

# Deserving & Undeserving



# Yr Haeddiannol a'r Anhaeddiannol

In 1834 the Poor Law Amendment Act created a new welfare system based on the workhouse. Wrexham's workhouse was on Croesnewydd Road.

Life in the workhouse was strict with lots of rules. Husbands were separated from their wives, children taken from their parents. The inmates had to do unpaid work in the workhouse fields or in the laundry, and a refusal resulted in hard labour. These rules and the stigma of being a pauper<sup>1</sup> were intended to act as a deterrent. The 'undeserving', such as vagrants and unmarried mothers, were treated harshly.

*"Ordered that all Vagrants admitted into this house be strictly searched by the Master and if there is found sufficient cash in their possession to furnish them with lodgings, that they be rejected."*

Wrexham Poor Law Guardians, 26th March 1840

Victorian society showed its kinder side to the 'deserving' poor through individual acts of generosity. Miss Maude Jones of Regis Place, Wrexham gave a rocking horse. Mr Yorke invited the inmates to Erddig, while the Mayor & Mayoress organised 'a knife and fork tea' and entertainment. William Bragger, the master between 1857 and 1863, often bought toys and cakes for the children. For his kindness, the Guardians criticized him for making Wrexham's workhouse an 'easy berth'; saying the paupers preferred life in the workhouse to earning a living outside.

Children were not held responsible for their situation and those children born in the workhouse were registered as born at 'Plas Panton' to hide their background. There was a school in the workhouse, and older children were sent out to work as domestic servants and apprentices.

<sup>1</sup> a term used to describe people living in the workhouse or relying on outdoor relief - the name for the Poor Law system's welfare payments.

Yn 1834 cyflwynwyd Deddf Newydd y Tlodion a greodd gyfundrefn les newydd yn seiliedig ar y wyrwys. Roedd wyrwys Wrecsam ar Croesnewydd Road.

Bywyd caeth oedd bywyd y wyrwys, gyda llawer o reolau i'w parchu. Câl gwragedd eu gwahanu oddi wrth eu gwŷr, a phlant oddi wrth eu rhieni. Roedd rhaid i'r trigianwyr weithio'n ddigyflog yng nghanau neu olchdy'r wyrwys. Byddai gwrthod yn arwain at ddedfryd o lafur caled. Roedd y rheolau hyn a'r anfrî a ddeuai yn sgîl bod yn dlotyn wedi'u bwriadu fel ataliad. Roedd yr 'anhaeddiannol' megis cardotwyr a mamau di-briod yn cael eu trin yn llym.

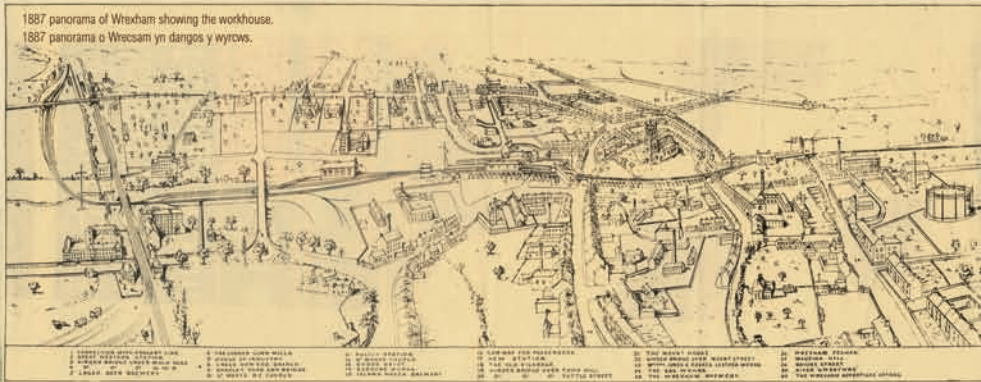
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Ceidwaid Deddf y Tlodion, Wrecsam, 26 Mawrth 1840

Roedd y gymdeithas Fictoraidd yn amlygu ochr garedicach i'r tlodion a ystyrir yn 'haeddiannol' trwy gyfrwng gweithredoedd o haelioni unigol. Rhoddodd Miss Maude Jones o Regis Place, Wrecsam gefyll siglo yn anrheg. Gwahoddwyd y trigianwyr i Erddig gan Mr Yorke, tra aeth y Maer a'r Faeres ati i drefnu te 'cyllell a fforc' ac adloniant. Byddai William Bragger, sef y meist'r rhwng 1857 a 1863, yn prynu teganau a theisennau i'r plant yn aml. Am ei fod mor garedig, cafodd ei feirniadu gan y Ceidwaid am wneud wyrwys Wrecsam yn 'dalcen meddal'; gan ddweud bod yn well gan y tlodion fyw yn y wyrwys na cheisio ennill bywoliaeth oddi allan iddo.

Ni fyddai plant yn gorfod derbyn cyfrifoldeb am eu sefyllfa a châl i'r plant oedd yn cael eu geni yno eu cofrestru fel rhai a anwyd ym 'Mhlas Panton' i guddio eu gwir gefndir. Roedd ysgol yn y wyrwys a châl i'r plant hŷn eu hanfon i weithio fel gweision neu fornyion neu fel prentisiaid.

<sup>1</sup> term a ddefnyddid i ddisgrifio pobl oedd yn byw yn y wyrwys neu'n dibynnu ar daliadau allanol - enw Deddf y Tlodion ar daliadau lles y gyfundrefn.



*"God bless our Benefactors  
For this our Christmas cheer:  
May blessings rest on them and theirs,  
Throughout the opening year.  
Freely they have given  
Both of their time and wealth  
And for their kindness shown to us  
Wish them long life and health."*

*God bless our kindly Master  
Likewise the Matron too:  
So wise to rule, so kind to bear,  
With faults we often do.  
Now while we are singing  
Our thanks to all we give  
Who smile on lowly children,  
Long may they happy live."*

Song of Gratitude sung by the children at Wrexham Union Workhouse concert, January 16th 1867.

Cân o Ddiolchgarwch a gafodd ei chanu mewn cyngerdd yn Wyrwys Undeb Wrecsam, Ionawr 16 1867.

*"The children are paupers it is true,  
but let it be remembered, that they are so  
without any fault of their own."*

Wrexham Reborder, 1849

*"Sarah Micklewright wishes to see  
the Board to ask for clothes for her child.  
Request refused. Mary Higgins wishes  
to appear before the Board to  
ask for boots to leave the house.  
Boots Refused"*

Master's Log Book, Wrexham Union workhouse.  
Llyfr Log yr Ysgolfeistr, Wyrows Undeb Wrecsam.

*"John Pickering,  
a young lad of thirteen, is proving an  
excellent apprentice shoemaker to  
Mr Alfred Povey of Rhos. His pay is one  
shilling a week, rising next year to a shilling and six."*

*"Mae John Pickering, bachgen ifanc tair-ar-ddeg oed, yn dangos ei fod yn brentis rhagorol o grydd i Mr Alfred Povey o'r Rhos. Scollt yr wythnos yw ei gyslog, a bydd hwnnec'n codi i swllt a chwech y flwyddyn nesaf."*



Wrexham County Borough  
Wrecsam  
Wrecsam  
Wrecsam