

EMMA RETALLICK
A PONTYPRIDD LEGEND



BY GARETH HARRIS

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Front page: The only known photograph of Emma Retallick.

Introduction

During my research in local newspapers on various topics one name kept cropping up and when I took a closer look an amazing story appeared.

Emma Retallick is a forgotten name from Pontypridd past, but someone who was infamous in the town for many years and who was a regular to the local police courts and inmate at the Cardiff and Swansea jails.

Her story you will find is amusing, but ultimately she lived a very sad existence, but still lived until a ripe old age.

Gareth Harris

Chapter One

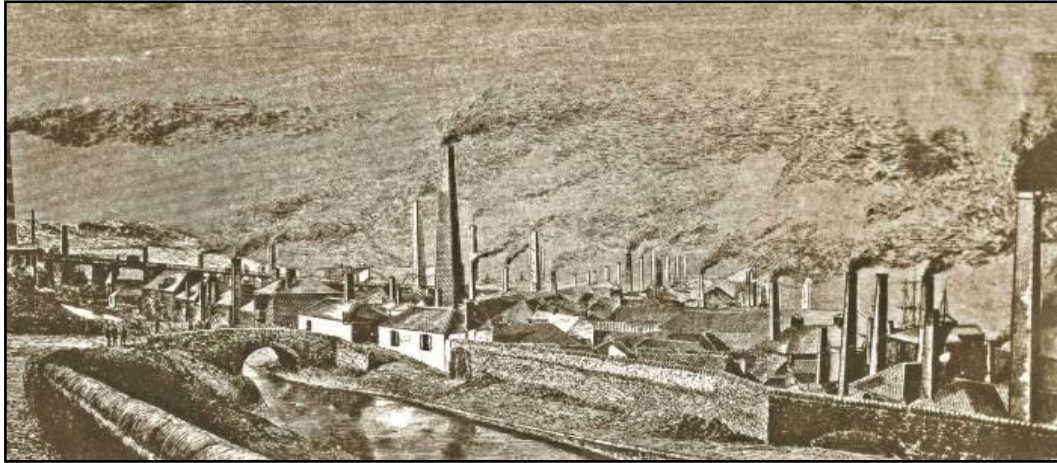
The Emma Retallick legend

In the Victorian era a number of women with huge numbers of convictions became the subject of a rather prurient contemporary fascination, like Jane Cakebread, who by the age of 65 in 1895 had made a total of 278 appearances in court. For one of these a constable had seen her around midnight, surrounded by a mob and using very bad language. Taken into custody she became violent and tried to bite him. In court, in her usual plausible style as the news report had it, she claimed to be very weak and not used to liquor. To laughter in court she alleged that while singing hymns in the cells the inspector had let officers in to 'knock her about.' On being sentenced she blessed the magistrate. In south Wales and in Pontypridd in particular, Emma Retallick (born Emma Sullivan) had a similar record and her fame spread far and wide in the same era. These are just part of her story, a woman who appears to have been born at Swansea on 24 July 1867 of Irish parents who had travelled across the Irish Sea during the great famine.

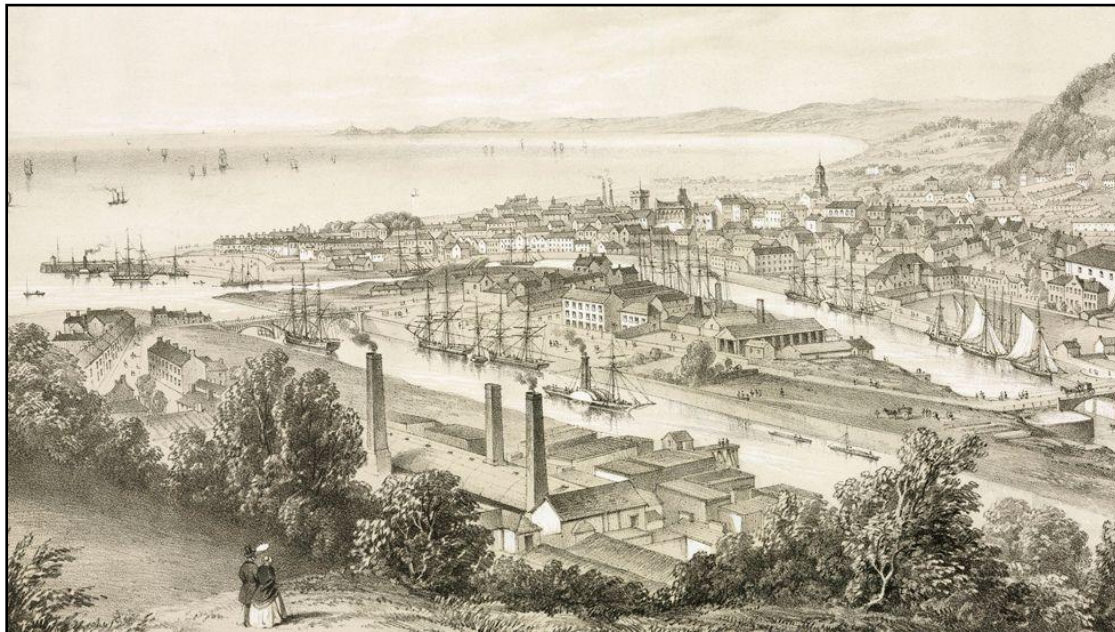
The Irish began arriving in Wales in the 1840s. They were the largest single group of immigrants to play a part in the story of Wales. Those who arrived in Wales were fleeing the Irish potato famine, and often arrived in a very desperate state. The ship named the Wanderer docked in Newport in 1847 and deposited 113 destitute men, women and children in the town, with 20 of them said to be close to death. This prompted comment in Parliament, and the Monmouthshire Merlin newspaper commented on "the alarming and lamentable appearance of the streets of Newport crowded with many hundreds of famishing Irish". The emotional impact the famine had on the escaping Irish was so great that they built a Famine Memorial in a Cardiff cemetery. From 1841, the Irish kept coming to Wales, to reach a high point of almost 30,000 people by 1861 - a 344% increase. They settled primarily in the four largest South Wales towns - Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Merthyr. But not all Irish immigrants to Wales were poor and unskilled. Among the new arrivals were also doctors, businessmen and other members of the professional classes. As the population dwindled at home, they too had to look for opportunities elsewhere. However, the arrival of the Irish caused tensions between neighbours, and led to Cardiff's first race riot in 1848. Cardiff's very first policeman, Jeremiah Box Stockdale, found the dead body of Welshman Thomas Lewis in Cardiff's Irish quarter, which was the area around Stanley Street. He had been brutally stabbed by Irishman John Connors. Prior to this, in some quarters there had long been a suspicion about the Irish – in earlier times there were rumours that the immigrant Irish sucked the blood of sheep, murdered children and ran "faster than any dog".

A drawing of the infamous Jane Cakebread, the London prostitute.





View of the Hafod Copperworks – from George Grant Francis (1881), *The Smelting of Copper in the Swansea District, from the time of Elizabeth to the present day.*



A view of the port of Swansea from the mid 1850s

In those days, Stanley Street was not a very inviting place – it wasn't uncommon for over 50 people to occupy a single room. Catholic churches and homes were assaulted with some venom as Welsh mobs rampaged through these streets looking for John Conners. In the end, he was arrested at Pontypridd, found guilty of manslaughter, and shipped off to Botany Bay in Australia. However, the arrival of the Irish caused tensions between neighbours, and led to Cardiff's first race riot in 1848. Cardiff's very first policeman, Jeremiah Box Stockdale, found the dead body of Welshman Thomas Lewis in Cardiff's Irish quarter, which was the area around Stanley Street. He had been brutally stabbed by Irishman John Conners. Prior to this, in some quarters there had long been a suspicion about the Irish – in earlier times there were rumours that the funeral of the murdered man, Irish railway workers apparently lined these streets, armed with pickaxes, ready to protect the Irish population against any further Welsh reprisals.

During the mid-19th Century the Hafod-Morfa Copperworks at Swansea employed over 1000 people. Situated in the Lower Swansea Valley, this area at that time accounted for 90% of the world's copper production. This was made possible by an abundant supply of coal in the Swansea Valley, brought down via the late 18th century canals, and the excellent facilities for shipping, which allowed the import of copper ore from Cornwall, North Wales, South America,

South Africa and Australia. The number of ships in the port of Swansea was reflected by the number of prostitutes plying their trade. It got to such an extent that in 1866, there were 199 known prostitutes and 85 houses of 'ill repute' in Swansea, otherwise known as brothels.

The Cambrian newspaper, dated June 3, 1881, observed: "Not only abandoned women, but young girls who have scarcely emerged from childhood parade our streets by day and night in the most unblushing manner. In the evenings, Wind Street is sometimes impassably crowded with brazen-faced solicitants and half-drunken victims, and brutal 'bullies' (pimps). It does no good to drive them from the pavement or to pull down the hovels in which they live; they swarm again, as boldly as ever." Swansea police statistics published for 1876 stated there were once as many as 286 known prostitutes on the streets of Swansea, some of them as young as 13, until 1885 when the Criminal Law Amendment Act raised the minimum age to 16.

Prostitution was the highest-paying job for a woman

During the Victorian era, the only career options for women were low-paying professions, and many had dangerous working conditions. There were street vendors (who assisted their husbands with their businesses), factory workers, and shop girls. If a woman was very lucky, she could be a household servant in the estate of a lord or lady. Even educated women who learned high-level skills at business colleges, like typing and shorthand, only made an average of £25 per year. That still wasn't enough money for women to support themselves or their children without the aid of a husband. Prostitution was the one and only job where a woman could have shorter work hours and earn high wages in cash without depending on a husband to support her. If she was exceptionally beautiful, she could earn enough to achieve total financial independence. If a lower-class woman could afford nice clothes and the finer things in life, it most likely meant that she was a prostitute.

Since many of the lower-class jobs simply didn't pay enough to support a large family, it was common for the wives of street vendors to offer their sexual services on the side while they helped their husbands run the family business. Husbands were completely fine with allowing other men to sleep with their wives. In fact, 50 percent of street vendors' wives were reported to moonlight as prostitutes. In some instances, the wife happily worked as a prostitute since it was a way for her to earn income. In other instances, the husband was acting as a pimp, using his wife as his property, lending her out as he pleased. Many single working women (seamstresses, shop girls, and servants) also worked as casual prostitutes to supplement their low incomes. However, if it was discovered that a woman had lost her virginity before marriage, it meant that she was "fallen" and doomed to continue living a life of prostitution. While history books and romantic novels from England's Victorian era depict people as being very uptight, there were actually more brothels than there were schools. It is estimated that roughly 80,000 women were working as prostitutes in London alone, which reveals how sex-obsessed the culture truly was. Prostitutes were called "fallen women," because they were seen as an example of what fine, upstanding women in society should never become.

However, prostitution was legal and even encouraged in many circles because it was believed that men needed an outlet for the sexual desires that they were forced to repress in their daily lives. It also allowed many women opportunities to earn wages that they could have never have earned otherwise. Although prostitution was legal, many ladies of the night were arrested for crimes like public drunkenness or gathering in the streets. Those behaviours were considered illegal under the Town Police Clauses Act of 1847.

Many of those small crimes resulted in a year in prison. There were also places called reformatories, which aimed to rehabilitate fallen women. Religious groups often ran these. The attitude of the people who ran the reformatories was that prostitutes acted out on their own selfish desires. In many ways, living in a reformatory was worse than jail. Some required women to stay for a minimum of two years to ensure they were "cured." Women were also required to show a deep sense of self-hatred for their evil actions and a desire for forgiveness from God for their sins to qualify for housing. Reformatories required women to wake up at 5:00 am, pray four times per day, attend religious services twice a day, work hard labour, and be locked in their bedrooms by 8:00 pm.

The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

No. of Sublots	ROAD, STREET, No. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES (over the Sublot) as shown on the plan of the lot (B)	Municipal Borough of Swansea Upper	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of Swansea	Town of	Village or Hamlet, &c., of	Local Board, or (Improvements Commissioners District) of	WHERE BORN	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	AGE of	CON- DITION	RELATION to Head of Family	NAME and Surname of each Person	Ecological District of	Whether 1. Deaf and Dumb 2. Blind 3. Imbecile or Idiot 4. Lame
265	Willing Road	1	Swansea	Upper	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	2	son	son	James, Proctier	Swansea	
											22	son	Head	Petrick, Sullivan	Swansea	
											14	Wife	Wife	Madeline, D.	Swansea	
											18	Daughter	Daughter	Maria, D.	Swansea	
											11	son	son	Thomas, D.	Swansea	
											2	son	son	Catherine, D.	Swansea	
											6 mo	son	son	Emma, D.	Swansea	
266	H. D.	1	Swansea	Upper	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	46	Head	Head	John, Griffiths	Swansea	
											45	Wife	Wife	Elizabeth, L. D.	Swansea	
											27	Daughter	Daughter	Parthel, D.	Swansea	
											18	son	son	Emma, D.	Swansea	
											16	son	son	John, D.	Swansea	
											12	Daughter	Daughter	Mary, Jane, D.	Swansea	
											5	son	son	Sarah, D.	Swansea	
267	"	1	Swansea	Upper	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	47	Head	Head	Richard, Williams	Swansea	
											18	Wife	Wife	Elizabeth, D.	Swansea	
											16	Daughter	Daughter	Mary, L. D.	Swansea	
											14	son	son	William, D.	Swansea	
											11	Daughter	Daughter	Francis, D.	Swansea	
											9	son	son	Sarah, A. D.	Swansea	
											7	son	son	John, D.	Swansea	
268	"	1	Swansea	Upper	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	Swansea	45	Head	Head	James, Griffiths	Swansea	
											14	Wife	Wife	Ann, G.	Swansea	
											14	son	son	Henry, D.	Swansea	
1	Total of Houses	1									11					

1871 census showing Emma Sullivan 3 years old living with her family at Swansea.

1881 Wales Census for Emma Sullivan

Glamorgan > Lansanlet Lower > ALL > District 5

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The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the

No. of Schedule	ROAD STREET, &c. and No. or NAME of HOUSE	City or Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of	Town or Village or Hamlet of	Urban Sanitary District of	Rural Sanitary District of	Ecclesiastical Parish or District of	II	
									WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic
107	1 Pritchard Street	Lansanlet	East	Swansea	Lansanlet	Swansea		all Saints		
108	19 St. Peter's									
109	19 Lansanlet Lane									
110	4 St. Peter's									

HOUSES	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION	CON- DITION	AGE last Birthday	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Imbecile or Idiot (4) Lunatic
1	William Davies	Head	Married	24	Labourer in Lime Works	Glamorgan Swansea	
	Jemot	Wife	Married	24	S Wife	" "	
	Thomas John	Son	Married	3	Scholar	" "	
	David	Son	Single	1	"	" "	
	John	Son	Single	13	Shemacher (Wool) maker	Abertawe, Carmarthen	
1	Richard Davies	Head	Married	25	Labourer (Wool) in the Works	Lansanlet Glamorgan	
	Elizabeth	Wife	Married	26	S Wife	Abertawe "	
	Jessie	Son	Single	14	Collier (Wool) maker	" "	
	Maria	Daughter	Married	12	Scholar	" "	
	Ann	"	"	9	"	Lansanlet "	
	Mary	"	"	7	"	" "	
	Ann	"	"	5	"	" "	
1	Patrick Sullivan	Head	Married	27	Labourer in the Works	Lansanlet	
	Catherine	Wife	Married	24	S Wife	Lansanlet	
	Thomas	Son	Married	22	Labourer in the Works	Lansanlet	
	Emma	Daughter	Married	15	Scholar	Lansanlet	
	John	"	"	10	"	Lansanlet	
1	John Rice	Head	Married	36	Labourer in the Works	Lansanlet	
	Mathew	Wife	Married	34	S Wife	Lansanlet	
	James Davis	Son	Married	23	Labourer in the Works	Lansanlet	
	Elizabeth	Daughter	Married	19	S Wife	Lansanlet	
	Thomas	Son	Married	1	"	Lansanlet	
	George	Son	Single	1 week	"	Lansanlet	
4	Total of Houses...						
12	Total of Males and Females...						

Emma Sullivan, 15 years of age, still at school and still living at home with her family on 1881 census.

The early life of Emma Sullivan is unknown. Obviously she left school at around 14 or 15 years of age. The 1881 census shows the complete family at Swansea, Emma being aged 15:

1881 Census

8 Lower Rising Sun Row, Lower Llansamlet,
Swansea Glamorganshire.

Patrick Sullivan Head General Labourer in Copperworks Born 1824 Age 57 Born Tipperary.

Catherine Sullivan Wife Housewife Born 1837 age 44 Born Tipperary.

Thomas Sullivan Son General Labourer Born Swansea 1859 Age 22.

Emma Sullivan Daughter Born 1867 age 15, Scholar, Born Pentrechwyth, Swansea.

Ellen Sullivan Daughter Born 1871 Birth town Foxhole, Llansamlet Age 10.

There is evidence also, that there was an older sister Catherine (Junior) not at home when this census was taken, but had already been arrested for prostitution.

The village of **Pentrechwyth** grew up on the hillside above the eastern bank of the River Tawe and many of its residents were employed in nearby coal mines or in the works down in the **Swansea Valley**. ***The Rising Sun**, Pentrechwyth. A public house frequented by copper workers in what was one of Swansea's industrial areas at the time.

As we can see Emma Sullivan was marked as being in school aged 15, but is this true? Or was she sent to work on the streets at an early age by her parents? We will never know. The first newspaper report of an appearance in court appeared when she was 17 years of age in 1884, when she was charged with theft: -

Emma's first mention

(Cambrian Daily Leader 6 November 1884)

Emma Sullivan and Sarah Burns two young women described as ungovernably wild were charged with being in possession of a watch, supposed to have been stolen. Detective Gill said that about 2.30 on Wednesday afternoon, he received information from Mr. Lyons, a pawnbroker, which induced him to go to Mr. Fletcher's. He there saw the prisoner Burns. He also saw the prisoner Sullivan in a shop. She was trying to sell a watch (produced) which she said belonged to Burns. The latter said this was true, and added that she had received it some months ago from her "chap," named James, who had since been drowned. As his relatives were all dead (laughter) the detective then took them into custody. The girls, he stated, had caused great trouble to their parents. They had only recently been discovered sleeping in a water closet with a sailor. Mr. Lyons, pawnbroker, said the prisoners came to him and wanted to sell the watch. He declined to buy in, and gave information to the police. The watch is a silver-birch watch capped; it bears the name of the maker John Clarke, 661, Bethnal Green Road, London. The prisoners were remanded for a week. On 10 November at the Swansea Petty Sessions both prisoners were sentenced to three months imprisonment.

There were no further reports of an arrest in 1884, but the following year 1885, Emma Sullivan and Sarah Burns were accused of stealing a feather, not in Swansea, but in the notorious Bute Street District of Cardiff.

Shop robbery

(South Wales Echo 6 July 1885)

At the police-court today before Mr R. O. Jones, Sarah Burns (15) and Emma Sullivan (17) were charged with stealing a feather of the value of 10s 11d from the shop of Mr. David John Evans, 12 Bute Street, on the 3rd instant. Prisoners went to the shop and asked to look at some feathers. A box containing a number was shown to them. They examined them for about a quarter of an hour. They left without making a purchase, and subsequently a

feather was missed. They were apprehended in Bute Street, and the feather found on them. Burns admitted having stolen the feather. They now pleaded guilty, and were each sent to prison for ten days, with hard labour.

The following year, 1886, Emma was fined for being drunk back at Swansea. It is stated she was married and using an alias name, though here is no record of Emma marrying someone name Harris. Wind Street was a notorious place renown for prostitutes and brothels in the town center of Swansea: -

Swansea Police

Cambrian Daily Leader 22 October 1886

Emma Maria Harris, otherwise Emma Sullivan, a young married woman, residing at Pentrechwyth, was fined 10 shillings for drunkenness in Wind Street, Swansea, another district known for prostitution. The following year, 1887, Emma seemed to avoid being arrested, though another woman named Emma Sullivan was charged with drunkenness at Aberystwyth in July and was assaulted by her husband, Thomas Sullivan, by stabbing her in the arm with a knife, knocking her on the head with a washing-tub, and kicking her whilst she was upon the ground, for which he was sentence to six months hard labour. Was this Emma Sullivan of Pentrechwyth in Swansea? That is another thing we will never know.

A change of town

The year 1888 saw Emma Sullivan suddenly appear at Newport. Why this change of district is not known, but a major factor must have been the docks and the army barracks in that town and the number of soldiers billeted there. In March that year the Star of Newport newspaper reported:-

Bruising females

(Star of Gwent 9 March 1888)

Minnie Reardon and Emma Sullivan were charged with being disorderly by fighting at the top of Llanarth Street, Newport, on Saturday night. P.C. Cordley spoke to the facts, and prisoners were fined 5 shillings each. In July that year Emma was named in a police case involving a possible brothel: -

Disorderly house keeping at Maindee.

(South Wales Daily Echo 7 July 1888)

At Newport County police-court this afternoon, Emily Seys, tenant of the Moss Cottage, Archibald Street, Maindee, was summoned for keeping a disorderly house. The evidence of Inspector Williams was to the effect that he visited the house on the 24th May and again on the 4th and 22nd June. On the last occasion he found six persons there, of whom three were sailors. He told defendant that he should report her, and that she ought to have desisted when he cautioned her in May. She said, "You can do nothing to me, I'm not the landlady." On the 2nd July he went to the house accompanied by Mr. Heitzman, the landlord, and Superintendent Bosanquet. The landlord said to defendant, "You are the woman who obtained the key from me in the name of Mrs Jenkins." Defendant replied in the affirmative. P.C. Thomas proved that the visits of men and women had been continued up to the 30th ult. and Emma Sullivan, wife of a sailor, proved defendant's agency by direct testimony. The Magistrates' Clerk stated that the defendant prosecuted a man lately at the borough court for stealing money from her, and he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. "Did he live with her?" — Defendant: "No." P.C. Thomas "They lived together at 7, Glebe-street." For the defence, Emily Thomas (defendant's sister) was called. She asserted that the men found in the house on the 23rd June were boarders returned home from sea. One, a captain, had been lodging there a fortnight, and the other (also a captain) five days. One girl came from Cardiff. At the outset of the case Mr. T. H. Parker asked for an adjournment that he might call witnesses to prove that the house was a lodging-house. The bench, after bearing Mr. Horace Lyle for the prosecution, declined the application, and Mr. Parker withdrew from the case. The defendant and her sister are stated to belong to Cardiff. The bench thought that the case was a very bad one, and inflicted a fine of £10 or one month's hard labour.

A fighting woman creates a sensation
(South Wales Daily News 12 July 1888)

Emily Miles, a powerful woman belonging to the unfortunate sisterhood, was charged under a warrant with assaulting Emma Sullivan. The complainant gave evidence at the county police-court on Saturday, which materially assisted in the conviction of a woman named Seys for keeping a disorderly house at Maindee. Prisoner, displeased at this, followed Sullivan about on Monday, and, having pushed a basket in her face and threatened her, the latter got a summons. Shortly after she left the Town-hall, having negotiated this matter, prisoner met her, created a sensation in the main street, and knocked her down, blackening her right eye. Mr. Cullum said he witnessed the assault from the Town-hall steps, and that a crowd of 200 people assembled. She would have been arrested there and then had she not jumped into a cab. The Magistrates' Clerk (to prisoner) "You seem to be a fighting character. Six weeks ago you were here for fighting in the Marshes Road, and you are under the peace now.—The court adjudged prisoner 14 days' hard labour, and, counselled Sullivan, who is only 20 years old, to return at once to her parents at Crickhowell, who were willing to receive her.

Serious charge at Newport - The Worcester man's irretrievable disgrace
(South Wales Echo 11 August 1888)

At Newport County Police Court this afternoon, John Connor, in the uniform of the Worcestershire Regiment, was charged on remand for feloniously assaulting Emma Sara Buss, a child of six years. On Tuesday afternoon, about 4 o'clock, the prisoner was seen to take the poor little creature into a sweet shop on Barrack Hill, and purchased her sweets. Afterwards he led her away towards fields near the barrack gate, and shortly afterwards Emma Sullivan, single woman, who was walking in some fields near, with John Poole, another Private in the same Regiment, saw the prisoner in a corner of another field. Sullivan called out in reprobation of his conduct, and Poole whistled to another soldier, Edward Talbot, to face him up. Poole told prisoner he was a scamp, and allowed him to slink off, but picked up the child, whose eyes were swollen with crying, with her clothes torn and in disorder, and gave her to Sullivan, who carried her to her mother's house. Prisoner said he remembered nothing about the matter; but his identification was beyond doubt, both Poole and Talbot having known him for several years. The child herself complained that Pat (the nickname prisoner is known by) had been beating and hurting her. Mr. W. J. Ready, surgeon, spoke of the injuries the child had received, which showed that the full offence as far as was compatible with the age of the child, had been committed. The Bench committed the prisoner for trial.

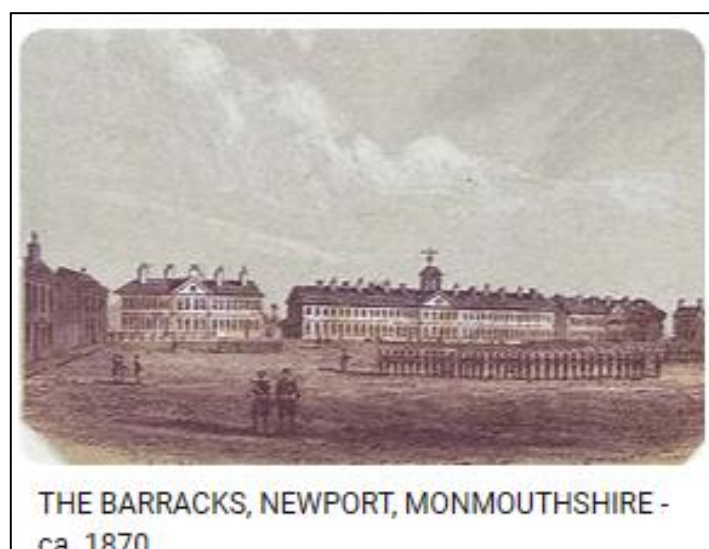
Lady companions fall out at Newport
(SW Echo 28 January 1889)

At the Newport borough police-court, to-day, Elizabeth Rees, attired in a velvet jacket and a fashionable hat, was charged with assaulting Emma Sullivan on Saturday night. A constable found a crowd gathered about the two women in Commercial Road, and saw that Sullivan was bleeding from a wound in the head. This had been produced by a blow from the heel of prisoner's shoe, hastily slipped off for the purpose. The assault was explained to have been caused by Sullivan accusing prisoner of taking a dress belonging to her and selling it to another girl. Head-Constable Sinclair said the two women, both street walkers, had been companions, but had fallen out. Prisoner had been sent to her home once by the magistrates and once at the instigation of her own friends. The Bench adjudged prisoner to 28 days' hard labour, and she retired to the lower depths protesting that she ought to have had a fine placed on her.

Emma assaulted
(Star of Gwent 1 February 1889)

Elizabeth Rees, and unfortunate, was charged with being disorderly in Commercial Street, Newport, and assaulting Emma Sullivan. On Saturday night P.C. Wilcox was attracted by a crowd outside the Lord Raglan public house and on going there Sullivan complained that defendant had struck her on the head with a boot which she had taken off for the purpose. Sullivan's head was bleeding at the time. A dispute had taken place in reference to a dress, which, it was alleged, defendant had stolen from Sullivan. Rees was taken into custody, and then became very violent.

Defendant asserted that complainant first assaulted her, and denied that she struck her with the boot. Supt. Sinclair said that the police had had great trouble with defendant, who had been before the courts six times lately. She was sent to gaol for 28 days. Emma, however shortly returned home to Swansea, much, no doubt to the dismay of the local police: -



Alleged assault by Emma's sister when out together in Swansea
(The Cambrian 4 October 1889)

Ellen Sullivan (18) of Pentrechwyth, was charged with assaulting William Taylor, by striking him with a glass, in a public house, High Street, Swansea. Prosecutor, a powerfully built young man, described as a labourer, deposed that on Saturday night, at 10 minutes to 11, he was in the Red Cow Public house, and prisoner and her sister were also present. Witness began pulling his (witness's) friend, and witness said: "Leave him alone, I don't want to be mixed up with you. Witness then turned round, and received on his head a blow from prisoner. She dealt the blow with a glass, and witness saw the pieces flying about. He went out and gave information to a Police-officer. Prisoner sat next but one to him and her sister, and had never seen her before. He did not speak to her before or after the assault. Another young man named Collins corroborated, stating that prisoner threw the glass and did so out saying a word. There was an ugly mark on prosecutor's head, and witness said the wound bled copiously, and he fainted in the passage of the public house, and several times subsequently. He was conveyed in a cab to the hospital, where his wound was dressed by one of the nurses, who stated that the injury sustained was not of a serious nature. The witness had also been injured in the eye, a fragment of glass striking it and that wound also bled very much. The prisoner in defence said she acted in self-defence. Defendant said prosecutor tried to strike her, and she attempted to throw the beer in his face, when the glass slipped from her hands. The Bench adjourned the case until Tuesday, for the attendance of her sister (Emma?) who was ill.

The woman and the policeman at Swansea
(South Wales Daily News 6 November 1889)

At the police-court on Tuesday—before Messrs J. C. Fowler, W. Stone, and D. Jones — Emma McGwyer was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Welcome Lane the previous night. The prisoner said she was assaulted by P.C. Bowen, who, in arresting her, kicked her on the neck while on the ground. The constable denied the assault, while P.C. Tricker said when the woman arrived at the station she was beastly drunk her neck was swollen, but she made no complaint against the officer. The magistrates decided to adjourn the case for further evidence.

The South Wales Echo added: The assault was explained to have been caused by Sullivan accusing prisoner of taking a dress belonging to her and selling it to another girl. Head-Constable Sinclair said the two women, both street

walkers, had been companions, but had fallen out. Prisoner had been sent to her home once by the magistrates and once at the instigation of her own friends. The Bench adjudged prisoner to 28 days' hard labour, and she retired to the lower depths protesting that she ought to have had a fine placed on her.

Policeman allegedly kicks Emma's sister

The South Wales Daily News reported on 13 November: Ellen McGuire, who, on a former occasion, when charged with being drunk and disorderly, alleged that the constable who arrested her had kicked her, now, on remand, repeated the allegation. Several witnesses denied it, and said the constable behaved with great consideration, and defendant was fined 10s and costs, half of which was for a further offence since the adjournment. The Cambrian newspaper of 13 December 1889 reported: Emma McGwyer, otherwise Sullivan, of ill-fame, Pentrechwyth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly and using obscene language in Castle Street, Swansea, on the 9th inst. P.C. Jones, No.72, gave evidence, and prisoner was sent to prison for fourteen days.

Emma's sister in court again? (The Cambrian December 27th 1889)

Ellen Sullivan, a woman of ill-fame, living at Pentrechwyth, was charged with doing malicious damage to the amount of 5s and also with assaulting Emma Thomas on the 23rd ultimo. The case was adjourned for a week owing to the absence of the defendant. At the Swansea Police Court on the second week of 1890, the Cambrian reported: - Ellen Sullivan, Pentrechwyth, a disorderly woman, was charged with assaulting Emma Thomas, on the 23rd Nov. The complainant said her husband kept the Cross Keys, in St. Mary's Street. On the day in question, prisoner came several times to her house, and in the evening she refused to serve her with drink, as she had already had enough. Prisoner then struck her a violent blow, and pulled her to the ground by the hair of her head, she next went into hysterics, and threw a pint mug through a looking-glass. After closing time, she threatened the witness, and thrust her fist through the window, breaking several panes. The prisoner was fined 2s. and costs, with 5s. damages, or 14 days.

Catherine Sullivan at the Swansea Police Court

And what of Emma's elder sister Catherine? The Cambrian newspaper of 21 February 1890 reported: - Catherine Sullivan (28), Pentrechwyth, was charged by P.C. Thomas, 25, with being drunk and disorderly on the Strand on the previous evening. This was the prisoner's fifteenth appearance. She said "I don't remember anything. I was so drunk."—Committed for 14 days. The Cambrian of 27 June 1890 reported: - Catherine Sullivan, of ill-fame, living at Pentrechwyth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Caer Street on the 19th last.; riotous conduct in Pentrechwyth on the 11th inst., and not appearing to a summons. Prisoner, who gives the police a lot of trouble, was sent to prison for 20 days. The Cambrian Newspaper of 29 August 1890 reported: Drunk - Catherine Sullivan, of ill-fame, Pentrechwyth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Wind-street on the 26th inst. P.C. Maries. 42, proved the charge, and prisoner was sent to prison for 14 days, this being her 19th appearance. The Cambrian on the 28 November 1890 reported: - Catherine Sullivan, a bad character from Pentrechwyth, who frequently appears in the dock, and has only just come out of prison, was again committed for 21 days for being drunk and disorderly in the Strand on the 22nd inst.

Emma to Swansea jail (Cambrian 4 April 1890)

Emma McGwyer, alias Emma Sullivan, a young woman of bad character, and Augustus Friedenthol, a young Russian sailor, were jointly charged with being drunk and disorderly, and the latter was further charged with interfering with a policeman while in the execution of his duty on Saturday night. P.C. Smith (71) gave evidence, and the Bench imposed a penalty of 20 shillings or 14 days, on the male defendant, and sent the female defendant, who is an old offender, to prison for one month hard labour.

An old offender
(Cambrian 15 August 1890)

Emma McGwyer, Emma's sister, (23), Pentrechwyth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Castle Square on the previous evening. P.C. Burnett proved the case. He found the prisoner sitting on the pavement, with a crowd of people looking at her. She was very drunk and used threats and bad language. Prisoner, who had been up before 13 times, was committed for 14 days. The local newspaper of 17 October 1890 reported: - Emma McGwyer, Pentrechwyth, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in High-street also on the previous evening. Prisoner is only 22 years of age, but she has been committed 14 times for drunkenness. She was now committed for a month with hard labour.

The Cambrian newspaper of 9 January 1891 reported: - Emily McGwyer, Pentrechwyth, was sent down for 14 days for drunkenness and disorderly conduct in the High Street. The Cambrian of February 6th 1891 reported: Drunkenness. — Emma McGwyer, Pentrechwyth, was again brought up charged with being drunk and disorderly, and the magistrates discharged her with a caution. The same newspaper of 27 February 1891 reported: Emma McGwyer, of ill-fame, Pentrechwyth, appeared in court for the 18th time on a charge of disorderly conduct in Wind Street, on the 24th inst. P.C. Haywood, No.90, gave evidence, and prisoner was sent to gaol for seven days.

Alleged theft from a Chinaman
(The Cambrian 20 March 1891)

Emma McGwyer, alias Sullivan, Maliphant-street, aged 22, who has been up 19 times before, was charged with stealing a gold diamond ring, value £5, from the person of George Archell, on the 16th inst. There was a second charge against the prisoner of breaking the seat of a w.c. and a pane of glass, in a cell, at High Street police station, doing damage to the amount of 2s., also on the 16th inst. Prosecutor was a young Chinaman, a steward on board the Wm. H. Macey, a sailing ship, lying in the East docks. Prosecutor was dressed after the English fashion, and his pig-tail was fastened up behind. He could speak very little English. To use in own words he said he spoke Spanish more better than English. He took the oath in the prescribed form, without the least demur, but when asked by the Stipendiary if he believed in God, or a hereafter, he shook his head as though he did not believe, or did not understand the question.

A messenger was despatched from the Court for an interpreter, but no one speaking Spanish could be found about the docks. Prosecutor then made an affirmation. He deposed that a little after eleven on the previous evening he accompanied prisoner to a refreshment house in High-street, where they had supper, witness paying for both. Outside he permitted the prisoner to inspect his diamond ring, and she withdrew it from his finger and ran away with it. He caught her by the arm, however, and called a police officer. Prisoner, in reply to the Bench, said the prosecutor gave her the ring.

George Lynn, who keeps the refreshment rooms at 214, High Street, spoke to the parties taking supper in the dining-room as already described. They went away together, and witness, opening the door, saw the altercation about the ring, and the prisoner given in charge by the Chinaman. P.C. Smith (71) said that at 11.45 he heard a cry of police outside the shop of the last witness, and running up he saw the Chinaman holding prisoner by the arm. The former charged the latter with stealing the ring. She said nothing, and witness took her into custody. In reply to the charge she said "All right, yes." P.C. Cross (15) said he picked up the ring (which was smashed, and produced in Court) about 18 inches from the gutter at the corner of Mariner Street, prisoner having passed that way to the station. The accused protested that prisoner gave her the ring. Prosecutor recalled, repeated that it was stolen. Remanded until Thursday.

The Cambrian 4 April 1891 reported: **Stealing a gold ring.** Emma McGwyer (22), a flashy looking prostitute, was sent for trial to the next Quarter Sessions, for robbing a Chinese cook, on board a ship in port, of a gold ring, of the value of £5. The parties were supping together at an eating house when it was alleged the prisoner took the ring, and attempted to run away, but was prevented and taken into custody. On this, she put the ring in her mouth and smashed it. The prosecutor was bound over in the sum of £20 to appear at the Sessions to give evidence, but some

difficulty was experienced as to how the prosecutor could appear, as the ship was going to sea on Monday. He ultimately consented to be bound over in the sum of £10, as the alternative was to go to prison.

An old offender leniently dealt with
(The Cambrian 10 April 1891)

Emma McGwyer (22), who has already 20 convictions recorded against her, was charged by P.C. Hill with being drunk and disorderly in High Street, and also with breaking a pane of glass in the bar of the Prince of Wales' public-house, High Street, Swansea, on the previous evening. Prisoner was discharged with a caution for the first offence, and for the second she was let off on payment of the damages.

Emma's mother and sisters?

Drunk and disorderly - Catherine Sullivan, an old woman, was summoned for being drunk and disorderly, in High-street, where, according to P.C. Cross, she caused a large crowd to assemble. Defendant's three daughters were also under the influence of drink, and defendant was disorderly as well. Fined 10s. including costs, or seven days.

Theft by a woman of ill fame
(South Wales Daily News 16 June 1891)

At the Swansea Police Court, on Monday, Emma McGwyer, a woman of ill-repute, was charged with stealing half-a-sovereign from a youth named James Lewis, a collier, of Aberdare, last Saturday. Complainant arrived in town on pleasure bent with a companion named Watts, and the two met prisoner, for whom they paid for drink. They subsequently went with her to a house in a lane, where she snatched a half-sovereign from the prosecutor and run off. She was sent to prison for a month.

Drunk again
(Cambrian 17 July 1891)

Mary Reardon, married, and Emma McGwyer, of ill-fame, were charged with being drunk and disorderly in High-street and Bath Lane respectively. P.C.'s Marels, No.42. and Davies, No.87, gave evidence, and fines of 5s. were imposed.

Swansea Police Court
(The Cambrian 16 October 1891)

Emily O'Neil, Greyhound Street, and Emma McGwyer, Baptist Court, both of ill-fame, were sent to prison for one calendar month for drunkenness and using obscene language; while Mary Barrett, of ill-fame, for being drunk and disorderly in Goat Street, was sent to prison for 14 days. AN OLD OFFENDER.—Catherine Sullivan, Pentrechwyth, who has been many times previously before the Court, was charged with being drunk and disorderly at the North Dock on October 9th. Dock-constable Jones proved the case, and defendant was committed for 10 days.

Fastened in each other's hair
(The Cambrian 1 April 1892)

Annie Taylor and Emma McGwyer, young women of ill-repute, were charged with fighting in Castle Square, on the 21st inst. McGwyer did not appear, and a warrant was issued for her arrest.—P.C. Northcote stated that at 9.55 p.m. on the day in question he saw the two women fighting. They were on the ground together, and appeared fastened in each other's hair. There was a crowd of 200 or 300 persons present. A fine of 10s. inclusive was imposed.

The year 1892 saw no other reports of Emma Retallick in court and 1893 saw no record of Emma appearing in court anywhere and it is probable that she might have been courting with a gentleman named Edward Retallick and was trying to turn over a new leaf.

Glamorgan Archives – Records of the courts

Petty Sessions divisions were established based on the groups of parishes known as hundreds. The court sat at larger towns and boroughs in the division. The courtroom was often located in a police station, hence their occasional description as police courts. As well as dealing with minor cases and committing cases to higher courts, they also determined the licensing of public houses.

The Record Office holds records of the courts of Quarter Sessions and Petty Sessions, the lowest levels of a legal system that extended upward to the High Court and the House of Lords. Local courts were not, however insignificant – they could impose sentences which ranged from small fines to transportation or death. Quarter Sessions The origins of today's Magistrates' Courts can be traced to the court of Quarter Sessions and to the Justices of the Peace (lay judges) appointed by the Crown to act within each county. The Glamorgan Quarter Sessions covered almost the whole of the historic county of Glamorgan, and dealt with both judicial and administrative matters. Thus, in addition to criminal trials, the court was responsible (for example) for the upkeep of bridges and the county gaol, provision of care for lunatics, registration of electors and the county police force, and it acted as an appeal court for the Poor Law administered by the parishes. The court functioned as the government of the county for more than three centuries before the county council or any other local authority came into being.

The Quarter Sessions met only four times a year, but over the centuries had to deal with an ever increasing load of legal and administrative business. As the eighteenth century progressed the workload of the Justices had grown to such an extent that it was necessary for them to hold extra sessions, meeting in small numbers in their own localities. In time these meetings became known as Petty Sessions. During the nineteenth century the system of Petty Sessions became increasingly formalised, with magistrates holding their sessions more regularly. Laws were enacted requiring formal records to be kept of the proceedings. The court was held before two or more magistrates but without a jury and dealt with minor cases such as drunkenness, poaching and vagrancy. More serious crimes would have been referred to one of the higher courts, either the Quarter Sessions or Great Sessions (replaced by the Assize Courts in 1830). In 1889 Glamorgan County Council was created, and took over nearly all the administrative functions of the Quarter Sessions and Petty Sessions courts. From then on the role of Quarter Sessions was almost exclusively judicial. In 1971, the Petty Sessions and the Quarter Sessions were replaced by Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts

Emma gets married

The 1891 Census shows Edward Retallick & John Retallick (brother) living at 42 Phillips Terrace, Llantrisant, both recorded as coal-miners. Emma Sullivan was often visiting her older sister Catherine at 3 Heol Sarn, Llantrisant, so perhaps Edward Retallick and Emma Sullivan got to know each other then, though it is possible that they knew each other before. Emma, herself, did not appear on the 1891 census. In the summer of 1892 Emma Sullivan, 25 years of age, married Edward Retallick, a labourer from Pontypridd in a civil wedding in Cardiff. The Cambrian newspaper of 2nd January 1880 records a mother and husband with the name (Retallick) living in Swansea and perhaps Edward and Emma were from the same community and grew up near each other, though records show he was born in Middlesex, but later census gives his birthplace as Cardiff. Having got married Emma moved into a home at 66 Pontshonorton Road with, Pontypridd, with Edward, near where there were large collieries where he would be able to find employment and higher wages in the district. Edward was sometimes described a labourer, coal-miner or a haulier, and perhaps sought work at the nearby Albion Colliery at Cilfynydd, a stone throw from their home at Pontshonorton. But one must ask, were they living there as lodgers or did they own it outright? If they had a mortgage how did they pay it? Whatever the reason Emma would live there for over 60 years. In a later article Edward Retallick is described as a haulier at the Coedcae Colliery, Trehafod. However, Emma's reformation appears not to have been a success for long, and her husband must have become very angry as can be seen from the following report:-

Chapter 3

A wife beaten with a hammer - Pontypridd man committed for trial

(Western Mail 1 March 1894)

At Pontypridd Police court on Wednesday (before the stipendiary, Mr. Ignatius Williams; Alderman W. H. Mathias, Captain William, and Messrs. Edwards and T. P. Jenkins) a man named Edward Retallick was charged with unlawfully wounding his wife, Emma Retallick on the 24th ult., at Pontypridd. The complainant refused to say anything against her husband and kept on saying "They were only a few scratches." Mary Sealine, a neighbour, said that about eleven o'clock last Saturday night she heard a cry of "Murder," and saw Emma Metallick running out of the house with her face covered with blood. Witness took her into her house, where complainant told her that her husband had beaten her with a hammer. She bathed and dressed the wounds.

Police-sergeant Lewis said that he arrested the prisoner about twelve on Saturday night. Complainant had told him that she had been beaten with a hammer. On the table he saw a basin of blood and found the hammer three doors lower down the street and on examining it he found it covered with blood. The Bench ordered the prisoner to take his trial at the next quarter sessions. His wife on hearing this screamed out, "Oh, Ted, have it done to-day; have it done to-day."

Emma refused to prosecute - Assault with a hammer

At the Glamorganshire Easter Quarter Sessions at Swansea on 3rd April 1894 Edward Retallick (27), Haulier, of Pontypridd, was indicted for maliciously wounding his wife Emma Retallick, by striking her on the head with a hammer the previous February and knocking her senseless, presumably because she had thrown a saucer at him. Mr. Kelly appeared to prosecute the evidence and the prisoner was found guilty, but he recommended mercy. The jury found the prisoner guilty, and the Chairman, in passing a sentence of nine months, said the assault was most brutal and nothing could justify the prisoner's actions, and but for the recommendation of the jury he would have passed a heavier sentence. Comment: With her husband now in jail, it appears Emma returned to Swansea and was soon back in her old ways: -

Committed for trial - Alleged robbery from the person

(The Cambrian 20th April 1894)

Emma Thomas, Neath Road, Landore, and Emma Retallick alias McGuire, 1 Baptist Court, High Street, two women of bad fame, were charged with stealing £7 in gold from the person of Francis Badowra, a German, in Swan Street, on Monday Evening. Complainant whilst in conversation with them in High Street the prisoners riffled his pockets and extracted the money, also biting his fingers.

P.C. Northcote and P. C. Lloyd deposed to arresting prisoners, who made the allegations respecting the theft against one another. Prisoners now pleading "not guilty," Emma Thomas saying that the other one stole the money, and they were both committed to the quarter sessions, where the Grand Jury threw out the case against them. On 20 July the grand jury threw out the bill against Emma Thomas and Emma Retallick, charged with stealing £7 from the person of Franz Badowra. Note: - Landore is located about 2.5 miles north of Swansea city centre and at this period had one of the world's largest steelworks.

Drunk and assaulting the Police

South Wales Daily Post 20th July 1894

Emma Retallick, prostitute, was drunk and disorderly on the 19th July 1894 and assaulted a Police-constable in Wind Street, Swansea. She was sent to gaol for one month. At the end of August Emma Retallick, a married woman, now of no fixed abode, was fined 10 shillings for being drunk and disorderly in different places on Saturday night.

Drunk and disorderly on Saturday morning

The Cambrian 24 August 1894

Lewis Hughes, labourer, 55, Bathurst Street; and Emma Retallick, a married woman, of no fixed abode, were fined sums of 5s. and 10s. each for being drunk and disorderly in different places on Saturday night. A week later the Cambrian newspaper of 7th September 1894 reported: - Emma Retallick, an ill-famed woman, living at Baptist Court, High Street, Swansea, was sent to prison for 14 days for drunkenness and disorderly conduct in High Street early on Saturday morning. On her release Emma was soon again in trouble. The South Wales Daily Post, 15 September 1894 reported: - Emma Retallick came out of goal on Friday and immediately got drunk and misbehaved herself in Castle Street. She was locked up by P.C. Lloyd (No.31), and was sentenced to 14 days hard labour. When she went below she told the Police-constable that "God will punish you if I don't"

The Cambrian newspaper of 5 October 1894 reported: - A destructive prisoner - Emma Retallick, an ill-famed woman, of no fixed abode, was sent to prison for five weeks on a charge of being drunk and disorderly in College street, and of wilfully breaking windows, &c., to the value of 30s., in the police station. And the South Wales Daily Post newspaper of 9 November 1894 reported: - Emma Retallick appeared in the dock to answer to a charge of being drunk and disorderly in Castle Street on the previous day. P.C. Thomas proved that Emma was lying on the pavement. She feigned a fit and a passerby threw over her a glass of water. She was sent to goal for 10 days. The Cambrian newspaper of 5 October 1894 reported: -

Law and order in Glamorganshire

The official bodies charged with the maintenance of law and order in coalfield society was the Glamorgan Constabulary (formed in 1841) and the courts. At the level of the community the police courts (so called because they located inside local police stations) overseen by local magistrates, dealt with huge variety of cases brought by the police, and private summons taken out by individuals. Cases that fell outside the jurisdiction of magistrates were referred to the quarter-sessions or the bi-annual assizes. Apart from cases of murder, manslaughter and a few other felonies, magistrates were empowered to deal with virtually every other serious offence. In practice the police courts spent a great deal of their time dealing with offences relating to drunken and disorderly behaviour.

Police Courts were lively places. A typical session may included a procession of men and women charged with offences relating to drunkenness, various cases relating to contraventions of highway regulations, contested affiliation (bastardy) orders, petty theft, child neglect and offences related to the Elementary Education Act. In the corridors outside the courts, solicitors, claimants, defendants, witnesses, young girls seeking paternity orders, petty thieves, prostitutes and little girls charged with coal-stealing, all sat side by side awaiting for their cases to be heard. In the middle of this bustling scene sat the court reporter, pencil poised, ready to report the proceedings of the court to a voracious readership.

In October 1901 the editor of the Rhondda Leader, reflecting on the problem of the invertebrate drunkard claimed that: - There are many cases in the Rhondda, particularly of the women kind. We have a woman before our mind's eye that was before a magistrate times without number. The routine of committal to so many days or weeks to prison, and to come out for a short period, to return for another period of incarceration, is their worldly experience. The poor creature is helpless, enslaved by the soils of craving, and has ruined a home and blighted a family.

The editorial reflected the view that women, wives and mothers, were duty bound to provide a moral influence within the home and in the wider community, a view that was also central to non-conformist thinking. Women's special role in life was to nurture and secure a happy respectable home environment. This gender-specific role was particularly visible in a community in which female economic participation rates were amongst the lowest in Britain. The female drunkard, in the eyes of the law and local press, was seen to be turning her back on those special responsibilities. By the end of the nineteenth century, popular opinion was beginning to move from a position in which the female drunkard was perceived as criminal, to a position where she was constructed as a victim of disease. Drink became recognised as a vice that, with the proper treatment, might be cured and the means to affect

IN M.M. PRISON, SWANSEA.

No	NAME	Age	TRADE	Degree of Instruction	Name and Address of Committing Magistrate	Date of Warrant	When received into Custody	Particulars of Offence or Offences as charged in the Indictment
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Emma Thomas (Bailed 20th April, 1894)	24	Charwoman	N	J. C. Fowler, Esq., Swansea Police Court	1894 17th April	17th April	Feloniously stealing £7 from the person of Franz Badoura, at Swansea.
2	Emma Retallick 3 Calendar Months H.L., 10th Nov., 1884, (stealing a watch), Swansea Petty Sessions, as Emma Sullivan. 10 Days H.L., 6th July, 1885, (stealing a feather), Cardiff Petty Sessions, as Emma Sullivan. 1 Calendar Month H.L., 1st Feb., 1890, (stealing money and a purse), Swansea Petty Sessions, as Emma McGwyrr. 1 Calendar Month H.L., 15th June, 1891, (stealing money from the person), Swansea Petty Sessions, as Emma McGwyrr. And further 37 times summarily convicted, viz: for drunkenness, disorderly conduct, &c.	25	Married	Imp	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto

A record of Emma Retallick in the Swansea Prison 17th April 1894 Swansea Prison with fellow thief Emma Thomas. Note: Emma has a further record of being convicted a further 37 times for drunkenness, disorderly conduct &c.

this cure was thought to be a placement in a home for inebriate women. And what was Pontypridd like at this period? Here are two stories from the local newspaper: -

Pontypridd - A modern Babylon

Disgraceful scenes in the streets - Prostitution rampant

A frightful picture of the 'Path to Hell.'

The '*Pontypridd Chronicle*' of March 30th 1893 gives another typical example of the 'night-life' in Pontypridd at the time: - In order to find out the real truth regarding the recent allegations made concerning the great immorality which was said to be a nightly practice in the streets of our town, a representative of the '*Pontypridd Chronicle*' was told last week to make inquiries and find out the true state of affairs, and the sketch that he brought into the office is of the most horrible and disgusting nature.

Late on Saturday evenings the streets are paraded by scores of shameless girls, some of whom come from Cardiff, whilst others are resident in the town, and these carry out their various practices right under the eyes of the public. In fact many of our bye-ways are almost impassable, while certain streets reputed to have been of respectable character are the happy hunting grounds of prostitutes.

For a man to take his wife or sister home from town of an evening is paramount to laying his family open to molestations and insults of the most glaring kind. Not only are the streets thus utilised, but the cloisters and graveyards of the chapels and churches, and even the sacred precincts of the County Court and Police Court, are alike used for immoral purposes. Fortunately, houses which are termed brothels are in Pontypridd rarely found or at any rate where girls of doubtful characters resort the occupiers of houses to have sufficient respect for decency and morality to prevent them carrying out their purposes there at, hence the disreputable condition of our streets and by-lanes. These "strange" girls frequent certain public houses, come out on the street, and lay in wait for the first - ah! worst luck, the first dozen men who pass by, lead them to those streets that are badly or insufficiently lighted, and there, although passers-by, are frequent, are enacted scenes which lead us to apply, without fear of contradiction, the title of a modern Babylon, on a small scale, to the town.

These localities are, happily, known to the police and on Saturday evening last a large number of these 'social lepers' which haunted the playgrounds of vice, are captured and taken into custody. It is to be regretted, however, that on Monday morning some of them were liberated by the magistrate on payment of a fine, for not only do they injure themselves and their victims, but undermine the morals of chaste people and tends to foster immorality among the hitherto pure.

We speak plainly, because the putrid sore which forms a blot on the fame of the town is such as to necessitate prompt and decisive treatment. When the last train leads for Cardiff the railway station is thronged with prostitutes, and the language used by these drunken, shameless girls, and their no-less guilty male companions, is most disgraceful and revolting. Yet, even then the curtain has not fallen upon the last act of this terrible drama, for from about 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning others are seen in a by-street, almost paralysed with drink, yet plying their horrible trade. It is pitiful to see raw youths, some of whom had hardly entered their teens, being dragged along the Highway to Hell by these drunken, pithy harlots.

Among the youths who consort with these wrecks of society may sometimes be seen some businessmen and an occasional glimpse may be caught of faces not altogether unknown in places of worship. So rampant is vice, so numerous are the fallen, that old men, middle-aged, and young alike have been caught in the vortex, and it is not surprising that fair-faced youths of comparatively few years are seen following their paths which tends to bring the grey-hairs of their parents in sorrow to the grave. But neither hoary-headed culprit nor beardless boys should be spared when the question of applying the knife to canker has come. Iniquity might be clothed in garments of righteousness, hidden beneath the chubby cheeks of apparent innocence, or flaunted before the public eye by the brazen face of the blotted debauchee - it is the bounden duty of those who love purity to brand the culprits with the crime, and let out the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The time has now come when it is useless to mince matters, for immorality in Pontypridd during the last couple of years has increased at a terrible rate, and it is high time both for the reputation of the town, and for the salvation of the coming generation, that the voice of the public should be raised against it. The police use their power to their utmost, and all cases brought under their notice are dealt with, but the Vigilance Society, the Ministers of Religion, and the so-called Christians of the town, should no longer neglect to discharge their duties, for the responsibility which rests upon their shoulders is appalling.

The police cannot succeed unless they are backed up by the community at large, and, just as some folks have helped by giving information and voluntary evidence, so many others do not try to put a stop to the plague. Efforts are being put forth to erect hospitals and prevent the spread of cholera and smallpox. Here is the worse plague right in the midst of the town with a teeming population, and the efforts to banish it have been few and feeble up to the present time. Dr. Talmage has preached straight at the "night side of New York," and as we have unflinchingly exposed the scourge which is sapping at the vitals of respectable society of the town of Pontypridd, we content ourselves with having drawn the curtain from the dreadful and revolting panorama of real life, and leave it to the pulpit and the platform to throw further light upon a picture which otherwise may someday rise above us all in its filthy nakedness when the sad scene is recounted before the judgment seat or perhaps, illuminated by the lurid flame of the Flames of Hell.

In the same issue this story confirmed all that the newspaper had been saying: - At the Pontypridd Police Court on Wednesday Annie Wightman and Emily Davies (two sisters) were charged with being a nuisance near the public highway on Saturday last. Mr. Edward Millward, commercial traveller, said that on Saturday night last, about 9.30 his attention was called to two groups of men with who were two women. They were having immoral intercourse close to the pathway. There were about 12 to 15 men altogether and two women. Cross-examined, he said that they were close to the gas lamp, and it was quite moonlight. The witness did not say anything then but followed them down until he met a policeman, to whom he gave information, and they were taken in charge.

Cross-examined the witness said that his attention was called to what was going on by a little girl aged 14 years, the offence being committed almost on his doorstep. He also said that he would like this put stop to, and the language used was most revolting. Sgt Davies said that he arrested the defendants and told them that they were charged with acting indecently close to the door of Mr. Millward. Defendants answered that they were certain that he had not seen them. The magistrate decided that the case was proved. Anne Wightman had been convicted of the same offence in 1887, 1889, and also keeping a brothel in 1889, and had been sent to gaol on 3 occasions. She was this time sentenced to 1 months and Emily Davies to 14 days. The defendants asked to be fined, but the magistrate would not allow it, stating that they intended to "put this type of thing down."

The following week the same newspaper wrote: - Just as I thought they would be, some folks are complaining that too much attention is being drawn to an unsavoury subject, and others who themselves have not witnessed any acts of gross immorality committed at the doors of their houses suspect that last week's pictures were overdrawn. But I wrote as a man who thinks that he has a mission to perform, and I am glad to find that my invitation to the pulpit to join in this crusade is already responded to. There is, however, room for further outspokenness, and the vice which is so rampant amongst us will gradually become the subject of more thunder as I draw the veil from the vile carnival.

Now although, for obvious reasons, I am not going to mention names, I am going to prove to the hilt the charges I made last week, and by doing so, show that there is room for reformers in churches and chapels, and Sunday Schools, and in respectable society to help in isolating, if not stamping out, the social leprosy which has a tendency to make Pontypridd an attractive place for 'human vultures.' True their allurements by showy vice in Cardiff and other large towns is not to be witnessed in Pontypridd.

Taff Street is not paraded by flashily dressed creatures openly flaunting their abominable traffic from eight or nine o'clock until midnight, as is the case in St. Mary's Street, Cardiff. It is this absence of shameless immorality from the main street that makes some highly respectable folks think Ponty is a model town, but the case brought forward last Wednesday proved in a very unpleasant way the truth of my allegations of the horrible nuisances committed in the

side-streets and the very doors of respectable people. The horrid case in which 15 men and two women were involved are too disgusting for publication even in connection with a crusade against public indecency.

Mr. Millward proved a public duty in giving evidence for the prosecution, and if such prompt action were more frequently taken the disgusting sights now too often witnessed, even by children, would practically be stopped. At one time, the slopes of Graigwen, behind Gelliwastad Crescent, were the favourite resort of objectionable characters, but Mr. J. F. McClean took energetic steps to prevent the nuisances, and he succeeded.

The tramroad-side between Pontypridd and Treforest once was the home of prostitutes and thieves, but Mr. James Roberts and others set the police going with such purpose as to help to sweep away the evil. Leading inhabitants in other neighbourhoods should follow the example set them, and, unless they help individually, the police will have to be increased tenfold in number.

While inviting the attention to the horrors of wholesale immorality committed on our local mountainsides by wild 'Shoni-hoys' who come from the Rhondda in droves to visit dirty, drunken sluts, that most people would not touch with an iron tong, I ask, do they know that they are men - respectable looking family men, who go to church and chapel every Sunday - coming into Pontypridd by the eight o'clock train on Saturday nights, and under the cover of the darkness visiting haunts of vice? Whether they do or not it is a fact that such things occur.

The dirty talk of the drunken 'Shoni-hoys' when they return by train on Sunday evening or Monday morning reveals the story of their visits to the 'gates of hell.' I have heard some of them boasting, in the presence of a carriage full of people, of their conquest amongst the vilest slatterns imported from Bristol. I know, and could mention the names of people who come to Pontypridd with regularly on immoral expeditions, and the police could tell tales, if they wished, of the capture of old men whose families would blush for shame if they knew why their hoary-headed relatives had been taken care of by the 'guardians of the night.' When one ponders over the allegations constantly made as to the immoralities of local religious men, and the things of the little notice paid to the subject of Christian churches, it is not surprising that the world tolerates and sometimes receives with open arms public adulterers that are well known in our midst.

Terrible state of affairs

Pontypridd and its morals – Interview with Mr. James Roberts
The licensed "guzzling" shop

The South Wales Daily News' of 23rd November 1893 carried this report: - Mr. James Roberts, Treforest, one of the oldest members of the Pontypridd Local Board, and who represented the district on the Glamorgan County Council, is loud in his complaint of the gross scenes or indecency which are being continually thrust under the public gaze. Mr. Roberts is especially competent to lift the curtain in this respect for the tramroad between his residence, Taff Vale House, and the town, over which he and members of his family have to walk day and night, has long been a favourite resort of the immoral section of the community. So intolerable is the nuisance that Mr. Roberts has often to walk home at night around the Wood Road, which is double the distance, in order to avoid contact with immorality of the grossest description. In an interview which I obtained with him the other day, Mr. Roberts declared that the picture already drawn in these columns on the state of the town is not in the slightest degree exaggerated.

Asked to give instances of the scenes he had witnessed, Mr. Roberts stated: - "The tramroad has long been the habitual resort of this class of people, and as for instances, why, my dear sir, I can give you scores. There is in open field, or slope adjoining the tramroad, and in this I have often seen indecency of the filthiest kind, and as often as not, a large number little children, from eight to ten years of age look down over the embankment at what was going on below. On another occasion, when a similar thing was going on, the woman, who was helplessly drunk, remained in a state of semi-nudity on the embankment for hours. Yes, this was in broad daylight. I called at the police-station to give information and was told by the late superintendent that as what I complained of took place on private property nothing could be done in the matter."

"And you and your family, of course, have to use this route daily, like other residents in Treforest?" - "Yes, but I must admit that there is an improvement in the condition of things now on the tramroad as compared with its condition in the past, and I attribute this to the extra vigilance of the police and to the successful suppression of illicit drinking on the Sabbath. Why, I often saw half a dozen of these girls drinking for hours with an equal number of men on the tramroad. But that does not take place now. But there is room for considerable improvement yet. It is evident that what once took place on the tramroad is now carried on in the Lan Wood and other places."

Questioned as to remedies, Mr. Roberts emphatically repudiated the suggestion of having licensed brothels, and added, "I should like to see the magistrates dealing more firmly with cases of this description. I will give you a case in point. A woman was arrested in the act, and the magistrate actually acquitted her, suggesting that she should leave the town. And yet this same woman was seen a few weeks afterwards in the district plying her awful trade with no attempt at concealment. I can't understand why women who are so well-known to the police should not be followed and watched so that convictions could be secured. I have a number of times seen these women go with numbers of men from the centre of the town to the neighbourhood of Mr. McClune's residence, and I can quite understand that Mr. McClune has very great reasons for complaining." - "Was a vigilance committee not formed here in connection with the social purity crusade?" - "Yes, but a large number of the members became so apathetic that the movement was allowed to fall through."

"Do you consider there are publicans who are guilty of harbouring these women?" - "I do, most decidedly, and I have before now drawn the attention of the magistrates to the matter. Take, for instance, the jug and bottle departments, in which sly drinking is allowed on a very extensive scale. In fact, in these departments loose women can be supplied *ad lib*, without the attendants ever seeing their faces, so that they cannot possibly tell the condition their customers are in before supplying them with drink. I have often seen men and women emerge stupidly drunk from these jug and bottle departments.

Indeed, I consider that these facilities for supplying intoxicants to men and women already drunk lead directly to the awful scenes and immoral exhibitions that are now being exposed in your columns. Yes; I think the police are quite sufficient in number to cope with the evil and if they were to be a little more vigilant, for it is undoubtedly the fact that the parties committing these scandalous outrages are invariably drunk. I have often seen young men assembling in crowds on the public streets in the daytime watching men and women on the breast of the Graig Mountain. It's simply awful! You know yourself that tenants and owners of houses in the Graig district are complaining sorely of their homes being made intolerable by the scenes enacted in the neighbourhood."

"Is Pontypridd worse off in this respect than other towns?" - "Yes, for very many reasons, and the chief of these is the fact that we have so large a number of public-houses here. Why, there are no fewer than 25 licensed houses on the road from the Cross Keys to the Graig and back to the Rhondda Bridge - a distance of only half a mile, and this is the district from which these people emerge. Often on Saturday nights, and on Mabon days (Miner's Holiday, first Monday of the month), it is positively dangerous to travel home by the last train, because of the drunken crowds of men and women who fill the carriages, who go to the outskirts to spend the night together, and I have seen unspeakable offences even on railway platforms. I should be delighted if the magistrates who carry out their responsible duties in this town would pay a visit to certain public-houses and see for themselves whether they are worthy of that name, or whether they are not simply places for 'guzzling.'

Three months at least in 1895

This year saw little reporting of Emma Retallick, but the records show that on the 22nd May 1895 she was sentenced to six weeks at the Cardiff Petty Sessions for riotous behaviour and a further six weeks on 24 October 1895 for assaulting the police. Despite searching the local newspapers and the Glamorgan archives at Cardiff, reports for these offences for some reason do not appear.

A quiet year?

The year 1896 saw no report of Emma Retallick at all. Did she move away or was she in jail? Did she go home to Swansea? Or less likely, was she a reformed character now her husband was out of jail? The following year, however, midway through 1897, she was back in the news, not at Swansea, but it appears she and her husband were back together at Pontypridd. She is once again in court for being drunk and disorderly, but it looks as if she might have done a good deed this time.

Rescuing the orphans - Heartless conduct of mother

The South Wales Daily News of 22nd July 1897 reported: - At the Abercynon Police Court on Wednesday (before the Stipendiary (Mr. W. M. North), Dr. Morgan, and Dr. Jones) Elizabeth Thomas, Pontshonnorton, was summoned for neglecting her four children in such a way as to cause them unnecessary suffering. Mr. James Spickett, solicitor, Pontypridd (instructed by Inspector Ruff) prosecuted on behalf of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. At an earlier stage of the proceedings, the defendant was fined 10s for being intoxicated upon two occasions, or an alternative of 14 days for each offence.

Mr. Spickett explained to the Bench that the defendant was charged with neglecting the four boys, whose ages ranged from 12 to 4 years. Her husband was killed at the Albion Colliery Explosion, and she was in receipt of the customary contribution from the Permanent Fund. Owing, however, to her drunken habits that was stopped, but the children received 30 shillings each fortnight from the fund. That sum was squandered by the woman in drink, and it was absolutely necessary that the children should be protected.

The woman had lived at Cilfynydd, Llanfabon, and Abercynon, and whilst at the latter place the house was visited by a police-constable to execute warrants upon her for neglecting to send the children to school. He would prove that the house was in a filthy state, and smelt badly, whilst the children were in a ragged condition. Inspector Ruff would also prove that he saw the woman being carried helplessly drunk into the Pontypridd Police Station, and when he went to Abercynon, as a result of that, to look for the children, he found that they had disappeared. He, however, found them in Pontshonnorton where they were looked after by one Maria Williams, who was obliged to cut off the hair of the two younger children owing to the vermin in their heads. The children were in a dirty condition, but they seemed to be fairly nourished. While the defendant was in Cardiff Gaol an instalment of 30s was given to the eldest daughter on a Friday, but on the following Tuesday all the money, with the exception of a few coppers, had been spent. Inspector Ruff corroborated the opening statement as to the neglect, and said that he had had the children under his observation since October, 1895.

The defendant, in order to make it difficult for witness to find her, had moved about from one place to another, but the four children were now in the Pontypridd Workhouse. When he found them at Pontshonnorton they were in a filthy state, and had hardly a rag to cover them. A few weeks ago the defendant was fined 10 shillings at Pontypridd for being drunk, but two hours afterwards she was carried back to the police station in a constable's arms helplessly intoxicated. The defendant, he added, had very drunken habits. The Stipendiary: - "We have had evidence of that this morning." Inspector Ruff added that when the instalment of 30s was received on Friday, the 2nd inst., it was handed to the eldest daughter, who was now in service, so that she should look after the wants of her brothers, the defendant being then in gaol. On the following Tuesday, however, the money had all gone with the exception of 7d, and he found that some of it had been given to a Mrs Retallick— also well-known to the police, and who was fined at the Pontypridd Police Court this morning for being drunk — who had pawned a ring to pay defendant's fine. The remainder of the money had been spent by other people.

On the following Thursday the defendant, who was accompanied by some man who was drunk, proceeded to witness's house, and asked for the children, but he refused to hand them into her custody. The defendant, in reply to the Bench, said that she had no home or children when she came out of gaol, and added that when she went to the house where she had lived it was upside down, and the children gone. Replying to the Stipendiary, Inspector Ruff said that there were only a few sticks and chairs and a sort of bed in the house. Twelve months ago, he added,

he had offered to find plenty employment for the defendant in Pontypridd if she kept steady, but she would not do anything, remaining idle in the house. Evidence was also given by P.O. Nicholls with reference to the dirty condition of the children and the house in Catherine Street, Abercynon. The boys were found by him to be literally in rags.

The woman interposed with a remark that the little boy was a very wicked rascal and used to tear his clothes. The Stipendiary: - "No wonder he was wicked if you treated him in that way. Mr. Spickett said that Mr. Lloyd, school attendance officer, could also give similar evidence, but was not called, the Bench being evidently of the opinion that the case had been clearly proved. The defendant now whined that if she only had her children back again she would be a different woman, and would leave the district. The Stipendiary, however, said that she would be imprisoned for six weeks with hard labour. Mr. Spickett then asked the Bench to make an order granting the custody of the four children to Dr. Barnardo.

The Glamorgan Free Press of 12 June 1897 reported: - William Bennett, cab-driver, Pontypridd, was fined 10s for using obscene language on the 27th of May. P.C. Rees proved the case. For a similar offence Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, was fined 5s.

The social evil at Pontypridd

On Wednesday August 18th 1897 at the Pontypridd Police Court before Dr. R. C. Hunter and Alderman Richard Lewis, Emma Retallick, a married woman living at 66 Pontshonorton Road, Pontypridd, was charged with stealing the sum of eight shillings and ten pence, the property of Joseph H. Gaunt, Pontypridd, on the 16th inst. The Prosecutor (Gaunt) affirmed that he met the defendant in Taff Street, at 10.30 on Monday night, and went with her to her house. Witness gave Mrs. Retallick seven shillings, and then went upstairs with her, her husband then being in bed. After he had taken off his clothes the defendant took them away. He had 8 shillings and 10 pence in his pocket at the time, and when his clothes were returned to him, his pockets were empty, and all his belongings were gone. Defendant said that after Gaunt had given her the 7 shillings he had no money left, she had not taken anything from his pockets. Mary Collins deposed that she was in the house when Gaunt came in and she saw him count out 7 shillings and 3 pence, when he said he had nothing more. P.C. Lewis said that the prosecutor came to him and complained that he had been robbed by Mrs. Retallick. Witness went to the house and found that the defendant was in bed. She came to the window, and was told that she was charged with stealing 8 shillings and 10 pence from Gaunt, but she refused to come downstairs. When charged at the Police Station defendant said "It's a lie! But never mind, it won't matter." When he gave information the prosecutor said he was under the influence of drink, but he was well enough to count his money.

Addressing the defendant, Dr. Hunter said, "It's a very serious thing. During the last few years you have been here 13 times. We are not exactly satisfied about this case, and we will give you the benefit of the doubt. You will be bound over to come up for judgement when called upon. Don't come here again, or you will probably end your years in gaol. You're husband is even worse than you, for he must know what is going on, and you are making your house a very bad one."

"So long, now!"

(South Wales Daily News 7th October 1897)

Emma Retallick, who had several convictions recorded against her, appeared before Alderman Richard Lewis and Mr. James Roberts, charged with refusing to quit the New Inn Hotel last Friday night. When P.C. David Davies attempted to put her out she clung to two men and afterwards got very violent. The Bench stated that for the next fortnight she would be kept sober in the Cardiff Gaol, and her only reply was, "So long, now!" A member of the public wrote the following letter in the South Wales Daily News on 2 October 1897 showing his concern that it seemed easy for people like Emma Retallick were allowed to buy alcohol:-

Her ninetieth appearance.

To the editor. Sir, Under the heading of Police Intelligence in your issue of yesterday you mention the case of Minnie McGuire, who appeared for the 90th time on Wednesday last for being drunk and disorderly. It would be interesting to know if the publican or other person responsible for supplying this poor woman with too much drink has appeared once. If not, why not? Surely it can be proved in many cases where she obtained the drink and got into such a helpless condition as to render it necessary to bring her before the magistrates. We do not for a moment desire to suggest that our worthy police are lacking in their duties still, it is to be feared that they are more apt to come down upon the helpless drink-consumer who makes a public exhibition of his or her folly than to drop on the drink-seller. It should be borne in mind when seeing or reading of sad cases of this kind that they are only specimens of the work done inside" public houses; and if the victim of drink deserves punishment, surely the victim-maker should be similarly dealt with. Could not something be done in this direction? - I am, &Ac., R. Bevan, Pontypridd.

At the Ystrad Petty Sessions on 25 October 1897 Emma was sentenced to 14 days for stealing a cape. Again, no report was found in local newspapers or the Glamorgan Archives at Cardiff.

Emma's sister or sister in law?

It looks like Emma had been thrown out once again by her husband and was living close by in Coedpenmaen. The Glamorgan Free Press 12th March 1898 carried this report: - Emma Retallick, a well-known frequenter of the police court, was again brought up charged with being drunk and disorderly. P.C. Nicholls said he saw Emma and her sister-in-law (Minnie McGuire?) fighting in Thurston Place, Coedpenmaen on Sunday, the 26th ult. The defendant, who had only completed seven days (in jail) on Tuesday, was now fined 5s. Meanwhile, it looks like Emma had been thrown out of her home at Pontshonorton by her husband and was living at Coedpenmaen.

Theft of an apron

(Glamorgan Free Press 18th June 1898)

Mary Ann Jones, a well-known character, of Gelly, was placed in the dock charged with stealing two aprons, the property of Annie Wallis. The prosecutrix, who is employed as a servant at the Bunch of Grapes, Pontypridd, said that on the previous day the defendant, together with a woman named Retallick, came to the public house. They were subsequently seen to proceed to the back, from where the defendant took the aprons. She now said that Retallick had informed her that they were hers. A fine of 5 shillings was imposed. The same newspaper reported: - Emily Retallick, Coedpenmaen, an old offender, was again summoned for being drunk and disorderly on the 3 June.

Defendant stated that she had had only three glasses of beer, and she had not appeared before the Court during the last three months. There being three convictions against her during the present year. Mrs Retallick was fined 10 shillings. She offered to pay 6 shillings down and 4 Shillings on Saturday. "Come on" she added "Don't be hard." Her plaintiff appeal was successful. The magistrates called the police court missionary, and suggested that he should try and convert her.

"I have a certificate" - Emma conducts herself with propriety

(Pontypridd Chronicle 22nd July 1898)

Emma Retallick, an old offender, was summoned for being drunk and disorderly at Coedpenmaen at 1 o'clock on the 6th inst. P. C. Nicholls said "I saw the defendant in Coedpenmaen. She was drunk. The next morning the defendant told him she intended to turn over a new leaf and would 'sign the pledge.' The defendant then produced an elaborate certificate showing that she had signed the pledge. Replying to the Stipendiary she declared that it was from the "Church of England" as she proudly proclaimed and that she would keep it. The Bench adjourned the case for a fortnight to see if she would conduct herself properly within that time.



Two weeks later Emma Retallick, Coedpenmaen, whose case had been adjourned from last month to see how she would behave in the meantime, again made her appearance in Court. Supt. Cole reported that Emma had conducted herself with propriety, and she was accordingly discharged. However, Emma's good behaviour did not last long. Two weeks later Emma Retallick, Coedpenmaen, again put in a court appearance, charged with being drunk and disorderly on the 22nd ult. P. C. Nicholas gave evidence to the effect that the defendant was very drunk and using disgusting language towards a townsman. The Stipendiary: - "What about the pledge you signed?" Defendant replied that she had been in trouble. She had received notice to quit her house, and could not find another. It was then she "had a drop." She was very sorry. A fine of £1 was imposed with the alternative of fourteen days. Having Emma for a lodger or tenant could not have been good for your reputation and once she was in it was difficult get her out, as the following report shows: -

Good behaviour by Emma

(Glamorgan Free Press 6th August 1898)

Emma Retallick, Coedpenmaen, whose case had been adjourned from last month to see how she would behave in the meantime, again made her appearance in Court. Supt. Cole reported that Emma had conducted herself with propriety, and she was accordingly discharged.

Emma moves out

(Pontypridd Chronicle 2nd September 1898)

Mrs Emma Retallick, of Coedpenmaen, usually figures in the Pontypridd Police Court for being what is commonly called "D.D.," which means drunk and disorderly; but on Wednesday she figured in quite a new role. Mr. W. H. Key, the well known Taff Street chemist, wanted the magistrates to empower him to eject Mrs Retallick from his house at Foundry Place. She had been a tenant of his for some little time, and he now wanted to get rid of her. Emma told

their worships that she had been looking for a house and had found one. She was prepared to leave on Thursday morning. The Stipendiary, however, gave her 21 days to move out.

What about the pledge you signed?

The Glamorgan Free Press of 3 September 1898 reported: - Emma Retallick, Coedpenmaen, again put in an appearance, charged with being drunk and disorderly on the 22nd ult. P.C. Nicholas gave evidence to the effect that the defendant was very drunk and using disgusting language towards a townsman. The Stipendiary: "What about the pledge you signed?" Defendant replied that she had been in trouble. She had received notice to quit her house, and could not find another. It was then she had "a drop." She was very sorry. A fine of £1 was imposed with the alternative of 14 days.

Creating a disturbance

(Glamorgan Free Press 10th September 1898)

Emma appeared at the Pontypridd Police Court before Mr. J. Ignatius Williams, again brought up on a charge of being drunk and disorderly on the 6th inst. P. C. David Davies stated that he was called to the Park Hotel to eject defendant. When he arrived there he found the defendant indulging in immoderate language and creating a disturbance. She refused to go away when requested and after being taken to the police station she became most violent, and kept up a continual noise from four o'clock until 9 p. m.

Defendant said she was sober and had only been out an hour. She admitted "going on" in the cells. "Two prostitutes hit me in the face," she added, "and it's them you ought to lock up. I never said anything to you." Another charge of doing damage to the windows in the Park Hotel was heard against the defendant. Mr. Edgar Treharne said that the defendant smashed the window.

She was quarrelling with two other women, but the defendant was the aggressor. Mrs Retallick said that the window had been broken by another woman with her umbrella. She was sentenced to 14 days hard labour. The Glamorgan Free Press 3 December 1898 reported: Emily Retallick was fined 5 shillings for the offence being drunk and disorderly near the Market Square on the 19th inst.

Emma charged with threats

(Pontypridd Observer 3 December 1898)

Elizabeth Massey, Trallwn Gardens, said on Monday that she went into the Tredegar Arms to warm her child and called for a glass of beer. Mrs Retallick was there and called her a cow and threatened to pull out her liver and told her to go to hell. Defendant said that the complainant was big enough to eat her. (laughter). Mrs Retallick was bound over in the sum of £5 to come up if called upon.

The way of transgressors (Glamorgan Free Press 4th February 1899): -

Martha Morris and Emily Bates, two Pontypridd women of low character, were sent to prison for 14 and 7 days respectively for being drunk and disorderly at Pontypridd on 31st January 1899. Emma Retallick, a noted Pontypridd character was sent to prison for a month for a similar offence.

Emma Retallick goes to gaol

(Pontypridd Observer 24 June 1899)

Emma Retallick was charged on remand at the Pontypridd Police Court on Wednesday for being drunk. The case had been adjourned in order that the police might observe how she behaved in the meantime. Sergt. Wakely and Sergt. Stibbs all gave evidence that she had been drunk on several occasions. Defendant was sent to gaol for one month. The Pontypridd Observer of 12 August 1899 reported: The Pontypridd Bench of Magistrates believed that sending Emma Retallick for occasional charges at Cardiff that they are prolonging her life, but on the other hand she

believes that they were killing her fast by sending her to gaol. She was brought up on Wednesday last with soliciting prostitution in Taff Street. The case was proved but as she had only recently come out of gaol she was discharged. So it looks as if Emma had been thrown out of her home by her husband, who was probably fed up with her behaviour again. For the rest of 1899 Emma Retallick disappears mysteriously from newspaper reports, why we cannot say, but she certainly made up for it the following year and even made a trip up the valley to Mardy at the far end of the Rhondda Fach Valley: -

A lively woman

An old offender, Mrs Emma Retallick (reported the Evening Express of 18th January 1900) stepped into the dock to answer a charge of stealing two-pound ten shillings from Benjamin Jones, an aged collier, residing at the Cellars, Mardy. They met at the Royal Hotel, Mardy, on the 11th inst; and, according to Jones' evidence, after taking sundry drinks they left for Mrs Lewis's house at the Cellars. He fell asleep, and when he awoke he missed the money. Defendant frequently interrupted the complainant when giving evidence and said that when she went into the hotel Jones threw his arms around her neck and said, "What will you have to drink my love?" "He ought to be ashamed of himself," she continued, "he having buried his wife a fortnight ago." She denied stealing the money, but on being told that she would be sent to trial she pleaded guilty. When sentence to two months hard labour she fell into a fit, and had to be carried below by two constables. Before entering the cells she became quite abusive, bit a piece off the constable's hand, smashed a number of windows in the cells, and for a time the court resounded with her shrieks from below.

Candidates for an Inebriates' Home (South Wales Daily News 10th May 1900)

Do not think Emma Retallick was the only female problem the Pontypridd Police had to deal with. The follow case names others, including Mary Jane Millar, who were particularly notorious local female drunks in the town: -

A few of Pontypridd's shady characters appeared before the Bench on Wednesday morning, amongst them being Mrs Emma Retallick, who has been given many chances to reform. She, however, always turned a deaf ear to advice, and on Tuesday night she was again found drunk and disorderly. "Please gentlemen," she pleaded, tears in her eyes, "Don't be hard on me this time, and I won't come here again." The Stipendiary said the Bench hardly knew what to do with her, but she was sent to prison for another 14 days. Mary Jane Millar, who had a very bad record, this being her 31st appearance during the last seven years, next appeared, and the evidence of Police-Sergeant Rees and others showed that on the previous evening she was very drunk and disorderly, and when the police attempted to arrest her she screamed, cursed, scratched, and kicked all about her, the result being that it was necessary to get four of the police to convey her to the station. She, too, was sent to Cardiff for fourteen days.

Anne Rogers, an aged woman of Hopkinstown, who had several times been fined for drunkenness, and was last year sent to gaol for several months for neglecting her children, who have since been inmates of the Cottage Homes, Llantwit Vardre, was found intoxicated on Tuesday, but she emphatically denied the charge, and said that she had walked back from Walnut Tree (near Taffs Well), where she had gone in search of her husband, who had left her since last August. The defendant was sent to goal for seven days.

A callous wife (Evening Express 27th June 1900)

Emma Retallick, who has not lived with her husband for some time, again put in an appearance at the Pontypridd Police Court for drunkenness. She said she had nothing to say. Dr. Hunter asked her if she knew that her husband had met with an accident at the Coedcae Colliery on the previous day, had broken his legs and dislocated a hip, "No," she replied. Dr. Hunter added that he (her husband) had no home, and was about to be removed to the workhouse. The Stipendiary remarked if he had a home defendant would not be much comfort for him. They would have to send her to the sessions to be dealt with. They could send her for a month's imprisonment, but that would not do her much good. He learned that she was to be prosecuted for two other offences, and he would adjourn this

case. P. S. Rees said that she had been told about the accident the previous night, but refused to go and see her husband, and used bad epithets towards him.

At the same session Mr. Lenox observed that the Merthyr Stipendiary had expressed his astonishment at the lenient manner in which the Pontypridd magistrates dealt with the cases of women summoned for being drunk and disorderly. Dr. Hunter remarked that riotous and drunken women were flooding to Pontypridd. Mr. Lenox further said that the Pontypridd Stipendiary had made up his mind not to fine women charged with offences of the kind in future, but send them to gaol.

A disorderly woman

(South Wales Daily News 5th July 1900)

Four charges of being drunk and disorderly on various dates last month were preferred against Mrs Emma Retallick, an unfortunate, and she was sent to prison for seven days for each offence.

How to reform Pontypridd

(Evening Express 8th September 1900)

Emma Retallick stepped into the dock of the Pontypridd court again after being convicted on 43 previous occasions. She had been seen on the previous night, said Police-Constable Dymont, rollicking about the Tram Road. She had only come out of goal on Wednesday. Dr. Hunter (the magistrate) said that he noticed by that morning's newspapers that the Graig people were complaining of the immorality in the district. If these people assisted them in getting a place where they could send these women for, say, 12 months, they would do some good.

Sending them to Cardiff (goal) for seven days was, in his opinion, no good. They should send them to some place for twelve months. There would be some chance then. Turning to Mrs Retallick he added: - "It does you no good to go for seven days. I have tried to be kind to you, but it's no good. You'll go to Cardiff (prison) for a month.

Regular pest

(Rhondda Leader 13th October 1900)

Emma Retallick, a well-known Pontypridd character, was charged at the Ton Pentre Police Court with being drunk and disorderly and doing damage to a cell. P.C. 235 said defendant attempted to kick every pedestrian who passed, and had to be conveyed to the police station on a stretcher. On being placed in the cell, she took her boot and smashed 13 panes of glass. She only came out of goal on Saturday. Defendant said she was not drunk, but in a fit. Superintendent Cole remarked that defendant was a regular pest to Pontypridd. She was fined £1 for damaging the windows and sentenced to fourteen days imprisonment for being drunk.

51 previous convictions – Defendant's request

Before Dr. R. C. Hunter and Mr. Hugh Bramwell.

(Evening Express 26th January 1901)

Poor Emma Retallick put in her fifty-second appearance in court. It was the old tale – drunk in the High Street. Police Constable Edwin Williams asked her to go home, but no sooner had he opened his mouth that she hit him in the face and followed this with a couple of kicks, interspersed with a peroration of the sins of the police as only Emma could make. By Friday she had had time to reflect, and spoke in a sensible strain to Dr. Hunter, who said she ought to be in gaol or in the asylum. She was, he added, "not right in the head."

"Love me!" was her reply "what am I to do? I only came out of gaol last week after doing five weeks, and I thought to turn over a new leaf. My husband – I have been married for nine years, and haven't lived much with him, but he wrote to me in gaol, asking me to come back, and we are now living by the Wheatsheaf Hotel." Dr. Hunter: - "But why do you get drunk and assault the police? I don't know what to do with you. You must go to goal for a month, with hard labour." With this Emma gave way to tears, and asked: - "Why don't you put me away for twelve months?"

This is no good for me, in and out like this all the time. "Oh dear, dear!" she continued, as she was being led to the cells. John Donovan, a Porth shoemaker, who interfered with P. C. Williams when taking Retallick to the police-station, was fined five shillings. Emma Retallick, who has been convicted 51 times for drunkenness and other offences, was sent to prison for a month.

Drunk in Taff Street

(The Pontypridd Chronicle 20th April 1901)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, a well-known character to the police, was again brought up on a charge of being drunk in Taff Street. There was a long list of convictions against the defendant. She was fined 30 shillings or 21 days in jail. P.C. 472 proved the case. She had no money to pay and consequently went down.

Her fifty-eighth appearance

(Pontypridd Chronicle 11th May 1901)

The notorious young woman Emma Retallick was seen in a new role at the court today. She was charged with assaulting the police as well as being drunk and disorderly. The magistrates' clerk observed that Emma had not interfered much with the police previous to this. The Stipendiary said this was her 58th appearance before them. Missioner Clayton, who was in the well of the court explained that he had tried to get her into a home, but so far had been unsuccessful, and Miss Box, missioner of the British Women's Association's attempts to rescue her had proved futile. The magistrates sent Emma to gaol for a month with hard labour.

At the Pontypridd Petty Sessions on 12 July 1901 Emma was sentenced to two months for assaulting the police.

Emma goes to a home

(Evening Express 13th November 1901)

Sordid Lives - Poor Emma Retallick again answered a charge of drunkenness. She was in a repentant mood today, and asked the bench to send her to a home. She would try six months of it. Miss Box, one of the court missionaries, said she would take her to a home. The Bench accordingly adjourned the case for six months to give Emma a chance.

Why Emma "slipped."

(Evening Express 21st November 1901)

Poor Emma Retallick stood up to answer another charge of drunkenness, there being 68 previous convictions against her. Some days ago she begged to go to a home and Miss Box, one of the court missionaries took her in charge, with a view of taking her to a home in Bristol. Emma, however, gave her "the slip" and last night was seen rollicking about Taff Street. Replying to the Bench she said: - "Why didn't they take me away at once? I could not see other people getting drunk as I went. I am willing to go now to a home. It is hard on me to be in the same town as my husband." The Stipendiary said they would do the best thing for her. She would go to prison for two months.



Not Emma Retallick, but another unfortunate unhappy to be photographed

LIST OF ALL PERSONS WHO SLEPT OR ABODE IN THIS INSTITUTION ON THE NIGHT OF SUNDAY MARCH 31ST, 1901.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
NAME and SURNAME.	RELATION to Head of Family, or to Institution.	CONDITION as to Marriages.	AGE Last Birthday.	OCCUPATION, if any, of each person (whether man, woman, or child). For those engaged in any trade or industry, state the particular branch, and also the industrial worked or dealt in.	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION.	WHERE BORN.	10. If (1) Irish, or (2) Scotch, or (3) English, or (4) Welsh, or (5) Foreign, or (6) other, state the name of the County, or the name of the Colony or Dependency.	11. Language Spoken.		
1. Susan Harvey	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Single	46	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
2. Annie Harvey	Daughter	Single	14	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
3. William Matthew Dupont	Officer	M	29	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
4. Thomas David	Officer	M	31	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
5. James Howell Griffiths	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
6. Elizabeth Amelia Williams	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
7. Anne David	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
8. Alice Mary Steer	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
9. Elizabeth Sophia Moorhouse	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
10. Anne Evans	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
11. Jane Ford	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
12. Eliza Ann Dupont	Officer	S	27	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
13. Bridgete Pius	Officer	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
14. Minnie Frances Webb	Prisoner	M	23	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
15. Ann Barrett	Prisoner	M	23	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
16. Elizabeth O'Grady	Prisoner	M	23	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
17. Eliza Dowd	Prisoner	M	23	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
18. Emma Retalick	Prisoner	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
19. Jessie O'Leary	Prisoner	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
20. Mary Ellen Horne	Prisoner	S	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
21. Lily Boy	Prisoner	S	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
22. Mary Jane Martin	Prisoner	S	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
23. Bridget Sullivan	Prisoner	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
24. Margaret Bailey	Prisoner	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			
25. Ann Harker	Prisoner	M	24	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	Wife of the Chief Assistant Officer, and gives the names of other Officers of the Institution, followed by the names of the Special Inspectors—such as Clerks, Purport, Foreman, &c.	England	English			

Total of Males and of Females..... 222

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SCALE 1 2 3 4 5 6

Census March 31st 1901 showing Emma Retallick age 34 in jail at Swansea

Irreclaimable Emma Retallick
(Pontypridd Chronicle 22nd February 1902)

Soon after the stipendiary sat, the irreclaimable Emma Retallick, of Pontypridd, stepped into the dock to answer charges of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. This was her 72nd appearance. Last Saturday she was taken into custody when drunk, and for his pains Constable Trigg experienced a warm time of it, Emma springing at him and tearing the buttons off his coat. A second charge against Emma for being drunk on the 11th inst. was then gone into, after which the Stipendiary was heard to remark: -

“What is to be done with you? We let you off last Wednesday at Pontypridd after adjourning the case for a month.” Supt, Cole told the Bench that Emma kept sober for nine days only after having two months’ imprisonment. Replying to the Stipendiary, Mr. Davies, magistrates’ clerk, said there was no provision in the country for women of the defendant’s class. Alderman W. Morgan: - “Can’t she be sent to a Salvation Army Home?” Alderman Lewis: - “Yes, but she is not bound to stay. She can go out when she likes.”

Defendant: - “There is a Home in Cardiff.” Alderman Lewis: - “Oh, yes; no doubt.” Mr. Stockwood (deputy magistrates’ clerk) remarked that Emma had been waited upon times out of number at the prison gates when coming out, by the Prison Gate Society, but to no effect. Supt. Cole: - “And Miss Box, the lady missionary, has tried to help Emma very hard indeed.” Defendant was sent to prison for a fortnight in each case, a month in all.

A harbour of refuge
(Pontypridd Observer 5 July 1902)

On Wednesday Emma Retallick paid to the Pontypridd Police Court. Only recently she came out of goal, and on the previous night she called at the police station and asked to be locked up. The Stipendiary said she went to the police as a harbour of refuge. He would give her another chance and adjourned the case for a fortnight to see how she behaved herself. She was brought up at Porth on Thursday, and sent to goal for 14 days, as she was drunk again on Wednesday night. The Rhondda Leader of 12th July 1902 reported: - **An incorrigible woman** - Emma Retallick, known as Pontypridd’s Jane Cakebread, appeared on the old charge of being drunk and disorderly. She was convicted for the 78th time, and was given a month’s imprisonment.

Pontypridd’s Jane Cakebread
(Evening Express 19th November 1902)

Another visit was paid to the Pontypridd Police Court this morning by the notorious Mrs Emma Retallick, a young woman of ill-fame, this being her 85th appearance. She was charged with being drunk and violent, and Superintendent Cole explained that she has spent eight months out of this year in gaol. P. C. Taylor’s evidence showed that Emma was seen in the streets at mid-day on Tuesday drunk and striking a man in the face by the Park Hotel, Pontypridd. She also tore his muffler off. Then she got into Market Square, and struck another man in face. When the constable got near she ran away. Near the district council offices in Taff Street she stood in the middle of the road, held up her hands in front of a horse, causing the rider to be nearly thrown off. P. C. Taylor added that he and P. C. Smith arrested her further up the road, and she got very violent, and bit P. C. Smith’s finger, and tried to break a shop window.

The Stipendiary said he hardly knew what to do with her, as sending her to Cardiff Goal did not appear to do her any good. Could she not be sent into a home at Bristol or Penylan? Superintendent Cole replied that when his worship had paid her fair to Penylan on one occasion a policeman was sent to Cardiff meet her, but she broke her journey, and did not go to the home. She had also broken away from Mrs Box, the court missioner, on another occasion. The Stipendiary said that they did not want to send her to gaol, but she would be out of mischief there. Sentence of one month’s hard labour was passed.

The Black list

In January 1903 the Glamorgan Joint Committee brought in a "Blacklist Rule" through the Inebriate Act, an attempt to stop the tide of wild drinking in the county. The two rules were **(1)** In every in which a Court of Summary forwards to the police authority i.e. the Standing Joint Committee, a notice of conviction of a habitual drunkard, the particulars of such notice shall be forwarded to the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable on receipt of this notice shall, through the Superintendents of divisions, circulate to licensed persons and secretaries of clubs a description and portrait (when practical of such habitual drunkard, these descriptions to be in a prescribed form. **(2)** When a habitual drunkard is known to have removed to another division, the police of that district be notified and supplied with a descriptive form. **(3)** Any police officer seeing a person who has been convicted as a habitual drunkard about to enter licensed premises or a club shall at once take steps to warn the licence holder or club secretary, or other person in charge, that intoxicating liquor shall not be supplied to such person. Comment: - What effect would these new laws have on people such as Emma Retallick?

Of course offenders always found ways around these rules. They would either get someone to go in and fetch drinks for them or the landlords themselves would not and did not take any notice, often claiming that the documents they had to fill had been misplaced. The prisoners themselves sometimes enjoyed having their photo taken, while the landlords insisted that the photos weren't good enough to identify anyone. The police themselves had extra paperwork for this new law and had to pay a local photographer out of their own funds. The law was poorly drafted by Parliament, as was stated that the prisoners could refuse to go on this list, opting to go to trial instead.

Rhonddaites blacklisted

(Evening Express 26th January 1903)

With bowed head and heaving occasionally a deep sigh, Emma Retallick, a Pontypridd woman, who has made frequent appearances in the Rhondda Police Courts, stood in the dock at Ystrad on Monday, and was charged with drunkenness. Evidence of her offence, which was committed on Saturday night at Pontypridd, was given, and it was mentioned that she had been convicted many times. "My husband," she said tearfully, "is willing to take me back again as soon as I am put on the blacklist."

The Stipendiary said he thought this would be the better plan, too. She was then sent to prison for a fortnight for being drunk, and a further charge of being a habitual drunkard was preferred against her. She was given to understand that she had the option of being tried by a jury, but preferred to being dealt with summarily. Superintendent Cole preferred previous convictions against the defendant in February, June, July, October, and November of last year, and the Stipendiary formally announced that her name would be placed on the "black list." Emma raised up her head confidently and said, "I prefer it sir. My husband will be glad to take me back."

Emma Retallick thanks the Magistrate

(Evening Express March 2nd 1903)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd's "Jane Cakebread," made another appearance, this time on a charge of assaulting Police-constable Rhys Davies, at Pontypridd last Saturday night. The P.C. said that Emma interfered when he was in the act of taking a man into custody. She advised the prisoner not to go with him. Afterwards she struck him (witness), and took his whistle. Emma: - "Oh, Mr. Davies, I didn't know you was a young man like that, telling lies. (Laughter.) I was asked to have a drink, and I refused, because I was a "black-lister." (laughter.) When told she was fined 10 shillings Emma looked up with surprise and said: - "Oh, thank you, gentlemen. I caught that," And she left the court smiling.

113 appearances in court
(Evening Express 16th April 1903)

Emma Retallick, a loose woman, who was charged at Cardiff Police Court this morning before Councillor F. J. Bevan and Mr. J. H. Jotham with disorderly conduct in Bute Street, has appeared before the court 113 times. She was sent to prison for a month.

On 26 May 1903 Emma was sentenced to 14 days for riotous prostitute at the Cardiff Petty Sessions. This appears to have gone unreported.

Cardiff woman's 114th conviction
(Evening express 6th August 1903)

Emma Retallick, 36, was this morning brought before the magistrates and charged with behaving in a disorderly manner and making use of obscene language in Custom House Street on August 5th. The prisoner, against who were recorded 113 previous convictions was fined 20 shillings and costs. The same newspaper the following day commented: -

Cardiff Police court afforded yesterday one more specimen of the melancholy and hopeless insufficiency of our system of discipline in certain cases. A woman named Retallick, although only 35 years of age, was convicted for the one-hundred and thirteenth time. It was very evident that fines and imprisonment in such a case as this are absolutely of no use. When will the law recognise that there is a moral as mental lunacy, and put these poor creatures on permanence, where they can be out of the way of temptation?

Comment: - Seems like Emma was being arrested and convicted so often that the magistrates were unsure how many times she had appeared in court.

Rhondda Woman's 134th conviction
(Evening Express 22nd September 1903)

Several cases were on Monday before the Ystrad magistrates in which women were summoned for accosting men in the street. The famous Emma Retallick made her 134th appearance after being released on the previous Saturday from gaol, where she admitted having spent most of her time for the past few years. Mr. T. P. Jenkins: - "You are an old customer. You have the longest list in these courts, and hold the second highest record for the county. Defendant said she only came out of prison on Saturday night after "doing" six weeks. She spent more time in prison than outside.

The present charge was of being drunk and disorderly and making improper solicitations. The defendant denied the charge, and remarked dramatically that it was a wonder the constable who was giving evidence had not been "struck down for telling lies." Retallick was placed on a "black list" on 20th January, and had frequently convicted since for drunkenness. The presiding magistrate said that the defendant held the second record for convictions in Wales, only being beaten by Mrs Sweeney, of Swansea. She was sent down for fourteen days.

Her 135th appearance
(The Rhondda Leader 26th September 1903)

An unenviable reputation is that possessed by Emma Retallick, a well-known Pontypridd woman, who was charged with accosting men in the street at Pontypridd on Saturday night. P. C. Williams, who gave evidence, stated that respectable people could not walk the streets of Pontypridd without being molested by these women. Emma whose 135th appearance this was, and who was also on the "blacklist," stoutly denied the accusation, ejaculating: - "It's a wonder the Lord don't strike you (P.C. Williams) dead." Defendant, it appeared, only came out of prison on Saturday, and has, with one exception (Mrs Sweeny), the worst record in the country. She was now sent to prison

for fourteen days. The Evening Express of 21st September 1903 had reported the same case thus and that Emma was not the only woman lost in drink: -

Rhondda Woman's 134th Conviction - Several cases were heard to-day before the Ystrad magistrates in which women were summoned for accosting men in the street. The famous Emma Retallick made her 134th appearance after being released on the previous Saturday from gaol, where she admitted having spent most of her time for the past few years. The present charge was of being drunk and disorderly and making improper solicitations. The defendant denied the charge, and remarked dramatically that it was a wonder the constable who was giving evidence had not been "struck dead for telling lies."

Retallick was placed on the "black list" on January 20, and has been frequently convicted since for drunkenness. The presiding magistrate said that the defendant held the second record for convictions in Wales, only being beaten by Mrs. Sweeney, of Swansea. She was sent down again for fourteen days. Mrs. Cooksly, another well-known character, was also ordered to prison for a similar offence for the same period. Two young girls, named Mary Stock and Amelia Smith, were each sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment for a like offence, the latter being ordered an extra fourteen days for striking the officer, who arrested her.

Poor conduct

(Weekly Mail 10th October 1903)

As a result of her conduct on Saturday night Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, who is the best known character frequenting the Rhondda Police Courts was brought before the Ystrad magistrates on Monday. Police constable Griffiths deposed to seeing the defendant drunk in Pontypridd. She accosted people, and when taken into custody struck, kicked, hit and scratched the constable. Superintendent Cole said Emma, when sober, was a very quiet woman. The Bench sent her to prison for a month.

Emma Retallick again

(Evening Express 1 December 1903)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, made another appearance before the Rhondda stipendiary yesterday at Ystrad Police-court, as a result of her behaviour on Saturday night at Pontypridd. Police-constable Rees Davies said he heard Emma, who is on the "black-list," ask men to get whisky for her. She was drunk. When taken in charge she became violent, and struck Police-constable Lester in the mouth. The Bench sent her to prison for a fortnight for the assault, and for a like term for drunkenness.

Pontypridd's "Jane Cakebread."

(The Rhondda Leader 5th December 1903)

This newspaper probably reporting the same offence as above: - A well-known Pontypridd "Blacklister" named Emma Retallick was charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting P. C.'s Rhys Davies and Lister. P.C. Davies said he saw defendant outside the Park Hotel, Pontypridd. She was drunk and using very bad language. She went up to a man and put her arms around his neck. When taking prisoner to the Police Station, she became violent and assaulted them. Prisoner was sent to prison for a month.

Her 124th appearance

(Evening Express May 15th 1904)

Emma Retallick, 37, an unfortunate, was brought before the Cardiff justices on Saturday, charged with using obscene language at Bute Terrace, on May 14th. Upon the court officer stating that the woman already had 123 convictions recorded against her. Prisoner asked the magistrates to send her to a home. The Bench instead fined her ten shillings and sixpence or fourteen days in default. The Cardiff Times of 21st May 1904 reported the same case: -

Emma and Bridget

Bridget Collins, with a record of 72 previous convictions and Emma Retallick, with a list of 125, were charged with disorderly behaviour on Saturday May 14th 1904. Fines of 10s and costs were imposed.

Emma before the court again (Evening Express 17th October 1904)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, again appeared before the Ystrad magistrates today with being drunk and disorderly. Supt. Cole stated that the defendant was on the "blacklist," and had been before the court no less than 160 times. She was ordered to find two sureties of £5 each and herself in £10, or in default three months in jail. She took the alternative.

An old offender (Caerphilly Journal 25 Feb 1905)

In a pathetic voice and tears in her eyes Emma Retallick admitted her 151st charge of drunkenness and appealed to the Bench for another chance so that she could go to her mother. Her husband, who was called, said he would, if the Bench would adjourn the case take his wife to where she was not known. When they were living peacefully together someone would complain, the landlord interfere and the result was that she went on the drink. The case was adjourned for two months.

At the Porth Petty Sessions on 9th March 1905 Emma was sentenced to six months for Habitual drunkenness and on 27 September she received another six months at the Pontypridd Petty Sessions for Habitual drunkenness. These offences were not reported.

Comment: For some reason 1905 seems to have been an extraordinary quite one for Emma and perhaps her husband had some influence over her during this year, but unfortunately 1906 would see her partially return to her old ways.

Emma Retallick again. (Evening Express 9 May 1906)

Emma Retallick, who has earned for herself the soubriquet of the "Jane Cakebread" of Pontypridd, appeared before the local bench today, and the 157th conviction was recorded against her. She was charged with behaving in a disorderly manner and using obscene language, for which conduct she was locked up on Monday night. She appeared very penitent, and tearfully pleaded for one more chance. "I will turn over a new leaf," she went on, and I will go home and never come outside the door." The Bench, however, would not be convinced, the Stipendiary remarking, "Your conduct convinces me that you will not turn over a new leaf," and, notwithstanding her protestations, she was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

Emma and the cakewalk (Pontypridd Observer 4 August 1906)

A well known attendant of the Police Court in the person of Emma Retallick, was brought before the magistrates charged with indecently behaving herself in the public streets. The evidence of the police constable was to the effect that he saw the defendant at 3.20 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon in Station Square miss-conducting herself. He sent her away, but later saw her near the Globe Inn indulging in the "cakewalk." Defendant denied this, and said it was Marian Jones. When she (the defendant) was going in the Globe hotel, the constable caught hold of her by her hair and dragged her out, and then jumped on her. The Constable: "I had to convey her to the station in a cart, your worship." Defendant: "Yes, a dirty ash cart (Laughter). Ever since I have been out of prison the constable has been watching me. I hope you will give me another chance, and I'll promise not to come here again."

The stipendiary: "I really don't know what to do with you." Defendant: Oh, do give me one more chance? I will go home straight. I won't see you again." The Stipendiary: "The proper thing to do is to keep you out of mischief. You must go to prison for a month." *Cakewalk - a promenade or march, of Black American origin, in which the couples with the most intricate or eccentric steps received cakes as prizes. A stage dance developed from walking steps and figures typically involving a high prance with backward tilt

Swansea child's death

Alleged Abandonment: Mother's Last Resource.
(Evening Express 31st August 1906)

An infant has died at Swansea Workhouse under curious circumstances, necessitating a post-mortem examination and an inquest. It was taken to the relieving officers in a very weak and emaciated state by its mother, a single woman, named Sarah Hopkins, who stated that she had placed it out to nurse, but it had been returned to her. It was examined by the relieving officers, who found it very small, and, apparently, dying, and they urged her to take it to the workhouse, which she did. An interview has been had with a woman named Mrs. Retallick, of Orchard-street, Swansea, with whom the baby had been left on the previous day by a woman who said she was going to lodge there for a time. Mrs. Retallick says that the woman went away however, and did not return that day. The child was evidently very ill, and Mrs. Retallick and a neighbour sat up with it all night. They next day made inquiries as to the whereabouts of the mother, and found her at the Hafod, and took her with the baby to the surgery of Dr. Roberts, who ordered the babe's removal at once to the workhouse infirmary, where it died that night. Was this evidence that there was a Retallick family in Swansea and that Edward Retallick (Emma's husband) was from that district?

The editorial notes in the Cambrian news of 26th October 1906 commented: - At a theological conference at Wolverhampton last week there was a discussion on "The Virgin Birth of Christ." About the same time, at Pontypridd, Emma Retallick was charged with drunkenness for the one hundred and sixty-ninth time. Might not the puzzle of the Incarnation be put off until the churches have settled the near-at-home case of this unfortunate woman who embodies a very distressful state of things? It is very difficult to live up to the Scripture injunction that whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Her 163rd appearance

(Evening Express 14th February 1907)

Emma Retallick, of Pontypridd, made her 163rd appearance in the dock at Porth Police-court today to answer a charge of being drunk and disorderly. As usual, defendant was very penitent, and the Stipendiary, bearing in mind that Emma had been fairly quiescent since November last, gave her another chance, and the case was adjourned for a month to I see how she would behave herself in the meantime, and Emma left the dock with expressions of sincere gratitude to his worship.

Improper invocations

(Evening Express 28 March 1907)

The irrepressible Emma Retallick, who has over 150 convictions recorded against her was again at Pontypridd Police-court on Wednesday for using obscene language. When the language was read from a slip of paper to the defendant, she shouted: "My heavenly God. Oh. God forgive you. It's a wonder that the Bible didn't stick to your fingers." The Stipendiary remonstrated with the defendant for using such expressions, and Emma then pleaded earnestly that she had five witnesses—three of them chapel people— who could say she was not out that day. Upon this assertion the Stipendiary adjourned the case for a week.



Emma Retallick again – prefers gaol to a home and threatens to hang herself

An incorrigible Pontypridd character, Emma Retallick, who has an unbelievable record of over 160 convictions, mainly for drunkenness against her, again appeared in the dock at Pontypridd Police Court on Wednesday, 17 April 1907 for habitual drunkenness and Drunk and disorderly and was as eloquent and as penitent as ever. On the last occasion Emma promised to go to a home, but it was now stated that the matron had to open the door to let her go away to prevent her jumping out of the window.

Emma now avowed that she preferred the prison to a home. "I am now 41, and too old," she pleaded, "to be sent to a home. Oh! Why didn't the late stipendiary – he is dead now, God bless him! – send me away. I would have been young then. For God's sake give me another chance. I won't live long, and I promise you won't see me at Pontypridd again soon."

Stipendiary: - "We cannot rely upon your promise, I am sorry to say, and sympathy is wasted upon you." Emma at this became still more eloquent, but her pleading were of no avail, and she was bound over for six months – her as two securities of £10 each. Emma then "went down," screeching at the top of her voice that she would hang herself in prison unless she was watched. She was sentenced to six months and 5 days or 7/6d (concur.)

Emma's husband to emigrate?

Very little had been heard about Emma's husband for the last few years, but apparently they were still associated with each other, but the following paragraph shows that maybe he was emigrating to America, but there again it could have been a Emma's figment of imagination: -

Xmas at home for once (Cardiff Times 14th December 1907)

Before the Rhondda Stipendiary (Mr. A. Lewis) at Porth on Thursday, the notorious Emma Retallick, of Pontypridd, made her 168th appearance on the oft-repeated charge of drunken and disorderly conduct. P.C. Davies said she was dancing about the street. This Emma, as usual, denied, and made a voluble complaint that the police were shadowing her. "I want your worships to know the truth, and the Almighty will bless you," she exclaimed. The Stipendiary said he was at a loss to know what to do with her. "Well," retorted Emma, "if you send me down it will be my seventh Christmas in gaol. (Laughter). My husband is going to America next month, and I have bought the raisins and suet for the Christmas pudding. (Laughter.) I am a nuisance to him." The Stipendiary: - "It is rather unfortunate that you should take this time of the year to do this." Emma: - "I wish I would die in gaol. I am tired of

my life. I am indeed." (Laughter.) The Stipendiary: - "I am not going to shut you up for Christmas. You must go down for ten days." Emma: - "God bless you thank you goodbye." (Laughter.)

St. Patrick's Day

(Evening Express 18th March 1908)

Emma Retallick, who has a record of over 160 convictions recorded against her, was before the Pontypridd magistrates today again to answer the usual charge of being drunk. Emma was quite frank, and admitted that she had been celebrating St. Patrick's Day with three bottles of stout. The case was adjourned for two months.

Emma Retallick again

(Evening Express 20th May 1908)

"We have tried everything with you," was the despairing remark of the stipendiary, Mr. Arthur Lewis, to Emma Retallick, of Pontypridd, who again appeared at the Police Court today on a charge of disorderly conduct. "Give me one more chance," pleaded Emma, "and I will stay away from here." "Yes," responded the stipendiary, "you shall be kept away for a while now. I cannot give you more than a month, but that I give you. You shall go to prison for a month." Emma was then conducted below.

Emma's silence

(Pontypridd Observer 28 November 1908)

Emma Retallick, an old favourite at the local Police Court, was summonsed for being drunk in Taff Street and also for being drunk and disorderly in Llantrisant. Contrary to her usual custom Emma for once kept silent and admitted the evidence without any of her oracular explosions. The chairman said that it was of no use talking to the defendant and that they had given her up. They had grown tired of preaching to her. He was to glad to see she had grown wise by keeping a silent tongue. She was bound over in the sum of £5 to be of good behaviour and to find two sureties of £5 each, failing to obtain same she must go down for two months.

PONTYPRIDD UNION.				THE RELIGIOUS			
	Date of the Entry.	NAME GIVEN & SURNAME.	Age.	From whence Admitted.	Religious Creed.	Name of Informant.	Name of Prisoner's nearest Relative or Friend.
Deserve child of	M	Rice Annie	21	Ustradyfodwg	Independent	Self	Husband Griffith Rice
Girl	S	Richard Isaac	60	Pontypridd	C. of E	W. Redwelthy	Mother Ann Reading alpine House, E. Llanfyllon
Married	S	Rice Mary	40	Ustradyfodwg	Baptist	In Calthurbad Robert Rice	Brother James
Prostitute	M	Retallick Emma	37	Pontypridd	C. of E	Self	Husband Edward Retallick
John P. N	S	Richard John	50	Ustradyfodwg	Independent	Brother Daniel Richard	Richard Aberavon
Girl	S	Rice Henry	67	Pontypridd	"	Self	No Relatives
Scholar		Rice William	11 1/2	Llanfyllon	"	Miss John Thomas	Rice
"		Blanche	6 1/2	"	"	"	"
"		Bessie	6 1/2	"	"	"	"
Don't Dumb	M	Roberts Margaret	47	Pontypridd	C. of E	Mr. Thomas Rice	Husband John Roberts
Collyer	S	Roberts John	35	Ustradyfodwg	Methodist	In Calthurbad	6 Llanfyllon
Tap	M	Rain Thomas	73	"	C. of E	Son Thomas Rain	Forth
Mason	M	Robinson John	63	Llanfyllon	Independent	Self	Wife Mary Robinson
Fitter	W	Rice Rice	65	Eglwysilan	Baptist	Self	No Relatives
Married		Rice Margaret	52	Pontypridd	Wesleyan	Husband David Rice	gone away
child of		Thomas Henry	7	"	"	Self	To look for work he went yesterday
"		Gladys	6	"	"	"	Mother
"		Rosina	3	"	"	"	"
"		Thomas John	3 1/2	"	"	"	"
Domestic	S	Ralph Rosina	19	Ustradyfodwg	C. of E	Self	Father has Ralph as apprentice
Collier	S	Roberts Llewellyn	35	Pontypridd	Baptist	Self	Not known
Domestic	S	Roberts Susanah	18	Ustradyfodwg	C. of E	Self	Father Robert Roberts
Lab. Rice	S	Rives Walter	33	Pontypridd	"	Self	Concise House Rice
Quarryman	S	Rosser Evan	81	"	"	Self	Brown Rosser
Lab. Rice	S	Riley John	38	Ustradyfodwg	R. C.	Self	Empyion Ambulance
Don't Dumb	S	Rice Jane Ann	19	"	Baptist	Self	Mother Mrs Jones
Richard Roberts	S	Roberts Mary	79	Pontypridd	Wesleyan	Self	Wife Mrs Sarah Roberts
Collier	S	Roberts Elizabeth	71	Ustradyfodwg	"	Self	Daughter Missie Bennett
"	S	Rice James	60	Pontypridd	C. of E	Self	No Relatives

The religious Register of the Pontypridd Union workhouse residents on 29th October 1909 showing Emma Retallick, 37 years of age.

Chapter 5

Given another chance

Emma Retallick was in Cardiff Police-court on 9th February 1909 on a charge by Detective Gooding of being disorderly in Bridge Street. She is only 42, but Court-inspector Price stated that she has been convicted 135 times, principally at Pontypridd. Prisoner: - "I only came out yesterday morning. My husband paid the fine for me. I was sentenced to fourteen days. Give me a chance!" The Deputy- Stipendiary: - "I will give you a chance if you will allow the lady police-court missioner (Miss Stephenson) to see you off." The woman gladly bowed her willingness, and left the court with her guardian.

One more trial

On 15th February 1909 Emily Retallick, whose name has been raised into bad eminence at the local police-courts in the Rhondda and elsewhere, made her 176th appearance before the bench at Ystrad. She was charged with being drunk at Pontypridd on the previous Saturday and annoying a respectable man by rushing up and placing her arms around his neck. (Laughter.) Defendant denied this soft impeachment, informing the bench that she was embracing the "chucker-out" to save being ejected from the hotel. This the magistrates discredited, whereupon the unfortunate woman made an impassioned and tearful appeal to their worships to give her one more chance, and she would go away to Swansea. "Gaol," she pleaded, "has sent me clean off my head. I have been there so much." "Kindness," said the stipendiary, "does not seem to do you any good, but we will try you again, and adjourn the case for a month." A request to the bench for a loan to pay her fare away was refused. The Cardiff Times reported this case: -

Rhondda Jane Cakebread (Cardiff Times 6 March 1909)

Emma Retallick, the Rhondda Jane Cakebread, made her 178th appearance at Ystrad on a charge of drunken and disorderly behaviour. A fortnight ago, owing to a tearful appeal the Bench adjourned the case against her for a month to see how she would behave. Her conduct, however, did not improve, and in less than a week she was found by the police throwing her arms around men in the street. Defendant on Monday had nothing to say to the magistrates and appeared to be most penitent. Mr. T. P. Jenkins (chairman) told her she had the highest record in the kingdom. There was no hope for her now and her word was no good. She would have to go to prison for a month with hard labour, but he was sure it would not do her a bit of good.

The incorrigible Emma (Rhondda Leader 6th March 1909)

Emma Retallick, one of the most noted characters of Pontypridd, was again brought up on a charge of disorderly conduct at Pontypridd. P.C. Downes said that he saw prisoner in High Street, Pontypridd, on Saturday night. She was very drunk, and threw her arms around every man who came near her. Emma was before the Bench a fortnight ago on a similar charge, and the case against her was then adjourned for a month on her promise to reform. Mr. T. P. Jenkins: - "This is your 178th appearance, and there might have been many more against you if you were dealt with less leniently. You will go to prison for a month but I don't suppose that will do you any good."

Welsh Jane Cakebread (Cardiff Times 28th August 1909)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, the Pontypridd "Jane Cakebread," made her 181st appearance at Ystrad on Monday on two charges of drunkenness and disorderly behaviour. With bowed head Emma, who is usually very voluble, had nothing to say. The stipendiary Lleufer Thomas said the Bench were at a loss what to do with her. It was perfectly obvious that as it was at present they had no power to do anything to compel her to break away from her old

habits. Nothing could be done until they had power to order her to be detained in a home for a long period. Sentence of two months with hard labour was passed.

Wanted nourishment
(Evening Express 14 October 1909)

With 183 convictions to her name, and only having been released from Cardiff gaol after undergoing two months' imprisonment, Emma Retallick was brought up at Porth today on a charge of being drunk at Pontypridd on Wednesday. The woman wept bitterly in the dock, and asked the magistrates to give her one more chance and said she would go to the workhouse for six months. She was weak, and wanted better nourishment than she could get in gaol. Mr. D. Lleufer Thomas acceded to this request and she was discharged on that undertaking. A singular coincidence was that Catherine Sullivan, Retallick's sister was next called on a charge of drunkenness. She admitted the offence, and on undertaking to sign the pledge she was discharged. A resident of Swansea, she had been in the Rhondda only this year and already there were three convictions for the same offence.

189th Appearance
(Pontypridd Observer 23 October 1909)

Emma Retallick, an unfortunate, Pontypridd, was charged with being drunk. Police-Constable Knipe (Pontypridd), said that about 6.10 p.m. accompanied with P.C. Wisk, on the previous evening he saw a large crowd outside the Park Hotel. On proceeding there he saw the prisoner, who was very drunk. He advised her to go home but she refused and with assistance he conveyed her to the Pontypridd Police Station. Defendant said that her husband had left her and she went to the Park Hotel. On being asked by the stipendiary, Police-Constable Knipe said he thought it was correct that her husband had left her. Defendant said that it was only the previous day she came out of prison after doing two months and pleaded for another opportunity and said she would go to the Union (workhouse) for about six months. Deputy Chief-Constable Coles said that she had been convicted 188 times altogether. On the understanding that she would go to the Union the Stipendiary discharged her with a caution. Catherine Sullivan, sister to the last defendant, was also discharged with a caution for being drunk.

On 10th November 1909 Emma was sentenced to two months at the Pontypridd Petty Sessions for habitual drunkenness. This again went unreported.

Emma Retallick again
(Pontypridd Observer 8 January 1910)

Emma Retallick, unfortunate, Pontypridd, again made an appearance before the Bench at the Ystrad Petty Sessions charged with being drunk and disorderly and assaulting the police. Police-Constable Millett said that at 6.30 p.m. on Monday last he was called to Barry Terrace, Pwllgwaun, and there saw prisoner, who was very drunk and swearing and smashing windows. He took her into custody and she came quietly until they reached Rhondda Road. Here she commenced to struggle violently and kicked and bit witness. When they got to the station she threw a jug at witness. Emma made a tearful plea for mercy, pleading that she was destitute and without friends. The Stipendiary said that it would be better for her and certainly better for the public if she was out of the way for the winter. She would have to undergo one month's imprisonment for being drunk and disorderly and two months for the assault.

Wanted one more chance
(Evening Express 22 April 1910)

Emma Retallick, a familiar figure at Pontypridd Police-court, was to-day again brought before the magistrates on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. Emma's record, containing about 200 entries, was produced in court. As usual, she pleaded for "one more I chance," and that Pontypridd would see her no more if she were given this one

chance for which she pleaded so hard. The Magistrates, however, were obdurate, Mr. James Roberts remarking that she had promised so many times before. She was fined 4 shillings or a month, and Emma once more went "down."

Incorrigible Emma

(Rhondda Leader 4 June 1910)

Emma Retallick, a well-known Ponty-pridd character, was again brought before the Bench at the Porth Police Court on a charge of drunkenness. On the previous Monday, prisoner was discharged at Ystrad on a similar charge on condition that she went home to Llantrisant. She got drunk the same night, and on Wednesday midnight she called at Pontypridd Police Station in a very intoxicated condition, and entreated to be locked up. When requested to go away, she declared that unless she was taken in she would do away with herself. The case was adjourned until Wednesday to make enquiries as to whether she could be placed in a Home.

Hopeless Emma

(Rhondda Leader 25 June 1910)

Emma Retallick, a well-known Pontypridd character, made her 193rd appearance at the Ton Pentre Court, this time on a charge of indecent behaviour at the White Hart Hotel, Pontypridd. Since Emma's last appearance at Court she has been to a Home at Plymouth, but left after 16 days' residence because she refused to comply with the regulations. She now pleaded for another chance, declaring that she was tired of her life, and that had vowed to give up the drink and her associations as long as she lived. Mr. T. P. Jenkins: "It is nearly 20 years ago since I first spoke to you, and it is folly to continue urging you to reform. This is your 193rd appearance, and with seven more you will have made two centuries. No Court in England has attempted to reform a woman as we have done here. We have been kind and Indulgent in every way, but you have abused our good offices all along. Prisoner was sentenced to one month's hard labour.

Emma was sentenced to 7 days and 2 months or sureties (consecutive) for drunk and disorderly at the Ystrad Petty Sessions on 10 July 1910 for Drunk and Disorderly and Habitual drunkenness. At the end of this month Emma appeared for the 195th time in the dock at Pontypridd on the charge of being drunk. Meanwhile Emma's reputation had spread through various newspapers throughout the country: The Holborn and Finsbury Guardian (London) of 29 July 1910 reported that Emma Retallick appeared for the 195th time in the dock at Pontypridd on the charge of being drunk.

Black-listed

Cardiff Times 1 October 1910

"No one has been dealt with more leniently in this court than you have, and no one has abused that leniency more than you have," remarked Pontypridd Stipendiary (Mr. D. Lleufer Thomas) to Emma Retallick on Wednesday, 28 September 1910. Retallick, who has made over 200 appearances at the local courts, was on this occasion charged with being a habitual drunkard. Defendant pleaded for still another chance. The Bench decided to place her name upon the "black" for the next three years, which had no effect upon her at all. Two weeks later, on consecutive days Emma was once again in the newspapers, apparently Emma appearing more time than their records could keep up with and the magistrates, as well appeared unable to tell how many times she had appeared at court:

A Pontypridd character

(Evening Express 19 October 1910)

Emma Retallick, a well-known figure at Pontypridd Police-court, where she has already appeared altogether about 200 times, again made another appearance at the court to-day, and her vehement protestations caused considerable diversion. As usual, she was charged with being drunk and disorderly, Police-constable Owen stating that she was creating a disturbance at Common Road, Llantrisant and absolutely refused to desist, with the result

that he had to take her into custody. "For shame!" exclaimed Emma; "it is a wonder you are not struck dead." Emma went on to protest that she was not drunk, but was "all of a tremble" owing to a quarrel which she had had with her sister. The latter had been drinking all day, but she (Emma) had not tasted drink. "I was going to give my sister in charge. It was a row between me and my sister." The police-officer said that the sister was sober, but that it was Emma who was obstreperous." "Oh, forgive me," exclaimed Emma: "don't tell lies: tell the truth! It is the honest truth my sister was drunk." The Stipendiary (Mr. D. Lleufer Thomas) said they took into consideration that defendant was of an excitable temperament and easily upset. Emma was bound over in her own recognisances for two months in the sum of £5.

Woman's 188 convictions
(Evening Express 20th October 1910)

Emma Retallick, who has 197 convictions to her discredit, was before the Porth justices to-day on the usual charge of being drunk and assaulting the police. Defendant had only been bound over yesterday at Pontypridd to be of good behaviour. Police-constable Hawkins gave evidence to the effect that he took Retallick into custody with great difficulty last night. She was mad drunk and kicked him. Defendant stated that her husband had bought her a bottle of rum. The Stipendiary asked Deputy chief-constable Cole if the man could not be prosecuted, Mr. Cole replying that it was the rum that made the woman drunk, and had not, in the first place, been given to a drunken person. It was one of the faults of the Licensing Act. For being drunk defendant was fined 10 shillings or ten days, and was bound over for two months. For the assault on the constable she was sent to prison for a month, without hard labour. Prisoner: - "Oh! I you can give me that. I'm not afraid to work." (Laughter.)

Almost two centuries for Emma
Rhondda Leader 29 October 1910

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, the well-known Court habitu , was charged at the Porth Police Court with being drunk and disorderly. Deputy Chief Constable Cole said that this was prisoner's 198th appearance. P.C. Hawkins said that on Wednesday night, the 19th inst. he saw prisoner very drunk. There was a crowd of from three to four hundred around her. She became very abusive, and kicked witness about the legs and in the stomach. She also attempted to bite witness. With assistance witness took her to the police station, but she was behaving like a mad-woman all the way. For being drunk and disorderly she was fined 10 shillings, or seven days, and in addition was bound over in her own recognisances of £20 and two sureties of £10. For the assault upon the police she was sentenced to one month's imprisonment in the Second Division. Emma: "Oh, you can give me hard labour I'm willing to work."

Half-carried to police-station
(Rhondda Leader 28th January 1911)

Emma Retallick a well-known Pontypridd character was summoned for being drunk and disorderly. Police Sergeant Thomas said that at 3.30 on Sunday morning he saw defendant in Craig Terrace, Pontypridd. She was very drunk, and was shouting at the top of her voice. She refused to go away when requested, and witness had to half carry her to the Police station. She was disturbing the whole neighbourhood, added witness. Questioned as to why she had not left Pontypridd, prisoner said she had had a house at Llantrisant (her sister's actually), and would have gone that day to fetch the key. The case was adjourned to 1st February to test the truth of her statement.

Emma again in trouble
(Rhondda Leader 29 April 1911)

Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, again put in an appearance in the prisoner's dock for being drunk at the Pontypridd Railway Station. P.C. Woods proved the case. Prisoner was sentenced to one month.

The incorrigible Emma (2).
(Rhondda Leader 27th May 1911)

Emma Retallick is a noted Pontypridd character who has a record in police court history. Last Friday she was liberated from Cardiff Gaol, and a few hours later she was in trouble again. According to the evidence of P.C. Downs, Pontypridd, she was found in a state of drunkenness in the street, and when spoken to she twisted her legs around the officer's leg and bit his finger, and threatened to stick the officer with a hatpin. With the assistance of other men she was taken to the police station. The Stipendiary questioned prisoner as to whether the Retallicks were Montgomeryshire people. Prisoner: - "No, sir; Cornish." - "Where are you a native of?" - "Swansea, sir." Mr. T. P. Jenkins: - "But you have spent the greatest portion of the last 25 years at Pontypridd and Treforest, haven't you?" Magistrates' Clerk: - "And at Cardiff, sir." (Laughter). Emma was fined 12/6d. or seven days, for habitual drunkenness; a month's imprisonment for the assault upon the police and was ordered to find sureties for £10 for her good behaviour, or in default three months. Emma: - "By heavens! I shall be worse again when I come out so help me God." She was hustled out, protesting against a police officer who placed his hand on her shoulder.

Emma jailed for a total of 17 months

At the Cardiff Quarter Sessions on 5th October 1911 Emma was sentenced to 2 months jail for being an incorrigible rogue and riotous prostitute. The following year, 1912, Emma spent the most of the time in jail. **At the Cardiff Quarter Sessions on 5 or 8 January 1912, Emma was sentenced to 6 months for being an incorrigible rogue, and a riotous prostitute. At the Cardiff City Sessions 3 October 1912, Emma was jailed for 9 months for being an incorrigible rogue. Strangely, there were no newspaper reports recording these events.**

Over 200 convictions

(The Rhondda Leader July 12th July 1913)

At the Ystrad Police Court Emma Retallick and Mary Ann Hayes, of Pontypridd, were charged with being drunk and disorderly on Saturday. Both pleaded 'Not Guilty.' Deputy-Chief Constable Williams stated that on June 18th Retallick was bound over and sent to the workhouse, but on Friday last her conduct became so unbearable that the master was obliged to let her out. She had been bound over three times during the last fifteen months, and there were already 216 convictions against her. Hayes had been convicted 28 times. Both a perfect nuisance at Pontypridd. The defendants were both sentenced to one month's hard labour. Retallick: - (surprised) "Is that all!" She was removed to the cells thanking the Bench.



The Pontypridd workhouse

For the least fortunate in society, particularly the elderly and those who found themselves out of work for long periods, the workhouse provided a form of welfare that has gained a negative mythology all of its own in large part because of the horror stories written by journalists and novelists such as Charles Dickens in the early days of the institution. Created as a result of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act (or New Poor Law), the workhouse was an institution designed to ensure that those in receipt of assistance were kept from being idle. Pontypridd Workhouse was erected in 1865 and cost £7,000. Originally a t-shaped building, by 1900 it had expanded greatly and provided sufficient space for over 300 inmates. The extended workhouse buildings survived until the 1960s and were part of the Graig Infirmary (later Dewi Sant Hospital).

Emma Retallick's Pontypridd workhouse record 1894 - 1916

1909 - 29 October
1910 - 21 September
1910 - 13 October
1913 - 13 June
1913 - 3 December
1914 - 26 March
1914 -12 May
1914 -10 November
1915 - 1 February
1915 - 6 April
1915 - 22 July
1915 - 19 October
1916 - 26 April

In 2023 the famous novelist Catrin Collier, writing about her grandmother who had worked there wrote: "The original stone buildings as vast, imposing and terrifying, with magnificent staircases and tiled walls. There were separate wards and yards for 'male paupers' and 'female paupers', and a children's block was for babies under two. The inspection block was for 'casuals': itinerants needing a bed for the night were deloused before entry. Their payment for lodgings was made by chopping wood."

Emma Retallick would have also have been regarded as a "casual" inmate and only entered to pacify either her husband or the police courts. The early morning awakening and regulated day; the early retirement in the evenings and the locking of the gates, and nearness of the public houses on the nearby High Street, insured that her stay was rarely more than one night. She might also have been made to work in the bakery, canteen or laundry to pay for her meals. Often her behaviour became so bad that sometimes she was thrown out by the workhouse officials, much to the annoyance of the local police.

1911 Census

On the 1911 census Emma and Edward (Ted) Retallick are recorded as visiting her sister, Catherine Sullivan, at 3 Heol Sarn, Llantrisant. There was more information on this census and contradicts what had been given previously. The head of the house was a Thomas Stevens, who was a haulier / Coal merchant, aged 46, a married man. Catherine Sullivan, lodger, aged 49, single, was recorded as being single and born in Swansea in 1862 (estimated) and employed as a housekeeper. Emma's husband, Edward (Ted) Retallick in previous census records was recorded as being born in Middlesex, but here he is recorded as being a visitor and born in Cardiff in 1868 (estimated), age 43. He was a haulier underground at a Colliery. Emma Retallick herself, born 1869 (estimated) at Swansea, was a visitor aged 42 and married.

Wasted a lot of time

(Rhondda Leader 16th August 1913)

The redoubtable Emma Retallick, Llantrisant (Emma seems to have been thrown out by her husband again and was again living with her sister in Llantrisant), appeared once more before the Bench on a charge of being drunk and disorderly. Mr. David Thomas: - "I think I have wasted a lot of time and energy with you these last 16 or 18 years – over 200 convictions. If we discharge you today, heaven knows what you will do. I am awfully sorry we cannot give you six months, because I think six months would do you good. Emma was convicted for one month.

“Is this the famous Retallick?” - Emma Retallick again – First offence 1885
(Rhondda Leader 13 September 1913)

Sitting at the Ystrad Police Court on Monday, Mr. T. P. Jenkins (presiding), with Mr. Enoch Davies as his colleague, had before him the psychological study, Emma Retallick, whose career upsets all the approved theories of the medical profession as to the fate of dipsomaniacs after a lengthened career of self indulgence. The redoubtable Emma is known to fame in south Wales, having figured locally often enough, as well as in the courts of summary jurisdiction at Swansea and Cardiff. A police-constable said he was an eye witness to prisoner’s conduct as alleged.

Mr. T. P. Jenkins: - “Is this the famous Retallick?”

Supt. Edwards: - “This is the one.”

Mr. T. P. Jenkins: - “We have before met face to face.”

Prisoner to the Police-constable: - “You don’t give me a chance to go at all.”

The constable: - “I did my best to get you away.”

Mr. T. P. Jenkins (to the prisoner): - “You have been here scores of times.”

Prisoner: - “I came from doing a month yesterday. I have had no chance whatever. I was as sober as I was now. I never had a drop. I was upset about a letter from my husband.”

Police-constable; - “When I charged her with breaking the windows, she said she would pay for them.” Prisoner: - “I am sorry I didn’t pay. I did break the windows.” (Accused sobbing).

Mr. Jenkins remarked: - “She ought to have been in tears long ago” (laughter).

Supt. Edwards: - “She has been up before (the court) 217 times, sir” (laughter).

Mr. Jenkins: - “What is the first date? It seems a long time ago since we first met.”

Supt. Edwards: - “The first time, sir, was July 1st 1886, at Cardiff (laughter).”

Mr. Jenkins: - “She began with me in 1886, and she still looks remarkably well.”

The accused, still weeping the magistrate remarked: - “Oh, dry those tears” (laughter).

Supt. Edwards: - “She is well used to it, sir (laughter). She is one of the most violent women I have ever come across (laughter).”

Mr. Jenkins: - “I wonder she has kept so well (laughter).” Prisoner: - “Don’t be hard, Mr. Jenkins, I am going to Cardiff.”

Supt. Edwards: - “She used to make the same promise to the late Mr. Ignatius Williams.”

Mr. Jenkins: - “Where does she make her home?” Supt. Edwards: - “Mostly at Pontypridd.”

Prisoner: - “How can I be at Pontypridd when I am in gaol all the time?” (Laughter).

Mr. Jenkins: - “Many an army veteran has suffered less.” (Laughter).

Finally Retallick was sentenced to a fortnight for soliciting, and to one month for wilful damage – six weeks altogether.

Her 221st appearance (Western Mail 20 November 1913)

Emma Retallick made her 221st bow before the magistrates at Pontypridd on Wednesday again on a charge of being drunk. She pleaded for leniency, but was once more fined 20 shillings or 14 days.

Woman’s bad record

(Rhondda Leader 20th December 1913)

At the Ton Pentre Police Court Emma Retallick was summonsed for being drunk and disorderly at Pontypridd. The evidence was to the effect that a 1.15 on the 30th inst. defendant was in a lane in a drunken state, shouting and swearing. Defendant: - “I was going to the Graig, they refused to take me into the lodging house.” Deputy Chief Constable Williams, in evidence said they did not know what to do with her. The stipendiary bound her over in June, and they found room for her at the Union Workhouse, but her behaviour was so bad that they had to send for the

police. She had been before the Court 220 times. The chairman: - You are abusing the leniency of the Court, and for your own benefit we commit you for one month.

Old offender

(Rhondda Leader 28th February 1914)

Emma Retallick, who had only a week before made her 222nd appearance at the Pontypridd Police Court when the charge was dismissed on her promising to go to Llantrisant, again appeared. Emma's stay at Llantrisant was a short one, and at 11 o'clock one evening she presented herself at the Pontypridd Police Station with the request that she should be locked up. When told to go away, she became abusive and disorderly.

Addressing defendant his Worship said she had exhausted their patience. In reply to a question if he knew of an inebriate home, Mr. Llewellyn (Court missionary) said he would make inquiries, whereupon his worship remarked: - "They are too parsimonious to provide homes for people of this kind." She was remanded until Monday.

225 not out!

(Rhondda Leader 11th April 1914)

"I am inclined to suggest the lethal chamber as the most merciful was of dealing with such a case," was the comment of the Stipendiary, Alderman W. H. Mathias, when Emma Retallick made her 204th appearance at Porth Police Court a little over a month ago. The suggestion by his worship then for the defendant to enter an Inebriates' Home would not induce Emma to reform from her career of crime and vice, and she was sent to prison for a month. On this occasion, defendant, in an intoxicated state, created a disturbance in Rickard Street, the Graig, Pontypridd, at 10.45 p. m. the previous evening. Defendant (tearfully): - "I only came out on Tuesday." The Chairman said it was a sad case, and they were unable to assist her. She was sent down again for another month.

On 15 July 1914 Emma appeared in court at the Pontypridd Petty Sessions charged with prostitution and Assaulting Police. She was fined £2 or 1 month and 3 months (consec.).

230 not out!

(Caerphilly Journal 23 July 1914)

The notorious Emma Retallick, of Treforest, made her 230th appearance at the Pontypridd Police Court on a charge of soliciting and assaulting P.C. Pope. The officer gave evidence as to prisoner's movements stating that she was pulling me about. She was arrested and taken to the Police Station. At Station Square she became very violent, and kicked witness, also striking him in the mouth. Whilst in the charge room she seized a glass paste pot and hurled it at him, narrowly missing his head. For the first offence, Emma was fined 40 shillings or a month, and she was further sentenced to three months with hard labour for the assault.

At the Pontypridd Petty Sessions on 19 December 1914 Emma was sentenced to 2 months charged with Rogue and Vagabond and Prostitution. On 8 May 1915 Emma Retallick at Pontypridd Police Court was said to have had 233 previous convictions against her, will have to be careful, the habit might grow on her!

Indecent and disorderly again

(Rhondda Leader 12th June 1915)

Emma Retallick, against whom there are over 200 convictions, was charged with behaving in an indecent and disorderly way at Pontypridd late on Saturday night. Police-Sergeant Bates, Pontypridd, gave evidence of defendant's unseemly manner. She was under the influence of drink. Defendant said she had only left the workhouse on Saturday and had been looking for her husband. Replying to the Stipendiary, she said she was prepared to go back to the Union (workhouse). Defendant was sent to the Union for six months and bound over in £10 to remain there. If she left the institution in that time she ran the risk of being sent to the sessions as an incorrigible rogue and vagabond.

Emma Retallick – Her 237th appearance in court
(Rhondda Leader 31st July 1915)

Emma Retallick, who has figured in the court on no less than 236 occasions, was again brought up at the Pentre Court on a charge of being drunk and disorderly and being drunk and disorderly and behaving in an indecent manner in the public street. The police evidence showed that a call was received from the Collier's Arms Hotel, Pontypridd, from which defendant was ejected owing to her conduct. Later she was seen coming out of the Park Hotel greatly under the influence of drink. She commenced dancing on the pavement and had to be taken into custody and detained. Police Inspector Rees proved recent convictions.

Defendant, who appeared penitent, broke down and shed tears. She was sent back to the workhouse for some nine months, and bound over in £5 to come up for judgement if called upon in the meantime. If she did not comply with the order of the court, a commitment would be made to the Quarter Sessions as an incorrigible rogue and vagabond.

Emma again
(Pontypridd Observer 16 October 1915)

Emma Retallick, made her 237th appearance at court. She was now charged with riotous conduct. P.C. Stalworthy said that he had to eject the defendant from the Greenmeadow Hotel, and because of her conduct afterwards he took her to the Police Station. She behaved very violently. Emma was committed to the quarter-sessions as an incorrigible rogue.

242nd Appearance
(Pontypridd Observer 5 August 1916)

Emma Retallick was at an Occasional Court at Pontypridd on Friday charged with being disorderly. Inspector J. L. Rees said that this was the defendant's 242nd appearance. Defendant pleaded for another chance. Mr. John Evans said that she had already been given this by the police and magistrates in the past, and they now intended to be firm with her. Defendant was fined 20 shillings or in default 14 days imprisonment.

Public House case
(Pontypridd Observer 13 October 1917)

William Thomas, licensee of the Globe Hotel, Pontypridd, was charged with selling by his agency intoxicating liquor to persons other than those ordering and paying for same. His son, Montague Thomas, was charged with selling and supplying. John William Roberts, Hopkinstown, was charged with paying, and Richard J. Owen, Hopkinstown, was consuming, and Emma Retallick, Pontypridd, for attempting to consume intoxicants. Mr. Stanley Jones appeared for the Thomas's, and he admitted a technical offence. Police-sergeant Edward Thomas said he visited the premises at 7.15 on the night of September 29th and saw the landlord's son go to the tap room with two half-pint vessels containing beer and a glass of stout in his possession, and hand them to Roberts. After paying for same and receiving the change Roberts handed the contents to Owen and Retallick. He (witness) drew the attention of the landlord to what was going on, and the landlord asked the boy, "What did you do that for?" The latter replied, "I did not think as Roberts told me it was alright, he had ordered drinks for his mate and Retallick." For the defence it was stated that the licensee was busy in the bar and knew nothing about it. The boy was not used to serving in the hotel. He was not instructed to serve on this occasion and he was not aware he was doing wrong. Mr. M. L. Porcher, for Roberts and Owen, said that his clients were hard-working men and they did not know anything about the order. The licensee was fined £4 and his son was discharged. Roberts was fined £3-10s; Owen £2-10s; and Emma Retallick was bound over for three months and placed on probation for that period, the condition being that she is not to enter a public-house.

Not to go into public houses any more
(Pontypridd Observer 6 December 1919)

Emma Retallick was summonsed for disorderly and indecent behaviour on Friday 28 November 1919. P.C. Nuggate gave evidence that the defendant threw herself on the floor and behaved indecently. She was under the influence of drink and was screaming at the top of her voice. She had to be carried to the Police Station. In pronouncing judgement the Stipendiary said that a place had been found for her to go. She was not to go into a public house anymore and would be bound over in the sum of £5 for twelve months.

315th appearance
(Pontypridd Observer 26 June 1920)

Emma Retallick, Coedpenmaen, was summoned for behaving in a riotous manner. Evidence was given to the affect that at 10 p.m. on June 19th 1920 defendant was in the New Inn hotel very drunk and shouting in obscene language. She refused to leave when asked and had to be forcibly ejected. She struck at the police officer with a hat-pin and the officer had to get the assistance of a civilian to convey her to the Police Station. Inspector J. L. Rees said that the defendant was told to keep out of town in December last, but she had been coming in rather regularly lately. Mr. John Evans, imposing a fine of 30 shillings or one month, said that no-one had so many opportunities of reforming as had the defendant.

Reformation of a known offender
(Pontypridd Observer 28 June 1930)

“She has been extraordinary good has Mrs Emma Retallick,” said Inspector Henry Smith when making a report on Mrs Retallick’s conduct during the past six months. Mrs Retallick, who had an exceptionally long list of convictions recorded against her, was brought to court to answer a certain charge in January last, when the Magistrates adjourned the case to see how she would have behaved during the ensuing months. The inspector added, in his report, that she had not been an absolute tea-totaler, but she had been very good. Mrs Retallick, who was in a repentant mood, was discharged.

Discharged again
(Pontypridd Observer 29 August 1931)

Upon promising to leave the drink alone for a year Emma Retallick, Norton Bridge, who was charged with being drunk on Saturday 22 August 1931 was discharged. P.C. John Davies gave evidence of seeing defendant in a drunken condition.

Bound over for three years on November 10th 1937
(Pontypridd Observer 15 November 1937)

An amazing record – Seventy years old with the amazing record of court appearances, Emily Retallick, of Norton Bridge, Pontypridd, promised the court “I will be good in future. She was charged with being drunk and disorderly. P.C. William Jones’ evidence was constantly interrupted by Retallick, who said, “Oh you big story teller.” The officer said he saw Retallick very drunk and staggering about the street on Saturday, November 6th. She refused to go home and witness was obliged to lock her up. Retallick admitted she had two glasses of beer. The police said she kept the station awake through the night. It was stated that she had not been before the court since 1915, but of late she had been frequently warned. She promised to give up the drink. Retallick was bound over for three years in £5 and placed on probation.

Pontypridd woman's 239 previous convictions – Promise to Bench
(Caerphilly Journal 14 January 1939)

At the Pontypridd Second Court on Wednesday before Mr. D. Milton (presiding) and Mr. Huw T. Richards, Emma Retallick, aged 72, of Norton Bridge Road, appeared to answer a charge of being drunk and incapable, and it was stated by P.S. Watkins, who prosecuted, that she had 239 previous convictions. P.C. Boulton said that at 10.55 p.m. on Saturday evening last he saw a group of people standing outside a hotel in Taff Street and upon investigation found Retallick being supported by two men. She was in a very drunken condition and was bleeding from the head. Witness carried her to the police station, where her injuries were treated. Asked in court whether she was drunk Retallick replied: "I wasn't sure." (laughter). Retallick told the bench she had had one glass of gin and one of home brew and had slipped on a banana skin. Chairman: "You were bound over for three years on November 10th, 1937." Defendant: "Yes, worse luck. I had not been out of the house until New Years' Eve and two women asked me to go and have a drink. I was silly, wasn't I?" Chairman: "You should have been stronger than that. You cannot afford to drink on an old age pension." Defendant: "The money was given to me." Chairman "That makes no difference."

Retallick then appealed for another chance and said she would stay in the house and not touch any intoxicants. The Bench decided to give defendant one more chance but warned her if she appeared in court again she would be sent to prison. The case was adjourned for three months. Retallick murmured her thanks and as she left the dock called out, "A happy new year and God bless you gentlemen." From here Emma Retallick disappears from the newspapers after 230

Emma's fate?

Emma seems to have an extreme reaction to small quantities of alcohol, and was given drinks by people who knew her who wanted to "hear her talk and see the fireworks". The sale and procurement of liquor for "habitual drunkards" and "drunken people" was made illegal when the Licensing Act 1902 was enacted by Parliament.

Council voting records show Emma Retallick living at Pontshonorton during the 1920 and 30s with her husband Edward at 66 Pontshonorton Road, Coedpenmaen and his death is recorded in 1946. On the 1939 England and Wales Register the occupants were Edward and Emily Retallick. Edward Retallick was born 18th February 1867 and Emily was born 24 July 1867. Emma or Emily died at Pontypridd aged 85 in 1952 (January – March) She was buried in an unmarked grave at Glyntaff. An amazing thing is that she never caught a disease and never became pregnant as far as we can tell. From a poor family life she spent the majority of her adult life in jail. Did she have a happy life? I don't think so, but she appears to have spent her last years out of trouble. Had the opening of the Norton Bridge Methodist Church in 1904 at No.85 Pontshonorton Road, just a few doors from Emma's home at No.66 eventually help to halt her drinking or did she eventually turn over a new leaf in her old age? We will never know.

Census results

On the 1911 Census, Emma and Ted Retallick were visiting (not living there) her relative (sister), Catherine Sullivan, at 3 Heol Sarn, Llantrisant. Catherine is 19 (error as she's 49 on census form). Catherine Sullivan was born in Swansea

1934 Wales Electoral Registers:
66 Pontshonnorton Road
Edward Retallick
Emma Retallick

1937 Wales Electoral Registers
66 Pontshonnorton Road
Edward Retallick
Emma Retallick

1939 Wales Electoral Registers:
66 Pontshonnorton Road
Maud Jenkins
Edward Retallick
Emma Retallick

1939 England and Wales Register:
66 Norton Bridge Road
Edward Retallick - b/day 18 February 1867 (Change of surname spelling)
Emily Retallick - b/day 24 July 1867 (Emily, not Emma)

Emily Retallick died at Pontypridd, aged 85, in 1952 (January-March)
Record 8b 579

Traced the prostitute she married Edward Retallick in 1892

Emma from Swansea originally
Been in prison numerous times
With aliases McGuire, McGwyer and Harris
Edward Retallick and her lived in 66 Pontshonnorton Road in 1920s and 30s
Edward died 1946.

She died 85 in 1952

She is down as Emily
This is why it was difficult to trace

Note: The surname spelling is different on her death record later census and council results and in others as Emily, as in Glyntaff.

No.	NAME, AGE AND TRADE.	Degree of Education.	Name and Address of Committing Magistrate.
1	2	3	4
a*17	<p>Emma Retallick, 46, none</p> <p>3 Mos., Swansea Petty Sess., 10th Nov., 1884 (stealing a watch). 10 Days., Cardiff Petty Sess., 6th July, 1885 (stealing a feather). 1 Mo., Swansea Petty Sess., 1st Feb., 1890 (stealing a purse and money from person). 1 Mo., Swansea Petty Sess., 15th June, 1891 (stealing money from person). 6 Wks., Cardiff Petty Sess., 22nd May, 1895 (riotous prostitute). 6 Wks., Cardiff Petty Sess., 24th Oct., 1895 (assaulting police). Bound over, Pontypridd Petty Sess., 18th Aug., 1897 (stealing money). 14 Dys., Ystrad Petty Sess., 25th Oct., 1897 (stealing a cape). 2 Mos., Porth Petty Sess., 18th Jan., 1900 (larceny from person). 2 Mos., Pontypridd Petty Sess., 12th July, 1901 (assaulting police). 14 Dys., Cardiff Petty Sess., 26th May, 1903 (riotous prostitute). 1 Mo. or 27/4., Cardiff Petty Sess., 6th Aug., 1903 (riotous prostitute). 3 Mos., or Sureties, Ystrad Petty Sess., 17th Oct., 1904 (habitual drunkenness). 6 Mos., or Sureties, Porth Petty Sess., 9th Mar., 1905 (habitual drunkenness). 6 Mos., or Sureties, Pontypridd Petty Sess., 27th Sept., 1905 (habitual drunkenness). 6 Mos., or Sureties, and 3 Dys., or 7/6 (concurr.), Pontypridd Petty Sess., 17th April, 1907 (habitual drunkenness and drunk and disorderly). 2 Mos., Pontypridd Petty Sess., 25th Nov., 1908 (habitual drunkenness). 1 Mo. and 1 Mo. (consec.), Ystrad Petty Sess., 23rd Aug., 1909 (drunk and disorderly—2 cases). 2 Mos., or Sureties, Pontypridd Petty Sess., 10th Nov., 1909 (habitual drunkenness). 1 Mo. and 2 Mos. (consec.), Pontypridd Petty Sess., 5th Jan., 1910 (drunk and disorderly and assaulting police). 7 Days and 2 Mos., or Sureties (consec.), Ystrad Petty Sess., 20th July, 1910 (drunk and disorderly and habitual drunkenness). 1 Mo., 7 Mos., or 13/2, and 2 Mos., or Sureties (consec.), Porth Petty Sess., 20th Oct., 1910 (assaulting police, drunk, and habitual drunkenness). 1 Mo., 7 Days or 14/2, and 2 Mos., or Sureties (consec.), Ystrad Petty Sess., 22nd May, 1911 (assaulting police, drunk, and habitual drunkenness). 2 Mos., Cardiff Qr. Sess., 5th Oct., 1911 (incorrigible rogue, riotous prostitute). 6 Mos., Cardiff Qr. Sess., 8th Jan., 1912 (incorrigible rogue, riotous prostitute). 9 Mos., Cardiff City Sess., 3rd Oct., 1912 (incorrigible rogue). 2 or 1 Mo. and 3 Mos. (consec.), Pontypridd Petty Sess., 15th July 1914 (prostitution and assaulting police). 2 Mos., Pontypridd Petty Sess., 9th Dec., 1914 (rogue and vagabond, prostitution). 203 other convictions for prostitution, drunkenness, &c., 1888-1915</p>	0	<p>D. Lleufer Thomas, Esq., Police Court, Pontypridd.</p>

Calenders of prisoners tried at Assizes and Quarter Sessions 1884 – 1915 showing record of Emma Retallick. See translation next two pages:

Calenders of prisoners tried at Assizes and Quarter Sessions 1884 – 1915 showing official record of Emma Retallick. (Showing previous page).

- 3 months, Swansea Petty Sessions 10th November 1884 (stealing a watch).
- 10 days, Cardiff Petty Sessions 6th July 1885 (stealing a feather).
- 1 month, Swansea Petty Sessions 1st February 1890 (stealing a purse and money from a person.)
- 1 month Swansea Petty Session, 15th June 1891 (stealing money from person).
- 6 Weeks, Cardiff Petty Sessions, 22nd May 1895 (riotous prostitute).
- 6 weeks, Cardiff Petty Sessions, 24 October 1895 (assaulting police).
- Bound over, Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 18 August 1897 (stealing money).
- 14 days, Ystrad Petty sessions, 25th October 1897 (stealing a cape).
- 2 months, Porth Petty Sessions, 18th January 1900 (Larceny from person).
- 2 months, Pontypridd Petty Sessions 12th July 1901 (assaulting police).
- 14 days, Cardiff Petty Sessions, 26 May, 1903 (riotous prostitute).
- 1 month or 20/- Cardiff Petty Sessions, 6th August 1903 (riotous prostitute)
- 3 months or sureties, Ystrad Petty Sessions, 17 October 1904 (habitual drunkenness).
- 6 months or sureties, Porth Petty Sessions, 9th March 1905 (habitual drunkenness).
- 6 months or sureties, Pontypridd Petty sessions, 27 September, 1905 (habitual drunkenness).
- 6 months or sureties and 5 days or 7/6 (concur), Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 17th April 1907 (habitual drunkenness and drunk and disorderly).
- 2 months, Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 25th November 1908 (habitual drunkenness).
- 1 month and 1 month (consec), Ystrad Petty Sessions, 23 August, 1909 (drunk and disorderly – 2 cases).
- 2 months or sureties, Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 10th November 1909 (habitual drunkenness).
- 1 month and 2 months (consec.), Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 5th January 1910 (drunk and disorderly and assaulting police).
- 1 month and 1 month (consec.), Ystrad Petty Sessions, 23rd August 1909 (drunk and disorderly -2 cases.
- 2 months or sureties, Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 10th November 1909 (habitual drunkenness)

1 month and 2 months (consec.), Pontypridd Petty Sessions 5th January 1910 (drunk and disorderly and assaulting police).

7 days and 2 months or sureties (consec.), Ystrad Petty Sessions, 20th July 1910 (drunk and disorderly and habitual drunkenness).

1 month, 7 months or sureties of 13/2 and 2 months and sureties (consec.), Porth Petty Sessions, 20 October 1910 (assaulting police, drunk, and habitual drunkenness).

2 months Cardiff Quarter Sessions, 5th October 1911 (incorrigible rogue, riotous prostitute).

6 months, Cardiff Quarter Sessions, 5th January 1912 (incorrigible rogue, riotous prostitute).

9 months, Cardiff City Sessions, 3rd October 1912 (incorrigible rogue).

1 month or £2 and 3 months (consec.), Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 15th July 1914 (prostitution and assaulting police).

2 months, Pontypridd Petty Sessions, 19th December 1914 (rogue and vagabond, prostitution).

203 other convictions for prostitution and drunkenness &c; 1888 – 1915.

Missing newspaper reports

Officials records show that these trials all took place and Emma Retallick was subsequently jailed, but after scanning many newspapers no reports could be found.

22nd May 1895 Cardiff Petty Sessions
24 October 1895 “ “ “
25 October 1897 Ystrad Petty Sessions
26 May 1903 Cardiff Petty Sessions
9 March 1905 Porth Petty Session
27 September 1905 Pontypridd Petty Sessions
10th November 1909 Pontypridd Petty Sessions
5 January 1912 Cardiff Quarter Sessions
3 October 1912 “ “ “

Emma Retallick workhouse record 1894 – 1916

Showing Emma Retallick's short spells, mostly for one or two nights not voluntarily at the Pontypridd workhouse

1909 - 29 October

1910 - 21 September

1910 – 13 October

1913 - 13 June

1913 - 3 December

1914 - 26 March

1914 -12 May

1914 -10 November

1915 - 1 February

1915 – 6 April

1915 – 22 July

1915 – 19 October

1916 – 26 April