privy Council.87 A letter sent to the Treasury following this announcement brought the response confirming the appointment of the Committee and the criteria under consideration.

86Minute 648 Parliamentary Committee CCC 3rd January 1905
87Western Mail 13th February 1905
THE FINAL CAMPAIGN

The Formation of Privy Council Committee and the Setting of Criteria

Sir William Anson MP,1 of the Board of Education, visited Wales in the September of 1904 and subsequently wrote to Austen Chamberlain MP2 of the Treasury with his views on the siting and funding of the national museum and library.3 To Anson it seemed clear that the museum should be sited in Cardiff and the library in Aberystwyth. He felt the objectives of the museum and library would not be served if the funding were to be spread amongst various municipal authorities or even amongst the three University Colleges. His arguments for the siting of the museum in Cardiff related mainly to access and sustainability. Cardiff seemed the place most readily accessible to the largest number of Welsh people and it already had a museum with collections of Welsh fine and decorative art, natural history and antiquities. Moreover, this museum was already modelled on the South Kensington Museum so conformed to the latest museum thinking - the movement emanating from the philosophy and practice of Sir William Flower of the British Museum(Natural History).4 With Cardiff being such a large centre for trade and industry Anson believed that it was more likely to receive gifts of money or collections and would be better able to maintain the support and interest of the local wealthy population.

Anson believed that the national library had a different aim in that it was not to be general in character but would contain books and manuscripts in the Welsh language and books in other languages which had a special bearing on Wales. It was,

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1Secretary to the Board of Education
2Chancellor of the Exchequer 1903-1906
3Letter, Anson to Chamberlain, 30th November 1904. Papers of the Privy Council, "Establishment of the National Museum and Library of Wales -findings of Committee, 1905" PRO, PC8/608 (hereafter, PC8/608.)
4Flower(1898)
therefore, aimed at a different audience, the specialist scholar rather than the general public - and accessibility would, consequently, be less of a problem. Aberystwyth, he maintained, "...was in the heart of Wales; it is as accessible as any place in Mid Wales". Aberystwyth had available a fourteen acre site for the development of the national library and the College Library had an extensive collection of Welsh manuscripts which would be placed in the national collection.

At the time that Anson was writing to Chamberlain the proposed funding for the annual support of the institutions was £10,000 with £2,000 for the library and £8,000 for the museum. Anson felt that if his suggestion regarding the siting was adopted, the funding for the library would be too low, Aberystwyth would not attract the same gifts of money that the wealth and business of Cardiff could, and a readjustment should be considered.

Whilst Chamberlain was in broad agreement with Anson's proposals regarding the siting of the museum and library, he felt that,"...it is not desirable that the odium of choice should fall on the Government or on a Government Department". Chamberlain was ensuring that the government was distancing itself from the decision, and the consequences of the decision, especially as the petitioners themselves had requested an enquiry through the Privy Council. He was also aware that an enquiry could well bring out a range of options and opinions which could influence the decision on the distribution of the grants and for these to be overlooked would be a poor political move.

The establishment of a Committee of the Privy Council having been agreed, the members of the Committee and their terms of reference were considered. Chamberlain had no particular view on the composition of the Committee or the terms of reference but felt that the Secretary should be someone from either the Treasury or the Board of Education as it was important that the Committee should be

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5 The transport infrastructure in Wales remains a problem to this day. There is no 'natural' centre.

6 Letter from Chamberlain to Anson, 7th December 1904, (PC8/608)
in close contact with both departments. Anson suggested to his senior civil servant colleagues Pelham, Morant, Bruce and Ogilvie that members of the Privy Council such as Lord Avebury, Lord Kelvin or Mr Haldane, who were knowledgeable about some of the more scientific and antiquarian subjects, should be asked to serve on the committee. However, only Bruce was in agreement with him. Fitzroy, the proposed Secretary of the Committee, had suggested Lord Jersey, Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Sir Edward Fry, and was of the opinion that a familiarity with scientific and antiquarian matters would add little to the enquiry; an ability to consider the evidence objectively was all that was required. Ogilvie agreed with Fitzroy's choice and also agreed that Lord Avebury was getting too old for the work whilst Bruce preferred Sir Edward Fry to be substituted for Lord Avebury. Lord Jersey had been suggested because of his extensive land holdings in Wales, although it was stated that none were in the areas under consideration; Lord Balfour had held an inquiry in Wales previously and was well-thought of there.

Lord Jersey had large land-holdings in and around Swansea. In 1902 he donated four and a half acres of land for a public park in Swansea and was present at the official opening. He also donated land for the building of a bridge over the River Tawe in the Hafod region, "... his Lordship is closely identified with the district in which both he and Lady Jersey are held in the very highest esteem and regard." Lord Jersey was also an Hon. Vice-President of the Royal Institution of South Wales in Swansea, an office which may have indicated an interest. However, there is no evidence that Lord Jersey took any active interest in the Institution and he may not have been cognisant of this particular honour amongst the many that must have been on his list. The appointment of Lord Jersey did not go without comment in the Cardiff press. The _Western Mail_ was concerned that there could be a possibility of influence in

_7Letter from Anson to Pelham, 8th December 1904, (PC8/608)_
_8A. W. Fitzroy was a civil servant, Clerk to the Privy Council._
_9Board of Education Minute Papers, Anson to Pelham 9th January 1905 and Pelham to Morant 11th January 1905, (PC8/608)_
_10_Cambrian_ 16th May 1902, 23rd May 1902_
favour of Swansea:

"... as Swansea will be a competitor, with other towns, for the honour of housing the national institutions, it is felt that it would have been better if the Lord President of the Council had selected a committee of which not one of the members would have any local connections."

This disregard of Lord Jersey’s Swansea interests is an indication that Swansea was not one of the towns under serious consideration for a share of the Government grant.

The draft order to appoint the Committee of the Privy Council named Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Lord Jersey and Lord Justice Cozens Hardy as members with Mr A W Fitzroy as Secretary. Fitzroy as Secretary ensured a strong connection with the Board of Education and the Treasury. The support for the membership of the Committee was the link that Lord Jersey and Lord Balfour had with Wales and the replacement of Sir Edward Fry with Lord Justice Cozens Hardy was to introduce a lawyer with much experience of University affairs, "...it was not considered necessary to have on the Committee people who were especially expert in the details of either Museums or Libraries". The capital sum of £60,000 had been proposed with an annual grant of £10,000 although Chamberlain preferred the actual sums to be determined by himself and Anson at the end of the enquiry, with the decision being dependant on the supporting monies proposed from the local towns.

The Order published for the establishment of the Committee of the Privy Council on 10th February 1905 listed the following points for consideration and determination:

1. The place at which the two institutions should be established, having special

11Western Mail 14th February 1905
12Pelham to Duckworth, 17th January 1905, (PC8/608)
13Duckworth to Pelham 28th January 1905, (PC8/608)
regard to the amount of support which is offered both to the original foundation and to the future maintenance of the institutions by the local authorities and inhabitants of the several places which may be suggested:

2 The probable cost of erecting and of maintaining the institutions:

3 The contributions which may be expected from the local sources either in land, money, or buildings towards the above mentioned cost:

4 The constitution of the Trust or Governing Body which should be appointed to manage the institutions if established."

In the draft, Chamberlain had altered the phrase, "amount of support" in point 1 to "proportion of support", but this subtle amendment did not survive to the final form. However, some confusion as to the exact terms of reference were dealt with a few weeks later when Lord Londonderry, the Lord President of the Privy Council, confirmed that, "...gifts in kind from whatever quarter for the purposes of either institution are not to be deemed excluded by the said Order of Reference from the purview of the Committee". 

The main participants in the Treasury and Board of Education had clearly earmarked Cardiff for the museum and Aberystwyth for the library. Anson had only visited these two towns during his visit in the September of 1904. And, in a note attached to the draft order of the Privy Council Committee, Pelham remarks that, whilst Lord Jersey was a large land-owner in Wales "... [this] is not connected with either of the two places that are immediately affected", [my italics] thus summarily dismissing any bid from any other town - and especially when it is considered that the bulk of Lord Jersey's land holdings were around the Swansea area. Whether the Committee

14 Privy Council Minutes, (PC8/608)
15 Note in the Privy Council Minutes, 20th March 1905, (PC8/608)
16 Pelham to Duckworth, The Treasury, Whitehall, 17th January 1905, (PC8/608)
members of the Privy Council were aware of these assumptions is unknown. The Committee, having been formed, awaited the memorials from interested localities in Wales.

The Final Campaign

The final campaign was fought on a number of fronts highlighted by a series of bitter skirmishes, bringing back memories of the first 'Battle of the Sites' for the location of the new College for South Wales in 1883.\textsuperscript{17} The relevant towns set up their battle lines with varying degrees of conviction and enthusiasm. Cardiff gathered the full might of the civic machine in the development of their case. The University College of Aberystwyth built their case on their Welsh library history and gathered support from a number of influential individuals. Swansea Council was pressured by a number of organisations and individuals to put themselves forward despite the difficulties of finance. Carnarvon centred their arguments around the Castle, their unsullied Welshness and the opposition to the south of Wales.

At the announcement of the Privy Council Committee and the setting of the criteria, Cardiff's Parliamentary Committee resolved to request that the Free Libraries Committee and the Museum Committee convene informal meetings to ascertain how best they could progress Cardiff's claim for the location of the institutions. The Corporation also recommended that the site at Cathays Park, originally set aside for the new Municipal Museum, should be offered for the site of the national museum and library. The University College was also contacted to ask for their assistance in securing the museum and library for Cardiff.

At the informal meeting of the Free Libraries Committee a number of resolutions were passed in support of the national library being located in Cardiff. They considered themselves to be the library which had served the whole of Wales in the nature of its access policy and with its acquisition of all literature of a Welsh

\textsuperscript{17}See, for example, Roderick (2000)
character. All the books, manuscripts, prints, drawings and photographs comprising the Reference Library should be offered for transfer to the national library if located in Cardiff. The sum of £1,000 should be offered out of the Public Libraries rate for the annual maintenance of the library.

At the informal meeting of the Museum Committee it was resolved that the whole of the collections of the Municipal Museum should be offered for the national museum; the site at Cathays Park should be offered for the new museum and library building; the capital sum of £7,500, plus the £3,000 being the gift of the late James Pike Thompson should be offered as support; and the annual rate product of ½d in the pound should be offered for the maintenance of the national museum. Both Committees strongly urged the Corporation to take strenuous measures to obtain the national institutions for Cardiff.¹⁸

The Mayor and Town Clerk began a programme of canvassing to obtain support from nearby municipal authorities, local businesses and wealthy citizens. They contacted their opposite numbers in Monmouthshire - Monmouth, Newport and Abergavenny - to persuade them to give their support for Cardiff's claim. The Town Clerk contacted a number of large land-owners in Cardiff to meet with the Mayor and himself to ascertain the level of financial support which could be forthcoming should the two institutions be sited in Cardiff. The proprietors of the Western Mail and the South Wales Daily News were asked to devise a scheme of subscriptions in support of the 'Cardiff Fund' similar to the scheme that had been established for the local Infirmary. Deputations were assigned to visit all the trade and friendly societies in Cardiff and the surrounding district to try and enlist financial support; Cllrs Veall and Thomas visited architects, builders and estate agents; Cllr Munn and Ald Thomas visited banks and insurance companies; Cllrs Crossman and Taylor visited tradesmen in the principal streets; Cllrs Morgan and Stanfield visited doctors and solicitors; and Cllrs Sessions and Mander visited license holders. They subsequently

¹⁸Minute 1192 General Purpose Committee CCC 23rd February 1905, these minutes include the Parliamentary Sub-Committee Meetings of 14th and 21st February 1905
reported that, "... speaking generally their efforts had been very gratifying".\textsuperscript{19}

This activity by the Councillors and the resultant financial support was in stark contrast to the time when the Curators had attempted to generate more positive enthusiasm for Cardiff Museum. The imminence of the decision was focussing the advantages of investment. It was in this economic environment that the Town Clerk reminded the commercial sector at a Chamber of Commerce meeting of the financial advantages of the two institutions:

"... when the fight for the college took place, it was estimated that it would be worth £10,000 a year to Cardiff from a commercial standpoint. They now knew that it was worth £20,000 a year."\textsuperscript{20}

In addition to the annual revenue, the establishment costs would bring considerable trade to the town:

"When asked by the Welsh Members to prepare a statement of the cost of a Welsh Museum and Library, he put down the museum and fittings at £50,000. That meant £50,000 spent in the town where the museum was erected, not by any means a trifling matter for the tradespeople."\textsuperscript{21}

Placards and handbills promoting Cardiff’s claim were prepared for distribution around the town. The Parliamentary Sub-Committee re National Museum and Library that had been appointed on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 1905 was given delegated powers to take all steps necessary to gather information and evidence in support of Cardiff’s claim and to prepare the Memorial for submission to the Committee of the Privy

\textsuperscript{19}Minute 1648 Parliamentary Sub-Committee re National Museum and Library CCC 20\textsuperscript{th} March 1905
\textsuperscript{20}Wheatley, reported in the Western Mail 7\textsuperscript{th} March 1905.
\textsuperscript{21}Ibid
Council without further reference to the Council.\textsuperscript{22}

The link with the acquisition of the national institutions and the drive for capital status was now freely expressed:

"The Corporation had made strenuous efforts to get Cardiff recognised by the authorities as the capital of Wales, so far without success: but if the National Museum and Library were secured, the town would be stamped for all time as the Metropolis of the Principality ... for years they had been struggling to get all kinds of national institutions established in their midst with a view to the town being recognised, as it should be, as the Capital of Wales, and if they succeeded now, future generations would say they had done well."\textsuperscript{23}

And the Editorial in the \textit{Western Mail} argued:

"When the time comes to settle the capital of Wales there is little doubt as to the town upon which the honour will be conferred. A town like Cardiff, with a population of nearly two hundred thousand, cannot possibly be passed over ...... such institutions as a National Library and a National Museum are established in other countries in their capitals."\textsuperscript{24}

Cardiff's perception of itself as the Metropolis, and, therefore, the rightful home of national institutions, was to be a major feature of its propaganda in the months up to the decision:

"Cardiff has become the capital of Wales by reason of its geographical..."
position as the natural centre of the densest population and of the principal industry, by reason of the note of leadership it has struck in all movements of a national character, by reason of its cosmopolitan renown, by reason of its growing importance as a municipality, and by reason of its vast and increasing population. Already selected as the proper home of the only two national institutions now possessed by Wales, namely, the Welsh University and the Central Welsh Board, Cardiff is still more entitled to become the home of the new institutions." 

In terms of 'local assistance' Cardiff knew that it had a strong case and took confidence in the announcement in the press: "Cardiff, in its corporate capacity, is able to lay before the Commissioners an offer of surpassing magnitude". Cardiff was to offer the site at Cathays Park already allotted to the Cardiff Museum with an adjacent space for the national library. In addition, the collections of the Cardiff Museum and Library were to be handed over as a nucleus for a national collection. Other collections, such as the Salesbury Collection from the University College, had been promised. The cash building fund was inaugurated with a promise of £2,000 from Mackintosh of Mackintosh and swiftly added to by civic leaders "... and their example will, we hope, be enthusiastically and generously followed by the wealthy merchants and by the inhabitants of Cardiff and district generally". The existing product of the Council rate for the museum, and an element of the library, were to be included as part of the annual maintenance costs so the Council was able to claim that there would be no further draw on the local public purse for the institutions.

25Western Mail 24th February 1905

26Ibid

27Mackintosh of Mackintosh (the Mackintosh Clan Chief) had married Harriet Richard, the only child of Edward Priest Richard of Plas Newydd, Glamorganshire. They spent half the year at Cottrell House, Glamorganshire and half at Moy Hall, Invernesshire; he was Master of the Glamorgan Hounds (Margaret Mackintosh of Mackintosh, 1948 “The History of the Clan Mackintosh and the Clan Chattan” revised and updated by Lachlan Mackintosh of Mackintosh in 1982). I am grateful to my colleague Michael Bowers for this reference.

28Western Mail 24th February 1905
In contrast, the 'Battle of the Sites' came at a difficult time for Swansea. The ratepayers were already stretched and the budget overspend had been a significant issue over several years. A recent offer by the philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, to part fund a branch library had had to be turned down because it proved impossible to budget for the partnership funding. In this financial climate the possibility of securing 'local assistance' to any significant level looked bleak. Cllr Moy Evans on being interviewed for the *Western Mail* said:

"It was hopeless, after the Carnegie vote, attempting to add to the rates at Swansea for any such purpose. People would not have it.'

'Are the Swansea folk going to give Cardiff a walk-over?'

'It looks like it. We could offer a site, no doubt, but the only first-class one has been set aside in Alexandra Road for Mr Glyn Vivian's art gallery"**

And Mr Glyn Vivian was not going to have his vision of an art gallery jeopardised by any national institution:

"Mr Glyn Vivian expressed his disapproval for a national museum on Victoria Park, with the Glyn Vivian Art Gallery as an integral part ... and in no circumstances would he permit his art gallery to be merged in any other institution."**

However, Swansea Council came under pressure from other bodies and individuals who wished to encourage the town to bid for the national museum. The Council of the Royal Institution stated, in February 1905, the importance of having the proposed national museum for Wales located in Swansea and it expressed its preparedness to do all in its power to facilitate its establishment there to the Corporation of Swansea. The impending deliberation and decision were focussing the attention of the Institution and spurred on, presumably, by the announcement in the press in

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**Western Mail 14th February 1905**

**Western Mail 17th February 1905**
February of the appointment of the Committee of the Privy Council. At a special meeting two weeks later, the Council of the Institution resolved to offer "... its Museum and all books, manuscripts, records and all other documents relating to Wales ... for the purpose of forming a nucleus for the National Museum of Wales if located in Swansea." The Institution also offered their land and buildings, subject to a retention of £5,000 for the Institution to continue its work on an alternative site, unless accommodation could be found for the Institution in the national museum. This was followed six weeks later by the Institution urging that the Corporation, "... should concentrate all their efforts in establishing their claim for the National Museum" and their support for Aberystwyth to be the site for the national library. The Institution resolved to send a copy of their support for Aberystwyth in regard to the national library to the Clerk to the Privy Council so that there would be no misunderstanding. Colonel Morgan, Vice-President of the Royal Institution said:

"We could do nothing with the Swansea Council in the past. They would not listen to the proposal. We are very slow in Swansea. If we put our shoulders to the wheel we could make a good case and make a big bid for the institution."

Sir John Llewellyn offered £1,000 to start the cash fund:

"I think we ought to press our claims for all they are worth, and make a bold, big bid for the whole thing. We certainly must not allow judgement to go by default, and what the great commercial men at Cardiff may do in the way of raising a fund."

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31 Minutes of RISW 14th February, 24th February 1905
32 Minutes RISW 11th April, 9th May 1905.
33 Western Mail 15th February 1905
34 Western Mail 16th February 1905

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This caused guarded encouragement, "... though the ratepayers groan under considerable burdens, and cannot be expected to help through the rates, the town will yet make a good fight for the honour of the museum." The Committee, disbanded in 1903, was re-established "...to take the matter of Swansea's claims into consideration and to put them in proper order, so as to get the case laid before the Government Committee in the best possible way" with Cllr David Harris stating "... the offers of those gentlemen and the Royal Institution had given the movement a life which augured well for success. It would give that council encouragement in putting forward the town's claims."

Swansea proposed the site at Victoria Park rather than Alexandra Road which they valued at £25,000, and offered the contents of the Council Reference Library and the collection of engravings of Wales housed in the Library. Although the Council had adopted the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, they had never levied an allowed rate. They therefore had the power to do so and proposed a ½ d rate and an increase of 1d in the existing Library rate towards annual maintenance.

Cardiff was seen as the main rival to Swansea in its bid for the museum and in the propaganda accompanying the announcement of their bid they sought to press their case in comparison with that town. Their main points were; a museum financed from individual subscriptions rather that the rates; the potential reduction in the importance of Cardiff; and Swansea's greater 'Welshness'.

The museum of the Royal Institution, they claimed, was an example of "God helps them who helps themselves" rather than "to him that hath shall be given". People in Swansea had established and run the museum by their own efforts whereas Cardiff's museum was paid for through the rates. However, the Royal Institution represented a small select group and it was they who had achieved and possessed the museum not
the town through the council. D Lleufer Thomas raised the point that because the Royal Institution's museum was privately owned it would not require an Act of Parliament to transfer to a national institution as was the case with a local government owned museum such as Cardiff, "... the offer of the Cardiff municipal museum must mean a breach of trust." As the decision and grant was to come from central government it would be unlikely that this would cause any problem, and, presumably, the same criteria would apply to the collections of the College at Aberystwyth promised for the national library. Swansea felt it inappropriate that, just because Cardiff had won the University College, all future institutions of a similar character should be established there "... and thus draw every Welshman to one extreme corner of the Principality for his educational facilities." The fair distribution of institutions was argued:

"The Swansea point is that there should be a distribution of the gifts amongst the people, and that the corner occupied by Cardiff and vicinity should not unduly benefit by the public funds at the expense of other parts of Wales"

and that the institutions should be placed in the best and most natural location - Swansea in their view. 39

Swansea had a wider industrial base than Cardiff which relied primarily on the export of coal through the docks. Swansea argued that, whilst Cardiff may be a large and flourishing town at that time, the rapid reduction in available coal seams at the east end of the coalfield compared with the west did not bode well for the future of towns relying on coal from that area:

"Thus, although Cardiff is now the largest town in Wales, it may be that national institutions, if all located in Cardiff, would find themselves in process of time standing in a town by no means the largest or most important

38 Western Mail 19th April 1905
39 Western Mail 27th February 1905, 17th February 1905
Cardiff was perceived as a highly anglicised town compared to the rest of Wales and Swansea pressed her Welsh credentials - "it is 'the' Welsh borough" - and although it has "... resident within it people of almost every nation, it has not lost its character as distinctively Welsh." Conscious of Cardiff's claims for the capital of Wales, the Corporation of Swansea "...will not fail to put forward the oft-repeated claim that Swansea is the Welsh capital of Welsh Wales." 41

Cardiff responded by recognising the value of the Royal Institution with the caveat that it was on a local level whereas the Cardiff Museum had assumed a Principality-wide brief. They chose not to respond to the suggested decline in their importance or degrees of Welshness. Instead they pointed out the greater level of maintenance funding possible through the Cardiff rates rather than the smaller product of a future rate imposed by Swansea and the difficulties of Swansea's finances, highlighting that "the levy of an additional rate for these purposes cannot be contemplated with confidence by the city fathers of Swansea." They were also disparaging about the Alexandra Road site first proposed by Swansea compared with the Cathays Park site, "... very much like comparing a barren wilderness with a municipal paradise". They concluded by reiterating their claim to capital status:

"Cardiff as the recognised capital, has never been found wanting in the spirit of national leadership. Depend upon it, Cardiff will never be found wanting in an endeavour to ennoble and enrich the national institutions entrusted to her keeping." 42

If Swansea had been more enthusiastic about bidding for the national museum it

40 Western Mail 27th February 1905. This did indeed become an issue of concern for Cardiff after the Great War, but less because of the reduction in available coal and more because of the fall in demand.

41 Western Mail 27th February 1905, 8th April 1905

42 Editorial Comments Western Mail 27th February 1905
could, no doubt, have argued that Cardiff had failed to fulfil its promises after the first 'Battle of the Sites' for the University College of South Wales in 1881-83. Of the £37,000 promised for the University, only £13,136 had been delivered after four years. Although a site was promised it was not until 1909 that a suitable location was allocated, and pledges to create schools of mining, engineering, metallurgy and medicine also failed to either be created or flourish. It seems that Swansea had been too preoccupied with its own budgetary problems and had had no spare energy for another sustained battle.

Despite its difficult history in relation to museum provision Carnarvon decided to make a claim for the national museum. They proposed the use of Carnarvon Castle with appropriate modifications. The *Western Mail* did not see much hope for Carnarvon, and the Castle was dismissed, "...there is no roof over the castle or rooms which could be utilised for a large collection", and Carnarvon’s reputation with regard to the care of collections was recalled, "...the local collection of exhibits displayed there years ago were forgotten by the corporation who were ignorant of its very existence when establishing their own free library". Also, it was clear that, when it came to finance, Carnarvon could not compete with Cardiff. However, Carnarvon pressed their claim based on the Castle and the protest that national institutions were concentrated in the south, "... the injustice to North Wales if both Library and Museum are located in South Wales." A sentiment endorsed by the Carnarvonshire Education Committee, "so far as North Wales was concerned they might as well have a museum in London as in Cardiff"

The north-south divide manifest in much of Carnarvon’s claims was taken up by several authorities in the north. The Carnarvonshire Education Committee proposed

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44 *Western Mail* 14th February 1905
45 *Western Mail* 24th February 1905
46 *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* 3rd March 1905
that North Wales should be given a share of the government grant and "... Cardiff, Aberystwyth, and Bangor should each have a nucleus to be afterwards added to." 47

The north’s propaganda grew in intensity with Carnarvon Town Council issuing a call to all North Wales local authorities to combine against Glamorgan and Monmouthshire:

"There exists a very real danger that unless North Wales bestirs itself and its public authorities act with energy and unanimity, these two sister institutions - a Welsh National Library and a Welsh National Museum - may be both located among a people having little in common with the nationality for whose benefit they are intended." 48

A conference of local councils at Carnarvon, which included representatives of North Wales University College, resolved "... to fight tooth and nail as against both Aberystwyth and Cardiff for the museum" 49 and a sub-committee was appointed to draw up a North Wales case based upon the offers of Carnarvon Castle as the home of the museum. Later, the county council endorsed the claims of Carnarvon and its castle.

Carnarvon also sought support from farther afield, in particular, the Welsh community in Liverpool. A meeting was held on 1st May 1905 in Liverpool Town Hall of people interested in promoting Carnarvon which culminated in a resolution of support being sent to the Privy Council Committee stating "... such a location would most fully meet the objects sought to be served by such an institution, and would also be in full accord with the national sentiment." Conscious of the moves by Cardiff, it was stated that the national museum "... should be for focussing the national sentiment and conserving the national antiquities of Wales and not to

47Western Mail 3rd March 1905

48Western Mail 9th March 1905

49Western Mail 17th March 1905; Museums Journal April 1905
complete the civic equipment of a municipality."

Carnarvon's battle against the south lacked the total support of their own Members of Parliament, William Jones and David Lloyd-George, who had a broader view of Wales and politics. Jones had already intimated that Cardiff should be the capital of Wales "... because of the enormous wealth and power of that town, and because of its being a great industrial and railway centre"; and Lloyd-George believed that the "... opinion of Wales is rather in favour of establishing the library at Aberystwyth and the museum either at Cardiff or Swansea." Nor did Carnarvon have the total support of their neighbouring authorities. Welshpool District Education Committee found amusement in the proposal, "No roof (laughter)," and did not consider Carnarvon to be a serious contender, "... it is really a keen fight between Cardiff, Swansea and Aberystwyth. I'm afraid Carnarvon is not in it." Conway Town Council would not give financial support on the grounds that the rates were already too burdensome. And the overseers of the parishes of Llandudno and Eglwysrhos were in agreement with some members of the Carnarvon County Council who had protested against the grant of £2,500 towards the national museum and wished to "...draw to the attention of the said County Council to the doubtful legality of the proceedings in support of the said grant."

The final Memorial produced by Carnarvon caused surprise in Cardiff, "... it more nearly approaches the Cardiff memorial than do any of the others", and it was perceived "... a stronger case in support of its claim for a National Museum than had been generally anticipated." The emphasis on the depth of their Welsh pedigree with

50 Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 5th May 1905
51 Western Mail 11th April 1905
52 Western Mail 15th February 1905
53 Mr C E Howell Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 17th March 1905
54 Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 12th May 1905
55 Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 19th May 1905
pointed references to their ancient capital status were the final salvos across Cardiff’s lines:

"Emphasis is laid upon the fact that the town was the recognised capital of the Celtic nations before Julius Caesar’s invasion, and that its historic pre-eminence in this respect has been re-established today by its formal selection by the Pan-Celtic Congress last year as the official recognised capital of the six allied Celtic nationalities, while it is also pointed out that in the Middle Ages it was made by the English Kings the political capital of Wales."  

The College at Aberystwyth had been collecting Welsh books and manuscripts for many years and considered themselves the national library in all but name. The possibility of a share of the museum grant for Wales gave them the opportunity to translate this perceived status into official status - along with welcome government funds. The College authorities, along with the Town Council of Aberystwyth began to formulate their claims. A public meeting had been held in December 1904 where it was decided to canvas the town and district for support with £2,600 being donated by the February. Lord Rendel, the President of the College, had donated a site on the Grogythan land valued at £2,500 and a number of valuable collections of books and manuscripts had been promised.  

Aberystwyth’s cause was championed by Sir John Williams, a surgeon who had purchased the Peniarth Library for Aberystwyth for between £12,000 and £14,000 - a very large sum at that time. He was clearly irritated by Cardiff who insisted that the two institutions should be in the same place - and that place should be Cardiff:  

"It would be much better and more politic for Cardiff to give credit to Aberystwyth as it deserved, instead of showing a pettifogging spirit, which did Cardiff itself serious harm in its pretensions, because every Welshman  

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56Western Mail 15th May 1905  
57Western Mail 14th February 1905
who knew anything at all about the subject knew that there was no comparison possible between Cardiff and Aberystwyth as the locale of the national library."

A hint of petulance underlay the irritation in that Sir John insisted that, should the national library go to Cardiff, not one of the collections at Aberystwyth would be passed over to them as they had been unconditionally given to their library.

Cardiff continued to press the case for the two institutions to be in the same place - for the benefit of scholars who would wish to study objects and associated literature - and for the institutions to be in a place where the greatest number of the population could benefit. This continuance continued to annoy Sir John who responded with increasing vitriol questioning the motives of Cardiff - "Another Diatribe From Sir John Williams" ran the *Western Mail* sub-headline:

"... the object of securing the library and museum for Cardiff was not the benefit of the Welsh nation, not the welfare of the Welsh people, but the aggrandisement of Cardiff itself and the increase of its wealth... but what had Cardiff done for Wales and the Welsh people? When during the last five centuries had it originated or abetted any great movement for the amelioration of the condition of the people of Wales, for uplifting them socially, morally or religiously? ... its chief aspiration, according to the statements of its own officials was to be called the capital of Wales, and to enjoy the prestige and profit accruing therefrom ... it was the object of hostile prejudice."

Cardiff had indeed made it clear that one of their motives was capital status so there was little they could say in response to such accusations. It was T. H. Thomas who attempted to counter the accusations by suggesting that any anglicisation of

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58Ibid

59*Western Mail* 8th April 1905
Glamorgan could be blamed on the indolence of the Welsh:

"If the English - 'our friends the enemy' - are in Newport, Cardiff, Swansea and Llanelly in great force and occupy great positions, whose fault would it be but that of our countrymen themselves, who will not struggle for place and power, even to save the very walls of their country, but murmur and retire, and from the West hurl epithets instead of deeds against their own abandoned positions." 60

As the final date for the submission of Memorials drew closer the skirmishing ceased and the bidding towns concentrated on fine-tuning their arguments. Whatever their motives, Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Carnarvon and Swansea submitted Memorials to the Privy Council Committee and awaited the results of their deliberations.

60 Western Mail 22nd April 1905
THE MEMORIALS

Four Memorials arrived for the consideration of the Privy Council Committee. Aberystwyth bid for the national library alone,¹ Carnarvon and Swansea bid for the national museum, and Cardiff bid for both the national museum and the national library. The bids from Aberystwyth, Carnarvon and Swansea were card-bound booklets, containing printed pages of supporting arguments and appendices of statistics, tables and maps. Cardiff's bid was a red leather-bound book with gold tooling containing their large volume of printed supporting arguments, statistics, tables and maps. Whilst the Memorials from Aberystwyth, Carnarvon and Swansea were well presented with detailed supporting arguments, Cardiff's presentation clearly stood out from the rest; there could be no doubt they meant to impress and took their application very seriously indeed.

Aberystwyth's Memorial displayed a restrained confidence, the evidence being presented factually with few convoluted claims to Welshness, location or support. Their concentration on the library with support from Swansea and Carnarvon meant that their only competition came from Cardiff. Both Carnarvon and Swansea were less sure in their bids and this came through in their Memorials. There was a concentration on the complex arguments for Welshness and location which distracted from the weaker arguments for financial support. Carnarvon in particular put great emphasis on their claim for the heart of Welsh nationalism and the support of the North of Wales knowing that their only playable card was Carnarvon Castle as a location. Swansea concentrated on their location in relation to the Welsh population particularly in comparison with Cardiff. Cardiff concentrated on the level of financial support both in subscriptions and in kind, and on the potential local support available within a town generating wealth through vigorous business and trading activity.

¹Whilst the history of libraries in Wales is not part of this study, Aberystwyth's Memorial will be discussed in so far as it relates to the establishment of the national institutions.
The criteria laid down by the Privy Council Committee have been discussed in Chapter 7 and comprise the amount of local support offered; the probable cost of erecting the institutions; and the contributions in the form of land money or buildings towards this cost from local sources. The Memorials dealt with these issues in a variety of ways which either highlighted their strong points or skated over their weaker points. All the Memorials listed a range of other evidence in support, mainly their Welsh credentials and support from other authorities, societies and individuals.

**Aberystwyth**

Aberystwyth's Memorial was for the national library of Wales only, it had no desire to be the location for the national museum. The Memorial was a joint bid submitted from both the University College of Wales (Aberystwyth) and the town of Aberystwyth. The main points of Aberystwyth's arguments were based on its history as a national library for Wales in all but name; the nature and suitability of its geographical location; and the support given to the application from a large proportion of the Welsh community.

The origin of the collections of manuscripts and books at the University College may be found in the National Eisteddfod of 1873 at Mold where a committee was formed with the object of establishing at the College a national library for Wales. The collections of books and manuscripts in the Welsh language, and in other languages where they relate to Wales, was given impetus with the establishment of the Welsh Library Committee in 1896 when the rate at which gifts of collections were made increased considerably. Further collections had been promised in anticipation of the national library being established at Aberystwyth. The library collections were housed in the College buildings but a fourteen-acre site had been purchased for the building of a new purpose-built library.

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2"The Welsh Library at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and the Proposed Museum Grants for Wales", PRO, PC8/608. All quotations in this section will be from this Memorial unless otherwise indicated.
Aberystwyth’s claim as a suitable location was based on the "healthfulness" of the environment, being close to the sea and unspoilt countryside, and its place in the centre of the Welsh-speaking area of Wales. The healthy location was considered conducive to the scholars who would visit Aberystwyth to make use of the library for research purposes. The point about its place in the centre of Welsh-speaking Wales was the only reference to ‘Welshness’ that Aberystwyth was to make, other potential sites making much more of such features.

That the Welsh Library at University College, Aberystwyth was the national library in all but name, was supported in its claims for recognition and grants from Government by ninety members of the Welsh Library Committee, formed in 1896, and seven County Councils. The supporting signature of the Welsh Library Committee which would have had considerable significance to the Committee of the Privy Council was that of the Hon. W. N. Bruce, Secretary to the Secondary Department of the Board of Education, South Kensington, London. Bruce, the second son of the first Lord Aberdare, was one of the people circulated when the structure and remit of the Committee was being discussed. He did not give a private address against his signature but that of the Board of Education. The weight of official backing to this Memorial by Bruce in this way could hardly have gone unnoticed by the members of the Committee.

Aberystwyth maintained that the national library and the national museum were two very different institutions and that it was not necessary, or even desirable, for them to be located in the same place. In the case of Wales, it was the language that largely controlled the functions of a national library and this was a consideration that far outweighed a location based solely on size of population. Access to the library would primarily be the need of scholars of Wales and the Welsh language and Aberystwyth claimed to be, "...the most central town in Wales", most suitable for such scholars. The national museum, Aberystwyth maintained, would be better located in an area of great population and ease of access for the greater dissemination of Welsh culture. The grant provision allowed for the purchase of the
reference books required by the museum, and the salary of a librarian, so the 
proximity of the national library to the museum was not necessary. Whilst Dublin 
and Edinburgh had been chosen as the sites for the location of both the National 
Libraries and National Museums of Ireland and Scotland, this was because they were 
the capital cities of their respective countries, a situation that had yet to be 
established in Wales. The absence of such a capital therefore placed no automatic 
assumption on the deciding authorities as to the placement of the institutions. The 
view that the two institutions should be in separate locations was supported by the 
towns of Swansea and Carnarvon, both bidding for the museum only and supporting 
Aberystwyth in their bid for the library.

Cardiff

Cardiff's Memorial was in support of the claim for the siting of both the national 
library and the museum. They opened their argument by reminding the Privy 
Council Committee that Cardiff was instrumental in presenting the Memorials in 
1904 towards the establishment of the national library and museum. These 
Memorials were supported by seven County Councils, twenty-four Borough 
Councils and sixty-three Urban District Councils along with the Council of the 
University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire. The Memorialists claimed 
that the Welsh Museum in Cardiff was a national museum in all but name and that 
the library service had a large number of reference works which, along with the 
collection of Welsh manuscripts and prints, were consulted by people from all over 
the Principality. Cathays Park was an area already set aside for municipal and 
educational buildings where the national museum and library of Wales could be 
sited. Supporting finances were laid out which included promised donations from a 
representative selection of the community. Cardiff was proposed as a thriving 
industrial, commercial and populous town which could enthusiastically support the 
national institutions, and, whilst not being in the geographic centre of Wales, it was

3"Memorial towards the Establishment and Maintenance of National Museum and Library" PRO, 
PC8/608; Cardiff County Council Minute Book, May to November 1905. All quotations from this section will 
be from this Memorial unless otherwise indicated.
in the centre of a large proportion of the population. The issue of 'Welshness' as indicated through the use of the Welsh language formed a very small proportion of the Memorial and was not mentioned in the Epitome.

The Cardiff Memorialists argued that the national museum and library should be sited in the place where, "...the fullest facilities for their use will be afforded to the people of Wales and Monmouthshire, as well as to visitors from England, Scotland, Ireland and foreign countries, and where the visible existence of the national museum and library will stimulate the greatest number of persons to take an interest in the work and welfare of these institutions"; and that both institutions should be in the same town and should not be separated so that students and other users would have the convenience of proximity and not have to make separate journeys. The Memorialists produced a table [fig.8.1] showing the different costs incurred by proportions of the population living within twenty-five miles of the different proposed sites visiting Cardiff and vice versa to show that there was a greater economic advantage in siting the institutions in Cardiff because of its greater population.
The National Museums and Libraries of England, Scotland and Ireland, and of continental countries, the Memorialists argued, were placed not in the geometrical centres of the respective countries but in the centres of population with ease of access. This was used as support for their claim that, "...no other town within the Principality possesses a claim at all approaching that of Cardiff in this respect".

However, the siting of these national institutions in other countries had more to do with the redesignations of existing major museums in established capital cities than considerations of population and access.

They claimed that Cardiff was in the centre of the most populous part of Wales and in the area which had shown the most rapid increase in its population. According to the 1901 census the population of Wales and Monmouthshire was 2,015,012 with the north having 469,005 and the south having the larger population of 1,546,007. The population of Cardiff was recorded as 164,333, i.e. 8% of the total for Wales.
and Monmouthshire and 10.6% of the population of the south of Wales.

The Memorialists' claim to Cardiff's accessibility was based exclusively on the railway system. Within a radius of twenty five miles of the town there were nine railway companies represented; the Great Western, the London and North Western, the Midland, the Taff Vale, the Rhymney, the Barry, the Brecon and Merthyr, the Vale of Glamorgan, and the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railways. Six hundred and thirty eight miles of railway were claimed to serve the area with three hundred and ninety six passenger trains arriving at and departing from Cardiff each day. The shortest journey time was to Newport just seventeen minutes away, whilst the longest journey time was Carnarvon at seven hours six minutes. Of the twelve journey times in the Cardiff list, six were in Wales whilst the remaining six were in England suggesting that Cardiff's relationship with England was considered as important as its relationship with the rest of Wales. Although many districts in Wales were geographically nearer to Aberystwyth, Cardiff claimed that their town was more accessible, giving the example of Pembrokeshire where it was possible to travel to and from Cardiff on the same day, a situation which was not possible between Pembrokeshire and Aberystwyth.

The Cardiff Museum had been re-named 'The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities' in 1901 on the basis that, in Cardiff's opinion, this better reflected the collecting and interpretation policies of the Museum. It was, claimed Cardiff's Memorialists, a national museum in all but name, "... intended, in the absence of a national museum, to fulfil by its collections the needs of Wales and Monmouthshire in these departments of study and education". They also claimed that it was the only museum in Wales supported by the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891. However, the Newport Museum in Monmouthshire had been supported by the product of a half-penny rate through the adoption of this Act since 1892. Monmouthshire has a history of being 'in' or 'out' of Wales depending on a variety

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4Minute 612, Joint Parliamentary and Museum Committee, CCC 16th December 1901
5The development of Cardiff Museum is dealt with in Chapter 4.

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of circumstances and it is clear that, for the convenience of this argument, Cardiff had decided that Monmouthshire was ‘out’ of Wales.\textsuperscript{6}

When the Cardiff Museum was re-established in 1863, the emphasis was on the illustration of local natural history and antiquities. With Cardiff’s implementation of the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, in the year 1893, it was claimed that the ‘local’ was expanded into the whole of Wales due to the greater level of funding available. In so doing Cardiff Corporation aimed beyond the municipal and sought to create a nucleus for a possible national museum. The Memorialists created a table illustrating the difference in expenditure between 1894 and 1904 (Fig. 8.2). The table illustrated that there had been an increase in visitor numbers, and that the cost of upkeep of the museum was in excess of the increase in the product of a half-penny rate. The cost of salaries and wages and the purchase of new specimens exceeded this figure, and the comparison pointed out the increase in expenditure that the Corporation had made in the areas of collection acquisition and collection care through building maintenance and more staff.

\textsuperscript{6} Until the Law in Wales Act 1536 (sometimes called the Act of Union) south and east Wales consisted of a large number of Marcher lordships which had jurisdiction in all cases except treason to the exclusion of the central English law courts at Westminster. The Act amalgamated the marcher Lordships into new counties including Glamorgan, Monmouth, Brecon, Radnor, Montgomery and Denbigh along with certain Lordships with adjoining English counties. The significant differences between the Welsh Act of Union and the Scottish Act of Union (1707) were that Scotland retained its own legal system and a Secretary of State, and that each of the Welsh counties, except Monmouth, had a Court of Great Sessions which had concurrent jurisdiction with the courts at Westminster. These were abolished during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and in all other respects there was little or no constitutional difference between England and Wales. The status of Monmouthshire in relation to Wales was recognised in the phrase “Wales and Monmouthshire” which acknowledged that Monmouthshire was not strictly part of Wales though being dealt with as if it were. Monmouthshire’s status as a Welsh county was only settled in 1974 under Local Government reform being given its old Welsh name of Gwent. (Pers Comm. P. King 2002)
Cardiff claimed that it was the first municipal authority to support a library under the Public Libraries Acts, the authority adopting the Act in 1862 and opening the library in 1863. Cardiff libraries, at the time of the Memorial had 151,096 volumes in stock with 69,330 being for loan and 81,766 for reference. The Welsh Department of the library had 33,755 printed books, 2,146 manuscripts and 9,118 prints, drawings and photographs. From 1894 to 1904, Cardiff had spent £10,440 12s 8d on books and £2,516 9s 10d on bookbinding. The value of the collection was set at a total of £30,000 comprising £18,000 for the Welsh Department and £12,000 for the General Reference Library. This collection was offered to form the nucleus of the proposed national library.

In 1898 Cardiff Borough Council obtained from the Marquess of Bute sixty acres of land called Cathays Park in the centre of the town. The land had been set aside for municipal and education buildings and the Town Hall, Law Courts and the Registry of the University of Wales had already been established there. A further five acres had been set aside for the buildings required for the University College of South...
Wales and Monmouthshire. Four acres of Cathays Park was proposed for the site of the national museum and library should Cardiff be chosen. The Memorialists pointed out that, although the site was close to the town centre, it was a sufficient distance away from roads and other thoroughfares to avoid noise, dust and vibrations. Also, there were no industrial manufacturing processes taking place nearby so there would be no problems from smoke and other fumes. Cardiff claimed a lower death rate than Swansea with 15.2 in 1904 compared to Swansea’s 17.7 suggesting a more healthy environment.

In addition to the monies already allocated for expenditure on the Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities, and Public Libraries in Cardiff, the Memorialists indicated a range of financial support available should Cardiff be chosen as the site for the national institutions. The capital sum of £7,500 had been accumulated from the annual rates levied under the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891. The product of a half-penny rate under that Act was £1,940 per annum and this was compounded to a capital sum of £58,200 based on thirty years’ purchase. The same calculation applied to the annual grant out of the Library rate of £1,000 to give £30,000. Individual public subscriptions promised ranged from £6,000 down to two shillings and gave a total at the time of the Memorial of £29,194.9s.0d.

The remaining financial support was in the form of ‘in kind’. The four-acre site for the institutions in Cathays Park was valued at £20,000; the Museum and Art Gallery collections were valued at £38,000; and the Library collections were valued at £30,000. In addition the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire had promised the sixteen thousand volume Salesbury Collection of books and manuscripts should the national library be sited at Cardiff and this was valued at £5,000. The total support offered by the Cardiff Memorialists, monies and in kind,

7Cardiff CBC was enabled to designate provision on this site through Section 8 of the Cardiff Corporation Act, 1898, “(3)they may also either with or without any pecuniary or other consideration grant and convey or lease any lands in Cathays Park either in perpetuity or for any term of years or upon such other terms and conditions as they think fit or by way of exchange to ... any body or persons on their behalf or to any Educational or other Public or Local Authority Institution or Body as and for a site or sites for the erection of buildings or other purposes in connection therewith ...”

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amounted to £217,700.

In their valuation of the Museum collections, the Memorialists recognised the difficulty in being particularly precise. It was not possible to value most of the collections except those actually purchased close to the time of the Memorial. Many items had been donated to the Museum and therefore there was no record of a value to act as a guideline. The paintings, sculptures and ceramics could be valued but most of the other collections - fossils, other natural history specimens and antiquities - could not adequately be replaced and could be considered, in that sense, invaluable. With records of purchase prices and previous valuations, the Memorialists came to the following figures which they describe as, 'approximations', although the preciseness of the amounts shown belie that description:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural History</td>
<td>£2,681 12s Od</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Art (pictures and Sculpture)</td>
<td>£17,829 10s Od</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramics</td>
<td>£2,073 0s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Reproductions</td>
<td>£750 11s 7d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiquities</td>
<td>£2,607 10s 0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£25,942 3s 7d</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To this total was added the estimated value of the furniture, cases, utensils, stationery and other sundry materials at £2,117 13s 0d. The estimated values, the Memorialists believed, did not fairly reflect the time and labour involved in acquiring and caring for the collections over some considerable time, in their opinion at least twenty five percent should be added to this new total of £30,758 16s 7d to give the rounded total of £38,000 quoted in the Epitome.

The building housing the Museum and Central Library had been completed in 1882

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*The Memorial has this total in error as £28,642 10s 0d and the subsequent additions are also in error. It is unlikely that these figures would have been checked and, even if they were, a small discrepancy would have been overlooked.*
at a cost of £10,000. An extension was built for the library at a cost of £20,000 and this had been opened on 27th June 1896 by the then Prince of Wales. At the time of the Memorial the Museum and Library building was valued at £45,000 and the six branch libraries spread around the suburbs of Cardiff were valued at £14,925.

Cardiff detailed the range of commerce and industry in the area as an indication of their status as a town of wealth, activity and importance and as a rich source of potential support. They claimed to be the chief port of the Principality and, in terms of foreign exports, the first port in the United Kingdom based on the 1904 figures of 8.3 million tons compared to Swansea 1.8, Liverpool 6.7 and London 7.9 million tons. There were seven separate dock areas covering over 270 acres with a new South Dock under construction at a cost of £2,000,000. Coal was the major commodity to pass through Cardiff docks to all parts of the world as well as to other ports in the British Isles, over twenty million tons were handled in 1904. Imports included iron ore, timber and general comestible provisions. Industries connected with the port, including the dry docks, were shipbuilding, boat building and marine engineering. Other manufacturing businesses and industries listed included flour mills, biscuit works, paper mills, printing works, chemical works and an iron and steel company. Cardiff also lists the output of various minerals - but the figures quoted were for the County of Glamorgan rather that just the Cardiff area; the County including Swansea, a town of considerable mineral activity.

Commercial activities serving the town included large offices of the main banks and insurance companies as well as the only Government Stamp Office, for the stamping of legal and other documents, in the Principality. Postal, telegraphic and telephonic communication systems were important at this time in indicating a town at the hub of new and improving technology and a centre for business activity. Sixty five telegraph lines from Cardiff spread to the main towns and cities of the British Isles and there were thirty six post offices distributed about the town. To emphasise its position as a centre of activity, Cardiff pointed out that it was the base for the Superintending Engineer of the Post Office telegraph system for the district which
covered the area from Worcester to Milford Haven. A new Post Office had been built in the town in 1897 to accommodate the growth in business with nearly 900,000 letters passing through the system weekly, 3,200 trunk phone calls daily and 3,885,000 telegrams annually.

The rateable value of the County Borough for 1904 was £1,090,518, a figure which had grown in fifteen years from £659,549 in 1889, and the customs revenue from the ports amounted to £802,668 in 1904. A range of other evidence supporting Cardiff’s claim as a thriving town included the tramway system, the major hotels, various municipal enterprises such as the electric street lighting, the water supply, parks and open spaces, baths and gymnasiums, and the markets. To aid the impression of Cardiff as an altruistic town able to support worthy causes, the Memorialists listed fifteen charitable institutions including the Cardiff Infirmary, the Hospital for Seamen of all Nations, the Institute for the Blind, the School for Deaf and Dumb Children and the Industrial Schools.

Cardiff’s need to demonstrate its commitment to education was illustrated by a section of five pages in the Memorial which described the range of organisations relating to education in the town at a cost of £83,550 in 1904 from the rates and customs and excise duties. The University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire had been founded in 1883 and by 1904 had twelve departments, 101 teaching staff and 651 students. Other Intermediate, Elementary, Higher Grade and Pupil Teachers schools were listed with the sum of £367,833 being spent on this part of the education system over the previous five years. The Registry of the University of Wales was based in a building in Cathays Park, the proposed site of the national museum and library, the Memorialists pointing out that the value of the site and the cost of the Registry, £6,000, were gifts from the County Borough of Cardiff. Amongst the educational organisations, the Memorialists listed the various philosophical societies based in the town including the Astronomical Society, the Cymmrodorion Society and the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society.
The Cardiff Naturalists' Society submitted their own Memorial in support of the National Museum and Library being located in Cardiff. The Society, with 400 members, claimed to be the largest scientific society in Wales carrying out important education and research work through its research fund and various sections; archaeology, biology and geology, and its annual publication, the *Transactions*. The Society pointed out that it had been formed in 1867 with an express purpose of supporting and enlarging the Museum at Cardiff and that all objects obtained and research results were offered to the Museum. Members of the Society sat as Honorary Curators on the Committee of Management of the Museum and were therefore well acquainted with the natural history, and other, collections many of which originated from the Society and its members. The Memorial listed a number of collections that the Society considered of particular importance including; the Index Collection based on the collection of the British Museum of Natural History, South Kensington (although this had yet to be completed due to lack of funds); the collection of Welsh birds comprising 220 species representative of all the birds found in the Principality; the large collection of Swansea and Nantgarw china; and the collection of casts of Pre-Norman inscribed stones from throughout South Wales. The Society believed that the site would be, "... all that can be desired ... free access of light and air is secured with a minimum of noise", and the Memorialists, "... hailed with satisfaction", the proposal to hand over the contents of the Cardiff Museum to the proposed national museum for Wales in the event of it being located in Cardiff. They believed that it was most important that it was located in the place where there was the greatest concentration of the population so that it could be accessible to the largest number of people.

**Carnarvon**

The local museum at Carnarvon had gone through difficult times during the latter half of the nineteenth century but that did not dissuade the Borough of Carnarvon

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from submitting a Memorial for the location of the national museum of Wales. Significantly, no mention is made of the local museum at Carnarvon, or its collections, in the Memorial. Carnarvon was the only town not to offer the nucleus of a collection, or even the promise of collections, as a basis for the establishment of a national museum. The nature of Carnarvon’s Memorial was unexpected with the Western Mail stating:

"Carnarvon submitted on Saturday a stronger case in support of its claim for the National Museum than had generally been anticipated. In general get up and literary character it more nearly approaches the Cardiff Memorial than do any of the others."

Carnarvon’s bid was for the museum alone; it did not wish to be the site for the Library, supporting Aberystwyth in their bid for this institution.

Carnarvon emphasised its standing as an, "Ancient and Historic Borough", and the fact that the only application from North Wales was supported by most of the Boroughs of North Wales. The main argument that Carnarvon puts forward was its ‘Welshness’:

"... the National Characteristics of the Welsh People, - in race, language, historical associations, manners and customs, and national sympathies - are much more general and pronounced throughout the whole of North Wales than they are today in any (with two exceptions only) of the seven Counties of South Wales, and that nowhere in the whole Principality are those National characteristics more pronounced than in the Borough and County of Carnarvon, the historical, traditional, and natural centre of distinctively Welsh National interests"

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10 "The Welsh National Museum", PRO, PC8/608. All quotations in this section will be from this Memorial unless otherwise indicated.

11 Western Mail 15th May 1905, reporting on the meeting of the Privy Council Committee of 13th May 1905.
Carnarvon used five of the nine paragraphs in its epitome to stress the degree and nature of its Welsh character, the use of the Welsh language, the regular hosting of the Eisteddfod, and the links with the, "... Allied Celtic Nationalities", to the extent that they believed themselves to be the, "...Metropolis of modern as of ancient distinctively Celtic Nationality".

In respect to one of the criteria under consideration by the Committee of the Privy Council - the contribution proposed by the locality - Carnarvon was at pains to point out that it was not as wealthy an area as some of the other applicants were. However, what they lacked in pure financial terms was more than made up by the offer of the Castle of Carnarvon as the home for the national museum, a site which, they believed, no other locality could match no matter how wealthy:

"This magnificent pile of buildings, itself an object of the greatest historical and antiquarian interest, situated in a very accessible spot of great natural beauty, amidst surroundings of the most profoundly interesting National associations, seems fitted by nature, art, and tradition, to be the permanent home of such an institution ... the very quaintness of its antique setting, would make it the envy of any National Institution of its kind in Europe."

The conversion of the towers of the Castle could be achieved at an estimated cost of ten thousand pounds, half of which would be provided by the Municipal authority through the rates and the other half through voluntary contributions. Thus, Carnarvon could claim that the full cost of the site, building and fittings would be provided by the local community.

**Swansea**

Swansea's Memorial was in respect of the national museum alone and they
supported Aberystwyth's claim for the national library. Swansea headed their bid by claiming to be an ancient Borough, "...prominent in the history of Wales". They then moved into the provision of statistics that supported their location in respect of population and 'Welshness'. Evidence was then provided in support of their commercial and industrial activities, their geographical position and accessibility and the nature and amount of support offered should the national museum be sited in Swansea.

The Memorialists' claim for 'Welshness' was the history of the town and the degree of the use of the Welsh language in the area. Evidence for the history of the town was to be found in the ancient Charters dating from the reign of King John which denoted an ancient Borough long prominent in history of Wales, and the local presence of, "...no less than eight old castles, eleven camps (Roman and Danish), eight cairns, and numerous bone caves". Most of these sites were to be found in the Gower Peninsula rather than the town itself.

Much more evidence was presented on the use of the Welsh language in the area. It was claimed that 47% of the population of Wales and Monmouthshire lived in Glamorgan and Swansea was, "...the most distinctly Welsh", having thirty places of worship using the Welsh language and slightly more than 32% of its population were Welsh speakers. In their calculations for estimating the Welsh-speaking population the Memorialists included populations outside the Borough boundary. They claimed that Swansea was surrounded by populous places the inhabitants of which were likely to regard Swansea as the prime town of the area due to its relative importance in size and industrial and commercial activity. This considerably influenced their calculations as they claimed that an average of 70% of the population in this area around Swansea was Welsh-speaking.

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12. The Memorial of the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the County Borough of Swansea", PRO PC8/608. All quotations in this section will be from this Memorial unless otherwise indicated.

13. The Welsh language and Welsh non-conformity were seen as the most tangible signifiers of Welshness (see pp.27-35).
They produced a table giving the estimated population and numbers of Welsh speakers within stated distances from Swansea (Fig. 8.3). This showed that over 33% of the population of Wales and Monmouthshire were within 25 miles of Swansea. Of the population aged three years and upwards within 30 miles of Swansea, 61.5% were Welsh-speaking with the average number of Welsh speakers for the whole of Wales and Monmouthshire calculated at 49.8%. In taking the population within 40 miles of Swansea and including the population of the Counties of Cardigan and Pembroke, both Counties which, the Memorialists believed, were particularly favourably placed for access to Swansea, then the figure became 71.45% of the total population of Wales and Monmouthshire and the number of Welsh speakers rose to 64% of the total Welsh-speaking population. The Memorialists claimed that the percentage of Welsh-speaking persons near Swansea was 11.7% greater than the whole of Wales until beyond the 30-mile radius.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Percentage of Wales and Monmouthshire</th>
<th>3 years of age and upwards</th>
<th>Percentage of Welsh-speaking population of Wales and Monmouthshire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>220,138</td>
<td>122,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 10 miles</td>
<td>238,925</td>
<td>11.9% per cent.</td>
<td>220,138</td>
<td>122,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>330,077</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>304,827</td>
<td>186,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>494,674</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>455,072</td>
<td>285,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>701,104</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>645,121</td>
<td>393,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>783,499</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>721,738</td>
<td>443,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>1,323,061</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>1,213,643</td>
<td>531,906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 8.3 Estimated population within the stated distances of Swansea (from the Swansea Memorial for the National Museum for Wales)

The Memorialists stated that, "...Swansea may claim to be one of the most important and progressive centres [of] commercial and manufacturing business in the United Kingdom". They went further, stating that, "...no town or district in the world can show a greater variety of industries than Swansea". Whilst they did not provide the comparative evidence to support this world-prominence thesis, they listed the range
of manufacturing industries operating in the area; Swansea was the prime location for the copper, spelter and tin-plate trades, and within eight miles of the town there were over one hundred different works, excluding collieries, for the treatment or manufacture of copper, gold, silver, lead, sulphate of copper, spelter, tin plate, steel and iron, nickel and cobalt, yellow metal, sulphuric acid, hydrochloric acid, alkali, galvanized sheets and patent fuel as well as containing engineering works, iron foundries and flour mills. The import and export value of raw materials and manufactured goods through the port amounted to £13,645,000 for the year 1904.

Being on the western edge of the South Wales Coalfield, Swansea was a natural port outlet for a large volume of coal and its derivatives. The available unworked coal in this area had been estimated at over 14,500 million tons, which indicated a continuing use of the port for transport purposes. The Memorialists claimed that the port of Swansea was closer to North America than was Liverpool by twelve hours. In addition, the railway journey from London to Swansea at that time was only half an hour longer than from London to Liverpool and a new line under construction would reduce this difference by fifteen minutes, thus making a possible journey from London to America via Swansea eleven and three quarter hours shorter than via Liverpool. The Memorialists presented this evidence in support of their contention that Swansea was an important and thriving commercial, industrial and transport centre with an assured future capable of supporting the national institutions.

The industrial activity of the Swansea area was linked to the Swansea Technical College and its curriculum covered chemistry, metallurgy and engineering. The planned granting of a Charter to the College affiliating it to the University of Wales meant that the Memorialists had great confidence in the College becoming the centre for technical instruction in the Principality, bringing to the town large numbers of students who would gain particular benefit from the establishment of the national museum of Wales in Swansea.

14 Such confidence in the railway timetable is but a distant memory
The Memorialists’ arguments concerning Swansea’s geographical position and accessibility were based on its relationship to the rest of Wales and Monmouthshire and made little reference to any links with England. Indeed the Memorialists emphasised that Swansea was, in any direction, greater than 48 miles from the boundary of the Principality with England, thereby reinforcing their Welsh credentials. All the railway systems related to Swansea’s connection with the rest of Wales and Monmouthshire. The systems which had a direct connection with Swansea were; the Great Western, the London and North western, the Midland and the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railways. Swansea’s links with the rest of Wales through the railways was tabled:

"That Swansea is thus in communication:-

(a) With Carmarthenshire, Cardiganshire and Pembrokeshire by means of the Great Western Railway and tributary lines;
(b) With Carmarthenshire, Breconshire, Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire, Merionethshire, Carnarvonshire, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Aghlesey, by means of the London and North Western and connected railways;
(c) With Breconshire and Radnorshire by the Midland Railway;
(d) With Glamorganshire, including the populous districts of Merthyr and Aberdare, Monmouthshire and Breconshire by the Great Western (Old Vale of Neath Railway) and connected railways;
(e) With parts of Glamorganshire and especially the populous places of the Rhondda Valley by means of the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway;
(f) With South and East Glamorgan by the Great Western Main Line."

The Memorialists claimed that with this system of railway connections, Swansea was the most readily accessible in terms of distance and expense to the great majority of the population of the Principality. Their rivalry with Cardiff was demonstrated in their assertion that, by reference to an accompanying map:

"Every town within the area hatched pink is nearer, in point of distance by
rail, to Swansea than to Cardiff ...[and that] the population of a considerable portion of Cardiganshire, the whole of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, and West Glamorgan has to pass through Swansea to get to Cardiff ... All the railway traffic passing through the area hatched blue on the map is practically as near to Swansea as to Cardiff, the difference in no single instance exceeding 6\(\frac{1}{4}\) miles.

As further evidence of Swansea's accessibility, the Memorialists cited a number of events that had taken place in the town and had attracted large numbers of people. The Annual Exhibition of the Bath, West and Southern Counties Society in 1904 attracted 78,827 visitors; the international football match between Ireland and Wales in 1905 attracted 33,000 visitors; and in 1903 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show came to Swansea when "... Mr Cody stated that the number at the afternoon performance on that day constituted the record attendance in any provincial town visited by the show, whose tour, in that country, was drawing to a close". Swansea's attraction as a pleasure and health resort, and its accessibility, was illustrated by the presence of 440,00 visitors during the summer of 1904.

Other annual meetings cited in support for their accessibility by the Memorialists were of a very different nature; the Church Congress, the Congregational Union, the Cambrian Archaeological Association, the British Medical Association, the Law Society of England and Wales, the Pharmaceutical Society of England, the Trades Union Congress, and the British Association for the Advancement of Science - who had held their meetings twice at Swansea. Whilst these annual meetings did support the argument for Swansea's accessibility it is surprising that the visits by such organisations were not used to support the argument for the cultural and scientific credibility of the town. Beyond discussing the Royal Institution of South Wales such an argument was not put forward.

The amount of support offered by Swansea consisted of finance in kind by way of buildings and collections, private contributions and the annual proceeds obtained
under the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891. Swansea put forward the land and buildings and collections of the Royal Institution of South Wales which they valued at £25,000. Should it be preferred that the national museum of Wales be erected at the alternative Victoria Park site, then this land was valued at £15,000 and a further £10,000 was offered by the Corporation towards the building costs. The Royal Institution was described as being entirely supported by the subscriptions of its members and, having been established in 1835, "... may truly be said to have been the pioneer in providing a museum in Wales". The Royal Institution was within easy reach of five railway stations and contained a, "... museum for the collection and classification of objects illustrative of geology, mineralogy, zoology, conchology, comparative anatomy, entomology and botany, local and general history and antiquities, coins, medals and seals, pictures, casts and other works of art, models and working drawings," and, "... a library rich in Welsh literature and in manuscripts, records and other documents relating to the history of Wales". More collections of books and papers in the Welsh language including the collections of the late Professor Rowland Williams and the Reverend Robert Jones of Rotherhithe, were in the Swansea Free Public Library and would be transferred to the national museum collections. The Free Library was also the location of the art gallery which contained, "... a large number of rare and interesting engravings and art treasures of local and national interest", all of which would be included as finance in kind should the national museum of Wales be located in Swansea.

Other collections from private sources were offered on condition that the national museum of Wales would be located in Swansea. A collection of Swansea and Nantgarw China had been offered as well as the collection of works of art belonging to Mr R. Glynn Vivian - provided the room or rooms containing the collections be designated, 'The Glynn Vivian Collection' - a last minute change of heart on his part.

Further supporting evidence as to the generosity of the local community in the

15Neath had established their museum just a few months earlier than Swansea but it did not survive through the century.
support of institutions, "... national in utility and character", was given through the support of the Swansea General and Eye Hospital, the Royal Cambrian Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, the South Wales Institute for the Blind, the Orphan Home for Girls and the Swansea and District Nursing Institute.

Actual financial contributions amounted to £10,000 together with the product of a half penny rate levied under the Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, which was estimated in excess of £1,000 per annum. The Memorialists were aware they would be unable to compete with Cardiff on purely financial terms and iterated their claim that the location of the national museum of Wales should depend more on the accessibility to, and the present and future interests of, the inhabitants of Wales rather than the level of local financial support.

The Memorials and the criteria

The criteria laid down by the Privy Council Committee were purely financially based to determine the viability of the institutions and their anticipated dependence on the Treasury. However, none of the Memorialists confined themselves to the financial issues prompted by the criteria, all giving a variety of supporting evidence to deepen their claims. There was a consistency in the nature of the supporting evidence but with a marked difference in emphasis. All Memorialists presented evidence in some degree to their Welshness, their location, and public support.

With regard to the amount of support offered all the towns submitting Memorials claiming to guarantee sufficient support for the establishment of the institutions in either money or in kind in the form of buildings and land (Table 8.4). Aberystwyth gave an undertaking to raise the sum of £20,000 which it estimated would be required for constructing the building. The 14 acres of land, the Grogythan Lands, had already been purchased and were offered in kind. Cardiff offered a capital sum of £7,500 and public subscriptions of £29,000 making a total of £36,500. A site at Cathays Park had been allocated for the buildings and was offered in kind.
Carnarvon submitted a total sum of £12,500 comprising £5,000 from the town rates, £5,000 from subscriptions and £2,500 from Carnarvon County Council. Carnarvon Castle was offered in kind with an approximate estimate of £10,000 for conversion into a national museum as well as offering £2,500 for maintenance. Swansea offered £1,000 from the rates plus £10,000 in private subscriptions. The Museum buildings and land of the Royal Institution of South Wales were offered in kind with the alternative offer of a site in Victoria Park if preferred.

Future maintenance was less well covered by the Memorialists. Aberystwyth did not give any specific indication of monies available for this whilst Cardiff promised the product of a ½ d rate - £1,940, for the Museum and £1,000 p.a., part of the rate allocation for the library. Although Carnarvon did not specify a sum for maintenance the £2,500 from Carnarvon County Council may have been an annual commitment. The surplus from the National Eisteddfod would be less reliable as the accounts described in Carnarvon’s Memorial indicated that there were as many losses experienced in the running of the annual event as there were surpluses. It is assumed that Swansea would continue to allocate the product of a ½ d rate p.a. for maintenance, contemporarily £1,000, although this is not stated in their Memorial.

Existing and promised collections formed a substantial element of the Memorials of Aberystwyth, Cardiff and Swansea with many of the promised collections having the persuasive proviso of only being donated should the institution be established in the relevant town. Carnarvon did not offer any collection; their record in the establishment of a museum in Carnarvon Castle had been singularly unsuccessful and they, wisely, made no mention of this.

Only Aberystwyth and Carnarvon made any attempt to estimate the building costs of the institutions (Table 8.5). Aberystwyth had established a target of £20,000 in 1904 at the half-yearly meeting of the Court of Governors of University College in Barmouth. Carnarvon had been given an estimate of approximately £800-£1,000 for the conversion of each of the ten towers of Carnarvon Castle by the architect Walter
W Thomas.\textsuperscript{16} Swansea based their Memorial on the assumption that the buildings and land of the Royal Institution of South Wales would be adopted for the purpose, these being valued at £25,000. Cardiff had been planning a new museum on the Cathays Park site and had estimated the sum of £25,000 for the erection of the building\textsuperscript{17} although the cost of erecting a national institution and a national library would be considerably greater and they chose not to indicate an estimate in their Memorial.

None of the Memorialists attempted to estimate the maintenance costs of the institutions. This was because the Privy Council had made it known in March that they only required information under the first and third criteria.\textsuperscript{18} Estimates had already been made by the Treasury and related to the Conference of Welsh representatives at meetings on 9\textsuperscript{th} and 23\textsuperscript{rd} June 1904 where Sir Isambard Owen reported on his visits to the Scottish and Irish National Institutions. There it was stated that an estimated £40,000 would be required for the erection of the museum and £20,000 for the library. Maintenance of the institutions was estimated at £10,000 per annum for the museum and £2,000 per annum for the library.\textsuperscript{19} Although these estimates were alluded to at these meetings they were not detailed in the criteria laid down by the Committee of the Privy Council, "...as the Chancellor thinks that this must be settled between him and Sir Wm. Anson after the Committee has reported. The proportion of the Exchequer grant must of course depend somewhat on the funds available locally for each purpose as well as on the size of the grant itself."\textsuperscript{20}

All the Memorialists stated their expected contributions from the local sources in land, money or buildings (Table 8.6). Aberystwyth offered the land that had been purchased for the purpose of building a new library valued at £2,000 as well as the

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{16}Report of Walter W Thomas, Esq., President of the Society of Architects, Lord Street Liverpool, 29\textsuperscript{th} March 1905. Appendix to Carnarvon’s Memorial.
\bibitem{17}Minute 1010 Special Museum Committee, \textit{Cardiff County Council}, 9\textsuperscript{th} December 1902.
\bibitem{18}\textit{Western Mail} 17\textsuperscript{th} March 1905
\bibitem{19}Report to the Parliamentary Committee, \textit{Cardiff County Council}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} July 1904.
\bibitem{20}Duckworth to Pelham 28\textsuperscript{th} January 1905, PC8/608
\end{thebibliography}
undertaking to raise the £20,000 estimated for the building itself. Cardiff also offered land that had been set aside for the purpose in Cathays Park valued at £20,000 along with capital sums and public subscriptions to a total of £36,500. Carnarvon did not place an estimated value on the Castle itself but offered the sum of £12,500 towards the cost of conversion and establishment. Swansea placed the value of £25,000 on the buildings and land of the Museum of the Royal Institution of South Wales. The alternative offered by Swansea of a site in Victoria Park, valued at £15,000, was supported with a Corporation contribution of £10,000 and private subscriptions of £10,000.

Aberystwyth did not supply any information as to their proposed contribution for the future maintenance of the institution. Cardiff offered the product of a ½ d rate amounting to £1,940 p.a. plus the £1,000 p.a. that was already being spent on library services; these contributions being for both the national museum and national library. Carnarvon’s contribution was unclear but may have included an annual sum of £2,500 from Carnarvonshire County Council and the irregular and unspecified surplus of the annual National Eisteddfod. Swansea proposed the contribution of the product of a ¼ d rate being £1,000 for the national museum only.

**Supporting Evidence**

The primary nationalistic argument put forward by all the Memorialists was that of the use of the Welsh language. They all saw this as the main signifier of Welshness. All the Memorialists used the 1901 census as a basis of their supporting data, the statistics being selected in a way which most favourably presented their argument. Aberystwyth and Carnarvon were both situated in the parts of Wales most populated with Welsh speakers and they could quote high figures for the areas they chose to represent, for Carnarvon - the Borough, for Aberystwyth - the County of Cardigan. Swansea and Cardiff were in parts of Wales which, although having a greater population, had a lower proportion of Welsh speakers. The areas they represented in their Memorials were carefully chosen to augment the figures of Welsh speakers.
Swansea was in an area with more Welsh speakers than Cardiff, the town it saw as its main rival, and could afford to quote a figure of 32.4% for the Borough knowing that Cardiff could not match this; moreover, it considered that Swansea represented a wider population:

"Swansea is surrounded by populous places, the inhabitants of which, for practical purposes and in estimating the relative importance of Swansea in regard to other towns, should be regarded as inhabitants of Swansea."\(^{21}\)

Cardiff knew that the figures for its own Borough could not compete with the other towns and chose to present the figure representing the whole of Glamorgan, the County which included their rival Swansea and its claimed peripheral inhabitants.

Religion was also considered a strong signifier of Welshness and all the Memorialists made reference to religious activities in their area. Aberystwyth and Cardiff chose to claim the birthplace of important religious figures. Swansea quoted the number of services conducted in Welsh thus linking the Welsh language and religion. Carnarvon’s reference to religion was in relation to the Welsh non-conformist populations of Liverpool and Manchester, where; "...each of the four great Nonconformist Denominations recognizes the Liverpool-Manchester district as a separate Welsh County Organization for denominational purpose ... [and] the vast importance of the Welsh element in that area beyond the Borders will easily be recognized".\(^{22}\) It was Carnarvon’s claim that they were the closest town to these Welsh populations in North West England; compared to the other towns bidding for the institutions, they were, but the distances involved were still quite considerable.

The Eisteddfod is a significant celebration of Welsh culture, and although Eisteddfodau had been held in Aberystwyth, Swansea and Cardiff it was only Carnarvon who put this forward as supporting evidence of Welshness. And

\(^{21}\)Swansea Memorial, p2.

\(^{22}\)Carnarvon Memorial Section G p11.
Carnarvon was the only town able to claim the title 'Metropolis of Allied Celtia' in its relation with other Celtic nations. Racial credibility, in the sense of being born in Wales, was evidence submitted primarily by Aberystwyth who claimed that 94% of the population of Cardigan and Merioneth were Welsh-born. Cardiff did not make such a claim directly, but stated that, although much of its population came from outside the area, these immigrants came primarily from other Welsh counties.

There is no evidence of radical Welsh nationalism in these memorials. The argument for the establishment of the national Welsh institutions had, by that time, already been won. It was the degree of Welshness that was the issue and it was Aberystwyth and Carnarvon set in the more rural, less industrially disturbed, North Wales that could put the stronger case.

Most of the supporting local authorities were clustered around the bidding towns. For Carnarvon, the authorities were primarily North Wales; most of Aberystwyth's supporting authorities were spread around North and Mid Wales but included Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire in the South West; and most of Cardiff's supporting authorities were from South Wales, but they could boast supporters from as far west as Haverfordwest and as far north as Wrexham and Mold. Some authorities spread their support between bidding towns; Wrexham, for example, supported Aberystwyth for the national library and Cardiff for the national museum.

The supporting societies were often a distance from the bidding town. Aberystwyth could claim support from societies in Birmingham and Liverpool, whilst Cardiff's support extended to Milford Haven. Although Swansea did not list supporters for its Memorial, it could be assumed that such support existed, particularly the Royal Institution of South Wales and the Swansea Welsh Society who had raised this issue with Swansea Borough Council in 1901.

Individual endorsement was illustrated through signatories and promised donations - Cardiff appearing to be five times ahead in this particular league (Table 8.3).
However, the criteria which decided a recognised supporter was not clearly stated in any of the Memorials.

The Memorials having been submitted, the rival towns awaited the decision of the Privy Council Committee.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aberystwyth</th>
<th>Cardiff</th>
<th>Carnarvon</th>
<th>Swansea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Original Foundation.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funds: Undertaking to raise</td>
<td></td>
<td>Capital sum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Product of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>£7,500, Public subscriptions of £29,000, total £36,500</td>
<td>£5,000.</td>
<td>£7,500, Public subscriptions of £29,000, total £36,500</td>
<td>£20,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£5,000.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Private subscriptions £10,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carnarvon CC £2,500. Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£12,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In kind:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cathays Park site (£20,000).</td>
<td>Carnarvon Castle</td>
<td>Museum, collections and land of RISW (£25,000).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The library of the University College of Wales.</td>
<td>Museum collection (£38,000).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Or Victoria Park site (£15,000) plus £10,000, total £25,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collections of books and manuscripts offered by individuals.</td>
<td>Library (£30,000).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14acres of land</td>
<td>Salesbury Library (£5,000).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total £95,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future maintenance:</strong></td>
<td>None specified</td>
<td>Museum; product of ½d rate, £1,940.</td>
<td>Carnarvon CC £2,500. Surplus of National Eisteddfod.</td>
<td>Non specified but presumed product of ½d rate, £1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Library; £1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4. The amount of support which is offered both to the original foundation and to the future maintenance by the local authorities and inhabitants.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aberystwyth</th>
<th>Cardiff</th>
<th>Carnarvon</th>
<th>Swansea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erecting</strong></td>
<td>NLW £20,000 estimated in 1904 to house the existing collections of the Welsh Library</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
<td>Conversion of Carnarvon Castle £10,000</td>
<td>No estimate assuming the adoption of the land and buildings of RISW valued at £25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintaining</strong></td>
<td>No estimate</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
<td>No estimate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.5 *The probable cost of erecting and of maintaining the institutions.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land, money or buildings</th>
<th>Aberystwyth</th>
<th>Cardiff</th>
<th>Carnarvon</th>
<th>Swansea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land valued at £2,000.</td>
<td>Land valued at £20,000.</td>
<td>Cathays Park site valued at £7,500.</td>
<td>Carnarvon Corporation £5,000.</td>
<td>Land and buildings of RISW valued at £25,000 or £15,000 plus Swansea Corporation contribution, £10,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertaking to raise £20,000 for building</td>
<td>Capital sum £7,500.</td>
<td>Public subscriptions £29,000</td>
<td>Carnarvon County Council £2,500.</td>
<td>Private contributions, £10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future maintenance None specified</td>
<td>Product of ½d rate, £1,940 pa</td>
<td>Library rate, £1,000 pa</td>
<td>National Eisteddfod surplus.</td>
<td>Product of ½d rate, £1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.6 *The contributions which may be expected from the local sources either in land, money or buildings towards the above mentioned costs.*
THE DECISION

The deliberations of the Privy Council Committee and the decision.

The Committee of the Privy Council met on Saturday 13th May 1905 to decide on the procedure to be followed and whether to take oral evidence in support of the Memorials, to make investigatory visits to the sites involved, or work from the written submissions alone. The Committee sat for nearly two hours before adjournment and announced that they would require some further evidence which they would request but that they would be making their decision based on the documentary evidence alone and would not require local visits or oral submissions. This was met with restrained surprise by the Western Mail, "...the whole Principality, of course, has every confidence in the three gentlemen who have been appointed to decide what is to Wales a very momentous question", however, there was a concern here that decisions relating to Wales would be dealt with somewhat summarily, "...in a question of such moment the desirability of inspecting the intended sites is so obvious that Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Earl of Jersey and Lord Justice Cozens-Hardy are not likely to have overlooked it." The Mayor of Cardiff was not discouraged and managed to persuade donations to Cardiff's cause from two travelling companions, whose sympathies were originally with Aberystwyth and Swansea, on his train journey back to South Wales.2

With the decision being made on the written Memorials only, it was assumed that the decision would be made fairly quickly but by the third week of May Lord Balfour of Burleigh had been called out of town and Lord Jersey had been sent to Rome as the special representative of Great Britain at an Agricultural Conference.3 Delay, therefore, was inevitable. During this waiting period, Cardiff was continually working to augment the fund in support of the institutions and by 23rd May this had

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1 Editorial Comments, Western Mail 15th May 1905
2 Western Mail 15th May 1905
3 Western Mail 24th May 1905
reached £40,000, a figure which was quickly relayed to the Privy Council Committee.

Delay, inevitably, generated rumour, the most disturbing one for Cardiff being that the national library would go to Aberystwyth. The *Western Mail*, in a pointed message to the Privy Council Committee, stated that such a decision would raise considerable controversy and had, "... prompted several Members to again criticise their method of procedure, and threaten to raise the matter at the first moment in the House of Commons." Mr Brynmor Jones, MP for Swansea District, did not feel that a decision based solely on the written Memoria would be acceptable. He was of the opinion that the Committee should have followed the methods of Lord Bramwell’s Committee of 1883 and to have allowed the presentation of evidence from interested representatives. As this did not take place, he was of the opinion that, "... it is not likely ... that any town in Wales will be satisfied with a decision based upon mere ex parte statements." It was open to any Member of Parliament to raise questions in the House of Commons whenever issues relating to the Treasury were under discussion and Brynmor Jones intended to take that opportunity. He believed that it would have been in the greater public interest to have had a public arbitration with a final decision, after which no further question would be raised. Cardiff had distinguished supporters lined up to give supporting evidence and clearly felt the frustration of being denied the full range of opportunities and media for presenting their case.

The decision of the Privy Council Committee was announced on Saturday 10th June 1905 in the Press following their meeting at the Council Chamber, Whitehall on Thursday 8th June. The National Library was to be sited in Aberystwyth and the National Museum in Cardiff. The Committee stated that the decision had been made after examining the evidence put before them in relation to the criteria laid down. In

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*Western Mail 8th June 1905*

*Ibid*

*Western Mail 10th June 1905; South Wales Daily News 10th June 1905; South Wales Argus 10th June 1905.*
a memorandum appended to the report the Committee briefly set out the
considerations that led to the decision. The memorandum began by summarising the
amount of support, local or otherwise, towards the foundation and maintenance of the institutions presented by the four Memorialists:

"I

ABERYSTWYTH (Library)
(i) A site of 14 acres or so much of it as may be necessary.
(ii) A sum of £20,000 towards the building fund.
(iii) That portion of the College Library and collections of books and MSS that are of National interest
(iv) Llanstephan Library
(v) Peniarth Library
(vi) Cwrtmawr Books and MSS

II

CARNARVON (Museum)
Carnarvon Castle, to which end the Corporation have voted £5,000
The Carnarvon County Council £2,500

III

CARDIFF (Museum and Library)
(i) four acres at Cathays Park (£20,000)
(ii) Collections in Municipal Museum and Art Gallery (£38,000)
(iii) A capital sum of (£7,500)
(iv) Public subscriptions amounting at present to (£32,500)
(v) A ½ d rate under Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891 (£1,940)
(vi) Collections of books in Municipal Library (81,766 volumes and 9,118 prints, drawings &c.) (£30,000)
(vii) £1,000 a year out of the rates levied under the Public Libraries Acts (£1,000)
(viii) Salesbury Collection of Books now in possession of University College of South Wales (£5,000)

IV

SWANSEA (Museum)
(i) The land and buildings of Royal Institution of South Wales, estimated value (£25,000)

Or, in the alternative, a site in Victoria Park, estimated value (£15,000);

and a contribution by the Corporation towards the original Foundation of (£10,000)

(ii) Private contributions amounting to (£10,000)

(iii) Proceeds of ½ d rate under Museums and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, a minimum of, (£1,000 per annum)

(iv) Contents of Museum and books, MSS, records and other documents relating to Wales in the Royal Institution

(v) The Deffett Francis collection of Fine Art works in the Galleries of Swansea Public Library

(vi) The books of reference relating to Wales at the Public Free Library

(vii) The Glynn Vivian collection of Works of Art

(viii) Private contributions of Swansea and Nantgarw china

With the estimated cost of £50,000 for the building and fitting of the museum and £8,000 for maintenance, the Committee identified that there was £40,000 available from Cardiff with an annual income of £2,940 from a combination of the Museum and Gymnasiums Act, 1891, and the Public Libraries Act. The Committee assumed that further subscriptions would be obtained to increase the capital sum available, £20,000 of which could be used for the provision of the museum and the rest to provide an endowment to increase the annual income to £3,540, the wealth of Cardiff and the County of Glamorgan being able to supplement these sums by a considerable amount. The inclusion of the income from the Public Libraries Act assumed the provision of the required library service to support the National Museum but failed to consider the public library service already being provided by Cardiff which operated on the basis of this income.

The Committee determined that Aberystwyth had offered the sum of £20,000

**Memorandum to the Privy Council Committee Report on the decision of the National Museum and Library of Wales, 8th June 1905, PRO PC8/608**
estimated for the establishment of the National Library. However, they recognised that the town and the eight County Councils who gave their support to Aberystwyth would be unable to find sufficient monies to ensure an endowment for future maintenance costs, but, "... with some support from outside it might not be impossible to find the balance in the Country." However, within the Memorandum the Committee did not define 'outside' or specify whether 'Country' referred to Wales or Great Britain.

The Committee recognised that the estimated costs for the establishment and maintenance were provisional and subject to adjustment, but the location of the institutions in towns already hosts to established University Colleges should contribute to the reduction of future maintenance charges.

The Committee had also considered the issue of placing the two institutions in one town or separating them. The Memorandum states that the Committee believed that the Museum should be placed in the area of the greatest population which pointed to the County of Glamorgan. But, "... there were cogent reasons, geographical and linguistic, for locating the Library elsewhere...". Also, they believed that a more healthy and tranquil atmosphere than would be found in an area of large industrial activity, would be more conducive to the students who would use the Library - although this feature had not been part of the original criteria.

Another result of separating the institutions was that the cost was split within Wales - even Cardiff may not have been able to gather sufficient funds to cover the full capital costs of both the Museum and the Library. This spreading of the costs between the two towns ensured that there would be a much reduced call on funds from the National Treasury.

Passages and sections of the Memorials in possession of the Privy Council

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8Ibid
9Ibid
Committee have been marked by a blue pencil suggesting that this selected content had specific relevance to the Committee in its deliberations. However, an analysis of the marked passages leads to the conclusion that the interest of the individual who made the marks lay primarily with the siting of the national library. The marked passages do not relate systematically to the criteria laid down by the Committee and, of the passages highlighted in the Memorials, fourteen are in Aberystwyth's Memorial, six in Cardiff's, two in Swansea's and none at all in Carnarvon's.

Not all of the marked passages relate to the criteria laid down by the Committee. In Aberystwyth's Memorial, highlighted passages connected with the criteria refer to the donations in kind of book and manuscript collections and the purchase of the site for the library building. Other passages not related to the criteria are; the arguments for the separation of the museum and library, the salubrity of Aberystwyth for students working at the library, the formation of the most important library collections being in the mid and north of Wales rather than the south, the mid and north of Wales being the centre of Welsh studies and Welsh culture, and the arguments for joint-rate provision for the funding of the national library. A similar spread of interest can be found in the marked passages of the Cardiff and Swansea memorials. In Cardiff's Memorial marked passages note the private subscriptions, the land at Cathays Park and collections offered by Cardiff, and the argument for the museum and library to be located in the same place. Swansea has marked passages describing the contents of the museum and library of the Royal Institution of South Wales and the curriculum of the Swansea Technical College and its importance for the industries of South Wales.

The lack of any markings relating to the capital funding and maintenance of the institutions suggests that the person who highlighted these passages was not concerned with these financial issues, it having already been established that finance would not be a deciding factor in the selection of the two main towns, Aberystwyth and Cardiff, both towns offering sufficient financial support. The concentration on other issues, of donations in kind - particularly books and manuscripts - and location,
suggests a need to gather information in support of a decision already made to place
the institutions in these two towns.\textsuperscript{10

\textbf{The reaction to the decision in Wales}

In Aberystwyth, at the request of the Mayor, the townspeople decorated their shops
and houses with flags, and in the evening many places were brilliantly illuminated. A
torchlight procession was organised, parading the principal streets with the Mayor,
members of the Corporation, Principal Roberts and other members of the College
staff. Afterwards, congratulatory speeches, in English and Welsh, were delivered
from the balcony of the Belle Vue Hotel.\textsuperscript{11

Carnarvon expressed great disappointment at not being chosen for the site of the
National Museum of Wales whilst supporting the decision for the National Library
to go to Aberystwyth. The Town Clerk, Mr R. O. Roberts, was "grievously
disappointed" and felt that Carnarvon was prepared to do much more,
proportionately, than were the "merchant princes" of Cardiff. Cardiff may be richer,
but Carnarvon was "prepared to sacrifice far more than Cardiff was prepared to do";
the Castle alone being of far greater value than anything that could offered
elsewhere.\textsuperscript{12 Roberts wrote to the Privy Council pointing out that their report
appeared to misrepresent the offers that Carnarvon were prepared to make. He was at
pains to emphasise that Carnarvon Town Council, the County Council and voluntary
subscribers were offering to provide the full cost of the conversion of the castle as a
national museum - £12,500 - whereas the Privy Council report suggested that only
£7,500 was being provided.\textsuperscript{13

Mr J. R. Pritchard, an ex Mayor and Chairman of Carnarvon County Council, was

\textsuperscript{10 Alternatively, these blue pencil markings may have been made by a later researcher - presumably
researching the history of the National Library of Wales.

\textsuperscript{11 Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 16\textsuperscript{th} June 1905

\textsuperscript{12 Western Mail 10\textsuperscript{th} June 1905

\textsuperscript{13 South Wales Daily News 16\textsuperscript{th} June 1905; Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 16\textsuperscript{th} June 1905

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also disappointed but not surprised. He believed the decision had been made by a Commission appointed by a Government, "...intensely hostile to Welsh sentiment", and that the members of the Commission were men who knew nothing about Wales, "...had we lived in Central Africa or Tibet, they would, probably, have taken some pains to find out what our opinion as a nation was, but being only Welshmen it was another case of de minimis". Pritchard was also severely critical of the Councils of Llandudno and Conway who had voted against the County Council's proposed substantial contribution of aid to the fund. In so doing, Pritchard believed they had put Carnarvon and the whole of North Wales at a considerable disadvantage, "...and may probably yet grow wise enough to regret their action".

Mr H. L. Carter, Under-Sheriff and a prominent Conservative member, expressed concern that the decision had been made without hearing evidence, "...had the Commissioners done this it is highly probable they would have taken a different view of the matter"; Carter encouraged the Welsh MP's to raise this in the House, "...they have now an opportunity of proving their Nationalism". Carter saw this refusal as a great loss to the nation as well as Carnarvon but still hoped to be able to obtain a grant to restore the Castle and there create a historical museum.

In the Editorial of the *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald* the decision took second place to a long piece on 'Wesleyan Bondage' - the Wesleyan Assembly had been held in Carnarvon that week. The Editorial agreed with the Council that "... the case of Carnarvon has not been fairly and full considered by the Committee of the Privy Council" and that, despite the protest sent to the Privy Council, it was unlikely to change the outcome. They were not confident that Cardiff would be able to comply with all the conditions of the establishing of the national museum but were satisfied with the decision to place the national library in Aberystwyth. However, disappointment was tinged with hope, "... before very long, the question of

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14 *Western Mail* 10th June 1905
15 Ibid
16 Ibid; *South Wales Daily News* 10th June 1905
establishing a National Gallery of Fine Art will come up. If Carnarvon then repeats her recent effort, success will be almost a certainty."

Carnarvon’s history as a museum town had been found wanting for several decades, and although there had been scant evidence that they were interested in a museum as such, they had been shown to be strong on rhetoric but weak on tangible results. The bid for the national museum had been motivated more by the symbolism the museum would bring with it - the nationalistic iconism; and it had been an opportunity for yet another skirmish in the political battle between north and south Wales. The Cambrian Archaeological Association at its annual meeting at Shrewsbury in 1906 announced the designation of Cardiff as the site for the National Museum for Wales noting that the need for a national repository for antiquities was urgently required, clearly shown by the number of objects that had been removed from the Principality or just lost. As illustration, they reported the loss of objects from Carnarvon Castle "...two objects of great archaeological interest and considerable money value have of late years disappeared from the Museum in Carnarvon Castle, namely (1), a thin gold plate with a Greek talismanic inscription; and (2) a gold cruciform fibula of Romano-British fabric". It could be assumed, therefore, that the Cambrians would not have been confident had Carnarvon been chosen as the site for the National Museum.

Swansea did not give the impression of such strong disappointment at not being chosen as the site for the National Museum. Mr Morgan Tutton, Chairman of the Swansea Education Committee believed that it was a question of finance, the museum going to the highest bidder, "...they [Cardiff] had a big subscription list ... it has been bought". There was a sense of resignation in the outcome; it was clearly the

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17Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald 16th June 1905

18The significance of the Cambrian Archaeological Association holding its AGM across the border in England rather than in Wales should not be lost. It is another illustration of the inadequacy of the transport infrastructure in the Principality, and the ease with which nationalistic sensibilities could be submerged for the sake of practicality.

19Archaeologia Cambrensis 1906 pp66-67
result that had been expected, Tutton's response even being somewhat good-humoured, "... then with an old-time twinkle in his eye, he remarked to our man: 'Ah, you're a wicked lot in Cardiff'. Swansea believed that the emphasis on local funding would lead "... not [to] a National Museum maintained by national funds for the benefit of the nation as a whole, but [to] a glorified municipal museum." The Chairman of the Committee responsible for promoting Swansea's bid, Mr Moy Evans, agreed with Tutton that the museum had, "... gone to the town with the heaviest purse", but he was also critical of the lack of support shown by local influential people such as the Borough MP, "... he did absolutely nothing, never interested himself in the subject, or attended a meeting, and his name was conspicuous by its absence from the Swansea subscription list. What can you expect with such apathy in high quarters?". The general lack of disappointment seemed to reflect the original lack of enthusiasm compared to Cardiff:

"It is idle to pretend that the movement for securing the institutions provoked in Swansea anything like the enthusiasm it produced at Cardiff. The dread of an additional rate had, no doubt, something to do with the general apathy."23

The Royal Institution of South Wales saw the opportunity of calling in some promises. They applied to the Corporation for a list of all those people who had promised collections or funds should the National Museum be placed in Swansea. They resolved to contact all those people "...to ask them to donate a portion of their promised donation to the Royal Institution; pointing out what the Institution had done in the matter of the museum, and how it was now in want of funds."24

20 Western Mail 10th June 1905
21 South Wales Daily News 12th June 1905
22 WM op. cit. The MP was Sir George Newnes of the publishing company George Newnes Ltd, publishers of The Strand and Tit-Bits. Newnes was from outside Wales and most of his interests were in England.
23 'The Leader' from the Swansea Post reported in the Western Mail 12th June 1905
24 Minutes RISW 30th June 1905

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Cardiff’s overwhelming response was the disappointment at losing the National Library to Aberystwyth, ‘The Mayor Indignant’ ran the sub-headline in the *Western Mail*. The Mayor, Alderman Robert Hughes, believed the two institutions should not have been separated, "...it is like Solomon’s judgement when two mothers claimed a child ... that is the effect of this decision", and that both should be within reach of the majority of the population of Wales. He was indignant that the Committee had not taken evidence or visited the proposed sites, "... there is no doubt at all that the Committee came to their decision without going into the merits of the cases presented on behalf of the various towns.”

The Town Clerk, Mr J. L. Wheatley, gave a diplomatic response as would be expected from a local government officer. He said that it was unfortunate that the sites had not been inspected by the members of the Committee so that supporting evidence could be presented. A number of highly qualified people had been prepared to give evidence on Cardiff’s behalf but they had not been allowed to express their opinions. He was inclined to continue to press for the library to be placed in Cardiff but this would be a decision of the Cardiff Corporation. He pointed out that neither Aberystwyth nor Swansea had been prepared to add their names to the list of supporters at the time of the initial application for arbitrators. His diplomacy slipped when asked why the decision might have gone in Aberystwyth’s favour. He suggested that the efforts of the University College may have been behind the decision as they had been in some financial difficulty, to the extent of £27,000, for some time and the securing of the library would improve their prospects "...so that it appears that the advantages which a National Library would give to the Welsh people have been sacrificed for college purposes". He stated that he had suspicions about ‘movements behind the scenes’ in the move to place the National Library at Aberystwyth:

"... and I was somewhat afraid that the undercurrent was having its effect.

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25 *Western Mail* 10th June 1905

26 Ibid
From what I have recently learned, the question of getting the library at Aberystwyth meant life or death to the college owing to the large amount of that institution's indebtedness and it was the college and not the town of Aberystwyth that was there.\textsuperscript{27}

Sir John Williams, the most vociferous voice for Aberystwyth - and against Cardiff - sent a telegram of "Hearty Congratulations" to the Mayor of Cardiff.\textsuperscript{28} The telegram was sent from Shrewsbury where he was attending a meeting of the University Court of Governors. Given Aberystwyth's insistence on their accessibility, it would have perhaps been more politic on that occasion to hold that particular meeting in Aberystwyth rather than Shrewsbury.

The Cardiff Museum Curator, Mr John Ward, expressed the concern that students studying, for example ceramics, would have to go to Aberystwyth to read the reference books on their subject but would then have to travel to Cardiff to examine examples. He cited his own recent experience of studying Romano-British archaeology at the British Museum where he was able to study the books in the Library in the morning and the objects in the Museum in the afternoon. He thought it a great pity that the two institutions were to be separated, "... both institutions will suffer by separation, for both should be combined, and each be of mutual assistance to the other". Because Cardiff would now require a reference library to complement the Museum there would be considerable duplication of works and the onus of funding this library would most likely fall to the rate-payers of Cardiff. Should the funding for the library be expected to come from the Treasury grant then the value of the Museum would diminish.\textsuperscript{29} The Borough Librarian, Mr J. Ballinger, was also disappointed and felt that the Cardiff Library had been acting as the national library for Wales for some time. He agreed with the Curator that the separation of the institutions would lead to considerable duplication and waste of energy. He hoped

\textsuperscript{27}SWDN 10\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
\textsuperscript{28}SWDN and WM 12\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
\textsuperscript{29}WM 10\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
that, "... if the people of Cardiff overtake the situation in the proper spirit ... the Cardiff Library will always maintain its present importance." 30

Wheatley, the Town Clerk, pointed out that many offers of financial support had been based on the two institutions coming to Cardiff. With the library going to Aberystwyth it was likely that the actual finances available would show a shortfall as prospective donors would not necessarily wish to subscribe to just one institution. The Committee of the Privy Council had, therefore come to a decision on a false assumption, "... some of those gentlemen who promised subscriptions did so on condition that both institutions were located in Cardiff." 31 A problem also arose with the assumption that projected monies for annual maintenance would be available for just the one institution. With the library going to Aberystwyth, the product of the library rate for Cardiff should now remain with the Council's library service; the Privy Council Committee had assumed that a proportion of this would be used to finance a library for the National Museum which was not the case:

"The Corporation of Cardiff stated in their case that if the national Library were established in the town they would give £1,000 out of the 1 1/2d rate towards the annual maintenance of that institution, and consequently, neither that sum nor any part of it will be available for the purpose of a National Museum library." 32

Sir Edward Reed MP was in Cardiff when the decision was announced and remarked that, "...the decision ... is almost ludicrous, because by that decision it is proposed to put the National Library of Wales in a place which is not accessible to the majority of the people engaged in scientific, commercial and industrial pursuits - the people who, in my opinion, ought to be the first considered". He declared his preparation to support a reversal of this decision, if required, when the issue of the grants was

30Ibid. John Ballinger was to become the first Librarian of the National Library of Wales in 1908.
31WM and SWDN 12th June 1905
32Ibid
brought before the House for confirmation.\textsuperscript{33}

Along with Carnarvon, Cardiff and Swansea expressed their concern that the Privy Council had come to their decision without visiting the sites or taking evidence other than the Memorials. The Mayor of Cardiff believed that without a public enquiry and the consequent interrogation of the memorialists there was the possibility to mislead the Committee, "In my opinion that is what has happened as far as Aberystwyth is concerned."\textsuperscript{34} The Editorial in the \textit{South Wales Daily News} agreed:

"Documentary evidence is not enough. Nor is it satisfactory that ex-parte statements should be accepted at face value. Anything may be written; and in the writing an half-truth or exaggeration will win the verdict as though it were fully confirmed."\textsuperscript{35}

Mr Brynmor Jones MP for Swansea District admitted that he had only seen the Memorial presented by Swansea, however:

"I do not wish to say anything offensive to Cardiff; but my experience of the claims of this character put forward by it, and many other places, is that they contain statements often of a slightly extravagant character, and sometimes of a grossly extravagant character."\textsuperscript{36}

Strongly as they disagreed with the decision, the Editorial in the \textit{Western Mail} made a plea for it to be accepted by all parties and not to pursue the matter in the House. The decision was a compromise and "...will remain a permanent memorial to the inability of Wales to agree on any question of national importance, and of the local jealousies which have been the greatest enemies to Welsh nationalism in the past".

\textsuperscript{33} WM 10\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
\textsuperscript{34} SWDN 10\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid
\textsuperscript{36} WM 12\textsuperscript{th} June 1905
Since Cardiff had in the past promoted the cause of arbitration then Cardiff should accept the decision, the Library was to be in Aberystwyth and "... the comparatively narrow circle to which this institution must now appeal will do their best to make up for the serious disadvantages of situation". And with a nationalistic clarion call to their readers, "... the award of the Privy Council Committee should finally lift the question of the National Museum and Library out of the rut of locality, with the inevitable accompaniment of local jealousies, into the loftier plane of nationality, where all Welshmen, whatever their local sympathies and their place of residence, should heartily cooperate for the good of the nation". 37 Ward also raised the nationalistic issue pointing out the history of the division in Wales "...it would tend to the cohesion of Welsh interests", and the establishment of the two principal national institutions in one place - Cardiff - would have made that town the capital automatically. The separation of the institutions, he contended, would weaken this tendency to the national detriment. 38

The decision of the Privy Council Committee was not recorded in the minutes of the Cardiff County Council - the Council, the Parliamentary Sub-Committee, the Museum Committee or the Free Library Committee. The first recorded reference to a national institution is the Museum Committee of 29th September 1905 where the transfer of a donated collection is minuted. 39 No doubt the decision was discussed but there was no official, minuted record of satisfaction, celebration or disappointment.

37Editorial Western Mail 10th June 1905
38Western Mail 10th June 1905
39Minute 1591 Museum Committee CCC 29th September 1905

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CONCLUSION

Museums, in the modern European tradition, encapsulate and present to the gaze, knowledge and understanding of the world. Possession of the museum assumes possession of the knowledge with subsequent status and power. It might be assumed that the battle for the national museum was a battle for the articulation of nationhood. However, it was museums as instruments in serving agendas at a more parochial level that prevailed here. For example, museums as instruments in the social manipulation of the lower classes has been well documented and this has been illustrated here with the Royal Institution of South Wales and its control of access through the Mechanics’ Institute. Museums as instruments in the hands of the middle classes in the reinforcement and demonstration of their place in society has been discussed by Alberti (2002) and Hill (1996) and this has been illustrated here with the museums at Swansea and Cardiff. The middle class in Swansea established and built the Royal Institution of South Wales and maintained possession throughout the period of this study. The middle class in Cardiff worked in partnership with the Council through the Cardiff Naturalists’ Society, the Society indulging in scientific and cultural activities associated with the Museum - it was their science that gave credibility to the Museum - whilst the Council benefited from possession. National museums have been used as instruments in the authentication of particular interpretations of a nation’s history (Cannizzo, 1987; Lira, 1999, 2002). This was not the case here. The articulation of Wales that might be presented to the gaze by the national museum was not a subject of discussion, it was its possession alone that was of issue.

In the tangible expression of the growing sense of nationalism in Wales through the latter part of the nineteenth century, a national museum would be one of the few options available. Although a national museum for Wales could be a physical

1For example, Greenwood (1888), Bennett (1995), Hill (1996)

2The museum of the Royal Institution was not taken into the Swansea City Council Museum Service until 1991.
manifestation of Welsh nationhood, its proposal illuminated the multiple representations of Welsh identity. The nature of Welsh identity was seen as more than a geographical boundary - itself contested due to the ambivalent status of Monmouthshire. More significant for the articulation of Welshness at this time was the Welsh language, its literature, its links with other Celtic nations, and its religious non-conformity. No singular articulation of Welsh identity dominated in the anticipated role of the national museum.

Welsh nationalism was primarily an intellectual nationalism rather than political - Cymru Fydd came the closest to a political movement towards a form of home rule at this time. For the Welsh Members of Parliament who argued for a national museum and library for Wales, the institutions signified their Welshness, their identity in terms of the Welsh nation, its language and culture - a place to store the tangible evidence of Wales as a nation separate from England. The call for parity with Scotland and Ireland, in terms of national institutions, reinforced the MP’s perception of the museum and library as indicators of equality of nationhood - and reinforced their exclusivity as a discrete Welsh group within the parliamentary structure. It was unfortunate, but not terminally destructive, that the north-south rivalry, occasionally demonstrated by Welsh MP’s during debates, failed to present an image of a united nation.

This national awareness grew in the last quarter of the nineteenth century with the re-constitution of the National Eisteddfod; electoral reform allowing a wider franchise; economic growth giving greater confidence to the Principality; and a greater recognition of the Welsh language through its teaching in schools. The Welsh landscape defined the location of Welsh identity. Welshness was to be found more in the rural parts of Wales - the mountains and valleys - the South Wales coalfield that fed industrialisation defined the more anglicised part of Wales. The anticipated function of a national museum for Wales in terms of interpreting or celebrating Welshness was less a subject of concern than its presence as one of the symbols of nationhood. The role of the national museum was seen as a place for Welsh things -
the science or the antiquities - more than an articulation of Welshness. Memory was through language, literature and music rather than objects, antiquarian or natural. A greater expression of the symbolism of the imagined Welsh community was through the language, literature and music that was celebrated at the National Eisteddfod.

The intellectual Welsh looked more to the national library to articulate the national narrative of Welshness rather than the national museum. During the early proposals, the functions of the two institutions were combined under the generic term 'museum', the idea of a separate library surfacing later in the discussions. The national library would hold evidence of the Welsh language and literature but not its interpretation or articulation. However, for the Welsh intellectuals this holding of Welsh literature was all they required - the literature embodied the language and the language represented their Welshness. When it was clear that the two institutions would be separate, their interest in the museum fell away and they were determined for the library to be placed in the University at Aberystwyth where so many collections of Welsh papers, manuscripts and libraries had already been collected.

With the national library becoming more the focus for the articulation of Welsh identity, the national museum became an object of political attention and it is the museum as an instrument in the hands civic administrations with a view to augmenting civic status that is the subject of this study. The two most significant museums already established at the time of the 'Battle of the Sites', and that could be considered as forming the nucleus of a national museum, were based at Swansea and Cardiff. Here, it is possession that is necessary for the associated recognition of status and power. In Swansea, possession was not with the civic structure of the town, possession was with the membership of the Royal Institution of South Wales, a small, distinct, middle class group. The museum was in Swansea, as was the building that contained it, and, whilst this had contributed to the scientific and cultural credibility of the town, it was outside the control of the Council. Earlier in the nineteenth century, Swansea had settled into its perceived role as the Metropolis of Wales and had not seen the need to take the Museum into the Council structure. But, by the turn of the century, Swansea had been overtaken by the swiftly
expanding Cardiff.

Swansea had dominated scientific activity in South Wales for the first half of the nineteenth century. The Royal Institute of South Wales, modelled on the Bristol Institute and the Royal Institution in London, created the spaces which provided the focus for this science. The Royal Institution had gained possession of the science in Swansea; it was concentrated in the spaces it had created. Many of the social elite were established philosophers whose scientific arena spread to London and Oxford. By mid-century, most of the science protagonists had passed on and the Royal Institution had lost its connection with the wider world of science outside Swansea - it had become settled and insular. Other affiliated groups attempted to generate scientific activity but the Royal Institution failed to incorporate them. It also remained independent of the Swansea civic structure, only discussing a possible degree of cooperation with the prospect of the national museum for Wales - but the level of independence desired by the Royal Institution ensured that negotiations did not succeed. The Royal Institution continued to provide a forum for the local philosophers to enjoy middle class intellectual pursuits and to partake in functions and activities which reinforced and illustrated their middle-classness. They had created a series of spaces for scientific activity - the library, the museum, the laboratory and the lecture theatre. And by controlling access to these spaces the membership maintained control of local philosophical activity. Even other organisations who hired the lecture room for such activities could only do so under the control of the Royal Institution. This ensured a continuation of status, possession and power over local science by the membership.

As Swansea's science waned; so Cardiff's science grew. The Cardiff Naturalists' Society was formed in 1867 primarily to support and promote the Cardiff Museum. Although it was a society with roots in the literary and philosophical society tradition there were leanings towards the field club model. But the concentration on the Museum skewed their focus. The Museum was the centre of their scientific activity at a time when Cardiff was growing into a wealthy thriving town. The Museum was
in possession of the Council and this enabled them to enjoy the associated growth in status as the Cardiff Naturalists' Society developed the scientific credibility of the Museum.

In Cardiff, possession of the Museum was with the civic structure. This was not always an enthusiastic possession. It was accepted into the civic fold only after a demonstration of public concern and it is doubtful if it would have survived to the extent it did without the support of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society. It was the membership of this Society which provided much of the practical curatorship, fieldwork, collecting and display. The Museum always shared space with the Library, with all the inevitable frictions, and was deprived of suitable space and funds. Even discussions and moves towards a new building were protracted with no decisions being taken year after year, exacerbated by the lack of financial support - the capital cost of the new building being dependant on the product of the annual revenue rate. Such difficulties of matching a suitable building with available capital allowed Cardiff to postpone action on a regular basis whilst giving the appearance of supporting the Museum. However, despite the lack of support - and much of the museum work being done by the Cardiff Naturalists' Society - possession was with the Council. This possession - and subsequent status and power - shifted more fully to the Council as the value of the Museum as an instrument in the drive for civic advancement became more evident. With the Museum in the hands of the Council, and the University perceived as part of the civic structure, Cardiff possessed the science and culture of the town. The civic leaders could use the associated status and power when the need arose. And the need arose when the proposal for a national museum for Wales became more of a reality than a mere idea.

Cardiff did not claim to possess all the elements that could identify Welshness. However, it claimed to be the only town able to represent the Welshness existing throughout the rest of Wales because of its sophisticated cosmopolitanism, its wider view of Wales, and its links with England and the rest of the world:
"Cardiff thus combines in a peculiar manner, the material and sentimental qualifications of a national capital. It is both ancient and modern, Celtic and cosmopolitan, progressive, wealthy, enterprising and the centre of learning. There is a Metropolitan ring about its large ideas which makes all other Welsh towns seem parochial by comparison."

The town had grown at a rapid rate and many of the new Cardiffians were ambitious and energetic cosmopolitan anglophiles, who had taken possession of the town for themselves and now saw the opportunity to take possession of the Principality. To the civic leaders of Cardiff, the national museum was an instrument in their drive for civic hegemony.

Cardiff presented a range of images in their drive to acquire the national museum and library. To Wales it presented a face of nationalistic leadership at the head of a battle to win these symbols of nationhood. To the Curators of Cardiff Museum it presented an image of understanding concern in the need for a larger, independent building whilst avoiding its realisation. To the business community Cardiff was seen as a champion of entrepreneurship bringing more wealth to the town. And to Parliament it presented the face of sophisticated cosmopolitan responsibility, fully equipped to take on the metropolitan mantle. Cardiff carefully orchestrated its drive for this instrument for civic advancement, eager to ensure appropriate support from all interested groups.

Cardiff adopted a dominant role from the beginning, memorialising other local authorities and organisations and leading the way in arranging meetings with government representatives, "Cardiff as the recognised capital, has never been found wanting in the spirit of national leadership." This dominant role in the Principality had been reinforced when Cardiff re-named the Cardiff Museum, 'The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities' in December 1901. Cardiff was a

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3 *Cardiff Times* 1st April 1905

4 *Western Mail* 27th February 1905

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town of rapid growth in terms of population and wealth which would only increase their standing in the Principality and emphasise the difference between themselves and the other smaller, parochial towns in Wales whose only claims were a greater level of Welshness as defined by the Welsh. It presented the image to Government that it was a town within Wales which was not trapped in the Welsh past; it was a town of wealth and sophistication, peopled by cosmopolitan entrepreneurs who could negotiate on equal intellectual and political terms with the English government. A town that could be relied upon to be responsible enough to take on the role of a capital possessing the symbols of capital status such as the national museum and library.

An accompaniment to status and power is wealth. Here the civic leaders of Cardiff persuaded the business community to promise support for the national museum and library. This was to be seen as an investment for the future; the University was bringing in a large income for local tradesmen and the national museum and library would do the same. The city and capital status that it was hoped would result from acquiring these institutions would bring in even further investment and subsequent increase in local wealth. The imminence of the Government grant, and the anticipated building and maintenance costs of the institution, finally raised the interest of the businessmen in Cardiff who saw the museum as an investment, a source of healthy and reliable trade over future years as well as the initial high building expenditure. Only at this very late stage did they promise any financial support for the museum in Cardiff. But the civic leaders saw the wider implications of the institution. Certainly the financial benefits of the museum were clear, but city and capital status would bring even greater investment - and would bring greater status to the civic dignitaries.

Carnarvon and Swansea saw the Welsh spirit of place as important in the location of the national museum for Wales. Their claims to Welshness - language, religion, significant Celtic links - were prominent in their Memorials. Although such criteria had not been laid down by the Privy Council Committee, the degree of Welshness
was clearly seen as an important qualification to Swansea and Carnarvon - Swansea referring to itself as the capital of ‘Welsh’ Wales. To towns such as Carnarvon and Swansea, the national museum would be more a recognition of their status as true Welsh towns than a symbol of civic status which was the stance of Cardiff.

But the final decision was taken by the English in England. The perception of Wales by central Government had already identified Cardiff as the metropolis with all the necessary symbols of size and wealth - many of the Parliamentary debates had included such references. And in the granting of the national museum it was this recognition that was all important. Swansea at this time had a fragmented science culture outside the civic structure whilst Cardiff had the town’s science culture - the Museum - within its possession. It also had another centre of science, the University, which it could add to its portfolio of intellectual credibility. The extent of Cardiff’s Welsh credentials in the eyes of the Welsh was not a concern to the Government, it was enough that it was in Wales, and the criteria laid down by the Privy Council Committee did not require the bidding towns to prove their Welshness. Despite the undoubted wealth, Cardiff’s record on local philanthropy regarding the Cardiff Museum was demonstrably poor - the Curators had called for such financial assistance on a number of occasions but had failed to elicit any positive response - but this poor record was not considered by Government.

Prior to the setting up of the Privy Council Committee, Anson visited Aberystwyth and Cardiff, clearly indicating that these were to be the locations of the institutions. The choice of members of the Privy Council also indicated the dismissal of other interested towns. Although the Privy Council Committee was formed to give the impression of a thorough investigation and objective decision, it chose to base its decision on the written Memorials alone without the addition of the supporting evidence prepared by the bidding towns. This was a process by which central government could achieve the outcome they desired whilst appearing to consult the people of Wales. The grant for the national museum was not large compared to Scotland and Ireland and was a small price to pay to give Wales a comparatively
uncontroversial symbol of nationhood without recognising any form of political separateness. For Government, the Museum was an instrument to appease the Welsh MP’s and to curry favour with the Welsh prior to an impending election.

When the decision was announced there was no celebration or rejoicing in Cardiff unlike Aberystwyth where there was bunting, parades and speeches. Cardiff was not satisfied with just the museum - it represented but half of what could have been, a blow to their civic ambitions. The Museum now signified their failure in achieving all their aims. Even the Cardiff Naturalists' Society who had supported the Museum in Cardiff for so long were taken over by the mood of disappointment, just making a short announcement of the decision in their annual report.

The ideality of the National Museum of Wales had served its purpose as far as it could for the civic leaders of Cardiff; its actual physical manifestation was less of a pressing issue. It took Cardiff twenty two years to complete the National Museum of Wales compared to just eight years to complete the new, larger and more complex, Town Hall and Law Courts which opened in 1906 on the same Cathays Park site. It was 1912 before even the foundation stone was laid for the Museum and it didn’t open to the public until 1927. Clearly, the mere nomination for the Museum had been instrument enough in the drive for civic hegemony, its creation would add little further to their aims.

Postscript

Soon after the decision, the Prince of Wales made a planned visit to Cardiff to lay the foundation stone of the University College building in Cathays Park. The Prince referred to Cardiff as the most important town in the Principality and the civic leaders took the opportunity of lobbying the political entourage to press, once again, for city and capital status. E. W. Edwards (1965) has examined these events and argues that, although Cardiff was granted city status in the October of 1905, it should

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also have been granted capital status but this failed due to a breakdown in communication. A. J. Balfour, the Prime Minister, was reluctant to grant Cardiff city status because there were many towns in England which were larger and would then press for city status for themselves. However:

"... the only possible justification for giving this honour to Cardiff is that it must be regarded as the capital of Wales. On its merits as a British town it has no claim, and if we were to have a Lord Mayor of Cardiff except on Welsh ground, we should lay ourselves open to claims from every town of large population who desired to possess a Lord Mayor at the head of its Council."

It was clear that Balfour intended that city status should only be granted along with capital status. However, delay in a decision being made and a lack of clarity in the official statement meant that, although Cardiff was proclaimed a city, it was not proclaimed a capital. Cardiff again achieved but half of its aim and was further disappointed that the decision had not been made earlier:

"It would at least have saved the dissipation of our national institutions. The controversy which ended in banishing the National Library to the cold shades of isolated Aberystwyth need never have arisen"

Cardiff had to wait until 1955 before capital status was officially conferred. By then, all the protagonists who had striven for the location of the National Museum and Library in Cardiff had passed away.

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6Balfour to Sanders 1st September 1905, Balfour Papers BM Add. MSS 49763, quoted in Edwards(1965) p.85

7Western Mail 23rd October 1905
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