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TOEING THE SCRATCH:
A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSITION OF WELSH PRIZE-FIGHTING, c.1750–c.1918

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ABSTRACT

Pugilism, or boxing as it is more commonly known, has arguably become one of the most exciting, important and controversial sports in the world; it has evolved from one-to-one combat ungoverned by rules into modern boxing which has a strong organisational basis and set regulations. No longer just a sport, it has become a major business with strong links to commercial enterprise and vast sums of money are often spent on broadcasting rights. Undoubtedly, public evaluation of boxing is simply one of violence, yet beyond the spectacle of violent confrontation, it is a sport that demands high levels of skill, courage, discipline, intelligence, sacrifice and respect.

The principal aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the transitional state of prize-fighting throughout the nineteenth century into early twentieth century. To achieve this, it will be necessary to consider how societal mores, particularly of middle-class moralists and religious observers affected prize-fighting, and how the sport adapted to changing social expectations in order to survive. To fully understand prize-fighting's social significance in Wales this study will consider various perspectives: the importance of locality and more widely national identity, class distinctions, and the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation on the sport.

The thesis will argue that the harsh social conditions of nineteenth century Wales drove many men and women into the prize-fighting arena. Although prize-fighting was considered illegal it was a sport that offered a beneficial convergence of the classes. The study will contend that the control of prize-fighting exerted by the gentry, along with a proliferation of reports in the burgeoning newspaper industry and wider reflection of contemporary literature, helped the sport to survive the nineteenth century. This investigation will discern how the

implementation of new rules that were introduced to regulate the sport, or at least to curtail its excesses, most notably in the Marques of Queensberry Rules (1867), helped the sport achieve greater respectability and counter the arguments of nineteenth century moralists. Moreover, in response to the preparations for war, prize-fighters were encouraged to accept positions within the armed forces and this study will analyse the impact that Welsh pugilists had on physical fitness, morale, and their understanding of what a soldier ought to represent. Finally, the thesis will view the morality of prize-fighting and deliberate whether the sport was actually brutal or beautiful!

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my gorgeous son, Connor Gardiner, he is my life!

ABBREVIATIONS

BBBC	British Boxing Board of Control
N.S.C.	National Sporting Club
BMA	British Medical Association
WMA	World Medical Association

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INTRODUCTION

SECONDS OUT

Fig.1. 'A Fatal Prize-Fight Between Two Welsh Miners',
***Illustrated Police News*, 29 May 1897.**[1]

> The very horrors of pugilism also highlight all that is noble in the ring. Courage, the quest for excellence, the overcoming of fear, dreams of transcending one's social and physical handicaps and their competitive strivings past all reasonable human limits.[2]

The above assessment by Elliot Gorn is just one of many which discusses the intricacies of prize-fighting, as writers have long been attracted to what has arguably become one of the most exciting and controversial sports in the world. Some form of prize-fighting, in the style of one-to-one unarmed combat, is one of the most ancient of all sports. The earliest recorded evidence of boxing date before the Greek and Roman empires, and the first evidence for prize-fighting is provided on Mesopotamian stone reliefs from the end of the fourth

[1] *Illustrated Police News*, 29 May 1897, p. 5.
[2] Elliot Gorn, *The Manly Art* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 12.

millennium BC. By the late Bronze Age (1600–1200 BC) images of pugilists, were found across the eastern Mediterranean.[3]

Bare-knuckle prize-fighting undoubtedly invites comparison with the gladiatorial contests widely practised by the Romans,[4] and contests of one-to-one combat for mass entertainment have lasted into the modern period. For several centuries fighting was viewed not simply as a sport, but also as a legitimate means of resolving disputes and settling matters of honour.[5] An early report of a bare-knuckle fight appeared in the *Protestant Mercury* in 1681,[6] but boxing, as it is known today, derives from bare-knuckle prize-fighting of the eighteenth century, known as the 'Noble Art'.[7] Pugilists, such as Tom Johnson, Daniel Mendoza and the Welshman, Ned Turner, literally fought their opponents to a standstill. In 1719 James Figg was publicly acclaimed as Britain's first national champion and this event is generally accepted as marking the official beginning of boxing in the modern age.[8] The sport has, nevertheless, evolved from personal combat ungoverned by rules into the organised format of modern boxing. It is no longer just a sport, but has become a significant business with vast sums of money often spent on broadcasting rights as high-profile boxing bouts draw huge audiences from across the world. On 31 March 2018 Anthony Joshua (UK) and Joseph Parker (New Zealand) fought for the world heavyweight boxing title at the Principality Stadium, Cardiff. It is estimated that Joshua earned £20 million and Parker £13 million for

[3] Kassia Boddy, *Boxing: A Cultural History* (London: Reaktion, 2008), p. 9. Also, see K. T. Frost, 'Greek Boxing', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 26 (1906), 213–25; Steven Ross Murray, 'Boxing Gloves of the Ancient World', *Journal of Combative Sport* (2008), 1–23.
[4] Christopher Johnson, 'British Championism: early Pugilism and the Works of Fielding', *Review of English Studies*, 47, 187 (1996), 334. For an example of such comparison see Moses Brown, 'A Survey of the Amphitheatre', in Roger Lonsdale (ed.), *The New Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 290–2. Also, see Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 126–49; Joyce Carol Oates, *On Boxing* (New York: Dolphin/Doubleday, 1987), pp. 41–4.
[5] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 11.
[6] *Protestant Mercury* (1681), and cited in Gilbert Odd, *The Hamlyn Encyclopaedia of Boxing* (London: Hamlyn, 1989), p. 183.
[7] Oates, *On Boxing*, p. 44.
[8] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 11.

the bout, which was watched by 78,000 people in the stadium and thousands more on pay-per-view television.[9]

What makes boxing fascinating for academic study is that it is a sport that generates both attraction and repulsion in equal measures. People have enjoyed boxing as either participants, or spectators, and it has captured the imagination of a large cross-section of the public, who enjoy the drama of two men pitting their physical and mental skills against each other. At the same time, there is little doubt that a significant number of people view boxing as simply violent: the unmediated, unbridled fistic onslaught of man against man (or woman against woman) is unquestionably the most graphic picture associated with prize-fighting.[10] As can be seen in Fig. 1 which illustrates a vicious bare-knuckle prize-fight that resulted in the loss of life, valour cannot be feigned in the squared circle.[11] Fighters climb through the ropes into the ring and immediately have to face their fears with only their fists for protection. Their objective is to deliver decisive blows to the head and upper body to render their opponent incapable or unwilling to sustain the contest.[12] Yet, beyond the spectacle of violent confrontation, boxing is a sport that demands high levels of skill, courage, discipline, intelligence, sacrifice and respect.[13]

Numerous and copious studies have been conducted about boxing from the 'coffee-table' book to more scholarly texts. General texts on the sport range from those produced by Peter Arnold and Gilbert Odd to wider study produced by Hugh McIlvanney in his compilation on boxing.[14] McIlvanney is a well-known, award winning, sports journalist and

[9] 'Anthony Joshua vs Joseph Parker prize money: how much of the fight purse will the winner get?', *Telegraph Sport*, 31 March 2018, and provided online: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/boxing/2018/03/31/anthony-joshua-vs-joseph-parker-prize-money-much-fight-purse/ [Accessed 4 June 2018].
[10] Loic Wacquant, 'The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers Think and Feel about Their Trade', *Theory and Society*, 24, 4 (1995), 495.
[11] Ibid., 515.
[12] Ibid., 495.
[13] Oates, *On Boxing*, p. 25. She further states that boxing is 'intelligent, cunning and strategic, an act of consummate self-determination', p.26.
[14] Peter Arnold, *History of Boxing* (London: Deans International, 1985); Odd, *Hamlyn Encyclopaedia of Boxing*; Hugh McIlvanney, *McIlvanney on Boxing* (London: Mainstream, 1996).

writer who reported on many sporting events for papers such as the *Observer* and *Independent*.[15]

Although his book (*McIlvanney on Boxing*) offers the reader important facts about numerous boxing bouts, it does not provide any detailed accounts concerning the background of the boxers mentioned. Specialist works, notably those of Dennis Brailsford, Ken Sheard and John Sugden, have examined the social significance of prize-fighting/boxing in Britain, touching on themes such as the historical continuity of boxing in a global context, the political economy of the sport, and the 'civilising' process.[16] Working with the grain of these existing studies, the principal aims of this investigation are to provide a comprehensive analysis of the transitional state of prize-fighting in Wales throughout the nineteenth century and into the opening years of the twentieth century, taking into account the participants, the audience, as well as the cultural and social changes that occurred in this period. It will also consider the morality of prize-fighting from those who wanted to see it banned to those who believed it could be reformed and provide some benefits for the working class. To achieve this, it will be necessary to consider how societal mores, particularly of middle-class moralists, affected prize-fighting and how the sport adapted to changing social expectations to survive. For example, what compromises did the exponents of prize-fighting have to make to change an outlawed illegal bare-knuckle contest into a legitimate, modern and institutionalised sport, with gloved boxing bouts and rules and regulations? How did prize-fighting survive a programme of reform, including legislative changes, and how did it respond to the criticism of religious spokespeople? Moreover, to fully comprehend prize-fighting's social significance in Welsh society, the thesis will consider various perspectives:

[15] 'Hugh McIlvanney: A great among sporting greats', *Independent*, 5 December 2005, and provided online: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/hugh-mcilvanney-a-giant-among-sporting-greats-518223.html [Accessed 5 June 2018].
[16] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*: *A Social History of Prize Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1988); Kenneth Sheard, 'Aspects of Boxing in the Western "Civilising Process"', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 32, 1 (1997), 31–57.

the importance of locality and more widely national identity, and the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation.

In 2000 Mike Huggins stated that Victorian leisure and sport 'received limited attention in recent decades',[17] while Dennis Brailsford earlier acknowledged that boxing has been 'subject to limited historical attention, and evidence on all British popular sports, including boxing, through the nineteenth century is still undigested'.[18] In agreement with Huggins and Brailsford, Martin Johns and Matthew Taylor have suggested that there is 'an absence of an established academic historical literature on boxing in Britain and there are limited explorations in what remains a vast and largely unchartered area'.[19] Therefore, there is still a need for greater subtlety of analysis concerning this fascinating and controversial sport, especially prize-fighting in modern Wales. There is still insufficient serious historical study which compares the transitional nature of industrial Welsh society and prize-fighting from 1750 onwards. In contrast to England, there is little understanding regarding prize-fighting, its origins and more importantly its significance in the social and cultural calendar of Wales. Some very gifted boxers came from Wales, notably Jim Driscoll, Johnny Basham, Jimmy Wilde, Freddie Welsh (aka Frederick Hall Thomas), Howard Winstone, Tommy Farr, Johnny Owen, and, more recently, Joe Calzaghe. Some interesting studies already exist, including *Wales and its Boxers* (2008) by Peter Stead and Gareth Williams, which throws light on the lives and fighting careers of famous boxers. This study also briefly addresses the ways in which the culture of the sport was embedded in Welsh society, whilst offering a general account of the boxing audience and appraises the literature on prize-fighting.

[17] Mike Huggins, 'Second-Class Citizens? English Middle-Class Culture and Sport, 1850–1910: A Reconsideration', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 1 (March 2000), 1.
[18] Brailsford, *Bareknuckle*s, p. 10.
[19] Martin Johns and Matthew Taylor, 'Boxing in History', *Sport in History*, 31, 4 (December 2011), 357.

However, their work predominantly focuses on twentieth century Welsh fighters, having only one essay examining earlier bare-knuckle prize-fighting.[20]

Gareth Jones' *The Boxers of Wales* (2009–17), offers further insights into the famous and often forgotten boxing champions, from the days of bare-knuckle fighting to modern times. Each portrait provides details of the boxing careers of these men alongside a brief description of their background. Whilst Jones' investigations are fascinating and reinforced with photographic evidence, they are simply an overview of those who participated in the sport, and there is no in-depth commentary of the relationship between boxing and their communities. Lawrence Davies' book on *Welsh Mountain Fighters* (2011) explores various Welsh bare-knuckle and boxing booth fighters. His latest work, *The Story of Welsh Boxing* (2019), covers the period from 1700–1837 and brings to life memories of prize-fighters who fought not only with their fists but with swords and other weaponry. The text contains colourful tales of fighters such as James Figg and Jack Broughton, through to William Charles of Newport (Champion of Wales, 1828). Both studies by Lawrence offer a solid examination of the careers of the fighters and their wider experiences, and give a general account of some of the issues faced by the sport in Wales.[21] All of the studies mentioned have helped to underpin this current investigation. However they differ from the principal aim of this current work as, in the main, they concentrate on the lives and careers of chosen prize-fighters, and offer little analysis of the transition of industrial Wales and its affect on prize-fighting. Furthermore, there is no detailed examination of the boxing audience, gender roles or the complex relationship with religious organisations, especially the moral and ethical issues contiguous with the sport. There are also limited comparisons between prize-fighting in Wales and other parts of the United Kingdom regarding the transition of boxing from a

[20] Peter Stead and Gareth Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008).
[21] Lawrence Davies, *Mountain Fighters: Lost Tales of Welsh Boxing* (Cardiff: Peerless Press, 2011); Lawrence Davies, *The Story of Welsh Boxing: Prize-Fighters of Wales* (Brighton: Pitch Publishing, 2019).

degenerate entertainment to that of a respectable sporting activity.[22] Therefore, there are still many aspects of prize-fighting in Wales that require fresh investigation. This current study intends to discuss these fighters in greater depth and expose the reasons why they entered the ring as well as offering an analysis if whether, or not, their careers as prize-fighters helped or hindered them throughout their lives. However, this investigation is not just about the history of boxing in Wales, but rather a critical examination of the social and cultural issues in Welsh society between 1750 and 1918. By studying prize-fighting in Wales it is possible to discern the character, values and priorities of Welsh society in this given period, particularly prevailing ideologies, ethnicity, class distinctiveness, violence, urbanisation, gender roles, and religious world views. All are part of sports history in general and boxing history in particular.[23] The historiography of modern Wales helps to flesh out the changing social landscape as a consequence of rapid industrialisation. This study is therefore centred on achieving a clear understanding of how these industrial changes affected the cultural foundations in Wales, especially the changing nature of sporting pastimes including prize-fighting. Welsh prize-fighting has had strong links with many other cities and regions such as London, Bristol, the north of England, and transatlantic ties as well. By comparing Wales with elsewhere, nationally and internationally, the intention here is to reflect on the transition of the sport during this period by offering a wider context than previous works have hitherto achieved.

Since the introduction of social history as a sub-field of the wider discipline there has been a plethora of works relating to a greater appreciation of the lived experience of the past, particularly the nineteenth century. John Golby and William Purdue's, *The Civilisation*

[22] For further details see Gareth Jones, *The Boxers of Wales: Cardiff* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2009), and his three other studies: *The Boxers of Wales: Merthyr, Aberdare and Pontypridd* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2011): *The Boxers of Wales: Rhondda* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2012), and *The Boxers of Wales: The Boxers of Newport: The Gwent Valleys and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2017).
[23] Gorn, *Manly Art*, p. 12.

of the Crowd (1984), examined the changes in popular culture through the context of work, the environment in which people lived and died and family.[24] Equally, in Wales there has also been an emphasis in the study of how communities interact. In their edited collection, *People and Protest: Wales 1815–1880* (1988),Trevor Herbert and Gareth Elwyn Jones scrutinise a number of historical sources in order to provide an insight into protests in Wales, notably the Rebecca Riots and Chartism movements during the nineteenth century.[25] Eileen and Stephen Yeo's, *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590–1914* (1981), widened the debate to allow greater discussions of power relations and social conflicts along with changes to popular culture.[26] All of the above publications have offered different interpretations regarding the prevailing social concerns of this period and helped influence the completion of this thesis.

Peter Bailey in *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* (1978) exposed the transformation of popular leisure between 1830 and 1885, including middle-class schemes for 'rational recreation' which was an attempt by the middle-class to control social activities and behaviour through wide-ranging proposals to restrict working-class leisure and recreational activities.[27] Encompassing this work, in *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c. 1780–c. 1880* (1980), Hugh Cunningham also discussed the growth of leisure during industrialisation. He examined many aspects of leisure and the notion of 'rational recreation' and its desirability to improve leisure habits and amenities of the working-class.[28] Taking into account the research of Bailey and Cunningham, this current study will explore the theme of 'rational recreation'

[24] John M. Golby and A. William Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd. Popular Culture in England, 1750–1900* (London: Batsford, 1984).
[25] Trevor Herbert and Gareth Elwyn Jones, *People & Protest: Wales 1815-1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988).
[26] Eileen Yeo and Stephen Yeo, *Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914* (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1981).
[27] Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830–1885* (London: Routledge, 1978).
[28] Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c. 1780–c. 1880* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980).

and how it impacted on prize-fighting during the nineteenth century in Wales and further afield.

There have been many publications regarding sports history. A number of these texts have been invaluable to this research as they have offered incisive comments on work and leisure in Britain. Richard Holt, in his *Sport and the British* (1989), explored the nature of sport since the late eighteenth century in terms of changes in society, politics and culture. Holt also looked at prevailing and contemporary attitudes towards sport and how it influenced male identity (ies).[29] Derek Birley's, *Sport and the Making of Britain* (1993), provided a comprehensive overview of the evolution of sport in Britain, including the role that politics, religion and economics played.[30] In 2004, Mike Huggins took up the challenge to assess how sport in Victorian Britain encouraged emulation throughout the world. He sought to explain how sporting activities, rules and mass participation, spread across the British Empire and further afield, and significantly how this was reported in the press.[31]

In addition, the work of Dennis Brailsford has underpinned this study. His *Sport, Time, And Society* (1991), examined the rise and transformation of organised sport and its impact on society.[32] Brailsford has also offered several lines of thought regarding prize-fighting in England during the nineteenth century. In his *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize-Fighting* (1988), he examined not only the London Ring but also regional developments of nineteenth century prize-fighting.[33] Drawing on the work of Brailsford, it has been possible to compare prize-fighting in Wales during the nineteenth century with that of other areas of Britain.

[29] Richard Holt, *Sport and the British. A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
[30] Derek Birley, *Sport and the making of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993).
[31] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon, 2004).
[32] Dennis Brailsford, *Sport, Time, and Society: The British at Play* (London: Routledge, 1991).
[33] Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1989).

For the reasons stated this investigation intends to fill the lacunae in our knowledge of prize-fighting in Wales from the late-eighteenth century onwards as there is insufficient academic research regarding this sport in Wales and the relevant primary evidence has been significantly underused. Taking on-board Peter Bailey's comment that 'the scholar's preoccupation with the history of the working-class experience' generally suggests that there has been 'too little attention paid to the leisure of other classes',[34] the current work will use class analysis as a defining investigatory approach. Thus, was prize-fighting just a working-class sport? This study will look at attitudes to leisure and pleasurable activities, especially the fractious relationship with prize-fighting expressed by nineteenth century moralists. So, did prize-fighting become marginalised with the gradual or temporary withdrawal of support from members of the upper and middle classes? What makes this enquiry unique is that to-date there has been little in-depth analysis of the transition of prize-fighting in modern Wales in such a social context. Existing academic work related to this topic has tended to provide a basic assessment of the subject rather than a thorough analytical examination. Indeed, much has been written about Welsh boxers of the nineteenth century, but there is little research regarding the followers and patronage of fighters in the country. Furthermore, there is certainly a gap in the current literature concerning the transition of prize-fighting into the formal sport of boxing during the nineteenth century, including the reporting of these fights, their dates and venues, in the regional and national newspapers. It is arguable that existing work relating to this topic also lacks a detailed analysis of primary source material. This investigation thereby seeks to offer a comprehensive analysis of pugilism in nineteenth century Welsh newspapers and is supported by additional reports from a wider selection of the British press in the same period. These provide detailed accounts, not only on the prize-fights but the mixed reaction to such bouts and the interaction between pugilists and their respective communities. As such it bridges those gaps left by previous studies on Welsh boxing by delivering an in-depth analysis of the transition of prize-

[34] Peter Bailey, 'The Politics and Poetics of Modern British Leisure', *Rethinking History*, 3, 2 (1999), 151.

fighting in Wales into its modern-day format, highlighting changes to the rules and regulations which governed the sport, and the evolution of different fighting styles. It will also examine the way poets and novelists have depicted prize-fighting, and those thorny issues, such as the ethics of the sport as determined by contemporary religious spokespeople or other nineteenth century moralists, and the controversial role of women as pugilists.

The methodology for completing this study was to first research nineteenth century Welsh prize-fighters to gain deeper insight into not only their fighting careers but also their social backgrounds and experiences, as well as the conditioning of their communities and the environment in which they lived, fought and died. A number of fighters were then identified as prime examples to use throughout the thesis. Following this, extensive research took place regarding the social history of Britain and Wales during the nineteenth century. There was a specific focus on the changing culture of Wales as a consequence of rapid industrialisation and how this influenced Welsh society, especially prize-fighting and sport in general. The completion of this thesis has been reliant on a wide range of primary sources, and this is reinforced with a substantial body of secondary evidence. There is a significant body of both secondary and primary evidence which has enabled a comprehensive examination of the history of prize-fighting in Britain and Wales during the nineteenth century. This current study has worked with the grain of the secondary literature that is available, but significantly it has enhanced an understanding of the sport by extracting relevant primary evidence. Using the contextual information provided by secondary sources available and evidence drawn from newspaper reports, contemporary magazines and quarter session reports, the thesis explored a mixture of sporting traditions, social circumstances and popular culture in relation to prize-fighting in Wales, including the importance of national, regional and local sporting identity.

During the period of research a considerable number of Welsh and English newspapers were explored.[35] These newspapers were scrutinised in-depth as they offered not only excellent examples of prize-fights in Wales and England, but provided crucial information regarding the numbers in attendance at fights and fight venues. Additionally, these newspaper reports conveyed important evidence regarding the changing nature of Welsh society during the nineteenth century and its relationship with prize-fighting. The circulation of magazines, which included, *Monthly Sporting Magazine* and *Punch Magazine*[36], between c.1750–c.1914 provided invaluable insights, as they not only supplied important information regarding dates, times, venues and results of prize-fights during the period studied, but also crucial background information on some of the boxers that feature in the thesis, along with literary assessments of boxing.

The thesis is divided into six chapters, with Chapter One offering a greater understanding of the impact that the sport had on different groups in society. It will observe the relationship between prize-fighting and community during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and locate the sport's place in Welsh society. Much has been written about the rise in prize-fighting in England by the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, this chapter intends to investigate what impact the sport had in Wales in comparison to other parts of Britain. For this reason, the research will examine how changes in an expanding industrial society not only influenced community values and cultural activities, but also affected the more violent aspects of the sport and how it had to accept reform in order to survive. Furthermore, did the more obvious ways in which Welsh communities were being transformed, notably the high levels of migration into new industrial centres and the consequent demographic shifts, desperately poor living and working conditions, including the fluctuation of employment and wages, play any part in enticing

[35] Refer to bibliography for a comprehensive list of newspapers.
[36] *Monthly Sporting Magazine* (1793-1870); *Punch Magazine* (1841-1918).

Welshmen into the ring? The social trajectories of those who have entered the ring will be analysed to try and understand what motivated pugilists during this period. Further questions will also be asked including why there was widespread interest in boxing, and why did certain groups in Welsh society embrace or scorn these pugilists? Was boxing, as many believe, restricted to a working-class occupation? Moreover, was it economic deprivation or rather social isolation that coaxed Welshmen into the ring, or perhaps more obvious motivational factors such as a thirst for success, money, fame and masculine honour? Did these Welsh fighters exchange blows as a way of enhancing their status in their communities or did they fight as an outlet for highly competitive and individual impulses? The association between prize-fighting and national identity will be addressed alongside the examination of how immigration into Wales influenced participation.[37] The work will profile the backgrounds and social status of individual boxers. Did these like-minded fighting men share the same backgrounds and values, and what did they achieve from partaking in boxing bouts? To answer these questions, prize-fighting can only be fully understood by first studying the society in which the sport was embraced, while an analysis of sport, and boxing in particular, can help add to our understanding of the broader social changes that occurred in Wales. By studying a number of Welsh pugilists alongside some of the important features of social change in nineteenth century Wales, particularly in industrial areas, pugilism can act as a lens through which to view key issues in terms of national identity, morality and the prevailing class structure and prejudices of the period. Therefore, this chapter will investigate the origins of 'manliness' and provide a contextual background for many of the later chapters.

Leisure and sport, including prize-fighting, was a major factor in the formation of individual and group identities. The nineteenth century saw fluctuations in support for prize-fighting between the different classes and Chapter Two provides an insight into the

[37] For an in-depth discussion regarding sport and its links to identity see Martin Johnes, '"Eighty Minute Patriots"? National Identity and Sport in Modern Wales', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 4 (December 2000), 93–110.

supporters of prize-fighting known as the 'Fancy'. For example, in December 1818 the *Morning Chronicle* commenting on the fight ('The Grand Pugilistic Combat') between Jack Randal and the Welshman Ned Turner in Hertfordshire reported that 20,000 people assembled embracing a great variety of people from the aristocrat to 'the speculative conveyancer'.[38] So, who were these followers of the prize-ring and why did they have such a fascination for this violent sport? To address this, the changing relationship between participants and spectators will be explored as well as the social composition of the boxing crowd. It will closely scrutinise the interactions between prize-fighters and supporters, especially those who gave patronage to the sport. Class distinctions are a key component of our understanding of the nature of sport and this chapter will investigate what connects particular groups to certain sporting activities and what role these play in generating inequalities. By doing so, this will help to explain who the people were who supported prize-fighting in Wales and importantly why they did so, and what were the consequences for community life more generally.

Newspapers are an essential component of this research because they yield not only historical data concerning specific individuals, but importantly they help to piece together the story of everyday life in industrial Welsh communities. Therefore, the aim of Chapter Three is to examine the reporting of prize-fighting throughout the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth century. Due to the newspaper's strategic position as a chronicler of events it will be essential to examine the relationship between national and regional newspapers, and the reporting of prize-fighting. The newspaper reports reveal a great deal about societal changes and responses to sport in general and prize-fighting in particular. Included in this assessment is the changing style of reporting on such sporting events by various journalists and other observers.

[38] 'The Grand Pugilistic Combat between Randal and Turner', *Morning Chronicle*, 7 December 1818, p. 3.

Writing about prize-fighting became more focused in the 1820s and at the forefront of this was undoubtedly Pierce Egan, notably in his *Boxiana* which provided graphic accounts of earlier and contemporary pugilists.[39] Chapter Three will consider the link between informed observers and prize-fighting. It will examine some of the well-known writers of this period and analyse their interest in prize-fighting. Why did people, such as Egan, Lord Byron and many literary observers, express such a fascination with the sport? Furthermore, did this scholarly interest in prize-fighting help to promote the sport? By analysing a number of well-known novels that included prize-fighters in the story, this chapter will debate whether the use of fiction can be used as a reliable source of historical material, by interpreting the past based upon sources and then recreating a particular place and time, that helps provide alternative perspectives of nineteenth century Wales and its links with prize-fighting.

Fighting techniques and strategies changed to varying degrees during the nineteenth century and this will be the focus of Chapter Four. There are many reasons why styles and strategies altered, including but not limited to, better nutrition and technological advancements. However, did this make boxers from the early twentieth century more robust than their nineteenth century prize-fighter counterparts? Research in this area is complex as no period has been identified as having a particular style, yet by analysing the techniques of Welsh fighters such as Ned Turner, Morgan Crowther, Shoni Engineer, Jimmy Wild (to name a few), this chapter will seek to draw some parallels between the fighting styles of Welsh boxers throughout the period under study. The chapter will further discuss the development of alternative fighting styles and new techniques, and it will consider how changes in British society influenced alterations to the rules of the sport, the prize-fighter's lifestyles and the mechanics of fighting. Finally, the introduction of boxing manuals during the nineteenth

[39] Pierce Egan, *Boxiana; or, Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism* (3 vols. Vol. 1: London: Smeeton, 1813; vols. 2–3: London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1818–21).

century will be considered, particularly the author's reasons for compiling them and the impact these manuals had on the way prize-fighters conditioned themselves and prepared for fights.

Prize-fighting, which has led to the death of many protagonists, is still, arguably, a complex and controversial sport. To illustrate this Joyce Carol Oates has stated that there is 'nothing fundamentally playful about boxing. One plays football, one doesn't play boxing'.[40] Kenneth Sheard equally has observed that 'a sport like boxing is undoubtedly one of the more physically damaging and violent contemporary sports'.[41] For this reason the concerns of the medical profession have led to the British Medical Association (BMA) and World Medical Association (WMA) regularly calling for legislation to abolish boxing, both amateur and professional. As recently as October 2016, doctors, other health experts and politicians have insisted that boxing be banned after a twenty-five-year-old professional fighter, Mike Towell, died on 29 September 2016 from severe bleeding and swelling to the brain following his boxing bout with Dale Evans in Glasgow. The late Welsh Labour MP, Paul Flynn, who failed on two occasions (1998 and 2005) to ban blows to the head in boxing matches, added that boxing was the worst example of a dangerous sport due to the fact that 'the whole purpose is to render the opponent unconscious'.[42]

Surprisingly, there seems to be little written about the controversy of boxing and the medical establishment alongside the legality of boxing. Considering the above statements of Oates and Sheard, Chapter Five will study attitudes towards boxing and examine both the morality and legality of prize-fighting from the nineteenth century onwards and compare it to modern day attitudes to the sport. This chapter will question if attitudes have changed over time and, if so, why and what influences have affected these attitudes? Jack Anderson's

[40] Oates, *On Boxing*, p. 19.
[41] Sheard, 'Aspects of Boxing in the Western Civilising Process', 33.
[42] 'Boxing: Mike Towell death prompts renewed calls for boxing ban', *Guardian Online*, 1 October 2018. See https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2016/oct/01/mike-towell-death-prompts-renewed-calls-for-boxing-ban [Accessed 14 June 2018].

assessment of the legality of boxing in *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love?* along with Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn's *Law and Sport in Contemporary Society* will be influential in the construction of this chapter.[43] The ideological and ethical principles of prize-fighting will also be considered, taking into account the statement by Loic Wacquant that

> fighting is in a man's blood and they cannot get it out of their system once they have had a taste for it… given how little most fighters earn and the multi-fold privations they must endure in the monastic day-to-day preparation for fleeting moments of glory or agony in the squared circle, economic payoffs fall woefully short of accounting for the seductions of boxing.[44]

Alongside the alleged immorality of boxing this chapter highlights racial discrimination, gender stereotyping and class prejudice. Finally, the principle of 'Muscular Christianity' will be investigated, especially the fractious relationship that existed between the boxing fraternity and nineteenth century moralists.

With previous chapters concentrating mostly on the nineteenth century, Chapter Six will primarily concern itself with an examination of prize-fighting at the *fin de siècle*, and will consider whether the application of technological improvements had a considerable impact on the sport. This section will debate the development of the mass entertainment industry and the influence of the media on boxing. Also, it will explore the development of formal organisations linked to boxing, particularly the National Sporting Club (1891 – later known as the British Boxing Board of Control, c.1929), and the impact this had on the sport, especially in relation to Welsh fighters. The chapter will explain the attempts to regulate and thereby control boxing *vis à vis* with illegal bare-knuckle fighting that continued to take place

[43] Jack Anderson, *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love?* (Oxford: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007); Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn, *Law and Sport in Contemporary Society* (London: Frank Cass, 2000). Other influential studies include Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn, 'Regulating Sport: Finding a Role for the Law', *Sport in Society*, 13, 2 (2010), 367–79; Neil Parpworth, 'Parliament and the Boxing Bill', *Sport and the Law Journal*, 4, 1 (1996), 24–31; Jack Anderson, 'Pugilistic Prosecutions: Prize Fighting and the Courts in Nineteenth Century Britain', *Sports Historian*, 21, 2 (2001), 35–53.
[44] Wacquant, 'Pugilistic Point of View', 490.

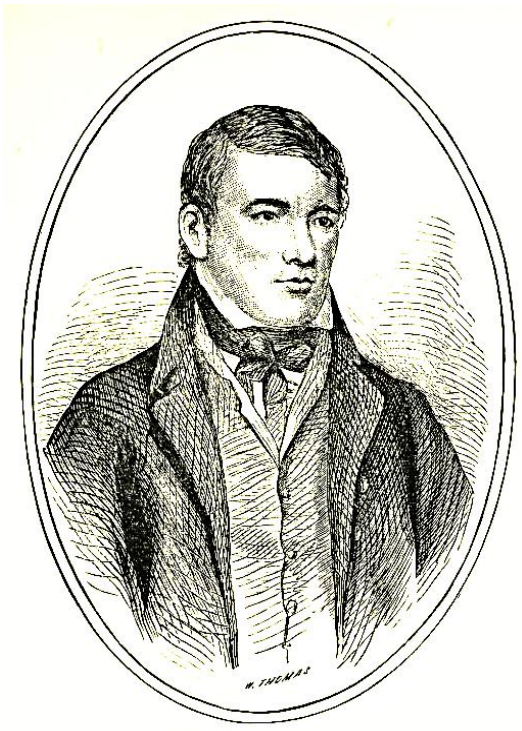
and tarnish the reputation of the sport. Finally, this research will concern itself with Wales in the immediate years before and during the First World War. It will offer an analysis of the societal changes that occurred and how the potential for extensive European conflict affected boxing. To explore this topic in greater depth specific Welsh boxers, such as Johnny Basham, Jimmy Wilde and Freddy Welsh will be scrutinised, while other boxers who fought in the First World War will be considered as this will expose the impact of war on their boxing careers.

Ultimately this study will provide a broader understanding of prize-fighting's place in Welsh society and culture. This will afford a better insight into its functional significance and why prize-fighting was enjoyed, encouraged and despised. It will also contend that prize-fighting had to go through a state of transition during the nineteenth century that allowed the sport to survive and gradually deviate from its eminence as an 'illegal' sport.

CHAPTER ONE

Identity, Honour and Self-Preservation. Prize-Fighting in Nineteenth Century Welsh Society: A Historical Perspective.

Fig. 1. 1. Jack Randall.[1]



JACK RANDALL, "THE NONPAREIL."
From a Miniature by G. SHARPLES.

Fig.1.2. Ned Turner.[2]

NED TURNER
From a Portrait by WIVILL.

The Grand Pugilistic combat between Randall and Turner.

No event within recollection of our reporter has excited so much general interest as the battle we are about to record, nor does it occur to our recollection that such heavy sums have been pending the issue of any similar event. 20,000 people had assembled, embracing a great variety, from the Noble Lord to the speculative conveyancer.[3]

The fight by Rounds

1. Randall's attitude in readiness for play, with his right shoulder dropped to hit with that hand, was picturesque. Turner made a left-handed hit upon Randall's eye and Randall threw his opponent in a trial of strength. The round lasted 12 minutes.

[1] Image taken from Henry Downes Miles, *Pugilistica* (3 Vols. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1906), I, p. 364.
[2] Ibid, I, p. 328.
[3] 'The Grand Pugilistic Combat between Randall and Turner', *Morning Chronicle*, 7 December 1818, p. 3.

2. The men seemed to be fighting with their feet as well as their hands. Randall had the best of the in-fighting and threw his man.
3. Turner appeared as if drunk and he made a lolloping hit with the right and Randall returned the attempt with a right handed hit. Turner was punished again, with blood pouring from his nose.
4. Turner returned some shots upon the head of Randall but Randall had broken away too far to sustain any other injury than a small cut upon the forehead.
5. Randall received another hit upon the contused tip of the nose, but after having the best of the close quarters, he threw his adversary again. The fight had now lasted 54 minutes.
6. Turner made hits, left, right and left, the two last of which told and Randall's hits were short.
7. A long round and much fighting and Turner had rather the best of it but in the close Randall showed such specimen of an English bulldog, and so exchequered Turners head, that it exhibited one mass of claret, and he was thrown.
8. Randall with a tremendous blow split the bridge of Turners nose, and afterwards mauled him again at the ropes.
9. Turner showed weakness but a gallant round was fought, and both bled freely, but Randall again had the fall.
10. Turner had no chance after this, he was slow at times and Randall did nearly as he liked with him.
11. Turner complained that Randall had stepped upon his toe and said to his antagonist 'Do you call that fair'. Randall smiled with the confidence of a victor and after a rally, Randall hit him hard in the body in going down.
12. Turner was again punished in head and body and he fell from weakness.
13. This round reduced the battle to a certainty. Turner made a hit and Randall returned with another tremendous right-handed hit upon the nose, which he immediately repeated, and the blood flew up a tremendous height, and scattered about on the outside of the ropes.
14. Randall gave Turner the first knock-down blow by a left-handed hit upon the body, and none but the bravest of the brave would have come again.

15 – 18. Until the 18th round Randall had his own way, administering punishment in every round; but in this Turner made a good stand; but by his exertion, he fell from weakness.

In the following round, both fell out of the ring, from a balance upon the ropes, and Turner was bleeding copiously inwardly. He made a gallant but unsuccessful stand in the 20th. In the 30th Randall received a hit on the chin, but he served his man for it by another knock-down. Turner, in fact, was down every round, and Randall had strength upon him

> throughout. Turner stood up until the 38th round when Randall finished him by a flush knock-down blow, in 2 hours and 22 minutes.[4]

The above newspaper review describes the preliminaries and 'blow by blow' account of the long-awaited boxing bout on 5 December 1818 between two famous prize-fighters of the early nineteenth century, Jack Randall and Ned Turner. Born in London on 25 November 1794 Randall, who was known as the 'Nonpareil of the Ring', was an Anglo-Irishman and one of the leading prize-fighters of the period. The highlight of his 'ring' career was arguably his bout with the talented Welsh prize-fighter, Ned Turner. Born on 8 November 1791 Turner had a fearsome reputation as a fighter and, at the age of twenty-five, was imprisoned for two months in Newgate on a charge of manslaughter for killing his opponent in the prize-ring.[5] Even so, Turner became known as the 'Pugilistic Prince of Wales' as he earned the respect of the prize-fighting fraternity, both in and out of the ring. [6] Turner's gentlemanly behaviour and respect for opponents was evident during his fight in June 1817 with Jack Scroggins. The *Norfolk Chronicle* recording that:

> The battle between Turner and Scroggins was decided on Tuesday, in Hertfordshire. On meeting each other they shook hands with much apparent friendship, and retired to the extremities of the ring to strip. During the fight the men's seconds, for some reason, instead of keeping opposite corners, nursed their principles between rounds side by side. As they sat on the knees of their bottle-holders, Turner stretched out a hand and took Scroggins's to show him that he admired his pluck and that there was no ill-will.[7]

As can be seen from the detailed account of the Randall versus Turner fight, bare-knuckle prize-fights were very often violent encounters. It seems such contests enthused many people as they thrived on the sport's brutality for entertainment. Yet, at the same time, these violent interactions also shocked and appalled others. Reports condemning prize-fights

[4] Ibid.
[5] Old Bailey Proceedings Online, t18161030–8. 'Edward Turner: Killing: Murder', 30 October 1816, p. 12 See www.oldbaileyonline.org [Accessed 26 January 2014].
[6] Gareth Williams, 'A Brutal Passion: Bare-knuckle Bruisers and Mountain Fighters', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 6.
[7] 'Boxing', *Norfolk Chronicle*, 14 June 1817, p. 2.

were frequently printed by the press, including *The Times* which had previously stated in January 1788 that:

> To the disgrace of *The Times*, boxing has been introduced to the public as a national art. Must a man, to [assuage]... his vigour, risk the loss of his eye, or his teeth, or, as experience has often proved, of his life? There are many rural exercises, not attended by danger, equally invigorating, and at which almost every man could play.[8]

Over a century later the *Aberdare Times* in December 1885 continued to express its concerns regarding prize-fighting in Wales, stating that

> A more disgusting thing than prize fighting it is hardly possible to conceive... That it should happen in our midst is an outrage to decency, and the brutes who take part in it... should be punished severely. We cannot look upon such people as anything other than beasts.[9]

Class distinction may have played its part in these moral judgements regarding the violent nature of prize-fighting, with the editors of the newspapers mentioned more likely to have been familiar with the leisure activities of rural life than those of industrial communities. However, no matter what the reason was for such criticism, and whether this condemnation was harsh or fair, it is questionable why anybody would want to partake in this type of activity. In observation, John Sugden believes that the answer to this question lies in the established social and economic conditions in which people lived at this time.[10] He further suggests that 'the fact that physical combat was viewed as a legitimate means of resolving disputes and matters of honour would have surely aided the development of prize fighting in this period'.[11] This was certainly the case in nineteenth century Wales where violence and hardship were common factors of everyday life for many people. Incidents of drunken and violent behaviour in Welsh towns were commonplace and an increase in prosecutions for violent crimes became evident after the late 1820s. By 1851 the rate of

[8] 'Boxing', *The Times*, 8 January 1788, p. 2.
[9] *Aberdare Times*, 26 December 1885, p. 4, and cited in Stead and Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers*, p. 15.
[10] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 17.
[11] Ibid, p. 11.

people committed for trial for such offences and consequently being imprisoned after Petty Session convictions for assault had risen by almost two-thirds. In Merthyr between 1842 and 1859 a third to a half of all charges were of assaults and drunken disorderly conduct,[12] while a combined rate of one violent crime per every sixty-three of the population was recorded in Cardiff, Swansea and Newport in 1858.[13] At the same time, between 1836 and 1854 those convicted and imprisoned as a result of summary prosecutions in the three south West Wales counties, and the border counties of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, rose from 262 to 669.[14] By 1871 violent crimes affected 1 in 237 of the inhabitants of Wales.[15]

Quarter Sessions records and regional newspapers frequently reported on numerous violent disruptions, including drunken assaults, stabbings, assaults on police officers and murder.[16] One example recorded in the *Huddersfield Chronicle* in November 1881 explained how a number of men who had been drinking alcohol in Llantrisant, Glamorgan, decided to 'deliberately assault everyone they met in the streets, which resulted in one particular man

[12] David J. V. Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), p. 71; Andy Croll, *Civilising The Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870–1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 69, and for a detailed account of public drunkenness see pp. 79–87 ('Disrupting the Codes: The Unpredictability of Public Drunkenness').
[13] Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. 71.
[14] David J. V. Jones, 'Rebecca, Crime and Policing: A Turning Point', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1 (1990), 106, and citing Parliamentary Papers, Goal Returns, 183750. Also, see Peter King, 'The Impact of Urbanisation on Murder Rates and on the Geography of Homicide in England and Wales, 1780–1850', *Historical Journal*, 53, 3 (2010), 671–98.
[15] Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth Century Wales*, pp. 66–7. Also, see 'The Conquering of "China": Crime in an Industrial Community, 1842–64', in his *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1982), pp. 85–116.
[16] For example, in July 1840 Thomas Rees assaulted a police officer and was sent to the House of Corrections for two months with hard labour, while, in January 1841, Patrick Donovan was charged with riot and assault of a police officer and received a two months term of imprisonment, again with hard labour, and three months later Edward Hopkins was accused of the manslaughter of John Clark, imprisoned for six months with hard labour. Evidence is plentiful in these records throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century and examples are frequently recorded for actions of violent disorder such as James Sullivan who, on 26 August 1865, assaulted Robert Barry with a knife, while, on 29 November 1864, Joseph James unlawfully assaulted George Garrett, a constable of Abergavenny. See GwA, Quarter Sessions Minute Book (QMB), 11 (April 1836–January 1842), p. 182; GwA, Quarter Sessions Calendar of Prisoners (QSCP), 11 (1861–6), p. 2. Examples of newspaper reports of this period include, 'Violent Assault on Police', *South Wales Daily News*, 21 February 1872, p. 3; 'Wounding at Merthyr', *South Wales Daily News*, 23, February 1872, p. 4; 'Murder near Aberdare', *Newport Gazette*, 24 October 1857, p. 4. Also, see Andy Croll, 'Street Disorder, Surveillance and Shame: Regulating Behaviour in the Public Spaces of the late Victorian British Town', *Social History*, 24, 3 (1999), 250–68.

being knocked down and left for dead in the roadway'.[17] On an earlier occasion, the *South Wales Daily News* commented that there were no less than twenty-three charges on the police sheets which were brought before the magistrates on a Monday morning in February 1872, most of which were cases of drunkenness and/or brawling.[18] Taking into consideration the levels of violence that existed in many of these small Welsh communities, there is certainly an argument to be made that the violent character of Welsh society at this time may have led to the growth of organised 'bare-knuckle' fighting.[19] Joe Maguire has identified that this kind of harsh industrial society was 'marked by a disorderly and undisciplined nature. There was a callous and brutal tenor to life, which found expression in both everyday social interaction and in recreational forms. The British were aggressive, rowdy, outspoken, riotous, cruel and bloodthirsty. A high level of socially-tolerated physical violence was evident'.[20]

In some instances, aggressive disputes were resolved by way of an organised prize-fight rather than resorting to a drunken clash. Conversely, turning a dispute into a planned bare-knuckle bout offered local communities a source of entertainment, whereby they could meet at a specific venue and enjoy the spectacle of a pre-arranged fight, whilst also indulging in the consumption of alcohol and betting on the outcome of the contest. An example of a drunken argument that transformed into a prize-fight was reported in August 1892 in the *Cardiff Times*. It stated how two groups of men had attended a coursing match and while drinking at a public house a dispute occurred about the use of their dogs. It was eventually agreed to settle the question on the following morning by means of a prize-fight for £10 a-

[17] 'Extraordinary Outrages by Welsh Colliers', *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 19 November 1881, p. 3.
[18] 'Newport Police Business', *South Wales Daily News*, 27 February 1872, p. 3.
[19] For example, in April 1839 William Jenkins assaulted a police officer and was bound over to keep the peace for twelve months. Later in December 1864, Evan Davies violently assaulted John Griffiths and was accused of 'putting him in bodily fear'. See GwA, Quarter Sessions Record Book (QRB), 2 (30 June 1834–2 August 1839), p. 480; QSCP, 11, p. 2,
[20] Joe Maguire, 'Images of Manliness and Competing Ways of Living in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *British Journal of Sports History*, 3, 3 (1986), 266.

side.[21] The above publications by Sugden and Maguire provide an insight into the common use of physical violence in nineteenth century industrial communities and the brutality of prize-fighting. The intention of this chapter is to offer further details regarding the violent nature and changing complexion of Welsh community life during this period, and to present a greater understanding of prize-fighting's social roots and acceptance in Welsh communities. In doing so, reports of prize-fighting can be used as a means to uncover the complexities of identity, class and the intermingling of cultures in Welsh communities.

To acquire an insight into why people became involved in prize-fighting it is important to first understand the environment in which they lived. One of the key factors and central features of eighteenth and nineteenth century Wales was the rise of industry, particularly coal mining and iron production.[22] Yet industrialisation and subsequent urbanisation in Wales was not achieved without initiating drastic changes. Edward Krzemienski has observed 'at no other time was the restructuring of society so dramatic and of such long-standing significance than the period of industrialisation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries'.[23] By examining the harsh realities of industrialisation and urbanisation in Wales during this period, the chapter will offer a wider interpretation regarding the attraction of bare-knuckle prize-fighting and how the sport was viewed more generally. Moreover, it will argue that it was the harsh social conditions of nineteenth century Wales that drove many men, and women, into the prize-fighting arena.

[21] 'Prize Fight in the Rhondda', *Cardiff Times*, 6 August 1892, p. 6.
[22] For details refer to Walter E. Minchinton, 'Introduction: Industrial South Wales, 1750–1914', in Walter E. Minchinton (ed.), *Industrial South Wales, 1750–1914: Essays in Welsh Economic History* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. ix–xxi; Arthur H. Dodd, *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951), pp. 203–21.
[23] Edward Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change: Boxing and Society at a Crossroads', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 2 (2004), 165. Also, see Michael Asteris, 'The Rise and Decline of South Wales Coal Exports, 1870–1930, *Welsh History Review*, 13, 1 (June 1986), 24–43; John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), pp. 372–4; Geraint H. Jenkins, *The Foundations of Modern Wales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 191–3.

One of the major features of industrial growth in Britain was the rapid demographic increase during the nineteenth century. This led to a doubling of the population from 9 million in 1801 to 18 million by 1850,[24] and the growth of many Welsh iron towns, such as Blaenavon, Ebbw Vale, Neath, Merthyr Tydfil, and Newport, alongside coal towns, notably Aberdare, Abertillery, Treherbert and Tonypandy. As a result new communities such as Abertyswg, Aberbargoed, Cwm, Cwmfelinfach, Hollybush, Markham and Ynysddu were established, and the geographical nature of these vigorous small iron and coal districts meant they soon became self-reliant districts and felt obliged to impose their own sense of social justice.[25] Greater mobility as witnessed in rural-urban migration led to a substantive increase in other Welsh towns and consequently a dramatic rise in the population, especially in the south Wales valleys.[26] Equally Cardiff, once a small port along the coast of south Wales, developed as a large port for the export of coal from south Wales whilst also serving the ironworks. This naturally led to its future development as a thriving commercial centre.[27] Further evidence of population increase in Welsh towns due to industrialisation can be clearly identified in the 1801 census. An excellent example is the Borough of Newport as the census shows that in 1780 Newport was comprised of 221 houses accommodating 1,087 people. The population then rose to 1,135 by 1801, reaching 10,492 forty years later. By the end of the

[24] T. Mansel Hodges, 'The Peopling of the Hinterland and the Port of Cardiff (1801–1914)', in Minchinton (ed.), *Industrial South Wales*, p. 3. For a concise description of the relationship between population growth and industrialisation, see Davies, *History of Wales*, pp. 310–87.
[25] Francis M. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain, 1830–1900* (London: Fontana, 1988), p. 45.
[26] From 1841 to 1901, rural areas of England and Wales lost over 4 million people to internal migration. For an in-depth analysis of rural-urban migration, see Jason Long, 'Rural-Urban Migration and Socioeconomic mobility in Victorian Britain', *Journal of Economic History*, 65, 1 (March 2005), 1–35.
[27] Davies, *History of Wales*, p. 456. For information regarding migration into Welsh towns see John B. Hilling, 'The Migration of People into Tredegar during the Nineteenth Century', *Gwent Local History*, 100 (Spring 2006), 19–40; Allan M. Williams, 'Migration and Residential Patterns in Mid-Nineteenth Century Cardiff, *Cambria*, 6, 2 (1979), 1–21; Philip N. Jones, 'Population Migration into Glamorgan, 1861–1911', in Prys Morgan (ed.), *Glamorgan County History. Volume VI. Glamorgan Society, 1780–1980* (Cardiff: Glamorgan History Trust/University of Wales Press, 1988), pp. 173–202; Brinley Thomas, 'The Migration of Labour into the Glamorganshire Coalfield (1861–1911)', in Minchinton (ed.), *Industrial South Wales*, pp. 37–56.

nineteenth century the figure stood at 67,270.[28] Undoubtedly, industrialisation and commercial growth was therefore beneficial in creating a better economy for some parts of Wales. Yet, at the same time, the dramatic increase in population for many Welsh towns signified the beginning of a new urban society which brought with it poor working conditions, severe overcrowding, disease and public-order issues, along with high levels of poverty.[29]

Working conditions were often dangerous with many men working in appalling environments, including miners who endured hard, physical labour, often working between ten and twelve hours per day, six days per week in dirty, uncomfortable and unhealthy conditions.[30] The risk of explosions due to the use of naked lights in the mines meant workers constantly lived in fear of fatal accidents occurring. Indeed, 914 men and boys were killed by explosions alone in Glamorgan between 1844 and 1871, an average of about 32 lives per year. In 1865, 159 lives were lost in the Welsh coalfields and another 120 the following year or, as the annual inspectors report stated, 1½ lives per 100,000 tons of coal raised.[31] One such incident recorded in the *Aberystwyth Observer* in February 1890. This provided details of a

[28] James Davies, *The Chartist Movement in Monmouthshire* (Risca: Starling Press, 1981), p. 9. For a detailed account of population growth in Welsh towns during this period refer to W. T. R. Pryce, 'Population and Population Movements', in Chris Williams and Sian Rhiannon Williams (eds), *Gwent County History* (5 Vols. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004–2011), IV (2011)*: Industrial Monmouthshire, 1780–1914* (2011), pp. 1–27.
[29] For a comprehensive examination regarding the effects of industrialisation on Welsh towns see, 'Wales: the Industrial Nation', in Ivor Wilkes, *South Wales and the Rising of 1839* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 7–22; Christopher Powell and Malcolm Fisk, 'Early Industrial Housing in Rhondda, 1800–1850', *Morgannwg*, 35 (1991), 50–78; Alan Gillie, 'The Origin of the Poverty Line', *Economic History Review*, 49, 4 (1996), 715–30; J. H. Treble, 'Causes of Poverty 1830–1914', in his *Urban Poverty in Britain, 1830–1914* (London: Batsford, 1979), pp. 91– 121; D. C. James, 'The Cholera epidemic of 1849 in Cardiff', *Morgannwg*, 25 (1981), 164–79 (166); B. Harris, 'Gender, Health and Welfare in England and Wales since Industrialisation', *Research in Economic History*, 26 (2008), 157–204. Specific examples of epidemics of this period can be found in press reports, including, 'Merthyr: Small Pox', *Newport Weekly Mail*, 29 February 1872, p.4; 'This Dreadful Disease Continues to Spread Rapidly'; 'Small Pox', *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 December 1871, p. 4; 'This Frightful Disease is Very Virulent in the Parish of Bedwelty'; 'Rhymney Board of Health Report', *Merthyr Express*, 11 March 1893, p. 7.
[30] Gareth E. Jones, *Modern Wales. A Concise History* (2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 203. Also refer to Anne Borsay and Sara Knight, *Medical Records for the South Wales Coalfield, c.1890–1948: An Annotated Guide to the South Wales Coalfield Collection* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007). Chapter 4 is devoted to colliery accidents and includes details of reports and compensation claims.
[31] Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, *Communities: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1987), p. 117. Also, see T. Boyns, 'Work and Death in the South Wales Coalfield, 1874–1914', *Welsh History Review*, 12, 4 (1986), 514–37.

mine explosion in Abersychan in which three hundred miners became trapped while a large number were killed.[32] Another fatal mining accident was printed in the *Rhyl Record and Advertiser* in February 1896. This recorded a mine explosion in the Tylorstown pit of the Ferndale Colliery Company that killed fifty men.[33] In total, it is estimated that 3,589 miners lost their lives in colliery disasters in north and south Wales (including Monmouthshire) between 1837 and 1927.[34]

Not only were there harsh working environments, the conditions in new industrial towns were also deplorable. There was inadequate housing and that constructed was often done so in great haste and cheaply. Moreover, most industrial communities lacked clean drinking water facilities, while sanitation was, at best, inadequate and, in many areas, non-existent.[35] The workers in these new industrial areas had to compete with periods of deprivation due to the variability of the trading prices of iron and coal. This industrial instability often brought with it fluctuation in wages, reduction in working hours and even long spells of unemployment.[36] The principal determinant in the fluctuation of wages was the variability in the selling price of coal. Wages of workers were determined by the sliding scale whereby wages were directly linked to the selling price of coal. For every one shilling change in the price of coal, wages were adjusted by 7.5 per cent.[37] Workers in Merthyr witnessed savage wage cuts of thirty per cent to sixty per cent in 1833, 1842 and 1847, and a

[32] 'Terrible Mine Explosion in South Wales', *Aberystwyth Observer*, 8 February 1890, p. 4.
[33] 'Mine Explosion in South Wales', *Rhyl Record and Advertiser*, 1 February 1896, p. 4. For further evidence of the dangerous working conditions in Wales during this period see, 'Explosion at Docks', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 26 February 1859, p. 5; 'Fatal Accident At Merthyr', *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 26 April 1879; 'Colliery Fatalities At Tredegar', *Merthyr Express*, 20 January 1894, p. 7; 'Colliery Fatality At Ebbw Vale', *Merthyr Express*, 27 January 1894, p. 6.
[34] Borsay and Knight, *Medical Records for the South Wales Coalfield*, p. 128.
[35] H. G. Williams, 'Nation State Versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales', *History of Education Quarterly*, 4, 2 (2000), 148.
[36] For an insight into changing wage-rates, see J. H. Morris and L. J. Williams, 'The South Wales Sliding Scale, 1876–79: An Experiment in Industrial Relations', in Minchington (ed.), *Industrial South Wales*, pp. 218–31.
[37] William J. Hausmann, and Barry T. Hirsch, 'Wages, Leisure and Productivity in South Wales Coal Mining, 1874–1914', *Llafur*, 3, 3 (1982), 58–9.

consequent rise in radicalism.[38] This, in turn, led to a rise in the poor rates in the town, as seen in 1833 when it rose to an unprecedented 10s. to cover a quarterly expenditure of over £1,200.[39] Employment prospects faltered in many Welsh towns due to factory closures, including the Penydarren works, near Merthyr, which was forced to close in 1858, closely followed by the Hirwaun works in 1859 and the Treforest works in 1867.[40] Newspaper reports of disputes between employees and employers over various issues, but particularly the reduction in wages, were evident throughout the period. The *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser* recorded in February 1877 that in Glamorgan of the eighty-eight blast furnaces only twenty-six were at work, and for this reason 'the district which for many years has been the scene of busy manufacture is struck with paralysis beyond hope of recovery, and the diminution of our export trade thus means a large population deprived of their ordinary subsistence'.[41] Likewise, in April 1882, the *Cardiff Times* explained how miners in Wrexham were outraged as they were only allowed to work two or three days a fortnight and a further reduction in wages was forecast from 2s. 8d. to 2s. 6d. per day.[42] In relation to these social and economic problems, the Welsh coalfields were 'among the most discontented areas of the kingdom'.[43] This resulted in numerous protests and strikes throughout Wales that were focussed on the needs and pressures of the newly-emerging industrial society, such as the demand for better working and living conditions and an

[38] Jones, *Modern Wales*, p. 203; Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police*, p. 89. For an in-depth discussion on poverty and low pay, see J. H. Treble, 'Poverty and the Urban Labour Market 1830–1914: Low Pay', in his *Urban Poverty in Britain*, pp. 13–50; David Englander, *Poverty and Poor Law Reform in Nineteenth-Century Britain 1834–1914* (London: Longman, 1998); S. Fowler, '"Draining the Bog": Charities and the Poor in the Nineteenth Century', *Modern History Review* (April, 1998), 23–6; Megan Evans and Peter Jones, 'A Stubborn Intractable Body: Resistance to the Workhouse in Wales 1834–1877', *Family and Community History*, 17, 2 (2014), 101–21 which offers further insights into poor relief in Wales.
[39] Gwyn A. Williams, 'The Merthyr Elections of 1835', *Welsh History Review*, 10, 3 (1980), 381.
[40] Gareth Evans, *A History of Wales 1815–1906* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989), p. 178. Also, see 'Foxhole Colliery Expired: Four Hundred Men out of Work', *Merthyr Express*, 11 March 1893, p. 5.
[41] 'The Iron Trade in South Wales', *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 3 February 1877, p. 4.
[42] 'Miners' Riots in North Wales', *Cardiff Times*, 22 April 1882, p. 8. Also, see 'The Distress in South Wales', *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 2 March 1878, p. 3; 'The Unemployed of Cardiff', *Western Mail*, 25 February 1879, p. 2.
[43] Davies, *History of Wales*, p. 339.

increase in wages.[44] Evidence of these protests, including a strike in 1857 of 3,000 miners in Aberdare due to a twenty percent reduction in wages[45] and a dispute in 1892 between boilermakers and employers in Ebbw Vale regarding wages (which resulted in a further outbreak of strikes in Cardiff, Newport and Swansea)[46] provide good accounts of the levels of social unrest and distress witnessed in many Welsh communities during the nineteenth century.[47]

Economic setbacks, notably long spells of unemployment, subsequently brought hardship to Welsh communities. Family obligations to contractual house rents, along with the need to acquire food to feed the family, often took its toll on income. Certain economic and social pressures impacted on the ability of the workers to pay for food. On average, during the early nineteenth century, a workers weekly wage was between 7s. 6d. and 10s. Family financial outgoings would have consisted of house rent of approximately 1s. 6d., school fees (where provided) of between 1-2d., clothing, fuel and even religious donations.[48] Food was naturally an expensive part of the family budget, and a rough guide of food prices of the early 1800s are as follows:

Bread 1d.-4d. per 1b.
Butter 9d.-1s. per 1b.
Sugar 6d. per 1b.
Meat 5d.-8d. per 1b.
Oatmeal 2d. per 1b.
Potatoes ½ d per 1b.
Soap 6d. per 1b.[49]

[44] George Rudè, 'Protest and Punishment in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies,* 5, 1 (Spring, 1973), 6.
[45] 'Strike of 3000 Colliers at Aberdare Valley', *Newport Gazette*, 5 December 1857, p. 4.
[46] 'Boilermakers Strike at Ebbw Vale', *Merthyr Express,* 6 February 1892, p. 3.
[47] See Chris Williams, 'Popular Movements, 1780–1850', in Williams and Williams (eds), *Gwent County History,* IV, pp. 308–28; G. Llewellyn Williams, 'Popular Movements and Disturbances in Glamorgan, c.1790–1860', in Morgan (ed.), *Glamorgan County History,* VI, pp. 19–42. For further examination of these uprisings refer to Chapter Two.
[48] Sheila M. Owen-Jones, 'Religious Influence and Educational Progress in Glamorgan, 1800–33', *Welsh History Review,* 13, 1 (June 1986), 78. Also, see E. L. Harry and J. R. E. Phillips, 'Household Budgets in the Rhondda Valley', *Welsh Journal of Agriculture,* 12 (1937).
[49] Owen-Jones, 'Religious Influence and Educational Progress in Glamorgan',77.

Considering these outgoings, it is easy to see that the average wage for working men of this period was often insufficient to support a family. Thus, the consequence of economic downturns in industrial centres would have been catastrophic for many working-class families as they would have seen their incomes dwindle, due mainly to factors that were out of their control. Consequently, the financial outlay for many families would have been more than they were earning, resulting in a high incidence of urban poverty.[50]

The responsibility of the male breadwinner was overwhelming as it was a given that the household had to be sustained by the man's work.[51] The fear of being unable to provide sustenance for their families was humiliating. As such, periods of unemployment or reduced working hours, would have brought hardship to many families who could not afford the cost of living. With men desperate to provide for their families, it is clear that such levels of destitution would have forced certain men to seek alternative sources of income such as prize-fighting, even if the financial pay out was often a meagre amount. As was the case for prize-fighter 'Scotch Laddie' from Aberdare who, after one particular prize-fight, protested about the meagre £2 he received for winning the fight. He complained that the fight purse was insufficient as he was 'hard-up' for the necessities of life and could not even travel to London to attend his mother's funeral due to a lack of money.[52]

There is no doubt that prize-fighting was a means by which a person could acquire additional funds. Involvement in an organised bare-knuckle fist-fight provided the victor with the 'winning purse' which was made up of the stake money put down by both fighters. Fight 'purses' often varied due to the amount that the fighters were willing to part with or could

[50] Kate Sullivan, '"The Biggest Room in Merthyr": Working-Class Housing in Dowlais, 1850–1914', *Welsh History Review,* 17, 2 (1994), 155–85. Also refer to J. H. Treble, 'The Socio-Economic Characteristics of Poverty 1830–1914', in his *Urban Poverty in Britain,* pp. 149–84; E. A. Davies, 'Life in a Nineteenth-Century Iron Town – Merthyr Tydfil in 1850', *Glamorgan Historian*, 12; Andy Croll, 'A Famished Coalfield or a "Healthy Strike"? Assessing Evidence of Hunger in the South Wales "Coal War" of 1898', *Welsh History Review,* 26, 3 (July 2012), 58–80; Andy Croll,'Starving Strikers and the Limits of the "Humanitarian Discovery of Hunger" in Late Victorian Britain', *International Review of Social History,* 56, 1 (April 2011), 103–31.
[51] John Tosh, 'What Should Historians Do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth Century Britain', *History Workshop Journal,* 38, 1 (1994), 185.
[52] 'Boxing', *South Wales Daily Post,* 22 November 1895, p. 3.

afford to wager on themselves winning the fight. Some 'purses' were also covered by a fighter's wealthy backer or the supporters of a particular fighter, usually for financial gains through gambling. Some fights were fought for as little as a few shillings, such as the contest in October 1896 between two miners from Nantyglo, David John Price and George Moore, who fought for 30s. each,[53] while other stakes would be laid at £5 a-side or more, as was the case in the ninety-round fight held earlier in September 1894 between Rhondda colliers, Thomas Shaw and William Rees.[54] Prize-fighting may have also been a valued source of income for some individuals who faced poverty as they were considered unemployable due to having a disability. As was possibly the case for well-known Rhondda prize-fighter, Thomas Richards, alias 'Twm Clump', who obtained his nickname as he bore a club foot. This particular pugilist could often be found fighting opponents on Lledrddu Mountain, near Porth, for as little as £2, which may have been a valuable source of income if employment was hard to acquire due to his disability.[55]

Owing to the ferocious nature of the sport, it was not the easiest manner in which to earn extra money, bearing in mind that the beaten pugilist not only walked away from the fight, having received a beating, but also in arrears financially. There were occasions where both fighters walked away from a vicious encounter without earning any money for their efforts, as experienced by two employees of the Blaenavon Iron and Coal Company on 2 January 1860. After inflicting serious damage to each other whilst fighting for upwards of two hours and twenty minutes for £1 a-side, the crowd concluded they could not decide on the 'better man', so each took his own money and made their way home.[56] There were also instances reported whereby the winning prize-fighter was not paid due to the stakeholder

[53] 'Prize Fight on Ebbw Vale Mountain', *Evening Express*, 3 October 1896, p. 1.
[54] 'Brutal Prize Fight', *Evening Express*, 5 September 1894, p. 3.
[55] 'Prize Fight in the Rhondda Valley', *Evening Express*, 5 August 1896, p. 2.
[56] Brian Foster, 'Prize-Fighting in the Eastern Valley', *Journal of Gwent Local History Council*, 96 (Spring, 2004), 42.

absconding with the prize money.[57] During severe times of hardship, it was not unknown for men to compete in a prize-fight, not for a winning purse of money but for numerous other commodities varying from a flitch of bacon to a new silver watch.[58]

Becoming prominent figures in prize-fighting allowed some men to escape the harsh environment of industrial Wales and earn an income from their fistic skills. England, and especially London, became the undisputed cradle of prize-fighting. Hopeful fighters flocked there and made it a decidedly cosmopolitan capital of the boxing world.[59] This growth of the sport impacted on many Welsh prize-fighters as it gave them an avenue by which to leave (if only on a temporary basis) the harsh climate of the industrial valleys, in the hope of furthering their fighting careers and earning a better income than the fight purses offered on the Welsh mountainsides or the wages offered for the dangerous working environment of the coal pits or ironworks. Although lesser-known Welsh prize-fighters took the opportunity to fight in London for more profitable earnings for their endeavours, well-known prize-fighters, particularly Johnny O'Brien (Cardiff) and Redmond Coleman (Merthyr) similarly travelled to London to enhance their reputations by not only fighting some of the best English boxers but also those from overseas who had travelled to London to make a name for themselves. The *Sporting Life* in April 1894 reported that Redmond Coleman knocked out Curley Howell of Bristol in the first round in London, describing it as one of the shortest battles ever witnessed at the National Sporting Club. In the same year the *Western Mail* noted that Johnny O'Brien had travelled to London to take on the American Frank Craig, known as the 'Harlem Coffee Cooler', while the largely unknown Welshman, Sam Thomas from Ynyshir in Glamorgan, fought a Bristolian by the name of Lyons.[60]

[57] 'Prize Fight in Wales', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 9 March 1889, p. 4.
[58] 'Local Prize Fight', *Wrexham Advertiser*, 30 November 1888, p. 8.
[59] Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change', 167.
[60] 'A Grand Night at the National Sporting Club', *Sporting Life*, 24 April 1894, p. 4; 'Welsh Boxers in London', *Western Mail*, 9 October 1894, p. 6.

Prominent prize-fighters earned an income outside of prize-fighting through involvement in public boxing exhibitions in which they could display their array of fighting skills to those who admired the art of self-defence. The renowned prize-fighter Dai St John from Resolven was one such fighter who toured the country giving sparring exhibitions, including the Rhondda, alongside Australia's heavyweight champion, Peter Jackson.[61] In November 1894 St John also took part in sparring exhibitions with Welsh champion John O'Brien at the Drill-Hall in Swansea.[62] These gloved-sparring exhibitions could often be gruelling contests as both men, looking to keep their reputation intact, would not have been reticent in using their repertoire of fighting techniques to show the crowd what they were capable of if the occasion required. However, these exhibition bouts were well attended events that would have been quite lucrative for prominent prize-fighters, while lowering the risk of serious injury, as they would have been undemanding affairs compared to partaking in a bare-knuckle prize-fight on some mountainside in all weathers, where only the winner walked away with the fight purse. The *Western Mail* in November 1887 described how the rooms of Cardiff Amateur Boxing Club were crowded with spectators eager to witness an exhibition spar between W. Brown (first name not known) and Tom Evans of the Cardiff Club.[63] The newspaper again reported in February 1894 of a boxing exhibition at Pontypridd that was attended by a large crowd, and stated that 'nearly all the principal professors of the noble art in south Wales and Monmouthshire put in an appearance'.[64]

The introduction of fairground boxing booths and travelling circuses around the country, including the valleys, offered prize-fighters another avenue in which to earn a salary from fighting. Boxing booths in Wales were largely controlled by a handful of operators,

[61] 'Boxing in the Rhondda. The Undefeated Champion of the World at Pontypridd', *Evening Express*, 9 April 1895, p. 1.
[62] 'Boxing – O'Brien and St. John at Swansea', *South Wales Daily Post*, 26 November 1894, p. 3.
[63] 'Boxing Displays at Cardiff', *Western Mail*, 23 November 1887, p. 3.
[64] 'Boxing Exhibition at Pontypridd', *Western Mail*, 6 February 1894, p. 6. Also, see 'Jack Knifton at Cardiff', *Sporting Life*, 19 January 1887, p. 4, which stated 6,000 people attended a sparring exhibition at the Cardiff Circus; 'Boxing Exhibition at Pontypridd', *Western Mail*, 6 February 1894, p. 6.

including William 'Bill' Samuels, Charlie North, Patsy Perkins and Harry Cullis, all of whom were excellent prize-fighters in their own right. As these men aged, and fighting became harder for them, owning a boxing booth became another means by which they could continue to make a living out of prize-fighting. Entering the booth business allowed them to forsake the traditional prize-fighting contest and, instead, charge the public an entrance fee to watch stage displays of their fighting skills with boxing gloves over a set number of timed rounds.[65] The booth owners also employed young fighters, such as Sam Thomas from Ynyshir near Pontypridd, to participate in 'sparring' matches with members of the audience, enticing men to enter the boxing ring with the promise of a financial payment if they could last an agreed number of rounds with the boxer. Thomas travelled for some time with Bill Samuels' boxing booth, with the *Evening Express* in January 1892 testifying that he had 'showed himself to be up to the mark in the rough school', by taking on all comers, including a gloved encounter with Shoni Engineer.[66] A number of other Welsh prize-fighters, including Dai St John and Redmond Coleman, not only fought on the mountainsides but in the boxing booth, which allowed them to continue to earn money from fighting, albeit in a slightly less demanding environment. These contests certainly helped some fighters to sufficiently improve their ring skills and thereby a career as a professional boxer.[67] In one particular interview with the *Evening Express* in May 1895, Samuels argued how working in boxing booths helped these men, observing

> I do not allow gambling within my boxing booths, it is prohibited. I pay a purse to fighters for skilful exhibitions of boxing, and my objective is to teach the boxing man to use nature's weapons skilfully to defend himself just in the same way as a minister of religion teaches the people to defend

[65] Elliot J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 11.
[66] 'Prize-fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[67] For an excellent description of a boxing booth fight in Wales refer to 'Prize-Fighting in the Rhondda', *South Wales Daily News*, 25 August 1897, p. 5. Also, see 'Boxing', *South Wales Daily Post*, 7 February 1894, p. 3; 'Boxing: Mazey V. Coleman', *South Wales Daily Post*, 11 May 1895, p. 3; 'Boxing: Glove Fight in Swansea', *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 January 1895, p. 3; 'Boxing: Exciting Glove Contest at Swansea. Harris V. Yates', *South Wales Daily Post*, 20 April 1895, p. 3; 'Swansea Boxing Saloons', *Cardiff Times*, 18 April 1896, p. 7.

> themselves against, and avoid the cunning and craftiness of the devil. You should remember, we don't keep people from church and chapel, but we do keep them from the public houses.[68]

It should be remembered, however, that the boxing booth fighters and spectators were certainly not safe from prosecution. Regardless of the fact that the boxing bouts took place in a closed environment with better regulation and control, such as a referee, timekeeper and the use of padded gloves, the sport was still prohibited where it was believed the fighters intended to cause physical harm.[69] It is not surprising that, given the violence, many vehemently disapproved of it. Indeed, in 1895 the Swansea Gospel Temperance Union passed the following resolution, on the motion of Councillor Roche:

> This meeting expresses its strongest disapproval of the existence of the degrading boxing salons which have recently sprung up in Swansea and calls upon the Watch Committee to use every possible means to put an end to these disgraceful proceedings.[70]

Yet the implications for such intervention and possible disruption or even closure of boxing booths would have only forced prize-fighters to return to the nearby mountains where regulation and control of such bouts would be very limited. This resulted in serious injury or even the death of prize-fighters, or, at least, public order offences.

Some of the better-known prize-fighters, notably Shoni Engineer of Treorchy, were able to make extra money by becoming trainers and seconds (also known as corner men) of flourishing young prize-fighters. Due to their reputation as outstanding prize-fighters in their local communities, they would have been very much sought after by young men wanting to emulate their prize-fighting careers. As these prize-fighters became older and less capable of enduring the hardships of bare-knuckle fights, taking on the role of a trainer was another avenue in the sport. In this capacity they could earn money, maintain their reputation, and help other young fighters. Moreover, the financial inducement of a percentage of the young

[68] '"Boxing and Betting". A Crusade by a Swansea Temperance Man', *Evening Express*, 29 May 1895, p. 3.
[69] 'Fight Stopped in Samuels Booth', *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 June 1895, p. 3.
[70] 'Boxing and Betting'.

pugilist's winnings was also part of the process. For some well-known fighters, they not only passed on their fighting skills to their trainee and accompanied them at fights but often acted as the 'backer' for the young fighter.[71] In January 1892 the *Evening Express* reported how Welsh champion prize-fighter and boxing booth owner Patsy Perkins acted as a trainer and second to a relatively unknown prize-fighter by the name of Thomas James of Aberaman in his fight at Merthyr Tydfil against Sam Thomas.[72]

The growth in prize-fighting in industrial towns not only gave working-class men the chance to earn extra money, but often helped to bolster their status in their communities by gaining the respect of their peers. Others naturally fought to improve their financial and/or social status. Indeed, the wealth and respect that they reaped from the sport was a way in which some prize-fighters were allowed to move in higher social circles. Christopher Stevenson certainly believed this to be the case, adding that it is 'generally recognised that sport, and particularly success in sport, is a good way of attaining status, popularity and prestige. It has often been demonstrated that there is a connection between 'perceived popularity' and participation in competitive sport, particularly for males'.[73] Welsh bare-knuckle champion of the 1850s, Dan Thomas (1828–1910; see Fig. 1.3) is a fine example of a Welsh working-class man who was able to use his pugilistic skills to enhance his livelihood. Born at Pwllgwaun, near Pontypridd, Thomas was better known to his followers as 'Dan Pontypridd'. During his fighting career, Thomas recorded some illustrious wins over a number of well-established prize-fighters including Jack Brookes over fifty-five rounds in London on 5 October 1858, the American, Charlie Lynch, in 1859, and Joe Nolan for the

[71] 'Glove Fight at Pontypridd, a [Special Telegram to the Echo]', *South Wales Echo*, 11 August 1890, p. 3. 'Prize Fight at Swansea', *Evening Express*, 22 December 1894, p. 3.
[72] 'Prize Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[73] Christopher L. Stevenson, 'Christian Athletics and the Culture of Elite Sport: Dilemmas and Solutions', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 14 (1997), 245.

light-weight championship in 1862.[74] Dan Pontypridd was able to make enough money from his prize-fighting to become a colliery proprietor near his home town and a licenced proprietor of the Cambrian Hotel, Cardiff, and afterwards of the Moria Hotel in the same city, before eventually becoming a chapel deacon in east Glamorgan.[75]

Fig. 1.3. Dan Thomas in his later years, *Western Mail*, 1910.[76]


EX-PUGILIST AND PREACHER

THE LATE MR. DANIEL THOMAS, PORTH-CAWL.

Due to his occupation as a prize-fighter Dan had a prosperous life and often gave generously to charities, such as Barnados, which earned him the respect of his local community.[77] He was certainly unique in that he was one of the few fighters of this period who successfully used his career as a prize-fighter to secure his future career opportunities outside the prize-ring, and was also lucky enough to walk away from the sport with his health intact, leading to a prosperous life until he died at the age of 82. When he passed away on 14 July 1910, Thomas left an estate of the gross value of £12,704.10.11.[78] It is therefore evident that he was a man who took his opportunities well, who thought beyond his fighting abilities

[74] Gareth Jones, *The Boxers of Wales: Merthyr* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2011), p. 105. Also, see 'Gallant Fight between D. Thomas (The Welshman) and Jack Brookes for Twenty-Five Pounds a Side', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 10 October 1858, p. 6. For a detailed, round by round, account of Dan Thomas against Joe Nolan (first fight) refer to *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1862, p. 6. For a further round by round account of Dan Thomas against Charley Lynch refer to 'Gallant Fight Between Dan Thomas (The Welshman) and Charles Lynch (The American), for Fifty Pounds A Side', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 30 January 1859, p. 6.
[75] 'Will of Mr. D. Thomas, Porthcawl: Pugilist, Coal Owner, Deacon', *Glamorgan Gazette*, 9 September 1910, p. 2; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 14 July 1910, p. 3.
[76] 'Ex-Pugilist and Preacher', *Western Mail*, 16 July 1910, p. 4.
[77] 'Mr Dan Thomas Dead', *Weekly Mail*, 16 July 1910, p. 6.
[78] 'Will of Mr D. Thomas, Porthcawl'.

and realised he could use his fighting skills as a temporary solution to progress his social rank. He was also a man of high morals who was not afraid to speak out about the brutal aspects of the sport that had helped improve his life.[79] Although Thomas walked away from the sport, fighting would always be a part of his character as seen on one occasion, when he used his prize-fighting skills to come to the aid of a local man who was being knocked about by a much bigger man. After asking the bully to leave the man alone to no avail, he took off his coat and gave the man a good thrashing, to the delight of an assembled crowd.[80]

While taking notice of the reasons why people involved themselves in prize-fighting, it is important to remember that the clichéd representation of a prize-fighter as an underprivileged working-class man is by no means conclusive. Stan Shipley has considered this issue suggested that working men and boys were 'not drawn into boxing for money solely by market forces… there were additional factors at play rather than just simply the 'purse' at the end of a fight'.[81] In agreement, Loic Wacquant has remarked that 'given how little money most fighters earned and the multifold privations they had to endure in the monastic day-today preparation for fleeting moments of glory or agony in the squared circle, economic payoffs fall woefully short of accounting for the seduction of boxing'.[82] To consider Wacquant's assertion there are a number of other motives for involvement in prize-fighting, other than the financial rewards. The development of leisure time during the nineteenth century and its relevance to the growth in prize-fighting ought to be examined. During the nineteenth century employers strove to create a disciplined and healthy workforce based around time-discipline and adherence to the clock.[83] Prior to industrialisation, working hours, especially in rural areas where agriculture was prominent, was often seasonal and task-

[79] *Glamorgan Gazette*, 22 July 1910, p. 2.
[80] 'The Bruiser and the Bully', *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 21 December 1896, p. 3.
[81] Stan Shipley, 'Tom Causer of Bermondsey: A Boxer Hero of the 1890s', *History Workshop Journal*, 15, 1 (1988), 32.
[82] Loic J. D. Wacquant, 'The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers Think and Feel about Their Trade', *Theory and Society*, 24, 4 (August 1995), 492.
[83] Davies, *History of Wales*, p. 427.

orientated. The length of the working day often changed to suit the task in hand such as the harvest months or lambing season.[84] Industrial capitalism and technological advancements in manufacturing techniques, on the other hand, demanded greater attention to the management of time by the workforce. As a result, the working hours of certain skilled workers were progressively shortened to around ten hours per day.[85] For most trades, however, long working hours remained the norm, with many workers still working a six or six-and-a-half-day week. Yet, with more emphasis now focussed on 'the clock' and time management, there was desire to encourage all workers to value every hour and put their 'spare-time' to better use, particularly in leisurely personal and social pursuits.[86] Peter Bailey has suggested that during the nineteenth century

> the expansion of the urban population and the development of a society ordered by the priorities of industrial growth fragmented social interaction, and the coherent and readily comprehensive pattern of social life shared within the small-scale traditional community was increasingly exchanged for a pattern of life notable for its discontinuities of experience in terms of time, space, and personnel. The introduction of new work routine compartmentalised social classes and the basic activities of work, leisure, and home life to such a degree that man, the social actor, was obliged to play out his encounters in an ever greater number of discrete situational settings.[87]

A custom of the early nineteenth century was 'Saint Monday', in which the public house was the principal venue, with various organised games taking place throughout the day, one of which was organised prize-fights. Up until the 1830s prize-fighting, dog fighting and cockfights were carried out almost every Monday afternoon.[88] Evidence of the association with boxing can be found in the poem *Saint Monday*, which was dedicated to 'Sir Benjamin Faulkner – Puissant Pugilist!'

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[84] E. P. Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present,* 38, 1 (1967), 60.
[85] Ibid, 85.
[86] Ibid, 95.
[87] Peter Bailey, 'Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand Up? Towards A Role Analysis of Mid-Victorian Working-Class Respectability', *Journal of Social History*, 12, 3 (1979), 340. Also refer to 'The Miners' Eight Hours Bill', *South Wales Daily Post*, 6 May 1893, p. 3.
[88] Douglas A. Reid, 'The Decline of St Monday 1766–1876', *Past and Present,* 71 (May 1976), 79.

Accept my panegyric, - tis your due;
For you, the most of all I ever knew,
Have honour'd great ST. MONDAY's noisy cause;
And gain'd the mobs unbounded, loud applause.[89]

By mid-century, however, the activities surrounding St Monday underwent a transformation as employers and temperance movements encouraged workers to indulge in more refined recreations, especially those which avoided excessive consumption of alcohol, such as cricket, archery and railway excursions.

By the 1860s the tradition of St Monday had become widely condemned by employers as they desired an efficient workforce in order to make as much money as possible from their businesses. The introduction of the Saturday half-day holiday from the mid-century point also helped reduce the importance of St Monday, as there was a shift of emphasis on leisure activities to Saturday and Sunday.[90] The importance of St Monday may have been eroded in the latter part of the century, but other traditional holidays were still prevalent. The monthly festival, which was associated with the name St Mabon (named after William Abraham Mabon, a political member for the Rhondda and one of the founders of the workers union movement), grew in importance as a holiday during the period 1888 to 1898, especially by the miners of south Wales after a compromise between employers and employees for further leisure time.[91] Yet drunkenness and gambling activities soon became associated with St Mabon's day, with the *Cardiff Argus* in July 1890 stating that 'in many cases the day is spent in dissipation'.[92] This arguably allowed prize-fighting to flourish in Welsh communities, as boxing exhibitions at booths, such as Bill Samuels, alongside

[89] Ibid, 79.
[90] Ibid, p.83
[91] 'St Mabons Day', *Pontypridd Chronicle and Workman's News*, 8 November 1889, p. 4. Also, see R. McKibbin, 'Work and Hobbies in Britain, 1880–1950', in J. Winter (ed.), *The Working Class in Modern British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 138–9, and particularly Andy Croll, 'Mabon's Day: The Rise and Fall of a Lib–Lab Holiday in the South Wales Coalfield, 1888–1898', *Labour History Review*, 72, 1 (2007), 49–68.
[92] *Cardiff Argus*, 12 July 1890, and quoted in Croll, 'Mabon's Day', 60.

organised prize-fights were regular occurrences as part of the Mabon's Day festivities.[93] Concerns regarding the association with St Mabon's Day and prize-fighting were reported in the *South Wales Echo* in 1891 which stated that

> Monday being what is popularly known as Mabon's Day, the miners of Monmouthshire kept holiday... crowded the taverns and freely indulged in the cup that cheers but inebriates… resulting in fistic encounters… At Abercarn a prize-fight took place, witnessed by a large concourse. The colliers themselves must save St. Mabon from this degeneration.[94]

1898 saw the gradual abolition of Mabon's Day as coal owners, determined to remove the festival holiday, instigated legal action against absent workers.[95]

Along with leisure festivities, the social significance concerning the theory of 'deep play', in which it is believed that the games and pastimes of a community reflected its core values, should also be considered. It is thought that the type of activity that people become accustomed to also determined the kind of life that they led. This can be true of prize-fighting. As the sport grew in popularity it had to reflect respectability, honour and manliness in nineteenth century Welsh society. As Welsh communities sought long-term solutions to their social problems they became conditioned to modes of behaviour that were socially acceptable. This process of social conditioning involved encouraging, or arguably even training, individuals in a manner generally approved by peer groups and their communities, especially on matters concerning education, employment, religion and family life. In 1863 the *Cornhill Magazine* proclaimed that to gain respectability people should 'come up to that most real, though very indefinite standard of goodness, the attainment of which is exacted of everyone as a condition of being allowed to associate upon terms of ostensible equality with the rest of the human race'.[96]

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[93] 'Prize-Fight near Cardiff. Championship of the Valleys', *South Wales Echo*, 28 July 1896, p. 2.
[94] 'Mabon's Day Prejudiced', *South Wales Echo,* 3 March 1891, p. 2.
[95] Croll, 'Mabon's Day', 62.
[96] James Fitzjames Stephen, 'Anti-Respectability', *Cornhill Magazine*, 8 September 1863, pp. 282-93, and cited in Bailey, 'Will the Real Bill Banks Please Stand Up?', 338.

Employers encouraged workers to become 'respectable' by adhering to qualities such as obedience, sobriety, and prudence.[97] More recreational activities were encouraged, particularly as sporting clubs and other associations were founded, and social reformers became keen to direct the attention of the working-class away from intemperance and drunkenness. However, the consumption of alcohol was very much a part of working-class recreation in Welsh communities. Many people saw the public house as an attractive place as it offered them a wide range of activities, such as the playing of cards, dominoes, 'nap' and sweep-stakes, which encouraged communal bonding. [98] Additionally, the public house became a place in which the working-class could cement their values, beliefs and accepted modes of behaviour. However, unemployment, alcohol consumption and the high concentration of the population in these small isolated communities, there was for many a constant threat of violence as part of everyday life, including assaults, robbery, gang attack and murder.[99] As Joe Maguire has observed there was 'a greater degree of tolerance towards the expression of violence by males – across the social spectrum – than is characteristic of present-day society'.[100]

This harsh and unsympathetic way of life generated the principal need for manliness, whereby some would resort to confrontation in order to stand up for their beliefs and defend themselves, their family and their honour. This signified that toughness, brutality and cruelty were often condoned as evidence of manliness and respectability, especially amongst

[97] W. R Lambert, 'Drink and Work-Discipline in Industrial South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 7, 3 (June 1975), 294, and developed in his *Drink and Sobriety in Victorian Wales, c.1820–c.1895* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1983).
[98] Stephen Etheridge, 'Brass Bands in the Southern Pennines, 1857–1914: The Ethos of Rational Recreation and Perceptions of Working Class Respectability', in Anne Baldwin, Chris Ellis, Stephen Etheridge, Keith Laybourn and Neil Pye (eds), *Class, Culture and Community: New Perspectives in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century British Labour History* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), p. 44. Also, see Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830–1885* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 9.
[99] Gorn, *Manly Art*, p. 27.
[100] Maguire, 'Images of Manliness', 266.

working-class men.[101] With large numbers of men regularly congregating at the local public houses to consume alcohol, drunken disputes often led to brutal fist-fights and public order offences as men sought to gain an advantage with their fists.[102] In June 1829 the *Monmouthshire Merlin* reported how Jeremiah Stephens was charged with assault on George Evans, a watchman, at a public house, while in September 1857 the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* described a serious riot among Irish and Welsh Colliers while drinking at the Bute Arms.[103] There was also a growing concern regarding the alarming rise in knife attacks during many of these altercations, with the *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* reporting in 1843 on the distressing subject of the great increase in knife attacks in the country.[104] In Wales, at a later date, the *South Wales Daily News* reported in September 1884 that 'the use of the knife has latterly become somewhat frequent in Cardiff', after acknowledging two separate cases in Canton on the same Saturday evening.[105] Debatably, it was the unforgiving and violent characteristics of working-class communities that enabled prize-fighting to become a significant element of these manly and respectable beliefs. Rather than beat each other senseless in a drunken pub brawl, prize-fighting was used as a

[101] For an analysis of masculinity in society see Ian Craib, 'Masculinity and Male Dominance', *Sociological Review*, 34, 4 (1987), 721–43.
[102] For detailed accounts regarding rates of drunkenness and public house fist-fights, see Andy Croll, *Civilising The Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870–1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp. 79–87; A. E. Dingle, 'Drink and working Class Living Standards in Britain, 1870–1914', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, 25, 4 (1972), 608–22. Newspaper reports and Quarter Sessions appearances are plentiful. For example, 'Scene in a Public-House at Ynysybwl', *South Wales Daily News*, 16 March 1876, p. 6; 'Free Fight in a Public House at Ebbw Vale', *Western Mail*, 14 June 1888, p. 3; 'A Public-House Brawl at Newport. Barmaid Wounded with a Knife', *South Wales Daily News*, 5 July 1898, p. 5. Also, see GwA, Quarter Sessions Record Book, (QRB), 2 (30 June 1834–2 August 1839), pp. 25, 288, and 355 where on 3 June 1834 John Dean was found guilty of assaulting William Gould and imprisoned for twelve months with hard labour, and John Bates was convicted for assaulting John Ormand, and fined 5s. The same fate befell Abraham Eyres who, on 3 April 1837, was found guilty of assaulting Blanford Lucas of and on 16 October 1837 William Pritchard was fined 40s. for a similar offence. A year later on 15 October 1838 Thomas Jackson was found guilty of assault Gustavious Dickenson, and had to pay the enormous sum of £5 and was bound over to keep the peace for one year.
[103] 'Monmouthshire Police' *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 6 June 1829, p. 3; 'Pontypridd Riot among Irish and Welsh Colliers', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 12 September 1857, p. 5.
[104] 'Manliness V the Knife', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 9 April 1843, p. 2.
[105] 'Growing use of the knife in Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 22 September 1884, p. 4.

respectable way of ending many disputes or grudges, whereby the antagonists would agree to meet at a designated place and time to do battle for their honour.

Very often disputes between individuals provided an opportunity, for those interested in such activities, to enjoy the entertainment of a prize-fight while consuming alcohol and gambling on the outcome of the fight. Gambling in the nineteenth century was prevalent among the different classes as it developed into an essential feature of both working class and upper class recreation.[106] Prize-fighting was, to a great extent, associated with an informal sporting and betting culture in working-class areas with many staking their wages in the hope of winning some extra (and very often much needed) money or simply enjoying the bravado of the event.[107] For many working-class observers the prize-fight was a pleasure that they enjoyed as a diversion from their usually harsh lives, and ensure the continued popularity of the sport.[108] An example of the heavy betting associated with prize-fights was evident in the *Evening Express* in January 1892 whereby the reporter commented that 'a lot of money changed hands at 6 to 4 and 2 to 1 on the fight between Sam Thomas and Thomas James at Merthyr's Turkish baths'.[109] Yet gambling at such events had a number of serious side-effects. Although wealthy patronage of prize-fights helped put the sport on a firm financial ground, the large-scale betting associated with the sport as the century progressed was responsible for an escalation in brutality witnessed at some bouts.

Little consideration was given to the health or safety of the prize-fighters due to the adverse pressure on them to win by their backers who wanted a return on their stake regardless of the cost this may have for their fighter. This was evident in a bout in September 1892 between two well-known Swansea men, Chamois Warner and Jack Davies. They were

[106] Mark Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter: Popular Gambling and English Society, c.1823–1961* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 2, 16; Ross McKibbin, 'Working-Class Gambling in Britain, 1880–1939', *Past and Present*, 82 (February 1979), 147–78.
[107] Clapson, *A Bit of a Flutter*, p. 82.
[108] Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change', 174.
[109] 'Prize-Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.

to receive £10 each, but by the seventeenth round Davies had received considerable punishment and expressed a desire to give in. Nevertheless, due to the persuasion of his backers, he went on to fight another ten rounds, taking further punishment, before throwing his arms up in defeat in the twenty-seventh round.[110] Another prize-fight between Sam Randall of the Ogmore Valley and Henry Millard of the Rhymney Valley in 1895 saw the two men fight desperately for an hour with both sustaining serious injuries. Millard's eyes were closed and his ear, lips and one side of his face were black from the pummelling he received, while Randall had large lumps on his body and his right-hand knuckles were knocked clean back. By the twelfth round both men were said to be very groggy and showed no desire to continue, yet their backers urged them to fight to the finish.[111] Additionally, clergymen and nonconformist ministers often spoke out about the immoralities of prize-fighting, condemning its close connection with drunkenness, quarrelsomeness and street brawling.[112]

Jack Anderson has remarked that prize fighting by the 1830s was 'a farce, with disqualification and downright cheating rife in the sport, as people of influence fixed boxing bouts for their financial gains… fighters and referees were bought off, with the ideal of a fair fight giving way to the presumption of corruption'.[113] Due to the high level of gambling associated with prize-fighting, there is no doubt that corruption in the sport existed. There are examples of prize-fighters using assumed names to hide their fight records in the hope of being matched against a less experienced fighter, giving them and their backers a distinct advantage over their opponents. This was the case in a fight reported in the *South Wales Echo* in July 1896 between Aaron Evans of Bargoed and Harry Iles of Bristol. The bout was

[110] 'Prize-Fight at Swansea. Twenty-Seven Rounds Fought', *Cambrian*, 30 September 1892, p. 8.
[111] '"Prize-Fight Near Cardiff": Fighting for an Hour for Twenty-Five Pounds', *Evening Express*, 30 July 1895, p. 1.
[112] Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society*, p. 9. Also, see 'Boxing and Betting'.
[113] Jack Anderson, 'Pugilistic Prosecutions: Prize Fighting and the Courts in Nineteenth Century Britain', *Sports Historian*, 21 (2001), 37.

Evans's first bare-knuckle prize-fight, but it was later discovered that Iles had worked at two or three pits in the Rhondda Valley under the name of George Davies and had won several previous bouts.[114]

Regarding the issues of gambling and corruption within the sport, Kenneth Sheard has asserted that it was possible that certain fighters may have felt that they could make more money, with less risk to themselves, by having people bet against them and then purposely lose the fight.[115] While there is some validity to Sheard's claim that cheating occurred during numerous prize-fights it is very difficult to confirm or speculate further on these accusations of corruption, especially in Welsh prize-fighting as very little evidence has been found during this study to support such claims. However, one example that gives a flavour of the possible corruption associated with prize-fighting was reported in April 1895 in the *South Wales Daily Post*. It described how the brother of Welsh prize-fighter, Mike Sullivan, complained that the water bucket in Sullivan's 'corner' had been tampered with. As the boxer gargled with the water through a sponge during the fight, he complained of violent pains, giddiness and a drying of the mouth, and went on to lose the fight. Sullivan's brother continued to argue that the fighter had certainly not been defeated on his merits but through foul play. However, Patsy Perkins, a well-known boxing booth owner, commented that the idea of foul play was 'preposterous, as everything was carried out in compliance with strict rules'. Yet, in contrast, another renowned booth owner, Billy Samuels, astounded at Sullivan's poor performance added that 'it don't look healthy; Sullivan, in his proper state, could not be beaten so easily'.[116]

The organisation of disputes into organised prize-fights did, however, remove violence from the public domain, where premises could get damaged and innocent bystanders

[114] 'Prize Fight near Cardiff. Championship of the Valleys', *South Wales Echo*, 28 July 1896, p. 2.
[115] Kenneth Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', Anglia Polytechnic, PhD thesis, 1992, p. 155.
[116] 'Morgans vs Sullivan. Was the fight fairly won? Curious statement by Sullivan's brother', *South Wales Daily Post*, 27 April 1895, p. 3.

hurt during the fracas. By agreeing to resolve their differences by means of a prize-fight, the bout could also be appropriately organised away from the gaze of the police and the local authorities, not only reducing the chances of arrest for the pugilists but also allowing the fight to be viewed only by those wanting to attend. Furthermore, the organised prize-fight brought with it honour and respectability for the participants with its unwritten, and eventually, formal rules, whereby fair play was adhered to through the acceptance of set rules by the majority of the prize-fighters. These views were echoed in *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* in 1843 which declared that

> the use of the ring in making anger itself submit to rules is plain to all who are not wilfully blind. The absence of such rules-the want of habit in applying them-leaves anger to its unrestrained indulgence, and we have no hesitation in declaring our settled opinion that those who have discouraged the honest and straight-forward practice of fair boxing are morally responsible for the system of stabbing which is now so fearfully spreading among the people.[117]

Considering the association between prize-fighting, manliness and propriety, Paul O'Leary comments that the sport was of 'a dubious respectability'.[118] O'Leary has a well-founded argument as there is no doubting the questionable nature of prize-fighting due to the violent means by which men were trying to demonstrate their manliness and earn community endorsement. Nonetheless, these prize-fights, whether organised to defend dubious principles or as a way of displaying manly attributes, allowed men to prove themselves publicly. Indeed, Britain had spawned a society characterised by increasingly severe distinctions regarding gender and sexuality, within which the notion of masculinity played an important role.[119] By participating in these contests fighters became renowned for their pugilistic skills and did not have to share the accolades with anyone else; as it was they alone who had overcome the opposition to win the fight and earn the respect that went with it. Prize-fighters

[117] 'Manliness vs the Knife', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 9 April 1843, p. 2.
[118] Paul O'Leary, 'Peerless: The Life and Legend of Jim Driscoll', in Stead and Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers*, p. 21.
[119] Tosh, 'Masculinities in an Industrialising Society', 330.

became respected by their peers for their toughness and bravery, and their masculine values of strength, power and stamina, which symbolised independence through physical prowess.[120]

The *South Wales Star* in July 1891 commented on the bond between prize-fighting, manliness and entertainment during its report of a prize-fight between Daniel Richards and William Richards, two Welsh miners from Maerdy, observing that they were 'charged with creating a nuisance by fighting on the Maerdy Mountain. Presumably, they were trying to demonstrate their manliness as well as provide entertainment to a paying crowd'.[121] By participating in this prize-fight these two young miners may have earned some extra money, but by showing their manly attributes they would have expected to receive the adulation and respect of their fellow workers and thereby enhance their reputations in their communities. Thus, there was a definite connection between the principles of manliness and prize-fighting for financial and social gain. However, this was not always the case as some fighters were content to remain in their local communities and use their prize-fighting abilities to gain recognition from their peers and become renowned figures in their own localities.[122] Certain parts of the south Wales coalfield were regarded as lawless areas where employers, magistrates and clergymen claimed they were helpless to stop the rising tide of crime and disorder. The *Merthyr Guardian* in 1834 reinforced these claims stating from Dowlais to Abergavenny 'there is no law'.[123] In such communities, where policing was ineffective, others would have had to fill the role of regulating the behaviour of their districts. A different approach was certainly necessary in some parts of the coalfield and prize-fighters may well have fallen into this category, not only due to the admiration they would have acquired but

[120] Gorn, *Manly Art*, p. 142. Also, see Ian Craib, 'Masculinity and Male Dominance', *Sociological Review*, 34, 4 (1987), 721–43; David Kuchta, 'Masculinity in the "Age of Chivalry," 1688–1832', in his *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity England, 1550–1850* (London: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 91–132; John E. Archer, "'Men Behaving Badly?' Masculinity and the Uses of Violence, 1850–1900," in Shani D'Cruze (ed.), *Everyday Violence in Britain, 1850–1950* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 41–54; Maguire, 'Images of Manliness', 265–87.
[121] 'Prize Fight at Maerdy', *South Wales Star*, 31 July 1891, p. 8.
[122] Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society*, p. 84.
[123] *Merthyr Guardian*, 14 June 1834, p. 3, and cited in Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. 201.

also for the fearsome reputation they would have gained from their pugilistic encounters and for being the town or village 'champion'. This is very apparent when reading reports of the respect that local fighters were shown by their communities attending their funerals. For example, when William Morgan, the Ferndale champion prize-fighter, died in 1892, aged twenty-three, the *Evening Express* reported that Morgan's corpse was followed to the grave by a very large following of the 'fancy' and the deceased man's work colleagues.[124] The fact that this report suggests a large number of the fighting fraternity attended the funeral to pay their respect to their former comrade suggests that he had earned the respect of his community due to his skills as a prize-fighter and undoubtedly the honour he had brought to the name of Ferndale while fighting opponents from other areas. No doubt Morgan would have commanded the respect of his peers as he would have presented himself as someone who was willing to fight in order to defend the honour of his community. Through his prize-fighting career Morgan was thereby a role model for others and he would have inspired others to follow in his wake.

In Welsh communities there would have existed a structure that corresponded to the local people's consciousness of group identity, particularly their attachment to a specific area or region as well as lifestyles, attitudes, relationships and language, that they would have believed distinguished them from others. The preservation of their identity would have been an important part of community life as it allowed people to reinforce their sense of belonging, protecting their culture on a local, regional, and even at a national level. Yet the industrial development of Wales was to have a profound affect on the identity of certain groups during the nineteenth century, primarily due to a high rate of immigration into many of the industrial centres as these migrants sought steady work and reasonable incomes. From the 1840s large numbers of English migrants settled in south Wales, alongside an influx of Irish settlers,

[124] 'Sad End of a Rhondda Pugilist', *Evening Express*, 3 October 1892, p. 3.

many of whom were escaping the effects of famine.[125] This can clearly be seen in Newport in 1851 where the number of Irish-born residents comprised 2,069 (10.7%) of Newport's total population of 19,323.[126] Similarly, over seventy-eight per cent (78.6%) of the adult population of Cardiff in 1851 had been born outside Cardiff, with the largest migrant group being those born in England (28.5%).[127] As this movement of people into Wales unfolded the towns in the south Wales valleys, in particular, became a dynamic social, economic and cultural melting pot in which people of very different backgrounds co-existed.[128] This made a distinctive mark on the profile of the Welsh towns which, in turn, challenged Welsh characteristics as it had become culturally diverse and pluralistic with no clear identity,[129] as the physical language, ethnicity and common history of Welsh communities became interrupted and influenced in various ways.[130] The Welsh language was a powerful unifying bond and a critical element of identity for the people of Wales. It was predominantly used in the home, workplace and in places of worship in many Welsh industrial towns at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[131] Yet the massive expansion and redistribution of population clearly had profound linguistic and cultural implications in Wales. When English workers moved into the industrial areas of Wales in considerable numbers, bilingualism became more commonly adopted. The Welsh language was further weakened as the gentry

[125] For an overview of the influx of immigrants into Wales, see Neil Evans, 'Immigrants and Minorities in Wales, 1840–1990: A Comparative Perspective', *Llafur*, 5, 4 (1991), 5–26; Paul O'Leary, *Immigration and Integration: The Irish in Wales, 1798–1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), pp. 15–43, and his 'Mass Commodity, Culture and Identity: the *Morning Chronicle* and Irish migrants in a Nineteenth-Century Welsh Industrial Town', *Urban History*, 35, 2 (2008), 237–54.
[126] C. Roy Lewis, 'Urban Society', in Williams and Williams (eds), *Gwent County History*, IV, p. 125. Also, see C. Williams, '"Decorous and Creditable": The Irish in Newport', in Paul O'Leary (ed.), *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), 54–82.
[127] Allan M. Williams, 'Migration and Residential Patterns in Mid-Nineteenth Century Cardiff', *Cambria: A Welsh Geographical Review*, 6, 2 (1979), 5.
[128] Geraint H. Jenkins, *A Concise History of Wales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 185.
[129] Robert Pope (ed.), *Religion and National Identity: Wales and Scotland, c. 1700–2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), p. 1.
[130] Ibid, p. 2.
[131] Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801–1911* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 1. Also, see Paul O'Leary, 'The language of Patriotism in Wales 1840–1880', in Jenkins, *The Welsh Language*, pp. 533–60; Raymond Howell, 'The Welsh Language', in his *A History of Gwent* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1989), pp. 178–82.

did not encourage its use, and educational and political leaders preferred the use of English as the means for the integration of communities, especially in the workplace.[132] During the nineteenth century few parts of Wales could remain insulated from the pervasiveness of the English language. This can be further emphasised during the early years of the twentieth century as the 1911 Census which revealed that only 8.7% of the population were monoglot Welsh.[133]

Although there were large numbers of migrants in Wales during this period, there, nevertheless, remained a vibrant spirit among the Welsh to preserve their distinctiveness.[134] This influx of 'outsiders' into Wales, alongside the desire to protect local identity, inevitably provoked friction and often violence, such as drunken street brawls and riots between the indigenous Welsh and incomers. This sense of loyalty and attachment to a Welsh and even parochial cultural identity was expressed through prize-fighting as it was an ideal outlet in which to protect and promote identity. When two men from differing cultural backgrounds fought they did so not only for their individual respectability but also in honour of their racial distinctiveness.[135] Moreover, these particular prize-fights promoted a social cohesiveness and group unity as people came together not only to witness a prize-fight but to cheer on the indigenous fighter as he fought the professed interlopers. Thus, these prize-fights were 'preserved as a badge of nationality in the face of alien immigration'.[136]

Having discussed prize-fighting and its correlation with respectability there were, however, many cases where certain actions tarnished the reputation of the sport, leading to

[132] Jenkins (ed.), *Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, p. 1; Jones, *Modern Wales*, p. 212.
[133] Dot Jones, *Statistical Evidence relating to the Welsh Language 1801–1911* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1998), and cited in Jenkins (ed.), *Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801–1911* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 2. Also, see Alan Roderick, 'A History of the Welsh Language in Gwent, Part Two', *Gwent Local History*, 51 (Autumn, 1981), 2–32; Brinley Thomas, 'A Cauldron of Rebirth: Population and the Welsh Language in the Nineteenth Century', *Welsh History Review*, 13, 4 (December 1987), 418–37.
[134] For Welsh identity see Geraint Tudur, 'Thou Bold Champion, Where art thou?: Howell Harris and the Issue of Welsh Identity', in Pope (ed.), *Religion and National Identity Wales and Scotland*, pp. 43–60.
[135] Refer to Chapter Five for a more detailed account of this subject.
[136] Evans, *History of Wales*, p. 92.

negative assessments concerning prize-fighting and its participants. The *Aberdare Times* in February 1862 condemned prize-fighters as cowardly men, stating that they believed that

> the odious prize-fighting is an institution which ought to be forever swept from the face of the land by a strict legislative enactment. Many devotees of the absurdly called science of pugilism have been punished for cowardly attacks on women, and cruel attacks on weaker men than themselves.[137]

These negative opinions concerning prize-fighting continued over time. The *South Wales Echo* reported in December 1893 that

> An immense amount of nonsense used to be talked in the days when the prize-ring flourished, about the influence pugilists had in developing manliness and chivalry among the people, but all the time these praises were sung no one could point to a single noble deed done by any prize-fighter himself that would justify his claiming to be a hero. On the contrary, these professors of the 'manly art' often proved themselves to be the most brutal and cowardly ruffians that could well be imagined.[138]

There is certainly some justification regarding prize-fighting and its participants. Although some may have earned a reputation as distinguished prize-fighters, others damaged the reputation of the sport by their recklessness or criminal behaviour. Frequently there were reports concerning prize-fighters receiving prison sentences for their involvement in criminal activities outside of the prize-ring. James Hains in the same year was sent to prison for three months for assaulting his sister-in-law. It was not his first offence, as he had earlier served six months in prison for beating another woman.[139]

Another prize-fighter who not only brought his own name but the reputation of the sport into disrepute was Daniel Desmond of Pontypool. Desmond was an acknowledged prize-fighter and aspirant of pugilistic honours,[140] but at the same time he was a pugnacious man who was regularly involved in violent altercations outside of the prize-ring that led to countless court appearances and imprisonment. On one occasion he was sentenced to two

[137] 'The Prize Fight', *Aberdare Times*, 1 February 1862, p. 4.
[138] 'Brutal Prize-Fighting', *South Wales Echo*, 7 December 1893, p. 2.
[139] Ibid.
[140] 'Pugilism', *Usk Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 4 June 1864, p. 8.

months ‘hard labour’ and imprisoned at Usk in 1871 for viciously assaulting John Lawrence in an unprovoked attack that left his victim unconsciousness for over a week.[141] Some of Desmond’s other violent encounters comprised drunken and riotous behaviour in Pontypool and another unprovoked attack on John Jones, a beer retailer in Pontnewynydd. The judge during an earlier court appearance in 1864 commented that ‘the defendant seems to possess a passion for committing offenses of this nature, by which he has gained an unenviable notoriety’.[142] While other prize-fighters, arguably, fought not just for financial gains but to enhance their reputation with their peers, it seems the behaviour of some, such as Desmond, indicates they had very little respect for the sport or the honourable personae it could provide. They were simply violent men who were benefitting from a violent sport. The troublesome characteristics of Desmond are summarised by Brian Foster who explains that

> If the body of evidence heard at court cases provides a yardstick to a person's character, then Daniel Desmond was possibly one of the toughest and most troublesome men in the Eastern Valley during the second half of the nineteenth century. A local prize-fighter of renown, he was in and out of gaol on any number of occasions for a seemingly endless string of offences ranging from drunkenness to riotous behaviour to assault. Barely did a week pass by when he was not reported in the newspapers as being in trouble of some sort or other, and quite a substantially sized book could certainly be written about his exploits.[143]

When analysing Desmond’s history of unlawful behaviour, along with the irrational behaviour of other violent prize-fighters like him, there is no doubt that their actions would have given those people who were firmly against prize-fighting considerable evidence with which to condemn the sport. It was, however, not just the participants in prize-fighting who gave the sport a tainted image, as other attributes were as much to blame for its unwholesome reputation. Naturally, serious injury was frequent, and this was generally accepted as part of the risk associated with prize-fighting. Yet, on times, serious injury to fighters that could

[141] Foster, ‘Prize-Fighting in the Eastern Valley’, 45; ‘Properly Punished’, *Western Mail*, 18 September 1871, p. 3.
[142] ‘Unprovoked Assault’, *Usk Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 25 June 1864, p. 8; ‘Daniel Desmond Again’, *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 6 February 1875, p. 5.
[143] Foster, ‘Prize-Fighting in the Eastern Valley’, 44.

have been avoided often occurred due to mismatches. Pugilists were often pitted against each other for the entertainment of the crowd regardless of obvious differences in weight or ability. For example, a prize-fight took place at Merthyr in 1894 when two colliers fought for a stake of £5 a-side, the fact that there was a difference between the weights of the two men of around two stone was ignored.[144]

How fighters conducted themselves in the prize-ring was also very important as there was an honour among fighters regarding standards of fair play which were not to be broken. Nevertheless, there were prize-fighters who, to try and win a fight, ignored the 'unwritten' rules governing the sport to ensure a respectable and fair fight. They simply turned the 'respectable' fight into a drunken street brawl. Such was the case in 1856 in a fight on board a ship near Seattle between American, Tom Sharkey and an unnamed Welshman. Whilst suffering a beating at the hands of the superior boxer, the Welshman sunk his teeth into Sharkey's neck and held on like a bulldog. The men around the ring cried out in anger at the Welshman's dishonourable action, as the marks of his teeth, a quarter of an inch deep, became clearly visible on his opponent's neck.[145] There were occasions when prize-fighting in Wales was similarly associated with degrading acts of inhumanity against animals. In August 1888 William Samuels caused considerable excitement when he entered alone into a den of a dozen lions at Messrs Wombwell's menagerie in Swansea. Samuels, using another form of entertainment other than prize-fighting, to show his manliness drew a great crowd who sang 'for he's a jolly good fellow', as he entered the cage. The *North-Eastern Daily Gazette* reporting on the show explained that he possessed 'nerves of steel' as he

> walked undaunted up to the end of the cage where the animals were huddled together, awaiting only the slightest encouragement to spring on the intruder, and held his cudgel threateningly before the nose of the

[144] 'Prize Fight at Merthyr', *Evening Express*, 2 October 1894, p. 1.
[145] 'Sharkey's Fight. Story of a Rough Battle with a Welsh Sailor', *South Wales Daily News*, 2 October 1896, p. 7.

> fiercest… and showed his fearlessness of them by firing a loaded pistol at their faces.[146]

Further the *Weekly Mail* in 1894 described men fighting dogs for entertainment, observing

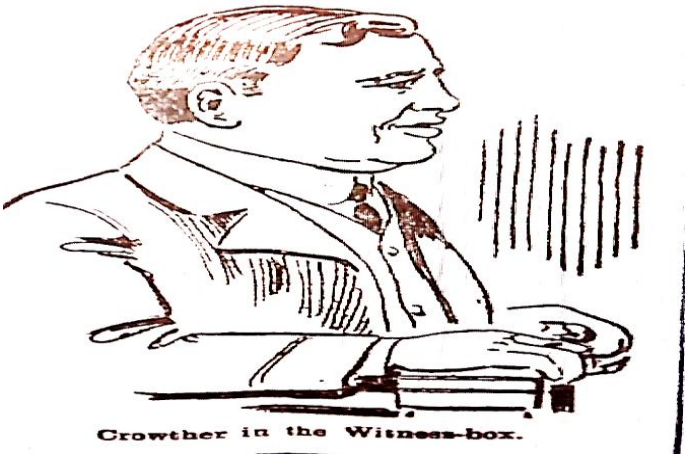
> during the last few days an encounter between a man and mastiff dog took place on the boundary-line of Shropshire. The 'battle' was kept quiet for obvious reason but a good attendance of men and dogs were present. The wager was, that the man should face the dog with bare arms and armed with a short cudgel… the man was the victor and challenged any dog present, but their owners refused to witness any more of the so-called sport.[147]

These deplorable acts against animals, often witnessed as a form of entertainment resembling that of a prize-fight, would not have helped the reputation of prize-fighting as a respectable sport. Moreover, this type of activity would have allowed those who were intolerant of prize-fighting to argue that the sport was a catalyst to further forms of brutal and inhumane entertainment, and for this reason prize-fighting, in any shape or form, should be outlawed.

The status of prize-fighters in their own communities and in the surrounding areas could, at times, have a negative impact on the credibility of the sport. The 'hard man' reputation of prize-fighters not only lived with them during their time in the prize-ring but largely remained long after their careers had come to an end. Inevitably, other local men often tried to engage in a fight with well-known prize-fighters in the hope of beating them, thereby enhancing their own reputations. Morgan Crowther (Fig. 1.4) frequently received challenges from other would-be pugilists during his fighting career,[148] and was stabbed on 27 January 1905 by Charles Francis Thomas, a known acquaintance, during an altercation at his house. Thomas was later arrested and stood trial for attempted murder.[149]

[146] 'Daring Deeds in a Lion's Den', *North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 10 August 1888, p. 4.
[147] 'Man and Dog Fight', *Weekly Mail*, 8 September 1894, p. 13. Also, see 'Man and Dog Fight near Bridgend', *Evening Express*, 15 July 1892, p. 3.
[148] 'Morgan Crowther', *Evening Express*, 18 April 1893, p. 3.
[149] 'Stabbed Ex-Pugilist, Mr Morgan Crowther Gives Evidence', *Cardiff Times*, 25 February 1905, p. 6.

Fig.1.4. Morgan Crowther in his later years, ***Evening Express,*** **1893.**[150]



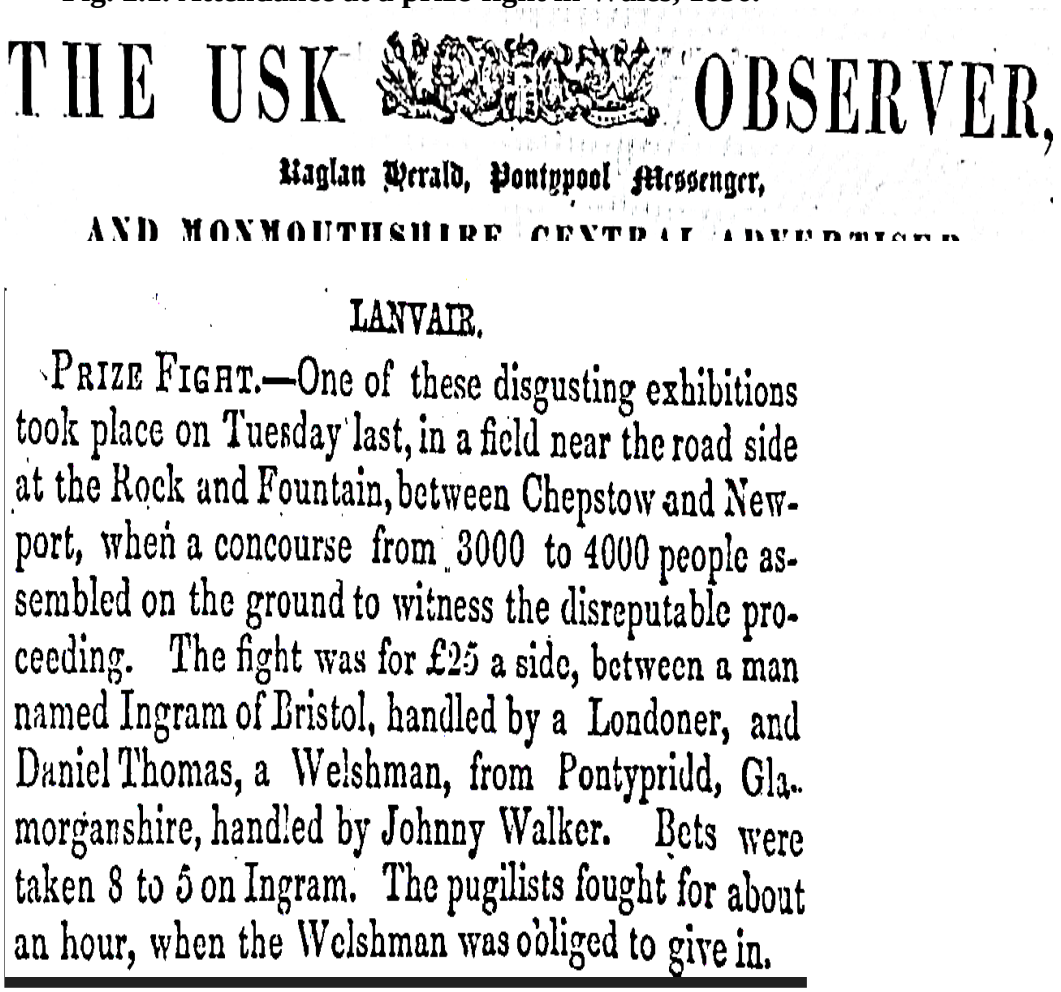
Overall, there is certainly a case to argue that prize-fighting firmly established its roots in Wales during the nineteenth century due to the social and economic conditions resulting from rapid industrialisation. There is no doubt that prize-fighting was a means of earning a living for some working-class men or, to be more precise, a means by which to augment other sources of income.[151] For this reason it is possible that many bare-knuckle prize-fighters may have initially had no intention to ever enter the prize-ring, yet social and economic circumstances could well have dictated their decision to do so. Some may have also seen prize-fighting as a better alternative to working in the harsh conditions of industrial centres. Thus, for some men 'stepping into the prize-ring may have seemed a better option to employment which was often hard physical toil, and the periodic chance of taking a brutal beating did not appear as a deterrent when weighed against the alternative of grinding work and destitution'.[152] Finally, it is worth stating that whatever the reasons for entering the prize-ring, a successful pugilistic career for a working-class man could lead to substantial enrichment and a close association with the gentry – for good or ill.

[150] Ibid.
[151] Wacquant, 'Pugilistic Point of View', 501.
[152] John Ford, *Prizefighting: The Age of Regency Boximania* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971), p. 42.

CHAPTER TWO

REGENCY AND RUFFIANS: THE BOXING AUDIENCE.

Fig. 2.1. Attendance at a prize-fight in Wales, 1856.[1]



THE USK OBSERVER,

Raglan Herald, Pontypool Messenger,

AND MONMOUTHSHIRE CENTRAL ADVERTISER

LANVAIR.

PRIZE FIGHT.—One of these disgusting exhibitions took place on Tuesday last, in a field near the road side at the Rock and Fountain, between Chepstow and Newport, when a concourse from 3000 to 4000 people assembled on the ground to witness the disreputable proceeding. The fight was for £25 a side, between a man named Ingram of Bristol, handled by a Londoner, and Daniel Thomas, a Welshman, from Pontypridd, Glamorganshire, handled by Johnny Walker. Bets were taken 8 to 5 on Ingram. The pugilists fought for about an hour, when the Welshman was obliged to give in.

There is an axiom which holds that nothing draws a crowd as quickly as a fight![2] As can be seen from the February 1856 newspaper report above (Fig. 2.1) this was certainly the case concerning prize-fighting during the nineteenth century which drew large, and often volatile, crowds to its venues in order to observe this brutal form of entertainment. Sir Henry Hawkins (Baron Brampton), a High Court judge, had in the eighteenth century proclaimed that

> It was a procession of the blackguardism of all ages and of all countries under heaven. The sexes were apparently in equal numbers and in equal

[1] 'Lanvair Prize Fight', *Usk Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 9 February 1856, p. 1.
[2] Randy Roberts, 'Eighteenth Century Boxing', *Journal of Sport History*, 4, 3 (1977), 246.

> degrees of ugliness and ferocity. There were fighting men of every species and variety – men whose profession it was to fight, and others whose brutal nature it was… Amidst this turbulent rabble rode several members of the peerage, and even Ministerial supporters of the 'noble art', exchanging with the low wretches an occasional laugh at the grotesque wit and humour.[3]

There have been varied descriptions of the prize-fighting audience who later become known as the 'Fancy', particularly who they were, where they came from and what their disreputable pleasures were. As observed in John Hamilton Reynolds' 1820 poem, a definition of the 'Fancy' was not just restricted to the followers of prize-fighting but was given to those who followed a variety of 'blood sports', such as cockfighting, dog-fighting and bear and badger baiting.

> Fancy's a term for every blackguardism-
> A term for favourite men and favourite cocks-
> A term for gentlemen who make a schism
> Without the lobby or within the box-
> For the best rogues of polish'd vulgarism,
> And those who deal in scientific knocks-
> For bull-dog breeders, badger-baiters-all
> Who live in gin and jail, or not at all.[4]

It can be interpreted from both Hawkins' comments and Reynold's poem that they believed those sharing the same uncouth interests in consuming large quantities of alcohol and violent sports, including a desire for the excitement of a prize-fight, were from a multiplicity of backgrounds, ages and both sexes, and were willing to tolerate each other's company, if only for a short time, in order to attend such fights. On occasions when prize-fights prevailed, men of high status could often be found fraternising with petty thieves and even possibly murderers, which was not standard practice of the aristocracy or the principles of conventional behaviour in British society. An explanation regarding supporters of prize-fighting was also noted in the nineteenth century by Pierce Egan, a British journalist and

[3] Richard Harris, *The Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins, Baron Brampton* (2 Vols. London: T. Nelson, 1904), I, p. 60.
[4] John H. Reynolds, *The Fancy: A Selection from the Poetical Remains of the Late Peter Corcoran* (London: T. Miller, 1820), and cited in John Ford, *Prizefighting: The Age of Regency Boximania* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971), p. 148.

sportswriter, who, when writing about an assembly of the 'Fancy', remarked that there was 'no intimacy or association about it. A man may be well-known here; he may also in turn know everybody… yet be quite a stranger to their habits and connexions with society'.[5] Towards the end of the century the *Western Daily Press* gave a detailed description regarding class distinctions at one particular prize-fight, stating that

> Every class of society may be said to have been represented. Here were leading lights of fashion... popular actors, play-wrights, stockbrokers and guardsmen elbowed solicitors and financial agents. Music hall proprietors, negro comedians and theatrical managers were packed like sardines with Foreign Office clerks and newspaper owners.[6]

In relation to these remarks, John Ford has implied that 'when the crowd assembled at a fight… all men were equal'.[7] However, there is much to be said for such an analyses, as can be ascertained in Gareth Williams' alternative definition of the 'Fancy'; he suggests that they were, in the Regency period, 'an unholy alliance of the raffish aristocracy and the rough working class, whom the former patronised while the other did the fighting, for it had been a lower class sport woven into the fabric of wider society'.[8]

Taking onboard the wide-ranging views and descriptions of the 'Fancy', the intention of this chapter is to specifically examine these riotous followers of Welsh prize-fighting and, more to the point, deliberate who they were and why they had such a fascination with such a violent sport. Furthermore, it will be questioned whether prize-fighting helped to bring different social classes together or divided them? In order to address these points, the reasons behind the fluctuations of prize-fighting in the nineteenth century and the changing social composition of the crowd need to be scrutinised. It will be of significance to study the relationship between the prize-fighters and their supporters, especially those who gave

[5] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 150.
[6] 'The Great Glove Fight', *Western Daily Press*, 12 November 1889, p. 7. The newspaper described the people attending a boxing bout between Jem Smith and Peter Jackson at the Pelican Club in Soho, London, the previous evening.
[7] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 149.
[8] Gareth Williams, 'A Brutal Passion: Bare-Knuckle Bruisers and Mountain Fighters', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 5.

patronage, alongside more general contemporary opinions about the sport. The study of class in Wales will be a key component in developing an insight into the sport and its followers, as it is important to understand what connected groups of people to specific sporting activities during this period. Furthermore, the intention here is to argue that the respectable found prize-fighting intolerable due to its association with drinking, gambling and violence. Yet, at the same time, it was a sport that attracted class conciliation, which enabled it to survive the harrying of moralists and the law.

The support for prize-fighting in Wales, it seems, was no different to other parts of Britain during the nineteenth century. Again, the followers of the sport were significant in number and came from various backgrounds. The *Monmouthshire Merlin* in 1832 described the diversity of people travelling to watch a prize-fight between Irishman, Stephen Trainer and Will Charles of Newport, commenting how the different roads leading to the prize-fight were

> thronged with equestrians, mounted on all sorts of steeds, from the lame dog's-meat animal to the prancing hunter carts, gigs, chaises and carriages… by twelve o'clock there was a stronger muster on the ground, the company was of a very motley description - there was a dark-featured collier, the robust peasant, the wily prig, the exquisite, and the beggar.[9]

The same newspaper on 30 March 1833 described how numerous groups of people made their way to a prize-fight in Raglan, stating that 'every species of vehicle was in requisition, from the swell drag and four to the donkey cart, and the number of horsemen was immense'.[10] Further evidence can be found in the *South Wales Daily News* in 1889 which conveyed that a prince, two lords, and numerous well-known figures in the world of sport were present, whilst a big crowd, unable to gain admission, waited anxiously in the streets to hear the result of a championship prize-fight between Welshman, Morgan Crowther and Englishman, Jack

[9] '"Provincial Milling" – Fight between Stephen Trainer, an Irishman, and Will Charles of Newport', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 9 June 1832, p. 3.
[10] 'Great Fight at Raglan', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 30 March 1833, p. 3.

Hicks.[11] The *Evening Express* in 1892 also reported that among the company attending one particular prize-fight in Merthyr Tydfil were a number of well-known sportsmen, notably Dick Richards of Ystrad Rhondda, Tom Isaacs (pigeon shot and gaffer of pedestrians), Bill Scott (south Wales handicapper), John Jones, John Evans, Alb[ert] Nicholson, Morgan Llewellyn, Captain Winters and Redmond Coleman.[12] What seems evident is that, although prize-fighting was illegal in Wales during the nineteenth century, there was nonetheless a wide ranging support amongst differing classes.[13] An example of which can be found in the *Evening Express* on 15 March 1899. This testified that the referee and timekeeper for the prize-fight between Dennis Tobin of Barry and Jack May, formerly of Birkenhead but now living in Cathays, were well-known 'gentlemen'.[14]

It should also be remembered that the term 'Fancy' also encompassed not only the followers of boxing, but the fighters, the patrons, the trainers, seconds, and all those who were attracted to the prize-ring.[15] Indeed, seconds were an integral and valuable part of the 'Fancy' and the prize-fighting contests, as the fighters and their backers would have relied heavily on the fighting expertise and experience of the second to help the fighter win the bout. One of their primary responsibilities was to hold up the fight if they believed their man was losing. This gave their boxer longer to recover between rounds, which was usually achieved by accusations of foul play against their fighter's opponent or supporters and often led to frequent altercations between rival seconds and opposing fighters.[16] For example, the prize-fight at Merthyr Tydfil in January 1892 between Sam Thomas of Ynyshir and Thomas James of Aberaman was staged after both men, who had previously acted as seconds to other prize-

[11] 'Boxing Match. West of England Championship Morgan Crowther Victorious', *South Wales Daily News*, 21 September 1889, p. 6.
[12] 'Prize-Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[13] For a detailed examination regarding the illegality of prize-fighting, refer to Chapter Five.
[14] 'Prize-Fight near Cardiff', *Evening Express*, 15 March 1899, p. 6.
[15] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 147.
[16] Dennis Brailsford. 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sport History*, 12, 12 (1985), 137.

fighters, accused each other of cheating. The only way to resolve this was to let them fight each other at a later date.[17]

Well-known fighters and ex-fighters were a key part of the 'Fancy' and were often used to command appropriate behaviour at prize-fights. As reported in the *Norfolk Chronicle* in 1820 the bout between Painter and Oliver (no Christian names given) was 'conducted appropriately: the greatest order prevailed, and the 'decorum of the ring' was ensured by well-known prize-fighters Tom Shelton, Jack Randall and Welshman Ned Turner'.[18] In the fight between Sam Thomas and Thomas James (noted above) there were a number of well-known prize-fighters in attendance, such as the Welshman, Redman Coleman. After explaining the rules to the fighters, the referee took it upon himself to remind the excited crowd that 'any attempt at interruption would be stringently dealt with'.[19] The role of ring-maker was of particular importance among the 'Fancy' as, more often than not, the venue of a prize-fight could not be announced in advance for fear of interference from the authorities. *The Times* sarcastically reported in September 1863 that 'any gentleman that feels curious to witness a prize-fight should betake himself the previous evening to one of those sporting public houses where, after a weightable quantity of boozing and smoking has been got through, an assistant whispers in your ear 'Paddington Station – half-past 3'.[20] On some occasions, in readiness for these prize-fights, some members of the 'Fancy' would work swiftly to erect a boxing ring on the mountain beforehand, while hoping that such activity would go undetected by the local constabulary. One example was printed in the *Aberdeen Evening Express* in 1889. The journalist reported that a brutal prize-fight in Wales took place on a hillside near Brynmawr between two well-known Welsh pugilists and lasted for an hour and a half in a ring of 24

[17] 'Prize-Fight at Merthyr Tydfil. Sam Thomas (Ynyshir) v. Thomas James (Aberaman)', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[18] 'Pugilism', *Norfolk Chronicle*, 22 July 1820, p. 2.
[19] 'Prize-Fight at Merthyr Tydfil. Sam Thomas (Ynyshir) vs Thomas James (Aberaman)', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[20] 'Prize-Fighting Under Difficulties', *The Times*, 7 September 1863, p. 3.

feet.[21] The *South Wales Echo* also described how the men of the 'Fancy', in order to avoid police interference, erected a twenty-four foot ring in a field in Marshfield (a village halfway between Cardiff and Newport) during the early hours of the morning, stating that 'they reached the rendezvous shortly after four, and spent some time getting up the ropes and stakes… a ring of the orthodox dimensions was speedily pitched'.[22]

The patronage of prize-fighters was integral to the success of the sport and noteworthy members of the 'Fancy' played an important role regarding the sponsoring of the fighters.[23] In prize-fighting money clearly mattered and was the key motive of the fighters and the 'Fancy'. Therefore, during bouts they shared the same common interest regardless of social status. Kenneth Sheard suggests that partaking, either as a contestant, backer or as a spectator, in popular sports including prize-fighting 'helped reinforce a social bond that in turn aided the upholding of social order and the acknowledgement of society's social hierarchy'.[24] This intermingling of classes can certainly be seen though the patronage of prize-fighting as historically the sport received the bulk of its financial support from wealthy patrons. Enjoying sporting events and gambling were one and the same to the wealthy, and for this reason many of them extended their patronage of blood sports and horseracing by sponsoring prize-fighters in much the same way as they owned racehorses.[25] Sir Henry Hawkins, who was a keen sportsman in his youth and possessed a love of horse racing and prize-fighting, remarked in his memoirs that the 'noble art of self-defence was patronised by

[21] 'Brutal Prize Fight in Wales', *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 13 September 1889, p. 2. The two men fought for forty-two rounds for a stake of £10 a-side. The contest was stopped when one pugilist's backers 'threw up the sponge'.
[22] 'The Interrupted Prize-Fight. Brought off at Marshfield Today', *South Wales Echo*, 1 May 1889, p. 2. Also, see 'Prize-Fight at Aberavon, Twenty-Nine Rounds! For Twenty Pounds', *South Wales Daily Post*, 3 April 1895, p. 4.
[23] For an insight into the patronage of fighters see Bob Mee, 'The Fancy, the Patrons and Pierce Egan', in his *Barefists* (Snitterfield: Lodge Farm Books, 1998), pp. 67–71; Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize-Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1988), p. 25.
[24] Kenneth Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', Anglia Polytechnic, PhD thesis, 1992, p. 172.
[25] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 15. Also, see 'Cardiff Races', *Evening Express*, 29 March 1895, p. 3. The newspaper article gives evidence of the horses taking part at Cardiff racecourse owned by the local squirearchy.

the greatest in the land'.[26] In accord with Hawkins, Sheard has asserted that the patronage of prize-fighting was 'impressive and included royal princes, including the Prince of Wales (later George IV), whilst a host of baronets, knights and esquires were attracted to the sport as supporters and patrons'.[27]

There are numerous newspaper reports that describe the patronage of Welsh prize-fights. In October 1889 the *South Wales Daily News*, describing the patrons of prize-fights, reported that 'a select coterie occasionally arranged a sparring bout for their own private delectation',[28] while the *South Wales Echo* reported earlier that year that a Gloucester gentleman was prepared to 'go a bond to any amount' to release Welsh prize-fighter Morgan Crowther on bail after one such fight.[29] Nevertheless, these reports rarely mention the names of the backers, unlike the prize-fighters themselves. The probable reason for this is that many of the patrons came from the gentry and, as the sport was deemed illegal, they would have sought anonymity while conducting such business in fear of the social repercussions they may have faced, including potential prosecution.

John Golby and Bill Purdue have noted that there were 'marked similarities between horse-racing and prize-fighting, and the supporters of the turf and the 'Fancy' overlapped considerably due to their common appreciation of physical prowess, whether of man or animal'.[30] This is substantiated in a newspaper report in the *Sporting Life* in 1890 which explained how Morgan Crowther's backers, before leaving for the Tenby Races, instructed Jem Bevan (Morgan's trainer) to issue a challenge on behalf of Crowther to box any man in

[26] Harris, *Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins,* I, p. 23.
[27] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 162. For a list of English nobility involved in the patronage of prize-fighters see Edward D. Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change: Boxing and Society at a Crossroads', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 2 (2006), 165.
[28] 'Prize-Fight near Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 26 October 1889, p. 3.
[29] 'The Lydney Prize-Fight', *South Wales Echo*, 28 June 1889, p. 2. In April 1895 it was reported that during a fight between David Pierce of Aberaman and Sam James of Glyn Neath 'a considerable sum was "on" among the backers of the principles'. See 'Prize-Fight at Aberavon, Twenty-Nine Rounds! For Twenty Pounds', *South Wales Daily Post*, 3 April 1895, p. 4.
[30] John M. Golby and William Purdue, *The Civilisation of the Crowd. Popular Culture in England, 1750–1900* (London: Batsford, 1984), p. 77.

the world 'old style' for a purse between £200 and £500 a-side.[31] As with prize-fighting, horse racing was looked upon with self-righteous condemnation by nineteenth century moralists, but these events provided the gentry with a means of exercising patronage and potentially the means to control such activities.[32] It has been implied that racecourses were occasionally used as venues to hold prize-fighting bouts and were advantageous as they guaranteed crowds, as race meetings increasingly became annual social events, usually over two or three days.[33] There is evidence to suggest that prize-fights were often arranged at venues near to racecourses on the same day as the race meetings in order to encourage some of the racing fraternity to partake in the added entertainment of viewing and possibly gambling on the prize-fight prior to or after the race meeting. Thus, in May 1890 Morgan Crowther of Newport and James Hayman of Bristol fought each other at Brock-Street Hall, a venue close to Bath racecourse, on the same night as a race meeting was held.[34]

Accounts regarding the diverse range of people in attendance at particular race venues can be found in numerous newspaper reports of the period. After examining this information, it is possible to identify members of the Welsh gentry that regularly frequented the races, which suggests their enjoyment of the equestrian sport and probably the gambling associated with it. Newspaper reports, as shown in Fig. 2.2, indicate that regular attendance at race meetings included the ironmaster families of the Crawshays and Homfrays, and other well-known personages such as Lord Tredegar, Lord and Lady Raglan, and Sir Charles and Lady Morgan, to name a few, along with numerous other men of similar social rank or professionals, such as politicians, doctors and members of the military.

[31] 'Morgan Crowther at the Sporting Life Office. Crowther Challenges the World at 8st 6lb', *Sporting Life*, 29 January 1890, p. 6.
[32] R. J. Moore-Colyer, 'Gentlemen, Horses and the Turf in Nineteenth-Century Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 6, 1 (June 1992), 60. Also, see Daryl Leeworthy, *Fields of Play: The Sporting Heritage of Wales* (Ceredigion: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2012), pp. 90–2; Mark Clapson, 'Horse Racing and On-Course Betting, c.1839–1960', in his *A Bit of a Flutter: Popular Gambling and English Society, c.1823–1961* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 108–37; Keith Laybourn, *Working-Class Gambling in Britain C. 1906-1960s: The stages of the Political Debate* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007).
[33] Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 16.
[34] 'Convictions of Prize-Fighters', *Pembrokeshire Herald and General Advertiser*, 24 October 1890, p. 4.

Fig. 2.2. Gentry attending a horse-racing meeting at Monmouth, *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 1873.[35]

MONMOUTH RACES.

After the first day's racing on Thursday last there was the usual race ball at the Beaufort Arms, which brought together a numerous and brilliant assemblage which included His Grace the Duke of Beaufort, K.G., Lady Blanche Somerset, Lady Henry Somerset, Lord and Lady Raglan, the Earl of Mar, Mr. Pryce Hamilton, Mr. Octavius Morgan, M.P., Lord and Lady Tumour, Lieut.-Col. McLean (13th Huzzars), Major Rolls, Mr. W. E. King King and Miss King King, Major and Mrs. Herbert, Mr. C. B. Marsham, Miss Steward, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Crompton-Roberts, Major and Mrs. Hickman, Mr. and Miss Laura Neve, Mr. Reade, Rev. Ellis Everett, and Mrs. and Miss Everett, Lieutenant Carrow, Lieutenant Foote, Mrs. and Miss Vaughan, Mr. Vaughan aad party, Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Wyatt, Miss P. Wyatt, Mr. H. M. Kennard, Mr. and Miss St. John, Mr W. C A. Williams, Mr. T. W. Oakley, Miss Oakley, Mr. R. Oakley, Captain Mardon, Major Davies, Major Wheeley, Captain W. Wheeley, Captain Kane (9th Regiment), Mr. Capel Hanbury Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Power, Miss Power, Miss L. Power, Captain and Mrs. Brandreth, Mr. Machen, Mr. and Mrs. Dighton, Miss Dighton, Mr. Dighton, Captain Bevan, Captain Reed, Mr. A. Vizard, Mr. and Mrs. W. Crawshay, Mr. A. Lawrence, &c., &c.

Affluent Welsh gentry families such as the Wynns, Powells and Morgans were also well-known racehorse breeders. Certainly Godfrey and Fred Morgan, were enthusiastic hosts at meetings held at Tredegar Park, for which monetary prizes were awarded.[36] It is probable that a proportion of the gentry regularly attending the races may have been linked in some way to the patronage of prize-fighting on account of their wealth, competitiveness and interest in sporting activities associated with gambling. And yet while researching this topic it has proven difficult to find any evidence linking well-known members of the Welsh gentry to the patronage of prize-fighters. This is perhaps due to many dignitaries choosing to remain anonymous regarding any involvement with prize-fighting. Due to the illegal and immoral nature of the sport, if it were to become common knowledge of a person's connection with prize-fighting, it may have possibly tarnished their reputation and 'standing' within the communities.

[35] 'Monmouth Races', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 26 September 1873, p. 8.
[36] Roger Phillips, *Tredegar: The History of an Agricultural Estate 1300–1956* (Newport: Self-Publishing Association for the Tredegar Memorial Trust, 1990), p. 162.

With the financial support of the wealthy in place, prize-fighting as a public spectacle and gambling forum was provided with a sound footing in which to prosper during the nineteenth century. When describing some of the affluent people of the 'Fancy', Sir Henry Hawkins remarked that

> Society loved a prize-fight. Magistrates went, and even clerical members of that august body. As magistrates it may have been their duty to discountenance, but as country gentlemen it was their privilege to support the noble champions of the art, especially when they had their money on the event. The magistrates, if their presence was ever discovered, said they went to prevent breach of the peace, but if they were unable to affect this laudable object, they looked on quietly so as to prevent anyone committing a breach of the peace on themselves.[37]

Hawkins' depiction of magistrates and members of the church attending prize-fights, while at the same time providing moral judgments against such events, highlights the hypocrisy evident at this time. Others were simply irritated by the lack of policing to prevent prize-fights. One concerned member of the public wrote to the *Aberdare Times* in August 1866 that despite 'growing distaste of the public, the brutal amusements of the prize-ring continue'. The anonymous commentator went on to add

> We are astonished at the apathy of our philanthropists and Christian statesmen in this matter, as we allow two men to hammer each other's faces into mummies for money for the gratification of a blood thirsty crowd. And yet it would be easy to prevent these disgraceful encounters. The law to them is not what it should be, enforced, it never is! On this last occasion, several policemen actually assisted at the embarkation of the crowd that were proceeding to the place appointed for the fight, and thus law was, as it were, mocked to its face.[38]

And yet there is evidence to suggest that the police were often proactive in preventing prize-fights and, on some occasions, would use unusual tactics in order to apprehend the fighters and spectators. In June 1889, having received information about a prize-fight, two police officers secretly watched the dawn fight between Morgan Crowther and Englishman, James

[37] Harris, *Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins*, I, p. 24.
[38] 'Another Prize-Fight', *Aberdare Times*, 11 August 1866, p. 3.

Hayman.[39] The Penarth Police Constabulary also frustrated attempts to stage a prize-fight in their vicinity by placing policemen in plain clothes all over the district in hope of overhearing gossip regarding the whereabouts of the prize-fight, which, amusingly, was arranged within three hundred yards of the police station.[40]

The nineteenth century witnessed important changes to policing across the country, with the formation of Metropolitan Police in 1829. This introduction of professionally paid, uniformed policemen offered a more efficient policing system to many large urban and industrial districts during the 1830s and 1840s.[41] This period also witnessed the introduction of the County Police Act of 1839 and then followed the Police Act of 1856 which required all counties and boroughs to have a police force that were under the control of a local Justice of the Peace, not central government.[42] This meant that there were huge variations in each local police force, ranging from not only pay, service and conditions, but also duties and obligations to the public. Therefore, the differing attitudes towards the surveillance and prosecution of prize-fighting raises the issue of interference or non-interference by the authorities, which would have no doubt impacted on prize-fighters and their followers actually succeeding in staging a prize-fight without obstruction or arrest in different localities in Wales. Likewise, the misuse of police power was apparent during the latter parts of the century with police officers often accused of accepting bribes and making false charges.[43] The *Cardiff Times* in May 1887 stated that 'the truth is leaking out. Incontrovertible evidence is

[39] 'The Lydney Prize-Fight', *South Wales Echo*, 28 June 1889, p. 2.
[40] 'Prize-Fight at Penarth Frustrated', *Barry Dock News*, 30 March 1894, p. 6.
[41] E. R. Baker, 'The Beginnings of the Glamorgan County Police', *Glamorgan Historian*, 2 (1965), 41. Also see, Simon Patrick Dell, *The Victorian Policeman* (London: Shire Publications, 2004); Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus Books, 2009).
[42] David. Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1982), p. 20. Also, see 'Police, Punishment and Reform', in David J. V. Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), pp. 201–38. For an account of the developments in policing see Clive Emsley, 'PC Dixon and Commissaire Maigret: Some Myths and Realities in the Development of English and Continental Police', in David W. Howell and Kenneth O. Morgan (eds), *Crime, Protest and Police in Modern British Society* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), pp. 97–119. For a detailed account regarding the introduction of the police force in Wales see Baker, 'The Beginnings of the Glamorgan County Police', 40–52.
[43] Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. 216.

being adduced proving that police officers at Cardiff are capable of acts which no honest man could attempt to justify'.[44] Following this, the *Cambrian* in February 1894 reported on an inquiry into the police of south Wales regarding blackmailing of some licensed publicans.[45]

Although no evidence has been found it is probable that, on occasions, members of the gentry associated with prize-fighting may have been willing to bribe local police officers to 'stay away' from arranged bouts in their district. An example of possible aristocratic authority and influence was recorded in the *Cambrian* in July 1834. A prize-fight was arranged between Owen Swift and Anthony Noon, near Andover, and was attended by a number of the gentry. Unfortunately, Noon was beaten so badly that he died the same night. The newspaper claimed a verdict of manslaughter was passed against all surviving parties of the bout, except for the 'titled getters-up and abettors of the affray'.[46] Furthermore, the Chief Constables at this time were appointed by the county magistrates.[47] It is possible that the attitudes of magistrates towards prize-fighting, whether in support of or against the sport, could have influenced the enforcement of bare-knuckle bouts by Chief Constables in their particular jurisdictions. Then again, prize-fighting may have been an activity that parish constables felt they ought to let occur as it would help resolve local disputes in these industrial centres and consequently make their job of keeping the peace easier.

Despite the illegality of this sport and the responsibility of the local authorities to prevent and prosecute all those found to be involved in a prize-fight, the examination of numerous newspaper reports covering various authorities in Wales throughout the nineteenth century demonstrates that there was inconsistency in approach. The police were either unable or unwilling to prevent such fights from taking place, while the magistrates were often

[44] 'A Cardiff Police Scandal', *Cardiff Times*, 14 May 1887, p. 5.
[45] 'Swansea Police and Blackmailing', *Cambrian*, 16 February 1894, p. 7. For further evidence of police corruption in Wales during this period see 'The Police and Blackmailing. Resolutions of the Trade', *Western Mail*, 21 February 1894, p. 7.
[46] 'Fatal Prize-Fight', *Cambrian*, 5 July 1834, p. 4.
[47] Gwyn, A, Williams, 'The Making of Radical Merthyr', *Welsh History Review*, 1, 2 (1961), 162.

compromised in their attempts to prosecute pugilists and their supporters. There is evidence of large numbers of policemen being despatched to prevent some fistic encounters, but more usually prize-fights, lasting for a number of hours and viewed by large numbers of supporters, somehow seemed to go 'unnoticed' and there is no mention of police interference. Examples of the limited ability to prevent prize-fights can be seen in the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* in May 1855 when it was reported that five policemen were despatched to stop a prize-fight from taking place near Llantwit-Fardre, but were overpowered by the crowd and suffered a severe beating. [48] The *Pall Mall Gazette* in March 1884 equally recorded that a fight which took place for forty minutes on a common near Maesteg, with 4,000 supporters in attendance, was inspected by two policemen, but only after the fight was over.[49]

Irregularities in those apprehended by the police and prosecuted by magistrates is prevalent in these reports. In some cases the police would detain the prize-fighters, their seconds and where possible the supporters,[50] whereas, on other occasions, the police simply stopped the fight but made no arrests.[51] Where prosecutions did take place there was considerable variations in punishment – from limited fines to imprisonment. More often the accused walked free from court. The *Evening Express* explained in November 1895 how Edwin Murphy had died during a prize-fight with Henry Lloyd at Marl pits, Grangetown. A coroner's inquest nevertheless recorded that Murphy had died from 'natural causes' and Lloyd was released without any charge brought against him.[52] These newspaper reports thereby help to provide a persuasive argument that in some Welsh communities prize-fighting gained unofficial protection from the law due to an unwillingness to prosecute due to the lack

[48] 'Pontypridd and Neighbourhood Disgraceful Proceeding', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 2 February 1855, p. 3.
[49] 'A Prize Fight in Wales', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 March 1884, p. 10.
[50] 'Prize Fighting', *Cardiff Times*, 13 March 1886, p. 4. At the Pontypridd court two prize-fighters, Edmund Powell and Tudor Foster (both colliers) were charged with breach of the peace and their seconds charged with abetting them. The police were also proceeding with the prosecution of 20 of the onlookers.
[51] 'The Interrupted Prize-Fight', *South Wales Echo*, 1 May 1889, p. 2. Police appeared at the scene of a prize-fight and intervened but did not arrest the fighters. They also interviewed onlookers but did not prosecute any of them.
[52] 'The Marl Pit Fight. The Combatant in Custody Discharged', *Evening Express*, 6 November 1895, p. 3.

of evidence and a more general failure to impose the law. Equally, the collusion of leading community figures helped mask the prevalence of pugilism in Wales. As Sheard has observed, the influence of country gentlemen 'may not have been sufficient to prevent the criminalisation of prize-fighting, but it had been enough to deter the full enforcement of the law'.[53]

At the same time, prize-fighting failed to garner wider support due to the absence of a governing body which meant the sport found it hard to police itself. In September 1822 the *Sporting Magazine* stated that 'whenever the spirit of manly combat gives way to greed and the art of boxing is made a trade-off, there will be constant inducements to unfairness and trick'.[54] These reports on the nature of prize-fighting and its dependence on gambling, alongside its inherent corruption, led to a slow decline in gentry support for boxing from the 1820s onwards and with it their financial backing.[55] It could be argued that this withdrawal was confirmed when the *New Sporting Magazine* announced in 1831 that its pages would be closed to prize-fighting, bull-baiting and cock fighting.[56] It should be remembered, however, that this decline in the gentry's financial support of the sport was gradual, with evidence indicating that there was by no means a complete withdrawal of aristocratic support of prize-fighting. The *Cambrian* in July 1834 testified that a prize fight was arranged by a Member of Parliament and attended by a number of 'Lords' and 'Gentlemen'. The *Pembrokeshire Herald* in December 1863 reported concerns regarding the encouragement of prize-fighting given by the upper classes, including members of the House of Commons and editors of some

[53] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 180; *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 28 September 1890 when reviewing prize-fighting stated that 'under the protection of royalty and aristocracy, these degrading scenes continued'.
[54] 'An Observer', *Sporting Magazine*,10, New Series, September 1822, p. 292, and cited in Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 86.
[55] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 134; Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 50; Golby and Purdue, *Civilisation of the Crowd*, p. 77. Also refer to Chapter One for a more detailed examination of possible corruption in Welsh prize-fighting.
[56] Golby and Purdue, *Civilisation of the Crowd*, p. 10.

newspapers, while the *Western Times* in October 1890 described how a number of 'worthy gentlemen' attended a pre-arranged prize-fight.[57]

Alongside the alleged corruption in prize-fighting, a new civilising culture in Wales, including temperance and new leisure activities, also played a part in the withdrawal of upper class patronage of the sport. The rise of the temperance movement and its campaign against the drinks trade swept across Wales, especially in the south Wales coalfields from the late 1830s onwards. 'Wholesome' activities were promoted in communities rather than 'sinful pleasures', including the consumption of alcohol.[58] There became a growing use of Sundays for sporting activities as key leaders of church social clubs and Mechanics Institutes recognised some sports as healthy outlets for misdirected energies. They called on 'respectable inhabitants' to vigorously campaign against drunkenness, gambling and pugilism, encourage exhibitions of running, leaping and climbing, and organise and sponsor regular sporting events.[59] In addition, the middle-class pursuance of a better, more moral society, encouraged the development of new sports in the second half of the nineteenth century, such as golf, tennis and cycling. In June 1867 the *Brecon County Times* reported on the opening of Sennybridge Cricket club, commenting that 'we are glad to find that a Cricket Club has been recently established in this thriving little village… We hope that the national game will be a source of much recreation and amusement for the young men of the locality'.[60]

These 'refined' sports attracted the attention of many gentlemen as they began to shy away from 'rough culture'. Furthermore, the civilising process focussed more attention on the

[57] *Western Times*, 10 October 1890, p. 2.
[58] Mike Huggins and James A. Mangan, *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians at Play* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 197. Also, see W. R Lambert, *Drink and Sobriety in Wales, 1820–1895* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1983).
[59] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), p. 40.
[60] 'Senny Bridge Cricket', *Brecon County Times*, 15 June 1867, p. 8. Also, see Rev. W. Edwyn Jones, 'Cricket in Wales', *Welsh Outlook*, 16, 8 (August 1929), 246–7; Andrew K. Hignell, 'Nineteenth Century Cricket in Monmouthshire', *Gwent Local History*, 77 (Autumn, 1994), 8–22.

family, particularly with the development of public parks from the 1830s,[61] while other sporting activities, such as rowing and sailing regattas, also provided opportunities for family orientated sporting activities.[62] In May 1860 the *Cardiff Times* described the mass turnout for a regatta in the East Bute Dock in 1860, observing that 'altogether there could have not been less than 5000 people to witness the contests… The whole proceedings were conducted in a quiet and orderly manner, and the fineness of the day gave a zest and enjoyment to the proceedings which the vast multitude participated in'.[63]

What is apparent from this newspaper report is that the description of the civilised nature of the well-behaved crowd at the regatta greatly differed from the frequent newspaper reports that described the boisterous and often violent behaviour of those attending unlawful prize-fights. For this reason, alongside alleged corruption and potential arrest, the introduction and availability of refined leisure activities caused the popularity of cross-class sports, such as prize-fighting, to become neglected by the gentry as they now enjoyed other leisure activities on offer that were more appropriate to their standing in society.[64] Additionally, Victorian respectability, instigated via a variety of socialising agencies and institutional organisations, not least the home, the school, churches and the workplace,[65] condemned drunkenness and gambling associated with bare-fist fights as being both morally corrupt and threatening. Middle-class missionaries also began to preach about 'rational recreation' to the working-class in the hope of improving social order, discipline and education through leisure

[61] For a detailed account of the development of public parks in Wales, see 'The Public Park', in Leeworthy, *Fields of Play*, pp. 9–36.
[62] Refer to 'Sporting Pleasures', in Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, pp. 85–110; Gareth Williams, 'Popular Culture, Leisure and Recreation', in Chris Williams and Sian Rhiannon Williams (eds), *The Gwent County History, IV: Industrial Monmouthshire, 1780–1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 226–51. For refined activities see the following newspaper reports: 'Recreation Ground', *Tenby Observer Weekly*, 12 December 1867, p. 5; 'Abergavenny. Public Baths and Recreation Grounds', *Brecon County Times*, 6 July 1867, p. 8; 'Opening of the Aberdare Public Park', *Western Mail*, 30 July 1869, p. 2; 'Opening of Park Llewelyn Yesterday. The Banquet, The Inauguration and the Fireworks', *Cambrian*, 4 October 1878, p. 5.
[63] 'Cardiff Amateur Rowing Club', *Cardiff Times*, 12 May 1860, p. 8.
[64] Mike Huggins, 'Second-Class Citizens? English Middle-Class Culture and Sport, 1850–1910: A reconsideration', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 1 (March 2000), 3.
[65] Ibid, Huggins, 'Second-Class Citizens?', 6.

activities.[66] This placed increased pressure on the middle and upper class members of the 'Fancy' to remove themselves from any involvement with prize-fighting as the sport became increasingly viewed as uncivilised by those who occupied the moral high ground.[67] The authorities argued that prize-fighting not only attracted disorderly crowds and encouraged criminal behaviour, but distracted the working class from their work commitments.[68] These concerns are relayed in a report in October 1890 of a prize-fight in the *South Wales Echo*, which demonstrated how the work discipline of miners in the Hafod and Coedcae collieries was compromised after they had attended a prize-fight. The newspaper commented that the early morning fight between Illtyd Evans of Pontypridd and Jack Hitchings of Ynyshir on the summit of Llanwonno mountain, near Pontypridd, and witnessed by many hauliers, 'prevented a large number of colliers resuming operations'. [69] This report indicates a lack of adherence by the workers towards the work ethics that their employers were trying to instil. It is hard to predict how often this type of disruption occurred, but it would have certainly led to less output and thereby diminished profits for ironmasters and colliery owners. If these industrialists did have any tolerance for the leisure-time activities of their workforce, including prize-fighting, such behaviour would undoubtedly have changed their attitudes.

Yet the fading support of the gentry and middle-class moralism did not signal the end of the sport. Golby and Purdue have stated that 'the general decline of prize-fighting must not, in any case, be exaggerated or ante-dated for it remained enormously popular with the working men'.[70] The withdrawal of the gentry occasioned a new period of middle-class patronage of the sport, but such backing did come at a price. Middle-class supporters had new expectations, including wide ranging attempts to reform working-class recreation through

[66] Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c. 1780–c. 1880* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), p. 91.
[67] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 20.
[68] Ibid., p. 45.
[69] 'Prize Fight on Llanwonno Mountain', *South Wales Echo*, 8 October 1890, p. 3.
[70] Golby and Purdue, *Civilisation of the Crowd*, p. 77.

their idea of 'rational recreation', which included viewing fights within a safe and controlled environment, alongside improved legislation and regulation. For this reason, there was an attempt to physically separate classes at fights through the introduction of 'inner and outer circles', where entrance charges were fixed for different seats. An example of this separation of classes can be seen in a report debating the legalisation of prize-fighting in the *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald* in December 1862 which described the inner ring as

> Those privileged spectators who have paid the guinea or two apiece to be protected during the fight, and sit on soft wrappers, cigar in mouth, and betting book in hand – a strange mixture of young exquisites, bill discounters and other middle-class rowdyism – on that broken-nosed band who stand around to protect their patrons against the outer circle of howling and blaspheming lower-class rowdyism.[71]

It would be incorrect to suggest that there were not periods of decline, but this was not consistent. In Wales there were continuous reports of prize-fights throughout the early to late nineteenth century, and the high numbers of spectators in attendance attests to this.[72] In March 1833 three thousand people, among whom were many respectable, well-dressed men from Ross, Monmouth, Abergavenny and Newport, watched a prize-fight at Raglan between Bill Gardiner, alias the 'Old Horse', and Will Charles, the Welsh champion.[73] In February 1856 a prize-fight between David (Duck) Ingram of Bristol and Daniel Thomas from Pontypridd was held at Llanfair Isgoed, between Chepstow and Newport, and was watched by an estimated crowd of three to four thousand people,[74] while in 1884 four thousand spectators watched a twenty-eight round prize-fight near Maesteg between Shoni Engineer and Thomas Davies.[75]

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[71] 'The Prize Ring', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 13 December 1862, p. 3. Also, see Henry Downes Miles, *Pugilistica: The History of British Boxing* (3 vols. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1906), III, p. 65. Miles states that, 'an inner circle of the privileged was soon formed by those who chose to 'qualify' by taking out 'certificates' at 5s. each from the commissary'.

[72] For a detailed account of Welsh prize-fights that took place throughout the nineteenth century refer to list of prize-fights in appendix.

[73] 'Great Fight at Raglan', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 30 March 1833, p. 3.

[74] 'Llanfair Prize Fight', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 9 February 1856, p. 1.

[75] 'Prize-Fight Near Bridgend', *Cardiff Times*, 22 March 1884, p. 5; 'A Prize Fight in Wales', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 March 1884, p. 10. There are anomalies in these reports as they refer to Shoni Engineer as John Davies while his real name was John Jones.

Without the support and backing of the patrician members of the 'Fancy', however, it is likely that prize-fighting became even more vulnerable to criticism. In conjunction with the disparaging comments directed against those who participated in the sport from moralists, the presence of large crowds, including those attending a prize-fight, raised anxiety of potential unruliness.[76] As Mark Harrison has commented, 'while crowds may have been singular features of the urban landscape, they were always understood in multiple ways. One person's 'mob' may have been another's lively gathering of the common people'.[77] This was due, in part, to the growth of radicalism from the late eighteenth century onwards which ushered in a period of social and political unrest. After witnessing the effects of revolution in France, there became a real fear of a Jacobin rebellion in Britain and any large gathering of people was considered a threat.[78] Prize-fighting happened to reach its peak during this period of civil unrest, and consequently, the government viewed large crowds attending prize-fights with considerable concern. [79]

Arguably, there is some validity in these claims as there was considerable discontent across the British Isles in the nineteenth century, including Wales. This discontent led to numerous industrial protests, many of which took the form of violent demonstrations and riots.[80] Evidence of this discontent was witnessed at the end of the Napoleonic wars (c.1815) as Wales, alongside many other parts of the British Isles, was plunged into a period of post-war economic depression due to rising food prices, low wages and unemployment. Samuel Bamford, the English radical and writer, best described the discontent felt across the country after the war when he stated that 'whilst the laurels were yet cool on the brows of our

[76] Andy Croll, *Civilising the Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr, c.1870–1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 107.
[77] Mark Harrison, *Crowds and History: Mass Phenomena in English Towns, 1790–1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.10. Also, see Donald Richter, 'The Role of the Mob-Riot in Victorian Elections, 1865–85, *Victorian Studies*, 15, 1 (1971), 19–28; George Rudè, 'The Patter of Disturbance and the Behaviour of Crowds', in George Rudè (ed.), *The Crowd in History 1730–1848* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1981), pp. 237–69.
[78] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 33.
[79] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 182.
[80] David Jones, *Before Rebecca. Popular Protests in Wales, 1793–1835* (London: Allen Lane, 1973), p. 69.

victorious soldiers on their second occupation of Paris, the elements of convulsion were at work amongst the masses of our labouring population'.[81] This resulted in disturbances across Britain as many protested against the hardships they were facing. Many strikes took place in Wales during 1816, especially in the industrial areas, following the continuous erosion of wages. The *Cambrian* reported in October of that year that 'the disposition to riot and disorder originated in a notice given by one of the works on the hill of further reductions in wages… The men's wages have been reduced considerably, and in some cases are so low as to cause great distress'.[82] This public disorder, and the violence associated with strikes and riots, has been described by John Bohstedt as a method that 'informally permitted the working-class to politically negotiate with those in authority, on issues such as impressments and wages'.[83] In agreement, Gareth Evans has suggested that this could be seen as a form of 'collective bargaining by riot'.[84] Following the strikes and social unrest of 1816 a number of significant events occurred in Wales in the following decades whereby the authorities were actively engaged in an on-going struggle against working-class demands for political, social and economic reform.[85]

Merthyr Tydfil had seen overwhelming industrial unrest in the early part of the nineteenth century which reached its climax in 1831 when an estimated 7,000 to 10,000 people marched to the town, attacked soldiers and held the magistrates, the High Sheriff of Glamorgan and a few ironmasters in the Castle Inn.[86] An eye witness described the violent scenes in the *Cambrian*:

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[81] Samuel Bamford, *Passages in the Life of a Radical* (privately published: J. Heywood, 1843), p. 6, and cited in David J. V. Jones, 'The South Wales Strikes of 1816', *Morgannwg*, 11 (1967), 27.
[82] 'Disturbances in Glamorganshire', *Cambrian*, 26 October 1816, p. 3. For a detailed account of the 1816 south Wales strikes refer to Jones, 'The South Wales Strikes of 1816', 27–45.
[83] John Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales, 1790–1810* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press), p. 310. See also Ieuan Gwynedd Jones, 'People and Protest: Wales 1815–1880', in Trevor Herbert and Gareth Elwyn Jones (eds), *People and Protest: Wales 1815–1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), pp. 1–6.
[84] Gareth Evans, *The History of Wales, 1815–1906* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989) p. 133.
[85] Huggins and Mangan, *Disreputable Pleasures*, p. 154.
[86] Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 129.

> About ten o'clock in the morning, several thousands of men (apparently workmen and miners) passed my house, armed with clubs, cheering, very noisy and hurrahing. They passed on by the Castle in where the magistrates, gentlemen and constables were...I saw a struggle between the mob and the soldiers as if the mob were trying to disarm the soldiers. I saw the muskets and bayonets moving and shaking backwards and forwards, as if they were fought for.[87]

Following the Merthyr riots, political agitation for reform grew apace, and was particularly reflected in the steady growth of unionism and Chartism.[88] In Wales, inequalities, unemployment and inadequate social welfare provisioning led to class antagonism as working class unrest grew due to the neglect of the ruling classes.[89] The rise of Chartism culminated in the uprising at Newport on 4 November 1839 which saw a large contingent of people (estimates vary from 5,000 to some 30,000), armed with muskets, pistols and other such weapons, march on the town and storm the Westgate Hotel, where the magistrates were sitting. South-west Wales also witnessed social unrest and mass protest over unfair taxation in the form of the Rebecca riots between 1839 and 1844. This was described by Pat Molloy as a 'classic example of mass protest against a logjam of inequity which had been allowed to accumulate as a result of the tremendous industrial, economic and social changes of the early nineteenth century.[90]

In the second half of the nineteenth century workers began to seek further reform via associational activities, especially via trade unions. These gave the workers a voice and their leaders, such as William Abraham ('Mabon', 1842–1922) sought better working conditions, including an eight-hour working day and compensation for industrial injuries.[91] There was considerable resistance to trade unions by many industrialists who viewed the leaders as nothing more than financed agitators and were concerned over the growth of union

[87] 'The Merthyr Riots – Inquest', *Cambrian*, 2 July 1831, p. 4.
[88] Malcolm Chase, *Chartism. A New History* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007), p. 359.
[89] Thomas Phillips, *Wales: The Language, Social Conditions, Moral Character, and Religious Opinions of the People* (London: J. W. Parker, 1849), pp. 52–3, and cited in David. J. V. Jones. *The Last Rising. The Newport Chartist Insurrection of 1839* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), p. 25.
[90] Pat Molloy, *And They Blessed Rebecca: An Account of the Welsh Toll-Gate Riots 1839–1844* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1983), p. 20.
[91] Eric W. Evans, *Mabon: A Study in Trade Union Leadership* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1959), p. 6.

membership. The National Amalgamated Malleable Iron Worker's Association began recruiting heavily in south Wales from 1871 and by 1873 it had not only established 110 branches in the district, but there was an increase in membership from 1,800 in 1872 to over 15,000 by 1873.[92]

Throughout the century industrialists and landed gentlemen were naturally concerned about the upsurge in violence and forceful collective bargaining in pursuit of social and political change in Wales. The perceived lawlessness of these industrial areas led to calls for stronger measures to enforce law and order. This did not bode well for prize-fighting which was both illegal and could lead to civil disobedience due to the large and potentially volatile crowds that attended such events.[93] This was the case in the bout between Ned Turner and Jack Randall at Crawley, Sussex, in 1818 where an estimated crowd of 20,000 attended.[94] Drunkenness at these events, mixed with over exuberance, often led to violence. This unruly behaviour could also disrupt the fight itself as spectators entered the ring. During the second round of the contest between Sam Butcher of Ynyshir and Maloy (first name unknown) of Wolverhampton, held at Porth in April 1894, the crowd broke into the ring. It was alleged that the crowd were in favour of the Welshman and sought to give him time to recover from Maloy's superior boxing skills. Reporting on the fight, the *South Wales Daily News* explained how Maloy had

> scarcely a friend except his seconds, and the round ended in a melee. Round 3, both men were gasping for breath as they came up, and sparred cautiously. Maloy had the best of this round, but had to fight his man and the crowd, who on this occasion fairly rushed over him and trampled upon the poor fellow. So ended a long looked-for event, much to the disgust of every lover of fair-play.[95]

[92] A. Jones, 'Trade Unions and the Press', *Welsh History Review*, 12, 2 (December 1984), 199; John Williams, 'Trade Unionism and the Labour Movement, 1850–1914', in Williams and Williams (eds), *Gwent County History*, IV, pp. 329–47; E. J. Jones, '"Scotch Cattle" and Early Trade Unionism in Wales', in Walter. E. Minchington (ed.), *Industrial South Wales, 1750–1914: Essays in Welsh Economic History* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 209–17.
[93] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 180; Brailsford, *Bareknuckle*, p. 84.
[94] 'The Grand Pugilistic Combat between Randal and Turner', *Morning Chronicle*, 7 December 1818, p. 2.
[95] 'Glove Fight at Porth. Sam Butcher (Ynyshir) v. Maloy (Wolverhampton). Disgraceful Conduct of Spectators. The Visitor Mobbed and Trampled on', *South Wales Daily News*, 3 April 1894, p. 7.

Attacks on the police were also prevalent during this period and were adjudged by the authorities to be more than just drunken behaviour. In 1868 the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* reported that 'a respectably dressed young man and four others attacked a police constable, took his hat, struck him down, and kicked him severely on the ground'.[96] Their concerns were heightened when accounts of such violent confrontations between the police and large numbers of the 'Fancy' became more widespread. The *Cardiff Times*, in March 1884, reported on a fight between Shoni Engineer and Thomas Davies for £20 a-side, at Cefn-Ydfa-House, near Bridgend. It stated that 4,030 people were present and at the end of the encounter a couple of policemen made their appearance, but the crowd closed upon them and prevented the pugilists from being arrested.[97] During one particular fight in November 1888 at Pentre, near Treorchy, the crowd were threatened with a revolver by one member of the 'Fancy' if they approached the combatants. At the same fight the police eventually arrived and attempted to apprehend the fighters and their seconds but they were unsuccessful as the crowd pelted them with stones and they were forced to retreat.[98] Crowd problems relating to prize-fighting did not only take place at the boxing venues. Very often, when travelling to fights, the 'Fancy' showed its collective strength and lack of respect for the law by their unruly behaviour.[99]

In 1884 in a fight held on common land between Tondu and Maesteg, John Davey and Thomas Davies fought in front of a 4,000 strong crowd, many of whom forced their way into a pub in Brynmenyn the previous night'. [100] The *Cardiff Times* reported that they had

[96] 'Assaulting a Police Constable', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 11 January 1868, p. 8. Also, see 'Murderous Assault on the Police', *Pembrokeshire Herald and General Advertiser*, 18 October 1850, p. 2; 'Desperate Attack on a Police Sergeant', *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 4 June 1859, p. 3; 'Ill Treatment of a Police Officer', *Merthyr Telegraph*, 30 July 1859, p. 3; 'Assaulting a Police Constable', *Cardiff Times*, 7 December 1866, p. 6.
[97] 'Prize-Fight Near Bridgend', *Cardiff Times*, 22 March 1884, p. 5.
[98] 'Local Prize Fight', *Wrexham Advertiser*, 30 November 1888, p. 8.
[99] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 185.
[100] Williams, 'A Brutal Passion', in Stead and Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers*, p. 10; 'A Prize Fight in Wales', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 March 1884, p. 10.

'disturbed several publicans in quest of liquor, and at one inn at Brynmenyn where the landlord refused them admission, they smashed the windows'.[101]

Members of the 'Fancy' would also go to great lengths to avoid police detection on their journey to a fight, including intimidating all those in close proximity of the fight. The *Weekly Mail* reported in 1887 that over a hundred people assembled at Pencoed and 'several of them carried guns and others had dogs with them, with the hope that locals would think they were on some legitimate sporting expedition and would take no further notice of them'. They then went to a secret location near Hirwaun 'where the guns were thrown aside and a ring formed'.[102] In examination of the thuggish behaviour of some of the 'Fancy', Mike Huggins contends that 'as the "Fancy" consisted of a selection of classes, the gentry would not have perceived their behaviour as working-class hooliganism but deemed it as middle-class manliness'.[103] He may have a valid argument. It is likely that many poorer sections of the 'Fancy' were willing to break the law for any economic gain, while the more affluent members may have viewed their actions as a way of demonstrating their own masculinity in this tough company.[104] This 'louche behaviour', according to Golby and Purdue, was 'something of a fashion in the Regency period, but those who rubbed shoulders or even exchanged blows with prize-fighters and chatted amiably and knowledgeably with lower-classes were well aware they were "slumming"'.[105] Additionally, it could be argued that while they mingled freely with the lower classes and witnessed, or were involved in, unlawful acts they believed themselves to be above the law. Indeed, as their daily routine would have

[101] 'Prize-Fight Near Bridgend', *Cardiff Times*, 22 March 1884, p. 5.
[102] 'Prize-Fight at Pencoed', *Weekly Mail*, 8 January 1887, p. 7. The combatants at this fight were Shoni Engineer and Peter Burns of Cardiff. The fight lasted about an hour and three quarters. Shoni won the fight.
[103] Huggins, 'Second-Class Citizens?', 22.
[104] John Tosh, *A Man's Place. Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 188. For further examination of nineteenth century masculinity, see Chapter One.
[105] Golby and Purdue, *Civilisation of the Crowd*, p. 57.

consisted of consorting with other gentry folk, including MPs and magistrates, they may have felt that these gentlemen would support their cause if ever the need arose.

The fear of assembled crowds made the 'Fancy' progressively more susceptible to prosecution for public disorder offence. This was certainly the case in Chepstow in 1856 when twenty-seven local townspeople, including leading tradesmen, were arrested for aiding and abetting a prize-fight at Llanfair Isgoed, where upwards of two thousand spectators were present.[106] Therefore, the 'Fancy' became adept at finding suitable locations to hold prize-fights where they could avoid being detected by the authorities or where the police were powerless to intervene.[107] Fights would very often take place near to county borders in order that the fighters and spectators could flee if the fight was interrupted by the police. Indeed, the *Merthyr Telegraph* observed in June 1862 that the unwholesome reputation of the area between Tafarnaubach and Llangynidr, where the borders of Glamorgan, Monmouthshire and Breconshire met, was a 'complete nursery for would be champions'.[108] It was noted in another report by the *Merthyr Telegraph* in January 1860 that after the men had fought for sixty-four rounds the Breconshire police 'appeared on the spot, and put a temporary check on the proceedings'. However, that the meeting place was near to three county borders meant they could easily escape. Consequently, the combatants 'retired into Glamorganshire and there fought another battle of equal duration'.[109] Rural farmers were sometimes persuaded to allow one of their fields to be used for a prize-fight if the price was right. This provided a very useful venue as it could protect the fighters and supporters from prosecution. They would simply allege that the fight had taken place on private property. The *Merthyr Express* described a bout on 18 July 1896 and how two men were charged with being drunk and

[106] 'Spectators at a Prize Fight', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 23 February 1856, p. 1. Also, see 'Prize-Fighting', *Cardiff Times*, 13 March 1886, p. 4.
[107] This is further discussed in Joe Maguire, 'Images of Manliness and Competing Ways of Living in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *British Journal of Sports History*, 3, 3 (1986), 268.
[108] 'Rhymney Prize Fight', *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser for the Iron Districts of South Wales*, 7 June 1862, p. 3; Williams, 'A Brutal Passion', p. 10.
[109] *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser for the Iron Districts of South Wales*, 7 January 1860, p. 3.

disorderly after they were found stripped to the waist in readiness for a prize-fight. The police wanted the magistrates to prosecute, however the men walked free as they chose to fight in a privately owned field rather than on a public thoroughfare.[110] Court rulings of this nature would have no doubt added to the confusion surrounding prize-fighting and its illegal status, allowing the 'Fancy' to use 'legal loopholes' regarding ownership of land to hold prize-fights whilst reducing the chances of prosecution. This may have been an important factor as to why many fights were held in rural areas rather than the urban centres. Rural prize-fights would have presented the 'Fancy' with more difficult travel arrangements, but this would have been counterbalanced by minimising police intervention, while also making prosecution, if caught, more difficult.

The major handicap for finding suitable venues was the sport's illegality, which meant there was a lack of specific indoor locations in which to hold organised bouts. Public houses were nevertheless popular for accommodating prize-fights, particularly as they became the centres of recreation and sporting events.[111] Although illegal, bets continued to be placed in pubs. As publicans were liable to be fined (and quite possibly lose their license if they were successfully prosecuted), these were covert operations and only the less successful or more disreputable ones openly allowed such practices to occur.[112] Boxing and horse-racing became regular events organised at these venues and it is worth noting that many ex-prize-fighters became publicans.[113] Boxing was also given space in the pages of the *Licensed Victuallers'*

[110] *Merthyr Express*, 18 July 1896. The newspaper reported that two men were charged with being drunk and riotous after found stripped to the waist in readiness for a prize-fight. Police wanted magistrates to prosecute, however the men walked free as they chose to fight in a privately-owned field rather than on a public thoroughfare.
[111] Tony Collins and Wray Vamplew, *Mud, Sweat and Beers* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 6; James Kneale, '"A Problem of Supervision": Moral Geographies of the Nineteenth-Century British Public House', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 25, 3 (1999), 333–48.
[112] Mark Girouard, *Victorian Pubs* (London: Studio Vista, 1975), p. 8. Also, see 'Public House Gaming near Pontypool', *South Wales Daily News*, 20 April 1891, p. 4; 'Gaming on Licensed Premises. A Newport Publican Fined', *South Wales Daily News*, 20 March 1894, p. 7; 'Gambling in a Public-House. Prosecution in the Rhondda', *South Wales Daily News*, 28 August 1894, p. 4.
[113] Refer to Chapter One for information regarding prize-fighters turned publicans.

Gazette and the *Licensing World* and other public house publications of the period.[114] Publicans, aware of the mass following, realised the revenue that prize-fighting could offer their businesses, and began to support the promotion, staging and administration of fights. In London, Victorian publicans, such as Jack Harper at the Market House, Islington, and Bill Richardson at the Blue Anchor, Shoreditch, helped the sport to continue during a period when it was illegal and disreputable.[115] There is evidence to suggest this was also the case in Wales with the *Hereford Journal* in July 1824 reporting that 30s. was laid down at the White Swan Inn, Monmouth, for the fight between Bob Parry and Powell (first name unknown).[116] Some prize-fighters carried out their training and preparation for a fight in local hostelries. One particular example was Sam Thomas of Ynyshir, who after the fight with Thomas James of Aberaman was arranged, lodged at the Bird-in-Hand public house in Merthyr. Bill Williams, the landlord, accompanied Thomas on his early training runs and a large hall at the rear of the hostelry was used by Thomas for his training prior to the fight.[117] The publican therefore increasingly became a central feature of prize-fighting in contrast to many other sports.[118] As Tony Collins and Wray Vamplew have noted

> Other than those involving animals, no sport had closer links with the pub than boxing... Landlords gave prize money, held stakes and took bets; they provided the ring for the boxers, refreshments for the audience and publicity for the fight and its aftermath.[119]

There is no doubt regarding the increased popularity of public houses as venues for prize-fighting during this period, but this did not mean that mountain fighting ended. Prize-fighting had no fixed or permanent venue as both the fighters and their supporters were willing to stage a fight almost anywhere. In addition to mountains, reports in local newspapers

[114] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p. 8.
[115] Girouard, *Victorian Pubs*, p. 8.
[116] *Hereford Journal*, 21 July 1824, p. 3.
[117] 'Prize Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2. Also, see 'Prize Fight at Swansea. A Stake of £250', *Cambrian*, 3 July 1891, p. 6. The newspaper states that a Welsh prize-fighter by the name of Northey was trained by R. Parker of the Rose and Crown public house.
[118] Collins and Vamplew, *Mud, Sweat and Beers*, p. 9.
[119] Ibid, p. 6.

suggest that bare-knuckle fights on Welsh beaches were regular events. The *Evening Express* in September 1894 reported that 'a mill with bare-knuckles took place on the sea beach, east Moors, Cardiff between two young fellows' with approximately 200 spectators in attendance.[120] The *Evening Express*, three years later in April 1897, reported that a fight took place 'near the pier head Swansea between two local boxers named Morgan and Grey',[121] while the *South Wales Daily Post*, in February 1899, related that 'a fight is reported to have taken place on the Swansea sands on Sunday morning between two well-known local pugilists'.[122] The rapid expansion of coalmining and ironworking in Wales meant that bouts could take place near these industrial centres. Thus, the *Pontypridd Chronicle and Workman's News* reported in September 1888 that 'a scene of profanity and ruffianism' near the Pwllgwaun Colliery took place as a prize-fight was witnessed by a large crowd.[123] Taking these reports into account, it seems feasible to suggest that prize-fighters and their supporters were always willing to use the landscape in which they lived or worked to their advantage in order to avoid police interference and accomplish their bare-knuckle battles.

Rapid technological change in the nineteenth century also had an influence on different sports.[124] The use of trains became an essential form of transport for the followers of prize-fighting across the country and replaced earlier forms of passage to fight venues. Improvements in the railways during the 1830s and 1840s, especially in Wales where links to other parts of Britain were important for the further development of the iron and coal trades,[125] seemed to be the perfect solution for travelling to prize-fights. The *Cardiff Times* reported in 1887 that 'two men, accompanied by their backers, and a select coterie of friends

[120] 'Prize Fight at Cardiff: A Battle with Bare Fists Results in a Knock Out', *Evening Express*, 3 September 1894, p. 3.
[121] 'Knuckle Fights at Swansea. Exciting Encounters on The Sands', *Evening Express*, 5 April 1897, p. 3.
[122] 'Knuckle Fights on Swansea Sands', *South Wales Daily Post*, 27 February 1899, p. 3.
[123] 'Prize Fight at Pontypridd', *Pontypridd Chronicle and Workman's News*, 28 September 1888, p. 4.
[124] Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 1.
[125] Gareth Williams, 'Popular Culture, Leisure and Recreations', in Williams and Williams (eds), *Gwent County History Vol. IV: Industrial Monmouthshire*, p. 63.

of the sport left Cardiff by an early train for Pencoed, from whence they walked to the field which had previously been selected as the locale of the encounter'.[126] Furthermore, it seems the use of trains to travel to prize-fights became effective for some whilst profitable for others. It no doubt helped the 'Fancy' to speed up their travel time to fights, which was especially useful when fight dates and venues were changed at the last minute, which was often the case. Additionally, the railway companies, recognising an opportunity to make money, even arranged 'special' trains to transport the prize-fighting fraternity to its destination. This was the case for the Tom Sayers and John Heenan prize-fight in April 1860. The *Inverness Courier* observed that 'a special train for 1000 persons was engaged to convey parties to the fight between Sayers and Heenan for the charge of three guineas'.[127] However, this lucrative partnership only lasted until 1867 as the government acted to prevent the immoral misuse of trains for the benefit of illegal activities by rendering special trains to prize fights illegal through the Regulation of Railways Act in 1868, which stated that

> Any Railway Company that shall knowingly let for Hire or otherwise provide any Special Train for the Purpose of conveying Parties to or to be present at any Prize Fight, or who shall stop any ordinary Train to convenience or accommodate any Parties attending a Prize Fight at any Place not an ordinary Station on their Line, shall be liable to a Penalty, to be recovered in a summary Way before Two Justices of the County in which such Prize Fight shall be held or shall be attempted to be held, of such Sum not exceeding Five Hundred Pounds, and not less than Two Hundred Pounds.[128]

Hugh Cunningham suggests that this activity was nothing more than the commercial exploitation of the working class. In his argument, he goes on to quote Samuel Smiles,

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[126] 'Prize Fight Near Bridgend', *Cardiff Times*, 8 January 1887, p. 6.

[127] *Inverness Courier*, 19 April 1860, p. 7. Also see *Stonehaven Journal*, 30 August 1855, p.2. The newspaper reported how a special train was provided for a fight in Cambridgeshire and during the fight the engine-driver's watch was stolen. For a detailed account of the improvements to railways and their use for leisure and tourism, refer to Jack Simmons, Chapter 12: 'Leisure (1): The Excursion Train and the Railway Sunday', and Chapter 13: 'Leisure (II): Tourism and Family Holidays', in his *The Victorian Railway* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), pp. 270–308.

[128] For 'Regulations of Railways Act 1868', see http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/31-32/119/enacted [Accessed 14 March 2017]. Also, see 'Prize-Fighters on Railways', *Durham Chronicle*, 14 August 1868, p. 5; 'Prize-Fighter's Special Train', *Drogheda Argus and Leinster Journal*, 22 August 1868, p. 6. The newspaper reported that the 'position' of prize-fighting would receive its death blow from the 21st section of the new Regulation of Railways Act.

Secretary to the South Eastern Railway Company, who had to explain to the Home Office why his company had put on special excursion trains to prize-fights between 1859 and 1860. He argued that 'the demand was irresistible' going on to reveal that 'Commerce triumphed over morality, and not in this instance alone. The railway gave an enormous boost to unrespectable as well as respectable leisure'.[129]

It also became apparent that this mode of transport had its limitations. It was evident that the policing of the 'Fancy', on their way to the prize-fighting venue, was much easier if they were travelling by rail. The authorities, after gathering local intelligence concerning the whereabouts of a pre-arranged prize-fight, could ensure that the police lay-in-wait at the appropriate train stations in readiness. This was the case during a pre-arranged prize-fight between Ned Llewellyn and John Williams (Jack Portobello) on Rumney Moors on the Glamorgan-Gwent boundary. Those who travelled from Cardiff to see the fight were met by the Monmouthshire police at the train station. [130] The *South Wales Echo* in June 1889 described how police surveillance of local trains helped to prevent one particular prize-fight, observing that the Bristol police after compiling their evidence

> promptly communicated the intelligence to the Gloucestershire Constabulary and the police throughout the county were put on alert, with the result that the *fight* was stopped. The trains from South Wales and the Forest of Dean were closely watched by the Lawford's Gate police and the names of several persons who had been present at the ring side were obtained.[131]

Regardless of the regulations introduced to prevent the passage of the prize-fighting entourage via trains and the limitations of using this mode of transport, it appears travelling by train had become the preferred option of the 'Fancy'. Access to new modes of transport certainly helped promoters to widen the scope of their operations, making travel to such events easier for participants and spectators, and making the risk of police intervention seem worthwhile.

[129] Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 159.
[130] Williams, 'A Brutal Passion', p. 10.
[131] 'The Lydney Prize-Fight. Magisterial Proceedings', *South Wales Echo*, 28 June 1889, p. 2.

Evidence of the continued use of trains by the 'Fancy', after the 1867 Regulations of Railways Act, can be found in numerous newspaper reports, such as the *South Wales Daily News* in May 1889, which described how a large influx of well-dressed men used the last Merthyr train to travel to a prize-fight in Brecon. [132]

Overall, there is no doubt that prize-fighting was a sport that cut across class lines. Support came from unskilled and poorly paid labourers to members of the gentry, whose respect for the rule of law was questionable.[133] Therefore, it was not only the brutal nature of prize-fighting but also the disorderly behaviour of the supporters which continued to undermine the reputation of the sport. Additionally, the illegality of prize-fighting may not have unduly interfered with its practice, but the sport was certainly plagued with a legion of problems. Sponsors found it increasingly difficult to provide appropriate locations that were free from police surveillance, while they were not always successful in managing the unruly crowds who attended prize-fights.[134] Due to the measures in place by magistrates and the police to prevent prize-fighting, and in many cases prosecute those involved, the sport clearly depended upon the patronage of the gentry for its survival during the nineteenth century. However, it should be considered whether such support was patronage or patronisation? The sport brought together people of differing classes, allowing all classes temporarily to share in the excitement of a prize-fight. Nevertheless, the involvement of the gentry in this working-class sport, often through the patronage of fighters, was not altruistic. Patronage was not intended to benefit working-class labourers, or to augment their entertainment, but was centred on their own selfish motivations as a show of status. It could be argued that 'owning' a winning prize-fighter was the same as owning thoroughbred horses. It demonstrated their wealth and often their power in their communities. Showing that they were fearless and could mingle with lower class 'ruffians' at 'rowdy' prize-fights could also have been a way in which

[132] 'Prize Fight at Brecon Interrupted by Police', *South Wales Daily News*, 1 May 1889, p. 3.
[133] Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 46.
[134] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 154.

the gentry felt they were able to show their manliness, while patronage of the sport provided the means of control of one the favourite pastimes of the working-class.

Patronage of the sport changed during the nineteenth century due to broader social and economic changes that occurred. The impact of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, and with it social unrest in the form of strikes and violent disturbances, increasingly led to fears of working-class revolution and a call for regulated recreation by the middle-classes. The 'crowd' had to be taken seriously but the authorities were often too slow to marshal their forces in times of violent unrest.[135] There were a number of reasons for police ineffectiveness. Rising public disorder and discontent in Wales throughout the nineteenth century alongside the failure of parish constables to provide adequate policing and crowd control highlighted the need for a better orchestrated and permanent police force. This was given greater credence with the introduction of the County Police Act of 1839, with the result that the majority of Welsh counties had professional police forces by the mid-1840s, while the County and Borough Police Act (1856) introduced the formation of compulsory police forces.[136] It was the local authorities who bore full responsibility for the maintenance of public order in their jurisdictions and many more constables would probably have been appointed but for the conflict which occurred between the desire to have increased police protection and the reluctance to pay for it.[137] The burden of additional costs for policing on a population already struggling to pay their taxes meant there was a constant preoccupation in keeping costs to the minimum even at the expense of efficiency.[138] Consequently, county constabularies were staffed for normal police duties only, such as collecting taxes, arresting suspects and evicting

[135] E. P. Thompson, 'Patrician Society, Plebeian Culture', *Journal of Social History*, 7, 4 (1974), 402.
[136] David J. V. Jones, 'Rebecca, Crime and Policing: A Turning Point in Nineteenth-Century attitudes', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1990), 101.
[137] E.R. Baker, 'The Beginnings of the Glamorgan County Police', in Stewart Williams (eds.) *Glamorgan Historian* (12 Vols. Glamorgan: D. Brown and Sons, 1965), II, p. 42.
[138] Ibid, p. 47.

vagrants, and were hardly equipped to deal with large crowd obstructionism.[139] Chief Constables were very often aware that they were not providing sufficient numbers of constables to deal with large crowds.[140] For example, during a review of shebeening, which was the opening of illicit premises where alcohol was sold without a license, it was calculated that police forces would require significant reinforcements to successfully close down shebeener establishments.[141] So, how would they cope with illegal prize-fighting that often took place on secluded mountainsides and attracted large audiences? The lack of police resources and the circumstances surrounding prize-fighting placed the police at a distinct disadvantage when trying to prevent prize-fights and apprehend those involved. They were repeatedly kept off-balance by the 'Fancy', who often played a clever game of cat-and-mouse with the constabulary forces. For one thing, the 'Fancy' were on familiar ground and additionally the unarmed police were very often greatly outnumbered by the crowds. Police constables therefore had to rely a great deal on the tactic of persuasion in their attempts to control them.[142] Thus, the rowdy and unrestrained behaviour of crowds, especially at sporting events such as prize-fights, challenged them and regularly they were powerless to prevent the means of social disorder.[143]

Ultimately, it was through fear of the crowd, that the middle-class sort to make prize-fighting respectable via 'rational recreation' by offering patronage to fighters and using suitable venues to hold prize-fights, enabling the crowd to be controlled. These developments were highly significant to move the sport from its illegal/illicit position to quasi – respectability.

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[139] Donald Richter, 'The Welsh Police, the Home Office, and the Welsh Tithe War of 1886-91', *Welsh History Review*, 12, 1 (June, 1984), 58.
[140] Ibid, p.70.
[141] J. Woodford Causer, 'The truth about Sunday closing in Wales, and about Shebeening', *Welsh Review*, 1, 8 (June 1892), 835.
[142] Richter, 'The Welsh Police, the Home Office, and the Welsh Tithe War of 1886-91', 70.
[143] Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 41.

CHAPTER THREE

PUGILISTS AND POETS: LITERATURE AND THE REPORTING OF BOXING

Success unto Young Bloody,
Let every hearty sing,
He is the conquering hero
And the champion of the ring.[1]

The above is an extract from the Welsh poem, 'Young Bloody', which describes a prize-fight in Montgomeryshire. Although the poem is undated it is believed that the fight took place in the nineteenth century. The poem not only describes the prize-fight, but it is a memorial of the days when the community was both obliged and ready to provide its own entertainment.[2] The popularity of prize-fighting at the beginning of the nineteenth century was also accompanied by the development of sports writing.[3] It attracted the interest of novelists and poets of this period, ensuring that considerable literature and poetry was written about the prize-ring and its exponents, the pugilists. People were, and arguably still are, captivated by the display of human violence. Indeed, John Welshman believes that 'the apparent primitivism of boxing… has generated this magnetic appeal'.[4] It is probable that many of these writers of pugilism were fascinated by the sport's brutality and its symbolic power. Just prior to World War I, *The Times* stated that

> Time and the literary artist who sees a golden age in the nearer or further past have thrown a blue mist of romance over the translated navies and coal-heavers who earned a living under the all-in code; so that we think of them as a race of athletic demi-deities, worthy contemporaries of Nelson's captains and Wellington's colonels… But the majority were mostly human animals of abnormal physique; little more than flesh blood fighting machines, without intelligence.[5]

[1] J. D. K. Lloyd, 'A Prize-Fight Poem', *Collections, Historical and Archaeological, relating to Montgomeryshire and its Borders*, 45 (1938), 183.
[2] Ibid.
[3] John Welshman, 'Boxing and the Historians', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14, 1 (1997), 196.
[4] Ibid, 195.
[5] *The Times*, 16 March 1914, p. 3.

As can be observed by the statement, *The Times* was not only critical of prize-fighting, but exasperated that scholars were happy to glamorise the participants of such a brutal sport. Not only was sport, and in particular prize-fighting, attracting the interest of literary scholars, it also began to feature in newspapers and magazines from the last years of the eighteenth century.[6] However, during the first half of the nineteenth century there was limited reporting on prize-fighting as the sport was deemed 'illegal' and, as already mentioned in previous chapters, magistrates and police were required to intercept and stop known prize-fights.[7] Nevertheless, as the nineteenth century progressed, boxing became popular entertainment with substantial press coverage, which helped to enhance the status of prize-fighters, and in some case made them local and national heroes.

Considering the comments above, this chapter will examine the connection between literature and prize-fighting in nineteenth century Wales. Newspapers are an essential component of this research as they help to piece together not only the transition of prize-fighting as a sport, but its place in industrial Wales. Therefore, the relationship between national and local (Welsh) newspapers and the sport of prize-fighting will be examined. For example, how did styles of reporting on the sport differ and change during the nineteenth century, and why did it do so? There have also been many debates regarding the use of the novel as a historical text,[8] and therefore the representation of prize-fighting through creative writing, especially in novels, naturally needs to be explored. These various forms of literature, notably newspapers, political pamphlets, or novels, have the capacity to shape and influence the reader's perceptions of this world.[9] With this in mind, the intention is to contribute to the debate by analysing evidence gleaned through the reporting of sport, in this

[6] John Ford, *Prizefighting: The Age of Regency Boximania* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971), p. 167.
[7] Refer to Chapter Two.
[8] This is discussed in John Demos, 'In Search of Reasons for Historians to Read Novels', *American Historical Review*, 103, 5 (1998), 1526–9.
[9] Keith Thomas, *History and Literature: The Ernest Hughes Memorial Lecture* (Swansea: Swansea University College, 1988), p. 3.

instance prize-fighting, in newspapers and popular literature, and attempt to explore why there was academic interest in prize-fighting. Additionally, what follows is a discussion that will explain how literature such as newspapers, ballads, poems and novels can be invaluable sources of evidence when researching the history of Welsh prize-fighting. It will also argue that the growth in newspapers during the nineteenth century acted as a catalyst for the promotion of prize-fighting which aided the sport's continued existence.

The increased interest in pugilism coincided with a significant upsurge in the reading public as there was undoubtedly a growth in demand for, and the volume of, reading material produced over this period.[10] There were a number of reasons for the demand of reading material, notably social and educational changes, and rising literacy rates which created a new mass market.[11] Firstly, the nineteenth century witnessed an increase in the numbers of schools established in Wales, for example, by 1850 the valleys in and around Pontypool reputedly offered accommodation for 2,500 children, with a number of works schools provided by local industrialists.[12] In conjunction, this paved the way for a growth in literacy levels and a wider demand for popular literature, which was partially satiated through the establishment of circulating and subscription libraries, book clubs, and libraries associated with churches, schools, mutual improvement societies, and adult education establishments.[13] Religious journals and newspapers also flooded the market during this period.[14] In 1818 John Parry established the Methodist periodical, *Goleuad Cymru* (The Light of Wales), and their main

[10] Ford, *Prize-Fighting*, p. 166.
[11] W. B. Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland and Wales 1500–1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, 30, 4 (1990), 547. Also refer to Gillian Sutherland, 'Education', in F. M. L Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750–1950* (3 Vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), III, pp. 119–70.
[12] G. W. J. Lovering, 'A View of the County c. 1850', *Gwent Local History*, 79 (1995), 20. Also, see Sheila M. Owen-Jones, 'Religious Influence and Educational Progress in Glamorgan 1800–33', *Welsh History Review*, 13, 1–4 (June 1986), 72–86.
[13] Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland and Wales', 548. Also discussed in Deirdre Raftery, Jane McDermid and Gareth Elwyn Jones, 'Social Change and Education in Ireland, Scotland and Wales: Historiography on Nineteenth-Century Schooling', *History of Education*, 36, 4–5 (2007), 447–63.
[14] Lisa Tallis, 'Literacy, Magic and Superstition in Nineteenth Century Wales: The Examples of Dic Aberdaron', *Welsh History Review*, 26, 3 (2013), 393.

journal, *Y Drysorfa* (The Treasury), appeared in 1830. The Wesleyan Methodists established their magazine, *Yr Eurgrawn Wesleyaidd*, (The Wesleyan Magazine) in 1809. The first weekly newspaper in Wales was the *Cambrian*, published in Swansea in 1804, which was followed ten years later by the first Welsh-language journal, *Seren Gomer* (The Star of Gomer), published by Joseph Harris. *Cronicl yr Oes* (Chronicle of the Age) was launched in 1836, followed by *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* (The Banner and Times of Wales) in 1859.[15] The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also witnessed developments in relation to the printing and distribution of reading material which increased its capacity to reach a wider audience.[16] Printing technology was revolutionised as metal replaced wood as the core material, increasingly steam replaced human muscle power and its prime raw material, paper, became progressively more cheap and plentiful.[17] Due to these developments, Isaac Carter established the first press in Wales at Trehedyn in the parish of Llandyfriog in 1718. By the 1760s, primarily due to the endeavours of printers such as John Ross at Carmarthenshire and Rhys Thomas at Llandovery, a professional printing industry was underway. Thus, during the eighteenth century it is estimated that around 2,500 Welsh books had been published by the Welsh presses.[18] Technological development not only helped improve the quality of the print but increased the ability to supply the print through better distribution networks. Crucial to this was the advent and subsequent development of the railway network.[19] Moreover, the increase in the volume of print on prize-fighting during the nineteenth century coincided with the spread of the sport's popularity. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries

[15] Ibid. Also, see Huw Walters, 'The Welsh Language and the Periodical Press', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains, 1801–1911* (Cardiff: Cardiff University Press, 2000), pp. 349–78.
[16] For an in-depth discussion on the developments of distribution and circulation of newspapers, see Lucy Brown, 'Distribution and Circulation' in *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 26–53.
[17] Philip Henry Jones, 'Printing and Publishing in the Welsh Language 1800–1914', in Jenkins (ed.), *Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, p. 329.
[18] Russell Davies, *Hope and Heartbreak: A Social History of Wales and the Welsh 1776–1871* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2005), p. 410.
[19] John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 397. For technological developments in printing refer to Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, pp. 8–11. For evidence of improvements in railways during this period, see Chapter Two.

well-known prize-fighters, particularly Daniel Mendoza and Welshman Ned Turner, had become popular heroes.[20] This popularity was complemented by the growth of sports-writing as literary scholars became interested in the development of prize-fighting,[21] especially as it was one of the few sports that could transcend social divisions.[22]

One observer to take an interest in pugilism was the journalist and novelist, Pierce Egan (1772-1849). In the early nineteenth century Egan, author of *Boxiana* (1813-28), did more than anyone to place pugilism in the forefront of the sporting world. He was arguably the most popular English journalist of his day, with a virtual monopoly of sporting science throughout the first quarter of the nineteenth century and has become one of the most famous chroniclers of prize-fighting in Britain.[23] In *Boxiana*, Egan considered the prize-fighters of this period and described their battles in the ring. Some of the fighters that Egan mentioned were Welshmen, in particular Ned Turner who he singled out for high praise after his fight with Jack Randall in 1818, stating that the peerless Randall 'could get out of trouble like magic, but, with all his science, he could not escape from the paralysing corner of his 'gristly foe'; the hardy Welshman, Ned Turner, was floored to rise no more'.[24] Others quickly followed in Egan's footsteps. English literary and social critic William Hazlitt's work on boxing is certainly well remembered especially his essay on the Neate-Hickman prize-fight of 1821 which set the early parameters for sports writing.[25] On 11 December 1821 Hazlitt had attended the fight at Hungerford, Berkshire, between the two well-known pugilists, William

[20] These two popular boxers are discussed in Chapter One.
[21] Contemporary texts on boxing from this period include Jon Bee, *Lives of the Boxers* (London, n.a., 1811); Pierce Egan, *Boxiana; or, Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism* (3 vols. vol. 1: London Smeeton, 1813; vols. 2–3: London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1818–21), and his *New Series of Boxiana: Being the Only and Original Complete Lives of the Boxers* (2 vols. London: George Virtue, 1828–9); T. Hughes, *The Art and Practice of Self-Defence* (London: Plummer and Brewis, 1820); Bill Oxberry, *Pancratia* (1st edn. London, W. Oxberry, 1811).
[22] Christopher Johnson, 'British Championism: Early Pugilism and the Works of Fielding', *Review of English Studies*, New Series, 47, 187 (1996), 337.
[23] Edward Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change: Boxing and Society at a Crossroads', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 2 (2004), 170.
[24] John Ford, *Boxiana or Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism by Pierce Egan* (London: Folio Society, 1976), p. 187.
[25] Jeff Hill, *Sport and the Literary Imagination: Essays in History, Literature, and Sport* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), p. 133.

Neate and Thomas Hickman. Following the prize-fight, Hazlitt wrote '*The Fight'*, probably his most celebrated essay, which first appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* in February 1822.[26]

Not only were these literary scholars producing books on pugilism, notably *Boxiana*, there were a number of poems written about the sport. Egan reworked his 'boxing poetry' to emphasise British patriotism at a time when the country was heavily involved in the Napoleonic wars.[27] This sense of Britishness and patriotic valour in times of adversity certainly caused no conflict of interest for many Welshmen and women who could distinguish between their attachment to Wales and their loyalty to the British state.[28] Through his pugilistic poems, Egan offered moral guidance about the 'honest Briton' and the 'foreign stabber', alleging that foreigners were cowards who not only used weapons against their foes, but will also stab them from behind and in the dark, leaving their opponent no chance to defend themselves. In contrast, he remarked that the British acted in a more manly fashion by fighting fairly and without recourse to underhand tactics. Egan's poem, in this way, portrayed prize-fighting as a sport that was used by the British as a gentlemanly and masculine way of resolving disputes. He wrote:

In darkest shades of night;
But Britons they are bold and kind,
And box their friends by light.[29]

Contemporaneous with Egan was Bob Gregson who published a poem in the *Sporting Magazine* in 1811 about Tom Cribb's fight with the American prize-fighter Tom Molineaux.

[26] David Snowdon, 'Hazlitt's Prizefight Revisited: Pierce Egan and John Bee's Boxiana-Style Perspective', *Romantic Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780–1840*, 20 (Winter, 2011), 22. William Hazlitt's essay, "The Fight" can be accessed at http://www.blupete.com/literature/Essays/Hazlitt/Fight.htm#rfn1 [Accessed 13 February 2015].
[27] For a detailed background of the Napoleonic Wars see Gunther E. Rothenburg, *The Napoleonic Wars* (London: Cassell, 1999).
[28] Paul O'Leary, 'The Languages of Patriotism in Wales', in Jenkins (ed.), *Welsh Language and its Social Domains*, p. 546. For a detailed account of this topic see Gwyn A. Williams, *When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
[29] John Strachan, 'Poets and Pugilists', *History Today*, 59, 1 (2009), 20.

Again, this poem was published at a time when Britain was on the verge of war and British jingoism would have no doubt been elevated. Thus, the prize-fight was expressed not as two men engaging in a fist-fight for entertainment and individual pride, but more in terms of two gladiators in a trial of national honour. Gregson stressed that

> In the centre of England the noble
> place is pitch'd on,
> For the valour of this country, or
> America's delight.[30]

Owing to these prize-fighting poems, Egan and Gregson demonstrate the prevailing belief that the British way of fighting was not only effective, but also 'magnanimous' and one which would terrify the British boxer's enemies.[31]

A number of other poems and ballads related to prize-fighting were similarly produced during this period, which helps to give an insight into not only the sport of prize-fighting but also Welsh society. The poem '*Young Bloody'*, for example, concerned a prize-fight between the young Welsh champion known as 'Young Bloody' and a Bristol fighter. Points of interest in this poem are the words that describe the pugilists, such as 'noble' and 'gentlemen'. This suggests that these men were held in 'high' regard within their communities, while the poem goes on to give an account of the fight and, in the process of which, gives important information as to the venue of the prize-fight and the stake for which the pugilists were fighting for:

> The money stake was entered down
> Five hundred pounds in gold. . .
> The conqueror for the money, boys,
> On Ludlow Castle Green.[32]

Prize-fighting had acquired a sullied reputation, not only due to the unforgiving nature of the sport but also for its clear links to gambling and corruption, evidence of which could be

[30] Ibid, 21.
[31] Johnson, 'British Championism', 332.
[32] Lloyd, 'A Prize-Fight Poem', 183.

found in numerous contemporaneous newspaper reports.[33] This poem thereby adds weight to the belief that the sport was corrupted as it is explained how one of the 'Fancy' voiced his concern that a fighter may have been bribed:

Then spoke a clothier from Newton,
His money he had laid,
This young man as to bribery
Indeed I am afraid.[34]

A number of poems by men, like Egan, certainly highlight the links between prize-fighting and the patriotic feelings of the British people. John Harris has stated that similar patriotic feelings were regularly expressed in many prize-fights in Wales. It was a way in which the Welsh could distinguish themselves as a distinct and identifiable people, while the supporters of prize-fighting felt that participating in and supporting the sport under the Welsh flag was a way in which to help raise the profile of the country within the United Kingdom and 'promote the country on an international sporting stage'.[35] Evidence of these patriotic views is clear to see in this poem, with one particular verse observing that 'Young Bloody' was not only fighting for his own pride and financial gain, but for the honour of his country:

Then up spoke young Bloody
Saying it never shall be told
That I would sell my country
For silver or for gold.
So be sure of your betts, me men,
To flinch I'll ne'er be seen,
Before your money shall be lost,
I'll die upon the green.[36]

Finally, the poem illustrates why many people criticised the sport during this period. The cruel nature of the prize-fight is well-documented and indicates how failure in a boxing match could very well be fatal. Thus,

[33] See Chapter One.
[34] Lloyd, 'A Prize-Fight Poem'. 183.
[35] John Harris, 'Boxing, National Identities and the Symbolic Importance of Place: The "Othering" of Joe Calzaghe', *National Identities*, 13, 2 (June 2011), 183.
[36] Ibid.

The streams of blood came down his cheeks,
Poor Jack began to cry
My head it is so mangled,
My body is so sore,
I must give in, kind gentlemen,
I cannot fight no more.[37]

The verse above, in particular, not only shows the savagery of the fight, through phrases such as 'streams of blood' and 'head so mangled'. Yet, at the same time, it offers an insight into prevailing codes of honour and respectability that often went 'hand in hand' with the violence of the sport as the prize-fighter attempted to show respectability and gracefully exit the bout. The juxtaposition of phrases and words such as 'streams of blood', 'mangled' and 'sore' are placed next to a gentle 'I must give in' and then a plea to the 'kind gentleman', which was probably his patrons to allow him to exit the fight with his honour intact.

Alongside poems, Wales was known for its love of ballads and over the centuries they have played an important and influential role in Welsh social and cultural life. Ballads are an invaluable field of study for anyone interested in the history of Wales as they are an indispensable source for understanding daily activities and personality of the Welsh. This literature has served a significant journalistic purpose. In the first half of the nineteenth century ballads enjoyed a wider circulation than any newspaper. They were certainly popular all over the south Wales iron and coal mining areas and were performed by singers at fairs and other popular gatherings, and have been traced to printers in Aberystwyth, Caernarfon, Swansea, Aberdare and Merthyr.[38] There were numerous well-known ballad writers during this period, including David Morris (bardic name Eiddil Gwent, c.1798–1878) who wrote 'Can mlynedd i nawr' (A Hundred Years from Now) and William Thomas (1832–1878) who penned '*Y Storm*' (The Storm).[39] A popular topic which created substantial ballad literature

[37] Ibid.
[38] Gareth Williams, 'Postponing Death: Sport and Literature in Wales', *New Welsh Review* (1997), 40.
[39] Alan Roderick, 'A History of the Welsh Language in Gwent: Part Two', *Gwent Local History*, 51 (Autumn, 1981), 9. For a detailed study of Welsh ballads, see E. Wyn James, 'The Lame Chick and the North Star: Some Ethnic Rivalries in Sport as Reflected in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Welsh Broadsides', in Marjetka Golez (ed.),

was sport, including prize-fighting. Therefore, these ballads testified to the popularity of prize-fighting in nineteenth century Wales. Several were written about the fistic prowess of 'Dan Pontypridd' (Daniel Thomas, b.1823). Examination of these ballads brings to the forefront the importance of Welsh identity during this period. One in particular from October 1858 provided details of Thomas' triumph in London over John Brooks, the Norwich champion. It described how John Brooks was a hero in England and his supporters were adamant that their champion would not lose to a Welshman but were clearly distraught when Thomas was declared the victor. The central issue of this ballad seems to be the victory of the Welsh over the English. This not only represents a latent sense of pride in Welsh identity but also a determination by the Welsh people to prove they were very capable of overcoming their former adversaries in 'battle'. The Ballad emphasised that

'R' was a big noise among the English. . .
'R' was a great cry that Brooks is the boy,
There never will be Englishman beat
By some laid back Welshman. . .
And a half hours and seven
The struggle has been there,
But at the end, the men of London-
Shout loud - "Go 'damn the Welshman".[40]

In Chapter One the links between prize-fighting and national identity were explored, mainly from the analysis of reports from regional or local newspapers. Arguably, these poems and ballads provide further evidence of the rivalry that existed between different nationalities, such as the Welsh and English, and how sport, especially prize-fighting, was often used as a way of bringing people together as they rallied round to support their local heroes who often fought for the honour of their community and, on occasions, their country.

Ballads between Tradition and Modern Times (Slovenia: ZRC SAZU, 1998), pp.93–100;, E. Wyn James, 'Zulus and Stone-Breakers: A Case-Study in Glamorgan Ballad-Sheet Printing', in Mary-Ann Constantine (ed.), *Ballads in Wales: Baledi yng Nghymru* (London: FLS Books, 1999), pp.41-8; Tegwyn Jones, 'Welsh Ballads', in Philip Henry Jones and Eiluned Rees (eds), *A Nation and Its Books: A History of the Book in Wales* (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1998), pp. 245–51.

[40] Tegwyn Jones, *Hen Faledi Ffair* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 1971), p. 32.

In order to cover all aspects of this research it would be unjust not to discuss the use of historical fiction. Increasingly, debates regarding the use of fiction as a source of historical material have been deployed. It has been suggested that novels could very well be an invaluable source for sports history as it is a 'social force' that shaped how people understood the world around them.[41] Indeed, as Jeff Hill points out, historians should

> take novels seriously as historical sources. They are part of the process of knowing the world, not simply a passive repository of meanings created elsewhere. Novels are a social force… texts that operate in society, and which communicate meanings about their subject matter to their readers.[42]

Moreover, John Tosh believes that authors are 'striving to create in their readers the illusion of direct experience, by evoking an atmosphere or setting a scene'.[43] In a similar vein, Martin Johnes explains that 'drawing upon the work of novelists and poets is one way of evoking such an atmosphere… acknowledging the postmodern condition means acknowledging that the historian's account is an interpretation of the past based upon sources that themselves are interpretative'.[44] Social historians have, therefore, been able to use novels for historical information as they can potentially offer deeper interpretations of earlier communities and the attitudes of the inhabitants. With this in mind, James Smith Allen goes as far as to argue that the nineteenth century novel is 'a rich source of details and observations not easily matched by other sources available to the historian'.[45] While fictional novels can certainly be used to some degree for the historical detail they hold, the novel does not necessarily have to be a 'sports novel' in order to give an insight into nineteenth century prize-fighting. Henry

[41] Martin Johnes, 'Texts, Audiences, and Postmodernism: The Novel as Source in Sport History', *North American Society for Sports History*, 34, 1 (2007), 124.
[42] Jeff Hill, 'Sport as Ideology: History, Literature and Culture', unpublished paper given at 'Educational and Sociological Issues in Sport and Physical Education' conference, University of Aarhus, Denmark (December 2004), and cited in Johnes, 'Texts, Audiences, and Postmodernism', 403.
[43] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (3rd edn. London: Longman, 2002), p. 141.
[44] Johnes, 'Texts, Audiences, and Postmodernism', 122–3.
[45] James S. Allen, 'History and the Novel: Mentalite in Modern Popular Fiction', *History and Theory*, 22, 3 (1983), 234.

Fielding's *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews* (1742), *Abraham Adams* (1842), *Jonathan Wild* (1743) and *The History of Tom Jones* (1749) are fine examples as they are brimming with prize-fighters, such as Fielding's main characters, Joseph Andrews and Tom Jones. Both men are skilled in the art of pugilism and are eager to use their skills in self-defence or for the sake of honour. In reviewing the works of Fielding, Christopher Johnson observes that 'in an attempt to trace how far boxing did indeed permeate normal social behaviour, the novels of Fielding are among our most valuable guides'.[46] Johnson's statement is echoed by that of Dave Day who states that the 'values espoused by boxing apologists such as national pride and uniqueness, courage, humanity and egalitarianism, together with a sense of moral righteousness, found early echoes in the novels of Fielding.[47]

Following on from the novels of Fielding, the publication of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* by Thomas Hughes in 1857 started a genre in which the schoolboy was the heroic character. The story was set at Rugby School in the 1830s. Sport was placed at the heart of the school curriculum as the headmaster epitomized the values of what became known as 'muscular Christianity', whereby a good character depended on a healthy mind in a healthy body.[48] Sports, such as rugby and cricket, were regularly mentioned throughout the novel but one particular chapter entitled 'The Fight' described Tom Brown's arranged fist-fight with another pupil. This particular chapter gives a clear impression that fist-fights in public schools were frequent and natural events for boys to settle their quarrels. If Hughes' account of public school fist-fights seems unconvincing, a newspaper report from the *Cambrian* in March 1825 provides evidence of such fights when it reported on the inquest into the death of a school boy at Eton through bare-knuckle fighting.[49]

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[46] Johnson, 'British Championism', 335.
[47] Dave Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom": Eighteenth-Century Boxing Manuals', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, 10 (2012), 1449.
[48] Kasia Boddy, *Boxing: A Cultural History* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2008), p. 89. A further examination of 'Muscular Christianity' can be found in Chapter Five.
[49] 'The Fatal Combat at Eton', *Cambrian*, 19 March 1825, p. 2.

There are also a number of well-known novels that have been written about nineteenth century Welsh society, such as Richard Llewellyn's *How Green Was My Valley* (1939) and his follow up, *Green, Green My Valley Now* (1975), Alexander Cordell's *Rape of the Fair Country* (1959), and even the much earlier Arthur Conan Doyle's *Rodney Stone* (1896), that can provide an additional understanding of Welsh society and prize-fighting than that gleaned by other sources of information. Thereby, novels can help replicate the social and cultural context of a particular period through the characters and their actions, as well as class distinctions, masculinity, honour and attitudes towards violence. Moreover, it is important to remember that novelists often write about actual events and places described by few others with the same power and accuracy, as they research topics in a careful and methodical manner closely resembling that of a historian.[50] In Llewellyn's *How Green Was My Valley*, set in a south Wales mining village, the tale revolves around the lives of the Morgan family. It is told through the eyes of the youngest son Huw who describes the family's struggles through the years of strikes, unionisation, and the exploitation of child labour. A prominent character is Dai Bando, a miner and prize-fighter. He is described as having only one tooth in his head. His face is marked with little punch cuts that are all dyed blue with coal dust, and eyes that were almost closed by skin which had been frequently cut and healed after numerous bouts. In the story, Dai is left partially blind after one particular prize-fight and is no longer able to work in the mines. The very description of Dai Bando and his fate in the ring gives a strong representation of the vicious nature of prize-fighting. Many descriptions of prize-fighters with similar features to Dai Bando could be found in newspaper reports of this period confirming Llewellyn's description of a nineteenth century bare-

[50] Allen, 'History and the Novel', 234.

knuckle fighter. Indeed, the *Evening Express* in August 1896 reported that Twm Clump's eyes were badly damaged, and one side of his face was 'hammered into a jelly'.[51]

Throughout Llewellyn's story, Bando is depicted as a multi-faceted character, kindly, courageous, brutal and heroic. The fact that Llewellyn decided to depict Bando as such could suggest that the author was a supporter of prize-fighting. For example, Dai's services are called upon to teach the young boy, Huw, the art of boxing after he is bullied at school. This informs the reader how prize-fighting was practiced during this period not only as a sport but as a form of self-defence that required courage and strength, and one that inspired no ill feeling after the fight had ended. The author's representation of prize-fighting and pugilists arguably reflects the importance of masculinity and manliness as characteristic of nineteenth century Wales. Llewellyn provides numerous examples of the harshness of the Welsh valleys, particularly acknowledging Bando's numerous bouts: 'they said he had fought more than a thousand fights, and a Marquis had asked him to go to Oxford to teach students to fight'.[52] Here, the author highlighted how these pugilists would fight many a hard and often brutal battle for the extra income that could be generated or for individual honour or community pride. It is certainly a contrast to the number of fights completed by modern day boxers who might be expected to have between forty and fifty fights during a successful boxing career. Also mentioned in the novel is Cyfartha Lewis, Bando's friend, another miner and champion in his weight at the pithead. This account of Lewis being the pithead prize-fighting champion certainly corresponds with many newspaper reports of the period that these pithead fights were a common occurrence among miners after a shift. On 5 September 1894 the *Evening Express* reported that two Rhondda colliers fought a bout in the morning accompanied by approximately thirty companions to 'try their relative strength in a quiet

[51] 'Prize-Fight in the Rhondda Valley: One of the Men Badly Injured', *Evening Express*, 5 August 1896, p. 3.
[52] Richard Llewellyn, *How Green Was My Valley* (London: Michael Joseph, 1939), p. 200.

"mill" for a "fiver" a-side in a quiet nook near to the station'.[53] The same newspaper also reported on 6 November 1895 that Henry Lloyd, a prize-fighter, had appeared in court to answer the charge of causing the death of Edwin Murphy while engaged in a bare-knuckle prize-fight at the Marl Pits, Grangetown.[54]

Further evidence suggesting the harsh nature of Welsh society can be seen through the portrayal of a beating inflicted by Bando on a local schoolmaster. The way in which the beating is described suggests that there was nothing unsettling regarding the thrashing given to Mr Jones, the school teacher, as the use of fistic violence to resolve disputes was common.[55] This acceptance of violence can be seen again when Huw's father defends his son for fighting at school and that he would tell his son to fight again, even if it resulted in corporal punishment from his schoolteacher.[56] Although the author is writing from the privileged position of hindsight and basing his observations on traditional and potentially biased accounts of such fights, this narrative can help to provide a more textured insight into how Welsh mining communities reacted to bullying, discrimination and their sense of an appropriate measure of local justice.

In this frontier society, women in industrial communities were quite capable of using violence as they were no less sensitive about defending their honour than men. Yet such acts would have been seen as totally unacceptable in polite society. For this reason, descriptions of these 'most unwomanly of pastimes' did not usually appear in fictional accounts. However, in *The Fire People* (1972) Alexander Cordell gave the example of Jobina who:

> rose from the table and finished her small beer, tied back her hair… her eyes glowing at the prospect of a fight… the fighters tore into each other with clawing hands… outwitted, out speeded by the amazing agility of the younger, Jobina floundered before one attack after another.[57]

[53] 'Brutal Prize-Fight', *Evening Express*, 5 September 1894, p. 3.
[54] 'The Marl Pit Fight', *Evening Express*, 6 November 1895, p. 3.
[55] Refer to evidence in Chapter One.
[56] Llewellyn, *How Green Was My Valley*, p. 219.
[57] Alexander Cordell, *The Fire People* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1972), p. 57.

Irregularly, evidence of women participating in prize-fights appeared in some newspapers, though they were terse accounts in relation to men participating in fights. So, the case of Jobina can be compared and/or contrasted to that of young Mary Mahony and Betty Dyson who fought each other for forty minutes near Hornsey Wood, in March 1807.[58]

Naturally, these works of fiction could draw on the exploits of well-known prize-fighters such as Shoni Sguborfawr (John Jones 1811–1858), an active pugilist during the 1840s.[59] In *How Green is My Valley*, Llewellyn shared his knowledge of Welsh prize-fighters and the bout between Bando and 'Big' Shoni,[60] which was a possible reference to Shoni Sguborfawr. Furthermore, Llewellyn took into account that many contests were located on mountainsides, away from the scrutiny of the local authorities, which was true of many bouts, and evidenced in newspaper reports. On 5 August 1892 the *South Wales Star* stated that about five o'clock a prize-fight had been staged for £10 a-side and took place on a hill top near Treherbert, [61] while the *Weekly Mail* on 9 June 1894 described how 'one of the most stubbornly fought battles ever waged between two Rhondda pugilists came off on the Maindy Mountains'.[62] The novel also goes on to note how Dai and Cyfartha invested their savings in a joint enterprise by purchasing the Three Bells pub, which Dai managed after retiring from the ring. This lends further argument that Llewellyn had a good understanding of prize-fighting in Wales, as many fighters, such as Morgan Crowther and Dan Thomas, went on to become publicans. The *South Wales Daily Post* recalled in July 1893 that 'gallant little Morgan Crowther', like so many pugilists before him, had 'gone into the public line. Good luck to him I say… history proves that few classes of people have made better publicans than

[58] *The Times*, 24 March 1807. Cited in 'The History of Female Bare-Knuckle Fist Fighting in Britain', http://fscclub.com/history/knuckle-e.shtml. For further discussion and evidence of women's involvement in prize-fighting refer to Chapter Five.
[59] See, Cordell, *The Fire People*, p. 119. Also, see David Egan, *People, Protest and Politics. Case Studies in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1987), p. 56.
[60] Llewellyn, *How Green Was My Valley*, pp. 391–2.
[61] 'Prize-Fight in the Rhondda. Disgraceful Scene on the Mountain', *South Wales Star*, 5 August 1892, p. 3.
[62] 'Prize-Fight in the Rhondda', *Weekly Mail*, 9 June 1894, p. 9.

boxers'.[63] Taking into account the author's knowledge of local fighters, it is very possible that Bando himself could have been based on a real Welsh fighter. Cordell refers to him numerous times in various novels, particularly *This Proud and Savage Land*.

The accuracy of information regarding prize-fighting in these novels could suggest that Llewellyn and Cordell had not only an interest, but also a great deal of knowledge regarding the sport which, in accord with other sources of information, may help to present an interpretation of prize-fighting and Welsh society in the nineteenth century. Yet, the pitfalls of using novels as a historical source, should always be remembered, such as the distortion of the facts by authors in order to make interesting reading.[64] As James Davies has explained, whereas history seeks to 'interpret known facts, literature is not obliged to stick to the facts. It sometimes changes them, or combines facts with fiction. What it does is to allow us, through stimulating the sympathetic imagination, to enter other worlds and characters'.[65] Thus, the novels examined never show the human cost of prize-fighting, such as the death of a prize-fighter. This was graphically commented on in *The Times* on 20 July 1833 when it was observed that the 'prosecution arose from one of those prize-fights which so frequently terminate in the death of one or the other party'.[66]

Daily and weekly newspapers were notable channels of popular communication during the nineteenth century. Their chief function was to attract advertising revenue, to provide entertainment and instruction to as large a target readership as possible for as long as possible, and to gather, buy and sell fresh news as a commodity.[67] Many cities and towns published several newspapers simultaneously, often aimed at distinct audiences depending on

[63] 'Morgan Crowther, the Boxer', *South Wales Daily Post*, 10 July 1893, p. 4.
[64] Allen, 'History and the Novel', 236.
[65] James A. Davies, *The Heart of Wales: An Anthology* (Bridgend: Seren Books, 1994), p. 15.
[66] *The Times*, 20 July 1833, p. 7. For further illustrations of Welsh prize-fighting fatalities, see 'Prize-Fight on the Welsh Mountains: A Fatal Termination', *Hull Daily Mail*, 16 September 1895, p. 4; 'A Fatal Prize-Fight', *Cardigan Observer*, 4 September 1897, p. 2.
[67] Hywel Teifi Edwards, *A Guide to Welsh Literature, c.1800–1900* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 21.

social status, geographical location and political affiliation.[68] Prize-fighting was not a new topic, with many newspapers of the late eighteenth century reporting on the 'major' prize-fights, and it was from these that Pierce Egan and other observers drew most of their material.[69] *The Times*, the *Morning Post* and more importantly the *World* were established in the latter years of the eighteenth century. The *World* is of particular interest concerning a study of prize-fighting. It was in this newspaper that open challenges between pugilists first featured, beginning with correspondence between two fighters – Daniel Mendoza and Richard Humphries.[70] The *Morning Post* and *The Times* also advertised boxing matches, but cautioned against the brutality of the sport and the engagement of the audience. Indeed, *The Times* produced a number of reports in which it described prize-fighting as social contaminant and called for the sport to be banned. One such claim was printed on Saturday, 5 June 1830, when the newspaper stated that 'we have always thought it disgraceful to ourselves, and disgusting to our readers, to notice the barbarous, filthy, and swindling exhibition called prize-fights'.[71] There were, however, concerns expressed in various newspapers, due to not only the illegality of the sport but public anxiety concerning its violent nature and the rowdy crowds that such bouts attracted. Therefore, by examining the way in which prize-fighting was commented on will show how the sport was either promoted or rejected, as Hill suggests the newspaper is

> a curious artefact the content of which, varied as it is, certainly cannot be taken for granted… They are 'real' events, although a fictional fringe might have been tacked on to them… in general though what happened was not the product of the imagination.[72]

[68] British Newspaper Archive. See https://www,britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/help/about [accessed 3 November 2019].
[69] John Cowie Reid, *Bucks and Bruisers: Pierce Egan and Regency England* (London: Routledge, 1971), p. 27.
[70] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 169.
[71] *The Times*, 5 June 1830, p. 3.
[72] Hill, 'Anecdotal Evidence', 127.

Wales had to wait until January 1804 for its first regular newspaper, the *Cambrian*, which was published in Swansea. Newspapers, such as this, were important as they covered the industrial areas of Wales and provided an unrivalled source of information that offers a valuable insight into the social, cultural, political and religious and history of Wales.[73] Readers' letters were a great source of evidence regarding cultural preferences or popular sentiments in Welsh communities, as seen in the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* in July 1851 when a member of the public described the scene at a prize-fight: 'we were taking a walk up to Penydarren, we saw what we have not seen on the high road for many years, an oscillating group of two or three hundred men, and in the middle two brawny fellows, stripped to the skin, busily engaged in the act of mauling each other. Having no particular affection for such sights we passed on'.[74] These accounts often reflect national interests and reading them enables the historian to obtain a more vital, albeit emotional, picture of the past.[75] In its first issue in 1866, the *Brecon County Times* explained the necessity of the local newspaper as an instrument of communication, observing that it has

> appeared to the proprietors of this paper that there was room for many improvements in local journalism. There is no one generally recognized and accessible medium centrally situated in which the wants of the thriving community around us may be published at a reasonable rate and in an effective manner.[76]

In the year ending March 1833 some examples regarding the numbers of newspapers sold include the *Cambrian* which produced 60,100 copies; the *Welshman*, 29,000; the *Carmarthen Journal*, 25,900; the *Carnarvon Herald*, 19,000; the *North Wales Chronicle*, 17,500 and the *Merthyr Guardian*, 10,500.[77] The role of newspapers was to follow current

[73] D. R. Davies, 'Press, Politics and Society: A History of Journalism in Wales', *Journal of the Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society*, 12, 2 (1994), 108–9.
[74] 'Merthyr and Neighbourhood', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 26 July 1851, p. 3.
[75] David Jenkins, 'Newspapers for the Historian', *Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society*, 11, 1–2 (1973–74), 69.
[76] *Brecon County Times*, 5 May 1866, p. 4.
[77] Sandra Thomas, 'The Cambrian', *Gower Journal of the Gower Society*, 54 (2003), 66.

fashions and interests of the public, and thereby satiate people's curiosity and appetite for news. During the nineteenth century leisure activities increased and sports news emerged as an integral part of daily newspapers.[78] Indeed, most newspaper reports in Wales during the nineteenth century show that there was a continuing fascination with the prize-ring, though one that was at the same time extremely equivocal, as people were both fascinated and repulsed by the brutality of the sport.[79] These newspaper reports help to determine how the sport evolved during the nineteenth century, as the narrative helps the historian to determine how communities were reacting to these fights, and, in turn, how the sport evolved in order to survive.[80]

There is certainly evidence to suggest that prize-fights were frequently taking place in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The *Monmouthshire Merlin* reported on the events of the Summer Assizes of 1828/9, and noted that two cases of 'killing' by prize-fighting came before two judges at different court circuits.[81] However, the first half of the nineteenth century is a difficult period for examining newspaper reports on prize-fighting as very few were published. As discussed in Chapter One, prize-fights were deemed illegal and magistrates and the police, where such a body of law enforcement existed, were required to intercept and stop prize-fights. Therefore, it should be considered that newspapers may have been cautious in publicising information regarding prize-fights due to reprisals from the law, especially as state regulation of the press (1819 and 1836) restricted such reporting and led to the prosecution of the perceived promoters of social unrest. As prize-fighting was deemed an illegal activity which often drew large crowds,[82] the government viewed reporting on such

[78] Hill, 'Anecdotal Evidence', 121.
[79] *The Times*, 26 April 1790, p.4 This stated that the magistrates of Hertfordshire 'deserve every commendation for their vigilance in suppressing every attempt to introduce prize-fighting in that county'.
[80] Hill, 'Anecdotal Evidence', 117.
[81] 'Judges and Prize-Fighters', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 16 April 1875, p. 1.
[82] For an examination of the government's fear regarding the assembly of large crowds in times of social unrest, and its possible impact on prize-fighting, see Chapter Two.

large-scale events as unlawful. If this was the case, many newspapers may have refrained from reporting on prize-fights for fear of prosecution under the new acts.

The emphasis on the reporting of prize-fights in newspapers seems to have changed during the 1830s as there was undoubtedly an increase in the reporting of them across a number of national and regional newspapers. This increased coverage indicated a change in attitude towards the sport as well as revealing an appetite for new community leisure pursuits. Nevertheless, there were distinctions as some newspapers would report only the facts regarding local prize-fights, while not offering any opinions. For example, on 9 June 1832 the *Cambrian* reported that a fight took place near Monmouth between William Charles, a Welshman, and Stephen Trainer, an Irishman, 'attended by a large concourse of people'. After nine rounds, Trainer was rendered senseless and Charles was declared the victor.[83] Conversely, other newspapers would relate the details, but would condemn the sport. Half a century later on 28 September 1888 the *Pontypridd Chronicle and Workman's News* testified that the previous Sunday morning there was 'a scene of profanity and ruffianism'. It described the fight as 'a determined and brutal one, and although the struggle for supremacy continued for some time, the men were not disturbed by the police'.[84]

An earlier report in the *Star of Gwent* in 1857, entitled 'a caution to publicans', was also used to highlight the consequences of being involved in prize-fighting, arguably to try and deter further fights from taking place in the area, especially as public houses were seen as venues 'outside' the reach of the law where gambling and prize-fighting became regular events.[85] In this particular report, the newspaper acknowledged that John Jones, landlord of the Railway Inn, Abersychan, had been charged with the promotion of a prize-fight in his

[83] 'Pugilism', *Cambrian*, 9 June 1832, p. 3.
[84] 'Prize-Fight at Pontypridd', *Pontypridd Chronicle and Workman's News*, 28 September 1888, p. 4. Also refer to Thomas, 'The Cambrian', 66; Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in Nineteenth Century England* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), p. 10. For an examination of the government's fear regarding the assembly of large crowds in times of social unrest, and its possible impact on prize-fighting, see Chapter Two.
[85] See Chapter Two for further information regarding the use of public houses as prize-fighting venues.

public house.[86] Yet, as the century progressed newspaper reports devoted column inches to masculine honour and the ethnicity of the fighters. The *Evening Express* reported in the autumn of 1894 that one bout was a 'battle… very stubbornly contested… both men were severely punished'.[87] The loser, who was somewhat handicapped from the start with an injured left thumb also fell heavily on a stone in the third round and sustained a severe cut on his head. Yet, despite his handicap and the likelihood of losing the fight, his masculine pride made it paramount that he continued until the end. Racist commentaries were similarly prevalent in press reports, particularly of ethnic minorities. Thus, on 9 October 1894 the *Western Mail* reflected on a fight between Johnny O'Brien, the Welsh Champion, and Frank Craig. The latter, the newspaper observed, was known as the 'Harlem Coffee Cooler', a gentleman of colour. Significantly, the report specified that 'wagering remained in the darky's favour… round 1; the black was the first to start the business'.[88]

Likewise, newspaper reporters on occasions ridiculed less-reputable fighters, especially when they were not in very good physical condition. One example was a fight between 'Rufus' and 'Blackfriars Tom' in Pontypool, in broad daylight, on 12 July 1865 which received a satirical, though scathing, attack in the *Star of Gwent*.[89] The newspaper mockingly described how Tom damaged what little reputation he had as a prize-fighter by cowardly striking his opponent whilst the latter had his hands in his pockets. The report went on to say that there was not much fighting action between the two men, especially as Tom seemed reluctant to fight and was, for most of the time, 'on his toes'. Finally, Rufus managed to knock down Tom with a well-timed blow, but then promptly ran off. The newspaper stated

[86] 'A Caution to Publicans', *Star of Gwent*, 28 November 1857, cited in Brian Foster, 'Prize-Fighting in the Eastern Valley', *Journal of Gwent Local History Council*, 96 (Spring, 2004), 48.
[87] 'Prize-Fight at Merthyr', Evening Express, 2 October 1894, p. 1. Also, see 'Prize-Fight: Twenty-Five rounds fought near Pontypridd', *Evening Express*, 7 August 1895, p. 3 which states how 'the two men fought in grim earnest and with a pluck which excited the admiration of the spectators'.
[88] 'Welsh Boxers in London', *Western Mail*, 9 October 1894, p. 6.
[89] 'A Pugilistic Encounter', *Star of Gwent*, 15 July 1865, p. 7. Also, see Foster, 'Prize-fighting in the Eastern Valley', 44.

that ‘he bolted, as if being desirous of proving the truth contained in the old couplet, that “he who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day”’.[90]

As shown here, the later part of nineteenth century shows a slightly more tolerant attitude towards prize-fighting. This was largely as a result of the significant changes that had occurred in regulating the sport, especially the introduction of the Queensberry Rules (1867), and thereafter how prize-fights were to be conducted. This included timed rounds and the use of padded gloves by the fighters.[91] The Queensberry Rules were quickly embraced across the United Kingdom, including Wales, which provided the sport with some legitimacy. In many instances the authorities became more relaxed about fights that took place using these rules as they were seen more as a ‘sparring’ contests between skilled pugilists rather than a violent encounter between two local ‘hard men’ intent on beating each other senseless. The introduction of Queensberry Rules thereby led to prize-fighting becoming known as boxing.[92] As Tom Sawyer has observed that post-1867 ‘old-style’ prize-fights ‘continued clandestinely’, but they were ‘no longer the national events that Sayers vs. Heenan had been’. They were now controlled by organisations such as the Amateur Athletic Club, while the Queensberry Rules were progressively used rather than the London Prize Rules. As such, ‘bare-knuckle boxing was giving way to boxing in its modern form’.[93] This somewhat relaxed approach allowed newspapers to report on these boxing bouts without fear of reprisal from the law, even if the sport was still seen by many as inhumane. As Sawyer has noted clandestine bare-knuckle prize-fighting continued to exist which meant that newspapers were now reporting on two totally separate types of fighting. Evidence of this can be found in two

[90] ‘A Pugilistic Encounter’, p. 7.
[91] See Chapter Four for a broader discussion regarding the Marques of Queensberry Rules.
[92] Two examples are T. Sawyer, *Noble Art* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 31: ‘the object of prize-fighting was to hit your opponent, while at the same time avoiding his return blow. This ritual was enacted ideally in the presence of a large and vociferous crowd, who placed bets on the outcome and from whom gate money could be extracted, but there any resemblance to modern boxing ends. Prize-fighting was a different game, fought to different rules and existing within a different world’. Also, see ‘Pugilism’, in Richard Cox, Grant Jarvie and Wray Vamplew (eds), *Encyclopaedia of British Sport* (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2000), pp. 307–10: ‘“Pugilism” and “boxing” are, strictly speaking, different sports; there was no smooth transition from one to the other’.
[93] Boddy, *Boxing*, p. 92.

newspapers in 1895. The *South Wales Daily Post* commented on a boxing match in Swansea that was more refined, observing that 'neither of the men went in for heavy work, but indulged in light, scientific sparring, which was pretty to watch'.[94] On the other hand, the *Evening Express* commented that 'what proved to be a stiff and stubbornly-contested fight came off in a secluded spot on Llanwonno Mountain... There was a fairly good crowd surrounding the ring… both men bore traces of hard hitting, their faces being somewhat disfigured'.[95] The latter newspaper report is just one of many bare-knuckle prize-fights that were reported in local newspapers after the introduction of the Queensberry Rules. As a result, the 'new' sport of boxing, with its rules and regulations, continued to be tarnished due to the brutal bare-fist fights that were still occurring in Wales during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Detailed reporting on gloved fights, giving detailed, round by round descriptions of the fights and the styles of fighting, along with sketches of the more well-known fighters, increasingly became the norm.[96] Due to its changing 'legality', especially regarding the suggested leniency surrounding the 'new' sport of boxing, fighters began to use newspapers for their own personal use by both advertising challenges to other fighters and printing details of the fight venues and times. In April 1895 the *South Wales Daily Post* reported on one particular challenge: 'Having heard that Hooligan of Swansea is anxious to box me, I, William Lane, am prepared to make a 10-rounds match with Hooligan for £20 a-side… Queensbury rules strictly…in the Swan public-house… fight to take place in a few weeks… A reply through the *South Wales Daily Post* will oblige'.[97] The very fact that venues and times of fights were reported in newspapers suggests that the authorities had, to some extent, changed their views on the sport as this information could have been used to prevent the

[94] 'Boxing: Glove Fight in Swansea', *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 January 1895, p. 3.
[95] 'Prize-Fight: Twenty-Five Rounds Fought Near Pontypridd', *Evening Express*, 7 August 1895, p. 3.
[96] Refer to Appendix for examples of newspaper sketches of Welsh prize-fighters.
[97] 'A Challenge to Hooligan', *South Wales Daily Post*, 20 April 1895, p. 3.

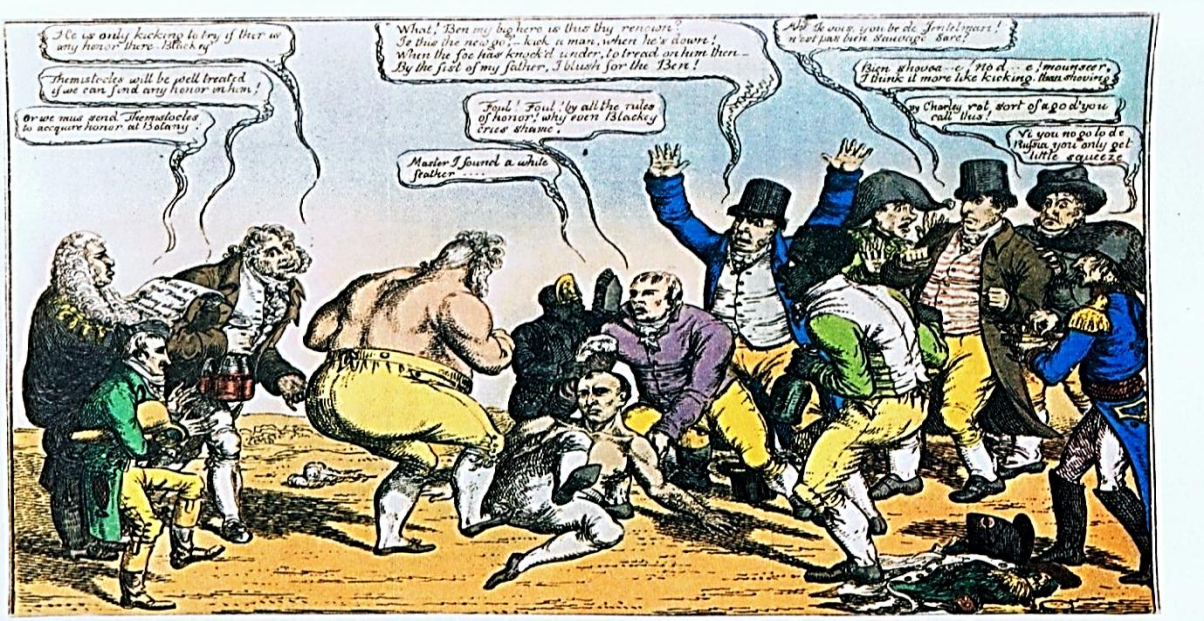
fights from taking place. Nonetheless, prize-fighting continued to come under scrutiny, with a number of newspaper reports concerning themselves with the sport's ambiguous legal position. Well after the introduction of the Queensberry Rules, as late as the 1890s, some boxing bouts were still being prevented by the police, and, in order to avoid prosecution, fighters had to prove in court that they had engaged in a gloved sparring match only and had not intended to physically punish their opponent. Well-known Welsh boxing booth owner, Patsy Perkins who, to assuage the consciences of his usual patrons, particularly after they avoided his boxing booth over its legality, quoted Justice Wills who had accepted that glove boxing was lawful, and Perkins then proceeded with the evening's entertainment.[98] The *Cardigan Observer* (23 November 1878) also reported how several men were indicted for assembling at a prize-fight, yet the solicitor, in defence of the men, contended that this was 'a sparring match, fought with gloves according to well-known rules, and was not, on the authority of the Queen v Young, an offence in law'.[99]

Illustrations in newspapers also became increasingly important, with visually appealing caricatures becoming recognised features in monthly periodicals, and newspapers.[100] They not only attracted interest by publicising important events, but did so by way of amusing mockery or, conversely, adulation. Mike Huggins has suggested that, as part of the wider process of Victorian illustration, the impact of 'visually appealing comic periodicals and comic art became a recognised feature of Victorian visual and verbal culture'. Indeed, they were 'seized upon and read by peers, politicians and the proletariat alike'. [101] Political caricatures, especially, were an effective agent in trying to mould and guide public

[98] *South Wales Daily Post*, 1 June 1895, p. 3.
[99] 'Illegality of Glove Fights', *Cardigan Observer*, 23 November 1878, p. 2.
[100] Arthur Bartlett Maurice and Frederic Taber Cooper, *The History of the Nineteenth Century in Caricature* (London: Grant Richards, 1904), p. 2. For a study of images as historical evidence see Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001).
[101] Mike Huggins, 'Cartoons and Comic Periodicals, 1841–1901: A Satirical Sociology of Victorian Sporting Life', in Mike Huggins and James Anthony Mangan, *Disreputable Pleasures: Less Virtuous Victorians At Play* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 124.

opinion. In times of great public excitement, particularly during the Napoleonic wars, such caricatures were increasingly used to create a sense of 'patriotism'.[102] On occasions cartoonists used prize-fighting as the main focus within which to portray and express their feelings towards a particular event. The caricature below (Fig. 3.1) is one example of the contemptuous attitude of the time towards Napoleon and was given through the medium of a prize-fight.

Fig. 3.1. Political cartoon of Napoleon and the Prince Regent.[103]



Boxiana—or the Fancy. Political cartoon of Napoleon and the Prince Regent, 1 October 1815.

The caricature, taken from Egan's *Boxiana*, illustrates the Prince Regent and Napoleon engaging in a prize-fight with Napoleon receiving a knockout blow. The caricature is presenting prize-fighting in a manly and courageous light, which suggests there was probably a broad approval of prize-fighting within the country at this particular time.[104] Peter Radford suggests that there were three main aspects of prize-fighting that demonstrate its status and importance on a national scale. It was widely credited for providing a system for

[102] Maurice and Cooper, *History of the Nineteenth Century in Caricature*, p. 3.
[103] Egan, *Boxiana*, p. 175.
[104] See Peter Radford, 'Lifting the Spirits of a Nation: British Boxers and the Emergence of the National Sporting Hero at the time of the Napoleonic Wars', *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 12, 2 (2005), 257. Also, see A Correspondent, 'Pugilism as a National Characteristic', *The Annals of Sporting*, 3, 13 (1823), 11–12. For discussions concerning abiding by the rules and the notion of fair play in prize-fighting see Dennis Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sports History*, 12, 2 (1985), 126–42.

people to settle their differences. Next, it was responsible for the gentrification of the lower orders, as it taught them to treat their adversaries with consideration and good manners and, lastly, with Britain at war, men were expected to be 'manly' and show courage.[105]

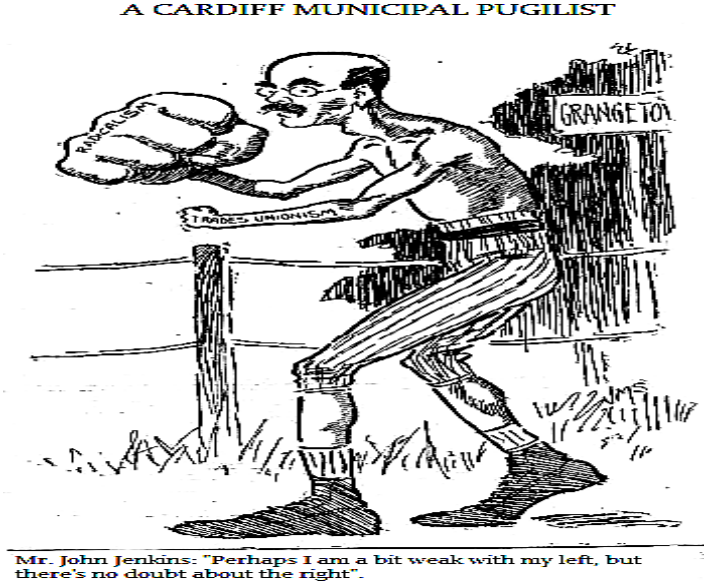
Victorian sporting cartoonists were faced with the challenging task of interpreting societal changes towards leisure time and sporting activities, as well as associated beliefs concerning 'respectability', or otherwise, of sporting behaviour.[106] Therefore, caricatures are helpful in providing evidence of changing attitudes, shortcomings, and prejudice. As Michael Huggins has rightly pointed out, 'the combination of visual material and humorous text in sporting cartoons provides a potent way to help to tease out the meaning of the discursive sporting practices that constitute to our understanding of sporting reality'. [107] One example is the tailpiece to the bound volume of *Punch* for the first six months of 1860 which was a caricature of the Sayers and Heenan fight (Fig. 3.2). This Tom Sawyer believes 'leaves little doubt that the publishers of the magazine considered the fight… to have been the single most newsworthy event of that half-year'.[108]

Fig. 3.2. Tailpiece to the bound volume of *Punch*, 17 April 1860.[109]

[105] Radford, 'Lifting the Spirits', 257–9.
[106] Huggins and Mangan, *Disreputable Pleasures*, p. 18.
[107] Huggins, 'Cartoons and Comic Periodicals', p. 149.
[108] Sawyer, *Noble Art*, p. 31.
[109] Ibid., p. 31.

Welsh newspapers and periodicals were no different in their use of caricatures. For example, the following caricature from 10 October 1896 in the *Evening Express* (Fig. 3.3) used pugilism in a political context. The caricature depicted the Cardiff councillor, John Jenkins, who was the President of the Trade Union Congress in 1895, as a pugilist and stated that 'perhaps I am a bit weak with my left, but there's no doubt about my right'. By comparing the characteristics of this politician with those of a pugilist this newspaper was drawing on the acceptance of the sport at the end of the century. Through his work as Trade Unionist, Jenkins was seen as a trusted leader of the working class in Cardiff and an honourable and reliable figure who was willing to fight for his people. The caricature thereby shows that a prize-fighter in this context was visualised as courageous and honourable – a man who would fight to the end to get what he needed. It also suggests that prize-fighters were looked on as heroes by the working class as they fought not only for their own honour, but also that of their community and supporters. Indeed, John Welshman has suggested that individual boxers were seen as symbolic of wider social and political changes. As such, the idea of the 'sportsman as a hero' was particularly apt for boxers as it was for the union leader Jenkins.[110]

Fig.3.3. Caricature of John. H. Jenkins, October 1896.[111]



[110] John Welshman, 'Boxing and the Historians', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14, 1 (1997), 199.
[111] 'A Cardiff Municipal Pugilist', *Evening Express*, 19 October 1896, p. 1.

Another caricature printed in the *Evening Express* in the same month (Fig. 3.4) depicts Eli Waddington, Conservative agent for the Cardiff boroughs, as a proprietor of a boxing booth who was calling on the radicals in the crowd to 'try their luck' in a boxing bout against his Tory prize-fighters. The image highlights the Tories as fearless, and ready and willing to take on all comers, indicating that they were not scared of the challenge that lay ahead. Yet, the radicals (Liberals and others) are portrayed as inferior due to their dithering and unwillingness to step forward and display any signs of manliness or courage. The depiction of a boxing booth as the setting for both prize-fighters and politicians was an acknowledgment that prize-fighting was going through a period of transition from the illegality of bare-knuckled mountain fights to a more formal setting of the boxing booths and adherence to set rules. The fact that the caricature reveals boxing gloves in the forefront of the sketch indicates that the illustrator was clearly aware of the Queensberry Rules and the growing respectability of the sport.

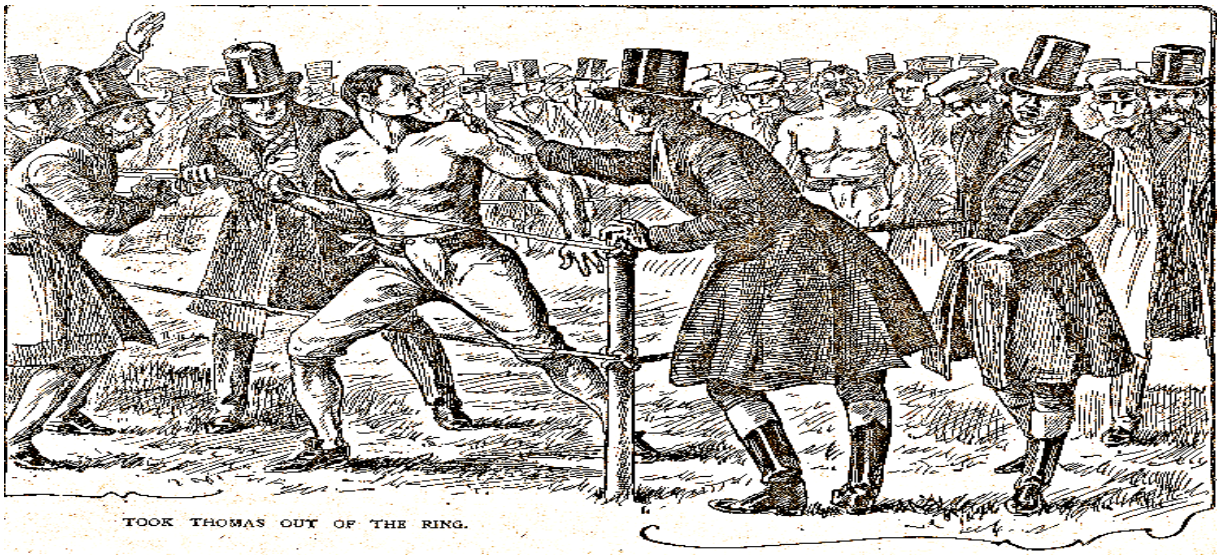
Fig. 3.4. Caricature of Cardiff Conservative, Mr Waddington, October 1896.[112]

[112] 'The Municipal Boxing Booth', *Evening Express*, 13 October 1896, p. 1.

The following newspaper report in the *Pontypool Free Press* earlier in July 1892 further discussed the use of prize-fighting as a political tool through the use of caricatures. The newspaper reported how two well-known tailors in the Rhondda (one a Tory and the other a staunch 'Rad') had caused amusement by exhibiting cartoons of a prize-fighting contest between Prime Minister, William Gladstone, and his contender in parliament, Lord Salisbury, as a way of highlighting their political rivalry, whereby

> Lord Salisbury's political 'friend' was startled by a cartoon stuck up in the window of his colleague, portraying Gladstone and Salisbury in a ring, the former landing his competitor one on the left 'peeper'. Aggravated by the picture he turned the tables upon his opponent and a picture appeared in the window of the Tory's shop showing 'Billy' in an exhausted state, and being knocked over the ropes…The cartoons undoubtedly indicated to people that there is some connection between politics and pugilism.[113]

Fig. 3.5. Dan Thomas V Jack Brooks.[114]



As such, newspapers and periodicals produced caricatures linked to particular known sportsman and sporting events. Arguably, this offers a better interpretation of the characteristics of those individuals and their contribution to particular events. The above illustration of Dan (Pontypridd) Thomas' fight with Jack Brooks on the Essex Marshes in

[113] 'Rhondda Tailors and their Political Pugilists', *Pontypool Free Press*, 22 July 1892, p. 2.
[114] Harold Furniss, 'Glorious and Surprising battle between Dan Thomas and Jack Brooks', *Police Budget Edition, Famous Fights, Past and Present*, IV, 44 (1901–4), 76, and accessed at https://archive.org/details/famousfights1 [Accessed 31 July 2017]. Also, see Lawrence Davies, *Mountain Fighters: Lost Tales of Welsh Boxing* (Cardiff: Peerless Press, 2011), p. 181.

September 1858 (Fig. 3.5) provides the reader with a graphic insight into both the character of Thomas and his bouts, which may not have been possible through simply reading a report about the fight. They illustrate the physique of these pugilists and, by studying the caricature it is plain to see that both Thomas and his opponent were in fine physical shape. This implies that the men would have trained well in readiness for the fight and were probably looked after by their patrons. The sketch of the Thomas vs Brooks fight also gives a flavour of the brutal side of the sport as it is possible to see that Brooks was badly beaten around the face and that Thomas was about to leave the ring thinking his opponent had suffered enough. However, on many occasions at prize-fights, the fighter was helped to his feet by his backers and encouraged to fight on, undoubtedly suffering a further beating, simply because of the money wagered on him to win. One account of prize-fighters being pressurised to continue to fight was recorded in the *Evening Express* in July 1895. This described a fight between Sam Randall (Ogmore Valley) and Harry Millard (Bristol) where the two men fought desperately for an hour. They received serious injuries, yet at the end of the twelfth round, with both men showing no desire to continue, their backers urged them to finish the fight.[115] The illustration notes the type of people and numbers attending the prize-fight. As can be seen, there was a large crowd gathered to witness the fight, indicating that there was considerable interest in this pugilistic encounter. More importantly, by examining the clothes that were worn by the men who attended there were different classes present. What is evident in the illustration are the wealthy backers of Thomas informing him to return to the ring to finish the fight, as they would have feared losing substantial sums of money if Thomas left the ring thinking the fight was over.

To summarise, newspapers in the second half of the nineteenth century became established as an important source of communication for all and there cannot be any doubt

[115] 'Prize Fight near Cardiff', *Evening Express*, 30 July 1895, p. 1.

regarding the widespread fascination of news in Victorian Britain.[116] Newspapers were concerned with putting together a serviceable publication which meant reporting on the increasing leisure interests of the general public. During this period prize-fighting was no doubt a popular sport, yet the uncertainty surrounding its legality made it contentious to chronicle. Public interest in prize-fighting was undoubtedly stimulated by the reports appearing in newspapers, both for and against the sport. Many newspapers may not have condoned prize-fighting, certainly in the earlier years of the nineteenth century, but they were also aware of the public interest in the sport. Therefore, it could be questioned whether the temptation was too great not to report on local bouts. The following from the *Chester Courant and Anglo-Welsh Gazette* in December 1829 certainly emphasises the point, stating that the editor of the *Halifax Chronicle* had alluded to the assistance pugilists had received from the press and observed 'here lays the root of the mischief. A base press, pandering to the base passions of the populace, for the purpose of selling a few hundred extra papers, gives these blackguards of the 'fancy' all their importance'.[117]

What is clear from the evidence examined in this chapter is that the existence of a sporting press certainly helped to endorse prize-fighting as newspapers provided the publicity which fed and fostered interest in the ring and provided some of the organizational elements which helped pugilism to survive.[118] It is also clear that there was certainly a rise in the number of newspaper reports on prize-fighting, both nationally and locally, as the nineteenth century progressed. The sport did, however, in the eyes of many, remain 'illegal' throughout most of this century. Nevertheless, the increase in reporting on prize-fights implies that there was a public fascination with the sport, as any decline in the reporting of prize-fights, in any capacity, would surely indicate that boxing had failed to adapt itself to the changes in the nation's sporting habits and had become less popular.

[116] Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, p. 273.
[117] 'The Late Fight', *Chester Courant and Anglo-Welsh Gazette*, 8 December 1829, p. 2.
[118] Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 156.

There is little doubt that prize-fighting was the object of considerable attention in other types of literary sources. Information taken from these should not be ignored and used alongside other evidence certainly helps to provide a clearer picture of prize-fighting in the nineteenth century. As discussed, there are certain factors such as manliness, identity and patriotism linked to prize-fighting in Wales. Once again, some of the characteristics of prize-fighting are clearly evident in newspaper reports, caricatures, poems, ballads and novels, which help to present a vivid picture of prize-fighting in British society. The idea that prize-fighting encouraged and embodied the principles of 'magnanimity' during times of war are evident through contemporary literature. However, the key point to remember, as James Davies states, is that literature 'is not history and we must be clear about its role'.[119] Take, for example, the novelist. Certainly they are often accurate in their use of historical or contemporary detail, but it is clear that novelists, such as Richard Llewellyn, pandered to commercial interests and factual accuracy would have been less important to them than the desire to keep the readers turning the pages.[120] Whereas historians seek to interpret known facts, fiction writers are not obliged to stick to them, or can combine fact with fiction. What such literature does provide is the opportunity to imagine the experience of the bout through its literary licence, and thereby recreate a particular place and time.[121] As Murray Phillips conjectures, novels can provide 'evidence that we cannot get from other sources, but we must check the novel against other kinds of evidence before we can accept it as an accurate account of what really happened'.[122] This also applies to the use of caricatures. When using these illustrations as a source of historical evidence it should be taken into account that, although caricatures will usually be accompanied by textual insertions, their interpretation can be problematic. Meanings might be obscure, or employ satire, irony, parody and paradox.

[119] Davies, *Heart of Wales*, p. 14.
[120] Ibid., p. 14.
[121] Keith Thomas, *History and Literature: The Ernest Hughes Memorial Lecture* (Swansea: Swansea University College, 1998), 3–4.
[122] Phillips, *Deconstructing Sports History*, p. 16.

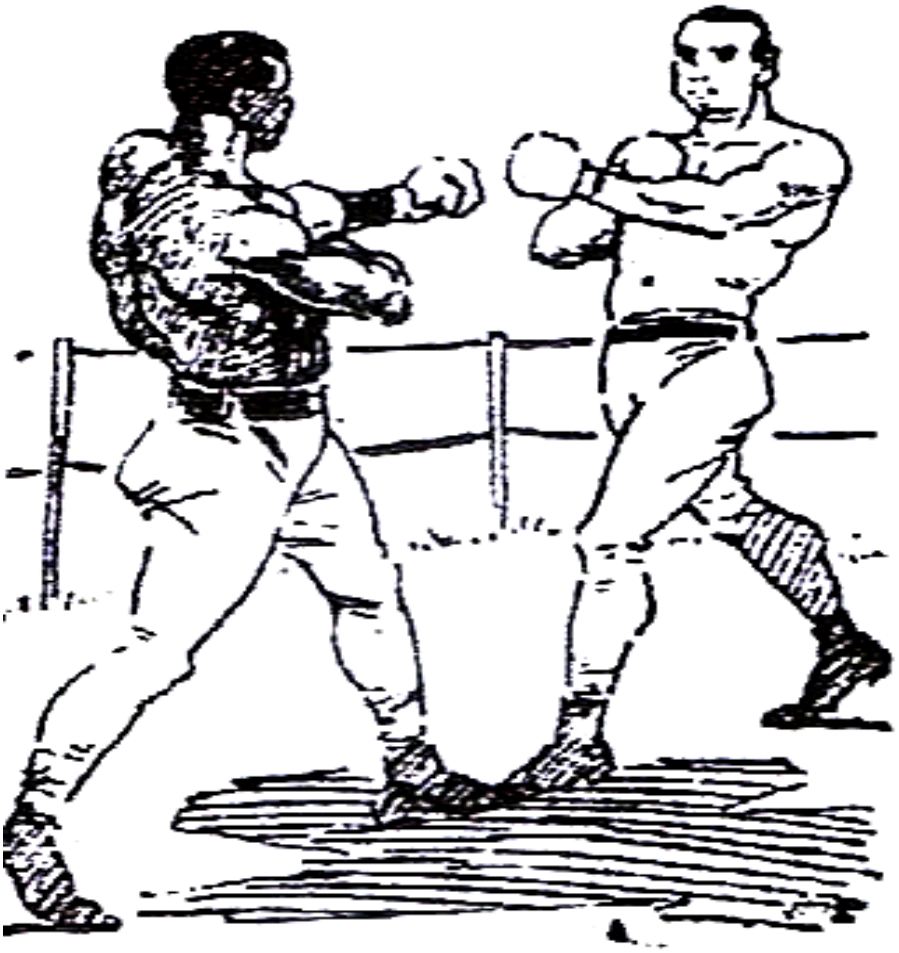
In order to entirely understand them as a cultural product it is vital to fully understand and be able to place cartoons historically in the social and cultural context in which they were created and to recognise that they need to be read alongside more conventional sources.[123] Finally, it is worth stating that the evidence provided in this chapter enhances the argument that the press, novels and caricatures of the past no doubt played a highly influential role in legitimising prize-fighting over time.

[123] Huggins, 'Cartoons and Comic Periodicals', p. 126.

CHAPTER FOUR

‘A Bunch of Fives’: Changing Styles of Boxing

Fig.4.1. Frank Craig versus John O’Brien, October 1894.[1]



In the Ring.

> Prize-fighting (and then boxing) has been described as ‘the use of strength, speed, and power to push human limits and aggressively dominate opponents in the quest of victories.[2]

Jay Coakley provides a fair description of the skills required to succeed in the sport of boxing. Yet, throughout the history of prize-fighting/boxing, techniques and strategies have changed over time to varying degrees. There have also been many differing opinions as to

[1] *Western Mail*, 9 October 1894, p. 6.
[2] Jay J. Coakley, *Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies* (5th edn. St Louis: Mosby, 1994), p. 446.

how far the skills and 'science' of boxing progressed from the late eighteenth century into the early twentieth century. Many boxing enthusiasts, such as Dave Day, assert that contemporary prize-fighting itself was often nothing more than a brutal slogging match in which two fighters threw punches until they came into a clinch and wrestled each other to the ground, arguably no different than 'street fighting'.[3] There are many reasons why styles and strategies have altered in prize-fighting, including improved nutrition and technological advancements. However, rules and regulations introduced into the sport during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were to have a major impact on the fighting styles used during this period and beyond. W. Russel Gray has argued that Broughton's Rules of 1838 brought the sport out of the toe-to-toe slugging format of the James Figg era (1684–1734) and introduced the 'scientific' skills of stopping and blocking punches, hitting and retreating, which introduced a style of fighting whereby fighters were renowned for standing up firmly and fighting in a courageous style, similar to that seen above (Fig. 4.1).[4] In the main, the rules and regulations regarding prize-fighting originated in England, mainly in London, however this chapter intends to examine if they had an impact on prize-fighting in Wales.

Research in this area is complex as no period has been identified as having a particular fighting style. This chapter will discuss the development of different fighting techniques and assess the reasons behind such changes. Utilising evidence from detailed newspaper reports of prize-fights, it will examine the structural and organisational developments that occurred in prize-fighting between 1743 and 1865. It will also include an examination of contemporary boxing manuals that were written during this period and their contribution to boxing performance. The intention here is to argue that the impact of large scale industrialisation in Wales, which brought a repatterning of time and space, helped to

[3] *World and Fashionable Advertiser*, 21 September 1787. This is also referenced in Dave Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom": Eighteenth-Century Boxing Manuals', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, 10 (2012), 1456.
[4] W. Russel Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled: The Decline of British Prize Fighting in the Victorian Era', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 21, 2 (1987), 54.

legitimise prize-fighting through the introduction of rules and regulations, which also influenced new fighting styles.

From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, teaching the 'art' of boxing became an important source of income for some of the well-known professional fighters who developed careers as trainers. The clientele was often made up of wealthy 'amateurs' wanting to acquire the skills of 'scientific' boxing as the middle and upper classes looked for other ways to settle disputes rather than the potentially deadly duel. These 'gentlemen' did not necessarily want to partake in prize-fighting, but increasingly wanted to learn how to defend themselves and attack others.[5] In agreement, Kenneth Sheard comments that they did not want to 'risk social degradation by taking part in prize fights or risk acquiring the facial features of "the bruiser". However, they could develop the required boxing skills for settling private grudges'.[6] In support of this, Daniel Mendoza stated in 1824 that 'a knowledge of the science is both useful and necessary to every man of spirit, if, for no other reason, to protect himself'.[7] At the same time, an eagerness to record the essential elements regarding the 'art of prize-fighting', along with the working-class desire for literacy, and accessibility of literature during this period led to the introduction of a number of boxing manuals.[8] The manuals described in detail the various skills needed to perfect the 'art' of boxing through identifying the different fundamentals required for competitive performance within a prize-ring, giving technical advice, and remarking on the characteristics of retired and contemporary fighters.[9] They also brought about an understanding of technical and physical training in boxing and were

[5] Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning, *Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p. 26.
[6] Kenneth Sheard, 'Aspects of Boxing in the Western Civilising Process', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 32, 1 (1997), 41.
[7] Daniel Mendoza, *The Modern Art of Boxing* (London: Mendoza, 1824), p. 3.
[8] John Lawson and Harold. Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (London: Methuen, 1973), p. 193. Also, see W. B. Stephens, 'Literacy in England, Scotland and Wales, 1500–1900', *History of Education Quarterly*, 30, 4 (1990), 545–71. For further discussion on improved literacy rates and reading material of this period, see Chapter Three.
[9] Day, '"Science, "Wind" and Bottom"', 1451.

significant in establishing the foundation stones of nineteenth century training theory, which will be discussed in more detail later.[10]

The first book written about pugilism was Captain John Godfrey's *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence* published in 1747 and included chapters on the 'Theory of the Sword and Boxing'.[11] Godfrey wrote about some essential basics of prize-fighting, however, he did not give any detailed accounts of techniques and tactics used by fighters. Other boxing manuals then followed such as *An Amateur of Eminence* – the *Complete Art of Boxing* (1788) and Daniel Mendoza's *The Modern Art of Boxing* (1790). It was in these manuals that authors began to clearly identify particular techniques related to the art of prize-fighting, such as advancing, attacking, closely engaging, and retreating. It was as a consequence of these manuals that a full understanding emerged of the importance of 'wind' (endurance), 'bottom' (courage), and 'science' (technique).[12] An example of this can be found in statement by famous prize-fighter, Daniel Mendoza, who explained that 'a good boxer needed strength, courage, art, plus activity and wind, both of which could be acquired by practice'.[13]

The growth in the popularity of teaching and learning the art of boxing, along with the boxing manuals, provoked considerable debate concerning those skills that were most important in order to become a good prize-fighter. Strength was seen as essential, especially in the old- style fighting which used the 'manly' method of prize-fighting, whereby combatants fought in close and direct confrontation and traded punches without dropping or moving away from their opponent. Due to this 'toe-to-toe' style of fighting, a strong man would be too powerful for his opponent to stop his blows effectively, one blow from him

[10] The early literature of the sport includes, Capt. John Godfrey, *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence* (London, 1747); Amateur of Eminence, *The Complete Art of Boxing* (London: M. Follingly and M. Smith, 1788); 'An Amateur', *Recollections of Pugilism and Sketches of the Ring* (London, s.n., 1801); John Bee, *Lives of the Boxers* (London: s.n., 1811); Pierce Egan, *Boxiana; or, Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism* (3 vols. vol. 1: London Smeeton, 1813; vols. 2–3: London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1818–21); Bill Oxberry, *Pancratia* (1st edn. London, W. Hildyard, 1811).
[11] Godfrey, *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence*, and discussed in John Ford, *Prizefighting: The Age of Regency Boximania* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971), p. 168.
[12] Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1448.
[13] Ibid., 1451.

would have more impact than several from a weaker man, and the stronger man would have a definite advantage when grappling. It was also argued that no fighter should rely on strength without incorporating technique, as success was dependent upon a foundation of strength, combined with manual dexterity, as a lack of skill would be detrimental, even to the strongest man.[14] Godfrey believed that 'strength is used to best effect if the appropriate skills are known and employed'.[15] 'Bottom' or 'game', generally defined as the perseverance to endure the severity of an opponent's blows, was similarly seen as an important skill required by prize-fighters. A man was considered to have good 'wind' and 'bottom' when he displayed rapid powers of recovery when taking a 'beating', along with the ability to fight back and possibly win the fight. As Mendoza observed

> In mentioning courage as a necessary requirement, it has been considered in both its active and passive sense; that is, as spirit or resolution in engaging your adversary, and as hardiness and bottom in bearing his blows. This courage assisted by strength and art forms a complete boxer.[16]

It was thereby argued that technique and strength were of little use without 'bottom' and 'wind', which, as Godfrey stated, could be 'significantly enhanced by exercise and diet'.[17]

It seems that during this period, strength, dexterity and courage were seen as the main components needed to make a complete prize-fighter. However, to find a fighter with all these qualities was a rarity. Some fighters relied on brute strength to win a fight whilst others in contrast, relied on skill and speed. A defensive style of fighting using a tight guard to protect the head and body was popular whereas other fighters used footwork to dance around their opponents to confuse and tire them out. What is intriguing is the question why prize-fighters adopted different styles of fighting. In order to answer this, it is important to observe

[14] Henry Lemoine, *Modern Manhood, or, the Art and Practice of English Boxing* (London: Methuen, 1788), pp. 15–16.
[15] Godfrey, *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence*, p. 47.
[16] Mendoza, *The Modern Art of Boxing*, p. 9. Thomas Fewtrell's *The Science of Manual Defence* (London: Scatcherd and Whitaker, 1790) similarly discussed 'wind' and 'bottom' as important factors of a good prize-fighter.
[17] Godfrey, *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence*, p. 5.

some of the rules and regulations that were imposed on the sport during the period in question.

Until 1743 there were no formal rules that regulated the sport of prize-fighting in Britain which meant that fights would often consist of punching, head butting, gouging of opponents eyes, wrestling and holding, and even kicking. Fights would very often continue until one of the fighters retired or was beaten so badly that they could not continue. The *Stamford Mercury* reported that during one particular prize-fight in May 1738 the pugilist was 'so sorely beaten that he was as blind as a beetle and was forced to be carried off the stage'.[18] It was the introduction of different rules and regulations between1743 and 1865 that not only helped give the sport some credibility, but had a key impact on the changes to fighting styles. Therefore, it seems appropriate to offer a brief outline of the main rules and regulations introduced to prize-fighting before examining how exactly they came to have such an influence on the changing styles of fighters.

In 1743 the first set of formal rules were introduced by Jack Broughton, the well-known prize-fighter. He was champion from 1734 to 1750 and is regarded by many as the founder of the modern art of self-defence as he became known for his different and often superior fighting style. Henry Downes Miles in *Pugilistica* reflected on his ability in the following manner:

> There was a neatness and quickness in his style which far distanced his competitors, and drew crowds to witness his exhibitions. He appears first to have introduced stopping and barring blows, then hitting and getting away; before him it appears to have been toe-to-toe work or downright hammering; at any rate, his method appears to have had the novelty of a discovery with his spectators and his antagonists. He stopped the blows aimed at any part of him with such skill, and hit his man away with so much ease, that he astonished and daunted his opponents.[19]

[18] *Stamford Mercury*, 11 May 1738, p. 2.
[19] Henry Downes Miles, *Pugilistica: The History of British Boxing* (3 vols. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1906), I, p. 21.

Broughton defeated fellow fighter George Stevenson in London on 24 April 1741. A few days after the fight Stevenson died, and Broughton, devastated by the death of his opponent, drew up a set of pugilistic rules to be used in his boxing emporium in London to prevent further deaths.[20]

Broughton's Rules, as they became known, consisted of seven basic principles, which were: (1) That fighters shall meet at lines and fight there only when both are 'set-to'; (2) that a fallen fighter had 30 seconds to return to the line before deemed defeated; (3) that only the fighters and their seconds may be on the stage while the contest ensues; (4) that failing to come up to the line constitutes defeat; (5) that the winning fighter receive two-thirds of the money; (6) that the fighters may choose two umpires to decide the battle; and (7) that no fighters may hit his adversary when he is down. Some of these rules were to play an important part in the development of different fighting styles.[21] Thus, fighters were now required to proceed to a chalked one-yard square at the centre of the ring, known as 'the scratch', at the beginning of the fight. Each fighter had to take up his position at the scratch before the round could begin, and it was this practice of taking up the stance which distinguishes old-style prize-fighting so markedly from today's boxing. Broughton's Rules also introduced some other benefits as it forbade a number of the more unsavoury aspects of prize-fighting such as hitting an opponent who was knocked down, hitting an opponent below the belt, seizing an opponent's hair or breeches, or using wrestling holds below the waist. It was agreed that a round would end with the downing of a fighter (a fighter that dropped to his knees was also considered to be knocked down), and that a downed fighter would have thirty

[20] For details of Broughton and others see Egan, *Boxiana*, Vols 1–3. Also, see Egan's *Book of Sports and Mirror of Life: Embracing the Turf, the Chase, the Ring, and the Stage* (London, T.T. and J. Tegg, 1836) online access available at https://archive.org/details/pierceegansbooko00eganrich [Accessed 27 June 2017], and discussed in John C. Reid, *Bucks and Bruisers: Pierce Egan and Regency England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) and David Snowdon, 'Pierce Egan, and Pugilistic Writing 1812–45', Newcastle University, PhD thesis, 2007. Also, see Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize-Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1988), p. 1.

[21] Broughton's Rules are reprinted extensively. For example, a copy of the original set of rules can be found in Vincent Dowling, *Fistiana or, The Oracle of the Ring* (London: William Clement, 1854), p. 30; and Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, pp. 8–9.

seconds to recover before once again coming up to the 'scratch' (with or without the assistance of his seconds) to continue the fight.[22] The new rules introduced umpires and barred everyone from entering the ring apart from the fighters and their seconds, and the referee.[23] Adhering to these new rules meant that disputes were prevented regarding how long a fighter was given to recover from a knockdown. In addition, the new rules gave better protection to the fighters as they were now given time to rest from a knockdown and could not be hit by their opponent whilst down. By introducing umpires and barring people from the ring, Broughton's Rules also helped to prevent fights from being interrupted by the crowd, which, again, helped to prevent disputes regarding the outcome of the prize-fights.

Following on from Broughton's Rules, the London Prize Ring Rules were introduced in 1839. The new rules were established as a result of further deaths in the prize-ring, and were seen by supporters of the sport as a way of not only reducing fatalities, but also as the means of easing the objections relating to the sport.[24] In 1853, with a growing realisation that many of the rules were insufficient and did not provide clear guidelines regarding unethical practices, members of the Pugilistic Benevolent Association, which came into being in December 1852, further revised the London Prize Ring Rules.[25] Membership of the Association was restricted to ex-fighters and fighters, with its main aim to erode the aristocratic patronage and thereby give fighters more protection and a better income.[26] They produced a detailed set of rules – twenty-nine in all – which not only formalised rules for the prize-fight but also the ring, its flooring, and how the fight was to be organised.[27] The London Prize Ring Rules were very much based on Broughton's Rules but added further

[22] Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled', 58. Also refer to Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 8.
[23] Dennis Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sports History*, 12, 2 (1985), 132.
[24] Dowling, *Fistiana*, p. 63.
[25] Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 98.
[26] Kenneth Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', Anglia Polytechnic, PhD thesis, 1992, p. 197.
[27] Ibid, p. 201. The London Prize Ring Rules are reprinted extensively. A copy of the original set of all twenty-nine rules can be found in Dowling, *Fistiana*, pp. 121–3.

regulations that made the sport more 'scientific' or 'artful' which helped to, once again, improve the status of prize-fighting in the wider community. As with Broughton's Rules, bouts ended when a fighter could not 'toe the scratch' on time, and no limit was placed on the number of rounds allowed. The round ended when a man was knocked down. He was still given thirty seconds to recover, but if he was not at the scratch eight seconds after the referee had called 'time', and if he had not got there under his own steam, the fight was deemed lost.[28] Further acts of foul-play were banned under these new rules, including hair-pulling, which was often used to pull a man onto a punch, and the butting of an opponent.[29] Yet, under London Prize Ring Rules, tripping and standing on your opponent's foot was acceptable, as was throwing your opponent to the ground. By accepting that certain 'moves' were permissible in a prize-fight the London Prize Ring Rules did not make a great impact on helping to reduce 'foul play'. Thus, under these rules, fighters were still allowed to stand on their opponent's feet and there were often reports of pugilists wearing spiked shoes in order to inflict as much pain as possible. An example of this was seen in the fight between Thomas Welsh (alias Young Sambo) and William Jordan in 1845. In its report of the fight the *Monmouthshire Merlin* stressed how these incidents of 'foul play' undermined prize-fighting's image as a 'manly sport' and was no better than those 'foreign counterparts' who often used knives to resolve disputes. It reported that

> Jordan, having exceeded the stipulated weight was compelled to fight without shoes, his opponent fighting with spiked shoes, and availing himself of treading on the feet of Jordan, and mutilating them exceedingly... frequent appeals were made to the umpires, but who decided it fair, and within the rules of boxing! And this is manly sport! The continental ruffian now and then earns his dinner by his knife: the British pugilist wins the stakes by the spikes of his shoes. Both deal in cold iron; only in the latter case it is for the especial encouragement of manly English sport![30]

[28] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 215.
[29] Dowling, *Fistiana*, p. 123.
[30] 'Manly Sport', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 12 April 1845, p. 4. For a full report of the fight between Welsh and Jordan see, *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 26 January 1845, p. 4.

The report from the *Monmouthshire Merlin* does, however, give an example of how other areas of 'fair play' were being introduced. There seems to be no precise recorded date when weight classes were introduced, but it is generally regarded that they were brought in with the introduction of the Queensberry Rules. Yet it can be seen, via this newspaper report, that weight divisions for particular fights were already in use by 1845. This would have no doubt been an important part of progressing fair play in prize-fighting by matching fighters of similar weights, thus removing any unfair advantage a heavier fighter would have had over their smaller opponent.

The Marques of Queensberry Rules of 1867 certainly modernised the sport of prize-fighting.[31] These rules were introduced to deflect mounting criticism, especially after the vicious encounter between Tom Sayers and John Heenan, the American champion, in 1860.[32] This reform of prize-fighting was manifested in twelve rules named after the nobleman who sponsored them, John Sholto Douglas, the ninth Marques of Queensberry.[33] John Graham Chambers, the Welsh Lightweight Boxing Champion, devised the rules for the Marques, which was intended for amateur competitions to stop them from being seriously injured when knocked to the ground or helpless to fight back.[34] Significantly, under the Queensberry Rules, no seconds or associates were allowed in the ring during the statutory three-minute rounds with no rest. Furthermore, the inability of a fighter to be on his feet and ready to resume fighting within ten seconds of being knocked down led to the forfeiture of the bout.[35] Also, if a fighter fell to his knees (or one knee) he was considered knocked down and would be given a ten second count; if during this time he was hit in that position by his opponent, the

[31] Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled', 60.
[32] Jack Anderson, *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 45. Referring to the so called 'Championship of the World' fight between Sayers and Heenan, Anderson states that 'in 1865, prize-fighting, in its bare-knuckle tradition, had its last great event'.
[33] The Marques of Queensberry Rules has been reprinted extensively. A copy of the original set of rules can be found in P. Arnold, *History of Boxing* (London: Deans International Publishing, 1985), pp. 34–5, and Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p.161.
[34] Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled', 59.
[35] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 215.

opponent would be disqualified. A man hanging on the ropes with his toes off the floor was also considered knocked down and again would be given a ten second count. The Queensberry Rules further outlawed the practice of wrestling or hugging, prohibited shoes with springs or spikes, kicking, gouging, biting, tearing of the flesh and falling on a man with the knees.[36]

Why then were these rules and regulations embraced by the sport and society more generally? One explanation is the elaboration and refinement of manners during the nineteenth century and an increase in the pressure on people to exercise self-control over their sexuality, aggression and emotions.[37] With the introduction of 'rational recreation' and the middle-class desirability to improve the leisure habits and amenities of the working-class, the authorities became more effective in curbing certain aggressive sporting activities, notably the banning of cockfighting. Thus, the character and structure of the civilising process helped sports, such as prize-fighting, to develop as the rules and regulations were embraced. This helped the high levels of violence characteristic of the early days of prize-fighting to be brought under greater control. Due to the acceptance of these impositions, Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning believe that prize-fighting went through a 'sportisation period through a civilising spurt', particularly during the nineteenth century.[38] Undoubtedly, the rules and regulations had a major impact on prize-fighting across Britain. As will be discussed, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the rules were increasingly adhered to, and had an impact on prize-fighting, in Wales, and particularly influenced fighting styles by the bare-knuckle fighters. Jimmy Wild refers to the toe-to-toe style of bloody prize-fights that occurred in the Welsh valleys prior to Broughton's Rules, when he stated that 'the two veterans of fighting' had stood face to face and 'slogged at each other for eighty-four

[36] Arnold, *History of Boxing*, p. 34.
[37] Sheard, 'Aspects of Boxing in the Western Civilising Process', 32.
[38] Elias and Dunning, *Quest for Excitement*, p. 150.

rounds'! The fight lasted several hours, at the end of which one of the boxers, Dai, had won on a knockout.[39]

All kinds of punches, it seems, were allowed during these fights, except those below the waist. However, prior to Broughton's Rules, punching, in some instances, occurred only sporadically, amidst gouging, butting, wrestling, and body-throwing.[40] Many bare-knuckle fights became a mixture of punching and grappling which could often resemble more of a wrestling match than a prize-fight. Wrestling holds, charging and throwing opponents, hitting opponents when they were down, karate-style chops on the back of the neck, and blows to kidneys were all common practices that were both accepted and admired.[41] Indeed, as early as the 1790s Thomas Fewtrell explained how 'chopping' had become the best mode of hitting:

> It has been of late the custom to extol chopping, as the best mode of hitting, it is a blow struck on the face with the back of the hand. Mendoza claims the honour of its invention, but unjustly; he certainly revived and considerably improved it… Broughton also occasionally used it.[42]

The lack of restrictions in prize-fighting even resulted in supporters of sword fighting and cudgelling denouncing the sport as inhuman, as prize-fights usually continued until one combatant was knocked out, could no longer continue to fight or retired from the fight, which very often led to fighters being carried off the stage without any appearance of life.[43] In one particular fight in 1742 between two bakers in a gravel-pit in Marylebone, one fighter was so bruised he had to be carried home in a chair and it was thought he would not recover, whilst the other pugilist lay on the grass, as though he were dead, for quite some time before he was able to crawl home.[44]

With the introduction of Broughton's Rules of 1743 the banning of certain fighting moves played an important role in encouraging fighters to focus primarily on more

[39] Jimmy Wild, *Fighting Was My Business* (London: Robson Books, 1990), p. 32.
[40] Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled', 54.
[41] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 135.
[42] Thomas Fewtrell, *Science of Manual Defence* (London: Scatchered and Whitaker, 1790), p. 23.
[43] Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1449.
[44] *Ipswich Journal*, 10 April 1742, p. 2.

sophisticated offensive techniques and defensive tactics.[45] There was also an increase in the knowledge of human anatomy, especially as Parliament passed the Anatomy Act in 1832, which allowed unclaimed bodies in workhouses, prisons and hospitals to be sold to medical schools for dissection.[46] Thus, anatomy became a legitimate component of a liberal education with public dissections and anatomical waxwork exhibitions.[47]

This increased knowledge of the human body fundamentally changed prize-fighting techniques as fighters discovered, through trial and error, certain anatomical principles which influenced their fighting styles. They began to deliver blows on top of the head, behind the ear, and on the chin, generally utilising straight and cutting punches since using hooks to the head without gloves risked breaking the fingers.[48] Randy Roberts describes further how prize-fighters

> found that a blow placed lightly under the ear, on the jugular vein, caused the blood proceeding from the heart to the head to be violently forced either to the heart or the head, leaving their opponent prostrate, bleeding from his eyes, ears, and mouth. They also discovered that a punch delivered between the eye-brows contributed greatly to a victory because it caused 'a violent ecchymosis, or extravasation of blood, which falls immediately into the eye-lids', the swelling which resulted from such a rap left one's adversary artfully hood-winked.[49]

Evidence regarding the use of such punches was recorded in the *South Wales Weekly Advertiser* in 1812 when James Gullan and Harry Penton 'both hit together at the head, and each drew blood... which ended in Gullan being hit down by a blow behind the ear'.[50] Under Broughton's Rules the fighting stance remained similar to that of old-style fighting whereby the normal practice of defensive boxing was 'never to shift' but to stay strong in a stance and

[45] Brailsford, *Bareknuckles*, p. 9. Broughton's rules stated that no person was to hit his adversary when down or seize him by the hair, the breeches, or any part below the waist.
[46] Lisa Beth Vernoy, 'The Value of a Body: Anatomy Lessons in Nineteenth-Century British Literature and Visual Culture', University of California, PhD Thesis, 2012, p. 1.
[47] Day, '"Science', "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1453. Also, see A. W. H. Bates, 'Anatomy on Trial: Itinerant Anatomy Museums in Mid-Nineteenth Century England', *Museum History Journal*, 9, 2 (2016), 188–204.
[48] Day, '"Science', "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1449.
[49] Randy Roberts, 'Eighteenth Century Boxing', *Journal of Sport History*, 4, 3 (1977), 249
[50] Anon., 'Pugilism', *Carmarthen Journal and South Wales Weekly Advertiser*, 11 January 1812, p. 4.

try and ward off blows from an opponent with the arms, without the aid of footwork.[51] Some prize-fighters, in order to show their manliness and courage, would not even try to avoid or block punches, but would take the punishment before delivering their own punches. There was no shifting, or falling back to evade a punch, and many of these fights ended with either a single knock-out blow as one fighter tired or sustained too many injuries to continue. Evidence of this can be seen in the fight between Gullan and Penton with the newspaper report stating that 'not a solitary attempt was made to stop, or avoid a blow during the combat, which was at length decided in favour of Penton, by his giving his adversary a heavy fall on the back of the head'.[52] Captain Godfrey, writing much earlier in 1747, also gives us a clear picture of Broughton's style of fighting when describing one of his fights: 'Broughton steps bold and firmly bids a welcome to the coming blow, receives it with the guardian arm'.[53]

One particular drawback of Broughton's Rules was that fighters could create a thirty-second rest period by feigning to be hit, and simply falling down to end a round, which meant a round could last just a few seconds or many minutes. Fighters would also box in a very crouching style, dropping one knee to the floor, so that whenever a blow was coming they could immediately claim to be 'down'. This was evident in the fight between Will Charles, (Newport), the Welsh champion, and Bill Gardiner from Ross in Herefordshire. The fight took place at Raglan in 1833 and during the fight it was reported that Gardiner 'pummelled his opponent severely in the face and succeeded each time in escaping a return from Charles, by falling before his blows'.[54] Rounds did, however, generally become shorter the longer the fight lasted due to fatigue. Fights under Broughton's Rules, and the style of fighting that it encouraged, meant that prize-fights could last a preposterous number of

[51] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 120.
[52] Anon., 'Pugilism'.
[53] Godfrey, *A Treatise Upon the Useful Science of Defence*, p. 5.
[54] 'Great Fight at Raglan', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 30 March 1833, p. 3.

rounds, usually exceeding those in later glove fights.[55] In Britain, the largest number of rounds to be fought under this system was 276, between Jack Jones and Patsy Tunney in Cheshire in 1825.[56] Similarly, in Wales, prize-fights were also renowned for lasting many hours at a time, such as the prize-fight between Parry of Monmouthshire and Powell of Hereford in 1824 which lasted 103 rounds or one hour and forty-seven minutes.[57]

It is difficult to get an accurate picture of how long a fight lasted as the length of each round could vary considerably. This often resulted in fights becoming merely a pushing and shoving match between the pugilists as the fight had been allowed to go on for too long and the men had become exhausted and were no longer in a fit state to fight. Such was the contest between Parry and Powell in 1824. Powell was so extremely weak from loss of blood that he could not make it to the scratch to continue the fight.[58] This led to tired fighters resorting to early fighting styles of increased mauling and wrestling which minimised skill and focused on resolution, giving a premium to strength and bottom, that quality admired by the Regency buck.[59] Welsh fighter, Daniel Desmond, relied very much on his durability rather than skill to win fights. In one such contest on 30 May 1864, on Little Mountain (Mynydd Bach), he fought and beat Thomas Walsh of Pontnewynydd over forty-six brutal rounds, which lasted an hour and forty minutes.[60] Additionally, these fist fights of particular lengthy duration often resulted in the prize-fighters receiving disturbing levels of facial disfigurement along with other serious injuries. Welshman, Ned Turner in his fight with

[55] John Ford, *Boxiana or Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism by Pierce Egan* (London: The Folio Society, 1976), p. 6.
[56] Maurice Golesworthy, *Encyclopaedia of Boxing* (London: Robert Hale, 1983), p. 136.
[57] *Cambrian*, 14 August 1824, p. 4.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ford, *Boxiana*, I, p. 7.
[60] Gareth Williams, 'A Brutal Passion: Bare-knuckle Bruisers and Mountain Fighters', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 8. Also, see 'Pugilism', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 4 June 1864, p. 8.

Peace Inglis, beat his opponent so badly that it was reported that Inglis was 'one mass of slaughter-work; and Scroggins sung out that Peace looked as if he was murdered'.[61]

Due to the fact that there were no 'points' decisions in these fights, Kenneth Sheard believes that there was 'seldom any doubt about the victor'.[62] To a certain extent, Sheard is correct in what he suggests, however, evidence shows that arguments between the opposing supporters of prize-fighters were common for numerous reasons. The *Monmouthshire Merlin* in June 1832 reported that after the main bout between Stephen Trainer, an Irishman, and Will Charles, a boxer from Newport, Monmouthshire, two men by the name of Cook and Bolter partook in a prize-fight to settle an altercation that had occurred during the earlier fight. The fight was naturally controversial, especially as the spectators enclosed the combatants in a very limited space which gave Bolter, who was receiving plenty of punishment from his opponent, the opportunity to grapple with his adversary. In response Cook continually dropped to his knees when held. The fight was stopped, and a scene of confusion ensued, with both sides claiming victory.[63]

Looking at the evidence provided it could be suggested that during the introduction of Broughton's Rules the sport not only remained physically demanding, but also raised questions regarding 'fair play'. Brailsford believes that victory depended as much on what was considered '"fair" in the pugilism of the day' as it did upon what 'actually happened in the fight'.[64] However, there are many examples from fighting practices that show how limited and unreliable 'fair play' was when Broughton's Rules operated. For example, the aforementioned fight between Charles and Gardiner, Charles complained about the manner in which Gardiner fought, having frequently fallen without adequate blows. Charles felt he had

[61] 'Battle between Ned Turner and Peace Inglis', *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 November 1824, p. 4.
[62] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 211.
[63] 'Provincial Milling: Fight between Stephen Trainer, an Irishman, and Will Charles, of Newport', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 9 June 1832, p. 3. Also, see 'Boxing between Belasco and Halton', *North Wales Gazette*, 17 April 1823, p. 1. The newspaper reported how the crowd disagreed with the outcome of a prize-fight and began fighting in the ring.
[64] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 127.

certainly not had the opportunity of doing his best in a stand-up fight, but it was considered by the organizers that Gardiner had not transgressed the laws of Boxiana.[65] It seems that this lack of 'fair play' was allowed to persist due to the limited and vague rules introduced by Broughton, which resulted in the prolongation of serious injuries to many fighters. As Day reflects, 'fine words of noble virtues fade away against the bloody realities of the ring itself, where fighters often received serious injuries due to the punishment inflicted upon them by their opponent'.[66] Unsporting fighting techniques, such as barging, head-butting and punching to the back of the neck or to the kidneys, continued under Broughton's Rules, as witnessed in the fight between Turner and Inglis with the *North Wales Gazette* claiming that Turner 'butted his opponent like a Welsh goat'.[67] During the same fight, both combatants resorted to unsporting techniques, with Turner landing blows to the ear and throat of his opponent, whilst Inglis landed punches to the loins.[68]

As with Broughton's Rules, when the London Prize Ring Rules were introduced in 1838 they continued to allow too much leeway for foul play, such as spiking, biting, gouging, strangling and butting, to be involved in a fight. Wrestling techniques also continued under the London Prize-Ring Rules with two excessive practices in particular lasting from the early days of bare-knuckle prize-fighting until the mid-nineteenth century - the 'suit in chancery' and the 'cross buttock' throw. To execute the 'suit in chancery', a fighter grabbed his opponent in a headlock and then struck him with the free hand until he was senseless, while the 'cross buttock' involved throwing an opponent over the shoulder and then fall heavily onto him, landing on his abdomen so violently that he was incapable of further resistance. These types of throw were often applauded by the crowd and were taught in the pugilistic academies as, although not seen as fair play, they were not considered illegal either. In 1749

[65] 'Great Fight at Raglan', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 30 March 1833, p. 3.
[66] Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1449.
[67] 'Fight for Two Hundred Guineas. Turner and Inglis', *North Wales Gazette*, 18 November 1824, p. 4.
[68] Ibid.

during a fight between John (Jack) Slack and Field the Sailor at Broughton's amphitheatre in Oxford Road, London, it was reported that 'two cross-buttock falls, very well-timed, but very seldom to be got at so late in the day, gave Slack the Victory'.[69] It was also mentioned in *Boxiana* that Turner used the 'suit in chancery' against Jack Scroggins in their third fight in October 1817.[70]

Considering the evidence provided, there is strong argument to suggest that Broughton's Rules and the London Prize Ring Rules were, to a large extent, not developed to protect the fighters, but actually to prolong fights for the interest of the supporters and gambling. John Ford remarks that 'whilst the half minute rest on a knock-down saved a fighter from further punishment, it also enabled him to continue to fight for longer, thus prolonging the spectacle for as long as possible'.[71] It could very well be argued that Broughton's and the London Prize Ring Rules did bring a little respectability to the sport, yet both sets of the rules continued to allow too much freedom for foul play and were only designed to protect fighters from the most obvious foul blows.[72] However, it became much harder to resort to foul play with the introduction of the Queensberry Rules.[73] Under the guidance of the Queensberry Rules, the abandonment of wrestling, of long rounds, of contests lasting hours, and the adoption of a well-roped ring, level floors and light gloves helped to rid the sport of some of the more brutal aspects of prize-fighting. This gave those fighters who had acquired the skill and knowledge of the 'art of boxing' a better chance of success.[74] Fewer rounds, which only lasted three minutes, along with the ten second knockdown rule eradicated the constant intervals in fights, which also meant fighters now had to rely more on stamina than ever before. In turn, this assisted boxing in becoming a sport of rapid

[69] *Ipswich Journal*, 25 February 1749, p. 2.
[70] Egan, *Boxiana*, II, p. 180.
[71] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 110.
[72] Ibid., p. 124.
[73] T. C. Wignall, *The Story of Boxing* (London: Hutchinson, 1923), p. 218.
[74] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', p. 217.

movement, lightness of foot, and suppleness and grace, as the Queensberry Rules took control over the pace of action away from the fighters and added an extra dimension of speed. As Elliot Gorn suggests with the referee inside the ring

> urging them to fight, boxers could no longer steal a few minutes to glare at each other, tactically agreeing to slow down, return to their corners for a drink, and regain their strength. Moreover, the new order banned wrestling, a skill on which many fighters depended. Above all, the Queensberry rules emphasised quick, dramatic blows. Thus boxing became simpler and faster-paced.[75]

As already discussed, bare-knuckle prize-fights caused considerable damage to fighters and, as a result, cannot be likened to boxing with gloves under the Queensberry Rules. Possibly, the most important change to prize-fighting as a consequence of the Queensberry Rules was the officially recognised use of boxing gloves, rather than using bare-fists. It is often suggested that the Queensberry Rules, especially the introduction of padded gloves, was a turning point as people began to recognise it, to some extent, as a sport, if a brutal one. For this reason many boxing enthusiasts believe that the introduction of the Queensberry Rules signalled the start of modern boxing.[76] In addition to the use of padded gloves, there is no doubt that these new rules eliminated prolonged fights for the interest of the supporters and gambling. In contrast to earlier rules, under the new system boxers could now use their skills and speed to score points against their opponents. This allowed fighters to show their superiority without showing unnecessary brutality and began to receive praise from the crowd for remaining upright and using boxing skills to entertain. A fight between Charley Palmer of Treforest and E. Morris of Blaina in 1895 resulted in Palmer showing such excellent skills that a number of judges admitted that he had no doubt been properly trained

[75] Elliot J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 205.
[76] Peter Donnelly, 'On Boxing: Notes on the Past, Present and Future of a Sport in Transition', *Current Psychology: Research and Reviews*, 7, 4 (Winter 1988–9), 331-36; Edward Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change: Boxing and Society at a Crossroads', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 2 (2004), 161–80. These are two examples of boxing historians who have suggested modern boxing started with the introduction of the Queensberry Rules.

and had a brilliant future ahead of him in the prize-ring.[77] However, the significance of the Queensberry Rules in introducing safety as well as a sense of sportsmanship could certainly be questioned. There is undoubtedly some debate as to whether the use of padded gloves actually took away the essential element of brutality as some suggest. As John Ford argues, the art of boxing and self-defence was certainly respected, but the use of force is what the audience wanted to see, especially reserving their appreciation for 'blood and bottom'.[78] This was clearly the case in the prize-fight between Morgan Crowther (Newport) and Chaffy Hayman (Bristol) a few years earlier in 1890 when, after around twenty minutes, Hayman was well beaten by Crowther and bore signs of severe punishment. Yet shouts came from all parts of the hall for the fight to go on.[79] In similar fashion, during the fight between William Barry of Greenhill in Swansea and Thomas Harris of Llansamlet in 1895, Harris received a brutal beating from Barry and at the end of the third round, Harris's face was covered with blood and he was not in any fit state to continue fighting. Nevertheless, the audience were clearly keen to see the fighter receive further punishment as they shouted for Barry to 'smash him' further.[80]

Changes to the prize-ring itself also played an important role in the development of different fighting styles. Broughton's Rules had stated that the practice of having fights, not just sparring exhibitions, should take place on a raised area six feet from the ground. Over time this was to become a fixture in legitimate boxing for two reasons: it would keep the seconds of each boxer from interfering during the fight, and, at the conclusion of the contest, would provide a degree of separation from angry spectators.[81] Where time permitted, a prize-ring might have been erected prior to the fight. This usually consisted of eight stakes, joined

[77] 'Prize-Fight at Cardiff', *Western Mail*, 17 August 1895, p. 6.
[78] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 110.
[79] 'Glove Fight at Bath: Morgan Crowther Versus Chaffy Hayman', *Western Mail*, 15 May 1890, p. 3.
[80] 'Glove Fight at Swansea', *South Wales Daily News*, 12 June 1895, p. 7.
[81] Rudolph Brasch, *How did Sports Begin?* (New York: David McKay, 1970), pp. 58–9.

with two ropes, with the higher one being 4ft from the ground.[82] The size of the ring that was prepared for the fighters would often vary, usually from 20 square feet to 30 square feet, and some fights even took place in rings 40 feet square. When Young Belcher fought Dutch Sam in Crawley in 1807 it was reported that 'a thirty-foot roped ring was formed at a quarter before twelve o'clock'.[83] In 1812 the *North Wales Gazette* recorded that a fight between Power and Carter was 'fought in a 20 feet ring which was deluged with blood'.[84] Under the London Prize Ring Rules, however, the size of the ring was finally formalised and set at 'four and twenty feet square'.[85] The introduction of these new rules for prize-ring size was to have a significant impact on the fighting styles of the boxers. Some fighters would use the size of the ring to their advantage by concentrating on light and speedy footwork to enable them to dance around their opponents, avoiding their punches before countering with punching combinations of their own. The *Evening Express* in 1892 described how fighter Sam Thomas (Ynyshir), during his fight with Thomas James (Aberaman), was very nimble on his feet and made the most of the ring in order to out-manoeuvre his opponent and win the fight.[86] In contrast, some fighters would use the ropes to their advantage by using an aggressive fighting style to force their opponents onto the ropes where it was hard for them to use their speedy footwork to avoid punches.[87] This was evident in the prize-fight between Robert Wiltshire (Cardiff) and Sam Hughes (Birmingham) in 1888. Wiltshire, sensing that Hughes was tiring and a beaten man, forced his opponent against the ring ropes where he kept him trapped and unleashed a series of punches that won him the fight.[88] In another contest between Patsy Perkins (Swansea) and John Thomas (Cardiff), under the Queensberry Rules, it was reported

[82] Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', 201.
[83] *Cambrian*, 29 August 1807, p. 4.
[84] *North Wales Gazette*, 3 December 1812.
[85] Dowling, *Fistiana*, p. 121.
[86] 'Prize Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[87] See Appendix. The front cover of the *Famous Fights*, 1, 7 (n.d., c.1901–44), cover page, shows a picture of a prize-fighter using the ropes to his advantage in order to hit his opponent.
[88] 'Boxing at Cardiff. Glove Contest for £50', *Western Mail*, 7 February 1888, p. 3. For another report of a prize-fighter using the ropes in order to win the bout, see 'Boxing. Glove fight at Swansea. Mazey vs. Day', *South Wales Daily Post*, 4 May 1895, p. 3.

that Perkins 'waited quietly for an opening, and, getting near to the ropes, at last drove his opponent into them… it was then that Perkins had completely the upper hand'.[89]

New rules and regulations regarding the prize-ring nevertheless had some disadvantages for prize-fighters, particularly standardisation regarding the flooring of the ring. Under the London Prize Ring Rules it was specified that the floor had to be laid with turf.[90] This was, however, difficult to implement as prize-fights were held in many different settings, especially outdoors and in all weathers. They were assembled in various ways, such as using stone floors covered with a thin layer of sawdust, which could be fatal if a fighter was knocked down and fell heavily. This was the case in the prize fight between Thomas Edwards and David Rees (both of Cardiff) at Aberdare in 1894. Rees was knocked down by a blow from his opponent with his head coming into contact with the stone floor. This resulted in his untimely death.[91] Due to many prize-rings being conducted outside, prize-fighters not only had to battle with their opponent but also deal with the adverse weather conditions. Pugilists often stripped to the waist for a fight and could, on times, suffer from the cold weather. Moreover, in one particular prize-fight in 1835 between Welshman, Scroggins and Newton, which took place during a tremendous thunderstorm, Newton claimed to have been struck by lightning.[92] When reporting on Shoni Engineer's fight against Gilderhill from Bristol, in 1888, the *Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly News* reported that during the fight Shoni seemed to 'suffer very much from the cold'.[93] On the other hand, a warm summer's day could also be a disadvantage to a fighter as the sunlight could sometimes affect their vision. In the fight between Turner and Inglis in 1824 it was reported that the experienced fighter, Turner, manoeuvred his adversary's face toward the sun in order to temporarily blind, whilst at the

[89] 'Glove Contest at Swansea', *Western Mail*, 15 February 1893, p. 3.
[90] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 95.
[91] 'Fatal Glove Fight, *Weekly Mail*, 26 May 1894, p. 15.
[92] 'Brecon-Pugilism', *Cambrian*, 5 September 1835, p. 3.
[93] 'Desperate Prize Fight: Shoni Engineer V. Gilderhill', *Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly News*, 26 May 1888, p. 5.

same time unleashing a number of punches to his body and head.[94] It was not until the introduction of the Queensberry Rules that the sport was predominantly taken indoors using a ring on a raised platform.[95] However, even then the rings remained dangerous as the wooden boards used as flooring were unyielding, which often meant that if a prize-fighter was knocked down during a fight and fell heavily to the floor then serious injury could occur.

Alongside the changes in fighting styles, training techniques evolved during this period with the introduction and development of specialist training programmes. Furthermore, the concept of achievement through improved performance meant that from the late eighteenth century onwards there was a widespread idea that life could be bettered with the application of science-based improvements including the merging of asceticism with the notion of healthy living that involved diet and exercise to produce disciplined bodies. This was homologous with the maxim that a healthier and agile workforce would increase industrial or commercial output.[96] This resulted in the replication of the work-time discipline of modern capitalist production methods. As Peter Mewett maintains, industrial development ensured 'a refinement of measurement. Sport began to be associated with measured distances, matches against time, the establishment of time-keeping and records. Achievement, which requires discipline, could be assessed in terms of the rational procedures of measurement'.[97] Thus, enhanced skills and levels of endurance through sporting activity, including prize-fighting, reflected the same requisites needed in the workforce of a modernising society. The development of 'wind', for example, which was essential for success in the ring, promoted a view of endurance, vigour and dedication to the task in hand in the workplace. The acquisition of new fighting skills also mirrored the need to learn new skills in an increasing

[94] 'Battle Between Ned Turner and Peace Inglis', *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 November 1824, p. 4.
[95] Donnelly, 'On Boxing: Notes on the Past, Present and Future of a Sport in Transition', 341.
[96] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 34.
[97] Peter G. Mewett, 'From Horses to Humans: Species Crossovers in the Origin of Modern Sports Training', *Sport History Review*, 33 (2002), 101.

complex industrial society, while fitness training reflected the need to remain tied to the job for long hours.[98]

During the nineteenth century these programmes evolved and became more refined or complex due to the influence of improved physical and technical training alongside diet and nutrition.[99] There were naturally other motives at play, including those who saw the advantage of a physically improved and well-trained boxer pitted against the untrained pugilist. Indeed, Captain Robert Barclay Allardice, Cribb's patron, was the first to draw the attention of the boxing world to the value of good training regime. After the second Cribb versus Molyneaux fight in 1811, in which Cribb beat his opponent senseless, Barclay spoke about the enormous advantage of a man in peak physical condition.[100] Thus, the physique of prize-fighters alone could usually give a good indication of the training regimes and lifestyles of these pugilists. It was also recognised that insufficient training could lead to surprise defeats, even for champion fighters. This was evident in the bout between Dan Pontypridd and David 'Duck' Ingram which took place near Newport, Monmouthshire, in February 1856. Dan appeared to be out of shape as a result of neglecting his training, and bets were taken 8 to 5 on Ingram. The pugilists fought for about an hour when the Welshman was obliged to give in.[101]

For this reason, patrons tried to improve their chances of a successful wager by placing their prize-fighters into training programmes that involved vigorous workouts and strict diets, and treating them with the same care as they did with their prize animals.[102] Prize-fighters would, therefore, go into the countryside for periods of six to eight weeks to train for

[98] Ibid., 97.
[99] Day, '"Science', "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1460. A good example is the very specific advice given in Sir J. Sinclair's publications, *The Code of Health and Longevity* (4 Vols. Edinburgh: Constable Cadell Davies and Murray, 1807); *A Collection of Papers, On the Subject of Athletic Exercises* (London: Blackadder, 1806) regarding preparatory training programmes involving purging, sweating, diet and exercise.
[100] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 127; *Cambrian*, 5 October 1811, p. 3, stated that Cribb was declared 'the victor, who had both his eyes closed, and his adversary was taken from the ring senseless'.
[101] 'Prize-Fight', *Usk Observer*, 9 February 1856, p. 1.
[102] Day, '"Science', "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1450. Also, see *Connoisseur* (collected issues), 22 August 1754.

a fight. Purging and sweating, before moving on to a strict regime of diet and exercise, remained the norm.[103] Due to the fact that he was out of condition, Turner, after losing a fight to Inglis, trained in the Welsh mountains for three months prior to their rematch. The *Dublin Evening Mail* reported that Turner 'went into the ring on Tuesday himself again, unlike the scape-death exhibited by his person before'.[104] Many prize-fighters took daily exercises such as regular long walks, alongside morning and evening runs. Dai St John and Morgan Crowther were often seen vigorously running around their home towns before a prize-fight.[105] The use of heavy weights to gain strength, such as dumb-bells, also came into regular use in the nineteenth century. Turner told Pierce Egan that when he first began to use dumb-bells he could scarcely count fifteen before feeling tired, but after a little practice he was able to pass them backwards and forwards upwards of 300 times.[106]

Boxing manuals and magazines, such as *Blackwood's* magazine, contained information regarding nutritional diets, that was useful for complete physical wellbeing.[107] However, as Ford suggests, undoubtedly many of the diets recommended to athletes 'suffered from the judgement that what was pleasing to the palate was well suited to the stomach'.[108] One example was the consumption of alcohol by many fighters. In Mendoza's *Modern Art of Boxing*, the following training method along with nutritional diet was recommended:

> Live temperately, but not abstemiously. Take exercise but not so much as to prove fatiguing. Use some muscular exercise, then walk a mile or two. Practice sparring and other moderate exercise. Your beverage at dinner should be wine and water and a glass or two of the old hock afterwards. On the morning of the fighting, eat only one slice of bread, well toasted, or a hard white biscuit toasted, and, if not too strong for the constitution, half a pint of good red wine, mulled with a tablespoon of brandy; this is to be taken an hour before the time of dressing. On the stage have your

[103] Day, '"Science', "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1461.
[104] 'Battle between Ned Turner and Peace Inglis', *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 November 1824, p. 4.
[105] 'Forthcoming Prize-Fight: Crowther in Training', *South Wales Echo*, 1 January 1890, p. 4.
[106] Egan, *Boxiana*, II, p. 183.
[107] Details regarding prize-fighting also featured regularly in Capt Topham's *The World* (from 1787); the monthly *Sporting Magazine* (from 1793), *Bells Weekly Messenger* (from 1796), and the *Weekly Dispatch* (from 1801). Pierce Egan wrote for the *Weekly Dispatch* from 1814.
[108] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 129.

> drink made of Holland's bitters, fine china orange juice, with some lump sugar to render it palatable.[109]

It seems that hard drinking and hard fighting went together for many pugilists. Doubtless, on occasions, alcohol was used to give the fighter extra 'bottom' or courage. Countless reports described prize-fighters as either drunk prior to a fight or drinking alcohol throughout the bout. In the contest between John O'Brien and Frank Craig in April 1895 the *Evening Express* reported that:

> The facts as we gathered them were that on Good Friday the Welshman received a wire inviting him to take Pritchard's place in the advertised contest. Known to be utterly unfit: for the task set out for him, and advised to stay at home, the big fellow would come south, and instantly packing his bag, and presumably providing himself with a wee drop of stingo, of which he didn't spill much when the cork was drawn during the journey up, he arrived at the London terminus in very jolly condition. How it came about that the poor' fellow was allowed to mount the stage passes comprehension, for he was manifestly as drunk as the proverbial fiddler… he stumbled through the ropes into the ring, reaching his seat in safety by holding on to a friendly rope, and seated on his chair, with dropped jaw and glazed eye, he looked, as he was, in hopeless condition.[110]

Also, in his fight with Inglis in 1824 Turner was given brandy between rounds nine and ten to enhance his performance as it was believed that he had over-exerted himself. Turner went on to win the fight convincingly. In contrast to Turner, Inglis was simple in his habits and never drank spirits or indulged in any excesses. However, a report in the *North Wales Gazette* in November 1824 stated that if Inglis had taken 'a little spice of the Devil it would qualify him better for the ring'.[111] This example provides evidence about how alcohol consumption was accepted within some sports as a tonic to improve performance rather than impair the participant's ability. Using sport as a mirror image of society, the use of alcohol by pugilists should also be seen in the context of a society in which many of the population utilized alcoholic drinks as thirst quenchers or erroneously thought they would achieve greater

[109] Mendoza, *Modern Art of Boxing*, pp. 24–7.
[110] 'Degrading Prize-Ring: A Sorry Exhibition in London', *Evening Express*, 20 April 1895, p. 2.
[111] *North Wales Gazette*, 18 November 1824, p. 4.

stamina. Indeed, such drinks were seen as less dangerous than drinking local water supplies.[112] Vincent Dowling, editor of *Bells Life* in London, in 1854 suggested that

> A bottle of brandy-and-water should be in readiness when a stimulant becomes necessary after long exertion, but should be used in moderation; and at times, especially in wet, cold weather, about a table-spoon of neat brandy may be given – this ought to be of the best quality.[113]

Patrons and fighters began to appoint professional trainers to watch over the fighters training programme. The trainer clearly became an important figure as he remained close to a fighter at a time when that man was often undergoing an unpleasant and severe training regime, as well as often meant time away from family and friends. A strong-minded, yet sympathetic, trainer was, therefore, of the utmost value in insisting on the regularity of the training and, at the same time, could provide sympathetic and entertaining companionship.[114] The poem 'Trainer's Rondo' by Bernard Breakwindow in 1890 gives a good account of the role of the trainer and the regular discipline which he urged on his fighter:

> Up in the morning, near the pump handle
> There I stand, Jack, with heart full of glee;
> Come, open each peeper,
> You featherbed sleeper,
> And up in the morning, Jack Randall, with me.
> Tho' in the Fives Court, you can fib it and spar it,
> And prove of neat hits both a giver and taker;
> Yet 'tis morn's early rising, and beef steaks, and claret,
> Will string up your nerves and wap Martin the Baker.[115]

As the role of the trainer developed, coaching the skills and training other men in readiness for a prize-fight became a regular source of income for professional fighters. It allowed good fighters another avenue in which to remain in the sport for longer and still earn a financial income from pugilism. In Wales, well-known prize-fighters, notably Shoni Engineer and Patsy Perkins, went on to become reputable trainers both during and after their prize-fighting careers.

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[112] Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1994), pp. 38–40. For a full discussion around alcohol and sport, see Wray Vamplew, 'Alcohol and the Sportsperson: An Anomalous Alliance', published on the internet, www.idrottsforum.org [Accessed 20 June 2017].
[113] Dowling, *Fistiana*, p. 143.
[114] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 130.
[115] Ibid., p.130.

The *South Wales Daily News* in 1890 reported that prize-fighter Sam Butcher (Ynyshir) was trained by John Jones Engineer (aka Shoni Engineer), while the *Evening Express* in January 1892 commented that Thomas James of Aberaman placed himself 'in the hands' of Perkins prior to his fight with Sam Thomas.[116] However, taking on a coaching role had its downside. If the police intervened and stopped a prize-fight it was not only the combatants who were charged, but also their seconds (who were more often than not the fighter's trainer). In the case where a fighter died from the beating sustained during the fight, both the fighter and those involved in the organization of the fight such as referees, timekeepers and seconds, could also often be charged with manslaughter and receive a prison sentence. In 1829 this custom had seen one group of seconds sentenced to transportation for life, there being, according to the trial judge, 'no excuse whatsoever' for permitting the deceased to continue after he was gravely injured.[117] The *Annual Register* of 1838 noted that four men acting as seconds in a prize-fight were convicted of manslaughter after allowing their badly injured fighter to carry on which resulted in his death.[118] Interestingly these examples indicate that it was very much the beating that the prize-fighters received that was at the forefront of the convictions and not the fight per se!

One of the most important aspects of training that evolved was the practice of sparring (which was a representation of the prize-ring battle but not the real thing, especially as gloves were worn at all times). Fighters would spar together to practice their skills and manoeuvres in the ring and experiment with techniques that they could eventually use in an actual fight. There was a great difference between sparring and fighting, and many of the 'Old School' of prize-fighters were of the opinion that sparring was of no great use as it emasculated the individual boxer, while teaching the finer points of boxing skills might not prove to be beneficial to a courageous

[116] 'Glove Fight at Pontypridd', *South Wales Daily News*, 7 October 1890, p. 8; *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[117] *The Times*, 11 September 1829, p.4. Also, see Anderson, *Legality of Boxing*, pp. 39–40.
[118] Martin Wiener, *Men of Blood: Violence, Manliness and Criminal Justice in Victorian England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 49.

adversary in a sport where strength generally prevailed over skill.[119] There is no evidence, however, to suggest that sparring diminished the powers of the boxer, but there is no doubt that many of the pugilists improved their techniques by exhibiting their skills with the masters of the ring. Pierce Egan made a valid point in 1818 when he stated that there might be 'a great difference between sparring and fighting; one may be very courageous in play, whose heart would be intimidated in real action… but cowardice is not produced in sparring'.[120] Furthermore, due to the transition of fighting styles in the light of changing rules to the sport, sparring became absolutely necessary to form a complete fighter. As Egan again suggests, although it was ''a mock encounter… at the same time [it was] a representation, and in most cases, an exact one, of real fighting'.[121]

Many prize-fighters could be found practicing the art of sparring at The Fives Court in Little St Martin's Street London. From 1802, until it was pulled down in 1826, it was the show-piece of prize-fighting. Bouts at the Fives Court were not matches, but rather exhibitions of a fighter's skills through sparring and were always gloved fights. It was here that aspiring new fighters were introduced to the Fancy as they demonstrated their claim to patronage, or the right to fight for a purse by exhibiting their fighting skills and new techniques.[122] The Fives Court exhibitions led to the acceptance of improved styles, and significantly Ned Turner was known to have sparred at the Fives Court on a number of occasions with other well-known prize-fighters, such as Jack Randall and lesser known fighters, such as a pugilist known as Sampson.[123] Turner sparring with Randal (Fig. 4.2) offers a useful insight into those attending the Fives Court, their social backgrounds, as well as the distinct boxing style used by the fighters, including the use of gloves and the practice of fighting in a raised, roped ring – all of which were symptomatic of the rules and introduced into boxing during the course of the nineteenth century.

[119] Ford, *Boxiana*, I, p. 54.
[120] Egan, *Boxiana*, II, p. 17.
[121] Ford, *Boxiana*, I, p. 54.
[122] Ford, *Prizefighting*, p. 137.
[123] 'Sparring', *Cumberland Pacquet*, 23 April 1821, p. 4; 'Sparring', *Morning Post*, 7 February 1822, p. 3.

Fig. 4.2. Sparring at The Fives Court.[124]

In essence, prize-fighting was an extremely violent and brutal sport, and yet there was considerable development in fighting techniques throughout the nineteenth century to demonstrate that it was a respectable sporting activity. This was, in the main, as a result of rapid social and cultural changes, including improved work discipline. Changes in attitude meant it became increasingly disreputable to be involved in a sport which caused damage to others. Therefore, to survive, the sport needed to avoid criticism as much as possible. This led to the introduction of new rules which became ever more complex in order to promote itself as a respectable activity. It was hoped that these new rules would reduce the sport's more barbarous practices and thus give more protection to prize-fighters, while, at the same time, reduce the level of opposition. Vincent Dowling has observed that the dissemination of the new rules

> is not less important, in as much as they inculcate principles of humanity (unfortunately overlooked by the framers of 'the old rules'), and, by stripping boxing of its more offensive features, tend to repress those barbarous practices heretofore so objectionable, and altogether opposed to the dictates of that 'fair play' by which

[124] Ford, *Boxiana*, I, p. 127.

> all personal combats, whether rising from a desire of distinction or from anger, ought to be characterized.[125]

Consequently, the violence connected with prize-fighting was increasingly controlled as it went through a 'sportisation' process that forced it to accept a transitional period which saw bare-knuckle prize-fighting replaced with gloved and timed boxing bouts. In parallel with the changes to prize-fighting, fighters were forced to develop new techniques in order to progress to a higher standard in the sport and potentially achieve the financial rewards from such conditioning. The evidence provided above also helps to confirm that the introduction of new rules in England were adhered to in Wales and, as such, there are clear lines of development between the fighting techniques used by both English and Welsh fighters from the eighteenth century onwards.

Social and cultural changes were evident in the creation of new forms of body discipline, especially in the development of sports training programmes.[126] This was to have an impact on many sports and leisure activities, including prize-fighting. As seen, prize-fighting developed from one of toe-to-toe brawling into a 'scientific art' which incorporated time-consuming fitness and training regimes, and nutrition, alongside more advanced fighting techniques to produce the best fighters. Evidence of this can be seen in both nineteenth century newspaper reports and the prize-fighting training manuals. Several texts which discussed the essential components of boxing performance help to highlight their methods of athletic preparation and fighting techniques. Additionally, the content of boxing manuals emphasised just how far the intellectual endeavours of that time had permeated all social classes and all social activities.[127] What is evident is that the transition of prize-fighting into boxing across the country, including Wales, through the introduction of these new rules and preparation for fights, left a considerable legacy. Training then, as it does now, clearly helped

[125] Dowling, *Fistiana*, p. 7.
[126] Mewett, 'From Horses to Humans', 96.
[127] Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1448.

with the acquisition of technique and of 'wind', which is now loosely referred to as fitness. Overall, it is clear that the impact of 'rational recreation' on prize-fighting can be seen with the introduction of set rules and regulations for the sport, which helped, to some extent, remove the most brutal aspects and thereby make it more respectable, or, at least, to be presented in this way. This has had a lasting influence on the sport as elements of some of the eighteenth and nineteenth century training programmes, along with the Queensberry Rules, remain the cornerstone of modern-day boxing preparation.[128]

[128] Ibid., 1460.

CHAPTER FIVE

'*Brutal or Beautiful*?': The Morality of Boxing.

Fig 5.1. Death of a Young Prize-Fighter in Wales, 26 May 1897.[1]

FATAL FIGHT IN WALES.

A Collier Lad dies after a Thirty Rounds Battle.

> Nothing could be clearer from my mind than that every fight which the object and intent of each of the combatants is to subdue the other by violent blows is, or has a tendency to, a breach of peace, and it matters not in my opinion, whether such a fight be a hostile fight begun and continued in anger, or a prize-fight for money or other advantage. In each case the object is the same, and in each case some amount of personal injury to one or both of the combatants is a probable consequence.[2]
>
> There is something fair and honourable in an appeal to pugilistic strength and science. It is done so openly, not in secret; it is the presence of umpires to see justice done; no foul must be struck; a man is not to be struck when he is falling; he is helped up and given time to recover, and when he allows himself to be pronounced vanquished, his person is secure against further violence.[3]

The statements above give very conflicting judgements on prize-fighting. In his assessment Sir Henry Hawkins, a high court judge, it is clear that he felt that pugilism was, in any form,

[1] 'Fatal Fight in Wales', *National Police Gazette*, 26 May 1897, p. 2.
[2] Richard Harris, *The Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins, Baron Brampton* (2 vols. London: T. Nelson, 1904), I, p. 44.
[3] Pierce Egan, *Boxiana; or Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism; From the Days of the Renowned Broughton and Slack to the Heroes of the Present Milling Era* (3 vols. London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1813–21), I, p. 557.

against the law, while, in contrast, Pierce Egan, (journalist/sportswriter), paints a picture of prize-fighting as a fair and honourable sport. The differing opinions of these two well-respected men is evidence that prize-fighting was a sport that encouraged (and still does) much debate. Certain questions regarding pugilism have often been debated, such as should prize-fighting be called a sport, is it legal, what kind of people would partake and watch such a brutal and violent activity? What is more, what kind of effect does it have on society? The fact that the very nature of prize-fighting promotes violence, alongside many displays of brutality by those involved in the sport, such as spectators breaking the ring, dirty tactics by fighters, and heavy gambling, meant it was very hard to convince doubters that there was any respectability in the sport. On the other hand, supporters of prize-fighting argued that it was a courageous and honourable activity. Prize-fighting also placed a high premium on physical toughness which resulted in 'honourable' fighters, such as that of the ancient gladiator, often refusing to concede and kneel down and very often continuing to fight no matter what the physical toll.[4] Given the above, the intention here is to examine the attitude towards prize-fighting from an ethical, moral and legal perspective.

In a study of the morality of boxing and whether it should be banned, Ken Jones states that there are 'four distinct areas of argument regarding the ethics of boxing - health and safety, violence, intentional harm of the sport, social responsibility'.[5] This research will work with the grain of Jones' study regarding the moral issues surrounding prize-fighting, while examining the sport's ongoing conflict with the changing expectations of nineteenth century society. This will involve a deliberation concerning the arguments for and against prize-fighting, taking into consideration the moral, ethical and legal aspects of the sport. Various aspects will be considered in this chapter, including the argument that prize-fighting was a sport that was often mired by the same issues pertaining to that of nineteenth century Welsh

[4] Loic J. D. Wacquant, 'The Pugilistic Point of View: How Boxers think and feel about their Trade', *Theory and Society*, 24, 4 (August, 1995), 496.
[5] Ken Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue: Should Boxing Be Banned?', *Culture, Sport and Society*, 4, 1 (2001), 64.

society, such as racism, sexual and ethnic prejudice, and religious issues. Yet, at the same time, it was a sport that could offer participants an escape route from these desperate conditions.

Campaigners against prize-fighting usually observed that the sport was a form of violence and was morally unjustified, obscene and degrading. However, what exactly is violence? Ken Jones suggests that it is 'unjustified harm or injury – where the emphasis is on unjustified. So, the key question is whether the harm and injury that occurs is justified or not'.[6] It is safe to suggest that it would be difficult for anyone to deny that nineteenth century prize-fighting was a blood sport, yet during the period in question British society was often violent. It was one of coarseness and savagery where blood sports, notably cock and dog fighting, were still common, even though the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1835 had been passed in order to eradicate these blood sports. It was a period marked by disorder and a high degree of physical violence.[7] Local newspapers regularly reported on the occurrence of drunken street fights in Mountain Ash, Pontypridd, Aberdare and Barry. In one late nineteenth century report in the *Barry Herald* it was observed that two men, under the influence of alcohol had gone into the street to fight over an incident that had occurred sometime previously.[8] Moreover, in many parts of Wales, notably Newport, Pontypridd, Merthyr and elsewhere in the Rhondda valley, there were numerous reports of the ill-treatment of cock fowls in illicit gaming.[9]

[6] Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue', 67.
[7] Joe Maguire, 'Images of Manliness and Competing Ways of living in Late Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *British Journal of Sports History*, 3, 3 (1986), 266. For Welsh examples of violence and disruption during the nineteenth century, refer to Chapters 1 and 2.
[8] 'Friends Fighting in the Street', *Barry Herald*, 29 January 1897, p. 5. For further examples refer to Chapter 1.
[9] 'Cock-Fighting at Newport', *Evening Express*, 15 June 1892, p. 3; 'Cock-Fighting at Merthyr', *South Wales Daily News*, 4 April 1883, p. 4; 'Cock-Fighting Near Pontypridd', *Cardiff Times*, 19 June 1886, p. 2; 'Cock-Fighting at Blaen-Rhondda', *Weekly Mail*, 21 April 1883, p. 2; 'Cock-Fighting Near Aberdare', *South Wales Echo*, 11 March 1885, p. 3. Also, see Iorwerth C. Peate, 'The Denbigh Cockpit and Cockfighting in Wales', *Denbighshire Historical Society Transactions*, 19 (1970), 125–32.

Prior to prize-fighting becoming popular with the young sporting gentlemen in the upper orders, who regarded self-defence skills to be an essential part of their repertoire, duelling was a well-known means of dealing with disputes and was seen as an affair of honour.[10] It often involved the use of swords or pistols which led to the serious injury or death of one of the participants, as in the case of the duel between Lord Castlereagh and Gerard De Melcy at Wormwood Scrubbs in 1838 when

> both men fired at the same instant. Lord Castlereagh's ball did not take effect, while De Melcy's passed through his antagonist's right arm near the wrist. It was feared at first that he was mortally wounded; but it was soon found that though his wrist was severely injured his life was not in the least endangered.[11]

The intent of duelling is to seriously wound or kill an opponent, while prize fighting, as the *Daily Register* recorded in 1787, would have been 'preferable to duelling as a means of settling disputes'.[12] In agreement, writing about the relative merits of boxing over the duel, Pierce Egan commented

> they should have had recourse to the manly defence of boxing than the deadly weapons of sword and ball (shot); from which a bloody nose, or a black eye, might have been the only consequence to themselves and their families, and neither in their feelings or their circumstances be injured; reconciliation with their antagonist – faults mutually acknowledged – and perhaps, become inseparable friends ever afterwards.[13]

From the above, it could be questioned whether duelling often gave many participants an unfair advantage if they were prolific in the use of sword or pistol. Moreover, this a lack of fairness, often resulted in the needless death of one of the duellers. In

[10] 'Affair of Honour', *Berkshire Chronicle*, 14 May 1853. For a detailed study of Duelling see V. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Jeremy Horder, 'The Duel and the English Law of Homicide', *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 12 (1992), 419–30; Antony Simpson, 'Dandelions on the Field of Honour: Duelling, the Middle Classes and the Law in Nineteenth-Century England', *Criminal Justice History*, 9 (1988), 99–155.
[11] *Northampton Mercury*, 23 June 1838, p. 2. Also refer to *Huntington, Bedford and Peterborough Gazette*, 22 June 1839, p. 4; 'Fatal Duel', *Pontypool Free Press*, 23 July 1859, p. 4; 'Duel', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 19 February 1859, p. 1.
[12] *Daily Register*, 29 March 1787, and cited in Dennis Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sport History*, 12, 2 (1985), 133.
[13] Egan, *Boxiana*, I, p. 194. Also, see John Sugden, *Boxing and Society*: *An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 14.

comparison, prize-fighting, although a bloody and brutal encounter, only warranted the use of 'fists' to determine a 'manly' dispute and the death of an opponent was not envisaged as the end result. The same could not be said of duelling. If a man was prepared to take a sword or pistol to his opponent, then surely their aim was to execute! Therefore, it is understandable why those taking part in such honorary disputes perhaps turned to the 'safer option' of prize-fighting, recognising that if they were unsuccessful, they stood a far better chance of remaining alive. This concept is endorsed by Elliot Gorn who states that duelling 'no doubt, was that "disgusting system of fighting". Boxing allowed a man to support his dignity, repel insult, resist attack and defend his rights from aggression. Some individuals could therefore imagine pugilism as the moral equivalent of duelling, the ring as a new field of honour'.[14] Even though prize-fighting may have been seen by many as the favoured option by which to protect ones honour and resolve disputes, the sport was still perceived as a threat to public order, on occasions a disruption to work, a degradation of human energies and abilities, and a scandalous and provocative waste of money.[15] As such, many regional and national newspapers of this period published reports condemning the sport. One such report in December 1893 noted that 'an immense amount of nonsense used to be talked about the influence pugilists had in developing manliness and chivalry among the people'.[16] Moreover the *South Wales Echo* observed that these professors of the 'manly art' often proved themselves to be the most brutal and cowardly ruffians that could be imagined.[17]

To examine this argument further the question of morality should be explored. Many people believed that it was morally wrong for one person to attempt, intentionally, to harm another, even in sporting pursuits. To win a prize-fight by consistent blows to the face and

[14] Elliot Gorn, *The Manly Art* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 54.
[15] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 133.
[16] 'Brutal Prize-Fighting', *South Wales Echo*, 7 December 1893, p. 2.
[17] Ibid. Also refer to 'The Home Secretary and Prize-Fighting', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 7 October 1881, p. 2; 'Prize-Fighting in the Rhondda', *South Wales Daily News*, 18 September 1897, p. 6.

body of an opponent naturally undermined the morality and ethical status of the sport.[18] As demonstrated in the *Merthyr Telegraph* in September 1858, these individuals

> with the ferocity of beasts, fought each other to win a paltry wager of a few shillings… After fighting about 10 rounds David Thomas, became helpless; his eyes had a vacant stare, consciousness left him, yet goaded by a brutal mob, he fought for four more rounds. He was then struck so violently that he fell down, never to rise again... The victim of a brutal passion.[19]

Modern-day boxers would dispute the claim that they go into a fight to intentionally harm their opponent, but rather argue that they use their skill to score points in order to win. This argument is not so prevalent for nineteenth century prize-fighting whereby many bare-knuckle fights were the consequence of disagreements and the intention was to inflict as much damage as possible. In addition, organised fights, which were not the result of a dispute, often ended with the fighters being badly hurt, which makes it difficult to defend the notion that prize-fighters meant their opponents no harm! Indeed, it can be asserted that if the major purpose of a sporting event is to win, when the surest way to do so is by damaging the opponent's brain, and this becomes standard procedure, the sport is surely morally wrong.[20] In agreement Jim Parry also suggests that 'John might hurt someone in cricket, but he won't get any runs or wickets for that. In boxing, he might win just by doing that. Indeed, hurting or harming someone so badly that he cannot continue the contest is a sufficient condition of victory'.[21] The above are but just two of many modern-day comments that have condemned prize-fighting because of the violent intentions of its participants to win. There is certainly evidence that prize-fighters in the period under study intentionally set out to inflict as much damage as possible, regardless of personal issues, as it was a means to victory, self-respect,

[18] Neil Warburton, 'Freedom to Box', *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 24 (1998), 58.
[19] *Merthyr Telegraph*, 25 September 1858, p. 2. Also, see Williams, 'A Brutal Passion', p. 3.
[20] 'Boxing should be Banned in Civilised Countries – Round 3', *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 255 (1986), 2483–4. Also, see Warburton, 'Freedom to Box', 58.
[21] Jim Parry, 'Violence and Aggression in Contemporary Sport', in Mike J. McNamee and S. Jim Parry (eds), *Ethics and Sport* (London: E. & F.N. Spon, 1998), p. 219.

and adulation from others. Welshman, Patsy Perkins, in the period prior to a prize-fight, took offence to an insult made by Tom James and stated that, 'James will find I don't forget an insult, for I shall put him to a little trouble to do what he promised at Treorchy – Business only meant!'[22]

An indication of the public's feelings towards the sport can also be seen in newspapers from the period, both on a national and local level. In one letter to the editor of *The Times* in 1823 a member of the public, commenting on the evils of prize-fighting, stated that 'these vagabonds should be hunted down, as these fights are contrary to law, and these rascals know it'.[23] This was similarly voiced in the *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* in 1851 in response to a prize-fight at Penydarren. It was observed that 'we grieve to think that such an exhibition should have met the eyes of the peaceful population in returning home from their respective churches'.[24] In spite of the apparent desire by prize-fighters to inflict such damage on each other, the attraction of prize-fighting, as Loic Wacquant points out, was 'an agonistic challenge and strict obedience to an all-embracing ascetic life plan, a highly effective procedure for publically establishing one's fortitude and valour'.[25] Erving Goffman also states that 'the voluntary taking of serious chances is a means for the maintenance and acquisition of character'.[26] Therefore, it could be suggested that prize-fighting 'told the truth' about a person, not only about his public and professional persona as a ring warrior but about his inner worth as a private individual.[27]

This was also a period when Britain was engaged in continuous warfare, including the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15), the Crimean War (1854-6), the Anglo-Zulu war (1879) and

[22] 'Boxing: Tom James vs Patsy Perkins', *South Wales Daily Post*, 12 June 1895, p. 3.
[23] 'Prize Fights: To the Editor of the Times', *The Times*, 12 November 1823, p. 3. Also, see *The Times*, 12 June 1830, p. 5. The newspaper reported that 'the rational and civilised part of the public were equally disgusted at the brutal exhibition of a prize-fight'.
[24] 'A Fight', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 26 July 1851, p. 3.
[25] Wacquant, 'Pugilistic Point of View', 513.
[26] For an interesting insight into this, see Erving Goffman's 'Where the Action is', in his, *Interaction Ritual* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 149–270.
[27] Wacquant, 'Pugilistic Point of View', 513.

the Boer Wars which commenced in 1880 and continued into the early twentieth century.[28] What became apparent during these wars, and thus a concern to the British Army, were apprehensions regarding the health of soldiers, the declining physical capabilities of recruits, and the alleged immoral behaviour of enlisted men.[29] This encouraged the army to enhance its physical training of new recruits and existing soldiers. It was believed that by improving the physical fitness of soldiers it would help improve their mindset and morale, and thereby their fighting capabilities.[30] Along with other sports, such as athletics, swimming and fencing, boxing was to become an important element in the physical training of both recruits and trained soldiers. By the 1870s physical training and regimental sport had become fixtures for all ranks and was seen as a way of improving the fighting capabilities of the men while improving them, a kind of 'military muscularity'.[31] In the first couple of weeks of recruit training, trainees were paired off with another of roughly similar size and build, and were then instructed to enter the ring for one minute of fighting (known as 'milling'). It was a way in which to assess the courage and stamina of the new recruits while also reminding them of the nature of their newly chosen profession.[32] From its beginnings as a form of physical training, boxing quickly became widespread in the army, with tournaments held all year round, and culminating in the establishment in 1893 of the first Army Boxing Championships, held at Aldershot, under the auspices of the gymnastics staff.[33] It was also not uncommon for well-known boxers to be employed by the army to train promising young

[28] For detailed accounts of these wars refer to John Gooch, *The Boer War: Direction, Experience and Image* (London: Frank Cass, 2000); Gunther E. Rothenburg, *The Napoleonic Wars* (London: Cassell, 1999); Paul Kerr and Georgina Pye, *The Crimean War* (London: Boxtree, 1997); Damian P. O'Connor, 'Imperial Strategy and the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879', *Historian*, 68, 2 (2006), 285–304.
[29] J. D. Campbell, 'Training for Sport is Training for War: Sport and the Transformation of the British Army 1860–1914', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 4 (December 2000), 27.
[30] Ibid. Also, see Brian Bond, 'The Late Victorian Army' *History Today*, 2, 9 (1961), 616–24; Richard G. Sipes, 'War, Sports and Aggression: An Empirical Test of Two Rival Theories', *American Anthropologist*, 75, 1 (1973), 64–86.
[31] Campbell, 'Training for Sport is Training for War', 56.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Lt Col. E. A. L. Oldfield, *History of the Army Physical Training Corps* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1995), p. 13. Also, see 'Boxing: Army and Navy Championships', *South Wales Daily News*, 29 September 1897, p. 7.

boxers, as in the case of Sam Baxter, a professional boxer, who was employed by the First Battalion Welsh regiment to train their army boxers in preparation for the Army Boxing Championships in 1894.[34]

There is certainly a connection between the 'manly' traits displayed by prize-fighters, such as courage and aggression, and those required by men during warfare, which may have influenced the army's decision to incorporate boxing into its physical training. Additionally, there are examples of prize-fighters acting courageously when faced with adversity in times of war, notably Dai St John. He was heralded as a national hero as a consequence of his actions at the Battle of Belmont (1899) during the Boer War.[35] St John showed tremendous courage by charging at 2,000 Boers, bayoneting four of them before he was shot dead.[36] The *Lancet* also wrote a proactive article earlier in 1860 regarding the uses of the prize-ring and valorised a soldier named Shaw, who single-handedly killed seven of the enemy in hand-to-hand combat on the killing fields at Waterloo.[37]

The issue of consent also needs to be considered when examining the morality of prize-fighting during the nineteenth century. As Nick Warburton has observed, 'surely, if a person consents to being hit, then, provided the consent is informed consent and freely given, that person is not considered to have been harmed in the appropriate sense when the fists connect'.[38] In agreement, Ken Jones comments that 'to make it an act of violence, the harm or injury suffered must coincide with the infringement of right'.[39] It could then be argued that

[34] 'Army Boxing Champions: Welsh Regiment Candidates Trained by Sam Baxter', *Evening Express*, 27 July 1894, p. 2.
[35] Benita Heiskanen, *The Urban Geography of Boxing. Race, Class and Gender in the Ring* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 97. Also refer to Chapter 3.
[36] 'The Famous Pugilist's Last Stand', *Evening Express*, 20 December 1899, p. 3; 'How Dai St. John Died', *South Wales Daily Post*, 20 December 1899, p. 3; 'The Late Dai St. John', *Weekly Mail*, 21 April 1900, p. 8. Also, see Lawrence Davies, *Mountain Fighters. Lost Tales of Welsh Boxing* (Cardiff: Peerless Press, 2011), pp. 383–428.
[37] 'The Physiology and Uses of the Prize-Ring', *Lancet*, 5 May 1860, p. 448, and cited in P. G. Mewett, 'From Horses to Humans: Species Crossovers in the Origin of Modern Sports Training', *Sports History Review*, 33, 2 (2002), 99.
[38] Warburton, 'Freedom to Box', 58.
[39] Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue', 67.

there was no infringement of a person's well-being during a prize-fight since the participants had consented to participate. Borrowing from the past, this notion of consent was very much respected in Roman law to highlight the 'honour' of the sport, in the principle known as *volenti non fit injuria* (to one who has consented, no harm done).[40] Alternatively, it can be suggested that many fighters were exploited and were the victims of unscrupulous patrons and managers, while certain fighters were forced into the sport through peer pressure and poverty. Jack Anderson has observed that numerous fighters had 'an overwhelming resolve to obtain monetary rewards through prize-fighting... and there was an element of paternalism in the belief that fighters, weak in the sight of money and applause, recklessly compromised their body, integrity and that of their opponents in their quest for monetary rewards'.[41] Some prize-fighters certainly have been ignorant of the level of risk involved in prize-fighting. Ken Jones believes that men were forced into prize-fighting due to social or economic pressures,[42] however he provides little evidence for this argument. No doubt the financial rewards came into the equation, for those men who fell below the poverty line it would have been a way of earning extra money in times of hardship. Poverty would have no doubt been a strong motivating force for men to enter the prize-ring, but it is very debatable whether this could be conceived as a way in which men were 'forced' into the ring!

There is no doubt that many prize-fighters received injuries during their bare-knuckle bouts that led to permanent injury and, in many cases, early death. Fighters would direct blows at the eyes of their opponents and thereby cause swelling which would eventually lead to the eye 'closing', making their opponent 'blind' and unable to defend themselves against punches thrown by their opponent. On severe occasions the eye would fall out of the socket causing immediate blindness. Any potential cure required the prompt

[40] See A. J. E. Jaffey, 'Volenti Non Fit Injuria', *Cambridge Law Journal*, 44, 1 (March 1985), 87–110.
[41] Jack Anderson, *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love* (Oxford: Routledge, 2007), p. 39.
[42] Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue', 67.

repositioning of the eye into its cavity.[43] Blows just below the breast-bone also caused a painful convulsion and reduced the cavity of the thorax thereby causing breathing difficulties which could not be overcome until the spasms in the diaphragm ceased.[44] Moreover, it was possible for pugilists to suffer brain damage. Unfortunately, these were regular occurrences during nineteenth century prize-fights in Wales. This was the case with Edward Collard who died from his injuries two hours after being knocked out by John Thomas during their prize-fight in May 1897 on Penrhys mountain in the Rhondda.[45] The *Cardigan Observer* similarly recorded the death of Samuel Mandry, from the Rhondda Valley, who during a prize-fight in September of the same year 'received a blow in the ribs and fell, striking his head against the post, which proved to be fatal'.[46]

Many fighters suffered from chronic brain damage which is more subtle and only became apparent after a number of years, usually when the boxer had retired. The long-term cumulative effect of repeated blows to the head caused what is now known as *dementia pugilistica*, boxer's dementia or punch-drunk syndrome.[47] Many nineteenth century bare-knuckle fighters fought hundreds of fights throughout their career with short recovery time in between bouts which would have certainly made them susceptible to becoming punch-drunk. However, it is difficult to find evidence of such fighters suffering from *dementia pugilistica*, particularly as neither the words nor the concept 'punch drunk' were used during this period and the danger of cumulative effects of punches to the head would not have been recognised or reported. Indeed, the first recorded case of the 'punch drunk' syndrome in medical literature did not occur until 1928.[48] Medical assistance for prize-fighters who were injured during bouts was infrequent due to the illegal nature of the sport. If fighters did receive

[43] William Rowley, *A Treatise on One Hundred and Eighteen Principle Diseases of the Eyes and Eyelids* (London: s.n., 1790), pp. 178–9.
[44] Capt. John Godfrey, *A Treatise upon the Useful Science of Defence* (London: s.n., 1747), p. 54.
[45] 'Fatal Prize-Fight', *Rhyl Record and Advertiser*, 22 May 1897, p. 8.
[46] 'A Fatal Prize Fight', *Cardigan Observer*, 4 September 1897, p. 2.
[47] Warburton, 'Freedom to Box', 56.
[48] John Welshman, 'Boxing and the Historians', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14, 1 (1997), 200.

medical attention after their bouts it was usually carried out at their homes, at the hands of the local doctor, or their patron's physician, as in the case of Arthur Vaughan who fell unconscious after a prize-fight in September 1895 on Llanwonno mountain (Mountain Ash). He was taken to his home in a cab and a doctor was called, but on arrival the physician could not offer any help and Vaughan never regained consciousness.[49] Kenneth Sheard has commented on the medical issues faced by these prize-fighters, observing that 'the medical knowledge, medical techniques and medical ideologies which existed prior to, and during the nineteenth century did not allow the accurate pin-pointing of the threats to a boxer's health in the way which became possible in the twentieth century'.[50] Due to the lack of understanding between the links to prize-fighting and possible brain damage, it appears that prize-fighting was promoted in a favourable manner. In 1860 The *Lancet* noted how prize-fighters were 'brought into a condition capable of the greatest physical exertion and endurance from their training'.[51] When taking onboard the comments above regarding the medical issues surrounding prize-fighting it should be remembered that by no means did all fighters suffer permanent physical or mental damage from their contests during this period. Many fighters, such as Dan Thomas and Morgan Crowther, remained healthy and lived well into old age. Thomas died, aged 82, while Crowther even survived a knife attack from an old foe in his later years and eventually died when aged 63.[52]

When looking at the merits of prize-fighting, the differences between street-fighting and prize-fighting should naturally be examined. Free-style fighting on the street had no clear boundaries regarding location, duration, means, and participants.[53] Yet, in contrast, prize-

[49] 'Man Killed on Llanwonno Mountain', *Evening Express*, 19 September 1895, p. 3.
[50] Kenneth G. Sheard, 'Brutal and Degrading': The Medical Profession and Boxing, 1838–1984', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 15, 3 (December 1998), 76.
[51] 'The Physiology and uses of the Prize-Ring', 1860, p. 448, and cited in Mewett, 'From Horses to Humans', 99.
[52] 'Death of Dan Pontypridd', *South Wales Daily Post*, 14 July 1910, p. 5; http://boxrec.com/boxer/354401 – Morgan Crowther [Accessed 5 December 2015]. Also refer to 'Stabbed Ex-Pugilist Mr Morgan Crowther Gives Evidence', *Cardiff Times*, 25 February 1905, p. 6.
[53] Wacquant, 'Pugilistic Point of View', 498.

fighting was governed by rules, upheld by a neutral authority (such as the referee), who would stop the use of illegal moves and underhand tactics in order to curtail the scope and degree of violence. Wacquant goes as far as to suggest that there are 'grounds for arguing that boxing does not fuel but rather depresses the level of interpersonal and public violence by channelling aggressive impulses within an organised, collective framework that rigidly regulates its display and endows it with structure, purpose and meaning'.[54] There is certainly evidence to suggest that using prize-fighting as a means by which to settle disputes helped to remove violent confrontations from public places into more remote areas, such as the mountains, where disputes could be resolved in a civilised manner. In the early 1900s David John Jones and William Phillips, both from Treorchy, had engaged in a quarrel at a local pub. Rather than cause a violent scene in public they arranged a prize-fight at a secluded spot and wagered 10s. each on the outcome.[55] It could be argued that prize-fighting had other benefits. Certainly, while nineteenth century social and economic circumstances limited the choices available to the working class, prize-fighting became an important form of cultural expression.[56] For some men prize-fighting did more than just help to put food on the table as it helped many financially. Indeed, exceptionally good fighters made a lot of money through the sport which, in turn, improved their level of respectability. Dan Thomas (Pontypridd) and Morgan Crowther (Newport) are both fine examples of men who improved their standard of living by virtue of participating in prize-fighting.[57] It did not just teach a person how to defend themselves, but instilled discipline and self-respect. Moreover, the training undertaken

[54] Ibid., 498.
[55] 'A Treorchy Prize-Fight', *Evening Express*, 15 July 1902, p. 3. For another example see 'Prize-Fight at Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 9 May 1899, p 7.
[56] Peter Donnelly, 'On Boxing: Notes on the Past, Present and Future of a Sport in Transition', *Current Psychology: Research and Reviews*, 7, 4 (Winter, 1988–89), 343.
[57] See Chapter One.

certainly increased their general level of fitness,[58] but was not limited to prize-fighters alone as many men learned the art of boxing as a basic form of self-defence.

With the introduction of the Queensberry Rules the aim of the boxing match was not necessarily to win by inflicting as much damage on an opponent in order to render them unconscious, but to win by scoring more points than your opponent. Hurting an opponent may have resulted from trying to score points but it was not a criterion for a point being scored.[59] Also, prize-fighting was not the only sport that caused injury and death, and was certainly not the most dangerous sport of the period. Therefore, the harmful intent of other non-combat sports should not be overlooked. Nigel Warburton points out that 'despite its violent intentions, boxing does not put its participants at greater risk than many other socially acceptable activities'.[60] Cricket was as violent as prize-fighting as the aim of the sport was to bowl a heavy cork ball at three wooden stumps. If the ball, which was often bowled at a high speed, was to hit the opponent and hurt them then this was seen as nothing more than a hazard of the game. This game too had its casualties. In 1916 Harvey Thomas, a Swansea cricketer, died from the effects of a blow to the head.[61] There is further evidence to suggest that football and rugby players often caused serious injury to their opponents, and was no different to that of prize-fighting. Such was the case of James Harkins (aged 32) who died as a result of another footballer falling, knee first, onto him, resulting in an abscess that led to his death.[62] Of course, boxing may be unique from other sports in that a fighter intentionally sets out to harm their opponent in order to win the contest. Yet it is not clear how an aggressive tackle to stop a try in rugby football is significantly different in intention from a boxer punching an opponent to score points.[63]

[58] See Chapter Four.
[59] Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue', 66.
[60] Warburton, 'Freedom to Box', 58. Also, see Sheard, 'Brutal and Degrading', 77.
[61] *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder,* 14 October 1916, p. 8.
[62] 'Killed in the Football Field', *South Wales Daily News*, 4 January 1888, p. 3.
[63] Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue', 67.

Issues surrounding the violence and health implications linked to prize-fighting have been discussed, especially the question regarding the legality of prize-fighting and whether it should be banned. However, the legal position of the sport is a difficult subject to tackle due to the inconsistent and often unclear rulings of the magistrates. It has already been inferred that during the nineteenth century prize-fighting was deemed illegal by magistrates and police throughout the British Isles. What needs to be considered is why the courts were so anxious to outlaw it? To enforce their legal judgments and protect communities against the frequent use of violence, the Offences against the Person Act 1861 was introduced. This made wounding or actual bodily harm to a person a criminal offence. The Act no doubt reflected the changing attitudes towards violence as it recognised that fistic aggression was no longer to be tolerated in a civilised society. This measure not only allowed the authorities to become more involved in the prosecution of those involved in less serious acts of violence but also reformed capital punishment, reducing the number of crimes that could be punishable by death.[64] All that was required for 'actual bodily harm' was some degree of pain or discomfort, and grievous bodily harm, which was classed as causing 'really serious harm', could be satisfied by a broken nose.[65] What was clearly an objective of the prize-fighter was to punch their opponent and thereby inflict bodily harm. By referring to the 1861 Act magistrates could insist that by throwing punches fighters would no doubt inflict injury and, for that reason, all fighters had the intention of causing grievous bodily harm.[66] The fact that the intention of many a prize-fighter was to win the fight for the sake of their reputation, as

[64] For detailed information on the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, see A. Ashworth, *Principles of Criminal Law* (5th edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); L. Farmer, *Making the Modern Criminal Law: Civil Law and Criminalisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
[65] For detailed information regarding the 1861 Act see J. Gardner, 'Rationality and the Rule of Law in Offences against the Person', *Cambridge Law Journal*, 53, 3 (November 1994), 502–23; Legislating the Criminal Code: Offences Against the Person and General Principles, Law Commission Consultation Paper No 122, para. 7. 8 (London, HMSO, 1992), see also: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271986/2370.pdf [Accessed 2 December 2015].
[66] Michael Gunn and David Ormerod, 'Despite the Law: Prize-Fighting and Professional Boxing', in Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn (eds), *Law and Sport in Contemporary Society* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 27.

well as financial rewards, and not to inflict serious damage on their opponent was deemed immaterial.

Writing nearly a century after the introduction of the Act, Edith Summerskill was quite clear about the importance of the 'Offences Against the Person Act 1861' in relation to prize-fighting, stating that this ruling made

> every prize-fight unlawful and each active participant guilty of assault. While an individual could give permission to a surgeon to perform an operation, according to the letter of the law in 1882, he could not give permission for an assault upon himself for the entertainment of others.[67]

There are many court cases which provide evidence that the courts did view consent seriously. They imposed limits on the bodily harm that could be inflicted and thereby regulated the degree of injury which could legally be inflicted during a prize-fight, even in cases where fighters, abided by the Queensberry Rules, wore padded gloves.[68] One such example was the 1897 case brought against two well-known Welsh fighters David James and Benjamin Lloyd. The fighters used four-ounce gloves and fought under the Queensberry Rules. However, the stipendiary argued that the blows were 'exceedingly hard… [and] it was apparent that James was in a weaker state and was so exhausted that he was absolutely a defenceless man and had no chance at all'.[69]

Yet the issue of consent in criminal law was complex as courts had to determine the level of harm. For this reason magistrates became anxious to clarify the difference between men participating in sparring and fighters participating in prize-fights. There was no doubt by magistrates that prize-fighting was an illegal activity but, in many cases, they considered a sparring match to be legal, as they believed there to be no blow struck in anger or intended to

[67] Edith Summerskill, *The Ignoble Art* (London: W. Heinemann, 1956), p. 45.
[68] Neil Parpworth, 'Boxing and Prize-Fighting: The Indistinguishable Distinguished', *Sport and the Law Journal*, 2 (1994), 5.
[69] 'A Rhondda Prize-Fight', *Evening Express*, 29 March 1897, p. 3. The Queensberry Rules stated that fighters should wear boxing gloves of a 'fair size' in order to protect the fighter's hands and also reduce the amount of damage inflicted on an opponent. Nevertheless, the introduction of boxing gloves actually allowed fighters to throw harder punches at their opponents with less risk of injury to their hands.

do corporal hurt.[70] Basically, they characterised the difference between a sparring match and a prize-fight on the basis of the likelihood of one of the combatants becoming seriously injured. This was exemplified in the *Cardiff Times* in 1894 when reporting on a case against two Welsh prize-fighters, the journalist commented that

> the two men were fighting with bare-knuckles and hitting each other as hard as they could... The stipendiary said a fight of this sort was undoubtedly illegal, for it was a pitched battle, and not a mere exercise in sparring. It was quite clear that Bennett and Evans were having it out until one had the mastery. The law did not permit it and they must put a stop to such fights.[71]

It was not an easy task for magistrates to interpret as the difference between sparring and prize-fighting was far from clear. Additionally, in distinguishing between the unlawful prize-fight and the lawful sparring match on the basis of risk of serious injury, the courts were, in reality, interested in a wider range of factors. These included whether payment was made to the fighters, if the rules were observed and gloves worn, what degree of regulation existed, and whether there was a danger of public disorder.[72] In the *Law Quarterly Review* in 1890 Edward Manson stated that the legality of a prize-fight could be answered by asking the following: 'is it a breach of the peace, and or does it endanger life or health? If it does either of these it is unlawful and no consent can make it otherwise'.[73] In his treatise *Pleas of the Crown*, Sir Edward East also reviewed the legal repercussions of fatal accidents in sport. He observed that

> If death ensues from such as are innocent and allowable, the case will fall within the rule of excusable homicide; but if the sport be unlawful in itself, or productive of danger, riot or disorder from the occasion, so as to

[70] See Chapter Four.
[71] 'Pontypridd Prize Fight. Defendants Convicted', *Cardiff Times*, 14 April 1894, p. 5. Also refer to 'Judge Park and the Fancy', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 25 July 1830, p. 1.
[72] Gunn and Ormerod, 'Despite the Law', 25.
[73] E. Manson, 'Notes on Prize-Fighting', *Law Quarterly Review*, 6 (1890), 110.

> endanger peace, and death ensues; the party killing is guilty of manslaughter.[74]

So far, this chapter has addressed the moral, ethical and legal concerns surrounding prize-fighting, but to fully evaluate the sport other social issues need to be appraised. Questions can be raised concerning racial prejudice in the sport, either as participants or onlookers, while the implications of female pugilism on masculine and feminine behaviour can also be examined. Finally, the significance regarding the development of 'Muscular Christianity' in Victorian Britain, in particular Wales, can be explored to assess whether the growing relationship between Christianity and sport had any influence on prize-fighting during this period. Racism in sport certainly existed in the nineteenth century, and the contested spaces between people of different ethnic and cultural groups repeatedly led to tension and ultimately conflict.[75] Indeed, it operated at both local and national levels, via enforced exclusion and stigmatization,[76] which not only determined individuals and group status in the community but enforced social distinctions, especially in sporting activities including prize-fighting.[77] One example of the level of racist abuse faced by black prize-fighters in America and Britain can be demonstrated in the career of Peter Jackson. He was an Australian boxer known as the 'Black Prince', but had been offered lucrative inducements to fight in America and Britain, and offered the opportunity to fight John L. Sullivan, the World Heavyweight champion (1882–92). However, it was to be a period of triumph as well

[74] Edward East, *A Treatise of Pleas of the Crown* (London, s.n., 1803), and cited in Anderson, *Legality of Boxing*, p. 38. Also, see Paul Roberts, 'Consent to injury: how far can you go?', *Law Quarterly Review*, 113 (1997), 27–35.
[75] Robert Park, 'The Nature of Race Relations' in Martin Bulmer and John Solomos (eds), *Racism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 332.
[76] Faye V. Harrison, 'The Persistent Power of "Race" in the Cultural and Political Economy of Racism', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995), 48. Also, see Eric. Dunning, 'Dynamics of Racial Stratification: Some Preliminary Observations', *Race*, 13, 4 (1972), 416; Eugenia Shanklin, *Anthropology and Race* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1994), p. 105; Park, 'Nature of Race Relations', p. 332.
[77] Heiskanen, *Urban Geography of Boxing*, 89. Links between racism and sport has received much attention. For a critical examination, see Ben Carrington and Ian McDonald (eds), *Race, Sport and British Identity* (London: Routledge, 2001); Ben Carrington, *Race, Representation and the Sporting Body* (London: Goldsmith's College, 2002); Grant Jarvie (ed.), *Sport, Racism and Ethnicity* (London: Falmer, 1991).

as personal frustrations and disillusionments.[78] Sullivan refused to fight Jackson and his successor to the title, James J. Corbett (1892–7) also avoided fighting Jackson.[79] Corbett's conqueror, Bob Fitzsimmons, (1897) similarly refused to enter the ring against the black boxer. Jackson was therefore never given the opportunity to fight for the world title due to racial discrimination.[80] A further example of this discrimination was conveyed by the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* in 1891 when it reported that in the proposed fight between Jack Dempsey and Bob Fitzsimmons 'a colour line has been drawn. Admissions have been refused to Peter Jackson, the pugilist Negro and several others'.[81]

Jackson nevertheless fought on a number of occasions in England, the most memorable being his 1892 rematch with Frank Slavin. Prior to the fight, Slavin proudly stated on several occasions that he would never let a black man beat him.[82] The fight took place at London's National Sporting Club on 30 May 1892 and it lived up to its expectations as it was a bloody encounter with Jackson emerging victorious in the tenth round. Chroniclers of the sport have repeatedly ranked it as one of the most viciously contested fights ever held in England.[83] Debatably, this fight was not just about sport or prize-fighting, but about racial prejudice and, in this specific case, Slavin's determination to protect white supremacy. What is more, due to his ability as a prize-fighter, Jackson was able to command respect and widen

[78] David K. Wiggins, 'Peter Jackson and the Elusive Heavyweight Championship: A Black Athlete's Struggle against the Late Nineteenth Century Color-Line', *Journal of Sport History*, 12, 2 (1985), 143.
[79] Jackson and Corbett did fight each other in Las Vegas in 1891 before Corbett became World Champion. The fight lasted 61 rounds and ended in a draw. For details, see P. Arnold, *History of Boxing* (London: Hamlyn, 1985), p. 39.
[80] For further examination regarding the status of black people in the nineteenth century, see Kenneth Little, *Negros in Britain: A Study of Racial Relations in English Society* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972); Douglas A. Lorimar, *Colour, Class, and the Victorians: English Attitudes to the Negro in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1978); Edward Beasley, *The Victorian Reinvention of Race* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
[81] 'Negroes Boycotted', *Sheffield Dailey Telegraph*, 14 January 1891, p. 5.
[82] For examples of Slavin's racism refer to 'Slavin Anxious for an Engagement', *South Wales Echo*, 13 March 1895, p. 3.
[83] Wiggins, 'Peter Jackson and the Elusive Heavyweight Championship', 160. Also refer to G. Corri, *Fifty Years in the Ring* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933), pp. 68–74; J. G. B. Lynch, *Knuckles and Gloves* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1923), pp. 121–6; H. Sayers, *Fights Forgotten: A History of some of the Chief English and American Prize Fights Since the Year 1788* (London: T. Werner Laurie, 1909), pp. 199–205.

his social circle, and importantly he would have acquired significant financial rewards in the company of such 'white' acquaintances.[84]

At a time when most images of black men and women portrayed a subservient race, images such as those of a victorious Jackson were remarkable. He appeared independent, self-reliant, and manly, which not only rendered him on a par with white men but also challenged their racist views. He was seen as a threat to both white hegemonic masculinity and to British superiority and the dominant racist ideology.[85]As early as September 1811 *The Times* reported that the 'Black's prowess was regarded… with a jealousy which excited considerable national prejudice against him' from the fear that 'the laurels of a British Champion were in danger of being wrested from him by a Baltimore man of colour'.[86] As such, there became a growing intolerance to interracial contests which brought about the introduction of the 'colour bar' and the suppression of black prize-fighters from competing for British prize-fighting titles. This lasted until the end of World War Two.[87] Due to the perception that the success of black fighters threatened white masculinity and dominance, it became seen as incumbent that champions should be 'white'. Indeed, any bouts arranged between 'Black' and 'White' prize-fighters were often based on the premise that the white fighter should win.[88] What this suggests is that decisions were probably made by patrons regarding who their fighter could and could not fight, rendering it outside of the fighter's control as to who they fought, regardless of the colouring of their skin. One example was

[84] Peter Jackson beat Jem Smith in a gloved fight at the Pelican Club in 1889, the winner receiving a sum of £1,000. See 'The Great Glove Fight', *Western Daily Press*, 12 November 1889, p 7.
[85] Ruti Ungar, 'The Boxing Discourse in Late Georgian England: A Study in Civic Humanism, Gender, Class and Race', University of Berlin, PhD thesis, 2010, p. 154
[86] *The Times*, 30 September 1811, and also cited in Ungar, 'Boxing Discourse in Late Georgian England', p. 148.
[87] For a detailed study of the 'colour bar' see Ruti Ungar and Michael Berkowitz, 'Introduction', in their *Fighting Back? Jewish and Black Boxers in Britain* (London: University College London Press, 2007). pp. 3–16.
[88] Ungar, 'Boxing Discourse in Late Georgian England', p. 148. Also, see Dennis Brailsford, 'Nationality, Race and Prejudice in Early Pugilism', in J. A. Mangan (ed.), *Proceedings of the XI History of Sport and Physical Education (HISPA) International Congress*, 3 (Glasgow: Educational Department, Jordanhill College of Education, 1985), 17–23.

William Muldoon, Sullivan's manager, who told boxing historian Nat Fleischer many years later that he had kept Sullivan from making a match with Jackson because he wanted to 'save Sullivan the humiliation of being defeated by a Negro'.[89]

During the nineteenth century racial discrimination was also prevalent in Welsh communities. Industrialisation had a significant effect on the population and cultural diversity of the country as a result of large numbers of migrants being drawn to Wales in search of work.[90] Due to this increase in immigration into Wales many towns developed into cosmopolitan, multicultural communities. In Cardiff the black population settled in Butetown. This was divided into the Bay (Tiger Bay), the residential area, and the docks, with Bute Street becoming the heart of the black district, and providing a home for over forty-five different nationalities.[91] Waves of immigration brought new challenges for particular areas of Wales, as economic difficulties led to certain ethnic groups being cited as the cause of economic and social problems, leading to increasing racial prejudice and confrontation.[92] Reports of such racially induced altercations often appeared in regional newspapers. The *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* noted in August 1869 that

> A serious riot took place late on Sunday night at Pontlottyn, a suburb of Rhymney, between the Welsh and the Irish labourers. There has always been an antipathy between the Irish and the Welsh, and this feeling has been increased by the large immigration of Irish labourers into the Dowlais and Rhymney works. These are employed in large numbers, and as they work for less wages than other labourers, the feeling of hostility towards them is increased.[93]

[89] Letter from William Muldoon to Nat Fleischer, 11 April 1931. Private collection of Bill Schutte, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, and cited in Wiggins, 'Peter Jackson and the Elusive Heavyweight Championship', 155. Also, see Chapter Six which examines how the news coverage of prize-fights during the early years of the twentieth century was also racially skewed.

[90] For a detailed discussion regarding the rise of immigration into Wales due to the effects of industrialisation, refer to Chapter One.

[91] For further examination of this topic see M. Sherwood, 'Racism and Resistance: Cardiff in the 1930s and 1940s', *Llafur: Journal of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History*, 5, 4 (1972), 51–70; Charlotte Williams, Neil Evans, and Paul O'Leary (eds), *A Tolerant Nation? Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003).

[92] John Rex, 'The Concept of Race in Sociological Theory', in Sami Zubaida (ed.) *Race and Racialism* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970), p. 47.

[93] 'Riots at Pontlottyn between Irish and Welsh', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 28 August 1869, p. 7. Also refer to 'Anti-Irish Riots in Wales', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 10 July 1882, p. 3; 'The Welsh-Irish Riots', *Cambrian*, 21 July 1882, p. 5.

As well as functioning as an outlet for hostile feelings, racial tensions within Wales fostered social cohesiveness and group unity.[94] Many immigrants, such as the Irish, had to endure appalling living conditions. They were provided with accommodation in the cheapest possible quarters as lodgers, often in houses that were being built with no regard for the needs, health or hygiene of their occupants, and were being let at inflated rents.[95] This led to widespread and severe overcrowding and disease amongst immigrant groups,[96] leaving them wallowing at the lower end of the social scale. As Paul O'Leary has observed the status of the Irish at this time was 'depressing'. He adds that their status was 'directly related to their occupations and it was reported that their work was usually of the roughest, coarsest and most repulsive description, and requiring the least skill and practice'. In this context the Irish were 'relegated to the bottom of the social scale, on a level with the poorest of the indigenous population'.[97] However, the urbanisation and consequent 'ghettoisation' of migrants and their incorporation into a 'caste-like' system of urban racial stratification facilitated more effective communication, perception of common interests and organisation, and led to the transformation of a subordinate 'class in itself' into a 'class for itself'.[98] In such a configuration everybody had to 'choose' an identity: either inside or outside a group, and such affiliations carried momentous practical, theoretical, and political implications.[99] As a result some migrants came to recognise that success as a prize-fighter symbolised not only individual achievement, but also racial and ethnical superiority. As Faye Harrison suggests, 'the increasing importance of ethnicity provided the underlying basis for new immigrants as well as established minorities to deploy ethnic strategies in their competition for political and

[94] Robert Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700–1850* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 84.
[95] W. R. Lambert, 'Drink and Work-Discipline in Industrial South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 7, 3 (June 1975), 290.
[96] Paul O'Leary, *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), p. 51.
[97] Ibid., p. 38.
[98] Dunning, 'Dynamics of Racial Stratification', 417.
[99] Heiskanen, *Urban Geography of Boxing*, p. 90.

economical advancement and in their rise above stigmatised forms of racial alterity'.[100] For this reason, racial tensions continued in sporting activities in Wales, especially in prize-fighting, where many fights occurred between Welshmen and those of different ethnic origin living in the area. The fights were often hard-fought contests and backed by large numbers of supporters from both sides. Both fighters would have been desperate to win not only for their own pride, but to gain respect for their ethnic communities. One particular prize-fight between Welshman, Will Charles, and Irishman, Stephen Trainer, at Monmouth drew a crowd of five thousand people. Before commencing the fight in June 1832 the Irishman tied his colours (the Shamrock) to the stake and the Welshman sported the blue-bird's eye.[101] In another fight between Welshman, John Jones, and Irishman, Peter Burns, which Jones went on to win in June 1887, it was reported in the *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough* that the Irish supporters were 'much annoyed at Burns' defeat by a Welshman'.[102] On another occasion, in 1833, during a fight between Michael Murphy and Edward Thompson, the ring was broken several times by the assembled 'Irish mob', many of whom were armed with sticks which they 'used with great violence' to deal with their fighter's opponent and to ensure that their hero did not lose.[103]

Prize-fighting became a way in which migrants could counteract local hostilities, while improving their circumstances. The most famous and celebrated Jewish prize-fighter was Daniel Mendoza (1765–1836). Born in Aldgate, East London, to a poor Sephardic family, he was the first Jewish boxer to win national acclaim. During his fighting career he received the patronage of the Prince of Wales and taught many of London's aristocracy how to box. After his retirement from the prize-ring he earned a living by giving boxing

[100] Harrison, 'Persistent Power of Race', 58.
[101] 'Fight between Charles, the Welsh Champion, and Trainer', *Bristol Mercury*, 9 June 1832, p. 3.
[102] 'Prize-Fight in Wales', *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough*, 3 January 1887, p. 3.
[103] Details are provided in Jack Anderson, 'Pugilistic Prosecutions: Prize Fighting and the Courts in Nineteenth Century Britain', *Sports Historian*, 21, 2, (2001), 43.

exhibitions alongside his regular employment as innkeeper.[104] Pierce Egan described the acclaim that Mendoza received, commenting that his name 'resounded from one part of the kingdom to the other; and the fame of this once-celebrated pugilist was the theme of universal panegyric'.[105] John L. Sullivan also visited Cardiff in January 1888.[106] This would have stimulated Irish interest as he was not only welcomed as a celebrity but received a salary of £600 a week to entertain the public with sparring exhibitions.[107] This would have no doubt enticed other Irish migrants to participate in prize-fighting after witnessing Sullivan's rise to fame. By pursuing a career in prize-fighting it was possible for migrants to not only gain the respect of their own ethnic community but that of their Welsh hosts who were admirers of the sport. One example was John O'Brien (1867–1911)**,** born in Newtown, Cardiff, to a father from Cork and a mother from Dublin. O'Brien became well-known for his participation in bare-knuckle prize-fighting and his fighting skills caught the attention of the renowned boxing booth owner, Bill Samuels which, as a result, steered O'Brien into fighting in a number of boxing booth bouts.[108] He then followed a career as a professional boxer and defeated Dai St John for the Heavyweight Championship of Wales in April 1894. This success was followed in October of that year with a bout against Frank Craig, the middleweight champion of America.[109] As a result of his activities, O'Brien became well respected by the Irish migrant population as well as others in Cardiff and further afield.

As nineteenth century sport was the 'natural' province of males, there was no acceptable place for women, and yet they were involved in boxing either as participants or as

[104] Ungar, 'Boxing Discourse in Late Georgian England', p. 138.
[105] Egan, *Boxiana,* 1, p. 255, and cited in Ungar, 'Boxing Discourse in Late Georgian England', p. 138.
[106] 'John L. Sullivan in Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 4 January 1888, p. 3. For a short synopsis of Sullivan's career see Gilbert Odd, *The Hamlyn Encyclopaedia of Boxing* (London: Hamlyn, 1983), p. 125.
[107] *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 14 December 1887, p. 4. For an example of Sullivan's sparring exhibitions in Britain see 'The Prince of Wales at a Boxing Display', *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 10 December 1887, p. 2.
[108] Gareth Jones, *The Boxers of Wales: Cardiff* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2009), p. 87. Further information can be found in this study regarding O'Brien's boxing booth opponents and the outcomes of the fights.
[109] 'Boxing: Fight for the Championship of Wales', *Evening Express*, 24 April 1894, p. 3. Also, see 'Welsh Boxers in London' *Western Mail*, 9 October 1894, p. 6.

witnesses.[110] This was in contrast to the accepted Victorian ideal of the family as a unifying feature of nineteenth century bourgeois ideology, whereby the woman was viewed as the family member whose moral influence should be impeccable. As Jennifer Hargreaves suggests it was 'from the "saintly mother" in the home that children first learned about the sexual division of labour and associated attitudes of obedience, hard work, honesty and loyalty'.[111] The legitimate use of the female body was redefined to symbolise a more active, yet nevertheless still subordinate, role when compared to men,[112] as moral respectability and domesticity were seen as important ideologies of feminine behaviour. The domestic role was thereby seen as pivotal and one in which women should be seen to be supportive wives, dutiful daughters and caring mothers.[113]

Due to the subordinate role assumed by most women there seems to be some debate among historians regarding the level of female participation in recreational activities in Britain during the nineteenth century. Robert Malcolmson suggests that women were 'largely shut out of recreational activities at local festivals', yet Shirley Reekie indicates this somewhat overstates the case. She suggests that at fairs and festivals, as well as other occasions, young women and girls and women were 'involved in foot-races and played ball games such as cricket, stoolball, trap-and-ball, handball, and "folk" football'.[114] In agreement, Catriona Parratt has argued that women were visible and vital participants in popular recreational culture. Indeed, she has noted that this 'allowed women a fair degree of license with respect

[110] Roberta J. Park, 'Sport, Gender and Society in a Transatlantic Victorian Perspective', in James Anthony Mangan and Roberta J. Park (eds), *From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism: Sport and the Socialisation of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras* (London: Frank Cass, 1987), pp. 58–9.
[111] Jennifer A. Hargreaves, 'Victorian Familism and the Formative Years of Female Sport', in Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern (eds), *Nature, Culture and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 131.
[112] Hargreaves, 'Victorian Familism and the Formative Years of Female Sport', p. 130.
[113] Bodleian Library, *Women and Victorian Values, 1837–1910: Advice Books, Manuals, and Journals for Women* (Marlborough: Adam Matthew, 1996), p. 1.
[114] Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society*, p. 96; Shirley Reekie, 'A History of Sport and Recreation for Women in Great Britain, 1700–1850', Ohio State University, PhD thesis, 1982, 33–95, and cited in Catriona M. Parratt, *More than Mere Amusement: Working-Class Women's Leisure in England, 1750–1914* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2001), p. 31.

to the forms their amusement took and the manner in which they took them'. Women expected to be able to enjoy these public holidays and seasonal breaks, particularly the accompanying fairs.[115] Adding to this, there is evidence available that leaves little doubt that women were actively involved in prize-fighting during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One example was reported in the *The Times* in March 1807 which observed that there were

> several fights amongst the lower orders on Sunday morning near Hornsey Wood, but the one which afforded the most diversion was between two women. The opponents were Betty Dyson, a vendor of sprats, and Mary Mahony, a market woman. These Amazons fought in regular order upwards of forty minutes until they were both hideously disfigured by hard blows. Betty was once completely blind but the lancet restored her sight and Mary was, at length, obliged to resign to her the palm of victory. The contest was for five guineas.[116]

Another account in the *Dublin Evening Post* over half a century later in 1868 explained that Mary Callaghan was sentenced to twenty-one days in prison for her part in a prize-fight on the banks of the River Severn, near Shrewsbury.[117] It was further reported that the large crowd in attendance formed 'the ring' and both women were supported by seconds,[118] which suggests that prize-fights involving women were no different to those involving men and were conducted under the same principles. The most famous woman fighter of the eighteenth century had been Elizabeth Stokes who was born in London around 1700. Surviving documents provide few details about her life and the exact details of her childhood and family remain a mystery, but she appears to have come from a working-class English household. Stokes was originally known as Elizabeth Wilkinson before marrying

[115] Parratt, *More than Mere Amusement*, p. 42.
[116] *The Times*, 24 March 1807. Cited in 'The History of Female Bare-Knuckle Fist Fighting in Britain', http://fscclub.com/history/knuckle-e.shtml.
[117] 'Female Prize Fighters', *Dublin Evening Post*, 10 March 1868, p. 3. For further evidence of female prize-fighters see 'Female Pugilists', *Bideford Weekly Gazette and Devon and Cornwall Advertiser*, 9 March 1869, p. 3; 'The Female Prize Fighters', *Gloucester Citizen*, 8 July 1882, p. 3; 'Female Pugilists', *South Wales Echo*, 7 January 1887, p. 2; 'Female Pugilists', *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 12 October 1897, p. 2. For a further detailed study of women's prize-fighting refer to Kassia Boddy, *Boxing: A Cultural History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), pp. 28–30; Bob Mee, *Barefists* (London: Collins Willow, 1998), pp. 6–7.
[118] 'Female Prize Fighters', *Dublin Evening Post*, p. 3.

John Stokes who owned a rival boxing amphitheatre to James Figg on Islington Road, London. After her first documented fight in June 1722[119] her prize-fighting career lasted until approximately 1728. One account of Stokes' pugilistic career was recorded in the *Daily Post* in 1728. It described her response to a challenge from another female prize-fighter, Ann Field of Stoke Newington, whereby she allegedly commented 'as the famous ass-woman of Stoke Newington dares me to fight her for the 10 pounds, I do assure her I shall not fail meeting her for the said sum, and doubt not that blows I shall present her with will be more difficult to digest than any she ever gave her asses'.[120] It is difficult to say how rare an event a prize-fight involving women was, but many fights may have been the result of the high consumption of alcohol.[121] Therefore, drunken and rowdy behaviour of women, as with men, would have no doubt led to disagreements, violent confrontations and, in many cases, a fight to resolve the dispute. One such case was reported in the *South Wales Echo* which provided details of a fight in February 1894 between two women in Bute Street, Cardiff. The reporter noted that the two female participants had a 'few words'. This led to blows and they fell on the ground together. While struggling, Thorne bit O'Brian's nose.[122]

It was not only the consumption of alcohol that led to physical confrontations between women. The nineteenth century could be a terrifying place for a deserted wife, widow or single mother. The fear of poverty would have loomed large for many of these women, yet most would have preferred to avoid poor law handouts at all costs, due to both the stigma attached to those in receipt of financial support from local parishes and also to

[119] A copy of an advertisement in a Diurnal Print in June 1722. This gives an account of Elizabeth Wilkinson challenging Hannah Hyfield, of Newgate-Market, and can be found in *The Lady's Monthly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction*…, New Series, 13 (1813), p. 164.
[120] L. A. Jennings, 'Elizabeth Wilkinson Stokes: "Championess of American and of Europe"', http://fightland.vice.com/blog/elizabeth-wilkinson-stokes-championess-of-american-and-of-europe [Accessed 2 April 2019]. Also refer to L. A. Jennings, *She's a Knockout. A History of Women in Fighting Sports* (London: Roman and Littlefield, 2014).
[121] Parratt, *More than Mere Amusement*, 39.
[122] 'Fighting Women', *South Wales Echo*, 28 February 1894, p. 2.

evade the Board of Guardians and the hardships of their workhouse system.[123] For this reason some women may have turned to the financial gains of prize-fighting as a way of earning at least part of their living. Thus, some of the disagreements between women would have not only ended in street fights, like the one mentioned in the above newspaper report, but, in some cases, would have been used as a means by which to stage a prize-fight in the same manner as that of their male counterparts. On 14 March 1868 the *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser* noted that Mary Callaghan and Alice Davies fought in a field near Shrewsbury for a stake of five shillings. They were accompanied by a second and the fight was enjoyed by the crowd until the owner of the field arrived and the threat of police action ensured that his land was cleared.[124]

In Wales, there may not be evidence of any well-known women prize-fighters in the same category as Elizabeth Stokes, yet there are plenty of reports regarding women participating in prize-fights in Welsh towns. For example, in October 1886 the *Cardiff Times* described how a ring was formed at the Butcher's Arms, in Llanishen, Cardiff, and two women fought bare-knuckle for forty-five minutes. [125] The *South Wales Echo*, in 1888, also reported how women took to prize-fighting in order to resolve a dispute.[126] There is further evidence to suggest that women were encouraged to partake in prize-fights in defence of the honour of their husbands. This was observed in the *South Wales Daily News* in July 1881. It noted that when two Welshmen came to blows over a dispute, one of them lacked skills in the 'noble art'. Consequently, his wife took up the challenge and

> being a worthy dame proved herself the better half as she warmly backed up her defeated hero and not content with consoling endearments

[123] Grace Hagen, 'Women and Poverty in South-West Wales, 1834–1914', *Llafur: The Journal of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History*, 7, 3 (1999), 23. For a study of the principles behind the New Poor Law of 1834 and the construction of workhouses see Trevor May, *The Victorian Workhouse* (Oxford: Shire Publications, 1999).
[124] 'A Prize-Fight Between Women', *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 14 March 1868, p. 7.
[125] 'Female Pugilists in the Rhondda', *Cardiff Times*, 16 October 1886, p. 5.
[126] 'Lady Pugilists at Newport', *South Wales Echo*, 10 September 1888, p. 2. Also, see 'Female Pugilists', *South Wales Echo*, 7 January 1887, p. 2; 'Pugilists in Petticoats', *South Wales Daily News*, 16 July 1896, p. 7.

> instantly let fly at Mrs White. As it happened, Madame White was nothing loth, and in a space of a few minutes these two determined specimens of feminine humanity were letting fly with their fists a la Tom Sayers and Heenan. A ring was formed by a crowd of admiring bystanders and the two went at it fast and furious for some twenty minutes when victory crowned the efforts of Mrs Black, and the honour of the male Black was redeemed.[127]

The above evidence leaves no doubt that women participated in bare-knuckle prize-fights during this period, but how were women fighters perceived by society during this period? Debates regarding sex and gender roles during the nineteenth century hinged on the ways in which sexual boundaries might become blurred.[128] Issues surrounding women's prize-fighting extend far beyond the sporting context, touching upon acceptable socio-cultural perceptions of femininity, sexuality and 'proper behaviour'. Although women participated in sport, including prize-fighting, men still dominated it, retaining the aura of a male preserve.[129] Roberta Park believes that male sport was 'frequently used in an effort to establish and give weight to this presumption of superiority'.[130] She has a valid point. Certainly, this was a society with ideal forms of masculine and feminine behaviour which dictated that men should take the authoritative role, leaving very little room for women. It could then be argued that the female fighter did not fit in with the traditional gender stereotyping. Their acts of aggression would have challenged the stereotype of a 'ladylike manner' in sport and physical leisure, by appearing to encroach upon competitive and confrontational behaviour associated with masculinity. Additionally, displaying acts of pugilistic skills, courage, strength and determination through prize-fighting would have undermined the stereotype that women were the weaker sex. It was also a period in which

[127] 'Pugilists at Newbridge. A Pitched Battle', *South Wales Daily News*, 11 July 1881, p. 3.
[128] Ludmilla J. Jordanova, 'Natural Facts: A Historical Perspective on Science and Sexuality', in Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern (eds), *Nature, Culture and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 42–4.
[129] Donald J. Mrozek, "The 'Amazon' and the American 'Lady': Sexual Fears of Women as Athletes", in Mangan and Park (eds), *From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism*, p. 283.
[130] Park, 'Sport, Gender and Society in a Transatlantic Victorian Perspective', 63.

men could be ridiculed if seen to be subservient to their wives.[131] As a result, men feared that they might be challenged or even displaced in the governance of local affairs or in the conduct of their domestic roles.[132] As Donald Mrozek explains there was a presumption that 'the emergence of women to athletic excellence' was a threat to the traditional ordering of society. Such activity represented 'a violation of "true womanhood"… [and]… a challenge to the notion of true feminine behaviour'.[133] Therefore, women prize-fighters were undoubtedly a curiosity for the male supporters of the sport. Yet, at the same time, female aggression was often disparaged. [134] An example of this can be seen in 1882 in the *Freemans Journal* which commented that 'no arena should be closed to women, but it is to be hoped that it does not include "the ring"'. The reporter felt that he had to 'distinctly draw the line, as it is unique in its depravity, and furnishes a sad specimen of womanhood and civilisation'.[135] Arguably, this assessment of women prize-fighters may have been the product of self-protection, whereby it was felt that some men considered themselves vulnerable to female dominance rather than the reverse.

From a religious perspective, prize-fighting was very much opposed due to its barbarity, with clergymen and nonconformist ministers openly denouncing the 'ruffians of the ring'.[136] Reformists were driven by evangelical Christian belief for personal salvation and thus attacked any manifestations relating to people seeking pleasure through brutality. They became hostile to gambling, the drinking of alcohol and a morally degrading sporting life.[137] In Wales, the Rev. W. Jeffery expressed his regret that such a cruel and brutal practice was given encouragement. He added that, prize-fighting would 'bring with it horrors almost

[131] For details of the 'witol' (trans. cuckold), particularly fictional accounts, see Jo Pryke, 'Wales and the Welsh in Gaskell's fiction: Sex, Sorrow and Sense', https://www.lang.nagoya-u.ac.jp/~matsuoka/EG-Pryke-Wales.pdf [Accessed 22 August 2017].
[132] Mrozek, '"Amazon" and the American "Lady"', 284.
[133] Ibid, p. 285
[134] Heiskanen, *Urban Geography of Boxing*, 92.
[135] *Freeman's Journal*, 6 July 1882.
[136] Nat Fleischer, Sam Andre, and Nat Loubet, *A Pictorial History of Boxing* (New York: Bonanza, 1981), p. 9.
[137] Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon, 2004), p. 39.

unspeakable, and could not fail to degrade and demoralise society'.[138] And yet, the combination of male physicality, honour, patriotism, alongside the promotion of physical and spiritual well-being led to the concept of 'Muscular Christianity'. The exact beginning of 'Muscular Christianity' is questionable, but Charles Kingsley (1819–75), the well-known author and clergyman, has consistently been credited with coining the phrase as he encouraged the use of sports and exercise to promote the harmonious development of mind, body, and spirit.[139] 'Muscular Christianity' certainly appeared in an 1857 review of his novel *Two Years Ago* (1857) and again in Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857). The latter described Victorian life through a boy's adventure in public school life and one in which character-building through sport was part of their education. Clearly, it was seen as advantageous to have strong and well-exercised bodies that could be used for 'the advancement of all righteous causes'.[140] It was widely believed that 'Muscular Christianity' instilled many manly virtues, including courage, loyalty and discipline in contrast to depravity and idleness.[141] Thus, there was a potential for spiritual, moral and physical development and this helped to forge a strong link between Christianity and sport.[142] Moreover, as John Lucas has stated, there is 'absolutely no way to adequately understand sport philosophy in the western world without knowing something of nineteenth century Victorian Muscular Christianity'.[143]

The growth of 'Muscular Christianity' alongside the introduction of the Marques of Queensberry Rules during the later years of the nineteenth century was to have an impact on how self-defence and the sport of boxing were viewed. Those who were firm believers in this

[138] 'Another Denunciation of Prize-Fighting', *Cardiff Times*, 31 December 1887, p. 4. Also refer to 'The Revival of Prize-Fighting', *South Wales Daily News,* 23 December 1887, p. 3.
[139] John A. Lucas, 'Victorian Muscular Christianity Prologue to the Olympic Games Philosophy (Part 2)', *Olympic Review* (1976)**,** 459.
[140] Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford* (London: Macmillan, 1861), p. 99.
[141] Nick J. Watson, 'The Development of Muscular Christianity in Victorian Britain and Beyond', *Journal of Religion and Society*, 7, 1 (2005), 7.
[142] Watson, 'Development of Muscular Christianity', 2.
[143] Lucas, 'Victorian Muscular Christianity', 456.

doctrine began to regard self-defence as a beneficial form of exercise. The *South Wales Echo* highlights how this had resonance in Wales when reporting in September 1897 about one unspecified individual who had been abused by a local gang. It observed that he

> first of all initiated his church lads' Brigade into the art of self-defence, and then perfected his own knowledge with a series of bouts with a local bruiser. What subsequently happened he describes as follows: 'I was delivering my parish magazines and one of the biggest roughs commenced swearing at me. I would not hide my light under a bushel so I pitched into him and gave him a bad blackened eye and made his nose bleed all over the footpath. I then took up my hat and stick and went about my business. My vicar assures me it is the best day's work I have ever done in my life'. This is 'Muscular Christianity' with a vengeance.[144]

As 'Muscular Christianity' grew in popularity some of the clergy had no objections to offering their church halls for boxing training, as long as the Queensberry Rules were strictly adhered to. It was, however, a controversial issue that raised public concerns, notably in Aberdare in 1894 with the death of prize-fighter David Rees at the Market Hall in the town. Very strong public feeling was expressed that the deceased had learned to fight at a church boxing club and significantly had been trained by a clergymen.[145] The unfortunate death of Rees and his association with church boxing was further used as a local clarion call for further religious and political opposition. It was claimed that if the church had not allowed the teaching of the so-called 'noble art of self-defence' then Rees may have never taken up the sport and would have not encountered such a tragic death. Elder clergymen were no doubt scandalised at the thought of such behaviour having a close association with the religious congregation, but this was often overlooked as funds for the church were raised by the sale of tickets on the occasion of such bouts.[146]

The practices of the prize-ring during the nineteenth century were no doubt at odds with a society influenced by moral improvement. However, was moral disapproval enough to

[144] 'Muscular Christianity', *South Wales Echo*, 15 September 1897, p. 2.
[145] 'Strong Public Protest', *South Wales Daily News*, 21 May 1894, p. 6. Also refer to *South Wales Daily Post*, 22 May 1894, p. 3.
[146] 'Muscular Christianity', *South Wales Echo*, 17 September 1894, p. 3.

ban the sport? It should be remembered that in industrial Wales people did not follow or participate in sport for moral lessons or with ethical considerations in mind, while the vast majority of prize-fighting adherents saw it as neither improving nor degrading.[147] Moreover, it was arguably a violent society and the very existence of physically violent sports, such as prize-fighting, reflected the fear of, and need for, violence.[148] There is no doubting that prize-fighting bordered on the transgression of legality, especially as the rules of the sport did not appear to guarantee that there would not be serious injuries or deaths. Many pugilists simply felt that they had to fight as a result of their precarious economic position while blinkered to the risks involved in prize-fighting.[149] Likewise, there is no hiding the fact that the sport was racist and misogynistic. The prize-fighting careers of ethnic fighters were often cut short, or held back, due to racial discrimination. Similarly, for women to have comparable opportunities in sport, attitudes towards both their sex and their participation in sporting activities had to change. Certainly, in terms of prize-fighting, such unruly female behaviour was seen as a threat to traditional roles in community life.[150]

It is clear that other physical sports that were similar to prize-fighting in their use of violence were not censured as severely. It was not so much the violent aspect of the sport which made it illegal but, in fact, there were concerns over crowd control. Thus, Sir Michael Foster, an English Judge, appeared well-disposed to friendly exertions of cudgelling, fencing and trials of strength involving wrestling and sparring, commenting that 'these "manly diversions" were not unlawful because they intend to give, strength, skill and activity and may fit people for defence, public as well as personal in time of need'.[151] However, he also opined that prize-fighting and public boxing matches could 'serve no valuable purpose but,

[147] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 133.
[148] Jeffrey T. Sammons, *Beyond the Ring: The Role of Boxing in American Society* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 251.
[149] Woodward, 'Culture of Boxing', 488.
[150] Park, 'Sport, Gender and Society in a Transatlantic Victorian Perspective', 67.
[151] Anderson, *Legality of Boxing*, 41.

on the contrary, encourage a sport of idleness and debauchery'.[152] Then again, despite the controversies concerning prize-fighting, would community life become more civilised with its prohibition? Obviously not. In modern times it has often been suggested that banning boxing would force the sport to go underground as pugilists will fight regardless.[153] It could be that this was the case in nineteenth century Wales. Making the sport illegal may have helped to suppress it in some areas, but it certainly did not eradicate it. From the perspective of social responsibility there is an argument that making prize-fighting illegal simply exacerbated social problems that may have been avoided if the sport had been legalised. Forcing it to the margins of many industrial communities to avoid the interference of the police meant that large crowds could easily become volatile, especially after the consumption of alcohol.[154] Moreover, if the sport had been legalised then such bouts could have been curtailed before life-threatened injuries were sustained.

It is very difficult to judge whether prize-fighters were part of the decision-making process to fight or if they were sufficiently aware of the potential risks. The concept of consent was very flexible, and yet there is little evidence to suggest that men or women were ever fully coerced into the ring. So, it seems reasonable to argue that it was a sport practised by individuals who freely chose to take part and decided to fight for a myriad of different reasons. For some pugilists, prize-fighting helped them financially, while exceptionally good fighters made a substantial amount of money. This, alongside the fame of being a well-known prize-fighter, gave them a degree of respectability in their communities and further afield. Finally, it is worth pointing out that prize-fighting was no doubt a cruel sport that often mirrored the social problems of nineteenth century Welsh society. Yet, it was a beautiful

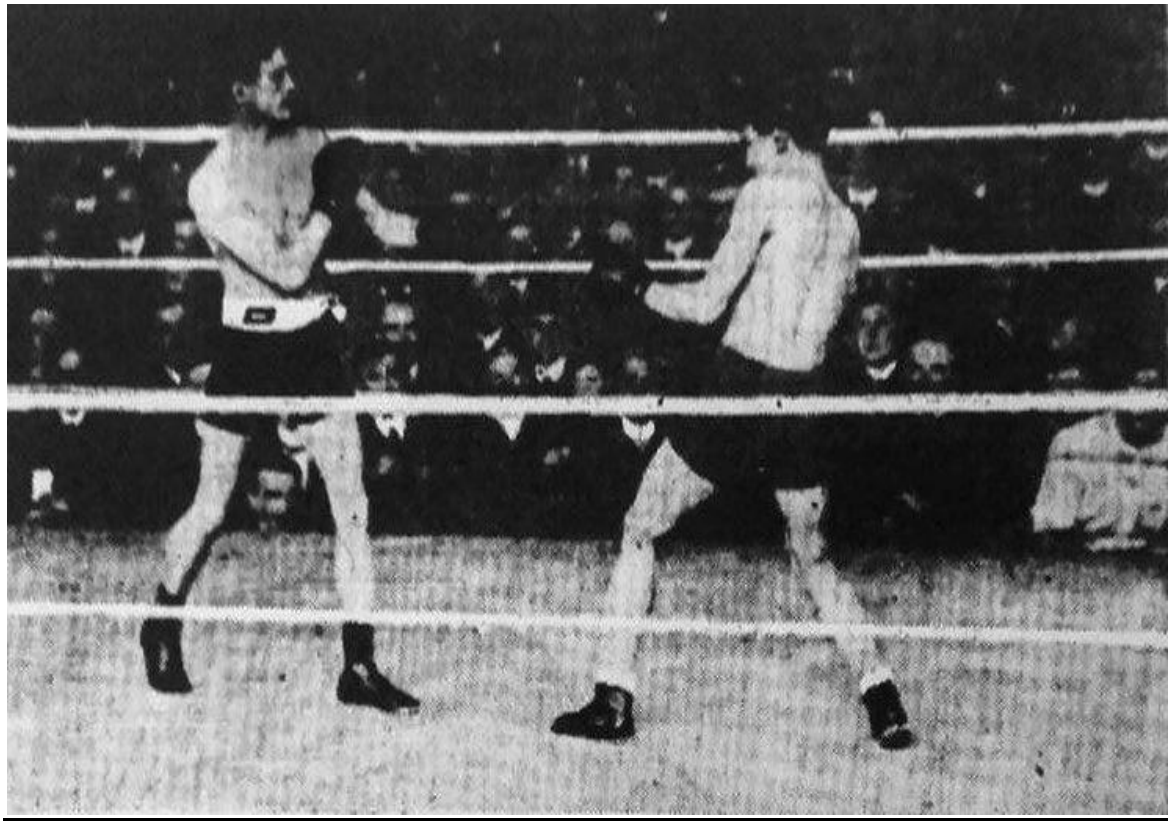
[152] Ibid.
[153] Jones, 'A key Moral Issue', 64.
[154] See Chapter Two.

sport in which participants, through their own consent, could find an avenue of escape from their desperately poor and deprived communities.

CHAPTER SIX

Bare-knuckles to Boxing Gloves: The continued transformation of prize-fighting into a new century.

Fig. 6.1. Freddie Welsh vs. Jim Driscoll.[1]



> Within the womb of bare-knuckle prize-fighting the embryo of modern boxing was taking shape…As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, the technical and institutional foundations of modern boxing had been laid.[2]

As the nineteenth century progressed, undoubtedly there was a move towards eradicating some of the violence and exploitation associated with prize-fighting. Nevertheless, the complexity surrounding the sport due to its illegal status continued to make it difficult for the sport to survive. Other sports, such as cricket and horseracing, were taking tentative steps towards accommodating their practices to a new morality by developing internal regulatory

[1] 'Fred Welsh vs Jim Driscoll', *Tacoma Times*, 5 January 1911, p. 2. The newspaper stated this was the first snapshot of Freddy Welsh and Jim Driscoll posed in the ring at Cardiff, Wales, upon the occasion of their recent fight. Also see, 'Sensational Result of Prize Fight', *Weekly Mail*, 24 December 1910, p. 2.
[2] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 25–8.

mechanisms which could exert some influence. This final section will primarily concern itself with an analysis of the transitional state of prize-fighting heading into the twentieth century and its evolution into modern boxing. The national recognition of the Queensberry Rules and the growth of formal organisations linked to boxing, particularly the National Sporting Club (1891) which eventually became known as the British Boxing Board of Control (c.1929), will be evaluated to assess its impact on the sport during the early decades of the twentieth century, especially in relation to Welsh fighters. Other areas for consideration will include the effect of technological improvements on boxing, including the advancement of the mass entertainment industry and of illegal bare-knuckle fighting that continued to take place in the twentieth century. Finally, attention will be drawn to Wales leading up to, and during the First World War. Indeed, how did global conflict affect boxing during the first quarter of the twentieth century? Specific Welsh boxers will be studied, such as Johnny Basham, Jimmy Wilde and Freddy Welsh, alongside lesser known fighters who fought in the First World War, to identify what impact, if any, the war had on their boxing careers. What follows is a discussion that as prize-fighting entered the twentieth century, alongside the introduction of new rules and regulations, there were a number of contributing factors that helped prize-fighting to alleviate people's preconceptions towards the sport. Moreover, it will question whether particular boxers, during times of war, played a greater role in preparing men for conflict.

The growth of industry continued in Wales into the twentieth century and between 1880 and 1914 it was among the most buoyant growth centres in the world for industrial production, manufacturing and commerce.[3] Due to the expansion of industry, the labour force in the Welsh mines alone amounted to well over a quarter of a million.[4] Yet the economic

[3] Kenneth O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880–1980* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 59. Also, see John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 475.
[4] Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 60.

progress of Wales was to be challenged by a period of social conflict.[5] Immigration into Wales remained high and it has been estimated that between 1901 and 1911 south Wales attracted 129,000 people. For example, according to the 1911 Census, thirty-seven per cent of the people living in Glamorgan were born outside that county; thirteen per cent of these came from other parts of Wales, and about twenty per cent from outside Wales.[6] Welsh life also remained harsh during the early years of the twentieth century. Many of the coalfields had housing shortages as construction failed to keep pace with the influx of immigrants, resulting in severe overcrowding. The Rhondda had one of the worst overcrowding rates in Britain and by 1911 there were 5.8 inhabitants per house.[7] Poverty increased as the income of many workers was insufficient to keep working class families fed and pay the high rental charges.[8] Twenty-three colliery accidents claimed over one hundred lives each in England and Wales between 1850 and 1914, and no less than eleven of these occurred in south Wales, four of them in the Rhondda.[9] Regional newspapers continually reported on smaller pit accidents that were frequently occurring throughout Wales. For example, on 30 March the *Evening Express* reported the death of a collier at the Big Pit Blaenavon stating that

> it appeared that he (the collier) was engaged in ripping top, when a fall of five or six tons of rubbish took place, and a large stone struck him on the back. His arms and ribs were crushed, and death was caused by the ribs entering the lungs – A verdict of 'Accidental death' was returned.[10]

[5] Ibid, p. 74.
[6] Mary McCririck, *Wales in the Twentieth Century* (Denbigh: Gwasg Gee, 1974), p. 10.
[7] Deirdre Beddoe, *Out of the Shadows: A History of Women in Twentieth Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 15.
[8] 'Drink and Poverty', *Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent*, 5 October 1906, p. 3.
[9] John Benson, *British Coalminers in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Longman, 1980), p. 219, and cited in Dot Jones, 'Counting the Cost of Coal: Women's Lives in the Rhondda, 1881–1911', in Angela V. John (ed.), *Our Mothers' Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History, 1830–1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 113. Also, see T. Boyns, 'Work and Death in the South Wales Coalfields, 1874–1914', *Welsh History Review*, 12, 4 (December 1985), 515–37; Michael Asteris, 'The Rise and Decline of the South Wales Coal Exports, 1870–1930', *Welsh History Review*, 13, 1 (June 1986), 24–43.
[10] 'The Monmouthshire Pit Accidents', *Evening Express*, 30 March 1906, p. 4. For further evidence of colliery accidents in Wales see 'Pit Accidents in West Wales', *Cambrian*, 26 April 1907, p. 1; 'Pit Accidents at Blaina', *Evening Express*, 22 September 1906, p. 3; 'Accidents in South Wales: Two Colliers Killed by a Fall of Rock at Penycraig', *Weekly Mail*, 17 October 1903, p. 3.

These pit disasters reached their peak in 1913 with an explosion at the Senghenydd colliery which killed 439 of the 935 men in the pit.[11] Such catastrophes provoked further unrest which acted as spur to trade unionism and working-class protest. By 1900 the Merthyr and Dowlais trades council represented 7,000 workers and sought electoral reform. By April 1902 the Cardiff Trades Council had 4,000 members and ran its own socialist monthly periodical, the *Labour Pioneer*. [12] Numerous strikes occurred throughout Wales, including those which occurred in the autumn and winter of 1900. The *South Wales Daily News* noted in October and December of that year that

> the colliers at Llangennech have turned out on strike, demanding their wages shall be levelled up. It is hoped it will not be a prolonged one as yesterday the strike at the Ferndale, Tylorstown and Bodringallt collieries, employing 6,001 miners was amicably settled.[13]

And that

> the workmen of two collieries are on strike, Craig Afon in Aberavon and Glanmorwg in Llangennech. Some 130 men are idle and have been for the last six weeks. The men are demanding an alteration in the wage list.[14]

One particular strike at Penrhyn quarry highlights the gravity of social unrest at this time as it began in November 1900 and did not end until November 1903.[15]

Frequent strikes together with a depressed economy resulted in rioting across Wales, notably in Tonypandy (1910), Llanelli (1911), and in the Cardiff Seamen's dispute (1911).[16] Reporting on a riot in 1910 the *Merthyr Express* stated that

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[11] 'Explosion. Shocking Scenes at Senghenydd. Bodies Decapitated and Dismembered', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 22 October 1913, p. 6; 'Greatest Disaster Ever Known in South Wales', *Amman Valley Chronicle and East Carmarthen News*, 16 October 1913, p. 5. Also see Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 475.
[12] Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 75. For detailed study of unionism of this period see Richard Hyman, *The Workers Union* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
[13] 'South Wales Coal Trade: Strike at Llangennech', *South Wales Daily News*, 6 October 1900, p. 4.
[14] 'South Wales Coal Trade: Strike in the Western District', *South Wales Daily News*, 12 December 1900, p. 4.
[15] 'Trouble Brewing at Penrhyn Quarry', *Welsh Coast Pioneer*, 2 November 1900, p. 6; 'Quarry Dispute County Committee and the Importation of Troops', *Evening Express*, 15 November 1900, p. 2. Also, see Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 471.
[16] For references to Welsh Riots see Anthony Mor-O'Brien, 'Churchill and the Tonypandy Riots', *Welsh History Review*, 17, 1 (June 1994), 67–99; D. Hopkins, 'The Llanelli Riots, 1911', *Welsh History Review*, 11, 4 (December

> riotous scenes, without parallel in the history of the south Wales coalfield, were enacted on Tuesday night in mid Rhondda and at Aberaman. At both places the mob and the police were in conflict in a fierce struggle for many hours, and charge after charge was made by the constabulary upon the infuriated crowd. In mid Rhondda alone over a hundred casualties were reported… there were 60 casualties in Aberaman and both there and in mid Rhondda many members of the police force were struck by huge missiles, sustaining serious injury.[17]

Observing the hardships, strikes, riots and prosecutions occurring in south Wales at this time, Anthony Mor-O'Brien described the area as a 'great cauldron of industrial confrontation'.[18] In agreement, Kenneth O. Morgan claimed that south Wales was the 'cockpit of industrial conflict'. [19] It therefore seems reasonable to suggest that many of the social problems of the nineteenth century remained as Wales entered the twentieth century, with historians often identifying the years between 1910 and 1914 as a period of great social and political unrest.[20] Similarly, it seems many issues associated with boxing continued into the early years of the twentieth century.

Racial hostilities certainly remained with John Sugden suggesting that boxing was 'struggling to come to terms with a paradox which cut right into the sport's core'.[21] Welsh anti-Semitism and a hostile climate of opinion towards migrants persisted, including the anti-Jewish riots of 1911 in south Wales being well documented.[22] Young men, allegedly singing Welsh hymns, attacked Jewish Shops in Tredegar and other mining towns.[23] Damage to

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1983), 488–515; Campbell Balfour, 'Captain Tupper and the 1911 seamen's strike in Cardiff', *Morgannwg*, 14 (1970), 62–80.

[17] 'Coalfield Riots: Unparalleled Scenes in South Wales', *Merthyr Express*, 12 November 1910, p. 5. For further evidence of riots in Wales see, 'Riots at Bethesda: Houses Wrecked', *Evening Express*, 3 January 1902, p. 3; 'The Rhondda Riots', *Merthyr Express*, 12 November 1910, p. 4.

[18] Mor-O'Brien, 'Churchill and the Tonypandy Riots', 67.

[19] Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation*, p. 74.

[20] See n.13.

[21] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 33.

[22] For references to the 1911 south Wales anti-Jewish riots see, Geoffrey Alderman, 'The Anti-Jewish Riots of August 1911 in South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 6 (1972), especially 191–3; C. Holmes, 'The Tredegar Riots of August 1911: Anti-Jewish Disturbances in South Wales', *Welsh History Review*, 11, 2 (1982), 214–25; Ursula Henriques, 'Introduction', and Anthony Glaser, 'The Tredegar Riots of August 1911', in Ursula R. Q. Henriques (ed.), *The Jews of South Wales: Historical Studies* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993).

[23] William D. Rubinstein, 'The Anti-Jewish Riots of 1911 in South Wales: A Re-Examination', *Welsh History Review*, 18, 4 (1997), 667. Also, see 'Tredegar: Jewish Shops Looted By Hooligans', *Scotsman*, 21 August 1911, p. 6.

Jewish property was put at £16,000, yet after a week the rioting 'ceased as mysteriously as it had begun'.[24] During this period there were also demonstrations against black minorities in Wales, notably in the ports of south-east Wales in the wake of the First World War.[25] A downturn in the global economy led to the Cambrian Combine strike in 1911 and was followed by the international seaman's strike (1911), which affected all the south Wales ports. Moreover, violent outbursts at these strikes were often aimed at the ethnic minorities, especially black seamen and the Chinese community.[26]

Racial differences nevertheless were often used by newspapers as a way of increasing interest in particular boxing bouts. Thus, the *Cambrian* noted in January 1909 that 'Kid Davies, the coloured Swansea boxer, fights the French boxer Adolph next Saturday'.[27] What other reason was there for the newspaper to use the words 'coloured' and 'French' when advertising the fight other than to highlight the local and national perspective of a local ethnic boy taking on a Frenchman, other than to encourage interest in it? The *Cardiff Times* was another example of a newspaper highlighting a boxers 'race' when it reported on Hicks Johnson's loss to the Pontypridd boxer, Dave Peters, as well as his deportation for stealing.[28] The newspaper report began by labelling the boxer 'coloured' in its heading, and then went onto explain that 'Hicks Johnson, the middle-weight **coloured boxer**, was charged at Cardiff with stealing a purse… and was sent to jail for 21 days and deported'. The newspaper also

[24] Ibid, 667. For a detailed study of the Jewish population in Wales during this period, see, Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, 'Judaism', in Richard C. Allen and David Ceri Jones (eds), *The Religious History of Wales* (Cardiff: Ashley Drake, 2014), pp. 201–14. Also see, Colin Holmes, Anti-Semitism in British Society (London: Routledge, 2016).
[25] Neil Evans, 'Immigrants and Minorities in Wales, 1840–1990: A Comparative Perspective', *Llafur: Journal of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History*, 5, 4 (1991), 5; 'Taunted About Colour', *Evening Express and Evening Mail*, 9 April 1910, p. 3.
[26] Neil Evans, 'Through the Prism of Ethnic Violence: Riots and Racial Attacks in Wales, 1826–2002', in Charlotte Williams, Neil Evans and Paul O'Leary (eds), *A Tolerant Nation? Exploring ethnic diversity in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), pp. 96–7. Also, see M. J. Daunton, 'Jack ashore: seamen in Cardiff before 1914', *Welsh History Review*, 9, 2 (December 1978), 176–203; 'The Seamen's Strike. Fresh Development at Cardiff. 5000 Dock Workers Come Out', *Scotsman*, 20 July 1911, p. 7; 'The Seamen's Strike at Cardiff. Prosecution of Strike Leader', *Scotsman*, 6 October 1911, p. 8; 'Renewed Rioting in Mid-Rhondda', *Rhondda Leader*, 29 July 1911, p. 3, reported that attacks took place on Chinese refugees thought to be working at the colliery.
[27] 'Swansea "Coloured" Boxer', *Cambrian*, 29 January 1909, p. 3.
[28] 'Coloured Boxer. Deportation After Sentence', *Cardiff Times*, 18 December 1909, p. 5.

went on to report that Johnson had not worked alone and that 'the other **undesirable associates** of Johnson were **'coloured men'**,[29] which significantly highlights the issue of race throughout the report and thereby intimated that the crime was the result of his ethnicity. If the boxer had not been from a minority background, would the newspaper had been so quick to highlight the fact that he was also a 'coloured' boxer who, the previous week, had lost to a white Welshmen in the boxing ring? In a fight in December 1915 between Dai Roberts and Dixie Kid, the *Daily Herald* continually referred to Kid as the 'negro' rather than by his formal name, yet the Welshman was always denoted as 'Roberts' and the colour of his skin was not signified in any way.[30] These newspaper reports are an indication of the racial inequality that was evident in society and sport during the period.

Sport in general continued to be an important feature of twentieth century society. Richard Holt explains that 'the government was aware of the potential of sport as a source of social stability and as such made funds available to provide recreation in industrial areas'.[31] Sport also played a pivotal role in education as it encouraged fitness, competitiveness and solidarity amongst the British people.[32] In 1906 the Board of Education officially integrated sport as part of the school curriculum and the government encouraged sporting activities by passing a series of measures that allowed local authorities to equip and maintain leisure facilities such as swimming baths, public parks and playing fields.[33] The establishment of a number of sporting governing bodies, such as the Football Association (1863), in the nineteenth century helped to formalise codified rules for many sports. By the early twentieth century codified rules for various sports had spread across the country which helped sporting

[29] Words have been emboldened to highlight the racist description of the men involved.
[30] 'Sporting Notions by Pollux', *Daily Herald*, 4 December 1915, p. 30.
[31] Richard Holt, *Sport and the British. A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 270. For an in-depth study of sport in general during the early years of the twentieth century see Jeffrey Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); Mihir Bose, *The Spirit of the Game: How Sport Made The Modern World* (London: Constable, 2011); Mike Huggins and Jack Williams, *Sport and the English, 1918–1939* (Abington: Routledge, 2006).
[32] Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain*, p. 205.
[33] Tony Mason, *Sport in Britain. A Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 2.

activities to become officially recognised. Sporting activities also continued to have a capacity to stimulate identity at various levels of social activity. Jeffrey Hill explains that 'at the very simplest level, people might acquire a sense of identity by following a particular football team or an individual sportsperson'.[34]

Due to the increased significance of sporting activities, in order to survive as it progressed into the twentieth century, boxing needed to be perceived as a legitimate and legal sport. The introduction of the Queensberry Rules in 1867 had certainly assisted the sport in its transformation from bare-knuckled bouts to a more refined art of skill and endurance. As Jack Anderson claims that legally 'the legitimising equation that emerged can be understood as follows: boxing, as regulated by Queensberry Rules or some statutory derivation thereof, was not prize-fighting; it did not incite social disturbance nor act as a threat to general public morality; it no longer required participants to fight to a standstill nor could it be considered unacceptably dangerous'.[35] Anderson further suggests that at the beginning of the twentieth century bare-knuckle prize-fighting was drawing to a close, noting that 'the primitive and brutal man-to-man fight to exhaustion, along with its outdated rules, had no place in the coming age of respectability. The risk of injury, the considerable obstacles in arranging and holding prize-fights, as well as increased legal surveillance were threatening the very existence of the sport'.[36]

Anderson's opinion was mirrored by that of Peter Donnelly who suggests that legislation finally led to the end of prize-fighting, and John Sugden who has stated that 'bare-knuckle prize-fighting was dead, but with new roots its progeny was to grow to be one of the

[34] Jeffrey Hill, *Sport in History. An Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 52. Also, see Jeffrey Hill, 'Cocks, Cats, Caps and Cups: A Semiotic Approach to Sport and National Identity', *Culture, Sport, Society*, 2, 2 (Summer 1999), 1–21.
[35] Jack Anderson, *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love?* (Oxford: Birkbeck Law Press, 2007), p. 38.
[36] Anderson, *A Punch Drunk Love*, p. 37.

most popular and durable sports the world has ever seen'.[37] Yet, in contrast, Dennis Brailsford believes that many supporters of prize-fighting were critical of the sparring matches and boxing exhibitions wearing boxing gloves, or 'mufflers' as they were called at the time, that were introduced as a result of the Queensberry Rules, remarking that 'for some fans reared on prize-fighting, these exhibitions were seen as tame and unexciting, and no more than an aperitif for the real thing, and their growing popularity at the Fives Court and other venues irritated the devotees of bare-knuckle fighting'.[38] There is certainly ample evidence in Welsh newspapers that supports Brailsford's observation, and suggests that bare-knuckle prize-fights in Wales continued alongside the newly-formed sport of 'boxing' during the early years of the twentieth century. The *Western Gazette* reported on a bare-knuckle prize-fight in April 1904, commenting that

> the days of the prize fight are not yet over in Wales. Such a contest took place on Tuesday morning at Taff's Well, near Cardiff, and one of the combatants was said to have his jaw fractured. The police got wind of the affair, but were unable to frustrate the fight. The contest lasted twenty-one rounds. Judging by the bodily and facial injuries, the fight must have been a desperate affair.[39]

As with nineteenth century society these fights would have constituted acts of lawlessness. Bare-knuckle prize-fights were still obtaining much unfavourable exposure, such as the Rev. J. Davies' (Gadle) denouncement in July 1910 that prize-fighting contests were brutal, demoralising, and unworthy of any civilized and Christian people. Davies called on newspapers to refrain from publishing accounts of these fights.[40] For the legitimate boxing authorities, who were working hard to introduce regulations, these 'old school' bare-knuckle

[37] Peter Donnelly, 'On Boxing: Notes on the Past, Present and Future of a Sport in Transition', *Current Psychology: Research & Reviews*, 7, 4 (Winter, 1988–89), 331–46; Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 28.
[38] Dennis Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sport History*, 12, 2 (1985), 141.
[39] 'Welsh Prize Fight: A Contest of Twenty-One Rounds', *Western Gazette*, 8 April 1904, p. 4. For further evidence of bare-knuckle prize-fights in Wales during the twentieth century see 'The Revival of Prize Fighting', *Cardigan Observer*, 17 September 1887, p. 4. Also refer to Gareth Williams, 'A Brutal Passion', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams, *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 16. Williams suggests that bare-knuckle prize-fighting in Wales is far from dead, even in modern day society.
[40] 'Prize-Fights. Minister's Condemnation', *Evening Express*, 28 July 1910, p. 4.

fights would have been a continual hindrance. Similarities between the two combat 'sports' would have made it hard for people to distinguish one from the other, which would have certainly undermined the legitimacy of the newly recognized sport.

Additionally, anti-boxing protesters reasoned that the introduction of the Queensberry Rules had not enhanced the reputation of the sport in any way but had rather made it more dangerous. In 1901 George Bernard Shaw questioned the sincerity of the Queensberry Rules on two counts. He argued that the new rules no longer allowed fighters thirty seconds rest to clear their heads after a knockdown. He claimed that the new rules caused a floored fighter to take the option of either losing the fight or stagger to his feet in a helpless condition and be eagerly battered into insensibility by his opponent before he could recover. He asserted that glove fighting was just as brutal, if not worse, than bare-knuckle prize-fighting because gloves provided a larger hitting surface, a longer range, and four ounces of extra weight.[41] It is also argued that during a bare-knuckle fight a pugilist's hands could become so sore that he could no longer hit his opponent with any force, therefore saving his opponent from further damage. Yet, with the introduction of boxing gloves, fighters wore hand-wraps to protect their hands which meant they could hit their opponent harder and more frequently, enhancing the chance of knocking them unconscious.[42] Consequently, there continued to be antipathy towards boxing in Wales during the early twentieth century. The *Weekly Mail* reported in July 1902 that:

> the recent glove fights at the Prince of Wales' Circus, Merthyr, were officially reported to the urban district council by Mr. Superintendent Townsend, who strongly recommended that measures be taken to prevent their repetition as the boxing displays are bringing serious discredit upon the town.[43]

[41] George Bernard Shaw, 'Note on Modern Prize-Fighting', an essay in *The Admirable Bashville* (New York: Brentano's, 1909), pp. 60, 68, 73.
[42] 'Why Not Abolish Boxing Gloves?' *Evening Express*, 9 May 1901, p. 3.
[43] 'The Recent Prize Fights', *Weekly Mail*, 5 July 1902, p. 7.

Moreover, the Queensberry Rules and the addition of boxing gloves could not prevent the deaths of fighters occurring in the boxing ring, such as that of Treforest based boxer William Mills who died in 1908 after being knocked out by his opponent in the fifteenth round.[44]

Although there was still a certain amount of hostility directed towards boxing at this time it was also an important period of change. Throughout the most part of the nineteenth century the absence of an organised boxing authority was certainly a handicap for the sport. Due to the lack of rules for prize-fighting and the understandable failure to produce a governing body for the ring, disputes were frequent.[45] As Dennis Brailsford explains, this deficiency in rules not only raised issues regarding problems with location and crowd control but 'the protection afforded to the fighters was very limited, due to uncertainty in their interpretation and application'.[46] For this reason, self-regulating agencies, such as the Pugilistic Club and the Fair Play Club, quickly lost control and credibility in the sport which resulted in their subsequent demise.[47] The introduction of the Queensberry Rules did, however, help to set a fundamentally 'fair' and 'gentlemanly', and somewhat legal tone that helped promote professional boxing in well-run private clubs. This allowed the former Pelican Club to resurrect itself into the newly named National Sporting Club (N.S.C), as the new rules allowed the prize-ring to be built indoors on a stage, therefore changing a long-standing rule that it had to be pitched on turf.[48] The N.S.C. eventually established control over the sport as well as charging admission fees.[49] Until the introduction of the N.S.C. the jurisdiction of former organisations, including the Fair Play Club and the Pugilistic Benevolent Association, tended to be confined to London and was therefore not nationally or

[44] 'Boxing Misadventure. Treforest Lad Killed', *Cardiff Times*, 12 December 1908, p. 9. This is one of many reports of Welsh boxers being killed in the ring in the early years of the twentieth century. Also, see 'Fatal Boxing Bout in Pontypridd', *Evening Express*, 9 December 1908, p. 3; 'Fatal Boxing Bout', *Rhondda Leader*, 31 October 1908, p. 1.
[45] See Chapter Four. Also refer to Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 134.
[46] Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers', 135.
[47] Anderson, *A Punch Drunk Love*, p. 40.
[48] Kenneth Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', Anglia Polytechnic, PhD thesis, 1992, p. 222.
[49] Ibid, p. 222.

formally recognized.[50] The objective of the N.S.C. was nevertheless to promote the science of boxing in the fairest and safest manner possible through the adherence to these new rules.[51] This was to play an important role in the future success of boxing as a legitimate sport in Britain, as the N.S.C. began to establish, if only to a limited degree, informal control over boxing nationally.

Expert opinion from all parts of the world concurred that the 'theatre' of the N.S.C. was an ideal place for watching boxing.[52] The best amateur and professional talent lost no time in getting together at the N.S.C, and this was to have a significant effect on the boxing careers of many Welshmen as they gained national and international recognition, along with generous financial rewards from fights arranged by the N.S.C. Jim Driscoll competed in approximately eighteen fights at this venue during his boxing career.[53] Other well-known Welsh fighters, notably Jimmy Wilde and Freddie Welsh, regularly frequented the N.S.C. with Wilde fighting sixteen times at the venue and Welsh ten times,[54] and Johnny O'Brien and Dai St. John fought each other at the N.S.C. on 24 April 1894 with O'Brien the victor.[55] Even veteran fighters would attend the N.S.C. to watch fights, particularly Bill Benjamin who was the only living opponent of Tom Sayers.[56] The N.S.C. also became a prominent venue for lesser known Welsh boxers to display their pugilistic skills in hope of drawing the attention of the N.S.C. members, which potentially led to more lucrative fights. In June 1913 the *Cambria Daily Leader* reported how Tommy Phillips of Neath made his first appearance at the N.S.C. stating that he was 'looked upon as a coming champion' and had 'made a sensational first appearance at the National Sporting Club, London'. The fact that Phillips

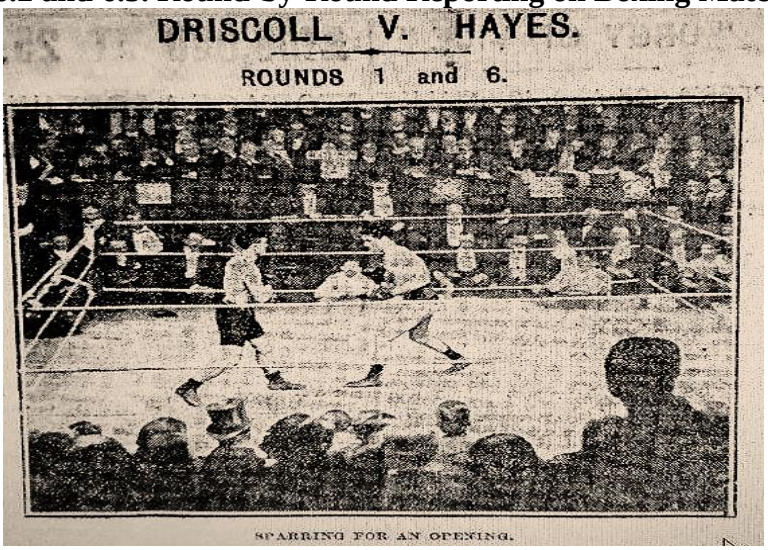
[50] Kenneth Sheard, 'Aspects of Boxing in the Western "Civilising Process"', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 32, 1 (1997), 38.
[51] A. F. Bettinson, and W. Outram Tristram, *National Sporting Club: Past and Present* (London: Sands and Co, 1901), p. 145.
[52] Ibid, p. 20.
[53]For information regarding Jim Driscoll's boxing career, including dates, venues and results, visit, BoxRec http://boxrec.com/boxer/10731 [Accessed 14 May 2016].
[54] Ibid.
[55] Bettinson and Outram, *National Sporting Club*, p. 212.
[56] Ibid, p. 95.

was to appear at the classic British club was announced exclusively in the *Leader* some weeks earlier.[57]

Boxing accidents did, however, occur even in the best regulated rings, and the N.S.C. was to witness the deaths of boxers John Arlott, Phil Donnelly and Mike Riley. Yet, it was the death of Mike Riley that was to have most significance. An inquest was held into the death of Riley in 1901 and an attempt was made to prosecute the club. Arthur F. Bettinson, manager of the N.S.C, Bernard John Angle, stockbroker, and others were accused at the Old Bailey of the manslaughter of Mike Riley.[58] At the end of the trial the Recorder of London advised the grand jury that there was nothing illegal in boxing itself, but that it was a noble and manly art which he hoped would never die out in this country and the jury, after less than two minutes' deliberation, returned a verdict of accidental death. They added that the N.S.C. had taken every reasonable precaution to prevent such an occurrence.[59] Debatably, the outcome of this court case was of considerable significance. Indeed, as the N.S.C. was found not guilty of manslaughter, boxing was 'virtually legalised in Britain'.[60] There is certainly some credence that this was the case in Wales as, after 1901 and compared to the large number of reports on the prosecution of prize-fighters in Wales during the nineteenth century, there was a distinct reduction in the number of newspaper reports relating to the prosecution of fighters, with more emphasis now given to offering in-depth reports (often round by round) on the outcome of the boxing matches,. This is shown in the fight between Jim Driscoll and Seaman Hayes in 1910. (see Figs. 6.2 and 6.3).

[57] 'Neath Boxer at N.S.C.', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 25 June 1913, p. 5. For more information on Welsh boxers at the N.S.C. see 'Llanelly Boxer off to London', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 31 October 1913, p. 5; 'Neath Boxer Beaten', *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder*, 26 December 1914, p. 12.
[58] Bettinson, and Outram Tristram, *National Sporting Club*, p. 149.
[59] Ibid, p. 148.
[60] John Arlott (ed.), *Oxford Companion to Sports and Games* (St Albans: Paladin, 1977), p. 109.

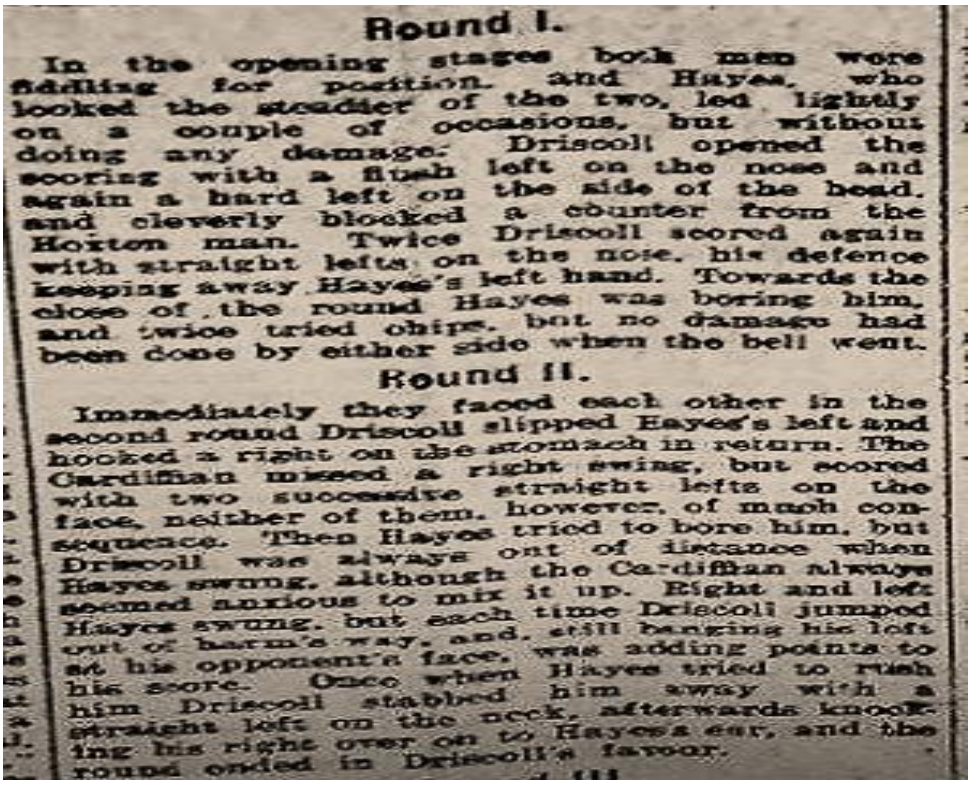
Figs. 6.2 and 6.3. Round-by-Round Reporting on Boxing Matches.[61]



DRISCOLL V. HAYES.

ROUNDS 1 and 6.

SPARRING FOR AN OPENING.



Round I.

In the opening stages both men were fiddling for position. and Hayes, who looked the steadier of the two, led lightly on a couple of occasions, but without doing any damage. Driscoll opened the scoring with a flush left on the nose and again a hard left on the side of the head. and cleverly blocked a counter from the Horton man. Twice Driscoll scored again with straight lefts on the nose, his defence keeping away Hayes's left hand. Towards the close of the round Hayes was boring him, and twice tried chips, but no damage had been done by either side when the bell went.

Round II.

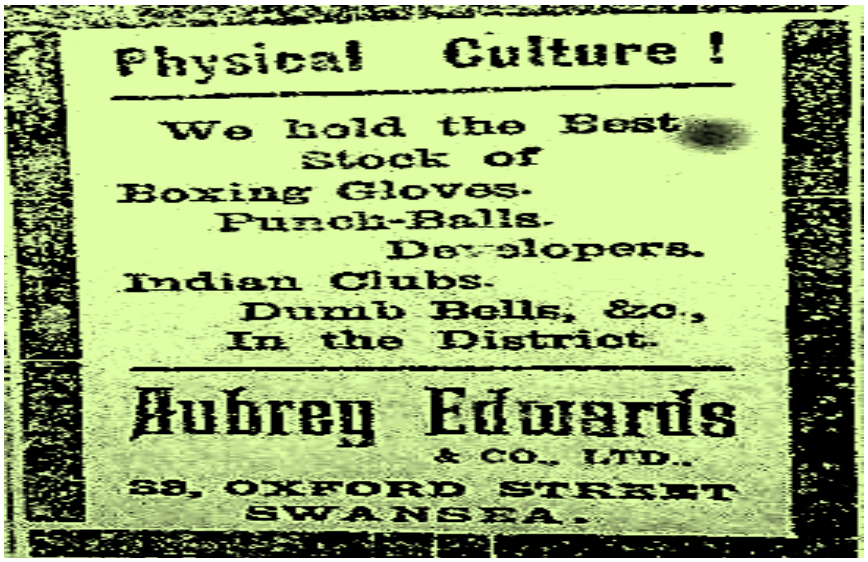
Immediately they faced each other in the second round Driscoll slipped Hayes's left and hooked a right on the stomach in return. The Cardiffian missed a right swing, but scored with two successive straight lefts on the face, neither of them, however, of much consequence. Then Hayes tried to bore him, but Driscoll was always out of distance when Hayes swung, although the Cardiffian always seemed anxious to mix it up. Right and left Hayes swung, but each time Driscoll jumped out of harm's way, and, still banging his left at his opponent's face, was adding points to his score. Once when Hayes tried to rush him Driscoll stabbed him away with a straight left on the neck, afterwards knocking his right over on to Hayes's ear, and the round ended in Driscoll's favour.

As can be seen by this report, newspapers began to give their readers an in-depth analysis of prize-fights, even describing the fighting styles of the boxers ('the Cardiffian always seemed anxious to mix it up'), and who they believed had won each round (the round ended in Driscoll's favour). These reports clearly show how the introduction of the Queensberry Rules had transformed the sport and how the boxing authorities had become focussed on using

[61] 'Driscoll vs Hayes', *Evening Express*, 15 February 1910, p. 4.

skills to score points rather than just raw strength. For example, 'Driscoll banging his left at his opponents face was adding points to his score'.[62] Additionally, the advertising of boxing equipment became the norm in regional newspapers as witnessed in the *South Wales Daily Post* in 1910 (Fig 6.4) which implied that it was now a legitimate sport and a way of improving physical fitness.

Fig. 6.4. Advertisement for Boxing Equipment, 1910.[63]



The changing attitudes of the authorities towards boxing coincided with artistic and cultural projects in film, art and literature that inspired a new response to boxing as a sport.[64] With the growth of the nickelodeon cinemas across Britain after 1904 early filmmakers became attracted to boxing as they realised it appealed to working-class audiences.[65] Boxing themed films were often constructed portraying the 'boxing hero', using his masculine values of strength, toughness and determination to overcome the odds to reach the pinnacle of his profession – a 'rags to riches' story.[66] As Katherine Woodward comments, boxing engages

[62] Ibid.
[63] 'Physical Culture!' *South Wales Daily Post*, 11 November 1910, p. 7.
[64] Kath Woodward, 'Culture of Boxing: Sensation and Affect', *Sport History*, 31, 4 (2011), 488.
[65] Boddy, *Boxing*, p. 154.
[66] James Rhodes, 'Fighting for "Respectability": Media representations of the White, "Working-Class" Male Boxing "Hero"', *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 35, 4 (2011), 357.

with ‘the social, economic and cultural forces through which the construction of heroic figures occurs. Boxing films are about social commentary more or less bound up with issues of masculinity. Boxing, and especially the archetypical boxer in film, has traditionally generated a singular heroic figure of troubled masculinity’.[67] The interest surrounding boxing films was to have an impact on one particular Welsh boxer, Jimmy Wilde, who starred in his own film, *A Pit Boy’s Romance* (1917). The British made silent film, directed by A. E. Coleby and Arthur Rooke, ends with the villain's protégé losing a boxing match to the hero.[68] The transformation of entertainment, particularly the growth of cinemas and film-making, allowed some Welsh boxers, such as Wilde, the opportunity to step beyond the realms of sport and into the wider arena of celebrity and popular culture.[69]

For all the pride and patriotism associated with Welsh sport during this period, Wales was immensely proud of its Britishness. This was evident with the outbreak of the First World War which clearly demonstrated that Welsh national consciousness co-existed with a sense of British and imperial pride. Patriotism was clearly dominant as the outbreak of war in 1914 was celebrated by cheering crowds in the streets as the nation joined the rest of Britain against a foreign aggressor.[70] Even David Lloyd George drew on his Welsh roots in his speech at the Queens Hall, London, in September 1914 when he made his appeal to the Welsh people to fight for king and country:

> I should like to see a Welsh Army in the Field. I would like to see the race who faced the Normans for hundreds of years in a struggle for freedom, the race that helped to win Crecy, the race that fought for a generation under Glendower, against the greatest captain in Europe – I should like to see that race go and give a taste of its quality in this great struggle in Europe. And they are going to do it.[71]

[67] Woodward, ‘Culture of Boxing: Sensation and Affect’, 494.
[68] Rachael Low, *The History of British Film: Volume III, 1914–1918* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 10.
[69] Martin Johnes, *A History of Sport in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p. 43.
[70] Ibid., p. 46.
[71] *The Times*, 21 September 1914, and cited in Angela Gaffney, *Aftermath: Remembering the Great War in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), p.10.

Welsh newspapers of the period also called for patriotism and promoted recruitment. In August 1914 the *Western Mail* printed a caricature depicting Dame Wales appealing for patriotism in industrial Wales as the dark clouds of war gathered behind her. (Fig. 6.5).[72] It was a call to active service for those Welshmen not involved in the war, especially mine workers. The response to war from Welshmen was instant and they were to provide a sizable contribution to the largest army, the first citizen-army, in British history. By April 1915 Glamorgan had provided approximately 50,000 men, with the Rhondda raising two battalions consisting largely of miners. According to the official record, 272,924 men from Wales served in the army during the Great War, representing 21.52 per cent of the male population of the country. This compares with percentages of 24.02 for England, 23.71 for Scotland and 6.14 for Ireland.

Fig.6.5. 'The Call of Patriotism', ***Western Mail,*** **August 1913**.[73]

THE CALL OF PATRIOTISM.

DAME WALES: Welshmen! In the hour of danger our Navy asks for coal. It shall not ask in vain. We will show the world that the blast of my horn, resounding in the hills of Wales, can be responded to by men as patriotic as any the world can boast!

[72] 'The Call of Patriotism', *Western Mail*, 4 August 1914, p. 3; Neil Evans, 'Loyalties: State, Nation, Community and Military Recruiting in Wales, 1840–1918', in Matthew Cragoe and Chris Williams (eds), *Wales and War: Society, Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), p. 47. For a detailed account of Welsh patriotic response to the First World War refer to Chapter 1: '1914: The Outbreak of War and the Response in Wales', in Stephen John, *The Welsh at War* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military, 2018), pp. 9–19; Gary Dobbs, *Cardiff and The Valleys in the Great War* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military, 2015); Angela Gaffney, *Aftermath: Remembering the Great War in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000).

[73] 'The Call of Patriotism', *Western Mail*, 4 August 1914, p. 3.

Due to Britain's involvement in various wars from the late 1880s onwards there were demands for significant improvements in the quality of soldiers fighting in the British army.[74] With the military relying on the levels of health and fitness that recruits brought with them from their civilian lives, the rise of organised sport was positively embraced by the military. Indeed, the continued development of physical training in the army and sport came to dominate the lives of soldiers in this period.[75] For this reason the reputation of boxing was enhanced as its training was welcomed as a way of preparing civilians for military life, alongside the soldier's combat training. It quickly became a popular army sport. The changing attitude towards boxing can clearly be seen in a report in *The Times* on the eve of the First World War in 1914. It commented that boxing is 'once more a national game in the land of its origin'.[76] This was in stark contrast to articles written by the same newspaper during the nineteenth century in which the sport was vilified as a brutal activity that should be banished.[77] The First World War also coincided with a golden era of boxing in Wales as Gareth Williams explains while discussing boxing in the Welsh valley towns during the early twentieth century:

> In the first thirty-five years of the twentieth century… that confined area had produced more boxing champions than anywhere else of comparable size in the world: Tom Thomas (Penycraig), Percy Jones and Llew Edwards (Porth), Freddie Welsh, Francis Rossi and the eight fighting Moody brothers (Frank and Glen the best of them) of Pontypridd, George Williams (Treherbert), Harold Jones (Ferndale) and Billy Hughes (Dinas) all proceeded from the pit to the boxing booths of Jack Scarrott and onto Welsh and British championships.[78]

[74] For further reference to Britain's involvement in various military campaigns see, Kenneth O. Morgan, 'The Boer War and the Media (1809–1902), *Twentieth Century British History*, 13, 1 (January, 2002), 1–16; Kenneth O. Morgan, 'Wales and the Boer War', in his *Modern Wales: Politics, Places and People* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995), pp. 46–58; Diana Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion* (New York: Berkley Publishing, 2000).
[75] James D. Campbell, 'Training for Sport is Training for War: Sport and the Transformation of the British Army, 1860–1914', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 4 (2000), 43.
[76] *The Times*, 24 June 1914, p. 10.
[77] See Chapter One.
[78] Gareth Williams, 'Jimmy Wilde, The Tylorstown Terror', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams , *Wales and its Boxers. The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 58.

It was during this period that Wales was to secure its first ever world boxing champion in Percy Jones when, in January 1914, he claimed the World, European and British Flyweight titles by beating Englishman, Bill Ladbury. This was quickly followed by a second Welsh World Champion in Freddie Welsh who beat Willie Ritchie on 7 July 1914 to claim the World Lightweight title. Jimmy Wilde secured a third world title for Wales on 18 December 1916 beating American Zulu Kid for the World Flyweight title.[79] The outbreak of the First World War, however, was to cause profound dislocation to British society.[80] Thousands of men were sent away to fight leaving widespread anguish over the fate of the soldiers on the frontline. Also, the burden on those at home was carried on primarily by women, who took over traditionally male-dominated jobs.[81] Yet, there is ample evidence in Welsh newspapers to suggest that boxing remained very popular during the war years, not only in Welsh communities but also within the confines of the army. The *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder* stated in June 1915 that 'the ninth open-air military boxing tournament attracted a large crowd and the interest sustained was proof of the popularity of the noble art'.[82] It seems, for numerous reasons, that some Welsh fighters were able to continue their boxing careers at home and abroad with limited interference, whilst other Welsh boxers of exceptional quality became casualties of the Great War and would never box again.

At the time of the outbreak of war, three exceptionally good Welsh fighters were Jim Driscoll (1880–1925), Johnny Basham (1889–1947) and Jimmy Wilde (1892–1969), all of whom were British Boxing Champions and holders of the Lonsdale Belt (see Fig. 6.6). Driscoll was European featherweight champion in 1912–13, British featherweight champion

[79] For information on these world title fights refer to Williams, 'Jimmy Wilde, The Tylorstown Terror', p. 63; Gareth Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Merthyr, Aberdare and Pontypridd* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2011), p. 131; Gareth Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Rhondda* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2012), pp. 76–81.
[80] Helen Jones, *Health and Society in Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 34.
[81] Gaffney, *Aftermath*, p. 11.
[82] 'Military Tournament at Neath', *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder*, 26 June 1915, p. 2.

(1908–13) and world featherweight challenger 1909.[83] Wilde's boxing career was well underway by the outbreak of the war. He had already won the British Flyweight title in 1913 and the European Flyweight crown in March 1914. John Michael Basham was a well-known boxer from Newport who was British and European champion at both welter and middleweight (1914 and 1919).

Fig. 6.6. Welsh boxers among the 'famous Six' with their Lonsdale Belts.[84]

Johnny Basham

Jimmy Wilde

Jim Driscoll

These three Welsh fighters seemed to benefit from the high profile status they gained from boxing. Wilde was a healthy boxer, but for some unknown reason was not passed as fit for active service on two separate occasions (Birmingham and Cardiff) in the early years of the war.[85] When Wilde was finally passed fit for the army in December 1916, he still appealed to the Rhondda Recruiting Tribunal for exemption, stating that he had

> worked underground for ten years and had twice been medically rejected. In his opinion he would be more useful to the country working underground, and, further his father, two sisters and two brothers were partially dependent upon him.[86]

[83] Gareth Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Cardiff* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2009), p. 31.
[84] Pictures courtesy of BoxRec. See http://boxrec.com/boxer/10731 [Accessed 14 May 2016].
[85] 'Private Jimmy Wilde', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 28 December 1916, p. 1.
[86] 'Jimmy Wilde Appeals to the Rhondda Tribunal', *South Wales Weekly Post*, 20 January 1917, p. 6. Also, see Jimmy Wilde, Chapter 9: 'Sandhurst and other Places', in his *Fighting was my Business* (London: Robson Books, 1990), pp. 130–53.

When asked by the chairman, 'could you not do your boxing in the army?' Wilde replied 'no, I think not'.[87] The initial appeal was approved but the chairman commented that, 'he did not see much hope that the application for exemption would be successful in view of the great need of the country'.[88] Wilde's application was unsuccessful and consequently he was enlisted into the army.

It seems the army exploited the propaganda value of these well-known boxers by retaining them as fitness instructors. Driscoll, at thirty-three years of age, was nearing the end of a coveted boxing career at the outbreak of war, but possibly the reputation he had established made him a valuable asset to the military. Also, when Wilde was finally passed fit for military service in Class B (which meant garrison or provisional duty abroad) in December 1916, an application was made for special permission to post him as an instructor at Sandhurst, thus sparing him the frontline.[89] Basham's circumstances were slightly different to those of Wilde and Driscoll, in the fact that he had already joined the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in 1911.[90] However, special privileges given to Basham by the army meant that during the early years of the war he was allowed to fight for the British Welterweight title, which he won, beating Johnny Summers.[91] He then made his first defence of his Lonsdale Belt and fought Irish-born Tom McCormick for the British title on 10 May 1915.[92]

Driscoll, Wilde and Basham, along with three other well-known fighters, 'Bombardier' Billy Wells, Pat O'Keefe and Dick Smith, went on to serve under Captain

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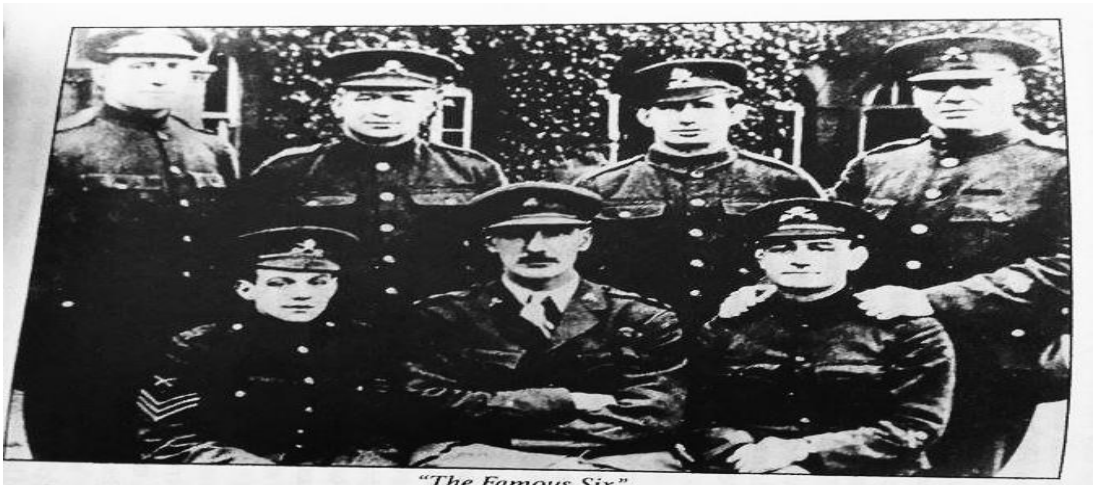
[87] 'Jimmy Wilde Appeals to the Rhondda Tribunal', *South Wales Weekly Post*, 20 January 1917, p. 6.
[88] Ibid.
[89] 'Private Jimmy Wilde', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 28 December 1916, p. 1. Wilde did not altogether avoid the carnage of war and was lucky to escape with his life during an air raid on London in which a bomb exploded next to his hotel and he was blown down the passage. A friend standing with him was severely injured and two women in the hotel lost their lives. For details refer to 'Jimmy Wilde's Narrow Escape', *Glamorgan Gazette*, 28 September 1917, p. 4.
[90] Alan Roderick, *Johnny! The Story of the Happy Warrior* (Newport: Heron Press, 1990), p. 17. Also, see 'Boxing: Basham Defeats Dick Nelson', *Western Mail*, 13 March 1914, p. 5; 'Private Basham', *Liverpool Evening Express*, 14 February 1914, p. 4.
[91] 'Welsh Boxing Champion: Basham's Clever Victory over Summers', *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 18 December 1914, p. 3.
[92] 'Title Regained', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 11 May 1915, p. 8

Bruce Logan in the army, and became known as the 'famous six'. These boxers were allowed to stay fighting fit, and continue their boxing careers, alongside which, the army sent them on moral boosting trips around the country to entertain troops with exhibitions of their boxing skills (which involved boxing fellow soldiers willing to enter the ring with them).[93] However, faced with dreadful casualties from the war and a decline in voluntary recruiting, the British Government introduced the Military Service Act in 1916, which brought conscription into effect. British men between the ages of 18 and 41 were enlisted for service in the army. It was at this time that the 'famous six' were disbanded (Fig 6.7). Basham and Driscoll were sent to France but, due to their boxing skills and reputation as 'tough' men, they still managed to avoid the hardship of fighting for their country on the frontline as they were used by the army as 'trouble shooters' and were sent to control any instances of disorderly behaviour or fights between British soldiers.[94] Wilde was also very fortunate as he remained at Sandhurst as an army instructor and continued his career as a boxer throughout the war.[95]

Fig. 6.7. Picture of 'The Famous Six'.[96]



"The Famous Six"
Back row, left to right: Bombardier Billy Wells, Pat O'Keefe, Johnny Basham, Dick Smith.
Front row, left to right: Jimmy Wilde, Captain Bruce Logan, Jim Driscoll.

[93] 'Military Tournament at Neath', *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder*, 26 June 1915, p. 2. The newspaper reported that the main attraction was 'the addition of the notable "stars" of the boxing world which included Billy Wells, Jimmy Wilde, Johnny Basham and Jim Driscoll who gave boxing exhibitions with their sparring partners'.
[94] Roderick, *Johnny!*, p. 67.
[95] Wilde, *Fighting was my Business*, pp. 130–54.
[96] Roderick, *Johnny!*, p. 64.

By the time the Great War ended in November 1918 an estimated nine million men had lost their lives; over 700,000 of these were British servicemen.[97] It is estimated about 35,000 of the British servicemen who died were Welshmen.[98] Reports regarding the loss of Welsh soldiers in the war were regularly printed by local newspapers, one being the *Merthyr Express* which commented on the exploits of the 2nd Welsh Battalion's involvement in the Battle of Mons which was the first engagements between British and German forces on the Western Front. It reported that they had lost 400 men in one day.[99] Welsh boxer, Billy Morgan, also provided an insight into the hardships endured by soldiers on the frontline through letters sent home to his wife, in which he commented

> We saw some awful sights at Gheluvelt, and I was sorry, but it is no good being sorry when you are in battle. If you were here you would think you were at the sports to see the Germans firing at our airplanes and our heads over the trenches. I have popped off a few dozen.[100]

Given the carnage of the First World War there is certainly an argument that the privileges given to these high profile boxers could have saved their lives during the war. When examining Johnny Basham's life, Alan Roderick has commented that 'it is probably no exaggeration to say that boxing may have well saved his life during the terrible carnage of the First World War. As the champion and Lonsdale belt-holder, Johnny was in something of a privileged position and far too valuable to the military authorities to risk losing in the lottery that was the fate of the frontline troops'.[101] And yet there is ample evidence to indicate that many boxers died in the war. Basham's opponent for the British title, Tom McCormick, a sergeant in the Manchester regiment, went to France with his regiment soon after his fight with Basham and was killed in 1916.[102] Another opponent of Basham's, fellow Welsh welter-

[97] Jay Murray Winter, *The Great War and the British People* (London, Macmillan 1986), p. 71.
[98] Christopher. Williams, 'Taffs in the Trenches: Welsh National Identity and Military Service, 1914–1918', in Cragoe and Williams (eds), *Wales and War*, p. 126.
[99] 'Welsh Hymns Sung on the Way to Battle', *Merthyr Express*, 16 January 1915, p. 2.
[100] 'Swansea Boxer at the Front', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 1 January 1915, p. 5.
[101] Roderick, *Johnny!*, p. 7.
[102] Ibid, p. 56.

weight boxer, Dai Roberts (Caerau), joined the 1st Surrey Rifles but was also allowed by the army to continue his boxing career during the war (losing a fight to Basham in 1915).[103] Roberts was involved in seventy-six professional fights between 1911 and 1917 but was sent to the frontline. He had only been there for five months before he was killed by an enemy shell on 7 June 1917.[104] Another well-known British fighter 'Bermondsey' Billy Wells was in the trenches alongside Roberts and was lucky enough to survive the shell attack.[105] Benny Thomas, the Bantamweight boxer who fought Jimmy Wilde in April 1916 and lasted the full twenty rounds with Wilde wining on points, was also killed during the war.[106] Champion Rhyl boxer, Capt. J. Gordon Davies of the 1st Rhondda Battalion 10th Welsh Regiment was killed by an enemy sniper.[107] The most notable Welsh boxer to lose his ring career and eventually his life in the war was Percy Jones who, as mentioned, became World Flyweight champion in 1914. Jones fought five more times prior to the outbreak of war, after which he joined the Glamorgan Bantams Battalion of the Welsh Army Corps. In contrast to Driscoll, Wilde and Basham, even though he was a world champion, it seems he was not given, nor did he want any special privileges and was sent to the Somme where he was gassed and wounded in the leg. This was amputated but he later died as a result of the effects of trench fever on Christmas Day 1922 – one day short of his thirtieth birthday.[108]

A number of Welsh boxers escaped the war, but their injuries sustained prevented them from continuing their boxing careers. Private Jim Kendall was a Rhondda boxer who had twice fought Percy Jones. Kendall observed that 'facing a champion boxer such as Jones was child's play to opposing the Germans'. He subsequently suffered shrapnel wounds in his

[103] 'Soldier-Boxer's Win', *Dundee Courier*, 30 November 1915, p. 7; 'Victory for Dai Roberts', *Dundee Courier*, 25 May 1915, p. 4.
[104] 'Dai Roberts Gone: Welsh Boxer Killed on the French Front', *Daily Record*, 20 June 1917, p. 6.
[105] 'Welsh Boxer Killed', *Lincolnshire Echo*, 20 June 1917, p. 4.
[106] 'Cardiff Boxer Killed', *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 17 August 1916, p. 4.
[107] 'Champion Boxer Killed by Sniper', *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 16 February 1916, p. 5.
[108] 'Well-known Boxer Dead', *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 26 December 1922, p. 5.

right thigh in 1915 and as an invalid was sent back to Tonyrefail.[109] Other Welsh boxers to suffer the same kind of fate included the Rhondda boxer, David Davies, of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and Private David. S. Thomas ('Dai Sol') of the 13th Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers.[110] In May 1918 the *Daily Mirror* printed a story about two well-known Welsh boxers, David Jones and David Britt, who found themselves reunited in the same hospital after suffering injuries in the war.[111]

Fig.6.8. Wounded Welsh Boxers, *Daily Mirror*, May 1918.[112]


WOUNDED WELSH BOXERS MEET.

David Jones and David Britt, two well-known Welsh boxers, who were close friends, find themselves in the same hospital after having been wounded.

For those boxers who avoided serious injury or death during wartime it seems the army were often prepared to allow them to continue with their boxing careers alongside their duties as a soldier. One example of a soldier who remained active as a boxer during the war was Walter Rossi of Pontypridd. He joined the Royal Field Artillery Regiment and served in France, but this did not stop him from enjoying a busy and productive boxing career, including a British title eliminator fight against Tommy Harrison at the N.S.C. in February

[109] 'Interesting Story by Rhondda Boxer', *Western Mail*, 11 January 1915, p. 9.
[110] 'Wounded Rhondda Boxer', *Rhondda Leader*, 21 August 1915, p. 5; 'Rhondda Boxer Wounded', *Rhondda Leader*, 15 April 1916, p. 5.
[111] 'Wounded Welsh Boxers Meet', *Daily Mirror*, 24 May 1918, p. 4.
[112] Ibid.

1916.[113] No doubt a combination of army leniency and better transport allowed fighters, like Rossi, to compete. He survived the war and continued his boxing career, winning the Welsh Featherweight Championship in 1921.[114] Another Welsh boxer who joined the army and continued his boxing career during the war was Joe Johns (1892–1927), Welsh Lightweight champion in 1915, who joined the Royal Engineers.[115] He fought a number of bouts during the early years of the war and on 22 May 1915 he won the Welsh Lightweight title at Cardiff Arms Park in front of an estimated 10,000 people.[116] It has been suggested that participating in such sporting events in times of war was perhaps inappropriate, as implied by Gareth Williams who explains that 'when reports from the Western Front were filling the newspapers with announcements of gallantry and death – when, as many contemporaries saw it, a greater game was being fought elsewhere – it was not a good time to be defending sporting titles'.[117] Yet the large attendance figures provide evidence of the significance of these prize-fights during wartime as they would have been good for the morale of the Welsh people.

There are a number of reasons why the army was willing to allow fighters to continue their boxing careers during wartime. It is evident that boxing was still very popular during the war with newspapers regularly reporting on local and national fights, as well as advertising bouts. An example (Fig. 6.9) is shown below taken from the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, which featured Welsh fighter Walter Rossi.

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[113] Walter Rossi lost the eliminator fight to Harrison on points. For evidence of Rossi's fights during the war, including the fight with Harrison, see 'Eliminating Bout: Tommy Harrison Too Good For Walter Rossi', *Sheffield Independent*, 29 February 1916, p. 6; 'Kid Doyle Defeated', *Western Mail*, 28 May 1915, p.7; 'Boxing', *Liverpool Echo*, 12 October 1915, p. 6; 'Scotland vs Wales Meeting at Liverpool', *Dundee Courier*, 4 August 1916, p. 2; 'Opening Night of the Season at N.S.C', *Dundee Courier*, 3 October 1916, p. 2; 'Boxing Contests', *Liverpool Echo*, 26 January 1917, p. 5.

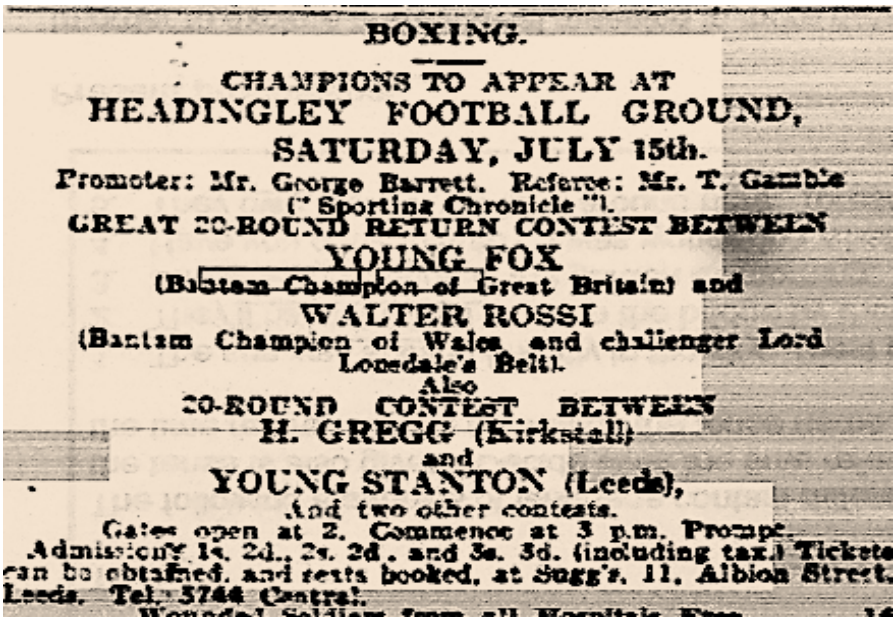
[114] 'A Boxing Attraction', *Fife Free Press*, 24 December 1921, p. 8; 'Rossi and His Match with Regan', *Sheffield Independent*, 18 October 1921, p. 6.

[115] 'Joe Johns joins the Colours', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 19 March 1915, p. 2.

[116] Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Merthyr*, p. 48. See also 'Joe Johns Defeated', *Pioneer*, 20 February 1915, p. 7. Johns was stationed in France for four years which interrupted his boxing career. He did however survive the war and partook in one more boxing bout in 1919 which he lost.

[117] Gareth Williams, 'Jimmy Wilde, the Tylorstown Terror', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams, *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University Press, 2008), p. 67.

Fig. 6.9. Advertisement of a Boxing Show.[118]


BOXING.

CHAMPIONS TO APPEAR AT
HEADINGLEY FOOTBALL GROUND,
SATURDAY, JULY 15th.
Promoter: Mr. George Barrett. Referee: Mr. T. Gamble ("Sporting Chronicle").
GREAT 20-ROUND RETURN CONTEST BETWEEN
YOUNG FOX
(Bantam Champion of Great Britain) and
WALTER ROSSI
(Bantam Champion of Wales and challenger Lord Lonsdale's Belt).
Also
20-ROUND CONTEST BETWEEN
H. GREGG (Kirkstall)
and
YOUNG STANTON (Leeds),
And two other contests.
Gates open at 2. Commence at 3 p.m. Prompt.
Admission 1s. 2d., 2s. 2d., and 3s. 3d. (including tax.) Tickets can be obtained, and seats booked, at Sugg's, 11, Albion Street, Leeds. Tel. 5744 Central.

Thus, the military would have no doubt viewed boxing as a way of keeping soldiers and civilians fit and combat ready. Boxing tournaments involving British (including Welsh) soldiers, both in Britain and on the front line, were frequently reported in regional newspapers, such as the *Barry Dock News* who in April 1918 informed their readers of two Welshmen fighting in the final of a divisional boxing tournament: ' a divisional boxing tournament recently took place behind the lines in France. Two Barry **boys faced each other in the final**…The result was a draw… **Both lads are up the line** now **keeping the huns back'**.[119]

Reports often described the valour and courage of the men as both boxers and soldiers, as highlighted in bold [my emphasis] in the above report. For this reason, the military would have probably been keen to see newspapers report on these boxing bouts as it was a positive way of enhancing recruitment. At a time of social distress boxing was recognised as good entertainment. Many boxing bouts emphasised the war effort as can be seen in the boxing advertisement (Fig. 6.9) which offered wounded soldiers a free pass to enter the event. Some boxers, after their bout, were even known to make a speech asking the men in the audience to do the right thing and fight

[118] 'Boxing', *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 13 July 1916, p. 3.
[119] 'Barry Boxers meet at Tournament in France', *Barry Dock News*, 12 April 1918, p. 2. Also refer to 'Boxers in Khaki', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 20 January 1917, p. 1.

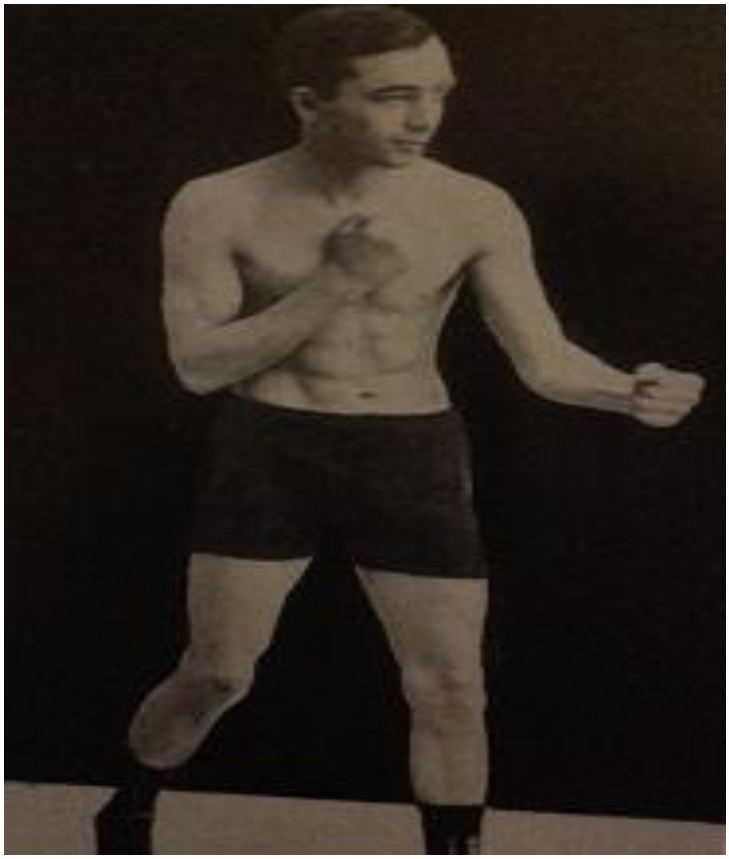
for their country. *The Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder* stated in June 1915 that the winner of the Regimental Lightweight Championship, Tommy Phillips, provided 'a recruiting speech' explain that 'the King and Country needs you and I ask all those who can to join me in the 6th'.[120]

Newspapers used boxing's popularity for propaganda purposes, as they were eager to report when Welsh boxers had enlisted. When Percy Jones (Fig. 6.10) joined the army in 1915 the *Western Mail* promptly stated that he had 'set an example to other boxers and by his lead several may follow'.[121] A further example was printed in the *Rhondda Leader* in January 1915 which reported that 'another boxer joins, Charlie Yeomans (Pontypridd) has not been long in following the example set by Jim Driscoll and Percy Jones, for on Saturday he joined the Welsh Horse'.[122] By reporting that these Welsh boxers had joined the fight against Germany and its allies was a message to other Welshmen that it was the 'manly' and honourable thing to do. In accord John Sugden explains how during the years prior to the First World War the reputation of boxing had enhanced considerably with the use of professional boxers as models for new recruits.[123] The importance of these fighters as role models for recruitment may have been due to a falling off in voluntary enlistment as public attitudes changed as the war progressed. Growing casualty lists, disillusionment with the reasons for fighting and a more realistic appreciation of the realities of twentieth century

[120] 'Military Tournament at Neath', *Herald of Wales and Monmouthshire Recorder*, 26 June 1915, p. 9. Also, see 'Boxers and the Army', *Sunday Mirror*, 31 October 1915, p. 22; 'Jim Driscoll in the ranks joins as a trooper' *Glamorgan Gazette*, 11 December 1914, p. 3; 'Soldiers of the King: How heroes of "The Ring" responded to the call to arms', *People*, 23 May 1915, p. 17.
[121] 'Percy Jones Joins: Another Famous Boxer Leads the Way', *Western Mail*, 4 January 1915, p. 7. For a detailed account of Percy Jones, see Gareth Jones, *The Boxers of Wales: Rhondda* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2012), pp. 76–81; Tony Lee, *All in my Corner: A Tribute To Some Forgotten Welsh Boxing Heroes* (Ammanford: TL Associates, 2009), pp. 24–7; Gilbert Odd, *The Hamlyn Encyclopaedia of Boxing* (London: Hamlyn, 1983), p.67.
[122] 'Another Boxer Joins', *Rhondda Leader*, 16 January 1915, p. 2.
[123] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 33.

warfare all played their part.[124] For this reason, the military reinforced duty, honour and patriotism,[125] for which these famous boxers would have been perfect ambassadors.

Fig. 6.10. Welsh Boxing Champion, Percy Jones.[126]



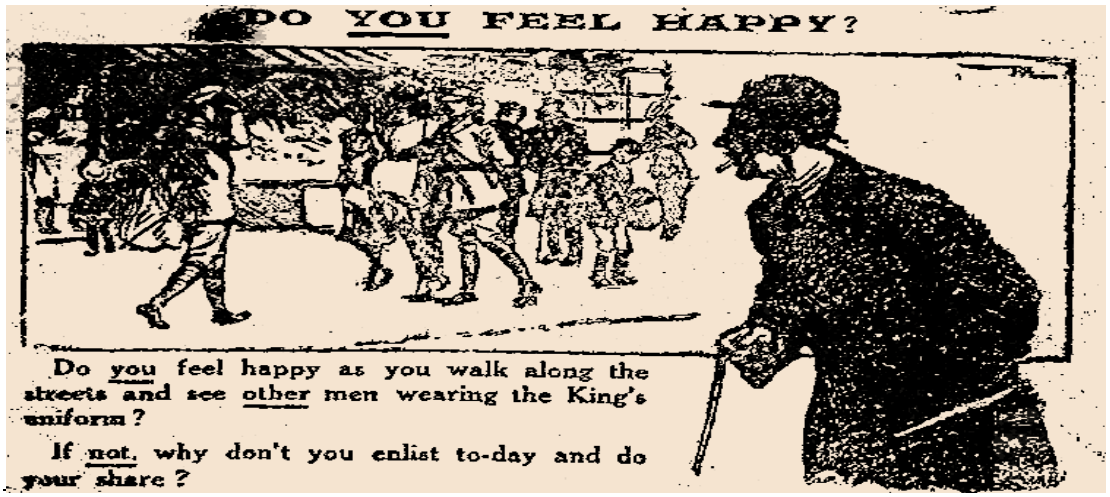
That boxers were allowed to continue their ring careers during the war meant they could use boxing as a profitable trade alongside their experiences as soldiers. Evidence of the financial gains that could be made often were reported in regional newspapers, which not only provided details of the bouts but commented on the amount of money. Thus, Johnny Basham was paid £300 for fighting John Summers in 1914, £550 for fighting Tom McCormick in 1915 and £475 for fighting Eddie Beattie in 1916.[127] Prior to the outbreak of war it was reported that Freddie Welsh had already earned $30,000 in eighteen months while

[124] Robin Barlow, *Wales and World War One* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 2014), p. 34. For an in depth discussion on recruitment in Wales during the First World War, refer to chapter 2 of this study, 'Honour, Glory, Adventure… Voluntary recruitment in Wales', pp. 17–41.
[125] Ibid., p. 36.
[126] Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Rhondda*, p. 76.
[127] 'Title Regained', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 11 May 1915, p. 8; 'Basham's Belt', *South Wales Argus*, 2 June 1915, p. 5.

fighting in America and the *South Wales Argus* reported in 1916 how he demanded £10,000 win, lose or draw for a championship bout with Johnny Dundee.[128] Jimmy Wilde who had a number of fights during the war was reported to have been paid £200 for one particular fight at the N.S.C. in December 1915.[129] Some newspapers similarly reported on negotiations between boxers regarding a possible bout, and how much they expected to receive. The *Glamorgan Gazette* provided details in March 1915 of a proposed fight between Welshmen, Dai Roberts and Sergeant Johnny Basham, where Roberts was 'prepared to place £100 with the editor of any paper selected by Basham, the fight to be for £200, open to £500 a-side'.[130] With many Welsh newspapers calling for men to come forward and join the fight, as seen in the illustration below from the *Merthyr Express* (Fig. 6.11.) it is understandable that, although some of these boxers were held in the highest regard in their respective communities, there did seem to be continued resentment of the lucrative nature of these bouts during wartime. Alongside high rents and food shortages, it was also a period of increased government control over shipping, railways, collieries and exports, which led to further tension and bitterness in many Welsh industrial communities.[131]

[128] 'Famous Boxer Freddie Welsh Home Again: Interesting Interview', *Evening Express*, 16 June 1909, p. 2; 'Boxing', *South Wales Argus*, 25 November 1916, p 5. For a detailed account of Freddie Welsh's boxing career see Andrew Gallimore, *Occupation: Prizefighter. The Freddie Welsh Story* (Bridgend: Seren, 2006); Elbert Hubbard, *Freddie Welsh* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2010); Gareth Jones, *The Boxers of Wales: Merthyr, Aberdare and Pontypridd* (Cardiff: St David's Press, 2011), pp. 123–36.
[129] 'By Our Boxing Expert', *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 21 December 1915, p. 7. For further information regarding Jimmy Wilde's fight purses during war time see, Wilde, *Fighting was My Business*, p. 140.
[130] 'Caerau Boxer Challenges Basham', *Glamorgan Gazette*, 26 March 1915, p. 7.
[131] Kenneth O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: A History of Modern Wales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 174. For detailed account of Wales during the war see Robin Barlow, *Wales and World War One* (Llandysul: Gomer Press, 2014).

Fig. 6.11. Enlistment, *Merthyr Express, February 1915*.[132]



The hostility towards Wilde demonstrates this as he often endured taunts from the public that he should be in khaki and not in boxing shorts.[133] In his autobiography, Wilde explained that

> I wanted to join the forces, although offers of fights were coming along fast; for the first time in my life I felt the real ease of money, the thing that I had dreamed of in the past… There were times when I envied them their opportunities (soldiers) and others when I told myself not to be a fool… I wonder if a single soldier, after the first two years of conflict, really ached to get overseas.[134]

The issue of whether members of the army should be allowed to promote boxing contests for private gain during the war period became so contested that it was raised in the House of Commons in February 1916.[135] The army similarly expressed its disapproval of boxers receiving a fight purse during that period.[136] For many boxers there was an issue of conscience. Should they be earning vast amounts of money from their sport while many others in their communities were risking their lives in the war? Yet how many people, if they were fortunate to be in the same position, would have reacted any differently given the

[132] 'Join up', *Merthyr Express*, 13 February 1915, p. 4.
[133] 'Private Jimmy Wilde', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 28 December 1916, p. 1.
[134] Wilde, *Fighting was My Business*, p. 135.
[135] 'Interesting Question in Parliament', *South Wales Weekly Post*, 26 February 1916, p. 4.
[136] Wilde, *Fighting was My Business*, p. 134.

chance to make money and live comfortably from their pugilistic skills? In his assessment Wild was pragmatic, noting that 'moralising was hardly part of a boxer's story'.[137]

It can be observed that some Welsh boxers avoided the war altogether by pursuing their boxing careers in America. The most famous Welsh fighter to do so was Freddie Welsh, who became Wales' second World Champion when, on 7 July 1914, he beat Willie Ritchie in twenty rounds for the World Lightweight title.[138] Just twenty-one days after his victory the First World War began and *The National Police Gazette*, speculating on Welsh's future as new world champion, suggested that he would

> probably sidestep the glory of serving with the British colours in the pending difficulty, and may soon be expected back in America, where the somewhat belated profits to be accrued from his championship victory over Willie Ritchie awaits him.[139]

The National Police Gazette was accurate in its prediction and Welsh left Britain in August 1914 for America with his family on board the *Olympic*.[140] There is no evidence to suggest Welsh deliberately avoided the war by moving to America, but there is no doubt that his boxing skills and fame allowed him to leave Britain, where he would have most likely been called upon to join the military. As Andrew Gallimore explains, 'the champion' was 'lucky to get back to this country (America) before the English Government grabbed him and sent him to the front to aid in whipping the Germans'.[141] Gallimore goes on to describe that as soon as Welsh set foot in New York he was offered $50,000 for three fights.[142] He had nevertheless made a speech prior to his departure to America, explaining to the soldiers gathered at the port that

> I am a fighter and so are you. Our fights are of a different kind but we both fight for good old Britain so what does it matter? It gives me

[137] Ibid., p. 135.
[138] Suesan Edwards, 'News from the Glamorgan Record Office', *Morgannwg: Transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society*, 47 (2003), 91–5.
[139] Gallimore, *Occupation: Prizefighter*, p. 226.
[140] 'Boxer's Inspiring Words to Soldiers', *Dundee Courier*, 25 August 1914, p. 5.
[141] Gallimore, *Occupation: Prizefighter*, p. 227.
[142] Ibid., p. 229.

> pleasure to try and win back for Britain one of the prizes that had been lost.[143]

He went on to add that he was only making a short stay in America, as he intended to return in about three months' time to box for the Lonsdale belt.[144] This, however, was not to be the case, as he continued his boxing career in America throughout the war, and until his retirement in 1922. As a result, he was highly criticised for departing to America so quickly, with some sportswriters and newspaper editorials, both British and American, going as far as to call him a coward.[145] In October 1915 the *Sunday Mirror* suggested that 'all the boxers of note have joined up… of course, there are people who attack Freddie because he has not enlisted. That is a matter for Welsh and his conscience'.[146] One American newspaper, the *Toledo Times* (Fig. 6.12) also depicted the imaginary figure of John Bull, the personification of the British people, ready to stand up and fight for what they believed in, and called on Welsh to return home and fight for his country. In contrast, Welsh is seen to be resisting any attempts to honour Bull's request and reflects the anger at the time that Welsh was more interested in the financial rewards to be gained than standing alongside his British comrades in France. This is also recognised in the caption used by the *Toledo Times* which stated that 'What's the war in Europe when there is a fight like this coming?',[147] which suggests that Welsh and his compatriots were very much in dispute over his decision to leave for America. For Welsh, boxing was a business that earned him considerable financial rewards. In his first trip to America in 1907, over an eighteen month period, he participated in twenty-two fights

[143] Ibid., p. 227.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Gallimore, *Occupation: Prizefighter*, p. 227.
[146] 'Not in the Army', *Sunday Mirror*, 31 October 1915, p. 22.
[147] 'What's the war in Europe when there is a fight like this coming?', *Toledo Times*, and cited in Gallimore, *Occupation Prizefighter*, p. 228.

and earned an estimated $30,000,[148] while a fight with Johnny Griffiths in 1915 also earned Welsh $4,000.[149]

Fig.6.12. John Bull calling on Freddie Welsh to fight for his country.[150]

During his time in America, Welsh was not allowed to, or chose not to, serve in the American army during the latter part of the First World War. He was nevertheless made a Lieutenant in the American Sanitary Corps and in 1917 he was stationed at the Walter Reed Hospital which was used for the rehabilitation of wounded veterans in Washington DC.[151] In very similar circumstances to that of Basham, Driscoll and Wilde, it seems that Welsh's status as a famous boxer helped him secure a sheltered job in the army, away from the frontline action. In similar fashion, to Welsh, Eddie Morgan (1892–1937), Welsh Flyweight champion in 1910 was another fighter who, it could be argued, used his boxing career to avoid war. Morgan moved to America in 1914 and quickly established a reputation in the American boxing fraternity, with one American critic claiming that 'the ring artifice, as displayed by Morgan, is marvellous. The way he makes his opponents miss and at the same

[148] 'Famous Boxer Freddie Welsh Home Again', *Evening Express*, 16 June 1909, p. 2.
[149] 'Welsh isn't going to hurt this boy much', *Day Book (*Chicargo, Illinois), 21 January 1915. For a comprehensive account of the money earned by Welsh through boxing during the war period see Chapter 12: 'From Roy Rogers to Gunboat Smith', in Gallimore, *Occupation Prizefighter*, pp. 227–41. Also, see Jones, *The Boxers of Wales; Merthyr, Aberdare and Pontypridd*, pp. 123–36.
[150] 'What's the War in Europe When There is a Fight Like This Coming?', *Toledo Times,* and cited in Gallimore, *Occupation Prizefighter*, p. 228.
[151] *Evening Star* (Washington, D.C.), 29 December 1918, p. 6.

time plough through his own fusillade is a treat to see'.[152] During his time in America, Morgan fought some high profile bouts, including a brace of fights against future world lightweight title contender, Rocky Kansas. Yet, his most prestigious contests were undoubtedly the two 'no-decision' fights against world Featherweight champion, Johnny Kilbane, with the first fight earning him a purse of $1,000.[153]

In light of the evidence discussed, it is apparent that while some Welsh boxers felt it their duty to fight alongside their countrymen, others used their boxing careers as the means of self-preservation. The army's role regarding the use of boxers during the First World War is also questionable. During the early years of the war why were some boxers chosen for propaganda purposes such as entertaining the troops, while others were overlooked? Was it possible that high-ranking army officers believed certain boxers were too important to lose in the war? If the 'manly', tough pugilists were seen to be losing their lives at the frontline, was it possible that such negative reports could have had an effect on the morale of other soldiers or hinder recruitment? In contrast it may be possible that other less popular fighters were purposely sent to the front line by the army to boost the morale of other soldiers who may have been encouraged by the sight of these tough, courageous boxers fighting alongside them. Whatever the reasoning for using these men during the war years, it seems certain that they became indispensable to the army during the latter years of the war, especially with the introduction of compulsory conscription into the armed forces. Moreover, it seems the reluctance of some boxers to fight at the front did not tarnish their reputations in any way as they were still respected in Wales.

Clearly, entering the twentieth century there was still criticism and uncertainty regarding the nature of the sport. There remained severe limits on its development in the increasingly dominant moralistic society obsessed by order, time-management and

[152] 'Morgan's Skills. American Critic's Tribute', *Pioneer*, 6 February 1915, p. 4.
[153] Jones, *Boxers of Wales: Merthyr*, p. 70. Also see 'Welsh Boxer's Success', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 25 January 1915, p. 12.

respectability. For example, the *Weekly Mail* observed in July 1902 that glove fights in Merthyr were officially reported to the urban district council for bringing serious discredit upon the town.[154] Discrimination on the grounds of race and gender was also evident, while the 'old style' bare-knuckle prize-fighting may have simply been replaced by the better organised boxing bouts with new rules and regulations. Yet bare-knuckle prize-fighting still existed, even in Wales irrespective of the legality of this form of combat. The Queensberry Rules no doubt played an important role in the transition of the sport from prize-fighting to modern boxing as this restructuring of the sport promoted the skilful, manly art of self-defence.[155] Yet, there was considerable debate concerning the level of violence that should be allowed in such contests, which only added to the confusion surrounding the legality of boxing contests. It seemed that no consensus could be reached on what was acceptable sparring or unacceptable brutality in boxing bouts, and the various outcomes in court cases against prize-fighters did not help to clarify the position of boxing as a sport.

Rugged athleticism and 'Muscular Christianity' nevertheless encouraged the view that a suitable codified, controlled and gloved version of prize-fighting was acceptable for both the physical training and vicarious entertainment of young gentlemen.[156] There is arguably some justification in Tom Shepherd's proclamation that, 'these new rules did more for boxing than any single event since its creation'.[157] However, alongside the introduction of new rules, the N.S.C. played a significant role in the transition of prize-fighting from an illegal activity to an acceptable sporting pastime. Through the acquittal of the N.S.C. manager and other members for the manslaughter of a boxer who died during a boxing bout at the N.S.C. it is apparent that the law became clearer regarding the legality of boxing and way in which the sport was viewed by the authorities. Although the sport had a legal footing the reports of

[154] 'Recent Prize Fights', *Weekly Mail*, 5 July 1902, p. 7. Also, see Chapter 4.
[155] W. Russell Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled: The Decline of British Prize Fighting in the Victorian Era', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 21, 2 (1987), 60.
[156] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 29.
[157] Thomas Boswell Shepherd, *The Noble Art: An Anthology* (London, Hollis & Carter, 1950), pp. 45–6.

serious injury and/or fatalities in the ring ensured that the opponents of boxing could still argue that the barbarity of the sport had no place in a modern and progressive society. Ultimately, established rules and regulations, court decisions and the advent of world war assisted prize-fighting to become viewed by moralists as less of a threat to social harmony, which finally allowed the sport to disentangle itself from its ‘illegal’ standing.

CONCLUSION

'The Decision'

> At its moments of greatest intensity, it seems to contain so complete and so powerful an image of life – life's beauty, vulnerability, despair, incalculable and often self-destructive courage – that boxing is life, and hardly a mere game.[1]

As Joyce Oates suggests, prize-fighting/boxing no doubt captures an ageless human struggle for honour and survival. Bare-knuckle prize-fighting and then boxing was never just about 'sport'. The fights were not staged and many fighters had to live with the sport's physical consequences for the rest of their lives, as the boundaries between life and death were very often brought frighteningly close together.[2] Yet, with its ritualised violence, prize-fighting was very much a product of the age in which it flourished.[3] With many confrontations beginning through a professed violation of the prevailing code of behaviour there was certainly a readiness to use fists to resolve disputes in many communities.

This study has made an original contribution to an understanding of Welsh prize-fighting in the period between c.1750–c.1918. The scrutiny of newspaper reports, contemporary magazines and quarter sessions has demonstrated that during a period of unprecedented social change, characterised by high levels of occupational differentiation, social mobility as well as rapid urban development, prize-fighting emerged as the perfect environment for both individual and collective identity to emerge.[4] As such, the sport helped

[1] Joyce Carol Oates, *On Boxing* (New York: Dolphin/Doubleday, 1987), p. 18.
[2] Benita Heiskanen, *The Urban Geography of Boxing: Race, Class and Gender in the Ring* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 96.
[3] John Ford, *Boxiana or Sketches of Ancient and Modern Pugilism by Pierce Egan* (London: Folio Society, 1976), p. 6.
[4] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 30.

shape and even sharpen a sense of identity, especially local, regional or national as well as the 'other', the ethnic 'outsider' distinction.[5]

There is no doubting that prize-fighting became a part of the fabric of the lives of so many people, which developed into a passionate social and shared activity. Not only was the sport widely practised in a strongly hierarchical society, it straddled social divisions and established a common identity shared alike by all who became known as the 'Fancy'.[6] It was this alliance of class enthusiasts that enabled prize-fighting to thrive despite its illegality,[7] especially as many members of the 'Fancy' could influence the authorities and provide legitimacy for the sport as a popular pastime towards the end of the nineteenth century. This certainly remained the case in Wales where, despite the gradual withdrawal of the gentry, the combination of working and middle-class backers enabled the sport to survive. Technological changes, especially the growth of railways, also helped prize-fighting to expand. Prize-fighters, particularly from isolated Welsh industrial towns, had the opportunity to access more profitable bouts in Wales and England, while supporters were now able to travel more quickly to organised prize-fights. Throughout the nineteenth century, prize-fighting nevertheless remained displaced, with no particular regular venues, and spectators had to attend pre-arranged prize-fights on mountainsides or fields as well as other venues such as public houses, racecourses, boxing-booths, beaches and even in private dwellings. In hindsight, this clandestine activity was essential for the survival of the sport as it was often difficult for the authorities to prevent such events due to their lack of knowledge regarding precise details of the bouts. Additionally, in the absence of adequate numbers of police

[5] Murray George Phillips, *Deconstructing Sports History: A Postmodern Analysis* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 14.
[6] Christopher Johnson, 'British Championism': Early Pugilism and the Works of Fielding', *Review of English Studies*, 47, 187 (1996), 337.
[7] W. Russel Gray, 'For Whom the Bell Tolled: The decline of British Prize Fighting in the Victorian Era', *Journal of Popular Culture*, 21, 2 (1987), 56.

constables, the ‘Fancy’ were, more often than not, able to act in blatant defiance of laws regarding public order.

It has been observed that leisure played an important role in the formation of class cultures. Indeed, the introduction of ‘rational recreation’ as the means of social control by middle-class reformers weighed heavily. This is noticeable in the views of those who believed social improvement could be made through recreational activities. Prize-fighting was certainly influenced by this strategy and ‘rational recreation’ no doubt played an important role in the taming and legitimisation of prize-fighting, as it allowed a new acceptance of the physical nature of the sport and the introduction of rigorous rules and regulations. Class conciliation through mutual interest in prize-fighting allowed the middle-class to gain some social control over the sport through the patronage of prize-fighters. Gentry involvement also helped to alleviate some of the anxieties relating to a fear of crowd violence at a time of rising social tensions. The gentry were able to influence the venues used for prize-fighting contests, using locations such as racecourses while introducing the use of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ circles, which no doubt helped to improve control of the often large crowds in attendance.

Evidence from Welsh literary texts and contemporaneous newspapers has been used to provide greater insights into the daily lives of Welsh communities. Curiously there has been a limited engagement with poems, ballads and newspapers and nineteenth century leisure and sporting activities such as prize-fighting. As Murray Phillips asserts ‘due to the existence of a large specialist sporting press in Britain since the nineteenth century, it is astonishing that so few single studies, whether contemporary or historical, of this branch of the media exist’.[8] The importance of Welsh literature and newspapers in examining the transition of prize-fighting during the nineteenth century is clear to see. Indeed, the way in

[8] Phillips, *Deconstructing Sports History*, p. 16.

which prize-fighting was portrayed during this period was very much dependant on prevailing attitudes or by those individuals who often appropriated the sport for their specific purposes.[9] The changing attitudes can be distinctly identified by noting the differences in the reports of bare-knuckle prize-fighting in the early part of the nineteenth century to those concerning 'manly' boxing bouts as the century progressed, especially noting the adherence to the various rules and regulations that were introduced at various times. Such reports helped to shape the future of the sport and took into consideration how fighting techniques and equipment, sponsorship and greater organisation transformed the sport from an outlawed activity to a semi-legitimate leisure pursuit.

Significant social and economic changes in the century alongside new scientific and medical developments similarly inspired new forms of body discipline and the development of sports training programmes.[10] This was to have an impact on many sport and leisure activities of this period, including prize-fighting. As seen, prize-fighting developed from a rough and ready, toe-to-toe, brawling into a 'scientific art' which incorporated wide-ranging fitness and training regimes, greater nutrition, and advanced fighting techniques to produce the best fighters. Evidence of this can be seen in newspaper reports and training manuals produced in this period. A number of texts which discussed these essential components of boxing performance help to highlight their methods of athletic preparation and technical ability. Additionally, the content of boxing manuals clearly shows just how far the academic enquiries of this period had permeated many social activities.[11] Furthermore, what is evident is that the foundations laid down for the transition of prize-fighting into boxing, through the introduction of these new rules and preparation for fights, have had considerable longevity. Thus, training then, as it does now, clearly distinguished between the acquisition of technique

[9] Heiskanen, *The Urban Geography of Boxing*, pp. 112–13.
[10] Peter G. Mewett, 'From Horses to Humans: Species Crossovers in the Origin of Modern Sports Training', *Sport History Review*, 33 (2002), 96.
[11] David Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom": Eighteenth-Century Boxing Manuals', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, 10 (2012), 1448.

and of 'wind' which is now loosely referred to as 'fitness'. While the rules and the technical know-how of today's professional boxing are markedly different from those of bare-knuckle prize-fighting there can be little doubt that the subculture of the earlier modes of fighting continues to have a presence.[12] Undoubtedly, elements of some of nineteenth century training programmes, in conjunction with the Marques of Queensberry Rules, remain the cornerstone of modern day boxing preparation.[13]

The popularity of prize-fighting (and then boxing) has nevertheless fluctuated throughout the period under study. One day it might be condemned as a fringe activity of social misfits, but the next it can be celebrated as a valorous combat on behalf of some collective good; and then again vilified for its roguish business practices.[14] This was most notable in times of war where fitness and physicality, so readily noticeable in prize-fighting/boxing, was recognised as a significant attribute for soldiers to acquire.[15] The unstable nature of Europe and the constant threat of war during the nineteenth century played a significant part in the transformation of popular opinion concerning prize-fighting from one of brutality to that of an honourable 'manly' sport. The idea of a 'sportsman as a hero' resonated in working-class communities, but prize-fighters also became cultural symbols during periods of war as men were expected to be 'fit for purpose' and defend the country from its aggressors. Thus, William Windham MP (1750–1810) was able to observe that 'why are we to boast so much of the *native* valour of our troops, as shown at TALAVERA, at VIMEIRO, and at MAIDA, yet to discourage all the practices and habits which tend to keep alive the same sentiments and feelings? The sentiments that filled the minds of the three

[12] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 19.
[13] Day, '"Science", "Wind" and "Bottom"', 1460.
[14] Heiskanen, *The Urban Geography of Boxing*, p. 81.
[15] James D. Campbell, 'Training for Sport is Training for War: Sport and the Transformation of the British Army, 1860–1914', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 4 (2000), 50.

thousand spectators, who attended the two pugilists, were just the same in kind as those which inspired the higher combatants on the occasion before enumerated'.[16]

Prize-fighting increasingly came to be seen as a sport that offered the type of fitness and discipline needed to defend the country, and its use within the military progressed rapidly. By the start of the First World War Welsh boxers were used as models of bravery for propaganda purposes to promote the war effort. This status did, however, allow some Welsh boxers to use their careers as a way of self-preservation against the harsh realities of the First World War, either by taking up less dangerous positions in the army such as training instructors and Military Police, or by leaving the country altogether and seizing the opportunities that came their way in other countries, notably in America. Therefore, the question has to be asked, if boxing was good enough for the British Army and seen as an essential part of their physical training programme and sporting activities, why was the sport considered immoral in wider society? During a debate in April 1820 at Jeremy Bentham's Society of Mutual Improvement, it was questioned whether magistrates ought to be censured or praised for their laxity towards prize-fights. At this meeting and later arguments were presented for the continuance of the sport as it had allegedly reinforced the fitness of soldiers, strengthened national character, provided a regulated safety-valve against pent-up grievances, and was accepted as an alternative to duelling to resolve disputes.[17]

Yet the violence associated with prize-fighting was often classified as criminal activity while, as Kath Woodward has noted, there were levels of exploitation which further tarnished the reputation of the sport.[18] Moreover, the greater codification of the rules did not rule out serious injury and clearly some fighters were forced to partake in bouts through peer pressure or acute poverty while ignoring the severe risk they were undertaking. Likewise,

[16] Extracted from Edward D. Krzemienski, 'Fulcrum of Change: Boxing and Society at a Crossroads', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 21, 2 (2004), 173.
[17] Dennis Brailsford, 'Morals and Maulers: The Ethics of Early Pugilism', *Journal of Sports History*, 12, 2 (1985), 140.
[18] Kath Woodward, 'The Culture of Boxing: Sensation and Affect', *Sport in History*, 31, 4 (2011), 488.

there is no hiding the fact that the sport was racist and sexist. The prize-fighting careers of ethnic minority boxers were often cut short or held back due to racial discrimination. Similarly, for women to have increased opportunities in sporting events attitudes towards both their gender and their participation more generally had to change.[19] Certainly, in terms of prize-fighting it was not to happen in the nineteenth century. Women were subordinate to male governance and their involvement in such rough sports was visualised as threatening the very fabric of British social life.

It is also clear that other physical sports that were similar to prize-fighting in their use of violence and aggression were not sanctioned as severely. There is certainly an argument that it was not just the violent nature of the event that attracted censure but the perception that such a violent spectacle could contaminate the crowd and lead to greater social unrest. Thus in his eighteenth century *Crown Cases*, Sir Michael Foster appeared disposed to friendly exertions of cudgelling, fencing and trials of strength involving wrestling and sparring, commenting that 'these 'manly diversions' were not unlawful because they intend to give, strength, skill and activity and may fit people for defence, public as well as personal in time of need'. However, he was vehemently opposed to prize-fighting and public boxing matches as they could serve 'no valuable purpose, but on the contrary encourage a sport of idleness and debauchery'.[20] Nevertheless, it can be questioned whether British society would have become more civilised if the sport had become illegal. The counterargument is that the prohibition of boxing would simply have pushed it further underground.[21] Certainly, in nineteenth century Wales, prize-fighting was clearly a clandestine activity while the attempts to make it illegal certainly did not work. Moreover, crowd control often proved difficult especially as the police often lacked enough information to either prevent the fight or disrupt

[19] Roberta J. Park, 'Sport, Gender and Society in a Transatlantic Victorian Perspective', *British Journal of Sports History*, 2, 1 (1985), 67.
[20] For Sir Michael Foster's views see Jack Anderson, *The Legality of Boxing: A Punch Drunk Love* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 41.
[21] Ken Jones, 'A Key Moral Issue: Should Boxing be Banned?', *Culture, Sport, Society*, 4, 1 (Spring, 2001), 64.

proceedings. Consequently, such bouts were frequently rowdy and drunken events. If the proceedings had been legalised then arguably the police could have controlled some of the worst excesses of the 'fancy'. One of the most prominent features of such bouts was the duration of the fight itself. This naturally led to serious injuries or fatalities with the police largely unable to intervene.

It could also be suggested that prize-fighters often became emblematic, whether they were recognised champions or unknowns who briefly sprung to fame. Their careers were metaphors for a society within which uncertain and sometimes fatal futures were commonplace, or where world champions, whose triumphs represented the hopes of the people and whose physical skills and determination to succeed seemed to embody the attributes of the fellow workers, were valued.[22] In 1925 Jim Driscoll's funeral was the largest ever seen in Wales. It was symbolic of the way in which a man of Irish descent and a product of a once-reviled community could become a symbol of the identity of industrial south Wales.[23] The sport certainly had violent characteristics, but there were also displays of courage, discipline and honour that have arguably outshone any other sport. For some boxers the sport provided respectability, identity and the financial rewards they craved, but all things considered prize-fighting was often no more than an exhilarating leisure interest of the nineteenth century that was enjoyed by many despite its questionable legal status and often covert nature.

Undoubtedly the way prize-fights were conducted had to change if the sport more generally was to survive and develop from a fringe activity. It had to transition, accept greater regulation and public scrutiny. In this respect it did so with the introduction of comprehensive rules which over time introduced weight classifications, specialist trainers and training

[22] Dai Smith 'Focal Heroes: A Welsh Fighting Class' in Richard Holt, *Sport and the Working Class in Modern Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 200; Martin Johnes, *History of Sport in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005), p. 43.
[23] Paul O'Leary, *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2004), p. 157.

programmes, as well as accepting the advent of specific bodies that governed the sport. Thus, by the mid-nineteenth century prize-fighting looked very much like a bare-knuckle version of modern day boxing, with the finishing touches being added with the introduction of the Marques of Queensberry Rules in 1867. By this time a form of prize-fighting training with gloves, known as 'sparring', had become accepted as a respectable pastime.[24] These new regulations also brought about improvements in the health and safety of fighters, and reduced public disorder at bouts, which no doubt enhanced the status of the sport. While the rules and the technical aspects of boxing today are markedly different from those of bare-knuckle prize-fighting, there can be little doubt that the subculture which sustained the former became part of the modern professional sport.[25] Indeed, prize-fighting never really disappeared rather it was simply appropriated and absorbed into modern boxing.

Finally, this study of boxing has demonstrated not only the evolution of prize-fighting into an acceptable sport, but it has also provided a lens through which to view specific changes in nineteenth century British and specifically Welsh society. It has considered class identity and community cohesion and conflict; questionable morality, law and disorder, as well as difference or otherness in terms of fighting for one's ethnic distinctiveness or gender. Moreover, it has shown how prize-fighting proved to be remarkably resilient, thriving in industrial nineteenth century Wales. By entering the prize-ring, men could not only demonstrate their fighting skills but also prove their courage and masculinity, thereby earning them the respect of others in their communities. Yet it is often difficult to defend prize-fighting owing to the violent, drunken behaviour of a number of its participants outside the ring, while attitudes towards gambling, alcohol consumption and the overall behaviour of the supporters very often jeopardised the 'legitimacy' of the sport. However, despite this negativity, there is justification that the sport was always going to prevail in

[24] Michael Gunn and David Ormerod, 'Despite the Law: Prize-Fighting and Professional Boxing', in Steve. Greenfield and Guy Osborn, *Law and Sport in Contemporary Society* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 25.
[25] Sugden, *Boxing and Society*, p. 19.

Welsh society as a result of the undoubted correlation that existed between violence, aggression and social structure, and for this reason, as John Ford fittingly states, 'any condemnation of the sport or the prize-fighters would be better directed at the environment that bred them'.[26]

[26] John Ford, *Prizefighting*: *The Age of Regency Boximania* (Devon: David & Charles Limited, 1971), p. 64.

APPENDIX 1

Timeline of Boxing, 1719–1929.

Boxing, 1719-1788	**Historical Events**
1719 - James Figg was publically acclaimed as Britain's first national champion and this event is generally accepted as marking the official beginning of boxing in the modern age.[1]	
	1735 - Welsh Methodists created by Howell Harris (1714-1773) and Daniel Rowland (1714-1790)
1738 – Boxing match at Tottenham Court Great Booth, Between Dimmock a Car Man in the Borough and Smallwood a Brick Maker. Dimmock was the victor.[2]	
1749 – John (Jack) Slack met with Field the Sailor, the fight is reported as the longest and bloodiest battle ever seen at Broughton's Amphitheatre London. The house was filled with persons of distinction who expressed the utmost satisfaction and applause for the bravery and skill exhibited by the combatants.[3]	
	1794 - Opening of the Glamorgan Canal from Merthyr Tydfil to Cardiff, which marked the beginning of the great contribution of this means of transport to overcoming the problem of moving heavy loads of iron.
1788 - Reports condemning prize-fights were frequently printed in the press. For example, in January 1788 it was recorded that: 'To the disgrace of *The Times*, boxing has been introduced to the public as a national art. Must a man, to... his vigour, risk the loss of his eye, or his teeth, or, as experience has often proved, of his life? There are many rural exercises, not attended by danger, equally invigorating, and at which almost every man could play'.[4]	

[1] John Sugden, *Boxing and Society: An International Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 11.
[2] *Stamford Mercury*, 11 May 1738, p. 2.
[3] *Ipswich Journal*, 25 February 1749, p. 2.
[4] 'Boxing', *The Times*, 8 January 1788, p. 2.

Boxing, 1800–9 **1807 -**The *Morning Chronicle* reported on a fight between two women for a purse of five guineas, the participants were Betty Dyson a vendor of sprats and Mary Mahony a market women. They fought for upwards of forty minutes and were both hideously disfigured by hard blows. Betty was the victor.[5] Combat between Young Belcher and Dutch Sam, near Crawley in Sussex. The fight lasted thirty-three minutes, in which Belcher was shockingly mangled by Sam.[6] **Boxing, 1810-9** **1812 -** A grand boxing match for 100 guineas a-side on Dornton Heath, between Harry Penton (Gloucesterdhire) and James Gullan (Wiltshire). An acre of ground was covered in spectators. The fight was decided in favour of Penton.[7] **1817**- Battle between Turner and Scroggins in Hertfordshire.[8] **1818**- Combat between Randall and Turner. The Morning Chronicle reported that 20,000 people had assembled by one o'clock, embracing a great variety, from the Noble Lord to the speculative conveyance.[9] **Boxing, 1820–9** **1820** - From 1820s until the 1850s, the prize-ring came under increasingly severe attack,	**1803-15** Napoleonic Wars

[5] *The Times*, 24 March 1807. Cited in 'The History of Female Bare-Knuckle Fist Fighting in Britain', http://fscclub.com/history/knuckle-e.shtml.
[6] *Cambrian,* 29 August 1807, p. 4.
[7] Anon., 'Pugilism', *Carmarthen Journal and South Wales Weekly Advertiser*, 11 January 1812, p. 4.
[8] 'Boxing', *Norfolk Chronicle*, 14 June 1817, p. 2.
[9] 'The Grand Pugilistic Combat between Randal and Turner', *Morning Chronicle*, 7 December 1818, p. 2.

and began to struggle for gentry and aristocratic support.[10] **1820 -** Changing patronage of boxing. **1820** – Suggested decline in prize-fighting during 1820s. **1820 -** Racecourse fights in 1820s. **1820s -** Fear of social and political unrest. **1820** – The *Norfolk Chronicle* reported, at the fight between Painter and Oliver, the greatest order prevailed: the decorum of the ring was kept up by well-known prize-fighters, Shelton, Randall, and Turner (to name a few). Painter won the fight in the twelfth round when he floored Oliver, who when time was called could not appear at the scratch.[11] **1823** – Battle for 100 sovereigns a-side, took place at Harpenden Heath near St. Albans, Herts. The combatants were Abraham Belasco and Pat Halton (Irish Champion). Thirteen rounds were fought and Belasco was declared the winner.[12] **1824** – Prize fight between Bob Parry, a local quarryman and a native of Monmouth, and Powell, a blacksmith, of Broad Oak, Herefordshire. The fight lasted one hour and forty-seven minutes and a total of 103 rounds were fought; not less than 5000 person were in attendance to watch the fight. Parry was the victor.[13] Battle between Ned Turner and Peace Inglis took place at Colnbrook for a prize of 200 guineas. 16 rounds were fought in just under 47 minutes. Turner was the victor.[14]	

[10] Kenneth Sheard, 'Boxing in the Civilising Process', Anglia Polytechnic, PhD thesis, 1992, p. 179.
[11] 'Pugilism', *Norfolk Chronicle*, 22 July 1820, p. 3.
[12] 'Boxing between Belasco and Halton', *North Wales Gazette*, 17 April 1823, p. 1.
[13] *Cambrian*, 14 August 1824, p. 4.
[14] 'Battle between Ned Turner and Peace Inglis', *Dublin Evening Mail*, 15 November 1824, p. 4; 'Fight for Two Hundred Guineas. Turner and Inglis', *North Wales Gazette*, 18 November 1824, p. 4.

1825 – The Pugilistic Club (which was set up by gentry' supporters) was dissolved. **1828 -** Attempts to halt the decline in prize fighting continued after the Pugilistic Club dissolved in 1825 with the Establishment of Fair Play Club in 1828**.** The club's immediate concerns were to improve the good order of fights and behaviour in and around the ring.[15] **1829** – Patrick Tunnycliffe alias Patsy Tunny (the Liverpool Pet) fought Ned Byrne alias Ned Murphy for £25 a-side at Hollin Bush near Wrexham. Byrne was declared the victor after 95 rounds were fought. Between three and four thousand people were in attendance.[16] **<u>Boxing, 1830–9</u>** During the 1830s and 1840s prize-fighting had become increasingly working class. **1832** – Provincial Milling between Will Charles (Newport) and Stephen Trainer (Irishman) at Monmouth Cap for £50 a side. Charles was the victor.[17] *Monmouthshire Merlin* 9 June 1832. **1833** – Great Fight at Raglan between William Gardiner (alias The Old Horse) and William Charles (the Welsh Champion) for £50. Gardiner was the victor. *Monmouthshire Merlin* 30 March 1833.[18] **1835** – 'Slashing contest' of an hour's duration at Brecon races.[19]	**1831** The Merthyr Rising 1-7 June. Widespread demonstrations by ironworkers and their families, who took control of the town, until large numbers of soldiers were brought in to regain control. **1832** The Great Reform Act (also known as The Representation of the People Act). One of the changes brought about by this Act was to formerly exclude women from voting in Parliamentary elections, as a voter was defined in the Act as being male. **1834** 16 October – Houses of Parliament burned down.

[15] Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1989), p. 89.
[16] 'Fight between Tunny and Byrne', *Chester Chronicle*, 4 December 1829, p. 3.
[17] 'Provincial Milling: Fight between Stephen Trainer, an Irishman, and Will Charles, of Newport', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 9 June 1832, p. 3.
[18] 'Great Fight at Raglan', *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 30 March 1833, p. 3.
[19] Peter Stead and Gareth Williams, (eds), *Wales and its Boxers, The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 3. Also, see 'Brecon-Pugilism', Cambrian, 5 September 1835, p. 3 where it was recorded

1839 – Mid Wales 3,000 watched Price and Humphreys fight eighty five rounds at Llanbadarn Fynydd, Radnorshire.[20]	**1836** Chartism in Wales – June 1836 John Frost Elected Mayor of Newport. 3-4 November 1839 – Chartist Riots.
Boxing, 1840–9	**1837** 20 June, Victoria became Queen after the death of William 1V.
1840s - Withdraw of aristocracy support of boxing. Any upper class support that remained for the sport was aimed at glove-fighting within the confines of private clubs, out of sight to the public.	**1839-41** Taff Vale Railway opened to Aberdare Junction 1839 and was continued to Merthyr in 1841. First passenger train from Merthyr to Cardiff ran on 19 April 1841.
1845 – Fight between Thomas Welsh (Young Sambo) and William Jordan for £50 a-side. Welsh won the fight when a foul blow was struck by Jordan in the 34th round.[21]	**1839-43** Rebecca Riots.
The Fight for the Championship of England between William Thompson (Bendigo) and Ben Caunt for £200 a-side took place on the county perimeter at Newport Pagnall. It was reported that 10,000 people were in attendance. The fight lasted two hours and eight minutes; the referee declared Bendigo the winner in the 93rd round when Caunt went down without a blow and lost the battle.[22]	**1840** John Frost (Newport), Zephaniah Williams (Blaina) and William Jones (Pontypool) found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death, (later reduced to transportation to Australia for life).
Boxing, 1850–9	**1845** September – Irish Potato Famine began, causing mass starvation, disease and emigration.
Decline in popularity of prize-fighting in the mid- and late nineteenth century. South Eastern Railway Company mounted special excursion trains to prize-fights in 1859-60 For a short period in the 1850s there was a resurgence of interest in pugilism which came to function as a focus of national pride.	**1847** The Blue Books published. Examination of education in Wales. It contained material criticising the Welsh language and the morals of the Welsh people. **1851** March – Census reveals the extent of Welsh support for the Nonconformist Church. Eighty percent of Welsh worshippers attended Nonconformist Chapels and twenty percent attended Church of England.

that a 'slashing contest took place during a tremendous thunderstorm between Welsh Champion Scroggins and Newton. Newton claimed to have been struck by lightning'.

[20] Stead and Williams, (eds), *Wales and its Boxers, The Fighting Tradition*, p. 60.

[21] *Bells Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 26 January 1845, p. 4.

[22] 'The Fight for the Championship of England', *Cork Examiner*, 12 September 1845, p. 3.

Influence of the Pugilistic Benevolent Association – boxing took on the appearance of a national sport as it came under control of men who had appeared in the London Prize ring and who could be considered among its more influential followers. **1851** - 2000 people in attendance at Chepstow races in 1851. **1853 -** Crimean War of 1853 to 1856 also helped cause of prize-fighting – attitude towards combat sport became modified as anxieties over fitness of the population for military service were aroused by the war continued through the late 1850s and 1860s, in a way which probably benefitted all 'manly' physical sports. **1855 -** *The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian* reported that five county constabulary were despatched to the scene of a prize-fight, but supporters of the fight turned on the officers and an encounter took place and the police officers were overpowered and suffered severely.[23] **1856 –** Prize fight between Dan Thomas (Pontypridd) and David 'Duck' Ingram (Bristol) took place at the Rock and Fountain between Chepstow and Newport. The fight was for £25 a side, the pugilists fought for about an hour when the Welshman was obliged to give in.[24] **1858** –The *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser* reported on a brutal fight between David Thomas and Edward Lewis (both miners) 14 rounds were fought and Lewis was the victor. Thomas was carried semi-	**1853-6** Crimean War. **1857** 3,000 miners strike in Aberdare, due to a twenty percent reduction in wages. **1858** The Great Llangollen Eisteddfod.

[23] 'Pontypridd and Neighbourhood; Disgraceful Proceeding', *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 2 February 1855, p. 3.
[24] 'Llanvair Prize Fight', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 9 February 1856, p. 1.

conscious to his home where he later died from his injuries.[25] Gallant Fight between Dan Thomas (The Welshman) and Jack Brookes for Twenty-Five Pounds a Side.[26] **1859 -** Fight Between Dan Thomas (The Welshman) and Charles Lynch (The American), for £50 a side, Thomas was the victor.[27] **<u>1860-9</u>** Revival of prize-fighting in 1860s but an attempt to exclude this same working class as had been successfully accomplished in horse-racing – physical separation of classes with socially exclusive grandstands and running only first class railway excursions. **1860** – A 64 round prize fight took place near Rhymney Inn between Clatchin (Abertillery) and J. Stephenson (Beaufort), The Breconshire police stopped the proceedings, however, the combatants moved across the border into the county of Glamorganshire and fought a further battle of equal duration.[28] **1862** – Lightweight Championship Fight between Dan Thomas (Welsh Champion) and Joe Nolan (Birmingham), for a £400 purse. The fight was brought to an abrupt end at round 20 by the arrival of the police). Some weeks later it was agreed by the men, for the records, to call the fight a draw.[29]	

[25] 'The victim of a brutal passion', *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser*, 25 September 1858, p. 2.
[26] 'Gallant Fight between D. Thomas (The Welshman) and Jack Brookes for Twenty-Five Pounds a Side', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 10 October 1858, p. 6.
[27] 'Gallant Fight between Dan Thomas (The Welshman) and Charles Lynch (The American), for Fifty Pounds A Side', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 30 January 1859, p. 6.
[28] *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser*, 7 January 1860, p. 3.
[29] 'The Fight between Nolan and Thomas for the Lightweight Championship', *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1862, p. 6.

Prize-fight for £5 a-side took place between Tafarnaubach and Llangynydr. The combatants, Billo-bach and Jem Hundred, were twice stopped by the police, but through some artful dodging, succeeded in carrying out their battle. Billo was the victor.[30] **1863** – Sowhill Chicken and the Tredegar Infant fought on Llanhilleth Mountain – watched by a sizeable crowd. **1864** – Daniel Desmond and Thomas Walsh both of Pontnewynydd met on Little Mountain, they fought 46 rounds in an hour and forty minutes. Desmond was the victor.[31] **1865** – Ned Llewellyn fought John Williams (Jack Portobello) at Rumney Moors on the Glamorgan-Gwent boundary.[32] **1866** - An observer commenting on a fight between Jem Mace and Joe Gobs in the *Aberdare Times* stated 'It is said that these prize-fighters who were put up like Roman gladiators to amuse the crowd, were disgusted with an arrangement that gave them very little of the money and that they therefore merely shammed a fight which neither intended should be in earnest'.[33] Pontypool's 'Tallow' fought 'The Admiral' in August 1866 (Gwent County History Vol 4 p. 237).[34] **1867** - Welsh sportsman - John Chambers drafted the Marquess of Queensberry Rules. It was a set of 12 rules which were drafted	

[30] Rhymney Prize Fight', *Merthyr Telegraph and General Advertiser for the Iron Districts of South Wales*, 7 June 1862, p. 3.
[31] 'Pugilism', *Illustrated Usk Observer and Raglan Herald*, 4 June 1864, p. 8.
[32] Gareth Williams, 'A Brutal Passion: Bare-knuckle Bruisers and Mountain Fighters', in Peter Stead and Gareth Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers: The Fighting Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), p. 10.
[33] 'Another Prize-fight', *Aberdare Times*, 11 August 1866, p. 3.
[34] Williams, Chris and Williams, Sian Rhiannon (eds), *The Gwent County History. IV: Industrial Monmouthshire, 1780–1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), p. 237.

for different categories, Lightweight, Middleweight and Heavyweight. The '30 second count' was reduced to a '10 second count' in this very set of rules. A famous boxer of his times - 'Gentleman Jim' Corbett defeated John L. Sullivan in New Orleans and became the first world heavyweight champion, as per the new rules, in 1892. **1868 -** Special excursion trains to prize-fights were barred by law in this year. A prize-fight took place in a field overlooking Shrewsbury for a purse of five shillings; the principals were Mary Callaghan and Alice Davies. They and their accessories were subsequently summoned before the magistrates and fined in varying sums from fifteen shillings to a guinea, or the alternative of fourteen and twenty-one days imprisonment.[35] **<u>Boxing, 1880–9</u>** **1884 -** The *Cardiff Times* newspaper reported on a fight between Shoni Engineer and Thomas Davies, both men hailing from the Rhondda, for £25 a-side, near Cefn-Ydfa-House. 28 rounds were fought in about 40 minutes. It is stated that not less than 4,030 people were present. At the end of the encounter a couple of policemen made their appearance, but the crowd closed upon them and prevented the pugilists from being arrested.[36] **1885** -The *Aberdare Times* continued to express its concerns regarding prize-fighting in Wales, stating: 'A more disgusting thing than prize fighting it is hardly possible to conceive... That it should happen in our midst is an outrage to decency,	**1867** Second Great Reform Act. It expanded upon the First Reform Act passed in 1832, by giving the vote to all householders and lodgers in boroughs who paid £10.00 or more a year in rent. **1879** Anglo-Zulu War. **1880-1** First Boer War. **1884** The Third Reform Act – Gave men in the counties the same voting rights as those in the boroughs i.e all householders and lodgers paying £10.00 or more a year in rent.

[35] 'A Prize-fight between Women', *County Observer and Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 14 March 1868, p. 7.

[36] 'Prize-Fight near Bridgend', *Cardiff Times*, 22 March 1884, p.5.

and the brutes that take part in it... should be punished severely. We cannot look upon such people as anything other than beasts'.[37] **1886** – Edmund Powell and Tudor Foster (both colliers) were charged with a breach of the peace for fighting on Cymmer Mountain; they battered each other for two hours until they had a draw.[38] **1887** - 'Prize-fight near Bridgend. The combatants at this fight were John Jones alias Shoni Engineer (Treorchy) and Peter Burns alias Dublin Tom (Cardiff). The fight lasted about an hour and three quarters, no less than 45 rounds were fought with Shoni eventually winning the fight.[39] **1888 –** An exciting combat between Sam Hughes (Birmingham) and Bob Wiltshire (Cardiff) for £50.00. The fight lasted for 7 rounds, Wiltshire was declared the winner.[40] Desperate prize-fight at Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire, the participants were Welshman Shoni Engineer and Gilderhill of Bristol. (The Bristolians name is in question as several newspaper reports show his name as White and also Guiderel).[41] Emily Miles and Emily Leys were summoned to Newport police court for fighting in Commercial Street. Miles, well-known for her boxing propensities, and Leys were given the choice of paying a fine of ten shillings or spending time in the penal establishment at Usk.[42] A prize-fight took place near Gatewen colliery between Edward Williams and John	

[37] *Aberdare Times*, 26 December 1885, p. 4, and cited in Stead and Williams (eds), *Wales and its Boxers*, p. 15.
[38] 'Prize-Fighting', *Cardiff Times*, 13 March 1886, p. 4.
[39] 'Prize-fight near Bridgend. Victory of the Welshman', *Cardiff Times* 8 January 1887, p. 6.
[40] 'Boxing at Cardiff. Glove Contest for £50', *Western Mail*, 7 February 1888, p. 3.
[41] 'Desperate Prize Fight: Shoni Engineer V. Gilderhill', *Cardiff Times and South Wales Weekly News*, 26 May 1888, p. 5.
[42] 'Lady Pugilists at Newport', *South Wales Echo*, 10 September 1888, p. 2.

Wright, for a flitch of bacon and a gold watch.[43] **1889** –John Jones (alias Shoni Engineer, Swansea) met John O'Brien (Cardiff) in a field at Marshfield, the stake was £50 a-side. O'Brien knocked out the Engineer in the 19th round.[44] The *South Wales Echo* reported that a prize fight at Lydney between Morgan Crowther (Newport, Mon) and James (Chaffy) Hayman (Bristol) was interrupted by the police. Crowther was arrested and charged with creating a breach of the peace. Hayman later surrendered to the police and was also charged.[45] David Rees (Nantyglo) and William Williams (Brynmawr) fought for an hour and a half in a ring of 24 feet on Brynmawr Mountain for £10 a-side. At the close of the 42nd round Rees threw in the sponge.[46] Fight for the West of England Championship between Morgan Crowther (Newport, Mon) and Jack Hicks (Cheltenham), Hicks was knocked down in the 4th round and failed to rise in the 10 seconds allowed. Crowther was declared the winner.[47] *South Wales Daily News* reported that a prize-fight took place between midnight and dawn. Two 17 year old youths named respectively Jones and Mcarthy fought with	

[43] 'Local Prize Fight', *Wrexham Advertiser*, 30 November 1888, p. 8.
[44] 'The Interrupted Prize-Fight', *South Wales Echo*, 1 May 1889, p. 2. Police appeared at the scene of a prize-fight and intervened but did not arrest the fighters. They also interviewed onlookers but none were prosecuted.
[45] 'The Lydney Prize-Fight. Magisterial Proceedings', *South Wales Echo*, 28 June 1889, p. 2.
[46] 'Brutal Prize Fight in Wales', *Aberdeen Evening Express*, 13 September 1889, p. 2. The two men fought for forty-two rounds for a stake of £10 a-side.
[47] 'Boxing Match. West of England Championship Morgan Crowther Victorious', *South Wales Daily News*, 21 September 1889, p. 6.

bare fists for 7 rounds. Mcarthy was declared the winner when Jones failed to come to the scratch when 'time' was called.[48] The Great Glove Fight for £1000 between Jem Smith (champion of England) and Peter Jackson (coloured champion of Australia) was reported in the *Western Daily Press*. The fight took place at the Pelican Club in Soho, London. The fight was awarded to Jackson.[49] **<u>Boxing, 1890–9</u>** **1890** - 12 round glove fight (4oz gloves) at Pontypridd for £50, contestants were Jack Raymond (Pontypridd) and Jack Doad (Penygraig), the contest was fought under the Queensbury Rules. Raymond was the victor.[50] Boxing contest under the Queensbury Rules took place at Victoria Theatre, Pontypridd, between Sam Thomas alias Butcher (Ynyshir) and George Lambert alias Bungy (Pontypridd). Thomas was awarded the fight after knocking out Bungy in the third round.[51] Prize fight between Illtyd Evans (Pontypridd) and Jack Hitchings (Ynyshir) took place on the summit of Llanwonno Mountain near Pontypridd. The stakes were £10 a-side; Hitchings was the victor.[52] A report in the *Western Mail* stated that Morgan Crowther (Newport) and James (Chaffy) Hayman (Bristol) engaged in a glove-fight at Brock Street Hall, Bath. The police interfered and both men were detained,	**1890** February – Explosion at Llanerch colliery, Abersychan. At least 170 miners lost their lives and many more injured. **1890** March – Explosion at Morfa colliery, Taibach. 87 Miners lost their lives in this terrible catastrophe.

[48] 'Prize-Fight near Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 26 October 1889, p. 3.
[49] 'The Great Glove Fight', *Western Daily Press*, 12 November 1889, p. 7.
[50] 'Glove Fight at Pontypridd, a [Special Telegram to the Echo]', *South Wales Echo*, 11 August 1890, p. 3.
[51] 'Glove Fight at Pontypridd', *South Wales Daily News*, 7 October 1890, p. 8.
[52] 'Prize Fight on Llanwonno Mountain', *South Wales Echo*, 8 October 1890, p. 3.

and later committed to trial. They were subsequently fined £25 each for assault and bound over to keep the peace.[53] **1891**- The National Sporting Club was founded in London. Daniel Richards and William Richards colliers from Maerdy were ordered to keep the peace for six months and to pay the costs, after fighting on Maerdy Mountain. The stake was two watches; eight rounds were fought before being interrupted by the police.[54] **1892**- Prize-fight at Merthyr Tydfil, Thomas James (Aberaman) against Sam Thomas, alias Butcher, (Ynyshir), Thomas was the victor.[55] Chamois Warner and Jack Davies two well-known Swansea men fought for a purse of £20. Warner was the victor in the 27th round when Davies threw up his hands in defeat.[56] **1893** - A glove contest at the Drill Hall Swansea, under Marquis of Queensberry Rules, between Patsy Perkins (Swansea) and John Thomas (Cardiff). The fight was awarded to Perkins who knocked out Thomas in the first round.[57] **1894** – An expected 'fight to the finish' at Penarth for £25 a-side, with skin gloves, between Albert Jones (Cardiff) and John Williams (Cardiff), was thwarted by the police as it was about to start; *Barry Dock News* reported that the principals were arrested and later released on bail. However, upon their release they continued to Cardiff	**1891** Parliament passes new Tithe Act – landlords made responsible for payment of tithes.

[53] 'Glove Fight at Bath: Morgan Crowther Versus Chaffy Hayman', *Western Mail*, 15 May 1890, p. 3.
[54] 'Prize Fight at Maerdy', *South Wales Star*, 31 July 1891, p. 8.
[55] 'Prize Fight at Merthyr Tydfil', *Evening Express*, 22 January 1892, p. 2.
[56] 'Prize-Fight at Swansea. Twenty-Seven Rounds Fought', *Cambrian*, 30 September 1892, p. 8.
[57] 'Glove Contest at Swansea', *Western Mail*, 15 February 1893, p. 3.

and concluded the fight. Twelve rounds were fought and the fight was declared a draw.[58] *South Wales Daily News* reported on a Glove fight that took place at Stokes's Boxing Booth, Porth, between Sam Thomas, alias Butcher, (Ynyshir) and Maloy, (Wolverhampton). The fight ended after 3 rounds, due to the disgraceful conduct of the spectators.[59] Prize-fight at Lan Wood, Pontypridd; the combatants were William Bennett (Norton Bridge) and Di Evans alias Matthews (Hopkinstown). Both were summoned to appear before the Pontypridd Magistrates, and were fined 20s each and bound over to keep the peace.[60] Welshman Redmond Coleman knocked out Curley Howell (Bristol) in the first round in London. The fight was reported in *Sporting Life* as being the shortest fight ever witnessed at the National Sporting Club at that time.[61] Fight for the Championship of Wales at the National Sporting Club, London, for a purse of £50. Fistic experts in the ring were Welshmen John O'Brien and Dai St. John. The fight lasted five rounds and O'Brien was the victor.[62] Fatal glove fight at Patsy Perkins's boxing saloon, Aberdare. David Rees (Aberaman) succumbed to a fractured skull after being knocked out by Thomas Robert Edwards.[63] Severely fought battle took place on the Maindy Mountains between Jack Northey and Joe Mitchell both from the Rhondda. The fight ended in a draw after 64 rounds were fought.[64]	

[58] 'Prize-Fight at Penarth Frustrated', *Barry Dock News*, 30 March 1894, p. 6.
[59] 'Glove Fight at Porth. Sam Butcher (Ynyshir) v. Maloy (Wolverhampton). Disgraceful Conduct of Spectators. The Visitor Mobbed and Trampled on', *South Wales Daily News*, 3 April 1894, p. 7.
[60] 'Pontypridd Prize Fight. Defendants Convicted'*Cardiff Times*, 14 April 1894, p. 5.
[61] 'A Grand Night at the National Sporting Club', *Sporting Life*, 24 April 1894, p. 4
[62] 'Boxing: Fight for the Championship of Wales', *Evening Express*, 24 April 1894, p. 3.
[63] 'Fatal Glove Fight, *Weekly Mail*, 26 May 1894, p. 15.
[64] 'Prize-Fight in the Rhondda', *Weekly Mail*, 9 June 1894, p. 9.

Bare-knuckle fight on the sea beach at East Moors, Cardiff, the *Evening Express* stated that two young men from the Roath district named Ford and Morgan fought six rounds for £5 a-side. 200 spectators attended and Morgan won the prize money.[65] Brutal ninety-round fight for £5 a side, between Rhondda colliers, Thomas Shaw and William Rees.[66] National Sporting Club, London, Sam Thomas alias Butcher (Pontypridd), against Lyons (Bristol), the fight was awarded to Lyons. John O'Brien against Frank Craig (Harlem Coffee Cooler) Craig was the victor.[67] A Sparring Exhibition between Dai St. John an John O'Brien took place at the Drill Hall, Swansea.[68] Dick Ambrose fought Jim O'Brien for £15. Ambrose knocked out O'Brien in the first roun **1895 –** Glove fight at Swansea took place at Mrs. E. Samuels boxing saloon, between Daniel Thomas (Hafod) and Tom Harris (Llansamlet) for a purse of gold. Thomas was the victor.[70] Prize-fight took place at Aberavon sands (Port Talbot) for £10 a-side between David Pierce (Aberaman) and Sam James (Glyn Neath). Twenty nine rounds were fought; Pierce was the victor.[71]	

[65] 'Prize Fight at Cardiff: A Battle with Bare Fists Results in a Knock Out', *Evening Express*, 3 September 1894, p. 3.
[66] 'Brutal Prize Fight', *Evening Express*, 5 September 1894, p. 3.
[67] 'Welsh Boxers in London', *Western Mail*, 9 October 1894, p. 6.
[68] 'Boxing – O'Brien and St. John at Swansea', *South Wales Daily Post*, 26 November 1894, p. 3.
[69] 'Prize Fight at Swansea', *Evening Express*, 22 December 1894, p. 3.
[70] 'Boxing: Glove Fight in Swansea', *South Wales Daily Post*, 21 January 1895, p. 3.
[71] 'Prize-Fight at Aberavon, Twenty-Nine Rounds! For Twenty Pounds', *South Wales Daily Post*, 3 April 1895, p. 4.

Scientific Sparring Exhibition at Pontypridd between Peter Jackson, the undefeated champion of the world and Dai St. John.[72] The *Evening Express* described the fight at the Central-Hall, Holborn, between John O'Brien (Wales) and Frank Craig (Coffee Cooler), as degrading, a sorry exhibition of boxing and a fiasco. The newspaper reported that O'Brien mounted the stage in a hopeless condition 'as drunk as the proverbial fiddler'. O'Brien was knocked out in the first round.[73] Glove fight at The Old Gloucester School of Arms, between Rees Mazey (Merthyr) and James Day (Plymouth). The fight was awarded to Day.[74] Contest held at Patsy Perkins Saloon between Rees Mazey (Swansea) and Redmond Coleman (Merthyr) for a purse of £10.00. Mazey was the victor.[75] William Barry of Greenhill and Thomas Harris of Llansamlet, both labourers, met at Patsy Perkins Booth, Swansea. The fight was stopped in the 4th round by Perkins due to the unruly nature of the crowd.[76] Successful prize-fight brought off at Cardiff between Sam Randall (Ogmore Valley) and Harry Millard (late of Kingswood Bristol now residing in the Rhymney Valley) for a prize of £25. The fight lasted for an hour and was declared a draw by the referee.[77] Prize-fight at Cardiff for a purse of £50, thirteen rounds fought, combatants were Charley Palmer (Treforest) and E. Morris (Blaina). Palmer was the victor.[78]	

[72] 'Boxing in the Rhondda. The Undefeated Champion of the World at Pontypridd', *Evening Express*, 9 April 1895, p. 1.
[73] 'Degrading Prize-Ring: A Sorry Exhibition in London', *Evening Express*, 20 April 1895, p. 2.
[74] 'Boxing. Glove fight at Swansea. Mazey vs. Day', *South Wales Daily Post*, 4 May 1895, p. 3.
[75] 'Boxing: Mazey V. Coleman', *South Wales Daily Post*, 11 May 1895, p. 3.
[76] 'Glove Fight at Swansea', *South Wales Daily News*, 12 June 1895, p. 7.
[77] 'Prize Fight near Cardiff', *Evening Express*, 30 July 1895, p. 1.
[78] 'Prize-Fight at Cardiff', *Western Mail*, 17 August 1895, p. 6.

A desperate and fatal prize fight took place on Llanwonno Mountain, between Mountain Ash and Ynysybwl. *Hull Daily Mail* reported that the combatants were Arthur Vaughn and Harry Lewis, both from Penrhiwceiber. Vaughan was beaten and died a few hours later.[79] Henry Lloyd was charged with causing the death of Edwin Murphy whilst engaged in a fight at the Marl Pit. He was later released without charge, when the coroner's inquest resulted in the verdict that Murphy had died from natural causes.[80] **1896** – Prize fight near Cardiff for the Championship of the Valleys, Aaron Evans (Bargoed) fought Harry Isles (Kingswood, Bristol). Evans won the fight in 10 rounds.[81] Prize-fight took place on Lledrddu Mountain between Twm Clump and Bunt for £2.[82] Prize fight on Ebbw Vale Mountain between two colliers from Nantyglo, David John Price and George Moore, they fought for thirty shillings each.[83] **1897** – Two well-known local pugilists were charged with taking part in a prize-fight on Mabon's Day, at the Drill-hall, Pentre. David Jones fought William Lloyd for a purse of £25. They were committed to trial at the next quarter-sessions and bailed for £20 each.[84] Knuckle fight at Swansea near the pier head between two local boxers Morgan and Grey. Morgan won the fight in four rounds.[85] A prize-fight for a £1 a-side took place on Penrhys Mountain, between Edward Augustus Collard and John Thomas. Collard who was badly beaten was knocked out in the	**1896** Mine explosion at the Ferndale Colliery Company, Tylorstown, fifty miners killed.

[79] 'Prize-Fight on the Welsh Mountains: A Fatal Termination', *Hull Daily Mail*, 16 September 1895, p. 4.
[80] 'The Marl Pit Fight', *Evening Express*, 6 November 1895, p. 3.
[81] 'Prize Fight near Cardiff. Championship of the Valleys', *South Wales Echo*, 28 July 1896, p. 2.
[82] 'Prize Fight in the Rhondda Valley', *Evening Express*, 5 August 1896, p. 2.
[83] 'Prize Fight on Ebbw Vale Mountain', *Evening Express*, 3 October 1896, p. 1.
[84] 'A Rhondda Prize-Fight', *Evening Express*, 29 March 1897, p. 3.
[85] 'Knuckle Fights at Swansea. Exciting Encounters on The Sands', *Evening Express*, 5 April 1897, p. 3.

thirteenth round. He was carried into a neighbouring cottage, where two hours later he died.[86] Fatal boxing booth prize-fight, Samuel Mainwaring alias Samuel Mandry, (Treorchy) lost his life after a fight with Ivor Thomas alias Ivor Butcher.[87] **1899** – 'Prize-fight near Cardiff', the *Evening Express* newspaper reported a fight between Dennis Tobin of Barry and Jack May of Birkenhead, who was now living in Cathays, for £10. Tobin won the fight in the fifth round.[88] A hard contest on the Cardiff moors between Dan Connell and Tamplin (no christian name provided) in the presence of a numerous crowd. Six severely hard rounds were fought before Tamplin's seconds threw in the sponge.[89] **<u>Boxing, 1900–9</u>** **1902** – After a quarrel had taken place, David John Jones and William Phillips engaged in a prize fight at Treorchy for 10 shillings a side to settle their differences, they were arrested and bound over to keep the peace for six months and ordered to pay the costs.[90] **1908** – Boxing contest at the Ynysangharad gymnasium, between William Mills (Treforest) and Thomas Evans (Pontypridd). In the fifteenth round Mills slipped on a wet patch in the ring caused by water from the sponges splashing on the boards, his head came into violent contact with the floor and he was rendered unconscious. Mills later died after an operation to remove a clot from his brain.[91]	**1899-1902** Second Boer War **1900-03** Strike at Penrhyn Quarry. **1901-** January, death of Queen Victoria, succeeded by Edward V11.

[86] 'Fatal Prize-Fight', *Rhyl Record and Advertiser*, 22 May 1897, p. 8.
[87] 'Prize-Fighting in the Rhondda', *South Wales Daily News*, 25 August 1897, p. 5.
[88] 'Prize-Fight near Cardiff', *Evening Express*, 15 March 1899, p. 6.
[89] 'Prize-Fight at Cardiff', *South Wales Daily News*, 9 May 1899, p 7.
[90] 'A Treorchy Prize-Fight', *Evening Express*, 15 July 1902, p. 3.
[91] 'Boxing Misadventure. Treforest Lad Killed', *Cardiff Times*, 12 December 1908, p. 9.

Boxing, 1910–29	
1910 –Boxing contest for the British feather-weight championship and Lonsdale Belt took place at the National Sporting Club between Jim Driscoll (Cardiff) and Seaman Hayes (Hoxton). Driscoll won the fight in the sixth round when the referee stopped the fight.[92] Fred Welsh fought Jim Driscoll at the American Skating Rink, Cardiff on Tuesday 20 December 1910. The fight was awarded to Welsh after Driscoll was disqualified in the tenth round. It was reported that Driscoll was in tears of dismay at the sensational verdict and was said to be inconsolable. Welsh was also saddened at the unfortunate conclusion of the fight and regretted that a more satisfactory termination had not come about.[93]	**1910-11** Cambrian Combine dispute (Tonypandy Riots). An attempt by miners and their families to improve wages and living conditions.
1914 – A 20 round contest for the fly-weight championship and Lonsdale belt took place at the National Sporting Club between Percy Jones (Porth) and Bill Ladbury (Greenwich). Jones gained a victory on points.[94] Private Johnny Basham (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) defeated Dick Nelson (America) at the Liverpool Stadium.[95]	**1913** Explosion at Senghenydd colliery, which killed 435 of the 935 men working in the pit.
Sergeant Johnny Basham (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) against Johnny Summers for the Lonsdale welter-weight belt at the National Sporting Club. Basham knocked out Summers in the ninth round. At least a third of the audience were officers and men of the British Army.[96]	**1914-18** World War 1 began on 28 July 1914 and ended 11 November 1918.
1915 – Welter-weight championship title fight between Sergeant Johnny Basham (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) in his first defence of his Lonsdale belt and Sergeant Tom	

[92] 'Driscoll vs Hayes', *Evening Express*, 15 February 1910, p. 4.
[93] Sensational Result of Prize Fight', *Weekly Mail*, 24 December 1910, p. 2.
[94] 'Percy Jones' Triumph: Welshman still unbeaten', *Rhondda Leader*, 31 January 1914, p. 2.
[95] 'Boxing: Basham Defeats Dick Nelson', *Western Mail*, 13 March 1914, p. 5
[96] 'Welsh Boxing Champion: Basham's Clever Victory over Summers', *North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality*, 18 December 1914, p. 3.

McCormick (Manchester Regiment). Basham won in the thirteenth round retaining his title and winning a purse of £550.[97] **1916** – Tommy Harrison (Hanley) beat Walter Rossi (Pontypridd) in an eliminating contest for the British bantamweight title. The contest took place at the National Sporting Club, Covent Garden.[98] **1929 –** National Sporting Club became known as the British Boxing Board of Control.	**1916**- Lloyd George first Welshman to become British Prime Minister.

[97] 'Title Regained', *Cambria Daily Leader*, 11 May 1915, p. 8
[98] 'Eliminating Bout: Tommy Harrison Too Good For Walter Rossi', *Sheffield Independent*, 29 February 1916, p. 6

Appendix 2: Poems.

‘Young Bloody’

Come all you gallant boxers
In boxing take delight,
Draw near and I will tell you
Of a famous noble fight.
It was as hard a battle, boys,
As ever yet was seen.
And now, for it was fought, my boys,

Chorus
Success unto Young Bloody,
Let every hearty sing,
He is the conquering hero
And the champion of the ring.

The match was made between two gentlemen
Of courage stout and bold,
The money stake was entered down
Five hundred pounds in gold.

Each man to find a champion
As good as e’er was seen,
The conqueror for the money, boys,
On Ludlow Castle Green

The one was a prize fighter
Brought up unto the stage;
The other was a Montgomery lad,
Not twenty years of age.
The betts they went so handy,
The money went so free,
It was ten to five and five to one,
Bri(s)tol Jack will win the day.

Then spoke a clothier from Newton,
His money he had laid,
This young man as to bribery
Indeed I am afraid.
O then, replied a gentleman,
Squire Harrison by name,
Saying I’ll be bound for all your gold
If bribery there is ta’en.

The up spoke young Bloody
Saying it never shall be told
That I would sell my country
For silver or for gold.

So be sure of your betts, me men,
To flinch I'll ne'er be seen,
Before your money shall be lost,
I'll die upon the green.

Then up steps a butcher lad,
Hearing what young Bloody said.
He pulled out twenty guineas,
And on this Welsh boy laid.
The champion pulled out twenty more,
And this to him replied,
Before I leave this country
I'll tan thy greecy hide.

The ring was clear at one o'clock,
The men went on the ground,
And in the midst of thousands stood
As you may dare go bound.
So now the battle as begun,
As you may well suppose,
The very first blow young bloody struck
He fairly split his nose.

The third round young Bloody rose
Just like a lion stout,
And with his bunch of fives
He made his man to reel about.
The seventh round young Bloody gave
A hard blow on the ear,
Which most took it from his head,
So plainly doth appear.

He panned him on the knowledge box
Which made the claric [claret] fly;
The streams of blood came down his cheeks,
Poor Jack began to cry
My head it is so mangled,
My body is so sore,
I must give in, kind gentlemen,
I cannot fight no more.

So now the battle it is o'er,
And Bloody has won the day.
And now let him fight when he will
I hope he always may.
The element did roar like thunder
With echo of their noise.
Hosaw! Hosaw! Was all their cry,

Hosaw! Montgomery boys![99]

Pierce Egan 'A Boxing we will go' (1811)

Come move the song and stir the glass,
For why should we be sad?
Let's drink to some free-hearted lass,
And Crib, the boxing lad.
And a boxing we will go, will go, will go,
And a boxing we will go.
Italians stab their friends behind,
In darkest shades of night;
But Britons they are bold and kind,
And box their friends by light.
The sons of France their pistols use,
Pop, pop, and they have done;
But Britons with their hands will bruise,
And scorn away to run.
Throw pistols, poniards, swords aside,
And all such deadly tools; Let boxing be the Briton's pride,
The science of their schools![100]

Bob Gregson, 'British Lads and Black Millers', *Sporting Magazine,* 1811.

You gentlemen of fortune, attend unto my ditty,
A few lines I have penn'd upon this great fight,
In the centre of England the noble
place is pitch'd on,
For the valour of this country, or
America's delight;
The sturdy Black doth swear,
The moment he gets there,
The planks the stage is built on,
He'll make them blaze and smoke;
The Crib with smiling face,
Says, these boards I'll ne'er disgrace,
They're relations of mine, they're
Old English oak.[101]

Thomas Ingoldsby's 1840 poem 'The Ghost'

Within a well-roped ring, or on a stage,
Boxing may well be a very pretty Fancy,
When Messrs. Burke or Bendigo engage;
Tis not so well in Susan, Jane or Nancy:

[99] Lloyd, 'A Prize-Fight Poem', 183–5.
[100] Strachan, 'Poets and Pugilists', 17–23.
[101] Ibid.

To get well mill'd by any one's an evil,
But by a lady-tis the very Devil.[102]

'Dan Pontypridd'

Cydneswch a dewch yn dirion
Pawb un anian, Gymry mwynion,
Canwn glod i'r Cymru gwyddyn.
Sef Dan Thomas, fel y plufyn.

Dangos gwaith wnaeth i Sais
Er bod yno llawer llais
Yn gweiddi, "Well done, Taffy
You will surely win the prize".

'R' oedd mawr swn ymhlith y Saeson
Am John Brooks ei fod yn champion,
Ond Dan Thomas a'u gwir siomodd,
Colli'r dydd mae'r Sais o'i anfodd.

Ar ddydd Llun trwy ddinas Llunden
'R' oedd mawr gri mai Brooks yw'r bachgen,
Nid oes Sais byth gaiff ei wado
Gan ryw grotyn back o Gymro...

Awr a hanner a saith muned
Y bu yno frwydr galed,
Ond yn y diwedd 'r' oedd gwyr Llundan
Yn gweiddi'n groch - "Go' damn the Welshman".

Ar y dechrau r'oedd y Saeson
Gyda Brooks yn gweiddi'n gyson,
Ond pan ddechreuodd Dan ei dwymo
Dangos wnaeth gwir waith y Cymro.

Nid oedd yno un cilbwti ,
Dan fel dur o blaid y Cwmry;
Er ei fod ymhlith y Saeson,
Fel y gog fe gadwai'i galon.

Er fod Brooks yn fachgen gwisgi

[102] Thomas Ingoldsby, 'The Ghost', in *The Ingoldsby Legends, or Mirth and Marvels* (London: Routledge, 1842), pp. 96–7.

A'i holl egni arno'n dyrnu,
Pedair rownd ar ddeg a deugan -
Dan aeth drwyddynt wedi'r cyfan.

'Nawr gwyr Norwich a'r gymdogaeth
Sydd mewn gofid mawr ac alaeth -
Wedi colli'r clod a'u harian,
Parch i fachgen o wlad Forgan!

Nid oes gwiw i'r Saeson bellach
A gwyr Morgannwg i ymyrrath;
Y Cyw a'u trecha i redeg gyrfa,
Dan Pontypridd a dorra'u clonna.

Llawenhewch holl fechgyn Cymru,
Ni chadd Saeson ddim ein maeddu,
A dymunwn am hir einios
Llwyddiant fyth fo i Dan Thomas.

Nawr dewch Gymru o un galon,
Canwn glod i'r Cymro gwiwlon;
Nid oes Sais fyth all ei faeddu -
Dan Pontypridd yw blodyn Cymru!

Maeddu'r Sais wnaeth yn ddi-gudd
Heb un braw na chalon brudd;
Gwyr Morgannwg, wiwlan olwg,
Barchant beunydd Bontypridd.[103]

'Dan Pontypridd' (English Translation)

Come together and come gently
Everyone one-minded, Welshmen of minerals,
We shall sing praise to the durable Welshman
Who is Dan Thomas, like a feather.

He showed his power to the English
Despite the voices
Shouting "well done, Taffy
You will surely win the prize"

[103] T. Jones, *Hen Faledi Ffair* (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 1971), p. 32.

There was a huge sound amongst the English
For John Brooks, for he was champion,
But Dan Thomas truly put him to shame
The English lost the day with displeasure

On Monday through London city
There was a huge cry for Brooks
An Englishman has never before been defeated
By some young lad from Wales.

For an hour and a half and seven minutes
There was a hard battle
But in the end, the men of London
Were shouting – "Go, damn the Welshman"

To Begin with, the English –
With Brooks, were constantly shouting
But when Dan started to warm up
He showed the true power of the Welsh

There wasn't a single sound
Dan, like steel for the Welsh;
Despite being amongst the English,
Like a gog he kept his heart.

Despite Brooks being the decorated man
And his entire energy was punching
Fourteen rounds past
Dan pulled through in the end.

Now, the man from Norwich, and the neighbourhood
Are the ones in distress and grief-
Having lost the glory and money,
Respect to the boy from Glamorgan.

There's no worth to the Englishman now,
With the Glamorgan boy interfering
The *** that prevailed in his career
Pontypridd Dan had broken their hearts.

The boys of Wales rejoiced
The Englishman could not defeat us
As they wished for a long time
An eternal victory to Dan Thomas.

Now Wales came from one heart
We sang praise to the worthy Welshman
No Englishman could ever defeat him
Pontypridd Dan is the flower of Wales.

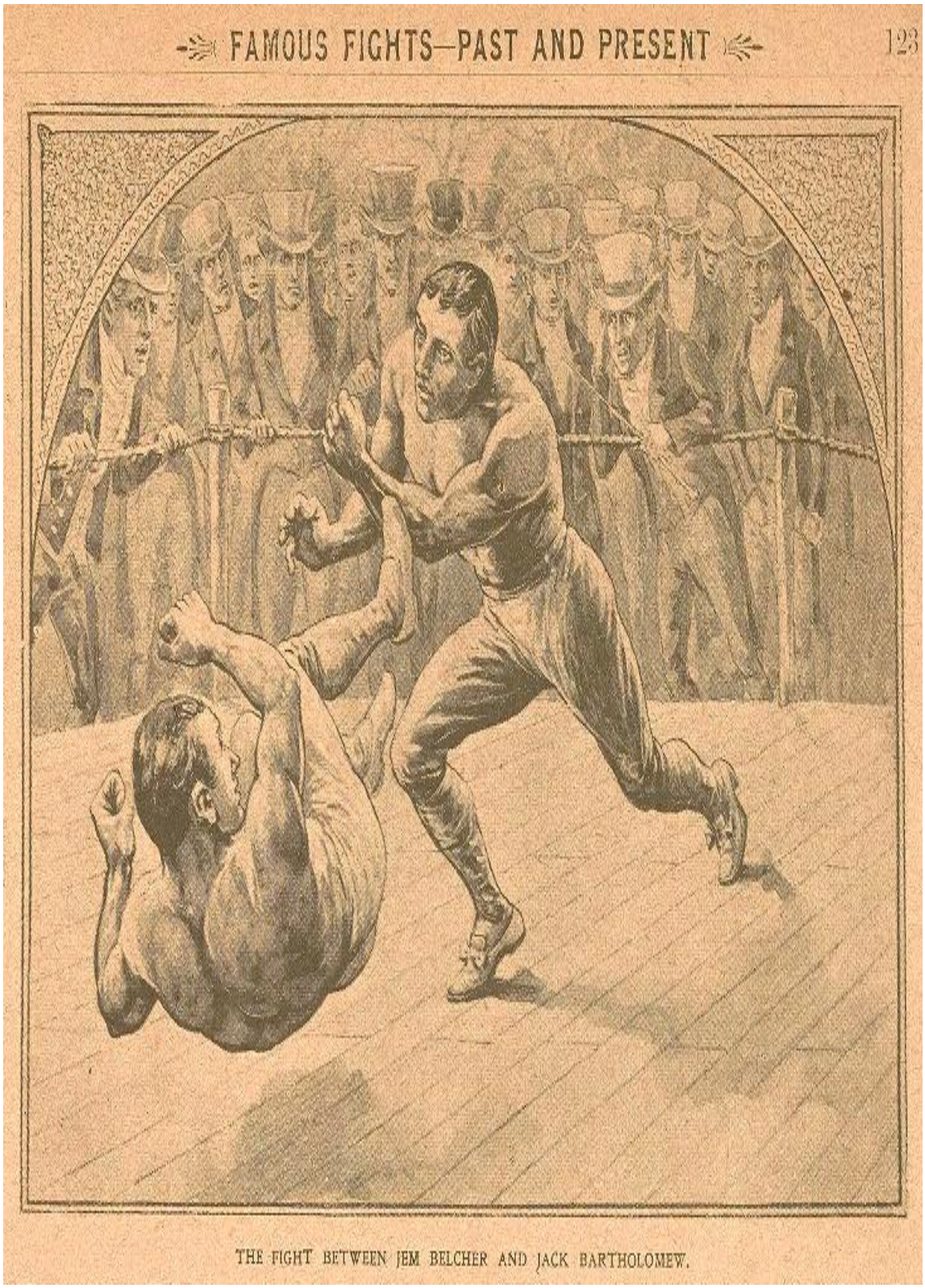
The Englishman's defeat was no secret,
Without a fight or sad heart
The man from Glamorgan a worthy sight,
Pontypridd's everyday reverence.

Appendix 3. Prize-Fighters.

1. Using the Ropes for Advantage.[104]

[104] 'Cutting the Rope', *Famous Fights*, 1, 7 (n.d., c.1901–44), cover page.

2. **Jem Belcher and Jack Bartholomew in a raised ring with wooden flooring.**[105]



[105] 'The Fight between Jem Belcher and Jack Bartholomew', *Famous Fights*, 1, 8 (n.d., c.1901–4), 123.

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