

A Brief History of Bangor

1600-1800

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Declaration:

I certify that this dissertation is my own unaided work, and has been personally researched and written by me.

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Table of Contents:

Title page	1
Declaration	2
Acknowledgements	3
Introduction	4
Bangor; an urban centre?	6
Bangor; the people	40

Fig 1, a graph detailing levels of trade in accordance to the probate records at different periods	30
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Introduction

Bangor is an ancient cathedral town which flourishes today as a small university city and a permanent population of 15,280 according to the 2001 census,¹ swelling by another 10,000 students during term time. While developments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen Bangor grow into the surrounding countryside the city has not always enjoyed such population figures or development.

Evidence of the presence of humans in the area goes back into prehistory. At Llandegai archaeological evidence consists of what has been interpreted as a Neolithic house,² as well as two Neolithic Henges, while in Bangor itself evidence of human activity dates to the early Bronze Age with finds including; a fine flint dagger similar to those found in warrior graves in Yorkshire which was found at Penrhosgarnedd,³ a cremation urn, thought to be typical of around 1700 BC, found during building work in Upper Garth Road,⁴ while excavations during the 1850s near St David's Hospital (now a retail park) found a hoard consisting of a looped palstave and two bronze moulds.⁵

Regardless of these archaeological finds, it is not until the sixth century that Bangor began its journey to become the city we see today with the founding of a monastic settlement by St Deiniol. It is traditionally thought, rather than a historical fact that the land was granted to Deiniol by Maelgwnking of Gwynedd who was described by Gildas as one of the most

1 City Population 'Bangor (Gwynedd), <http://www.citypopulation.de/php/uk-wales.php?cityid=e51300> (accessed 3 November 201).

2 F. Lynch, 'Bangor before Saint Deiniol', in S. I White (ed), *Bangor From a Cell to a city* (Gwynedd, 1994), p.6.

3 Ibid, p.7.

4 Ibid, p.7.

5 Ibid, p.8.

powerful kings in Western Britain.⁶ St Deiniol founded his monastery in 525 AD,⁷ and the church became a cathedral when he was consecrated a bishop during 546 AD⁸. It is often cited that Bangor took its name from the wattle fences that originally surrounded the settlement but this is only true in part, the name actually derives from the binding part of the wattle fence, rather than the wattle fence itself.⁹

One of the earliest mentions of Bangor dates to the age of the Welsh princes and comes from the Welsh chronicle 'Brut y Tywysogyon', where it is written for the year 1210-1211, when king John was at war with Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, that John 'sent some of his men to the city of Bangor to burn it. And Rhobert, bishop of Bangor, was seized in his church, but he was ransomed for two hundred falcons'.¹⁰ Bangor is also mentioned in the Brut y Tywysogyon with regards to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in the year 1282-1282 where it states, intriguingly, 'And then was effected the betrayal of Llywelyn in the belfry at Bangor by his own men'.¹¹

Written histories of Bangor are scarce indeed as it is commonly assumed that nothing happened in Bangor from the founding of the cathedral until the industrial revolution, a view point highlighted brilliantly in a recent BBC documentary of the town. The half hour program described the founding of the cathedral by St. Deiniol but then jumped all the way to the

6 D. Longley, 'Bangor Fawr yn Arfon', in S. I White (ed), *Bangor From a Cell to a city* (Gwynedd, 1994), p.13,14.

7 A. Lockheart, *The Cathedral church of St. Deiniol* (Bangor, 1994).

8 A. Lockheart, *The Cathedral church of St. Deiniol* (Bangor, 1994).

9 Ibid.

10 *Brut y Tywysogion*, trans. J. T Caradoc (Cardiff, 1955), p.85.

11 *Brut y Tywysogion*, trans. J. T Caradoc (Cardiff, 1955), p.120

nineteenth century.¹² A. D Carr wrote that ‘great events seem to have passed Bangor by’,¹³ while a PhD thesis by P. E. Jones about Bangor that began in 1801 wrote that ‘Bangor did not grow beyond the size of a small village, however, until about 1800’.¹⁴

Although it is true that Bangor saw major changes during the nineteenth century, such as a huge increase in population, the building of the bridges over the Menai Straights, the coming of the railways and its popularity as a tourist destination, to say that nothing happened before then is to ignore, not only the history of the ancient city, but also the history of the people, as well as developments that foreshadowed the changes of the nineteenth century and beyond. The dissertation will examine the period 1600-1800 as it covers a period of a slow change during the seventeenth century to a period where change speeded up during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

The dissertation itself will begin with the question ‘can Bangor be termed an urban centre during the period 1600-1800?’ and will discuss classical, early modern and recent ideas of what an urban centre means. Bangor’s population levels during the period will be examined as well as what trade was available there. The overriding argument will be that although Bangor was a small market town neither its population nor trade available justify the argument that it was merely a backwater town as has been insinuated.

The second chapter will discuss the people of Bangor, what were their occupations, their sources of income and their rent levels, in order to establish what Bangor was like then. It

¹² Welsh towns, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00pk567> (accessed 20 November 2012).

¹³ A. D. Carr, ‘Medieval city’ in S. I. White (ed), *Bangor from a cell to a city* (Gwynedd, 1994), p.32.

¹⁴ P. E. Jones, ‘Bangor: a study in urban morphology and social geography 1800-1901’ (PhD diss. Bangor university 1973) p.3

will also include comparisons of place names between the old and the new as some of the old place names can still be seen today in the form of street names. Crime will also be examined with comparisons drawn between Caernarfon and Bangor in order to examine the argument by Beattie that crime was more likely in places with larger populations. The Quarter Session records and the Great Session Records are expected to validate Beattie's argument, while Bangor did suffer from some crime it was generally along the form of brawls and misunderstandings or arguments, leading to entries in the quarter sessions regarding keeping the peace. It will end with the conclusion

Bangor; an urban centre?

In order to ascertain whether Bangor could be classed as an urban centre during the period 1600-1800 a variety of elements will be considered such as the views of classical, early modern and recent scholars with regards to urban centres. Population levels will be examined along with what trade and amenities were available. It will be argued that although Bangor was a small ecclesiastical town it still fulfilled an important urban function and while this function may have remained on an even keel during the seventeenth century the eighteenth century and particularly the latter half, saw changes that not only increased this function but also foreshadowed the changes that occurred in Bangor during the nineteenth century.

Classical philosophers and scholars such as Socrates and Aristotle defined their ideas of the city along with reasons for their growth. When describing the growth of a city Socrates did so with the idea that a city was an economic, social and cultural centre that happens as '...none of us are self-sufficient, but we all need many things'.¹⁵ For Socrates, a city was a place

¹⁵ Plato, 'The Republic', ed. and trans. J. M. Cooper, *Complete Works* (Cambridge, 1997) p. 1008.

where people came together offering a unique trade, from farmers to crafts men, soldiers to merchants as well as medics as above all the environment of a city should be a healthy one.¹⁶ Aristotle thought that ‘the city state is a natural growth, and that man is by nature a political animal’, he attributed the growth of the city as partnerships between villages and while it may have ‘come into existence for the sake of it, it exists for the good life’.¹⁷ It was also considered important that a city could supply itself with basic necessities of life while being as far as possible self-sufficient.¹⁸ For these scholars of the classical world the city was representative of mans most natural and best environment.¹⁹

This idea was rediscovered during the renaissance with scholars continuing to place a huge emphasis on the connection between the urban centre and the beginning of civilised life.²⁰ For Thomas More the city was a place where ‘rude uncouth inhabitants’ were transformed to a ‘high level of culture and humanity’.²¹ It is true that the English word for civilisation derives from the same word as city and both the contemporary and early modern scholars believed there was a direct link between the two.²²

More recently scholars have debated not only of the size and function of urban centres in Wales, but whether they existed at, particularly when examined in a European context. In Europe some urban historians had a very high population threshold for defining a town, such

¹⁶ Plato, ‘The Republic’, p.1008-1012.

¹⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans H. Rackham (London, 1932) V.21. p9.

¹⁸ S, Shearn ‘Concepts of an Urban Ideal and the early modern Welsh town’ (PhD diss., Bangor University of Wales, 2011), p.150

¹⁹ Ibid, p.61.

²⁰ Shearn, ‘Concepts of an Urban Ideal and the early modern Welsh town’ (PhD diss., Bangor University of Wales, 2011), p.61

²¹ Thomas More, *Utopia: Latin Text and an English Translation*, eds. G. Logan, C. Miller and R. Adams (Cambridge, 1995), p. 111.

²² H, Carter. *The Towns of Wales: a study in urban geography* (Wales, 1965), p. 1.

as Jan de Vries who thought that a population of 10,000 people made a town,²³ while Paul Bairoch ignored urban populations that were less than 5,000.²⁴ In a Welsh context, P. Jenkins defined a ‘real’ town as having a population of a 1,000 or more and that in Tudor Wales there were barely a dozen towns that would qualify as ‘real’ towns under these conditions.²⁵ Even by 1801 there were only a dozen towns that could boast a population of 2,000 or more, while only three of those could boast a population large enough to be considered as big as a small English town and these were Swansea, Carmarthen and Merthyr Tydfil.²⁶ Jenkins goes as far as to argue that specifically Welsh towns were of limited importance in Wales and that ‘to speak of urban history in Wales before the nineteenth century is perhaps to misuse the term’.²⁷ The role of urban centre was instead filled by the English towns of Chester, Shrewsbury and Bristol.²⁸

Comments upon Bangor itself and its role as a small functioning town are not encouraging. Contemporary writers such as Daniel Defoe wrote that although Bangor was a town noted for its antiquity with a church though to be one of the most ancient in Britain the ancient cathedral had such an old mean look it was almost ‘despicable’.²⁹ Elis-Williams wrote ‘it would be an exaggeration to say for the greater part of the eighteenth century the little town

23 Jan de Vries, *European Urbanization 1500–1800* (London, 1984)

24 Paul Bairoch, Jean Batou and P. Chevre, ‘La population des villes europeennes de 1800 ‘ a 1850 ‘ (Geneva, 1988)

25 P. Jenkins, ‘Wales’, in P. Clark (ed), *Cambridge Urban History of Britain* (Cambridge, 2000), p.134

26 Ibid

27 P. Jenkins, ‘Wales’, p.134.

28 Ibid, p.133.

29 Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain vol II* (London, 1748), p.374

of Bangor was a sleepy ecclesiastical hollow...but only a slight one'.³⁰ He also draws a contrast between Caernarfon and Bangor suggesting that Caernarfon was an ancient borough with a wealthy merchant class that traded in goods imported by the sea as well as in slates while Bangor was 'a mere ecclesiastical adjunct'.³¹ It is true that Bangor lost out in some measure to Caernarfon which had been established as a place of royal authority after the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd when Edward I built his first Snowdonian castle there,³² the building of which began in 1283.³³ The population was thought to be bigger at Caernarfon with the 1801 census showing a population over 3,600 in the Parish of Llanbeblig in which the town was situated, in comparison to the population of 1,700 in the Parish of Bangor³⁴. Caernarfon had a harbour of sorts with a customs house that could command ships on the spot,³⁵ in contrast to the fishing smacks and master of vessels found at Bangor.³⁶ Ships would have bought in trade that would have been on a larger and more varied scale than at Bangor. Caernarfon was also the administrative centre for the whole of Caernarvonshire with Sir John Wyn (1509-1547) writing during the reign of Henry VIII 'In those days Carnarvon flourished as well by trade of merchandise, as also of the Kings Exchequer, chancery and common law –

30 M, Ellis-Williams, *Bangor Port of Beaumaris: the nineteenth century shipbuilders and shipowners of Bangor* (Denbigh, 1998), p.11.

31 Ibid, p.12.

32 A. Dodd, *History of Caernarvonshire* (Denbigh, 1968), p14

33Coflein, 'Caernarfon castle'

<http://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/95318/details/CAERNARFON+CASTLE%3BCAERNARVON+CASTLE/> (accessed 3 Febuary2013).

34 M, Ellis-Williams, *Bangor Port of Beaumaris*, p.12.

35 Dodd, *A History of Caernarvonshire*, p.203.

36 Ibid, p.204.

courts'.³⁷ Caernarfon then may have held many advantages over Bangor in terms of their functions as towns, this does not however mean that Bangor was a mere 'ecclesiastical hollow' and to brand it such is to ignore its function and development in the period 1600-1800.

Carter argued that urban development up until the restoration of 1660 was characterised by a general decay and disorder which inhibited the economic conditions needed in order for towns to grow and develop.³⁸ He graded Welsh towns of the seventeenth century on the amenities they had; if they had a market, if they held Assize courts, if they had a chancery and exchequer and if there was a grammar school established by 1600.³⁹

As Bangor had both a market and a grammar school Carter put Bangor into a grade two out of three⁴⁰. Only four towns achieved a grade 1 while there were 21 towns in the grade two and 31 towns in grade 3.⁴¹ By the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the criteria had expanded to contain commercial functions, such as, markets, number of employed people, banks and insurance agencies, while social functions included theatres, newspapers and grammar schools. The administrative functions included whether the town held Assizes and Quarter Sessions and poor law union heads. Again Bangor was put into the grade two category.⁴² However, Carter also fails to see that these small towns played an important role within their communities or parish as well as in a wider context. It can also be argued that as

³⁷ The history of Caernarfon,

<http://www.caernarfononline.co.uk/gwydion/thedock.html> (accessed 5 March 2013).

³⁸ H. Carter, *The Towns of Wales*, p.30.

³⁹ Ibid, p.34.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.35.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid, p.50-1.

a grade two town Bangor was not the ‘sleepy ecclesiastical hollow’ as Ellis-Williams had described it and there were indeed another 31 towns that were in the category below Bangor. This idea of the Welsh town as being unsubstantial and un-functional has recently been challenged,⁴³ and a number of key points regarding Welsh early modern urbanism have emerged; every town has its own story that has been influenced by factors such as typology, function and geography and while independent, each town should be seen in terms of a series of urban networks⁴⁴. Bangor itself can be seen in this way since it is positioned between Beaumaris and Caernarfon, both busy towns, as well as either near (during the seventeenth century) or on (in the eighteenth century) a main route way to Anglesey and Ireland. Just because Welsh towns were small it does not necessarily follow that they did not fulfil a role as an urban centre and research has shown that around three quarters of the 1,000 British mainland towns had a population fewer than 2,500 people, both during the early modern period and beyond.⁴⁵

According to John Speed, Bangor had not been a very populous place since times past when it was ‘...so large, that for the greatnesse thereof it was called Banchor Fawr’ as detailed in his description of the town in 1610.⁴⁶ He wrote that the old town had been levelled to the ground ‘insomuch as there is not any footing to be found, or other monuments left thereof...’⁴⁷ That Bangor was once so large is anecdotal since there is no real historical or archaeological

43 P. Borsay et al, ‘Wales, a new agenda for urban history’, *Urban History*, 32 (2005), pp.5-16, and N. Powel, ‘Do numbers count? Towns in early modern Wales’, *Urban History*, 32 (2005), pp.46-67.

44 Ibid p.9.

45 Ibid, p.9-1.0

46 J. Speed, *John Speed’s Atlas of Wales* (London, 1676), p.123.

47 Ibid.

evidence to support this. Although, it could be argued, such evidence may have not have been recognised during previous times of expansion when archaeological work was very basic if it occurred at all and knowledge of such things was rudimentary. What then was the population of Bangor during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

Today Bangor is famed for having one of the longest high streets in Britain. Beginning at the Skerries pub, it runs all the way up to the former cinema, now a hall of residence with a Dominos pizza shop below. It is though from John Speeds 1610 map of Bangor as well as other written sources that Bangor comprised one street of about half a mile in length. These sources however, with the exception of Browne Willis, who tells us the number of households at the edge of the town,⁴⁸ do not seem to take into consideration the population or households in the surrounding area, all of which formed part Bangor as an urban centre.

When examining population levels of Bangor for the period 1600-1800 the whole parish will be taken into consideration, there are three reasons for this. Firstly the parish of Bangor was very small and was described as ‘being in Length from *East to West*, five miles, and from *North to South* four miles’.⁴⁹ Secondly, Aristotle wrote that ‘The partnership composed of several villages is the city-state’,⁵⁰ a quote which could apply to Bangor and the surrounding communities within the small parish of Bangor, that contributed and used Bangor in the context of an urban centre and thirdly the primary sources available, that give population numbers, deal with Bangor as a parish rather than the town and surrounding communities by themselves.

48 B. Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of Bangor and the Edifices Belonging to it* (London, 1721), p.48

49 Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of Bangor*, p.48.

50 Aristotle, *Politics*, trans, Rickman. H. (London, 1932)

There are a few primary sources that can cast light on the question of Bangor's population for the period 1600-1800, although they mainly date to the seventeenth century. The *diocesan surveys* of 1563 and 1603 were taken throughout England and Wales in order to ascertain the state of the church after the reformation.⁵¹ The 1563 survey returns, which was to be returned quickly and as such only shows the number of households, show that there were 80 households in Bangor while Pentir had 20 households.⁵² The 1603 survey returns were completed and returned over a larger time span and detail the number of communicants, non communicants and recusants.⁵³ For Bangor and Pentir the numbers were 400 communicants, a female non communicant with no recusants.⁵⁴ It is unfortunate that the survey returns do not give a separate number for Bangor and Pentir. It is however unclear what portion of the population was counted, whether it was both males and females, everyone over a certain age, just men or just men over a certain age.⁵⁵

The Compton Census of 1676, which like the diocesan surveys, were used to see the number of communicants, non communicants and recusants, show that there were 320 conformists and non conformist listed for Bangor although these figures may also include Pentir.⁵⁶ However, caution must be taken with the accuracy of the Compton Census as the first

51 M. Grey, 'The diocese of Bangor in the late sixteenth century', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, 5 (1988), p.31.

52 A. Dryer, And D. M Palliser, (eds). *The diocesan population returns for 1563 and 1603* (Oxford, 2005), p.12.

53 M. Grey, 'The diocese of Bangor in the late sixteenth century', p.64

54 M. Grey, 'The diocese of Bangor in the late sixteenth century', p68

55 M. Grey, 'The diocese of Bangor in the late sixteenth century', p 34

56 A. Whiteman, introduction to *The Compton Census of 1676*, by (Oxford, 1986) p.xxx

question ‘what number of persons are by common Accompt & Estimation resident & inhabiting in each parish subject to your jurisdiction’,⁵⁷ led to some ambiguity as it was unclear whether the census should include children and women or women over a certain age.⁵⁸ Some bishops wrote for guidelines, such as Edward Reynolds, Bishop of Norwich, who wrote ‘onely the house-keepers or all women and children as well as men or wether onely men of above sixteen years of age’,⁵⁹ there is no record for such guidelines being requested from Bangor.

There can be found in Caernarfon record office one Hearth Tax document dating to 1662 that lists names and the number of hearths in the parish. The Hearth tax record at Caernarfon lists one name and the number of hearths contained in the house. The hearth tax may only be used as an indication to the number of households in the parish as it does not give a population figure and only lists one name rather than the names of the entire household. Neither does it list those who were exempt from paying the tax, for instance those who were too poor to pay. For the parish of Bangor there are a total of 176 names with 101 belonging to Bangor itself, 10 in Treborth Issa, 11 for Brithdir, 18 for Tyllvaen, 9 for Caerwedog and 9 in Pentir.⁶⁰

The only source available for the eighteenth century, with regards to population figures, can be found in *A Survey of Bangor Cathedral and the Edifices belonging to it (1721)* by Browne Willis. This book not only gives the number of households in Bangor but also lists the communities along with the numbers of households in the parish.⁶¹ The number of households

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ A. Whiteman, introduction to *The Compton Census of 1676*, by (Oxford, 1986)
p.xxx

⁶⁰ Q.S Hearth Tax (Caernarfon record office)

⁶¹ B. Willis, *A Survey of the Cathedral Church of Bangor*, p.48-49

in Bangor was 68 with another 30 at ‘the skirts of the Town, or Town parcel’.⁶² Tyllvaen had 16 houses, Brithdir had 12, Caerwedog had 14, Treborth had 25, Vaenol had 6, Aber-y-Pwll had 15 and Pentir had 17 houses.⁶³

The number of the probate records can also give clues regarding how the population of Bangor changed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; these can be found on the national Library of Wales website. For the period 1600-1700 there are a total of 68 records, 47 of these were wills and the remaining 21 records were for bonds. For the period 1700-1800 there are a total of 219 records of which there were 120 wills and 99 bonds. It must, however, be taken in to consideration that records for the seventeenth century only begin properly in 1660, before this there are only six records for 1637, 1638, 1643, 1644, 1645 and 1648 with none for the 1650s. This is mainly due to a fire at the records office which destroyed many of the earlier records. Due to this, any comparisons drawn between the two centuries must be taken from the latter halves such as between 1660-1669, for which there are a total of 18 records in comparison to 27 for the period 1760-1769. However comparisons such as these should not always be taken at face value, for example the period 1690-1699 has 20 records, while the period 1790-1800 has 23 records. These are very similar numbers which is surprising as the developments by Richard Pennant the Lord Penrhyn, at what became known as Penrhyn quarry, meant that the workforce there had risen to over 600 men,⁶⁴ which would of had a knock on effect on the port at the river Cegin and on the population of Bangor. However external influences had dealt a hard blow to Pennant and his workforce. Upon the outbreak of war with France in 1793, the Prime Minister William Pitt introduced ‘an *ad valorem*’ duty that was placed on stone and slate that was to be shipped coastwise,⁶⁵ at

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid, p.49.

⁶⁴ The national trust, *Penrhyn castle: Gwynedd* (Swindon, 2009), p.16.

⁶⁵ A. Dodd, *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales* (Cardiff, 1933), p.206

20 percent the duty amounted to around a third of the prime cost⁶⁶ and its effects were crippling. Slates shipped to Ireland did not have to pay the duty but still by 1798 the amount of men employed had dropped from 600 to 120.⁶⁷ The records of wills do in fact reflect this, of the 23 records available for 1790-1799 seventeen of them are for the period 1790-1795, in contrast to the eight that are available for the period 1796-1800, this is suggestive that people were moving to places where there was work to be had.

While primary sources can be unclear about the population numbers there are two more recent secondary sources that can shed further light on the population of Bangor for the period 1600-1800. Leonard Owens 1959 *The Population of Wales during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* suggested figures of 80 households with a population of 400 for the period 1545/63, 176 households and a population of 780 for the period 1670 and 304 households during 1801.⁶⁸ Caernarfon on the other hand had 160 households with a population of 800 during 1545/63 and 351 households with a population of 1,755 during 1670.⁶⁹ However, these figures by Owen have been criticised by Nia Powell who argues that problems arise over the accuracy of Owens numbers as the calculations were based on sources that number the households rather than the population total through multiplying the average household which in turn were expanded into population figures.⁷⁰ Powell's more up to date figures give a population number for Bangor as 880 (not far off the 1000 mark as was

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 L. Owen, 'The population of Wales in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, (1959), p.109.

69 Ibid.

70 N. Powell, 'Do numbers count? Towns in early modern Wales', *Urban History*, 32 (2005), p.48

quoted by P. Jenkins that make a 'real' town), rather than 780 for the period 1670,⁷¹ while the population numbers for Caernarfon are as follows; 816 for 1563, 867 for 1670 and 1,075 for 1676.⁷²

In Bangor at least, these revised figures of a population 880 by 1670 contradicts Carters argument that Welsh towns were until 1660 were stagnating, if this was the case then surely the population for Bangor would not have been increasing throughout this period and may have stayed nearer a population of 400 as it was during the very early seventeenth century rather than doubling within seventy years.

Bangor then may have had a smaller population than Caernarfon but it does not necessarily follow that it cannot be termed an urban centre. Towns in Wales on the whole were small places but they fulfilled an important role. For many of these towns the important relationship was not between the small Welsh town and the big English town (this would be Chester for Bangor) as Jenkins had suggested, but between the town and surrounding countryside; which, highlights the close interaction which took place between the urban and the rural elements.⁷³ Geraint Jenkins wrote that 'towns were the locations of fairs, markets, shops, schools, inns and taverns'.⁷⁴ The small Welsh Towns were vital places for the distribution and sale for agricultural produce of the surrounding area, particularly in the form of markets and fairs.⁷⁵

71 N. Powell, 'Urban Population in Early Modern Wales Revisited' *The Welsh History Review*, Volume 23, Number 3, (2007) , pp. 1-43

72 Powell, 'Do numbers count?', p.50.

73 PETER BORSAY, LOUISE MISKELL and OWEN ROBERTS (2005). Introduction: Wales, a new agenda for urban history, *Urban History*, 32, p10.

74 G. Jenkins. *The Foundations of modern Wales* (Oxford, 1987), p116.

75 G. Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.117.

Browne Willis detailed the market and fair days at Bangor; ‘there is kept, every Friday, a small market at Bangor, and three fairs in the year, viz. on *June 14, St Trillo’s Day, October 17, St. Luke’s Eve; and Lady Day, viz. March 25.* The Bishop has a Right, by his Patent, as ‘tis said, to keep another Market on Wednesday, which was the ancient Market-Day, and chang’d to Friday. The two first Fairs are of very long standing; but the last is not known to be above 40 Years’.⁷⁶ By 1790 the three annual fairs had become four and Friday was still market day in Bangor.⁷⁷ The weekly markets would have offered opportunities for merchants, wayfaring traders, drovers, pedlars and the local farmers to sell any surplus of items such as cheese, butter and corn.⁷⁸ The fairs would have attracted many people from the surrounding countryside and beyond and as such both the market and fairs would have acted as stimuli for the surrounding rural economy.⁷⁹ In fact, Thomas Pennant describes the volume of livestock and grain that came over from Anglesey via Porthaethwy when he was visiting Bangor, ‘the passage of cattle at this place is very great...it is computed that the island sends forth annually from twelve to fifteen thousand head, and multitudes of sheep and hogs...That in 1770 upwards of ninety thousand bushnells of corn were exported’.⁸⁰ Even if this number is an exaggeration,⁸¹ some of what was being brought over must have been destined for markets in Bangor as well as Caernarfon and further afield, perhaps even as far as London. This helps to

⁷⁶ B. Willis, *survey*, p.49.

⁷⁷ P. Barfoot and J. Wilkes, *The universal British directory of trade and commerce* (London, 1790), pp.258.

⁷⁸ G. Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.117.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Pennant, *Tours in Wales Vol III*, ed. J. Rhys (Caernarfon, 1883), p.23.

⁸¹ In a footnote the editor suggests Pennant's exaggerated figure was more like 5,000, Pennant, *Tours Vol III*, p.23.

strengthen the argument that Bangor should be seen in terms of an urban network linked with other urban areas.

Writing in 1723, Browne Willis declares that ‘Bangor was well accommodated with inns’.⁸² Inns were places that served as not only somewhere to refresh oneself but also be a place where county business, local administration and politics could be conducted.⁸³ The inns could only exist if there was a demand for them, either from the local population or from a travelling population. Unlicensed alehouses were a problem during the seventeenth century and by 1672 there were 107 of them throughout Gwyrfa, Caernarvon and Bangor⁸⁴, while nine Bangor innkeepers were included in a memorandum of recognizance ‘of alehouse keepers to keep good order their Alehouses’ with the added sureties of ten pounds each during 1790⁸⁵.

The first mention of an innkeeper in Bangor is the inscription for ‘John Wiggon *Innkeeper*, dyed the 1st of Jan. 1637. Aged 58 years’⁸⁶, while the second is for the innkeeper/ gent John Bulkeley dating 1695. It was claimed by the North Wales Gazette in 1824 that the Castle Hotel was the oldest established inn in Bangor, the article however does not suggest a date as to when it was built⁸⁷ although John Speeds map of Bangor does seem to show an archway that according to Ingam ‘appears to be the archway leading to the present Castle yard’⁸⁸.

82 Willis, Browne, *Survey*, p50.

83 G. Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.117

84 Ibid, p.170.

85 XQS/1790/83,85,86,87,88,92,99,103 and 126.

86 B. Willis, *Survey*, p.38.

87 J. Ingam, ‘notes on aome old Bangor Inns’ *Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society*, 10 (1949), p.38.

88 Ibid.

Ingman was in the writing mid twentieth century and the old building has subsequently been knocked down and rebuilt so the archway is no longer present. The building still retains the same function, although it has been known by other names such as The Eagles, The Three Eagles and Mitre Inn and in 1775 you could refresh yourself on red and white wine, either French or British whiskey and ale at the establishment⁸⁹. Two forms of documentations can be found for The Eagles on the National Library of Wales website. The first is an inventory written by Robert Roberts in 1775,⁹⁰ and the second is a will written by Edward Jones and dating to 1784.⁹¹ The inventory total was five hundred and eighty pounds one shilling and three pence,⁹² this would convert to around £36,944.18 by today's standard in accordance to the National Archives website,⁹³ and when taken with the amount of alcohol that was in the inventory (43 bottles red wine, 18 bottles white wine, 3 gallons of French brandy, 16 gallons British brandy as well as 5 half full and two full barrels of ale),⁹⁴ demonstrates that in 1775 Robert Roberts was doing a brisk business indeed. By 1790 the inn was in the hands of one Hutchin James, mentioned as part of a list of principle inhabitants in the book 'The universal

89 Robert Roberts '1775 inventory' <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:901901>
(accessed 23 November 2012)

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 The National Archives 'money convertor'

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid> (accessed 23 November 2012).

94 Robert Roberts 1775 inventory <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:901901>
(accessed 23 November 2012)

British directory of trade and commerce'.⁹⁵ There is also mention of an inn in the name of 'Star', of which Parry Joseph was the innkeeper.⁹⁶

During 1780-85 the bishop of Bangor was given permission by the church authorities to lease out church owned land in Bangor as building plots, an opportunity that was not missed by David Hughes who proceeded to build the Harp Inn and the six adjoining shop premises at some point during this five year period⁹⁷.

It has been seen then that Bangor had trade in the forms of markets, fairs and inns but what other trade was occurring at Bangor? It has been written of Bangor in 1721 that 'there was no trade or industry in the town worth mentioning. It existed for its Cathedral, its School and for Irish travellers'⁹⁸. Willis also wrote that that Bangor was expected to '...grow more populous, and be daily improving in Trade and Building'⁹⁹ particularly 'since the Way over *Penmaenmawr* is so much mended'¹⁰⁰. The *Penmaenmawr* pass had earned itself a frightful reputation, as Defoe wrote, 'we went over the famous precipice called *Penmaen-maur*, which I think Fame has made abundantly more frightful than it is; for thou' the Rock is indeed very high, and, if any one should fall from it, he would be dashed to Pieces, yet, on the other hand,

95 P. Barfoot and J. Wilkes, *The universal British directory of trade and commerce* (London, 1790) pp.258-259.

96 Ibid.

97R. Idloes. Owen, 'Roots- A Town Called Bangor' *Bangor Civic Society*, online, <http://www.bangorcivicsociety.org.uk/pages/hisso/roots/s1.htm> (accessed 23 November 2012)

98 H. Barber and H. Lewis, *The history of Friars school, Bangor* (Bangor, 1901), p.52.

99 Willis, Browne, *Survey*, p50.

100 Ibid.

there is no Danger of it, a Wall being built all the Way, on the Edge of the Precipice, to secure Passengers'.¹⁰¹ Pennant writes that although before 1772 the pass was 'extremely narrow, bad and stoney'¹⁰² after this time due to the work of John Sylvester the road was now 'widened to a proper breadth... and the road is brought on a level for two or three miles'.¹⁰³ Its little wonder that people avoided the pass if possible until it was made safer.

While many Welsh towns during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were likely to specialise in a particular trade, such as Denbigh with its high proportion of tanners, corvisors and glovers,¹⁰⁴ records indicate that Bangor was not one of them. During the seventeenth century Bangor offered a medium variety of trade in very small numbers. The probate records available at the National Library of Wales website are the main way to gain knowledge as to what kind of jobs or trade people were engaging in. Other clues can also be found in other places such as the Quarter and Great Session records, old books and rent accounts. When using the probate records it is important to bear in mind that these probate records, although useful in a general sense, are not representative of everyone for a variety of reasons.

Problems with the wills include the fact that not everyone wrote a will while those who did, did not always specify what their occupation was, while the records of bonds show the amount that was being borrowed but not what the loan was for.

Due to a fire at the record office the records for the first half of the seventeenth century are sparse, none the less the most commonly stated occupation during the seventeenth century was gent followed by yeoman and widow. There were also a few labourers, smiths, carriers, a youngman, minor, innkeeper/gent, clerk, vicar, ironmonger, esquire and a baronet. In other

101 D. Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain vol II* (London, 1748), p.375.

102 Pennant, *Tours in Wales Vol III*,), p.107.

103 Pennant, *Tours in Wales Vol III*, p.108.

104 Jenkins, *foundations*, p.118.

records there are detail of an organist (in connection to a bakehouse),¹⁰⁵ baker,¹⁰⁶ grocer,¹⁰⁷ smith,¹⁰⁸ butcher,¹⁰⁹ glover,¹¹⁰ miller,¹¹¹ husbandmen,¹¹² tinker,¹¹³ grocer.¹¹⁴ However, for most Bangorians there are no probate records available for them, either they did not survive or were simply never made. Very early on in the eighteenth century the records begins to change, the number of records increase, indicative perhaps of a growing population and the growing importance of Bangor as an urban centre. The variety of occupations represented also increase, with widow, yeoman and gent remaining the most popular occupations but now in addition to the previous list there are carpenters, a fuller, a tobacconist, a possible pharmacist, carpenter, cooper, butcher, Joyner, tanner and a almshouseman whose place of residence was given as The Hospital, Bangor. These jobs only represent up to the mid eighteenth century after which there is the addition of a mariner, shopkeeper, singing man, shoemaker, leather cutter, keeper of records and maltster. There is also mention of an apothecary in the 1762 will of Martha Griffith¹¹⁵. Contained in the 'The universal British directory of trade and commerce' the principal inhabitants during 1790 encompassed; four gentry, six clergy including the master of the free school, thirty tradesmen including three

105 Browne, *survey*, p.37.

106 G. Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.147.

107 XQS/1699-1702/30- A).

108 XQS/1699-1702.

109 XQS/1699-1702.

110 XQS/1616/49.

111 XQS/1649-50/41.

112 XQS/1651/40.

113 XQS/1660/50.

114 XQS/1699-1702/30.

115 Martha Griffith, 1771 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:702639>.

shoemakers and the first mention of both a saddler and an excise officer found in Bangor.¹¹⁶

These variations in trade from the beginning of the eighteenth, and particularly mid way through the eighteenth century could be indicative of the growing importance for Bangor as an urban centre.

Another indication of trade can be seen in the issuing of 'token' coins in the city during the seventeenth century. Although there was a short lived mint at Aberystwyth that operated from 1637 until the civil war when it became damaged,¹¹⁷ demand for coinage outstripped supply.¹¹⁸ To combat this certain traders began issuing their own 'token' coins of small denominations to circulate within their locality.¹¹⁹ It is an indication of Bangor's status as an urban centre that pennies were issued at Bangor by one Richard Boulton during 1667.¹²⁰

While the issuing of 'token' coins at Bangor may have been small scale in comparison to other places in Wales, such as Caernarfon, Wrexham or Haverford West, (see fig1), the fact that pennies were issued at Bangor and not Llanllechid, which, with its 440 conformist according to the Compton Census had a bigger population than Bangor, is testament to Bangor's status as an urban centre during the seventeenth century. Perhaps it was Bangor's position between Caernarfon and Beaumaris, both busy port towns, which helped the town both, to become and to remain. an urban centre during the seventeenth century and again, can be seen as an indication that Bangor should be seen within the constraints of an urban network.

116 Barfoot and Wilkes, *British directory of trade and commerce*, p.259.

117 R. C. Jones. 'Early banking in north Wales and Chester' *Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society*, 70 (2009), p.13.

118 Ibid.

119 R. O. Roberts, 'Financial developments in early modern Wales and the emergence of the first Banks', *Welsh History Review*, 3 (1993), p.293.

120 Jones, 'Early banking in north Wales and Chester', p.13.

Anglesey has always been important to Wales and Gerald of Wales in the late twelfth century described it as ‘... *so productive that it could supply the whole of Wales with corn over a long period*’ which earned it the name Mon mam Cymru, the mother of Wales.¹²¹ Anglesey was also important for travellers due to its close proximity and links to Ireland. The narrowest point of the straights is near the present day Menai Bridge and Defoe tells us that Edward I had intended to build a great stone bridge there, although later abandoned the idea as the bottom was doubtful while the sea was ‘sometimes very raging and strong’.¹²² Although navigation by ship to Ireland was considered easier from Holyhead, the condition of the road from Chester to Holyhead was such that many travellers bound for Ireland preferred to depart from Chester, where adverse winds could cause long delays, rather than face the long journey to get to Holyhead.¹²³ From 1555 it became the responsibility of the individual parishes to maintain their roads and each able bodied parishioner was required to donate six days a year for working on the roads.¹²⁴ The resulting roads were suitable for the sturdy Welsh ponies and for people on foot, but not coach travel, which, when taken with the horror of Penmaenmawr pass, may have been reason enough to travel to Ireland from Chester. The coming of the turnpike roads, where a toll was paid at certain intervals on the road for the cost of the upkeep, made travel easier and by 1770 the Anglesey Trust and

121 Gerald of Wales *A Journey Through Wales/ A Description Through Wales*, trans. L.Thorpe (Hamondsworth, 1978), p.230.

122 D. Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain vol II* (London, 1748), p.374.

123 R. Chambers Jones, *The crossing of the Menai* (Wrexham, 2011), p.9 .

124 Ibid.

Caernarvonshire Trust were fully operational.¹²⁵ The improved road conditions opened up Wales and contributed to breaking down the isolation of Wales.¹²⁶

Before it was improved, the Penmaenmawr pass could be avoided if one was to follow the post route over the Lavan Sands. The journey to the ferry entailed a four mile journey from the foot of Penmaenmawr and across the tidal sands which was only accessible at low tide, meaning only a period of around four hours out of twelve.¹²⁷ The journey was a dangerous one, there were no stakes to mark the way and as such it could be particularly perilous during stormy or foggy weather.¹²⁸ The lack of stakes to mark the way was such a concern that Rowland ap Robert, a postman of Beaumaris, was moved to petition the courts for a second time during 1624, so that they ‘would be pleased to give order at every mile end of the sands a name poste might be fixed, and every quarter of a mile smaller stakes, that may guide such of his ma’ties subjects as have cause to travel that way...’¹²⁹ Many travellers in fact preferred to go through Bangor and journey over the straights via the Porthaethwy ferry.¹³⁰ The possibility of using Bangor as a post route had occurred to the Deputy Postmaster General in March 1675 when he inquired firstly whether the mail passed through Bangor while the sea

125 R. Chambers Jones, *The crossing of the Menai* (Wrexham, 2011), p.9.

126 Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.297.

127 R, T, Pritchard ‘history of the Bangor Post office’ *Transcactions of the Caernarfon Historical Society*, 24 (1963), p.275.

128 Ibid.

129 Transcribed by Emyr Gwynne Jones, this reference is no longer present in the Quarter Session Records and was written down in note form from the Bangor University Archives. It is not possible to reference as the archives are currently shut for refurbishment.

130 Pritchard ‘history of the Bangor Post office’, p.275.

was out; later suggesting that Bangor would be the safest way to cross over the Menai straights.¹³¹ Although there is mention of there being a sub-office that was working there in 1673,¹³² Bangor did not supersede Beaumaris until 1718 when the route over the Lavan Sands was finally abandoned as the post route¹³³ and Bangor found itself situated on the main route to Holyhead.

No discussion of trade in Bangor would be complete without mention of the slate trade. Slate was an important export for Bangor during the nineteenth century, however, this industry did not begin to expand and become industrialised until the latter quarter of the eighteenth century with the succession of Richard Pennant, later Lord Penrhyn, to the Penrhyn estate in 1781. His succession heralded a period of expansion in terms of agriculture and industry, not only in Bangor but in Caernarvonshire as a whole.¹³⁴ It was however the slate trade that was to transform the fortunes of both the Penrhyns and Bangor. Slate had been quarried in the local area on a small scale for many years; there were even a few small quarries scattered around Bangor itself that can still be seen in the 1899 map,¹³⁵ today evidence of these small quarries is still visible in places such as Llanllechid Mountain. At Penrhyn quarry itself, formerly known as Cae Braich y Cafn, small scale slate extraction had been occurring since the fifteenth century at least,¹³⁶ although the remoteness of the area along with the lack of good roads kept the slate industry as a cottage industry, rather than a large scale industrial

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid, p.276.

¹³³ Pritchard 'history of the Bangor Post office', p.276.

¹³⁴ A, Dodd, *History of Caernarvonshire*, p.232.

¹³⁵ Bangor Town, Edina maps online <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/ancientroam/mapper> (accessed 14 April 2013).

¹³⁶ The national trust, *Penrhyn Castle*, p12.

industry. Figures for the exportation of slate from Bangor in the early part of the eighteenth century are as follows; during 1713 there were 14 shipments of 415,000 slates sent to Dublin, while in 1720 there were shipments of 155,000 slates to Dublin, 2 shipments of 20,000 slates to Drogheda and a shipment of 35,000 slates to Belfast with a shipment of 80,000 slates to Dunkirk two years later.¹³⁷ It can be seen that the export of slates from Abercegin was sporadic, probably coinciding with peak periods of demand and were on a small scale when compared to the number of 4,000,000 that was exported from Caernarfon during 1747, none were mentioned for Bangor that year.¹³⁸ Thomas Pennant describes how quickly the changes made by the Lord Penrhyn after 1780 affected the output slate and how slate production rose from ‘not a thousand tons’¹³⁹ when Lord Penrhyn first came into the estate to ‘upwards of twelve thousand tons’ in 1792.¹⁴⁰ Amongst the improvements Lord Penrhyn made was the building of a single quay along Abercegin in 1790, it was further expanded in 1803, 1830 and 1855¹⁴¹ and now is known as Porth Penrhyn. The quay allowed Lord Penrhyn to greatly increase the output of slate from the quarry. It is too his credit that when the brief downturn in trade occurred due to tax as discussed earlier, Lord Penrhyn put to work his 120 remaining men on the construction of a horse tramway that ran from the quarry to the port.¹⁴² He also set up a sawing mill at the port in order to make writing slates, demand that had previously been

137 Ellis-Williams, *Bangor Port of Beaumaris*, p.12

138 Ellis-Williams, *Bangor Port of Beaumaris*, p.12

139 Pennant, *Tours in Wales vol III*, p.82

140 *Ibid*, p.83.

141 Coflein, ‘Porth Penrhyn’

<http://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/306314/details/PORTH+PENRHYN/> (accessed 10 March 2013)

142 A. Dodd. *The Industrial Revolution in North Wales* (Cardiff, 1933), p.206

satisfied with writing slates from Holland were now being supplied and made in Bangor.¹⁴³

Penrhyn also established a mill on the river Ogwen that ground chert and quartz collected from the hills and bound for Staffordshire for use in the potteries.¹⁴⁴

An example of how bad the roads were and how quickly they were improved upon the succession of Lord Penrhyn can be found in Thomas Pennants 'Tours through Wales vol ii' where he describes the 'Ben-glog'¹⁴⁵ path through Nant Francon as being 'the most dreadful horse path in Wales, worked in the rudest manner into steps for a great length'.¹⁴⁶ However by the time he writes the third volume of the series the road was much improved, 'At present a noble coach road is made, even beyond Nant Francon, and the terrors of the Benglog quiet done away'.¹⁴⁷ Writing in the early twentieth century Smiles recounts that the roads in north Wales before Telford built his road were still in a bad state of repair, they 'were rough, narrow, steep, and unprotected, mostly unfenced and in winter almost unpassable'.¹⁴⁸

Bangor then in the seventeenth century contained many elements that would be found in an urban centre. Its population at just under nine hundred was by not that small for a Welsh town and while its variety of trade was not as large as at Caernarfon, the fact that it did contain various trade even at low levels shows that there was a demand for it and that people both in Bangor and in the surrounding area were using Bangor as an urban centre.

The eighteenth century had an even bigger array of trade, it became a post town and as such the main route to Holyhead, while industrialisation finally came to Bangor with the

¹⁴³ Ibid, p.207.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Pennant, *Tours in Wales vol II*, p.83

¹⁴⁶ Pennant, *Tours in Wales vol II*, p.313.

¹⁴⁷ Pennant, *Tours in Wales vol III*, p.83.

¹⁴⁸ S. Smiles, *Lives of the Engineers Metcalf-Telford* (London, 1904), p.316.

industrialisation of the slate trade at the end of the century. There were improvements to the roads and developments in building at the end of the century, including the building of the Harp Inn and shops and the port at Abercegin, all these can be seen as indicators of how the fortunes of Bangor were increasing during the latter half of the eighteenth century, foreshadowing the changes that would occur in the nineteenth century.

Bangor; The people;

Life in north Wales during the seventeenth and the first quarter or so of the eighteenth century was a perilous thing. The risk of dying from infectious diseases, malnutrition or violence was a very real one.¹⁴⁹

The everyday people, or common peasantry,¹⁵⁰ such as the yeomen, husbandmen, servants, fishermen and drovers wore a rude homespun cloth that varied according to the person wearing it.¹⁵¹ The poorest people wore hemp, those who were better off could make their own woollen hoes and suits of undressed woollen cloth known as *brethyn cartref*,¹⁵² with wool either purchased at a nearby farm or picked out of the hedges, while the very well off could afford to buy broadcloth at the fair.¹⁵³ Many of the Bangor inventories in the probate records contain a wheel or spinning wheel regardless of the level of wealth contained in them.

Food consisted of oat cakes cooked on a flat plate of iron or stone known as a bake stone, rye or barley bread and *llymry* (or flummery, a dish made out of oatmeal or wheatmeal that is boiled into a jelly),¹⁵⁴ as well as fish in the coastal villages while the main refreshment was

¹⁴⁹ Jenkins, *foundations*, pp.89-90.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p.102.

¹⁵¹ A. Dodd, *Industrial Revolution*, p.2.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

buttermilk and mead.¹⁵⁵ There is some evidence of salting herrings in Bangor, contained in the 1713 invoice of Richard Parry, gent, who owned various sets of herring gages as well as four big bags of salt. In keeping with the threat of disease Parry also owned various oils such as sweet oil and ointments such as ‘oyntmt of march madows’.¹⁵⁶ Parry also liked to look after his wigs with the inventory listing a wig comb and wig oil.¹⁵⁷

The economy, both during the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, was mainly rural, with cattle being the ‘linchpin of the Welsh economy’,¹⁵⁸ particularly after the Irish Cattle Act of 1666 which stopped the importing of livestock from Ireland and lead to tens of thousands of cattle being driven by drovers from Wales to England.¹⁵⁹ While lowland areas were best for the rearing of cattle, the upland environments of mountains and moorlands in north Wales, along with the heavy rainfall incurred in such areas produced poor soils for the rearing of cattle and where given instead to the rearing of sheep.¹⁶⁰ This is born out in the probate records where everyone, with one exception, owned animals in different degrees, particularly in the seventeenth century. The poorest were more likely to own a cow and a heifer (a female cow that has not yet bared calves), such as labourer, Thomas Pritchard,

154 Flummery, definition of, *Oxford Dictionaries*

online, ,<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/flummery?q=flummery>

(accessed 12 March 2013)

155 Dodd, *Industrial Revolution*, p.2.

156 Richard Parry, 1716 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:740815> (accessed 4 April 2013).

157 Ibid.

158 G. Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.112.

159 Ibid.

160 Ibid.

whose inventory was a mere four pounds during 1689.¹⁶¹ The people of middling wealth owned a greater array of livestock, including some cattle and anywhere between 20-50 sheep. Those estates that were worth the most had a variety of cattle, sheep and some, such as Owen Parry, could indulge in seven beehives at a value of seven shillings.¹⁶² Parry, in fact, owned the most sheep and lambs in Bangor, they numbered a hundred and fifty. While the sheep and lambs were only worth twelve pounds, Parry's eighteen oxen and runts were worth forty five pounds and his 18 milk cows and old bull were worth twenty eight pounds. This invoice and others show that people in seventeenth century Bangor did in fact tend to own more sheep and in bigger numbers than cows, regardless that cows were worth more. This is due to the fact that sheep are much easier to tend than cows, with regards to both time and money. It is also possible that there was poor grazing in and around Bangor, however, given the increase of cattle ownership in Bangor during eighteenth century this does not seem likely.

It has argued by A. Dodd that in Caernarvonshire sheep began to replace cattle in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, particularly in mountainous areas.¹⁶³ This thought, in part, to be a response to the growing demands for wool after 1750.¹⁶⁴ However, the study of probate records regarding Bangor indicates that in Bangor the opposite is true. The ownership of sheep in fact seems to decrease from the start of the century and the ownership of cattle increase, although not in proportion to the decrease of sheep. The seventeenth century records indicate sheep numbering in their tens and sometimes hundreds, the eighteenth century records show that ownership was decreasing with numbers usually under 10 sheep, with the

¹⁶¹ Thomas Pritchard, 1689 will, <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/619095> (accessed 4 April 2013).

¹⁶² Owen Parry, 1679 inventory, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:1036442> (accessed 4 April 2013).

¹⁶³ Dodd, *Industrial Revolution*, p3-4.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

odd exception. After 1750 although still present in the records sheep become scarcer in these inventories. Ownership of cattle tended to remain low in eighteenth century Bangor and only the 1757 will of Owen Shon has cattle numbering over ten, the inventory listed; eighteen cattle as well as nine cows and bulls while he also owned eighteen sheep.¹⁶⁵

Jenkins suggests that in Wales, the most prosperous of the common peasantry were the yeomen.¹⁶⁶ By the middle of the seventeenth century the term came to be a suffix that described all farmers big and small, with the median value of yeomen in Caernarfon being around £26.¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately there are only two available inventories out of a possible seven for yeomen concerning the period 1600-1700, a 1681 will for William John Morgan worth 36 pounds 10 shillings and 6 pence¹⁶⁸ and a 1698 bond for Owen Rytherch worth 15 pounds.¹⁶⁹ It is interesting to note that William John Morgan was worth above the median rate put forward by G. Jenkins although not by much. Both Jenkins and Dodd argue that from the mid eighteenth century agriculture began to prosper due the new and improved techniques, in the form of better husbandry and improvements in soil, arriving from England at this time.¹⁷⁰ These developments attracted more people to agriculture and the probate records demonstrate a remarkable increase in yeomen in Bangor from the beginning of the eighteenth century,

¹⁶⁵ Owen Shon, 1757 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:1004833> (accessed 5 April 2013).

¹⁶⁶Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.102.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.103.

¹⁶⁸ William John Morgan, 1681 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:902044> (accessed 5 April 2013).

¹⁶⁹ Owen Rytherch, 1698 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:563376> (accessed 5 April 2013)

¹⁷⁰ Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.270 and Dodd, *Industrial Revolution*, p.36.

although, the increase in yeomen is not necessarily mirrored in the level of wealth. There were only 6 records of yeomen for the period 1650-1700, 24 for the period 1701-1750 and 41 for the period 1751-1800, as can be seen in *fig 1*. Caution however must be taken with the figures and it must be kept in mind that they only give a general sense of what was happening in Bangor, rather than a clear overview. Interestingly, it is in the latter half of the eighteenth century that farmers begin to enter the probate records with four in total in this period.

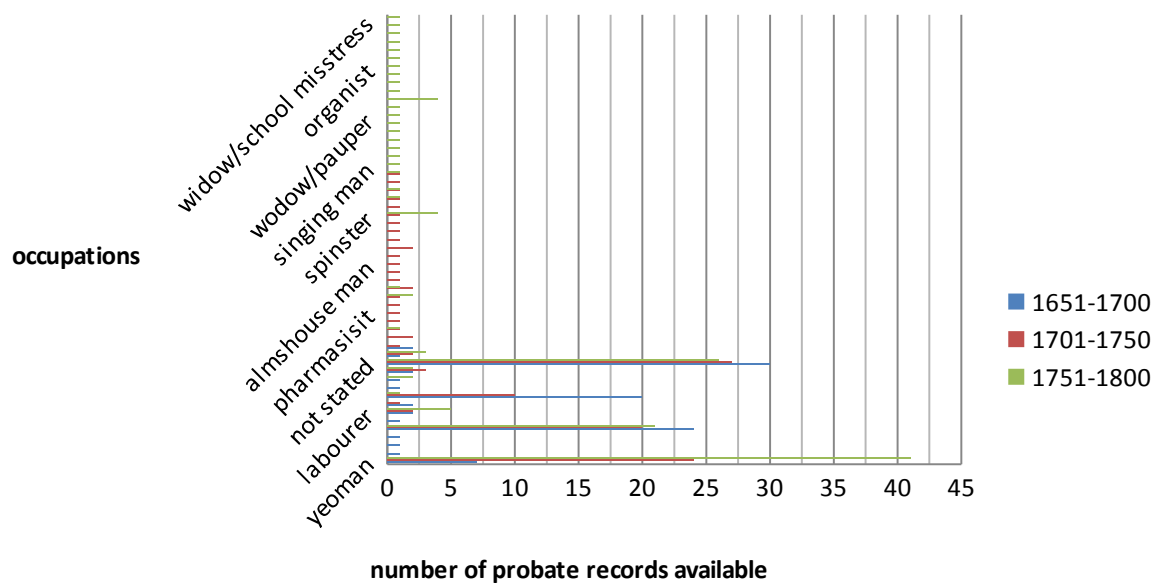


Fig 1, Graph showing the number of probate records for each occupation in different time spans, this enables a general idea of what was occurring in Bangor during those times.

More and more people during the eighteenth century in Bangor did not own animals of any sort, with a total of ten inventories not listing any. While some people were too poor, others made a successful living in other ways, such as Roger Griffith a tobacconist, whose inventory from his 1719 bond was worth 278 pounds and 16 shillings. While the bond stated that Griffith was a tobacconist his inventory shows that this was not strictly true, he not only sold tobacco, but in fact sold a range of goods, including apothecary supplies such as a ‘parcell of

Oly's Ointment' and aromatic brimstone, materials such as cotton, linen and calico as well as items such as beeswax and molasses.¹⁷¹

Francis Jones suggests the eighteenth century was generally a period of prosperity for the Welsh gentry,¹⁷² and while this may have been true for a select number, it is now known that many of the gentry and lesser gentry families languished during this time.¹⁷³ The reasons are thought to be twofold; firstly there was a perplexing shortage of male heirs born during the eighteenth century. If the family had no daughters then the inheritance would pass into the hands of distant relatives or be swallowed up by the Leviathans, the few who could afford to swallow up ownership of land. If there was a daughter then she would be married out, most likely to an English estate to where the bride would move to the English seat while the Welsh estates fell into disrepair under absentee landlords. The second reason was due to debts that were gained through bad investments, mortgaging land along with debt incurred through gambling and fine living,¹⁷⁴ leaving estates to be put up for sale and again be swallowed up by the Leviathans. During his tours of the 1770s, Pennant had found many neglected and cheerless mansions while Richard Morris commented that newspapers were 'shamefully stuffed with continual advertisements for sale of Welsh estates; several of which I remember to have seen in flourishing condition'¹⁷⁵. In Bangor the gentlemen listed in the probate

171 Roger Griffith, 1719 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:767233> (accessed 7 April 2013).

172 M. F. Jones, 'The old families of Wales' in D. Moore (ed), *Wales in the Eighteenth Century* (Swansea, 1976), p.36.

173 Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.264.

174 Ibid, p.262.

175 D. W. Howell, 'Landlords and Estate Management in Wales', in J. Thirk (ed), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, vol v: 1640-1750* (part 2, Cambridge, 1985),

records were mostly lesser gentry and they were not immune to the effects of the eighteenth century. While there were twenty gentry listed in Bangor for the period 1651-1700 only half that number appears in the period 1701-1750 while there are only four gentry listed in the period 1751-1800 (see *fig 1*). The trend for higher levels of borrowing are also reflected in the bonds available and it is telling that the largest amounts borrowed were not from gents but from men of trade such as shopkeepers and fullers and is representative of the decline of the gentry and rising importance of men of trade such as merchants.

Bond amounts were hand written in Latin until 1729, when the standard printed text begins to be introduced with blanks for the filling in of particular details, such as the amounts being borrowed. The section that details the conditions of the bond also start to become a standard print with blanks, this section however is written in English. Some bonds were still entirely hand written, such as the 1732 bond of Humphrey William,¹⁷⁶ which is also the last bond that details the amount borrowed in Latin. The next available bond, the 1733 handwritten bond of John Pritchard a curate, is entirely hand written in English, (he had borrowed the sum of £300).¹⁷⁷ From 1736 onwards all bonds come in the printed form. Altogether there are 121 records of bonds available, 21 of these are from the seventeenth century while the other 100 are from the eighteenth century. These numbers could be taken as a general guide to the growing population in Bangor. All records for the 1600-1700 bonds occur in the period 1660-1700, while only 40 out of 100 bonds occur in the period 1760-1800. Out of the legible bonds from 1733 onwards, the highest amount borrowed by far was for the very high sum of

pp.262-3.

176 Humphrey William, 1732 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:680244> (accessed 8 April 2013).

177 John Pritchard, 1733 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:456411> (accessed 8 April 2013).

£6000 by the shopkeeper William Baker in 1767,¹⁷⁸ followed by the sum of £2000 borrowed by one Thomas Tudor, a tanner in 1734.¹⁷⁹ There are another 2 bonds that were for £1000 or over, the first is contained in the will of Hugh Wynne Esquire, it is dated 1753 and was worth £1200,¹⁸⁰ while the second was for Jane Vincent, spinster, dated 1771, for the amount of £1000.¹⁸¹ Unfortunately there are no inventories available for any of these bonds. The lowest amount borrowed was for £13 in 1760 by a fuller of the name of Richard Jones¹⁸² and includes an inventory worth only 6 pounds 15 shillings and 6 pence and lists items such as two cows, a calf, an old mare and a small amount of household goods including unusually for such a small inventory, ten pewter plates.¹⁸³

The seventeenth century rent accounts from land owned by the Penrhyn estate can shed much light on the question of land ownership in Bangor, although it must be remembered that they do not offer, either in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, a complete picture of property ownership in Bangor as the Penrhyns did not own all the land and only began to buy land in earnest after 1800.¹⁸⁴ In the 1604 accounts one Richard Foxwith seems to renting the most

178 William Baker, 1767 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:402829> (accessed 9 April 2013)

179 Thomas Tudor, 1734 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:149937> (accessed 9 April 2013)

180 Hugh Wynne, 1753 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:828412> (accessed 9 April 2013)

181 Jane Vincent, 1771 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:1007696> (accessed 9 April 2013)

182 Richard Jones, 1760 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:635218> (accessed 9 April 2013)

183 Ibid.

184 National Trust, *Penrhyn Castle*, p.8.

land from the Penrhyn estate, he rents on his own and in part tenement with other people.¹⁸⁵ Individually he rents the tenement for 'barn' bach as well as Llain y Pwll, Pant y Ty Bwbach and Mais y Bont, for which he pays 11 pounds and 8 Pence. He also rents a further three part tenements, the first with one Dafydd Lliwelyn for which he pays 10 shillings,¹⁸⁶ the second tenement had once been in the tenure of Nicholas Taylor for which he pays two shillings and thirdly with John ap Richard for the sum of five shillings.¹⁸⁷ The rent accounts for 1736 are particularly detailed and offer all kinds of information. For instance the first entry shows that Roger Jones paid 10 pounds for the following; Cooks house and land, Cae Pont y Marchogion, Cae Cegin and Cae Hir as well as Gwerglodd wen, Nant y Glynn and Tythe. In the 1736 accounts Altogether there are around 31(35 if including the names mentioned in part tenement) different names renting a total of 54 different properties or land.¹⁸⁸

The rent accounts and sometimes the probate records can give place names that are still familiar today and although many of the place names have vanished, some can still be seen in the names of streets. In the 1604 rent accounts Owain y Gor (the smith) paid thirty pounds with one goose and one capon for 'Kay Bryn Melin'¹⁸⁹. In 1736 a Mr Doulsen paid only 6 pounds and 10 shillings for Cae Bryn Melin, dye house and croft.¹⁹⁰ Today there is a dead end street with around three houses called Bryn Melin just off Lon Popty. Interestingly, in the 1736 account, the word cai has been inserted after writing Bryn Melin and although a probably mistake, may show that the name was already morphing into Bryn Melin. It is more

185 Penrhyn additional 4 PFA/4/29, Bangor university archives.

186 Ibid.

187 Ibid.

188 Ibid.

189 Ibid

190 Penrhyn additional PFA/4/42

probable however that it has something to do with the dead end street near the hospital, now called Cae Cilmelyn. Indeed, Mr Doulsen seems to have his hands in many pots as he also rents by himself 'Cae Lletpai, The old Soldiers House, vacant ground at the end of it and the little Garden and Croft belonging thereto' for 21 pounds.¹⁹¹ He also rents four other places with Griffith Williams and Arthur Williams for 11 pounds and 15 shillings.¹⁹²

Kay Lletpai is another recognisable name from the 1604 rent accounts, rented by John Moythey for six shillings and eight pence, a name very similar to the present day Caellepa that can be found behind the high street. While the 1703 bond of fuller Griffith Williams has Maesygeirchen as a place of residence in all likelihood the same place as the present day Maesgerchen.¹⁹³

Today Penrallt Road is situated near the bottom of Glanrafon hill and runs up in a curve past the university meeting Collage Road at the top of the hill. It can be seen through examining the various tithe maps from 1840-1851, available on the Bangor Civic Society web site,¹⁹⁴ that the present road marks the boundary for the old Penrallt estate, which also contained the land where the university and university gardens now are. The name Pen Rallt appears in the probate records and rent accounts throughout the period 1600-1800 and is first found in a will from 1663 belonging to William Griffith gent.¹⁹⁵ The will contains an inventory worth 47

¹⁹¹ Penrhyn further additional PFA/4/43

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Griffith Williams, 1703 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:533890> (accessed 5 march 2013).

¹⁹⁴ Bangor Civic Society, 'tithe maps', online, <http://www.bangorcivicsociety.org.uk/pages/hisso/index.htm#maps> (accessed 10 April 2013).

¹⁹⁵ William Griffith, 1663 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:582818> (accessed 5 march 2013).

pounds 7shillings and 4 pence (in 2005 this would convert to £5,164,70).¹⁹⁶ It contains mostly animals although there are some household instruments listed including ‘six ould silver spoons’ worth 19 shillings and 4 pence.¹⁹⁷ Upon his death amongst other things he leaves his ‘beloved wife’¹⁹⁸, Martha Griffith, ‘the farm...and Penrall[t]’.¹⁹⁹ Martha Griffith died in 1674 and she left all that she had to her daughter Elizabeth.²⁰⁰ Her inventory is worth 67 pounds 5 shillings and 6 pence and amongst the various animals and household goods are listed the silver spoons, this time they are weighed at 17oz and are worth 3 pounds, 16 shillings and 6 pence.²⁰¹ Two bonds were taken out during 1686,²⁰² and 1724,²⁰³ and both were under the name William Griffith. While the first has no occupation stated the second is a gent. The rent accounts for 1736 show that Griffith William was paying 4 pounds and 10 shillings annual rent.²⁰⁴ However by 1794 the trend of William Griffith or Griffith William stops and we find in residence one Thomas Pritchard, farmer, his will contained an inventory worth 310 pounds

196 The National Archives, currency convertor

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid>

197 William Griffith, 1663 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:582818>
(accessed 5 march 2013).

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid.

200 Martha Griffith, 1674 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:163724>
(accessed 5 March 2013).

201 Ibid.

202 William Griffith, 1686 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:1037247>
(accessed 7 March 2013).

203 William Griffith, bond 1724, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:297080>
(accessed 7 March 2013)

204 Penrhyn Further additional PFA/4/43.

and 12 shillings. The land was still in the hands of a (William) Pritchard at the time of the 1840 ownership tithe.²⁰⁵

It is possible that the Penrallt estate compromised the land upon which the post office was situated and as such the land may have been in the hands of the Griffiths' as late as 1762.²⁰⁶ In the 1752 Caernarvonshire Quarter Sessions, there is a record of one Martha Griffith, postmistress (and widow to William Griffith), who was defending her rights against two men from Llanfairfechan who had encroached upon them.²⁰⁷ It seems very likely that William and Martha Griffith were of the same family as the original William and Martha Griffith from the seventeenth century. This example shows how the family of a gentleman must adapt and evolve for the family name to survive; while the Griffith family were originally classed as gentry, by 1733, they had instead become postmaster and postmistress.

Through primary sources it is sometimes possible to trace families, particularly when the surname is an unusual one. Browne Willis details a total of five Boultons who were laid to rest in the cathedral, their inscriptions read as follows; '*Here lyeth the Body of Thomas Boulton, Organist of Bangor, who dyed the 21st of Jan, 1644*',²⁰⁸ '*Richard Boulton dyed the 15th day of August 1668*',²⁰⁹ '*Here Lyeth the Body of Hannah Boulton, who dyed March 1669. Aged 5 years*',²¹⁰ '*Here lyeth the Body of Penelope Boulton, Who dyed March 5, 1670. Aged 2*

205 Bangor Civic Society, '1840 map of occupiers' online, <http://www.bangorcivicsociety.org.uk/pages/hisso/ocup7.htm> (accessed 16 April 2013).

206 Pritchard, 'History of Bangor Post Office', p.227

207 Ibid.

208 B. Willis, *Survey*, p.39.

209 Ibid, p.38.

210 Ibid.

years',²¹¹ 'Tho. Boulton dyed the 27th of July 1667',²¹² and 'Here lyeth the Body of Eliz.

Boulton, who dyed the June 3, 1694. Aged 64',²¹³ Of these names there is mention of a

Thomas Boulton in the rent accounts for 1613 paid twelve shillings for a house and garden,²¹⁴

while a Thomas Boulton also appears in the hearth tax for 1662 with one hearth.²¹⁵ The fact

that Thomas Boulton lived in a house with only one hearth shows that he was not a wealthy

man. In the Probate records we also find a will for Richard Boulton, who is likely to be the

same Richard Boulton who was mentioned earlier for the issue of 'token' coins in 1667.

There is an entry in the Hearth tax of 1662 for a Richard Boulton who had three hearths,²¹⁶

and as such was not a poor man. His will shows that he was an ironmonger by trade and was

already ill on the 'seventh day of August',²¹⁷ when being sick in body but sound of mind he

wrote the will. There are also two records of bonds for a Hannah Boulton the first, for a

minor, is dated 1669 and has a Jane Boulton as one of the witnesses,²¹⁸ this could possibly be

the same Hannah Boulton who died in March in 1668 when she was five. The second Hannah

Boulton was also a minor and her bond is dated 1678,²¹⁹ she was already dead at this time as

the bond says 'Hannah Boulton a minor late of Bangor'.²²⁰ Both Hannah Boultons may have

211 Ibid.

212 Ibid.

213 Ibid

214 Penrhyn further additional, PFA/4/35 1613 rentals.

215 Q.S Hearth Tax (Caernarfon records office).

216 Ibid.

217 Richard Boulton, 1668 will, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:665333>
(accessed 11 April 2013).

218 Hannah Boulton, 1678 bond, <http://dams.llgc.org.uk/object/llgc-id:1038802>
(accessed 11 April 2013).

219 Ibid.

220 Ibid.

been the same person but just as equally may have been different people, perhaps the bond taken out in 1668 was only called in after a ten year period. The last mention of a Boulton is found in the records for the court of Great Sessions heard in Caernarfon on the 4th December 1788, where Richard Mitchel was being tried for shooting Charity Boulton in the head.²²¹ Mitchel was declared not guilty but insane and was sent to Ireland under the care of his brothers.²²²

CRIME

It has been suggested that crime is more severe when it is in a larger town or city rather than in a rural setting,²²³ due to the element of being anonymous in large populations. However, there is a danger when examining crime in this context to see people in a large urban setting as shadowy or anonymous; this does not take into account the stable communities that would have existed there.²²⁴

The lord-lieutenant was crown appointed and despite holding a very important position in the county he carried out few day to day duties.²²⁵ His importance, instead, lay in his power of patronage, the appointment of men to the wide range of offices in the shires.²²⁶ At a community level the position that held the most power and prestige was that of Justice of the

²²¹Crime and punishment database, online ed,

http://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?

[name=&co=Caernarfon&parish=Caernarfon&status=&off_co=All&off_cat=Any&from=1730&to=1800&prosecutor=&freetext=&punish=&off=50](http://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?name=&co=Caernarfon&parish=Caernarfon&status=&off_co=All&off_cat=Any&from=1730&to=1800&prosecutor=&freetext=&punish=&off=50) (accessed 10 April 2013).

²²² Ibid.

²²³ J. M Beattie, *Crime and the courts of law in England 1660-1800*, (Oxford, 1986).

²²⁴ Ibid, p.29.

²²⁵ Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.166.

²²⁶ Ibid.

Peace,²²⁷ who could be seen as a ‘jack of all trades’. Amongst his duties were those of police chief, tax-assessor and magistrate, road surveyor, recruiting officer, censor, inquisitor and licenser.²²⁸ While within his own home, he was able to administer oaths, issue warrants, investigate criminal cases and minor misdemeanours, take suites for good behaviour, punish petty offenders and send people to prison.²²⁹

The Court of the Quarter Sessions was held four times each year and has been described by Jenkins as being akin to a noisy local parliament, formally summoned by the high sheriff and preceded with a procession to the shire hall with an elaborate show of magistrates wearing full-bottomed wigs, three cornered hats and gold-laced coats.²³⁰ The streets would be thronged with all manner of people, including legal people such as justices, clerks, jurors, constables, bailiffs and attorneys as well as none legal people such as prisoners, petitioners, suitors and witnesses amongst others.²³¹ The Court of the Quarter Sessions were able to settle all manner of civil, criminal and administrative matters including assault, petty theft, raising a false hue and cry, relief of poor people and maimed soldiers, the settlement of bastard children and repair of bridges and highways,²³² amongst various others. Problems began to arise in the early eighteenth century, however, when justices of the peace slowly stopped attending the quarter sessions and excused themselves on grounds of the cost of travel, the bad state of the roads, as well as lack of time due to the many obligations that were expected of them.²³³

227 Jenkins, *Foundations*, p.166.

228 Ibid.

229 Ibid.

230 Ibid.

231 Ibid, pp.165-66.

232 Ibid, p.166.

233 Ibid.

The vast majority of the Quarter Session records regarding crime in Bangor are concerned with keeping the peace, such as the memorandum of recognizance concerning William Prytherch of Bangor, clerk, to come before the next general sessions and to keep the peace especially towards John Morgan of Bangor, in the sum of £40,²³⁴ or that of Thomas John Evan of Bangor, miller, who was to keep the peace and appear at the next general sessions.²³⁵ However there is the odd entry that alludes to other crime, such as the issue of a warrant for the surities and apprehension of William Jones of Aberypwll to appear at the next Quarter Sessions on a charge of having carried out various clandestine marriages,²³⁶ William Jones however could not be found. There are also records for people to appear at the courts for unlawful cohabitation including Richard John ap Evan and Margrett Moris.²³⁷ Some of the crimes recorded in the Quarter Sessions were more serious, such as the five entries from 1653 which deal with the wounding of the Robert ap Richard the petty constable of Vaynol in Bangor.²³⁸ The entries deal with warrant for the perpetrators as well as punishments for those who refused to aid Robert ap Richard. However more serious crimes were more likely to be heard at the Court of Great Sessions, crimes such as homicide and theft.

Details of the cases heard at the Court of the Great Sessions, from 1730 until it was abolished in 1830,²³⁹ can be found on the National Library of Wales website *Crime and Punishment*.²⁴⁰

234 Caernarfon Quarter Session Records, XQS/1644-45/3

235 Caernarfon Quarter Session Records, XQS/1649-50/41

236 Caernarfon Quarter Session Records, XQS/1643-44/b5

237 Caernarfon Quarter Session Records, XQS/1654-55/37

238 Caernarfon Quarter Session Records, XQS/1653/59,65,65,76.

239 Crime and punishment database, online,

http://www.llgc.org.uk/sesiwn_fawr/index_s.htm (accessed 12 April 2012)

240 Ibid.

Through this website it is possible to tell the fate of some of the accused such as Anne Thomas a spinster who was also known by the name of Catherine Thomas. During 1743 Anne was accused of the theft of wearing apparel from Thomas and William Parry from the dwelling house of Harry Thomas, however, it was the theft of a horse that sealed her fate and for which her punishment was death.²⁴¹ Transportation was another punishment faced by those who were caught stealing such as Richard Jones who stole a wig in 1749 or Williams Williams, a tinker, who was responsible for at least three burglaries in 1793. Both Jones and Williams were sentenced to seven years transportation. At this time it was most likely transportation to Australia. Bangor did have a crime rate of sorts but not a particularly violent one with many of the records of the Great Sessions passing verdicts of not guilty or no true bill and the most serious crimes were of theft.

Conclusion:

In conclusion then, the array of primary sources available for Bangor such as the probate records, rent accounts and Quarter Session records as well as information gleaned from secondary sources demonstrate that although a small town, Bangor was not the smallest town in Wales, neither during the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries and although described as ‘a sleepy hollow’ it was nothing of the sort. Although the various primary sources, such as the diocesan returns and Compton census, give figures of around 400 communicants, caution must be taken with these figures as they may not have listed everybody. The more up to date figure of 880, provided by Nia Powell, represent a more accurate population figure for the seventeenth century and demonstrate that although no huge the population of Bangor was not so small either.

²⁴¹Crime and punishment database, online ed,

http://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?

[name=&co=Caernarfon&parish=Bangor&status=&off_co=All&off_cat=Any&from=1730&to=1830&prosecutor=&freetext=&punish=](http://www.llgc.org.uk/php_ffeiliau/sf_results.php?name=&co=Caernarfon&parish=Bangor&status=&off_co=All&off_cat=Any&from=1730&to=1830&prosecutor=&freetext=&punish=) (accessed 12 April 2013).

The primary sources offer evidence of a variety of trade, drinking establishments and regular market and fair days in Bangor during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, leading to the conclusion that Bangor can most definitely be described as an urban centre at this time.

The primary sources also demonstrate that life in Bangor was very much integrated with the surrounding countryside as can be seen in the levels of yeomen, particularly in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Some social and economic changes in Wales were mirrored in Bangor, such as, the decline of the gentry, although others, such as an increase of sheep ownership during the eighteenth century in Wales generally, were not apparent in Bangor as seen in the probate records.

All forms of records available show, just like everywhere else, while not particularly glamorous, the people of Bangor still lived and died like everywhere else and have their own stories to tell, as does the town itself.

There was some crime in Bangor, however, it was mostly small scale and mainly to do with keeping the peace, although there were more serious crimes of theft and stabbing, there was no homicide. The records also have evidence of some deviant social behaviour, such as the couple who where to appear at the Quarter Sessions for cohabitating without being married or the bigamist who could not be found.

The topics in this dissertation were chosen to give a picture of Bangor during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and although this picture in not a complete one, it has demonstrated that Bangor city is a worthy topic for a historical analysis, although, there is still much work to be done.

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