THE ROLE OF SYMBOL AND MYTH IN THE WELSH
SETTLEMENT OF PATAGONIA, 1865-1911

by

William Iain Stevenson
M.A. (hons), University of Glasgow, 1972

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THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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of
Geography

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Title of Thesis/Dissertation:
The role of symbol and myth in the Welsh settlement
of Patagonia, 1865-1911

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the documentation and explanation of the Welsh emigrations to Patagonia in Southern Argentina and the nature of the settlement and related behaviour of the Welsh settlers there between the years 1865 and 1911.

The topic is introduced by a brief review of the standard studies concerned with immigration and colonisation in Argentina, and the deficiencies of the traditional "economic" or "political" interpretations are pointed out. It is suggested that a fuller understanding of the migration and settlement behaviour of Argentinian pioneers, and specifically the Welsh, would necessitate a "cultural" approach.

A detailed study of the geographical and historical aspects of the Welsh colony is then presented. On the basis of this section, three key problems are identified;

(i) Why did the Welsh emigrate to Argentina, specifically Patagonia?
(ii) In terms of farming, settlement, community organisation and external relations, why did they behave as they did?
(iii) Why did a proportion of the settlers abandon the colony once it had apparently achieved success and settle elsewhere?

It is then suggested that answers to these problems may be arrived at by the development of a "cultural" approach, as alluded to earlier. A cultural methodology is accordingly articulated, and the concepts of "symbol" and "myth" are introduced. It is hypothesized that these abstract components of culture had great influence in determining the behaviour of the Welsh settlers, and the resulting landscape forms of the settlement. This hypothesis is applied to each of the problems in

(iii)
Firstly, the origins and nature of the Welsh symbols, which may be identified broadly as "language", "religion" and "rural way of life" are documented, and their role in precipitating the emigrations from Wales is discussed. It is further shown how the symbols were woven into the fabric of a myth of Patagonia as a "Southern Wales" and how the communication of that myth encouraged the migration of Welshmen to Patagonia.

Secondly, it is demonstrated that belief in the myth caused the first settlers to misinterpret the real geographical conditions of Patagonia, and thus their initial settlement behaviour was "irrational". It is then shown that, even after the myth had been laid, the Welsh symbols continued to have a controlling influence in all aspects of the settlers' behaviour throughout the period under review.

Thirdly and finally, it is shown how the symbols had given rise to a feeling of exclusivism among the Welsh, and that, towards the close of the study period, the incursions of Argentines and European immigrants into the Welsh colony put the colonists under "cultural pressure". A significant proportion of the Welsh settlers responded to this situation by emigrating from the colony, first to the Andes, and then (a different group) to Canada.
DEDICATION

For my parents
"Do me the kindness to look out of that door, Mr. Morgan," he said, "If you can see a tree, it was planted by the Welsh. If there is grass the Welsh put it there. If there is a flower, Welsh women brought the seeds in their bosoms. If there is water, the Welsh dug and ditched and damned it. These streets were planned and stamped out by the Welsh. These houses and the farmhouses outside are Welsh. The shops are Welsh. The railway was built by the Welsh. The sewers were dug by the Welsh. The Bank is Welsh. This Co-operative is Welsh, staffed by the Welsh, and the books and accounts are in our language. There is only one cemetery. Go there and see. It is Welsh."

"But there is a lot of Spanish," I said, "Why is everybody against it?"

"They are hoping to keep it Welsh, especially the old pioneer families," he said, "Remember, this is called the City of Lewis, in the Welsh language, not Castellano."

------- Richard Llewellyn,
Up into the Singing Mountain.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A thesis inevitably bears the impress of many hands and I should like here to record my gratitude to those who have left their mark on this study. Firstly, I must acknowledge the contribution of my senior supervisor, Dr. Paul Koroscil, whose careful direction has been, I trust, reflected in the form of this study. The remaining members of my supervisory committee, Prof. Frank Cunningham, in whose graduate course on Latin America the seeds of this study were planted, and Dr. Ed Gibson, whose deep insight and uncompromising concern with scholarship kept my line of enquiry straight when I was tempted to let it wander, both gave freely of their time and expertise during my research and writing. My thanks are also extended to Dr. Phil Wagner, who, although not among my de jure supervisors, nevertheless took great interest in the development and form of the thesis; his stimulating conversation has helped shape both the argument of the present study and the nature of my thinking on cultural geography.

To Emeritus Professor Emrys Bowen, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, my thanks are due for his unfailing courtesy and kindness, and for his practical help over some of the difficulties, (particularly the evaluation of Welsh language sources) I encountered during the preliminary research. Prof. John Bergmann, Department of Geography, University of Alberta, graciously shared with me his research into soil salinisation problems on the lower Chubut. The Consul-General of the Argentine Republic, Ottawa, was helpful in furnishing me with statistical material and official documents.

Practical help in various forms was forthcoming from the Humanities
and Social Sciences Librarians, Interlibrary Loans staff, and the staff of the Microfilm Room, Simon Fraser University Library, the Audio-Visual Centre, Simon Fraser University, the staff of the Library, the University of British Columbia, and Dave Dairon and Margaret Wheat, Geography Department cartographers at Simon Fraser.

Finally, I must record my appreciation of all those people at Simon Fraser whose advice, conversation, friendship and contributions to good times relieved the bleakness of those months when I was researching and writing, John and Bettina Bradbury, Bob Galois, Angela Hamilton, Jerry Fagerlund, Gerry Nanson, Hiroshi Tanaka, Bernard Curtin, Judy Miles and Ron Phillips all contributed perhaps more than they know. Of the group, my especial thanks go to Ken Cawker, who taught me to use the computer machine and whose friendship I greatly value, and to Bruce and Mary Batchelor, who singly and severally provided not only comment, criticism, typing, good times, sustenance and the occasional spare bed, but also warm friendship.

Each of these was instrumental in moderating, in various ways, the hardships of thesis preparation and my hearty thanks to all.

Burnaby, B.C.

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Author's Note

In any study in Historical Geography, one is continually confronted with the major problem of how to standardise the quotation of weights and measures, sums of money and the like. For instance, in the documents and other sources used in the present study one encounters at least three different systems of weights: the British (Imperial), the Argentinian, and the French (Metric). There is equal confusion as regards the quotation of areas and distances. The temptation is to convert all measures to a commonly recognised standard (conventionally the International Metric system) for ease of comparison, but in so doing a great deal of the 'period flavour' is lost. The alternative method of footnoting all references to measures in the text to give their metric equivalents is exceptionally cumbersome. In the present study, the policy that has been followed is as follows:

1. All calculated measures (e.g., distances derived from maps) and measures taken from modern sources (e.g., climatic statistics) have been quoted in metric units;

2. All measures quoted from contemporary sources are given in the units in which they were expressed. To avoid unnecessary repetitions in the text, the table reproduced below gives the equivalents in metric units of the most common Argentinian and Imperial Measures thus quoted.

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<th>Imperial</th>
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<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>1 Cuadra cuadrada</td>
<td>4 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>1 Fanega</td>
<td>112 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>1 Milla</td>
<td>1,200 yards</td>
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* Normally referred to simply as a 'cuadra'
N.B. Sums of Money are quoted in Argentine Gold Pesos unless otherwise stated and the sign ($) refers to this. U. S. or Canadian dollars are referred to as 'dollars' and British pounds are symbolised thus (L).
A leaden grey dawn broke over the Patagonian coast on a mid-winter’s day in 1865. Within the lee of a headland, a small barque rode at anchor, sails furled, but with a green and white standard charged with a crimson dragon streaming at her masthead. On board, there were one hundred and fifty Welsh to whom this was the culmination of a seven thousand mile journey. They had come to this empty land to found a colony that would be a reincarnation of a past Wales, a Wales wherein dwelt only Welshmen.

As the light grew, those on board the barque could see more of the place to which they had come. Beyond a narrow fringe of white pebble beach rose a series of white and stony terraces ending in the sudden steep eminence of a cliff-wall, flat-topped and treeless. An occasional seabird, wings as white as the pebbles with which it constructed its nest, wheeled and cried in a clouded, slaty sky. And from the land came the wind that chilled the body and drew moisture from the exposed skin.

They landed in small boats and made camp under the cliffs, in shallow caves which offered some protection from the wind. Along the beach ran a shallow, dry watercourse, but its gravel bed bore no trace of moisture and the lumps of driftwood which lay there were bleached white and cracked. Inside the caves the walls were grey and cold, rimed with thin lines of ice in a few places where spring water had seeped through. Children cried with thirst until a spring at the cliff-foot was tapped, but the water ran milky white and left the mouth crusted. In a day, it began to run clear, but the taste had turned to salt. And the cold wind which chapped the lips filled the air with its bleak and continuous moan.

On their first Sunday in the New World, Pastor Williams and Pastor...
Humphreys doubtless led the group in worship, their gloved fingers tracing the lines of Scripture in the leather-bound Welsh Bible. From a makeshift pulpit of boulders, the Ministers perhaps preached of the Israelites lost in the Wilderness, and of their reward in the Promised Land. The Congregation, forty-one women with their children huddled in blankets and shawls, sixty-two men standing stiffly in black suits of homespun, their clothes and hair tossed by the wind, their faces pinched and veined by the cold, heard the sonorous words of the Welsh Old Testament and understood. Their voices joined in their hymn of colonisation, its glorious sentiment filling their minds with hope and pride as the green, white and red Dragon Flag of their Ancient Principality stirred on its makeshift staff. Their voices, modulating in the ancient tongue of their forefathers, faded into the white and dun and grey landscape around them and from the bluffs behind the omnipresent wind sang a melancholy coda.
PROVINCE OF CHUBUT
LOCATION MAP

International Bdy
Provincial Bdy
Provincial Capital

0 160 km

SANTA CRUZ
Lago Gihue Haupi

GULF St. GEORGE
New Gulf

FIGURE I
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

During the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, the Argentine sustained a European immigration on a scale much larger than any other Latin American nation. The interest and significance of this fact has not been lost on either geographers or historians. For the geographer, the relationship between agricultural expansion and colonisation and the European incomers is a demonstrable reality, and one of great importance for the interpretation of the Argentine landscape. The historian, on the other hand, has attempted to document the economic and political conditions under which the immigrations took place, and in the process, has attempted to explain why the Argentine among all South American nations received such a large influx of foreigners.

The classical geographical approach to the topic is exemplified by the work of Mark Jefferson. In "Peopling the Argentine Pampa", published in 1926, Jefferson shows how immigration and agricultural development were closely related in the Northern Plains, and examines the impact they had on settlement patterns and distribution. In the first chapters, he convincingly depicts the concommitance between the influx of newcomers and the displacement of the established cattle-ranching economy by tillage.

1. Indeed Argentina which received 6,300,000 European immigrants between 1858-1930, came second only to the United States in the New World (between 1840-1914 the U.S. received 50 millions), see John I. Clache, Population Geography, Pergamon, Oxford, 1965, pp. 134-39.
In 1865, he points out, the Argentine had 0.13 acres of cultivated land \textit{per capita}, and 11,767 Europeans settled in the country. By 1895, \textit{per capita} cultivated land had reached 3.0 acres and European immigration was 61,226. In 1910 the \textit{per capita} land under tillage was 7.0 acres and over 300,000 new settlers arrived in the country. Between 1857 and 1914 almost five million Europeans had made their homes in Argentina and something like 100,000 square miles of land had been brought into cultivation.

The role of political factors, particularly the importance of the Presidency of General Roca, during which the power of the \textit{caudillos} (the cattle barons) was eradicated and 'peace and security' were brought to the Pampas, is briefly reviewed, but Jefferson is mainly interested in the form and structure of the immigrants' settlements, and he devotes most of the remainder of his study to a detailed consideration of the history and organisation of the colonies established by the immigrants. His review is careful and he treats sympathetically, but with penetration and thoroughness, the successes and failures of the various colonies and their impact on the landscape. He then turns to the relationship between railway growth and the needs of agriculture, which he sees as \textit{symbiotic}: "Neither would have been possible without the other." He concludes that the presence of the railway had a great deal to do with the choice of location for the colonies. In the final chapter he returns to the general topic of the size and composition of the immigrant stream and assesses its importance for the development of Argentina as a whole.

Jefferson's interpretation, despite its age, has not been superseded

or surpassed by more recent geographical work. Indeed one finds his examples cited and his arguments re-stated in the majority of the conventional geographical texts on Latin America. Yet a critical reading of his work tends to raise more questions than it answers. Despite its depth and its impressive scholarship, its analysis fails to tackle satisfactorily several crucial aspects of the problem. What, for example, motivated such a vast immigration of diverse cultural types to Argentina? Jefferson shies away from this basic question at several points in his study, and he prefers to deal with the forces (the railways, the pacification of the pampas Indians, for example) which influenced the distribution of the immigrants within the country, rather than looking at what induced them to come in the first place. Indeed it is not until the final paragraph that he confronts the problem clearly. "The Italian" for example, [he writes] has not merely an [economic] attraction in the New World, but an urge out of Italy in the utter hopelessness of the prospects of the labourer in his native land." The best that Jefferson can do is follow the unsatisfactory deterministic gospel of Ravenstein that an individual migration is the inexorable end result of a simple 'economically rational' mechanism. Negative economic factors "push" an individual out of his homeland, positive economic "pull" factors attract him to a new one. Under critical examination, of course, this mechanism can be seen to be

at best, merely a partial explanation. Agreed, the New World provided a wider range of economic opportunity to the European peasant than his home country, but a mere realisation and enunciation of this "pull" factor does nothing to answer the important question as to why the immigrant chose the Argentine, as against, for example, Canada or the United States. On the other hand, certainly the combination of low returns from deteriorating soils, an exploitative system of land tenure and a rigid class system which prohibited economic self advancement may perhaps be seen to provide an Italian peasant with adequate economic incentive to emigrate. Yet can this generalisation be justifiably extended to the 33,000 Swiss, or the 161,000 Russians who immigrated to Argentina between 1857 and 1914 as the sole causative factor? In the case of the former, grinding rural poverty was hardly characteristic, and although with the latter economic privation was significant, it was complicated, obscured and compounded by a whole range of social, religious, racial and historic factors. Moreover, if immigration to the Argentine is solely explicable in terms of a simple "push-pull" mechanism, how can one account for those immigrants who returned home? This is a very significant point, for the numbers who returned were unusually large. For instance, of the 2,300,000 Italians who came to Argentina between 1857 and 1914, fewer than 940,000 remained in 1914. Indeed, just slightly less than half of all the foreigners who entered Argentina in that period had given up and returned home by its close.

In the sections of the study dealing with the actual colonisation activities of the settlers, points are raised which Jefferson fails to in-

terpret or explain. For example, why, at the colony of Esperanza, did
the Swiss sow their maize broadcast, while the American group nearby
planted it neatly in rows? And why did the German-speaking Swiss and
French-speaking Swiss in the colony maintain themselves in segregated
communities? Elsewhere, why did the Italians at San Carlos become easily
and quickly assimilated in the Creole Argentine way of life, even to the
extent of abandoning the Italian language, while the Russian Jews at
Colonia Baron Hirsch kept themselves aloof from their surroundings, main-
taining their language, religion, customs and costume virgo intacts?
One could continue to cite examples, but the point has been fairly made.
The answers to these questions may appear obvious, but Jefferson, signi-
icantly, refrained from drawing the manifest conclusions. In his view,
immigration and colonisation were to be understood in terms of a simple
cause-and-effect economic process, as witness his treatment of the
relationship between railroad growth and settlement, and complicating
factors of culture, experience, aspiration and perception could not be
built into this schemata.

The major contribution of historical scholarship to this topic is a
doctoral dissertation entitled "A History of Argentine Immigration, 1853-
1924" by R. D. Ochs. Ochs' interpretation does not follow the "economic
man" thesis put forward by Jefferson. Rather he sees the major influence
on the nature, direction and magnitude of the immigration flow as being the

---
10. Ibid, p. 83.
Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, Urbana, 1939.
concurrent political environment of the Argentine. In his preface, he clearly states that "an account of the entrance of Europeans to Argentina and their settlement in that country" is necessarily dependent on "a study of the plans, decrees, and laws relating to immigration and land settlement". This is the organising principle of his thesis, and throughout the study he carefully and systematically traces the legal and political background to immigration. Where Jefferson glosses over this aspect, and treats of it only in passing, Ochs, in turn, pays only minimal attention to the impact of immigrants on the landscape. Indeed, he only devotes eight pages (pp. 130-39) to a consideration of the geographical implications of the immigrations, and even there he deals only in the most superficial terms with agricultural and settlement expansion, railway construction, industrialisation and the impact of immigration on international trade.

The main contribution of the thesis lies in its elucidation of how the actions of the Argentine Government influenced immigration. The topic is introduced by a consideration of the largely inhibitory policies of the Spanish Empire of the Indies towards immigration. Turning to the post-independence period, Ochs traces the gradual trend towards the development of a favourable policy during the regime of Rivadavia (1812-1835), the reversion to an exclusivist stance during the presidency of the Caudillo Rosas (1835-1852), and the restoration of a pro-immigration policy attributable to the New Constitution of 1852.

After 1852, the government began an active and organised programme to encourage immigration, although the intensity with which the campaign

13. Ochs, op.cit., p. i.
was carried in depended very largely on the personal attitudes of the president in power, and to a lesser extent, on which party controlled the Congress. Ochs draws a close relationship between the introduction of land laws, especially those offering grants of free land to settlers, and the quickening rate of immigration. He notes that government advertising proved to be extremely significant in attracting immigrants, and explores the role played by land speculation in the slowing down of immigration in the 1890's.

The concluding two chapters of the thesis deal with the formation and effects of a restrictive government policy towards immigration after 1912, which, it is suggested, was a major factor in influencing the marked decline in immigration. The overall view presented in the thesis is that the generally favourable attitude of the government during the second half of the nineteenth century toward immigration resulted in a series of land and colonisation laws which made the Argentine appear attractive to Europeans. However, lack of foresight, unrealistic legal drafting, and failure to maintain a consistent policy reduced the effectiveness of these legal measures in directing the migrant stream toward the areas of greatest potential for development in the nation.

Ochs' study suffers from a defect similar to that of Jefferson's. By concentrating on the causal influence of a factor external to the immigrants, he necessarily ignores the immigrants' motives for coming, why they settled where they did, how the settlements were organised, why some groups were readily assimilated and others not, and the crucial question of "why the

15. Ibid, p. 212.
The thesis is logically consistent and well-documented within its limits, but it too seeks a simple, one-cause solution to the problem of the nature of Argentine immigration.

Put simply, the major shortcoming of these two studies is summed up in the preceding paragraph. Both Ochs and Jefferson attempted to understand the immigrants by visualising them as a passive medium, as it were, whose actions are explicable in terms of the influence of external factors; in one case, economic in nature, in the other political. In so doing, both have, in a sense, overlooked the most salient feature of an immigrant. That he is not passive, nor part of a completely homogenous population, but that he comes to a new country with a whole bundle of pre-conceptions already formed about it, while retaining a range of memories, prejudices and values picked up in the country he left. Every immigrant is a member of a particular culture, and possesses a particular language, set of taboos and customs, religious observances, tastes, desires and ideals as part of his cultural baggage. The immigrant is therefore neither a rational economic man nor a pawn in a legislative game, but a human being whose behaviour is complex and often objectively irrational.

It is not the purpose of the present thesis either to denigrate or reject the arguments put forward by Jefferson and Ochs. Both are valid interpretations, although limited by the simplistic, almost telological mechanisms implied by their frameworks. Rather, an alternative explanation will be offered which, it is hoped, will go some way towards answering the questions which the traditional studies avoided or to which they were not addressed. The underlying assumption of the present approach is that certain aspects of immigration and their effects may be interpreted in terms
of the culture of the immigrant. This may seem to be a self-evident assertion but it has never been explicitly or consistently used to interpret the problems encountered in an investigation of Argentine immigration.

Perhaps one of the reasons why a study taking this approach has not previously been undertaken may stem from the extreme cultural diversity of the immigrants who settled in the Argentine. They ranged in nationality from Italians, through Turkish, to North Americans; in religion, from Roman Catholic, through Jewish, to Eastern Orthodox; in language, from French to Serbo-Croat, from English to Lithuanian. Apart from promulgating a simple "melting pot" thesis, which is demonstrably inappropriate in the Argentine situation, a study from the cultural point of view which encompasses the whole topic would obviously be too vast and complex to be undertaken within the bounds of a single thesis. Accordingly, this thesis will be confined to a case study of one cultural group which immigrated to and settled in the Argentine, but with the understanding that the methodology proposed in this specific example might well be applied to the problems posed by other cultural groups who immigrated to other areas of the Argentine, or indeed to studies of the cultural geography of immigration in general. It is to be hoped that other students of immigration, particularly those whose interests focus on the Argentine, may feel that the methods developed here could contribute usefully to their understanding of their own specific topics.

The cultural group selected for study in this thesis was the Welsh, who settled the lower valley and Andean headwaters of the Rio Chubut in Patagonia, within the boundaries of the present Province of Chubut, between 1865 and 1911. (See Figure I)
The Welsh appear to be particularly suited to a study of the present scope and orientation for several reasons. Firstly, they constituted a discrete and isolated group, both culturally and in terms of the physical distance of their colony from the Argentine heartland. Secondly, they were the first Europeans to colonise the region, and thus their colonisation was not modified, in the first instance at least, by conflicts with existing European inhabitants. Thirdly, they were relatively few in number, and markedly socially and culturally homogenous.

As a geographical problem, this topic may be seen to have two related aspects. Firstly, the whys and wherefors of the Welsh immigration per se, and secondly the nature of their subsequent settlement and its impact on the landscape. Broadly speaking, it is to an elucidation of this two-part problem that a methodological approach using the concept of culture will be developed. However, before turning directly to this, it is first necessary to give a brief outline of the Welsh immigration and settlement and its geographical background, in order that the problem can be more clearly focussed and stated in more detail.
CHAPTER TWO

The Welsh Colony in Patagonia, 1865-1911

The Rio Chubut is the major river draining the Patagonian Plateau of Southern Argentina. It rises near El Matien (70° 55' W, 41° 45' S) in the high Andes, and flows south-east until it joins the Rio Tecka at Allamillio (70° 30' W, 42° 45' S), where the Andean foothills and plateau proper meet. It traverses the plateau in a deep canyon-like gorge, until it reaches its confluence with the Rio Chico (66° 30' W, 43° 40' S) beyond which the gorge opens out to form a U-shaped valley (see plate I), ranging in breadth from eight kilometres at the mouth of the gorge to sixteen kilometres at the Estuary. About five kilometres from the sea, the river makes an abrupt turn south-westwards, following the line of a post-glacial marine spit, which it breaches, and enters the sea at 65° 05' W, 43° 15' S (see Figure I). Although it does not form a delta, there are considerable sand-bars at the Estuary.

The physical landscape of the Patagonian Plateau shows much evidence of glaciation. Most of the plateau, the lithology of which is predominantly comprised of Tertiary sedimentaries, is overlaid with a thick white till of a clayey texture which was deposited during the successive advances and re-advances of the Andean ice-sheets. Only a few isolated monadnocks of volcanic origin, which stand above the general level of the terrain, are free of drift.

The effects of glaciation are also visible in the form of the valley.
During the recession of the most recent ice-sheet, the Proto-Chubut was the major carrier of meltwater away from the wasting ice front and this massively increased flow was one of the major factors involved in the accelerated erosion of the Chubut gorge. In some places the walls of the gorge rise 100 metres above the present stream level, which gives some idea of the magnitude of the flow the channel once carried.

At the commencement of the Holocene, the mouth of the Chubut was the mouth of the present gorge. The combined effects of isostatic depression of the land and eustatic rise in sea level led to the submergence of the present lower valley, producing a ria-like feature. A stepped series of raised beaches on the coastline suggest that the land had begun to rise from the sea at about 7000 B.P., and recent observations have confirmed that isostatic uplift is not yet complete. The marine transgression of the lower valley probably lasted some two thousand years and during this period, a thick layer of sand, mud, salt and miscellaneous deposits of marine origin was laid down on the valley floor. These marine deposits contain a high proportion of calcareous material. In some places, mollusc shells may still be found in the subsoil.

Within the lower valley, the Rio Chubut follows an exceptionally serpentine course, meandering across the former bed of the ria from one wall to the other. Apart from the Rio Chico, no stream of any significance joins the river in its lower course, but several must have done so in the immediately post-glacial era, or perhaps slightly earlier, for on both the north and south sides of the valley there are depressions which mark the sites of former watercourses.

Since the elevation of the lower valley is above sea-level, the river
PLATE I

The mouth of the Chubut Gorge
has, by periodic flooding, gradually constructed levees along its banks, and since this has resulted in a gradual raising of its bed, it now flows approximately at, or slightly above, the level of the surrounding terrain. Flooding is a typical feature of the regime of the river, and although topographic features, particularly the elevation of the river bed above the level of the plain, contribute to this problem, climatic factors are of paramount importance in this connection.

The major characteristic of the area's climate is aridity. For most of the year a high pressure area is located over the Patagonian land mass, and the prevailing winds are thus westerly and blow out to sea. Very little precipitation therefore falls on the plateau. The Andean foothills may receive up to 50 centimetres per annum, but precipitation elsewhere east of the seventieth meridian rarely exceeds 25-30 centimetres per annum. The only exception to the general lack of precipitation comes at the end of winter and at the beginning of spring (September-November) when squally, cyclonic storms may blow up along the coast, bringing torrential downpours of up to eight centimetres per diem. Unfortunately, these storms tend to coincide with the spring Andean snowmelt, which brings about a spate in the river. If these two conditions do occur simultaneously, serious flooding is nearly always the result. The average discharge of the Chubut in its lower course is circa 40 c.m.s.; when storm and spate coincide, increases to as much as five times that amount have been recorded. The level of the river has been observed to rise as much as six metres within a single day.

The vegetation of the area is closely adapted to environmental conditions. Most of the native plants are xerophytes and salt tolerant, and those belonging to the genera Lepidophyllum and Verbena are common.
In many areas, bunch grass is the only cover and trees are generally absent except for willows and these are strictly confined to the banks of the river. On the plateau the vegetation tends to be stunted and low because of the typical high winds. Large stretches of the soil are devoid of any vegetation whatsoever. Where it lies unprotected in this fashion, the soil is extremely susceptible to deflation and violent dust storms are fairly common features.

The soil of the area is generally low in fertility if unimproved. It is deficient in organic material, very alkaline, and in some areas where a salt pan has formed, the resulting tierra salada is almost totally unproductive. As in most arid regions, the water table is very close to the surface, and this has led to the formation of a caliche-like hard crust of calcium carbonate on the more limey soil.

The wildlife supported by this barren landscape is sparse. Herds of ostrich and guanaco—the plains llama—roam the plateau but there are few other large native species of any importance. There is however an abundance of seabirds which nest along the coast and thick deposits of guano are typical of much of the shoreline.

On May 27th 1865, the barque "Mimosa", under charter to the Welsh Emigration Society of Liverpool, left the Mersey en route for New Bay, an inlet about thirty-five kilometres north of the estuary of the Chubut. On board were 153 passengers, comprising about 70 Welsh families, who, in return for the passage money of £12 per adult, were to receive "good food... on the voyage", a farmstead of 100 acres per family, plus "at least 5 horses, 10 cows, 20 sheep, two or three pecks of wheat, a plough peculiar to the country and a number of fruit trees" and enough supplies to last for four months after their landfall "i.e., until the first crops from the earth".

To the Emigration Society, the 153 comprised the vanguard of a wholesale emigration from Wales, which would be directed towards settling and farming the valley of the Rio Chubut, and would form the nucleus of what would eventually become a self-governing, Welsh-speaking province within the Argentine Confederation.

The "Mimosa" arrived in New Bay on July 26th 1865. During the voyage there had been five deaths, all of infants and young children, and two babies had been born; in all other respects, there had been little of incident during the voyage. The original intention of the colonists had been to land first at New Bay, to reconnoiter, and then to sail up the Chubut and establish a townsite at Yr Hen Amndiffynfa (The Old Fortress), an

17. Great Britain, Sessional Papers of the House of Commons, "Correspondence respecting the Establishment of a Welsh Colony on the River Chupat, in Patagonia" 49, 1867. Document No. 17, p. 505. (This series hereafter cited as "Blue Books, 1867").
19. All Welsh spellings quoted in this study are transliterated into the modern form as given by H. M. Evans and W. O. Thomas, Y Geiriadur Mawr, Aberystwyth, Lly Frau'r Dryw, 1963.
earthwork fortification which had been constructed by some itinerant Argentinian horse-traders in 1853 on a gravelly raised beach deposit on the north bank of the Chubut about eight miles inland. However, the sand-banks at the mouth of the river made the passage too shoal for the "Mimosa" to negotiate with any safety, so the colonists were put ashore at New Bay (close to the present site of Puerto Madryn) to await the arrival from Buenos Aires of a sloop of sufficiently shallow draught to transport them inland. Camp was made under the lee of the limestone cliffs which rose steeply from the beach terraces along the coastline, and on July 28th the "Mimosa" raised anchor and departed.

The sloop took longer to arrive than was anticipated, so most of the male members of the party decided to traverse the sixty-four kilometres between New Bay and the Chubut valley townsite on foot. They set off in small groups to cross the arid plateau of the campo de postoreo, leaving the women and children, together with most of their belongings, provisions and equipment, to await the sloop. It was generally believed that the journey by water up the Chubut would take no more than forty-eight hours, that by land a little less.

The overland journey proved to be more difficult than they bargained for, due, in the words of one report, to "their ignorance of the landmarks of the district". Nevertheless, all the men, with one exception, had arrived safely at the Old Fortress by September 15th, albeit, since some had taken as much as five days to make the journey, tired and hungry. In the meantime, the sloop "Mary Ellen" had arrived at New Bay with a cargo of

21. Ibid.
provisions and seed corn to augment the supplies brought from Liverpool.
The women and children were embarked on this vessel, along with their
baggage. The voyage was a near disaster. Almost immediately it had set sail
the "Mary Ellen" ran into a storm which lasted for seventeen days, during
which time the deck cargo, including most of the seed corn, was lost. Quite
apart from the effects of the storm, the passengers suffered extreme hard-
ship during the voyage. Secretary R. G. Watson, assistant to the British
Charge d'Affaires at Buenos Aires, quoted the testimony of one woman,
"...although there were provisions on board, she had no food during the
whole of that time, excepting a small quantity of biscuits and water, and
during three days, some brackish water alone". It is significant to note
that as many lives were lost aboard the "Mary Ellen" as had been on board
the "Mimosa". Eventually, the sloop was able to enter the river, and with-
out further incident discharged her passengers and remaining cargo at the
townsite, which the settlers had by now renamed "Tre-Rawson", in compliment
to the Argentine Minister of the Interior, Senor Guillermo Rawson.

Despite these initial setbacks and losses, the settlers were undaunted
and work began almost immediately on the construction of dwellings. Turf
huts and storehouses were quickly erected within the earth palisade at
Trewson. Some of the nearby scrub vegetation was cleared, and work was
begun on a gravel road which was to follow the north bank of the river for
twenty kilometres inland.

However, the actual surveying and lotting of farms, and the laying out
of a road network was carried out by an Argentinian. He was Julian Diaz,

22. Ibid.
who had arrived at the nascent colony, on the orders of Senor Rawson, on
September 15th with a party of soldiers from the frontier fort of Carmen
de Patagones in order to raise the Argentine flag and to ensure that the
Welsh settlement was complying with Argentine colonisation laws. 24
Diaz's brief was to divide up the valley floor into 500 rectangular farm lots,
each 25 cuadras in area, a task which he completed within a few weeks
(Figure II). The grid of farms was laid out with very little reference to
soil conditions or topography, but since there were so few settlers in the
original party, only those farms adjacent to the river and close to the
townsite of Trerawson were occupied in the first instance. Since the colo-
nists did not possess any means of crossing the river, none of the farms
on the south bank was initially occupied. The allocation of farms was de-
cided by the drawing of lots, each family, or group of three individuals,
receiving one farm unit, as the Argentine land law required.

The colonists had elected twelve of their number to act as a governing
body, and one, Lewis Jones, was elected Colonial Superintendent. This body
supervised the allocation of the farms, and, once the distribution had been
finalised, it organised the settlers into communal work groups for clearing
and ploughing. Most of the immigrants had no experience of this kind of
labour and progress was slow. The preparatory work was thus not completed
until the end of October, and the sowing of crops was delayed until then.

As one observer noted in a subsequent report, May or June were normally re-

Historical Geography" Geographical Journal, 162, 1966, p. 23.
25. See note on units of measurement prefacing this study.
garded as the months for sowing in the Patagonian region and an October-sown crop was unlikely to produce a good harvest. The subsequent failure of the crop could therefore be ascribed, the report concluded, to misfortune and mismanagement on the part of the voyage's planners, who had delayed the departure of the Welsh too late to allow sufficient time for a crop to be taken that season. Another observer, Consul F. C. Ford, was less charitably inclined. He wrote; "It is greatly to be feared that incorrigible idleness and total inaptitude for work will prevent any good result arising from the establishment of the colony, the more so as the members comprising it have shown such a want of knowledge of the art of husbandry".

Ford's charge that the colonists were improvident and indolent was baseless in fact, but his comments on the extent of their agricultural knowledge are not without truth. Apparently few of the Welsh had any idea of how to prepare the soil to receive seed. In most cases, the ground was merely roughly hoed, and the seed was sown broadcast, without attention to spacing or orientation. Although some seed drills had been brought on board the "Mimosa", they had been abandoned at New Bay since noone knew how to use them.

With regard to animal husbandry, their incompetence again derived more from inexperience than inaction. During November 1865, the colony purchased 1000 sheep at Carmen de Patagones. These, along with other miscellaneous livestock, were entrusted to the care of W. R. Jones, who had been a tailor to trade. According to a contemporary report in the Wrexham Advertiser

he "drove the sheep in the wrong direction and after a few days gave up the job in despair and left the sheep to wander at their own sweet will". Likewise, the settlers apparently did not realise that the guano deposits which coated the beaches at the mouth of the Chabut could be used for fertiliser, and these remained unexploited.

However, it is clear in retrospect that no amount of fertiliser or farming expertise could have saved that season's crop. The seeds had only been sown for a week or so when a cyclonic rainstorm caused the river to rise and overflow its banks, and this flood washed away most of the seedlings. Very little of the first sowing was salvaged, and it became necessary to plant a proportion of the grain that they had reserved for food purposes. This second sowing was not completed until the middle of December, by which time the nearly rainless Summer season had commenced. A few patches of grain close by the river sprouted, but most of the seed did not even germinate. By the end of January, it had become apparent that the crop was going to fail.

Most of the settlers, had, by that time, left the townsite and were living on their individual farms. As the summer drew on, however, and their fields remained sterile, most returned again to Trerawson and pooled their resources. Nonetheless, it was obvious that the remaining supplies, even if used exceptionally sparingly, could not conceivably last until a new crop was sown and harvested.

The survival of the colony during the winter of 1866 was largely due to the provision of supplies by the Governments of the Argentine and the United Kingdom, and to the material aid and friendship shown to the Welsh by the native Indians.

29. Quoted in Blue Books, 1867, Document No. 6, enclosure No. 2. The date of publication of the quoted extract is February 17, 1866.
The Argentine Ministry of the Interior had taken a great deal of interest in the colony, and besides granting it land and basic supplies, it made an *ex gratia* payment of 4000 *patacones* on its establishment for the purchase of stock and equipment. This was later augmented by a further monthly grant of 700 *patacones* for food and clothing supplies. News of the crop failure reached Buenos Aires in February 1866, and Senor Rawson immediately made arrangements for the shipment of a cargo of foodstuffs to the colony, including flour, rice, potatoes, jerked beef, lard and vinegar. At least two further similar shipments were made during the winter. In addition, the Minister authorised the payment of $4000 towards the replacement of lost stock. It was obvious, however, that Rawson could not thus continue to spend his Department's entire immigration vote on the support of one colony, especially since his country was at war with Paraguay and funds were needed elsewhere. After the annual audit of the Interior Ministry accounts during the winter session of the Argentine Congress in 1866, Rawson was obliged to pare his expenses, the food shipments ceased, and the monthly grant was cut. However, it was largely through Rawson's generosity that the colony survived the critical months of February, March and April, 1866. The famine and privation, that must have seemed inevitable to the colonists in January, was averted, and throughout the winter of that season, each individual received a frugal but adequate diet, amounting weekly to 8 pounds of flour, 1½ pounds of meat and a small amount of tea and sugar.

By comparison, the aid to the colony from the British Government was a

30. The "patacon" was approximately equal to the value of the Argentine Gold Peso.
great deal more sporadic, and it was only after reports had appeared in
the British Press claiming that the colonists were starving that any great
interest or concern was expressed by the Foreign Office. For instance, the
*Mercury* of Liverpool reported on January 29th 1866, that "one third of the
band...has fallen a prey to famine and a want of water". Reports such as
these apparently stimulated the Foreign Office to begin tentative enquiries
into the state of the settlement, and the matter eventually came to the
attention of Earl Russell (the Foreign Secretary), and the British Charge
d'Affaires at Buenos Aires. However, it was not until June 18th 1866 that
a British vessel, H.M.S. "Triton" of the South America Squadron, was des-
patched to the Chubut. On board were provisions (including a case of brandy
and a case of port) presented by the British community in Buenos Aires, and
some clothing. Another cargo of provisions was shipped to the colony by
the British Charge d'Affaires on 18th of July, but these two shiploads
apparently constituted the sum total of the material aid provided to the
colony by the British.

In the long term it was probably the contacts the Welsh made with the
Indians during the "hungry times" of the first season that were of greatest
significance for the future of the colony. The earliest meeting between
Indians, who belonged mainly to the Medio Campo and Tehueleche nations, and
Welsh took place as early as December 1865, and although at first the Welsh
had little to spare for trade, the visits of nomadic groups to Trerawson
became increasingly frequent. The Indians traded guanaco and ostrich meat
and provided the colonists with cured guanaco hides for use as cloaks and

34. Quoted in *Blue Books*, 1867, Document No. 4, enclosure No. 2, pp. 483-84.
blankets. Of perhaps greater importance, they also instructed the Welsh in the capture, breaking and riding of wild horses, and in the use of the bolas in hunting. The acquisition of these skills meant that the meagre food supply of the colony could be supplemented by wild game, and there appears to be little doubt that hunting provided most settlers with the quoi vivre during the winter famine of 1866. At the height of the food shortages, one settler, the Rev. Humphreys, could write, "We have not killed any of our cattle, but try to get our meat on the camp and we have [thus] not been in need of provisions".

The colony emerged from the winter of 1866 only slightly depleted in numbers, and still intent on developing the farming potential of the region. In July, the population of the settlement was enumerated as 130, of whom 68 were women and children. There had been sixteen deaths at the colony since its establishment, mostly of young children. Tuberculosis was the most common cause of death. Only twelve of the original colonists had given up, six having left for Buenos Aires, four for Carmen de Patagones and two for the Falkland Islands.

The arrival of replacement stock, purchased in Rio Negro with funds provided by the Ministry of the Interior, and a gift of seeds from the British Charge d'Affaires at Buenos Aires enabled the settlers to attempt farming again. When R. G. Watson visited the colony during the sowing season of 1866 he encountered an air of prosperity and contentment. Doubtless reflecting the confidence of the settlers themselves, he estimated that the valley had sufficient agricultural potential to support a population of

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37. Ibid.
The only major items the colony lacked, he reported, were timber and soap.

By the end of June 1866, some thirty acres had been sown with wheat, and a yield of 1,180 pounds per acre was anticipated. This would be enough to feed the colony and to provide an adequate surplus for trade. On the strength of these hopes, the settlers again moved out of the protective palisade of Trerawson, and returned to the individual steadings. Farms up to a distance of nine miles from the townsite were occupied and in cultivation. Wooden-framed cottages were erected to replace the impermanent turf houses that had been hastily constructed during the first season, but the shortage of timber meant that they had to be built along the property lines, each sharing a common back wall. These were houses which were obviously intended to be permanent, for they were provided with such refinements as beamed roofs, thatched with reeds and sealed with clay daub. Some even possessed windows glazed with ostrich peritoneum. In elevation, they were long and low, divided into two sections, one serving as barn and milking shed, the other as living space.

The colonists were not alone in their hopes for the future of the Ch but settlement as a thriving agricultural community. A limited liability company (The Welsh Trading and Colonising Company Ltd.) was formed in Liverpool, apparently some time early in 1866, for the express purpose of

39. Ibid., p. 510.
41. Ibid.
42. Blue Books, 1867, Document No. 17, enclosure No. 6, p. 508.
43. Williams, op. cit., p. 128.
trading in the colony's agricultural surplus. A few of its shares were held by the more affluent colonists, but the main promoters were businessmen in Wales and Liverpool.

The second season's crop flourished initially, probably as a result of an unusually wet August in 1866, but the drought returned in September and all but a few seedlings withered. Faced with starvation for a second time, several of the colonists lost faith in the future of the colony, and in February 1867, fifty abandoned it and sailed for Buenos Aires in the hope that the Argentine government would resettle them elsewhere.

To the ninety who remained, the immediate prospect was bleak. They were again faced with a hungry winter, and the coming one promised to be harder than the last, for the Argentine Government, burdened by its financial commitment to the Paraguay War, had made it clear that the colony could expect no repetition of its earlier generosity. Their attempts to provide food for themselves had been frustrated by both drought and flooding, since their loss of the grain crop had been compounded by the effects of a flash flood, which had drowned most of the sheep and some of the cattle. Moreover, as the winter approached, the herds of guanaco moved north, and the possibility of eking out their small supply of dried beef with game became remote.

During November 1867, the remaining cattle were slaughtered, and the colonists underwent partial starvation. The effects of the food shortage were to some degree alleviated by gifts of meat from the Indians, but many of the colonists were, on the evidence of one contemporary traveller, re-

44. see Great Britain, Sessional Papers of the House of Commons, "Correspondence respecting the Welsh Colony on the River Chupat in Patagonia", 48, 1871, Document No. 9, enclosure No. 1, pp. 10-14. (This series hereafter cited as Blue Books, 1871.)
45. Ibid.
duced to "eating grass". Nevertheless, some of the grain remaining from the last Argentine shipment, although amounting to no more than 250 kilogrammes, was carefully preserved and planted. This season's crop did eventually prove successful but only after a new technique of cultivation had been adopted.

The necessity for irrigation had been pointed out in an Argentine survey of the region as early as March 1866, but the Welsh had chosen to disregard this advice. Although those farmers who held riverside lots had constructed dykes and overflow channels to protect their land from the spring spates, none had thought to use the river water for irrigation purposes. However, in November 1867, Aaron Jenkins, reputedly on the advice of his wife, breached his flood dyke and inundated the field he had sown with wheat. The crop flourished, and in February 1868, Jenkins took the first successful wheat crop in the colony.

Encouraged by Jenkins's success, others followed his example, and, despite late sowing and indifferent seed quality, they, without exception, reaped good harvests. As one contemporary commentator remarked, "Most of the wheat was sown this season in lands capable of easy irrigation from the river, and although hurriedly and slovenly put into the ground, in most instances, the crop was excellent and abundant."

The 1868-69 season marked the turning point of the colony's agriculture. While there were still occasional bad harvests (that of 1869-70, for instance, was poor due to flooding and the germination of a proportion of the seed

47. Williams, op. cit., p. 126.
grain in store) from then on the colony was able to support itself in food requirements and also export some quantities of grain. Progress was rapid and during the 1870-71 season, about 259 acres had been sown to wheat, which gave a yield of almost 16½ tons.

Until 1871, the technique of inundation remained the only form of irrigation in use. However, since this method could only be efficiently implemented in those lots adjacent to the river, productive acreage was largely confined to a narrow strip along the north bank above Trerawson (see Figure III). It was clear, therefore, that if each family was to operate its own farm, and if this right was to be extended to future settlers, some means would have to be devised to provide irrigation water to outlying lots. Moreover some inexperienced farmers tended to over-water their fields, and some of the choice river-frontaged lots had begun to suffer from soil saturation. The necessity for a system of irrigation canals and drainage ditches therefore arose.

The idea of constructing a canal was first mooted in 1871, when Commander Dennistoun, of H.M.S. "Cracker", reporting on a visit to the colony, made mention of a scheme to divert part of the river's flow into a natural channel which ran parallel to the Chubut along the valley bottom. (This was presumably a former course of the river.) "Immense tracks [sic] of arable land lie on each side of the canal" he observed "and there can be no doubt that if it could be opened the prospects of the Colony as an agricultural settlement are most promising." This initial project must have been successful; for in 1875, work had been completed on an artificial channel, fifteen feet

deep, eighteen feet wide and 1,160 yards long, and the construction of a series of barrages across the river to regulate the flow entering the canal was commenced. By 1880, most of the eastern end of the valley was under irrigation, and in 1899 the system was extended so that a stretch of the valley thirty-two kilometres upstream from Trerawson, the water being channelled through a system of three main canals, and a complex network of feeders. Figure IV shows the extent of this system.

One incidental advantage of this expansion of the canal network was the partial control of floods. After drought, flooding was the most agriculturally disruptive natural hazard in the area. As has been shown earlier, the regime of the Rio Chubut is very variable, and particularly in the area north and east of Trerawson, disastrous flooding was very frequent. Ironically, once the Welsh had learned to solve the problem of aridity by means of controlled inundation, uncontrolled inundation became the major threat to their colony's prosperity. The severe floods of 1866 and 1869 had resulted in the destruction of their granaries and the drowning of cattle and sheep, and throughout the decade after 1870 there was scarcely a season when the crop was not partially destroyed by flood. With the extension of the canal system in the 1880's however, washouts of the fields became much less common, the artificial channels being in most cases sufficient to handle the extra volume.

After the successful demonstration of the value of irrigation, agriculture expanded and diversified. Wheat remained the main crop, and yields increased steadily. By 1880, a thirty-fold yield over quantity sown was being

51. Great Britain, Sessional Papers of the House of Commons, "Welsh Colony of Chupat" Reports of Captain H. Fairfax, R.N. of H.M.S. "Volage", 53, 1876, p. 812. (This series hereafter cited as Blue Books, 1876.)
commonly taken. Wheat exports had been commenced in 1873, and over
500,000 pounds, worth £2,500 sterling, was exported to Buenos Aires in 1875.

Five years before, the colony's total production had amounted to only 27,850
pounds. By 1880, the value of wheat exports increased to £15,000 ster-
ing. At the turn of the century, the region was exporting something in
the range of 6,000 long tons of wheat annually.

Despite wheat's pre-eminence, other crops became increasingly important
in the farm economy. Barley was widely cultivated, but was not regarded as
a cash crop and the relatively small harvest (1,500 pounds in 1870) was
used for fodder. Potatoes and other vegetables were grown on almost every
farm but were mostly intended for domestic consumption. After 1875, orchards
and berry fields became important features of the rural landscape.

However, the most significant trend to emerge in Chubut's changing
farm patterns after 1870 was the increasing importance of stock. There had
been a wholesale slaughter of the colony's stock after the famine periods of
1866 and 1867. In 1870, no family had more than one or two cows, and there
were only seven sheep in the entire settlement. As agriculture, sensu stri
ceto, became more diversified and commercial, and the irrigated bottom-
lands became devoted to cash cropping, stock assumed a new importance. They

52. J. E. Baur, "The Welsh in Patagonia. An example of Nationalistic Migra-
54. Blue Books, 1871, Document 9, Appendix, Table II, p. 25.
55. Williams, op. cit., p. 132.
56. Bureau of American Republics, "The Commerce of the Patagonian Coast"
58. Ibid.
obviously could not now be ranged on the lowland farms, as had been the practice in the pre-irrigation era, and for the first time the value of the arid bunch grass prairie of the plateau as a stock range became appreciated. Angus and Hereford cattle were imported and in some cases were crossed with local wild cattle to produce a breed hardy enough to withstand the rigours of the plateau. Sheep, too, achieved much greater importance after irrigated agriculture was developed. Australian Merinos were, for obvious reasons, the most favoured breed, although Border Leicesters and Romney Marshes were ranged on the pastures of the valley slopes. As early as 1875, the ovine population was already almost 300 and in 1897, it numbered 60,147.

Most flocks were confined to the plateau, but some of the more arid farms east of Trerawson, which were unsupplied with irrigation water until quite late, provided sheep pasturage. Dairy cattle were much fewer in absolute numbers than either steers or sheep, but they had considerable economic significance. The butter and cheese produced by the colony had enjoyed a good reputation in northern Argentina from the earliest, and it remained an important export from the Chubut until the 1890's. In 1875, there were only 79 milch cattle in the valley, but over 6000 pounds of butter were shipped out in that year. By 1897, there were over 10,000 dairy cattle in the valley, and 317 acres of land had been laid down to alfalfa to provide winter fodder for them. The dairy cattle grazed mostly on the lower slopes

60. Great Britain, Sessional Papers of the House of Commons "Report on the Welsh Settlement at Chubut in the Argentine Republic", 61, 1897, p. 300. (This series hereafter cited as Blue Books, 1897.)
61. see Baur, op. cit., p. 480.
63. Blue Books, 1897, p. 300. Although dairying was so significant, exports of butter and milk products had apparently ceased. For the significance of this observation see chapter five, below.
of the valley, but in some exceptionally low-lying areas near the river, where the water table was close to the surface, some land had been given over to water-meadow.

A good index of the increasing sophistication and commercialisation of farming in the colony is given by the growing mechanisation of techniques. When the settlers first arrived in 1865, they possessed only hand tools, and a very few larger implements. There were only three ploughs, for instance. Cultivation by hoe and shovel was normal practice for the first few years of the colony's existence. After the introduction of irrigation however, it obviously no longer remained feasible to use simple hand tools, and horse-drawn and mechanical implements were substituted. As the colony progressed from self-sufficiency to become a net exporter of produce, this progress became cumulative. The more capital agriculture generated, the greater became the level of investment in machinery; hence, the more land could be brought into cultivation, the more crops could be produced, the more machinery was required, and so on. If one looks at the increase in numbers and range of implements and the cultivated acreage in the colony between 1870 and 1896, this progression may be grasped more clearly. In 1870, the colony possessed nine light 'American' ploughs and two heavy 'English' ploughs (although the latter were rarely put to use since they each required a full team to draw them), three "cultivators" (these, presumably, were harrows of the disc-blade type), some conventional harrows, and an unspecified number of scythes, sickles and hoes. Two hundred and sixty-five acres of the bottom lands adjacent to the river were under cultivation.

64. Blue Books, 1867, Document No. 17, enclosure No. 6, p. 509.
66. Calculated from the map in Williams, op. cit., p. 129.
By 1875, the colonists possessed in common one steam-driven threshing machine, 2 horse driven threshing machines (in 1870, threshing had been carried out simply by driving the horses over the grain on a beaten earth floor), one steam pumping engine, one steam driven mill, three winnowing machines, ten reapers and one windmill pump. About 1000 acres were in cultivation. In 1897, a report (dealing only with the lower valley, up to the mouth of the Chubut gorge) recorded that there were 6 mills, 10 threshing machines, 166 binders, 123 harrows, and 399 ploughs, with a total capital value of nearly $300,000. In 1896-97, over $1,500 worth of implements had been imported. Over 70,000 acres were in crop.

The growing prosperity of the region's agriculture was closely paralleled by expansion of settlement. Before 1870, the settled area extended only fifteen kilometres above Trerawson and was confined to the north bank of the river. Despite the sporadic attempts at dispersal noted earlier, Trerawson remained the core of the colony's life in the very earliest period. Repeated crop failure caused many of the settlers to abandon the dwellings they had erected on their farms and return to within the protection of the palisade. This is not to say that life in Trerawson was any easier than on the steadings, for its food supply was just as meagre, and the site was extremely susceptible to flooding. It did act, however, in William's terms, as a "focus of physical and moral protection".

Once agriculture began to achieve success, dispersion of settlement again took place, but this time with some degree of permanence. When Commander Dennistoun visited Trerawson in April 1871, he found it "nearly

68. Ibid.
69. Blue Books, 1897, p. 300-301.
70. Williams, op. cit., p. 126.
"deserted", and containing only the chapel, the smithy and the residence of the Colonial Superintendent, Lewis Jones. The majority of the colonists had erected new houses, of fairly elaborate construction, of burnt brick, adobe and timber on their own land. Only four of the old turf huts were occupied; most of the new houses were of one or two rooms, but one was under construction which boasted six rooms. Four new farms had been cleared on the south bank of the river, opposite the townsite, and gravel roads had been laid out for ten miles up the valley. A rough and discontinuous track had also been made across the plateau to the anchorage at New Bay.

Trerawson was finally abandoned late in 1871 after a particularly disastrous flood, and although the chapel was rebuilt it remained a ghost settlement for almost a decade.

In 1875, all the original settlers were granted full title to their land, and almost all were prosperous enough by now to afford improvements and additions to their farmhouses. In that year, Surgeon Edwardes, of H.M.S. "Volage" visited about three quarters of the households and he found adobe construction and planked floors to be universal features; wattle and daub constructions still stood on some farms, but were used only as storehouses. His commander, Captain Fairfax, praised the "nice houses" he found. During this period, a greater range of domestic furnishings began to appear in the households. Prior to 1870, the colonists had owned very little of a personal nature, and apart from china and some books and clocks, their dwellings were furnished with locally made pieces, roughly constructed from

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73. Blue Books, 1876, p. 814.
74. Blue Books, 1876, p. 812.
willow wood and sealskin. By the middle 1870's, an increasing income had allowed some to invest in more luxurious appointments, and the front parlours of many of the houses were equipped with piano, dresser, rocking chair, and carpets.

Although the increasing sophistication of agricultural techniques did allow some of the original settlers to increase their farm sizes and, indeed, hold some farm lots in plurality (up to 300 acres in some cases), the main impetus to agricultural and settlement expansion came from renewed immigration. It had been the original intention of the Welsh Emigration Society to promote regular and sustained Welsh immigration into Chubut, but the disastrous early experiences of the colony had resulted in a postponement of any plans to introduce more settlers. As conditions within the colony became more favourable, these plans were revived. In June 1869, the Buenos Aires correspondent of the Times wrote:

> The affairs of the [Welsh] settlement have at length taken a prosperous turn...Mr. Jones, the manager of the colony and to whom the direction of its general concerns is intrusted [sic] has been for some time past in Buenos Ayres with a view to completing certain necessary arrangements...I understand that means will now be adopted for the active promotion of immigration to Patagonia, the occupation of which by a thrifty population would be of immense advantage to this country.

A local newspaper report quoted by the correspondent estimated than an influx of between 200 and 300 new settlers was imminent.

In the event, renewed immigration did not take place as speedily as was predicted. During 1870, only eleven new families had arrived, and in 1871, the population of the community numbered exactly the same as in 1865,

75. Williams, op. cit., p. 130.
76. Baur, op. cit., p. 479.
77. The Times (London), June 8th 1869.
the new immigrants being sufficient only to make up the losses the colony had suffered by defections. This situation of stasis did not persist for long. The brig "Myfanwy", operated by the Welsh Trading and Colonising Company, plied regularly between the Chubut and Liverpool, and after 1874, every return voyage brought new emigrants from Wales. Seventy-nine newcomers had arrived by the end of 1874, and the flow was soon to increase dramatically.

Between September 1875 and January 1876, no fewer than 412 newcomers arrived, almost without warning, to bring the colony's population to 690. This relatively massive augmentation brought tremendous problems in the first instance, since there was insufficient cleared land available for homesteading. Indeed, there was not even sufficient accommodation or food for most of the newcomers. Several were obliged to sleep on the floors of storehouses and barns, and the entire colony was forced to return to starvation rations for the first time in several years. A contemporary report in the Times, although exaggerated in parts, provides an idea of the havoc the increased immigration caused:

... [in the] last mail there comes a warning note to those who are about emigrating to the Welsh colony of Chupat [sic] in Patagonia. My friend (whose name I give you) writes; 'Colonists all but starving. Some 1000 to 1200 colonists gone down there and nothing for them to eat. Old colonists have sent up and sold last years' crop, retaining of course sufficient for the maintainence of their own small number. This season the Chupat river has not risen so the land not being irrigated or warped, there will be no crop.' To this I may add that when I was down there at the Chupat in 1873, the little colony, which then numbered about 140 souls, was just on the turning point. This in the two following years

80. The name "Chupat" for "Chubut" appears in all the English language documents relating to the colony between 1865 and 1885. In Welsh, the form was Camwy and in Spanish "Chubut". The Spanish form has been used throughout the text, although in quotations (as here) the appropriate form has been retained.
was increased to a surplus, which was exported to Buenos Ayres. The thriving condition of the colony has attracted a much increased immigration from Wales during the past 12 months--too large it is to be feared, to be absorbed by the limited wants of this little establishment. The Argentine Government will probably help the newcomers to tide over their first difficulties and matters may not be as bad as reported. Still a word of caution in your columns may protect our Welsh friends from crowding the limited resources of the Chupat colony. 81

These unheralded arrivals caused friction at first, but in the long term they consolidated and helped expand the colonial economy. They were allocated uncleared farm-lots to the south of the river and west of the existing settlement frontier. One group, led by the Reverends Williams and Roberts of Aberdare, established a new hamlet some 29 kilometres west of Trerawson. The site selected was on a bench cut into the valley side at an elevation of about 10 metres, which thus had relative immunity from flooding. These newcomers were enthusiastic, and the settlement they established was named Pentre Sydyn for the speed with which it was erected, although it afterwards acquired the more Hispanic sounding sobriquet of Gaiman. The houses, constructed of white sandstone quarried nearby, were elaborate in design and included such refinements as glass windows and plastered ceilings.

By 1875, therefore, the settlement frontier of Chubut had advanced thirty-four kilometres from the mouth of the river and even the most marginal farms, now supplied with irrigation water, were becoming productive. Although there were still echoes of resentment against the new settlers, Captain Fairfax's report of 1876, albeit rather curt, manages to convey the impression that they had been assimilated well into the colony's way of life.

81. The Times (London) January 28th, 1876.  
82. tr. "Sudden Village"  
Immigration was continual through the late 1870's and into the 1880's. In 1881, it again became necessary to extend the settlement frontier, and in that year, work began on clearing some of the unoccupied farm lots west of Gaiman, and on extending the irrigation canals. New settlers who occupied these farms established the village of Dolayon, on an elevated site on the north slope of the valley, eight kilometres west of Gaiman, and they completed the colonisation of the valley bottomlands up to the mouth of the Chubut gorge. By 1885, the entire lower valley was settled (see Figure V).

Thus, by 1885, all the original 500 farm lots granted to the colony by the Argentine in 1865 were occupied and in production. No further land was available in the lower valley for homesteading and indeed, the cultivated acreage had already reached its peak and had begun to decline. However, the immigrants still kept coming. For example, a party of 465 embarked on board the "Vesta" at Liverpool on June 18th 1886, apparently in the belief that they would receive grants of land in the colony.

Such new settlers were not altogether unwelcome, since they could be absorbed by the various small manufacturing and service trades that had recently begun to develop in the colony. Gaiman, for example, had quickly developed into quite a thriving service centre and offered a not inconsiderable employment in distribution, clerical and other tertiary trades. Trerawson, which had been re-occupied in the late 1870's, and had been named territorial capital when Chubut was declared an Argentine National Territory in 1884, provided considerable employment in government and administration. However, the largest and most significant alternative employer to agriculture in the region was the railway—the Ferrocarril de Chubut—begun in 1885 to link the

84. Williams, op. cit., p. 136.
settlements in the valley with the northern outport at the New Bay anchorage.

In some respects, the railway was the apotheosis of the area's prosperity. Lewis Jones had raised the idea in a report as early as 1862, but the early setbacks suffered by the colony's economy had caused the project to be shelved. The scheme was re-introduced during the early 1880s, on the grounds that it would facilitate the colony's agricultural exports to the Buenos Aires market. A survey was carried out during 1884 and 1885 under the auspices of the Argentine Government and British banking interests in Buenos Aires. On the recommendation of the surveyor's report, the site for the valley railhead was chosen at the mouth of a shallow depression on the north slope, about halfway between Gaiman and Trerawson. The construction of the roadbed absorbed most of the colony's unemployed, and the contractors imported a group of Italian labourers from the pampas to lay the track and build the terminus and wharf at New Bay. These Italians, incidentally, were the first non-Welsh group of any size to settle in the colony, and they presaged later incursions.

The railway was opened in June of 1889, and on the land around the valley railhead a new settlement was laid out. Within a year this had become a sizeable community with a population of 80. It was named Trelew in honour of the elder statesman of the colony, Lewis Jones. Similar growth was experienced at the coastal terminus, and the temporary encampment round the wharf became transformed into a functioning seaport, named Puerto Madryn. The suddeness of Puerto Madryn's expansion was discernible in its layout and architecture, which apparently, did not give it a very prepossessing aspect.

85. Ibid.
86. Ibid., p. 138.
It was described as "the usual collection of corrugated iron and wooden houses and stores, rather more irregularly laid out than is usually the case--indeed, most of the buildings appear to be dumped down anywhere".

The railway made a great contribution to the increase of the colony's trade, but it was not universally welcomed by the settlers. Baur suggests that this may have been partly due to the fact that it was financed, like all Argentine railways of the period, by English capital. Certainly, it was the first enterprise over which the colonists themselves did not have direct control. Moreover, its rates were high and it was by no means the model of efficiency, as witness the report of one visitor:

The passengers [on a train] never knew when they would reach their destination, as something would be sure to go wrong; either the engine would break down, or the axles would become heated, or something would happen. Indeed, it is rumoured that up till a few years ago, a train had only once made the whole journey without mishap...[a story is told that] the train has stopped and the guard comes along and orders the first class passengers to get out and walk, the second class to get out and shove, while the third class have to go and collect firewood for the engine. 89

Nevertheless, by 1897, the line was carrying ten times the freight that went by water and although still opposed by diehards among the colonists, like the Reverend Lloyd Jones, who had been on the "Mimosa", it was extended to Gaiman. By the turn of the century, it owned two engines, one carriage, several wagons, and ran one train a day in each direction.

In the same year as work on the construction of the railway was begun, an expedition was organised under the leadership of the Argentine governor

89. Rae-Smith, op. cit., p. 474.
PROVINCE OF CHUBUT
Welsh Expeditions 1870-85
after LEWIS JONES

FIGURE VI
of the Chubut territory, Luis Jorge Fontana, to explore the Andean foothill zone and the headwaters of the Rio Chubut. There had been several earlier explorations of the interior. In 1871, one party, with Indian guides, had penetrated as far as Telsen, and six years later an expedition had followed the valley of the Rio Chico to Lake Colhue Haupi, which they named Colwapi, by transliterating the Indian name into a Welsh form. A map prepared by Lewis Jones in 1885 (reproduced as Figure VI) showed the extent of the explorations up to that date, but as he pointed out in the accompanying note, none of these explorations had resulted in an expansion of settlement out of the lower valley. This was not completely true in fact, for one enterprising Welsh pioneer had established a cattle ranch at Rede Tilly during the previous decade. However, in general, the pre-1885 expeditions had not been followed up by the colonisation of the areas they had opened up.

However, Fontana's expedition had the express purpose of reconnoitering the Andean area for colonisation. It comprised 19 Welshmen, and 10 "foreigners", including 7 Argentinians, and was accompanied by Indian guides. The route the expedition followed was along the Chubut gorge, until it reached the bend at Rhyd yr Indiad, where it struck off westwards towards the Rio Tecka. Beyond the Tecka, the landscape the expedition encountered changed dramatically. At this point, the Upper Cretaceous sedimentaries that form the plateau suddenly give way to a complex range of hills, composed of folded Tertiary and earlier rocks, which were thrown up during the Andean phase of the Hercynian orogeny. These hills average about 2000 feet in height. The

90. L. ap. Iwan (Lewis Jones) Ym Fudiaeth y Cymru, n.p. 1885 (unpaged).
sides of the hills are scored with dry meltwater channels. Between the
hills there are a series of small, discontinuous basins, the floors of which
contain considerable depths of fluvioglacial and fluviolacustrine deposits.
Many of the basin floors, in fact, still contain small lakes. Thus, the
typical physical landscape unit of the area is a small, self-contained,
flat-floored upland hollow, isolated from the next by mountain walls, but
linked by glacial overflow channels. In the Andes, these features are
termed "bolsons".

The suddeness of the physical transition from the plateau to the foot-
hills is emphasised by a parallel change in climatic and vegetation conditions.
Pacific airmasses can penetrate into the foothill zone through gaps in the
Andes, and this results in a relatively high precipitation. The annual
average for the eastern part of the foothill zone is between 50 and 30
centimetres. Natural vegetation here is thus much denser and of greater
variety than on the plateau. Short steppe grass covers all but the highest
and steepest slopes. Most of the more westerly bolsons are forested; pine,
cedar and larch are the dominant species. At Esquel, for instance, which
receives 67 centimetres of precipitation per annum, the natural vegetation
is classified as humid mid-latitude forest, and among the stands occur the
largest and oldest examples of larix (larch) in the Americas.

The explorers named this region Bro Hyfryd, and spent four months in
conducting a preliminary survey. On their return, they enthusiastically

94. Station Figure, supplied by courtesy of the Argentine Government.
96. tr. "Happy Land"
ANDEAN CHUBUT

WELSH SETTLEMENTS

LEGEND

Territorial Bdy
International Bdy
Welsh Colony

FIGURE VII
broke the news to the colony that they had discovered an empty paradise ripe for settlement. Some of their excitement is suggested by the vivid and glowing description contained in Governor Fontana's subsequent report:

[We discovered] a most magnificent country, with great lakes, rich valleys, dense woods, and all the elements necessary for supporting a large population close to the Cordilleras, with passes quite accessible through to the Pacific...Who could have believed that such a paradise could have remained unknown for so many centuries? Who could have supposed that the barren wastes and stony steppes of the Patagonian seaboard were the outer margin of a land teeming with fertility and delightful water-courses near the Andine slopes...In these regions Nature has been as exuberant and lavish as in Misiones or the Grand Chaco.97

Fontana suggested that the Minister of the Interior make grants of land available in Bro Hyfryd to those of the existing Welsh settlers in the lower valley who might wish to move there, and particularly to those who had arrived since the closure of the settlement frontier. The Government accordingly brought the area within the ambit of the colonisation laws, and in September 1888, the first batch of 49 colonists left the lower valley to settle in the Andean foothills. They selected a large, semi-circular bolson, about 75 kilometres south-west of the confluence of the Rio Lepa and the Rio Chubut as the site of the new colony, which received the name

Cwm Hyfryd, (see Figure VII).

By the end of 1888, the flat floor of the bolson had been divided up into individual farm lots, and the local cedar and pine had been felled to provide constructional timber for the dwellings. The primary settlement pattern was irregular and dispersed, since the first settlers preferred to

97. The Times (London), Dec. 8th 1887.
98. Bowen, op. cit., p. 25.
99. tr. "Happy Valley"
live on their farmsteads rather than in a central settlement. Nevertheless, a small agglomerated settlement did develop, with the schoolhouse and chapel as focus, and it quickly became the nucleus of community life, if not residence. The district was formally incorporated as a departmento in 1891, under the name of Esquel.

During 1892, another tract of land, about 24 kilometres south-west of Esquel, was granted by the Government to a group of prospective Welsh settlers from the colony in the lower valley. This new location was rather more accessible than the isolated bolson of Esquel, and attracted settlers in greater numbers than did the earlier montane colony. Within a year, it had been incorporated as the Colonia 16 de Octubre--the name commemorating the date of the Chubut's formal acquisition of territorial status in 1884. As at Esquel, primary settlement was dispersed; irregular groups of buildings being erected on each individual farmstead. A mill was constructed in 1895, and this formed the nucleus of a hamlet named, appropriately enough, Trevelin.

The farm economy of the new settlements was essentially pastoral. The steppe grass vegetation of the area was well suited to the grazing of sheep and beef cattle. Gallois noted that in 1895 the colonists at 16 de Octubre owned over 5,000 head of cattle. Dairy animals were also kept, and the colony's cheese and butter, which had quickly acquired a reputation for quality, was a major item of trade. The population of the Andean colonies increased rapidly and in 1895, they contained about 200 families.

101. tr. "Mill hamlet"
103. Ibid.
1896 was also a year of prosperity and well-being in the lower valley colony. In the spring of that year, Commander Woods, of H.M.S. "Acorn" visited the colony and in the subsequent report he filed with the Admiralty, he commented that:

The colony appeared to be in a prosperous condition. The colonists looked contented and healthy, and the houses well built, and more comfortable than one would expect from outside appearances. 104

Telephone and telegraph lines had been opened between Puerto Madryn and Trelew, and the latter settlement had been equipped with a municipal water system. Woods recorded that local capital had financed all the public works in the colony. The colony's exports in 1895 had amounted to $207,285 and there had been a trade surplus of $76,748. The population of the colony in May 1895 had amounted to 3,748, of which 2,212 were apparently Welsh. Of the remainder, 165 were Italians, 103 Chileans, 190 Spanish-speaking Argentines and 735 Indians.

The air of contentment that Woods had depicted did not last. In 1899, two colonists went to Britain to request that the Chubut be admitted to the British Empire as a self-governing Dominion. The Colonial Office took no action, but it soon became clear that the Welsh in Chubut were restless and unhappy. Events apparently came to a head in 1902, and in May of that year, 230 of the colonists abandoned their farms and homes, and sailed from Puerto Madryn to Canada, eventually to settle, as a group, in Saskatchewan. In the same year, 200 more left the lower valley settlements to join the

105. Ibid., p. 301.
106. Ibid., p. 299.
Andean colony.

After 1902, the Chubut colony began steadily to lose its exclusively Welsh atmosphere. The flow of immigrants from Wales abated, and was finally staunched in 1911. Among the present population of 143,000 of Chubut Province, there are only 5,000 Welsh speakers, and less than 15,000 have Welsh ancestry, the majority of whom live in the Andean area. These proportions have remained about equal since 1920. With remarkable abruptness, the Welsh presence in Chubut changed from an almost absolute majority to a minority.

CHAPTER THREE

The Welsh in Patagonia as a Geographical Problem: Statement and Approach

A consideration of Welsh immigration and settlement in Patagonia raises several interesting and perplexing questions. With regard to the immigration, why did the Welsh decide to settle Patagonia, an exceptionally remote and inhospitable region, while other areas of Argentina, including the more easily accessible, well-watered and fertile Humid Pampa, were open to settlement, under the same terms in that period? Indeed, why did they decide to settle in Argentina as opposed to any other region?

Likewise certain aspects of their settlement behaviour and its consequences prompt some questions which do not appear to be readily answerable. Why, for example, did they attempt unirrigated agriculture even although the physical landscape of the area bore obvious evidence of aridity? And why did it take so long for the realisation of the necessity for irrigation to dawn? Why did they prefer to live in dispersed farmsteads, rather than in agglomerated, defended settlements as did other European colonists further north? Why were their relations with the Indians marked by cordiality and mutual respect while elsewhere in Argentina other Europeans were waging what amounted to a full-scale Indian war? And most puzzling of all, why, at what was apparently the height of the colony's prosperity, did a large proportion of the colonists abandon it to begin anew in the Andean foothills or in Canada?

These are a few of the questions which come to mind in connection with
the Welsh colony in Patagonia. In our introduction, we suggested that a fruitful approach to the geographical problems posed by the Welsh colony would be to consider the migration and settlement behaviour of the colonists. If this two-part approach is adopted, all the questions raised above may be resolved to three;

(1) Why did the Welsh emigrate to Argentina, specifically Patagonia?
(ii) In terms of farming, settlement, community organisation and external relations, why did they behave as they did?
(iii) Why did a proportion of the settlers abandon the colony once it had apparently achieved success and settle elsewhere?

It is clear from the preceding chapters that the Welsh colony was very distinctive in the context of Argentine immigration and settlement. As the tenor of the key questions framed above imply, it will be the purpose of the remainder of this study to explain this distinctiveness in terms of the attitudes and behaviour of the Welsh colonists.

In the introductory chapter, we made some preliminary observations on the inappropriateness of either the traditional "economic" or "political" interpretations of Argentine colonial settlement in this particular case; we also briefly suggested that the development and implementation of a "cultural" methodology was necessary to elucidate the problems posed by the Welsh colony, and similar situations. The review of the geographical and historical background of the colony, and the questions arising therefrom, has made it clear that we should seek to interpret the Welsh colony in terms of the behaviour and attitudes of the colonists, and moreover, that, since their behaviour and attitudes appear to be "irrational" from the objective economic or political points of view, a cultural approach is not only defensible but
essential. We shall thus now devote some space to a closer consideration of the nature of the cultural approach, and how it may be specifically adopted to the questions posed by the problem at hand.

The term "culture" possesses many different meanings and there appears to be some debate among geographers about the way in which the concept of culture should be applied in their studies. Nevertheless, the broad definition provided by Spencer and Thomas seems to enjoy a consensus among cultural geographers. "Culture," they write, "is the distillate of total human experience." Culture is thus seen as an accumulated set of human responses, evaluations and actions, with the implication (from the term "distillate") that such components of "experience" are subjectively structured, interpreted and used by the cultural group to whom they pertain. Wagner has developed this concept further.

[The components of a] culture...serve as a vocabulary of perception...[to] identify, interpret and relate...phenomena...[and thus] make possible the arrangement of experience in an abstract order other than that imposed by the spatio-temporal continuum. A culture is thus an instrument of abstraction and imagination.  

If we accept Wagner's concept of culture, how may we then make use of it to clarify our understanding of geographical problems? Obviously, if culture is a "distillate" and "an instrument of abstraction", cultural geography should be concerned not with what the landscape objectively is, but rather what it signifies to a particular group sharing a common culture.

In short, the cultural viewpoint in geography focuses on what a landscape means (or meant) to a particular group, the meanings they ascribe being arrived at by their use of culture, consciously or unconsciously, as a regulator and referent.

This statement naturally begs the question how exactly does culture determine the meanings invested in particular landscapes? I would submit that a cultural group primarily invests a landscape with meaning by reference to a system of symbols. In his development of the concept of culture cited earlier, Wagner states that "Humans learn to recognize and respond to the symbolic content of a particular set of stimuli in a consistent way that may be called culture." A symbol is thus seen as a practical form of the cultural abstraction of reality, recognised, used and articulated in common by members of a cultural group. Symbols are "working culture" if you will, and are of prevasive importance in determining the group interpretation of

113. An interesting methodological note concerning the role of meaning in geographical study was recently published by Edward Relph ("An Enquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography", Can. Geogr. 14, 1970, pp. 193-201). Relph, arguing for a more "humanistic" viewpoint in Geography, suggests that a formal application of the philosophical procedures of Phenomenology to Geographical enquiries may yield profitable returns. He describes Phenomenology as a "procedure for describing the everyday world of man's immediate experience, including his actions, memories, fantasies and perceptions" (p. 193); its basic premise is that knowledge cannot exist independently of man's consciousness. If one accepts such statements as valid, one must inevitably accept that in a phenomenologically aware Geography, human experiences, and hence the meanings invested in experienced objects must be the core of the study. Relph's paper is essentially a more rigorous restatement of the point of view expounded by Wagner, as cited above. While the present author does not entirely accept Relph's formulation, he feels it important that this statement, detailing a position so close to that taken in this thesis, should be noted.

114. Wagner, op. cit., p. 34.
a situation, and hence the pattern of group behaviour in that situation. Obviously, therefore, if one identifies and describes the nature of the symbols held by a particular cultural group, one has gone a long way towards a grasp of the group's motives for behaviour in a given situation.

Symbols, *per se*, are non-specific; that is, they refer very rarely to only one situation or object. They can, however, form the basis for a structured set of interpretations, anticipations, assessments and aspirations held in common by the cultural group, about a *specific* situation. This common structure, because it finds its origin in the group's set of symbols, may bear little relation to the objective reality of the situation with which it is associated, and is termed by anthropologists a "myth". Thus a myth is not in itself a symbol or group of symbols, but rather the product of the specific application of symbols to the interpretation of a specific situation.

These two related concepts, symbol and myth, will be used to throw light on the three key questions with which this chapter was introduced. These concepts have been only infrequently used explicitly in a study of this type. Indeed, only in Henry Nash Smith's pioneer work on the image of the American West have they received any detailed and consistent articulation. The present author's use and understanding of the terms are very close to that of Nash Smith, and he feels that he cannot provide a better or more concise statement of the orientation of this study than by quoting the paragraph with which Nash Smith prefaced his study:

The terms "myth" and "symbol" occur so often in the following pages that the reader deserves some warning about them. I use the words to designate larger or smaller units of the same kind of thing, namely an intellectual construction that fuses concept and emotion into an image. The myths and symbols with which I deal have the further characteristic of being collective representations rather than the work of a single mind.

I do not mean to raise the question whether such products of the imagination accurately reflect empirical fact. They exist on a different plane. But, as I have tried to show, they sometimes exert a decided influence on practical affairs. 116

Bearing the above discussion in mind, the concluding three chapters of this study will be arranged as follows:

(i) Respecting the question of why the Welsh migrated to Patagonia, the Welsh cultural symbols will be identified, documented and analysed, and their role in the formation of the myth of Patagonia will be investigated.

(ii) The role played by the myth and the symbols in determining the economic and social behaviour of the colonists will be traced.

(iii) The key role of the symbols in precipitating the emigration of a proportion of the settlers from the lowland colony to the Andes and Canada will be traced.

Framed in terms of a formal proposition, therefore, it will be shown that symbol and myth were instrumental in the formation of the distinctive characteristics of the Welsh immigration to and colonisation of the Chubut.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Welsh Symbols and the Making of the Myth

An understanding of the minds of the Welsh settlers who went to Chubut in 1865 requires an appreciation of processes that were set in motion half a century earlier. Although Wales had possessed a distinct and separate way of life for almost two millennia, and a culture which had reached a peak of artistic and literary achievement during the thirteenth century, a coherent and universal set of Welsh symbols did not crystallise until the early years of the nineteenth century. This is not to say that prior to this period Wales lacked a national identity, nor that its language, history and traditions were of no consequence to Welshmen. However, in pre-1800 Wales, these cultural components were diffuse and unfocussed, and had not yet achieved the meaning they eventually would possess. The Welsh language was the means of everyday commerce, rather than the fervently cherished symbol of nationhood it was to be become, while the Welsh literary tradition was regarded, even by Welsh scholars, as worthy of little more than antiquarian interest. There has been some attempt by students of Welsh history to explain why Welsh nationalism should have remained quiescent for so long, but of greater consequence to the present study is the complementary question of why Welsh national feeling should have been roused from its dormancy at the particular time it was.

Some of the factors that precipitated the transformation of the elements

of Welsh nationality into assertive and active cultural symbols appear to have been external. Although Wales had been formally incorporated into England by the Act of Union of 1536, the relative poverty and remoteness of the Principality had kept English intervention in Welsh affairs to a minimum. Morgan's observation that Wales constituted in English eyes little more than "four isolated dioceses in the province of Canterbury" is not a gross exaggeration. Furthermore, Wales was not only isolated from England, but the various regions of the Principality were each considerably isolated one from the other. Since until the end of the eighteenth century, any lengthy overland journey within the country was considered at best, arduous and dangerous.

By 1800, however, isolation and internal fragmentation had become less typical of Wales. Under the Turnpike Act of 1753, the interrupted and badly constructed road network had been expanded and improved, and with the construction of the Holyhead road between Shrewsbury and Anglesey the first of the great east-west links with England was forged.

Roads were not the only means whereby English influence could enter Wales. The decades prior to 1800 had seen a gradual displacement of the Welsh-speaking landed aristocracy by the nouveaux riches of the English trading and manufacturing classes, who aspired to gentility through the purchase of Welsh estates. This trend was paralleled by the gradual "anglicisation" of those Welsh landholders who remained, most of whom adopted Tory politics and Anglican religion, thus clashing with the largely Radical and Non-

120. Morgan, op. cit., p. 12.
conformist affiliations of their tenantry.

The external threat of English cultural and economic infiltration was, as Morgan suggests, probably not as powerful as it appeared to be at the time. Nonetheless, it is easy to see that from the standpoint of an educated Welshman events would seem to have been moving towards the complete assimilation of Wales into England.

In itself, the perceived threat of English domination was not enough to transform latent Welsh nationalist feelings into cultural symbols. The threat had to be dramatised and focussed, and the value and virtues of Welsh institutions required to be emphasised. The Welsh cause needed a good polemicist.

Polemical writings on the status of Welsh culture began to appear after 1814, when the first exclusively Welsh language newspaper, *Seren Gomer*, was published. Most came from the pens of radical young nationalist intellectuals, like Robert Ambrose Jones, or Michael Daniel Jones. Ironically, this group of nationalists was strongly influenced by the Romantic movement which dominated the intellectual life of contemporary England, but rather than deriving their inspiration from Gothic cathedrals or the works of Chaucer, their writings were nostalgic for the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilyn and the heroic deeds of Glendwyr and Llwellyn. The results of their appeals to Welsh nationality were important. Welsh language books and periodicals proliferated. In 1866, there were thirty-eight periodicals, with a combined circulation of over 120,000, published entirely in Welsh, and a year later, some 70,000

121. Ibid, p. 15.
Welsh language Bibles were sold. The ancient bardic festival of Eisteddfod, which had languished for centuries, became the focus of cultural life after 1858. In most areas, religious and secular groups alike established schools wherein Welsh was the sole language of instruction, and in 1863, the proposal that Wales should have its own independent Welsh-speaking University was introduced. Active political groups, of which the Liberation Society was the largest and most influential example, were formed to campaign for nationalist issues, such as the dis-establishment of the Church of England. When Thomas Gee founded the most famous of the Welsh nationalist newspapers, *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, in 1859, he was well aware that for his subscribers the Welsh language had become a symbol of nationhood.

The cultural symbols that condensed out of the nationalist ferment of the early nineteenth century, and which were to become firmly embedded in the Welsh consciousness, were three in number. As suggested above, the first was the Welsh language, the most obvious, the most precious, and, in the eyes of the nationalist writers the most precarious. The publication of the Report of the Committee on Education in Wales in 1847 which recommended that Welsh should cease to be the language of instruction in Welsh schools, was seized upon by the nationalists as clear evidence that the English "invaders" intended to destroy the Welsh heritage, and the resulting furore caused most Welshmen to take a more positive attitude towards the preservation of their language than hitherto. The growth of the Welsh language press, and the careful nurturing of the oral tradition, alluded to earlier, were aspects of

125. Ibid.
this movement to protect Welsh from the blandishments of English. When one comes across as non-radical a Welshman as the anti-Chartist, Sir Thomas Phillips of Newport writing a passionate refutation of the Blue Books recommendations, one can appreciate how important an ideal the preservation of Welsh had become.

The second symbol was non-conformist religion. Dissension against the practices of the erastian Church of England had had its roots in England and did not begin to establish itself in Wales until about 1800. However, by 1851, the religious census showed that something in the order of 80 percent of church attendances in the Principality were at dissenting chapels. The rapid growth of non-conformism was closely related to the Welsh language issue. The dissenting chapels conducted their services in Welsh, published Welsh newspapers and Bibles (Seren Gomer was originally a Baptist publication), and maintained Welsh language schools. Furthermore, religious dissent grew to have political overtones for the nationalists, since the Test Act excluded all but Anglicans from holding local government office. Moreover the in-comer English landlords were not only exclusively Tory, but also exclusively Anglican. Thus, despite the well known English origins of dissent, membership of a non-conformist congregation became for Welshmen not only a spiritual commitment but also a symbolic gesture of nationalist solidarity against the English encroachment. Anglicanism, perhaps more than any other single factor, was generally perceived to be the main carrier of English infection into Wales, and by 1843, the year of the "Rebecca Riots" which were partially directed

129. Ibid.
against the interference of Canterbury in Welsh ecclesiastical affairs, non-conformism was generally accepted as one of the major bulwarks against foreign contamination.

The remarkable rise of dissent as a Welsh cultural symbol was also aided by the individual attitudes of certain non-conformist ministers. Many pastors, of whom Rev. William Rees was an example, were active nationalist agitators. Indeed, by the middle of the century, nearly all of the leading figures in the nationalist movement were in Holy Orders. Despite various ideological and political differences among the three main sects (the Congregationalists, the Baptists, and the Wesleyans), non-conformism was, in most Welsh minds, a potent unified symbol of radical nationalism.

The third symbol was the social structure and way of life of rural Wales. This was a vague and difficult idea, but one that found expression in most nationalist writings. The industrialisation of the southern valleys, with its related displacement of rural population and the increase of anglophones, was anathema to the nationalist brotherhood, who regarded it as one of the more subversive and debilitating influences on Welsh culture. In retrospect this can be seen to have been an erroneous judgement, for as Morgan points out, it was in the southern mining villages that Welsh survived most successfully as a living language. Nevertheless, the Romantic outlook of the nationalist intellectuals led them to characterise traditional rural Wales as a Celtic Elysium, where equality and freedom were absolute, where the agrarian way of life was ennobling and pure, and where the small, unenclosed peasant

127. Morgan, op. cit., p. 15.
farmstead was a strong bastion against Anglo-Saxondom. The focus of this symbol was the concept of Y Llan. Literally meaning "church" or "parish", Y Llan referred to the agricultural and social organisation of the traditional rural Welsh community, and many of the features associated with it also gained symbolic meaning. Most important among these were the typical dispersed settlement pattern of the isolated farmsteads and the architecture of the traditional tyffarm, the farmhouse, long and low, turf roofed, and comprising the dwelling and cattle shed under one roof. Even the characteristic "in-field-outfield" system of rotation and the co-operative enterprise among neighbours became accepted with varying degrees of clarity and comprehensiveness, as things traditionally and distinctively Welsh.

To some of the nationalist thinkers, however, it appeared that the effects of anglicisation had gone so far as to be past reversal. If Welsh culture was to be preserved, the only solution for Welshmen who clung to their symbols of nationhood appeared to be to leave Wales and establish an isolated Welsh state in which the national culture could flourish free of external admixture. This idea appealed especially to the romantic imaginations of the nationalist corps d'elite and especially to Rev. Michael Daniel Jones, principal of the Independent (Congregational) College at Bala, Merionethshire, and perhaps the most outspoken of the radical nationalists.

In order to understand the nature and motives of the organisation that encouraged the migrations to Chubut, it is essential to know something of Jones. The Dictionary of Welsh Biography describes him as a "Born fighter... 
...the father of the nationalist renaissance in Wales...[who helped] trans-

form Welsh patriotism into a vigorous practical nationalism". To judge the situation fairly, Jones was probably more peripheral a figure than an enthusiastic biographer would care to admit. He was, however, a figure to fire the imagination. An "antique, full-bearded figure, in homespuns of ancient cut, and buckled shoes", he epitomised, in writings as well as in dress, the Romanticism of the more extreme nationalists. Jones had emigrated to Ohio in 1845 where he had ministered to a Welsh congregation in Cincinnati, but he had returned to Wales in 1850, disillusioned by the detrimental effects he perceived Anglo-Saxon culture had been having on his parishioners.

During his stay in Cincinnati, the idea of establishing a Welsh colony away from Wales became one of his major preoccupations. The influence of Edwin C. Roberts, who had been instrumental in founding a Welsh colonisation society in the U.S.A., may have been the initial stimulus which directed Jones' thoughts in this direction, and on his return to Wales, Jones began an energetic campaign for emigration. Under his tutelage, the movement gained strength, and the Welsh Emigration Society was established at Liverpool in 1861 with Jones as Chairman.

The immediate concern of the Society was to find a suitable area for colonisation, uninhabited and remote enough to allow the Welsh way of life to preserve its integrity. Oregon, Vancouver Island, Australia and New Zealand were all canvassed, but Jones, doubtless recalling the evidence of his years in Ohio, argued that the colonisation of those areas would lay the settlers

131. Ibid.
133. Baur, op. cit., p. 469.
open to the assimilative influences of the Anglo-Saxons already domiciled there. Nonetheless, the Committee of the Society approached the British Government for a grant of territory in either British Columbia or Austra-
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lasia, but the cool reception they received probably convinced them that Jones' assessment had been correct.

Eventually the committee's attention was drawn to the valley of the lower Chubut in north-east Patagonia as a suitable site for a potential settlement. Bearing in mind that the colony's main objective would be the protection and fostering of the Welsh language, religion and way of life, it seemed an ideal location. Although claimed by both Chile and the Argentine, Patagonia was far to the south of the effective settlement frontier of the Rio Negro and apart from the sporadic incursions of Argentine horse traders was virtually free of European influence and the native population was sparse and nomadic. Moreover, as Jenkins has pointed out the Welsh nationalist movement in its formative years had drawn inspiration from the independence movements of other nations, including those of Peru and Argentina, and to a Romantic like Jones, the Argentine, birthplace of Jose de San Martin, would appear to bear close ideological affinities to the Welsh nationalist cause. Finally, the Argentine Government itself had begun to advertise in the Euro-
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pean press for colonists to settle in Patagonia.

By 1862, the Committee had become convinced of the suitability of Patagonia, and had begun the campaign to encourage the emigration of Welshmen there. Unfortunately, most Welshmen possessed a neutral or even rather jaundiced view of South America, the latter deriving from the failure of the

136. eg. The Times (London), September 8th, 1856.
nationalist colony that an earlier group of patriots had attempted to establish in Brazil a decade earlier. Thus the major task of the Emigration Society's campaign was to create in Welsh minds a belief that Patagonia was an ideal location for a colony dedicated to the preservation and furtherance of Welsh culture. In other words, the campaign created the myth that Patagonia possessed an environment closely comparable to that of Wales and where, by implication, the Welsh symbols would be safe from external contamination.

The major means whereby this myth was communicated was through the Society's Welsh language colonisation handbook, *Llawlfyr y Wladychfa Gymreig*, which was put together by their secretary, Hugh Hughes. Bowen has accused Hughes of ignoring all the evidence which contradicted the thesis that Patagonia resembled Wales. It is my contention, however, that Hughes' admittedly biased presentation was a result of his interpretation of the evidence in terms of the Welsh symbols, and also partially reflected contemporary conventional wisdom on the area.

This becomes evident from an analysis of the handbook. The introductory sections discuss the reasons why Patagonia was the ideal territory in which to establish the colony. Great play is made of the fact that the area was outwith the effective political and economic ambit of Argentina, but it was pointed out that, once the colony had been firmly established, Chubut would be admitted to the Argentine Confederation as an independent Welsh speaking province. Obviously the preservation of Welsh language and religion, guaranteed by isolation and political autonomy, was uppermost in Hughes' mind.

as he composed these paragraphs. It was however the third symbol of the rural way of life that apparently influenced his detailed presentation of the Chubut environment.

It was a sine qua non that a truly Welsh settlement should have an agrarian base. Hughes thus approached his sources with a view to demonstrating that the Vale of Camwy (as the handbook referred to the region) possessed physical conditions which would be favourable to farming. Unfortunately, the opinions of the published authorities on the topic diverged considerably and Hughes, like the rest of his Committee, was not equipped with either the practical or theoretical knowledge which would have allowed him to judge satisfactorily between the varying reports. It is necessary therefore to assess the handbook's statements, not only with Hughes' nationalistic bias in mind, but also, taking into account his imperfect knowledge of agricultural practices.

After a brief description of the topography of the valley and the regime of the river (which does not diverge too greatly from actuality), Hughes proceeded to deal at length with the climate of the area. Following the classical Greek concept, enshrined in well-regarded contemporary texts such as Bell's System of Geography, that the earth was latitudinally divided into three zones; Torrid, Temperate, and Frigid, north and south of the Equator, Hughes concluded that:

Patagonia lies between the latitudes with the most pleasant and healthy climates in the world, namely between latitudes 38° and 55° south. It is consequently a temperate land climatically, without being too hot or too cold. There are 90° of latitude from the Equator to the Pole and every country that lies halfway in between, namely around lat. 45° is a land in which it is very pleasant to live. 141

141. Hughes, op. cit., p. 22. (Translation courtesy of Prof. E. G. Bowen.)
The comparison with Wales, which lies approximately between 50° and 53° North is implicit.

Hughes set great store on proving that Patagonia had an equable temperature regime. In the absence of data for the immediate area, he evolved a quasi-logical system based on the latitudinal zone concept, to derive values from the mean monthly temperatures of the area. Chubut lay, he argued, exactly half way between Buenos Aires and Port Famine, therefore if one divided the aggregate of the observed temperatures at those two locations by two, one would arrive at values for Chubut. This calculation gave the region a temperature range of from 50.97°f to 63.98°f which is in fact within one degree of the observed average temperature range at Puerto Madryn. Hughes made the significance of this point clear to his Welsh readers: "Now the temperature of the six summer months in England and Wales is 57°f and of the six winter months 38°f. Thus you can see that the temperatures of mid-Patagonia are very pleasant and adaptable to the Welshman's constitution."

Hughes was less successful in his predictions of precipitation. From the evidence of a map in Johnson's Physical Atlas he inferred that the number of rain days increases uniformly in mid-latitudes with distance away from the Equator. At latitude 44°S, that of the proposed settlement, he calculated that there would be an average of 142 rain days, which was very close to the average of 158 which he had derived for the latitude of 52°N of mid-Wales. This, to modern eyes, spurious computation, further reinforced his proof that Patagonia resembled Wales in environment.

The invalidity of Hughes' comparison is obvious from even a cursory exami-
ination of the precipitation regimes of the two areas. Most of Chubut receives an average annual precipitation of less than 25 centimetres, whereas Wales had a much higher precipitation and can receive up to 250 centimetres in the interior mountain areas. Mountain Ash, where almost a quarter of the first settlers originated, has an annual precipitation of 120 centimetres. Compared to Wales, therefore, Chubut is extremely arid, and its dryness is exacerbated by the seasonal distribution of the precipitation which results in an extreme water deficit at certain times of the year. At Trelew, for example, annual precipitation amounts to marginally less than 16.5 centimetres per annum of which just slightly less than 4 centimetres falls between the months of November and February; these constitute the crucial period for moisture availability for the maturation of small grains. The months where precipitation is relatively high are those which correspond to the periods of harvest and dormancy in small grain production when water supply is of no consequence. For comparison, a typical Welsh station (Aberystwyth) records over 149 centimetres of precipitation per annum more than 50 centimetres of which comes during the growing season.

Simple precipitation figures do not alone tell the complete story and one can only fully appreciate the inadequacy of Chubut's water budget for agricultural needs by comparing the values for actual and potential evapotranspiration. Using the Thornthwaite formula, the values of potential evapotranspiration were computed by the author for Trelew, Puerto Madryn and Esquel, and were graphed against the values of precipitation (Figure VIII).

145. The Thornthwaite formula was first published in 1948, and allows an empirical calculation of moisture balance for a station, if temperature and precipitation data are known. In the present study, the author assumed a ground storage of 14 centimetres, and for the Welsh stations
# TABLE ONE: Monthly Moisture Balances for Welsh and Argentine Stations

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Precipitation and moisture indices expressed in centimetres.
Welsh statistics corrected for 50°N latitude; Argentine for 40°S latitude.
Ground water storage of 14 centimetres assumed.
CAWKER RDR2 Fortran IV Programme used to derive the above statistics.
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*centimetres*
MOISTURE BALANCE GRAPHS; WALES & CHUBUT

CARDIGAN

ABERYSTWYTH

CARDIFF

ESQUEL

TRELEW

Pto. MADRYN

FIGURE VIII
Corresponding graphs for three representative Welsh stations (Aberystwyth, Cardiff, and Cardigan) were prepared for comparison. Table I sets out complete moisture data for all the stations involved.

There is little need to comment at length on the graphs or tables, since a casual glance confirms the great divergence in moisture regimes between Wales and Chubut. At Trelew, for example, only in June (i.e. the depth of winter) do the values for actual and potential evapotranspiration correspond; for the remainder of the year monthly water deficits range between 14.51 centimetres and 0.32 centimetres, the annual deficit amounting to 68.97 centimetres. 82.20 per cent of the annual deficit occurs during the September to February growing season. At Puerto Madryn, which is rather atypical of the region, since its annual precipitation exceeds 25 centimetres and is more evenly distributed than elsewhere, the monthly deficit may still be as high as 13.38 centimetres, and 81.49 per cent of the total deficit of 64.78 centimetres comes during the growing season. By comparison, none of the Welsh stations selected experience a water deficit at any period of the year and even in the height of summer, monthly water surplus (which in the Thornthwaite system is equated to run-off) can be as high as 5.04 centimetres (Aberystwyth, August). Over the year, water surplus exceeds 77 centimetres at Aberystwyth and even at Cardigan and Cardiff, which are relatively arid by Welsh standards, applied Thornthwaite's corrections for latitude $50^\circ N$. Since there are no published corrections for the southern hemisphere, correction figures for $50^\circ S$ were calculated a priori for the Chubut stations. The author is grateful to Ken Cawker for advice and for the loan of his computer programme, thus saving the author from many hours of incarceration with excessively long mathematical formulae. See C. W. Thornthwaite, "An approach toward a rational classification of climate" Geographical Review, 38, 1948, p. 55.
the annual run-off exceeds 32 and 45 centimetres respectively. As an aside, it is interesting to note that at Esquel, the sub-Andean colony which was not occupied by the Welsh settlers until the 1880's (and which modern writers have described as matching Welsh conditions) though the aridity is not so overwhelming as in the lower valley, there is nevertheless an annual water deficit of 53.03 centimetres reaching a monthly peak of 15.78 centimetres in the middle of the growing season (January).

It is apparent from the above discussion that irrigation is a necessary concommitant to small grain production in Chubut. Hughes' interpretation, however, was that the climatic conditions of the "Southern Wales" favoured wheat raising and that was the impression that was incorporated into the myth.

The sections devoted to the vegetation and wildlife of the area are as vague and misleading as the remainder of the handbook, but here Hughes appears to have been led astray not only by his own reasoning but also by contemporary geographical orthodoxy. The major passage dealing with biotic conditions in the valley paraphrases the report of Captain Robert Fitzroy, commander of H.M.S. "Beagle", who had visited the area some thirty years previously. It reads:

The rich and fertile soil [of the valley] is covered with vegetation and tall strong forests. The forests in the neighbourhood of the river were tall and thick and suitable for any type of construction. From a hillock nearby we saw the land around stretching green and splendid before us, especially on the southern side where a most successful settlement could be established. The river ran through this meadow land as far as the eye could see and there were herds of animals in the luscious pastures.147

147. Hughes, op. cit., p. 34.
Although Hughes had dressed up Fitzroy's rather mundane prose (and had perhaps deliberately edited out a reference to the Chubut's apparent tendency to burst its banks) in order to produce this beatific image, the general content of this section is by no means unrecognisable when compared to the original; furthermore, it is borne out by similar passages in other major contemporary texts. For example, the chapter on Patagonia in Smollett's Present State of All Nations, one of the classic compendia of geographical knowledge, contains a description strikingly similar to that of Hughes:

It [Patagonia] is said to be covered with wood and stored with an inexhaustible supply of large timber.....yet there is good pasture, and incredible numbers of wild horned cattle and horses.150

Similarly, the French surgeon, de Moussy, writing contemporaneously with Hughes, and with some personal experience of the Argentine, described the lower Chubut valley thus;

le Rio-Chupat [est une] belle rivière qui nait dans les Andes.....[elle débouche] dans L'Atlantique, à 40 milles au-dessous du Nouveau Golfe. ... La terre des environs paraît fertile, il y croit de tres-beaux soules, on y trouve même des magnifiques pâturages, frequentées encore des troupes de beuves et de chevaux sauvages, d'autruches et d'guanacos. Ce serait un excellent endroit pour placer une colonie.151

148. The original passage reads, "Along the banks [of the Rio Chubut] ... he was much struck by the richness of the alluvial land (caused, doubtless, by the river overflowing its low banks) and by the quantities of drift timber..... Among the drift wood, there were many large and sound trees left several hundred yards from the banks, therefore the periodical floods must be great..... The river and the country around had a beautiful appearance, as seen from the rising ground on the south side - an excellent position for a settlement....the stream was traced to the westward, through level meadow land, covered with rich herbage. Several herds of wild cattle were seen....a great abundance of animals." From R. Fitzroy, Voyages of H.M.S. Beagle, n.p. London, 1839, pp. 306-7.
151. tr. "The Chupat River is a beautiful river which rises in the Andes. It
Hughes did, however, commit a sin of omission in this section, since he makes no reference to the periodical flooding of the valley bottom by the river in spring, and to the sandiness of the soil in some areas, both of which are referred to in Fitzroy's report. However, it is important to note that he was not alone in his enthusiasm for the colonisation of the Chubut.

To a modern reader, the arguments contained in Hughes' book are facile and specious. Even to a practical farmer of the period, the brief and vague references made for instance to soil fertility would hardly have been either satisfactory or convincing. Nevertheless, Hughes' version was the one that inspired 153 of his fellow countrymen to emigrate to Patagonia, and which most profoundly influenced their initial behaviour there. It is suggested that Hughes provided his audience with what they wanted. He had pictured Chubut in terms of the Welsh system of symbols by playing on its isolation and its suitability for the traditional agrarian practices. To any nationalistic Welshman of the period, it would have appeared a thoroughly commanding and appealing image.

With the publication of the handbook, there was a growth in interest in the practical organisation of the colony. For example, E. C. Roberts returned from the United States to join the Executive of the Society, and to lend his expertise in the planning of the detailed aspects of the proposed migrations.

flows into the Atlantic, 40 miles below New Bay. The earth of the region seems fertile. Very fine willows grow there, and magnificent pasture is found, inhabited by herds of cattle and wild horses, ostriches and guanaco. It would be an excellent spot for a colony." M. de Moussy, Description de la Confederation Argentine, tome III, Didot, Paris, 1864, p. 520.
By the summer of 1862, the Committee was confident that it enjoyed sufficient support to begin the final preparations for the first wave of migrants. Consequently, they despatched two envoys, the radical nationalist journalist Lewis Jones, and Captain J.L.D. Jones-Parry, a prominent landowner of nationalist persuasion, to reconnoiter the suggested settlement site and to conclude negotiations for land grants with the Argentine government.

It is perhaps indicative of the faith that was placed in the veracity of the handbook's description that Jones and Jones-Parry spent less than one week in Patagonia. Most of their visit was passed in Buenos Aires drafting out a colonisation agreement with Senor Guillermo Rawson, the Minister of the Interior for the Argentine Confederation.

The influence of Sr. Rawson on the establishment and early history of the colony has never been satisfactorily explained and it will be of considerable interest to devote some space to a review of the negotiations and their outcome.

Sr. Rawson's attitude towards the representations of Jones and Jones-Parry was initially extremely favourable. There appear to have been two reasons for this. Firstly, earlier in 1862, Argentina had for the first time entered the claim of legal sovereignty over Patagonia, a claim which was hotly disputed by Chile, and which nearly precipitated a war between the two nations. Rawson realised, of course, that this claim only gave his government de jure rights, and that de facto suzerainty would require the colonisation of the area by settlers licenced by the Argentine. If the Welsh were established in Patagonia under Argentine protection, Rawson hoped that this would provide some

152. Estimates vary between three days and one day. See Blue Books, 1867, Document No. 17, p. 503.
justification for his Government's annexation of the territory. Secondly, it appears that Rawson believed that his active advocacy of the Welsh settlement might predispose the British government to consider more favourably the Argentine's claim to the Falkland Islands. This aspect of Rawson's interest is made clear by the account of a conversation between the Minister and Edward Thornton, British Charge d'Affaires at Buenos Aires, quoted in the consular despatch of July 25th 1865, addressed to Earl Russell, the Foreign Secretary.

His Excellency [Sr. Rawson] stated to me that the principal objection...to the establishment of an English [sic] colony in Patagonia had been the proximity of our settlement at the Falkland Islands.... He [later] insinuated that although England, having the power, was quite right in keeping the possession of these islands de jure, she had no claim to them. His Excellency asked me whether Her Majesty's Government would not be disposed to take into consideration the possibility of the islands being ceded to the Argentine Republic adding that if it were in his power to put forward the prospect, Congress, he was convinced, would put no obstacle in the way of the original contract with the Welsh committee being carried out. 153

Whatever the motivation of the Argentine Minister, the draft contract he signed with Jones and Jones-Parry certainly favoured the Welsh. The Congress of Buenos Aires (the provincial government of Buenos Aires at this period was responsible for the Confederation's external affairs and the administration of national territories) had promulgated regulations in 1856 referring to the colonisation of the coast of Patagonia. Under those regulations, the Confederation was prepared to offer lots of up to 100 square leagues to any colonisation group. Within these lots, each individual farm grant was

154 and 155. Copies of these documents are reproduced in the appendix for reference.
not to exceed 20 cuadras and common pasturage was not to exceed a total of 5,574 acres. In addition, a parcel of land not exceeding 1000 square yards could be made available as a townsite.

Some idea of the extent of Rawson's enthusiasm for the Welsh settlement may be gained from the extent to which the agreement he signed exceeded the legal limits of 1856. The Law of October 11th 1862, had raised the individual farm-lot limit to 25 cuadras for foreign emigrants, but had allowed the other provisions of 1856 to stand. Nevertheless, Rawson undertook to grant the Welsh colony in addition to 200 individual farms of legal size, 18 square miles of land for a townsite, plus a further 45 square miles of land adjoining the latter which was to be divided equally among the first settlers. Moreover, he agreed to supply the new colony, with a generosity that apparently had no precedent, and which was certainly not allowed for under any of the Argentine Confederation's statutes of colonisation, with "4 pieces of artillery, 50 fanegas of Indian corn, 50 fanegas of wheat, 50 tons of wood for building, 200 tame horses (including 50 milch cows) and 3000 sheep". In return the Welsh Emigration Society was to ensure that between 300 and 500 Welsh families would settle in Patagonia per year for the first ten years of the colony's existence.

When Rawson presented the contract to Congress for ratification on August 27th 1863, it was rejected by a vote of twenty-one to five. According to contemporary reports, the feeling of the Congress was that the settlement of Patagonia by a non-Hispanic, predominantly Protestant group would be detrimental to Argentinian interests. Nevertheless, Rawson persevered, and al-

156. Copy of document reproduced in the appendix for reference.
158. Ibid.
159. see Baur, op. cit., p. 471.
though he was forced to reduce the land-grants to within the legal limits, as he informed the committee of the Society by letter through the Argentine Consul-General at Liverpool on 22nd November 1864, he continued to support actively the interests of the Welsh colony against a largely hostile Congress and Cabinet. So strong was his faith in the settlement, that on at least two occasions he illegally appropriated funds from his Department's estimates to provide the settlers with provisions and building materials.

If at any stage the Emigration Society can be accused of deliberate mis-representation, it is with respect to the use they made of the original agreement with Rawson. They were well aware that it had not received Congressional ratification, but they not only continued to issue statements which suggested that it had, but also made grossly distorted claims which had no basis in the agreement or elsewhere with regard to the amount of Argentinian aid the first colonists might expect to receive. In a Welsh language handbill, which the Society had had circulated at the beginning of 1865, one finds the following passage:

.....it is judged that there will be at least 5 horses, 10 cows, two or three pecks of wheat, a plough peculiar to the country, and a number of fruit trees to every three [settlements].

Obviously the references to wheat and livestock derive from the original agreement with Rawson, but the references to the plough and fruit trees appear to have been products of the imagination of the handbill's author. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that in a later passage, the handbill harks back to

162. A copy of the handbill is reprinted in the appendix.
163. Ibid.
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<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. H. Jones</td>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Blue Books, 1871.
WALES
Places of origin of first settlers in Chubut

- one settler

0  30 Kms

FIGURE IX
Hughes' handbook; "There will be an abundance of animal food" is apparently based on the statement therein that the valley of the lower Chubut was roamed by large herds of wild cattle.

It was under the influence of the myth of the settlement potential of the lower Chubut, formed in general terms by Hughes, the details provided by the handbill and a series of lectures by Michael Daniel Jones, that 153 Welsh people decided to join the colony. It is important to remember, however, that they were not, in the words of R. G. Watson, the second secretary of the British Consulate at Buenos Aires in 1865, "simple peasants".

Table II is a listing of the names and former occupations of the heads of the families who were members of the colony in 1871. This list comprises all the original settlers, with the exception of 11 people who had abandoned the colony and Lewis Jones who was temporarily absent. (For the record Jones had been a journalist, and among the settlers who had given up there was numbered a physician and a pastor.) It is significant to note that only one of the settlers was described as a "farmer", and three as "farm labourers".

The majority had followed urban trades before joining the colony. This point is underlined by the map (Figure IX) on which the places of origin in Wales and vicinity of the original 153 is plotted. No fewer than 39 derived from the coal mining town of Mountain Ash. Twenty came from Liverpool, 17 from Aberdare, and 10 each from Rhosllanerchrugog, the coal-mining village near Flint, and the slate quarrying centre of Ffestiniog. Of the remainder, only 7 came from rural areas. Thus the great preponderance of the people who were to resuscitate Y Llan in the southern hemisphere were urbanites and

165. Blue Books, 1871, Appendix, Table II, p. 25.
had no first hand experience of agriculture. There can, however, be little doubt that these 153 who sailed from Liverpool on May 27th 1865 were fully convinced that they were to be the instruments of Welsh cultural emancipation.
CHAPTER FIVE

Myth, Symbol and the Making of the Welsh Landscape in Patagonia

The previous chapter has essayed an answer to the question of why the Welsh decided to settle in Patagonia. It has been shown how the Welsh cultural symbols were important factors in precipitating immigration from Wales and in influencing the selection of Patagonia as its goal. Furthermore, it has been shown how the myth of Patagonia as a well watered "Southern Wales" emerged within the context and under the influence of the symbols. This chapter will attempt to take the analysis a step further, and will be addressed to the second question of why did the Welsh colonists behave as they did in their colonisation of the lower Chubut valley.

Bearing the previous discussion in mind, this section may be divided into two. Firstly, the relationship between the myth and the nature of the earliest phase of colonisation will be explored; how the belief in the area's fertility and abundant precipitation influenced Welsh settlement behaviour in the first few years of the colony's establishment, and how long it took for the real conditions to obtrude upon the myth and displace it. Secondly, we shall investigate in what ways the Welsh symbols were instrumental in forging the distinctive forms in the cultural landscape of the Chubut during the second half of the nineteenth century, especially with regard to farming, settlement patterns, community organisation and external relations.

The myth of the Vale of Camwy as a fertile, rainy, "typically Welsh" valley, perpetrated in the first instance by the Hughes handbook, and perpetuated by handbills and lectures sponsored by the Welsh Emigration Society was
obviously, to an objective eye, at odds with the reality of the area's physical landscape, which contained abundant evidence of prolonged natural drought. Nevertheless, the myth, which had inspired the earliest migrations continued to be the main influence over the colonists' initial settlement behaviour. The colonists made their assessment of the potential of the Lower Chubut through the filter, as it were, of the myth and they were inclined, for instance, to ascribe the failure of the first season's rains to an atypical climatic accident. This attitude is implied in the report of Secretary R. G. Watson, made in July 1866, after his visit to the colony a month earlier. He pointedly made no reference to the climate of the area, and, doubtless echoing the opinion of the colonists he interviewed, he ascribed the failure of the first season's crops to the unfortunate timing of the colonists' arrival. George Bolster, the assistant surgeon of H.M.S. "Triton", the vessel which took Watson to New Bay, was more explicit. In his report, he described the climate of the area as "excellent, a little colder but drier and more bracing than Buenos Ayres". He obviously did not feel that the climate in any way constituted a hazard to the colony.

That the comments on the physical environment made by these two visitors was closely reflective of the colonists' own assessment is made clear by the exceptionally optimistic tone of one of the first letters to reach Wales from the colony. Apparently writing some time in September or October 1865, the Rev. Lewis Humphreys waxed so enthusiastic about the environment of the area

168. Ibid., p. 508.
170. Ibid.
that a Welsh local paper printed his letter as a defence of the wisdom of the Emigration Society in selecting Patagonia. The crucial passage in Humphrey's letter reads:

The valley is very much longer and broader than any I have ever seen before... We [have] crossed a considerable hill and entered a second valley more excellent than the first. We here saw plenty of free-stone fit for building purposes. Towards the extremity of the second valley 200 farms of 100 acres each have now been marked out... Those who were travelling about were obliged to sleep in the open air. The climate is, however, so pleasant, that no one felt any bad results from the exposure.171

The letter concluded with a reference to the progress of the first crops which he contended were growing "so nicely" as to be likely to be ripe by Christmas.

Humphrey's optimistic eulogy must be tempered by the knowledge that as one of the colony's clergy he would have had very little to do with ploughing or planting. Nevertheless, one can be reasonably certain that he was aware of the opinions and feelings of his parishioners, and it seems safe to conclude that his viewpoint was broadly representative of that of the colonists as a whole.

The feeling of confidence in the environment of the Chubut persisted all through the "hungry times" of 1865-66. Certainly, there was disillusionment as the first season's crops withered, but significantly blame was directed not at the conditions of climate or soil, but at the organisation of the colony. This is best illustrated by the "Baptist Revolt" led by the Rev. R. Mirion Williams. In March 1866, three months after the first season's harvest had failed, Williams addressed a memorial, allegedly signed by nineteen of the colonists, to the Governor of the Falkland Islands. In it, he

172. "So-called" perhaps. Williams was a Baptist and the majority of the colonists were Congregationalists. There were only about six other Baptists in the colony.
wrote:

[We have had] nothing there to keep us alive for many weeks only a few biscuits, barely two of them to each person a day, and at last a small cup of water mixed with tea only for several days to support our wants and weak constitutions, and we have at present to live on dry bread and water...we are in great distress...because in this colony there is no liberty...we are thus appealing to you...to move us to the Falkland Islands. 173

It later transpired that William's disposition was exaggerated and fraudulent and that all but two of the nineteen signatures he appended were forged or those of children. However, although Williams had apparently no scruples about mis-representing conditions in the colony, it is important to note that he at no point in the tirade makes reference to the hazardousness of the climate or the failure of the crop. That William's was greatly disillusioned with the colony there can be no doubt, but the grounds for his dispute probably stemmed from a sectarian disagreement with Lewis Jones (Jones was a Congregationalist). It may not be too far-fetched to claim that, by his remarkable lack of reference to the harshness of the environment, Williams still apparently accepted the myth of the Chubut's fertility.

Certainly, there seems to have been a definite feeling among the other settlers that the following season's harvest would be successful. For example, William Davies, the interim superintendent of the colony in the temporary absence of Lewis Jones, was quoted as saying June 1866 that he intended to remain in the colony to see if the new season's harvest would fare better than the last. At about the same time a declaration got up by John Ellis, and

signed or approved by 90 of the settlers, to refute the memorial of Williams leaves no doubt that the majority felt that their sowing would be amply rewarded: "We declare that we get sufficient food to keep us in good health and that we expect a good harvest in January 1867."

Also during June 1866, two Argentine land speculators, named Aguirre and Murga, had attempted to attract the settlers away from the colony by offering them free land, equipment and stock at a new colony that was being established near Carmen de Patagones. Despite this attractive offer, made at the height of the winter shortage, only four families abandoned the colony. The poorness of the season of 1865-66 was ascribed to their own inexperience and misfortune. They had planted too late, and there had been a freak drought. As the declaration quoted above explicitly states, at least 90 of the colonists felt no doubt that January 1867 would bring a harvest adequate enough to supply at least domestic needs. It is obvious that the majority of the colonists still held an unshaken faith in the myth.

Thus Secretary Watson found the colonists content, hopeful and sanguine, and everyone he visited expressed the belief that the land had great farming potential, that the initial setbacks had now been overcome, and that future prosperity was assured. Appended to Watson's report are descriptions of the condition of specific colonists, and these accounts, although brief, are suffused with optimism. Witness:

John Jones was a collier; has a wife and child; has four acres under cultivation; possesses two cows and a calf; is quite contented, but suffered much at first.

180. Ibid., p. 509.
Among these accounts, perhaps that relating to Edwin Roberts is the most remarkable in the present context. Roberts not only expressed contentment and optimism in Chubut, but he unfavourably compared the settlement potential of Wisconsin with that of Patagonia:

Edwin Roberts arrived at the colony with only a carpet-bag; is now married; is very comfortable; and has eight acres under crop; was for some years in Wisconsin, and says the settlers there had much greater hardships to put up with than any the Welshmen have undergone in the Chupat, as the climate is not so good, [my emphasis] and they had to clear the land before occupying it. 181

Faith in the myth was again strained by the disastrous crop failure in January 1867, and fifty of the colonists abandoned their land and left for Buenos Aires the following month. More significantly however, a greater proportion—about ninety in all—still strongly clung to the myth and, despite internal dissension, they resolved to remain at the colony and sow another season's crops. As was noted in chapter two, the season of 1867-68 did prove to be the turning point for agriculture, but only after Aaron Jenkin's rather fortuitous discovery of irrigation by inundation.

There is evidence to suggest that many of the original settlers did not completely reject the myth until into the 1870's. For instance, as late as 1871, one finds Dr. Turnbull of H.M.S. "Cracker", apparently writing on the basis of evidence supplied to him by the colonists, describing the climate as "pre-eminently temperate". Furthermore, he noted that the colony appeared to be suffering from "a prolonged and...unprecedented drought, which has existed for the past two [sic] years" (my emphasis). Indeed, it is only

181. Ibid.
184. Ibid.
as late as 1876, in the report of Dr. Lewis Edwardes, Surgeon of H.M.S. "Volage", that one can find in any of the documentary evidence the first reference to aridity as being the essential characteristic of the area's climate. "The principal characteristic of the climate is an extraordinary dryness [he wrote], the skin and lips become parched and cracked, and woodwork shrinks and warps."

In summary, then, it can be seen that the myth was among the strongest influences in developing, indeed in keeping together, the colony during the first three seasons. The settlers were so convinced of the truth of the roseate image put forward by the Emigration Society, that they denied the evidence of their own eyes, and rationalised the crop failures away in terms of the myth. There can be little doubt that it was this persistent belief in the myth and their consequent rejection of the objective reality of the area's aridity, that prevented the colony's total abandonment during the first three years of its existence. Which brings one naturally to the question, why should they have so desperately cling to a belief that was so obviously untrue? The reason, I would submit, lies in the factors that brought them to Patagonia in the first place. They had come because they were nationalists; because they wished to preserve the culture of Wales, represented by the symbols of language, religion and way of life. If this had not been the case, they would hardly have chosen to join a colony whose raison d'être had been explicitly nationalistic, and which was located in such an isolated area. They fervently believed the myth that the Chubut was the "Promised Land", where Welsh culture could flourish free from the threat of interference, because it

was, quite literally, necessary to do so. In short, their commitment to the colony, and indeed their very presence in Patagonia, only had meaning if the colony could be agriculturally self-sufficient. To reject the myth, was to reject the rationale for the colony's existence.

After the advent of irrigation, the myth lost this critical role. The colony could now be agriculturally productive and self-sufficient, and the colonists became prepared to accept the environment of the Chubut as it really was and not as it had been ideally pictured. However, the influence of the symbols per se remained nonetheless pervasive, and they found expression in many aspects of the life of the colony up until the turn of the century. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with the relationship between the symbols and the formation of the cultural landscape, and related elements of the way of life of the colony.

As the previous chapter has shown "traditional Wales" was a rural agrarian society, and this idea, in the idealised form of Y Llan had become one of the prime symbols of Welsh nationalism. The idea of farming self-sufficiency, implied by Y Llan, of each family providing for itself, was thus very important in determining the farming behaviour of the colonists, and this realisation helps to explain certain of the more distinctive features and patterns of the colony's farming practices.

The re-creation of Y Llan commenced almost as soon as the settlers landed. As early as September 1865, most of the colonists had abandoned the townsite of Trerawson, and were living in family groups on the individual farms they had been allotted. The failure of the first season's crops obliged most of them to return within the palisade, but they again abandoned the townsite in March 1866 and returned to their steadings. A similar movement accompanied
the following season's crop failure. However, once irrigation had been successfully implemented and the settlers had the wherewithal to maintain themselves on their farms, Trerawson virtually ceased to exist as a settlement. In fact, it supported no permanent population, apart from the Argentine Governor, until well into the 1880's. During his visit in 1871, Commander Dennistoun was so struck by this rapid and complete dispersal of settlement that he introduced his report by commenting on it; "I arrived at [the village] of Chupat, [i.e. Trerawson] which is now nearly deserted as most of the colonists reside on their farms, some of which are nearly ten miles up the river." Certainly, the settlement patterns and mode of life the Welsh had established was in sharp contrast to those encountered in other immigrant colonies further north on the pampa. At Esperanza, for instance, a Swiss colony in Santa Fe province, the settlers lived in the town and travelled out to their farm plots daily.

The symbolic apperception of Y Llan also influenced the farm management practices the Welsh settlers adopted. Most of the farms, until the 1880's, were mixed enterprises, wheat, sheep, cattle and vegetables being most commonly produced. Even into the early years of this century, long after the commercialisation of the colony's agriculture, single-crop or livestock specialisations were uncommon. The idea of the farm being first of all self-sufficient, of the family feeding itself from its own produce, apparently over-rode the economic arguments for "rationalisation by specialisation".

During the first fifteen years of the colony's history, the traditional

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farmstead of Y Llan,—or at least the symbolic, idealised abstraction of it, for it must be recalled that few, if any, of the settlers had previous, first hand knowledge of the rural way of life,—was clearly reproduced in the Chubut landscape in form and in technique. Again Dennistoun's report pointed this up. He noted that all the farms in the colony were unenclosed, and that "dairy farming is combined with grain growing" on every occupied farm. He erroneously attributed the lack of fencing to a scarcity of timber. Certainly timber was scarce, but the natural scrub vegetation of the neighbourhood provided adequate fencing materials, and indeed hedgerows of low scrub were planted to provide those enclosures which were consistent with the idea of Y Llan, for instance sheep folds, and the yards round dwelling houses.

What Dennistoun was reporting, but what he failed to recognise, was the traditional infield-outfield system of tillage of Celtic antiquity. As far as may be inferred from the fragmentary evidence, this technique, as used in the Chubut, was as follows: a few acres near the steading were cleared, then the stock was folded on the cleared area for a period, after which the stock were herded off to another part of the farm and the clearing was sown broadcast. The infield was left then until harvest with the minimum of attention. While this approximated traditional Celtic practice, it was entirely unsuited to the Chubut. The aridity of the area meant that not only had the crops insufficient moisture, but that the manure from the stock, which would have been washed down into the soil in a humid climate, merely dried out on the surface.

189. See Williams, op. cit., p. 124.
As the colonists gained more farming expertise, they began to modify their techniques to the Chubut environment. Seed drills and harrows came more and more into use, and cropland was more strictly segregated from pasture. Nevertheless several of the farms remained unenclosed until fairly late, while, even in the heart of the grain region around Trelew, at the height of its productivity in the 1890's, most farmers still maintained considerable numbers of stock to supply domestic needs. This can be illustrated by reference to the Census tables appended to Commander Woods report of 1897. Woods enumerated almost 30,000 cattle and 9,000 poultry but neither dairy, poultry produce nor beef figured in the colony's exports. Moreover, the Census noted that the colony possessed about 100 kilometres of fencing in place, which is an average of only about 200 metres per steading. Thus, it seems safe to conclude that a considerable proportion of the farms even at this late date were wholly or partially unenclosed. The symbol of Y Llan, while certainly eroded and modified by the growing commercialisation of the farm economy, still apparently exerted some influence over the form and structure of farming.

The distribution and nature of settlement was, as has been hinted above, closely tied up with farming. It has been seen that the self-contained nature of farms had led to a dispersal of settlement. In 1871, Dr. Turnbull summed

192. The figure is probably somewhat generous, since it is based on the original grant of 500 farms, and by 1896, the number of holdings, though not the amount of land under cultivation, had increased due to subdivision (see below). Even so, an average figure of 200 metres per farm does not allow enough fencing for each farm to enclose its boundaries let alone account for any internal division. Thus it seems to be an obvious assumption that many farms were unenclosed.
up the visual impression of the colony's settlement pattern in one sentence: "Their settlement is scattered over some ten miles of the valley." The early "villages", Trerawson, Gaiman and Dolavon were in fact not villages in the conventional sense at all. They all had very few permanent residents; indeed only those services which could not be provided on the farmsteads were centralised there, the blacksmithing, milling, trading and religious functions. Most colonists only visited the "villages" on certain days of the week, principally Sundays, to attend chapel, and on market days. Those colonists who provided services in the "villages" were in most cases farmers themselves and lived on their own steadings. At one stage, the only occupied dwellings within the palisade at Trerawson were those of Lewis Jones (and he lived there only part of the time), and the Argentine Governor. At Gaiman and Dolavon, only the clergymen had permanent residences.

In other words, the three "villages" did not act as specialised service centres and concentrations of population, as did those established by foreign colonists elsewhere in the Argentine, but were in fact re-incarnations, in a functional sense, of the traditional agglomerated hamlet, the "treflan" of rural, mediaeval Wales. The "treflan", which means literally "church-township", was an agglomeration of service buildings, constructed co-operatively by the members of the "tref" (literally, township, but since it refers to a group of people, "clan" expresses the idea more clearly) for their communal use. In most cases, those who practised the specialised trades of

smithing or milling, for example, lived on their isolated farmsteads, and only travelled to the hamlet on certain fixed days, when their neighbours would know that they would be available to perform their skills. The role of the hamlets changed after the establishment of Trelew, but for the first twenty years of the colony, the relationship between farmstead and hamlet was that of the "trefydd" of traditional Wales.

In architecture, the buildings erected on each farmstead resembled the romantic ideal of the traditional peasant dwelling-house group. Williams devotes considerable space to a discussion of house-form and spatial organisation on the steadings, but fails to make the obvious connections with the traditional Welsh forms. The earliest houses were of turf, or shingle and daub, with small unglazed windows, low doors and unbeamed thatched roofs, with openings for smoke to escape. They were divided into two sections by a central partition separating the living room from the cattle shed. Williams quotes the dimensions of one such typical house as 34 feet long, by 17 feet broad, and 7 feet in height to the eaves. The resemblance borne by a dwelling of this type to the traditional Welsh cottage, Y tyddyn was very close indeed. Later, when the colonists became more prosperous, the houses became more sophisticated with planked floors, glazed windows, plastered interior walls, and typically consisted of three rooms, "parlour, back kitchen, and bedroom". In external design, and also in internal arrangement, however, they retained a distinct Welsh flavour, as Williams

196. "trefydd" is the plural form of "tref".
197. Williams, op. cit., p. 218.
198. Ibid.
199. Ibid, Footnote.
201. Williams, op. cit., p. 130.
description suggests. "The large parlour...[contained]...the piano, the
dresser full of the best crockery, the rocking chair and other heavy oak
pieces."

The layout of the buildings on the farmsteads was also an expression of
Welsh culture. There tended to be a main group of buildings, comprising the
original, or rebuilt, farmhouse, the storehouses, and sometimes an implement
shed, on the edge of the tilled land. On other parts of the steading, how-
ever, the sons of the farmer, or his brothers, erected a small, one-roomed
wooden hut, called the "batch" which was sometimes used to store implements,
but more often was used as sleeping accommodation for the members of the farm
family who were working in the outlying areas of the farm. Sometimes, too,
farmers constructed batch-like huts on the common grazing lands, on the
valley slope sides, or the campo de pastoreo, where they could sleep and seek
shelter while herding sheep and cattle. In most cases, once the farms had
begun to be sub-divided, the batch became the permanent dwelling place of
the sons of the farmer, was extended, and developed its own subsidiary
cluster of implement sheds and storehouses.

This type of settlement structure, and process of subdivision and
"hiving off", was totally foreign to Argentina, but again was typical of
Wales. The first stage of erecting a dwelling house on the fringe of the
arable land was paralleled in Wales by the first stage of the development
of the landscape of Y Llan. In this first stage, a cottage, called the
Hendre, was constructed on the fringe of the infield, the arable tir priod.

202. Ibid.
204. See Taylor, op. cit., Chapter 13 for a discussion of the "typical"
Argentine farm layout.
This was the gwely, or heart of the family unit. The next stage of settlement was determined by the nature of the traditional inheritance system of rural Wales (which the colonists in Patagonia also practised), that of cyfran (partible inheritance). Under this system, the sons of the farmer, on the latter's death, inherited the farm jointly, and either worked it communally, or more commonly, split it up into smaller individual lots. Normally, the eldest son occupied the Hendre, his brothers erecting their own cottages on the land they had received. Thus the batch was in many cases the latter-day re-incarnation of this second phase of dispersal and was the product of Welsh custom. In the Wales contemporary to the colony, the custom of cyfran had almost completely died out, and was certainly not practised in the southern mining villages, or the north-western slate quarrying settlements, from where the majority of the colonists had been drawn. Nevertheless, cyfran was an important component of the symbol of Y Llan, and it is significant that the practice was resuscitated in Chubut, and was thus instrumental in the recreation of the mediaeval settlement pattern of Wales in nineteenth century Patagonia. Significant, too, is the observation that partible inheritance was very rare elsewhere in Argentina.

As sketched out earlier, the role played by the hamlets of Trerawson, Gaiman and Dolavon was analogous to that the treflanau of mediaeval Wales. They served as meeting places, rather than as economic or residential centres. The communal functions performed in these hamlets had, nevertheless, great symbolic meaning, and were clearly derivative of the practices of "traditional" Wales. Their pre-eminent function was religious. If one recalls the symbolic importance of religion in the formation of the nationalist movement, and how the Welsh churches were almost the only establishment institutions in
Wales to wholeheartedly support the nationalist cause in the period leading up to the emigration to Chubut, it is easy to conceive the central role that religion played in the life of the Chubut colony. Thus, it is hardly surprising to find that the chapel was the most important single building in each of the hamlets, and tended to become the morphological node of the settlement. The immensely important role the chapel played in the life of the colony is illustrated by the observation that when the buildings at Tre-rawson were washed out by floods, as they frequently were, the chapel was invariably the first building reconstructed. As the population grew, the number of chapels increased, but even when the colony achieved the height of its prosperity, they continued to be built in the severe, unostentatious "meeting hall" style, reflecting the asceticism and simplicity of dissenting religion.

The massive and all-pervading role of religion was one of the most distinctive features of the community, and its vitality often elicited comments from travellers who visited the colony. Witness, for example, the account of the American journalist John Randolph Spears, writing of his visit in the early 1880's:

Sectarians floated in on the waters of the irrigation ditch, so to speak, and there was a burst of zeal in building up denominations that brought a growth in church outfits quite equal to that in area [of crops] planted--rather larger in fact. Among the 2000 people in 1883 there were two independent congregations with ordained ministers, who held regular services in chapels, of which 'the walls were baked brick, the roofs were wooden, with a layer of mud on top, and the wooden benches had good backs on them', as one of

206. As in 1869. See Blue Books, 1871, Document No. 9, enclosure No. 3, p. 20.
them described the places of worship. They had also a stone-walled chapel in a third place and held regular services in schoolhouses in other places. The Methodists had a brick church with an ordained Minister, at Rawson, and held services in the upper valley. The Baptists had a fine chapel at Fondrey [Dolavon], one of the little villages that sprang up, and an ordained minister for it. In fact, there were, in all, seven ordained ministers in the colony.207

Because of the focal role the chapel played in the community's life, the chapel building assumed other functions than worship alone. In 1871, Dennistoun noted that the chapel at Trerawson served as the general meeting place of the colonists, and at other times chapel buildings served as schoolrooms, counting houses, administrative offices, courts of justice, and temporary accommodation.

The symbols of religion and language were, as has been demonstrated, closely inter-related, and the chapel was the main means of expression, for both. Chapel services were conducted exclusively in Welsh, as was education, which, until the establishment of Argentine state schools within the colony in the late 1880's, was the responsibility of the chapels. The chapel was invariably too the locus of the Eisteddfodau held annually in July to commemorate the foundation of the colony, and, on the evidence of Dr. Edwards of H.M.S. "Volage", the colonists' skills in singing and the recitation of epic poetry in the traditionally approved fashion were considerable.

Apart from the chapel, the other buildings, like smithies or mills, erected in the hamlets were small and scattered, functional in appearance, and most often communally operated. This structural and morphological

209. see Baur, op. cit., p. 479.
re-incarnation of the traditional *treflan* does not appear to have been consciously planned, but rather seems to be an unconscious working out of the Welsh symbols in landscape form. Nevertheless, without reference to the symbols it is difficult to explain why this particular layout, so absolutely foreign within the Argentine context, should have appeared.

With the establishment and development of Trelew as the colony's rail-head after 1885, the character of agglomerated settlement in the valley changed. Trelew was the first true "urban" settlement to appear in the valley, and its structure and morphology reflected this. Although the chapel figured as an important focus in the town, the morphological node was the railway yard and station. As the break of bulk point for goods being transported between the outport at Puerto Madryn and the valley, Trelew quickly acquired stores and warehouses. The growing prosperity of the colonial economy was reflected in the development of retail shops and services. Since the colony's settlement frontier had been closed in 1885, it was Trelew which absorbed the majority of the post-closure immigrants, and they mostly found jobs in distribution or with the railway. Thus, Trelew acquired quite a sizeable residential population in a remarkably short space of time. In 1890, one year after the opening of the railway, its population numbered 80 and had risen to almost 2000 by the turn of the century. The dwellings in Trelew were in the first instance constructed by the railway company, and were of local stone. They were laid out on the narrow strip of company land between the tracks and the irrigation canal, and were more sophisticated in design than the rural *tyddnod*.

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212. *tyddnod* is the plural form of *tyddyn* (cottage).
Trerawson, and to some extent Gaiman, lost the distinctive form and layout of the treflan during this period too, although Dolavon retained the classic scattered morphology for many years. However, the development of Trelew and Gaiman was markedly different from that of Trerawson. The reason for the growth of Gaiman was the establishment there in 1885 of a co-operative marketing society, to deal in the colony's agricultural produce, and to operate retail stores to serve the colonists. The resultant construction of warehouses and stores produced a more compact morphology, and as at Trelew, the expansion of the service sector led to an increase in resident population. Administrative functions were added when Gaiman was named as a departamento in the late 1880's. It is important to note, however, that both Gaiman and Trelew remained Welsh in outlook, language, customs and population, displaying "a strong Welsh non-conformist make-up". Indeed, Trelew has remained to this day distinctly "Welsh" in physical appearance.

This was not so at Trerawson. It was the political capital of the territory, and, as such, was the major bridgehead for the introduction of Latin culture into the colony. The territorial civil service, stationed in Trerawson, was exclusively Argentinian, and it was in and around Trerawson that the Italian labourers, who had come to build the railway, settled. On the other hand, the Welsh colonists did not reside in Trerawson, or after the ascendancy of Trelew, make use of it as a service centre. Thus at Trerawson, the colony's first settlement, Welsh influences were quickly displaced by Latin ones, and the Welsh all but abandoned the town. By 1900,

213. Williams, op. cit., p. 140.
214. Personal communication, E. G. Bowen.
TRERAWSON; Ground Plan

Ideal Typical Ground Plan of Latin American City

after WILLIAMS

after NELSON
TRELEW: Growth Plan

Model of Colliery Village Development
South Wales

After P.N. JONES (simplified)
"its population was mainly of Italian and Spanish ethnic background, and 216 Roman Catholic in religious affiliation". This transformation in the character of the settlement was emphasised by the dropping of the Welsh prefix "tre--" from its name, at about this time, and its acquisition of present sobriquet, "Rawson".

This growing dichotomy between Trelew and Rawson found expression in their respective urban morphologies. Figures X and XI show present-day plans of the two towns, and make a dramatic point about the differential effects of two cultures on the same landscape. The town plan of Rawson has the classic Latin American "grid-square" appearance. The foci of the plan are the two central plazas, linked by a broad diagonal running from the north-west corner of the settlement. Another diagonal, running at right angles to the first, cuts across the main northern plaza. With its rigid rectangularity, its air of "plannedness" and regularity, the street-plan of Rawson is most un-Welsh in outline. It is, however, very close to the "ideal-typical" model of the Latin American town, suggested by Nelson, as even a cursory comparison with Nelson's model shows (Figure X).

On the other hand, the morphology of Trelew is anything but Latin in inspiration. It is long and linear, aligned along the railway and the main irrigation canal. It is more compact but has much less of the air of regimentation than has Rawson. Indeed, it resembles if anything the long and narrow coalfield settlements of South Wales, as a comparison with the model

216. Williams, op. cit., p. 140.
for the latter developed by Phillip N. Jones shows (Figure XI). There is insufficient evidence in these purely morphological observations to conclude that Trelew was a symbolic transplantation of a Welsh coalfield village in Patagonia, but nevertheless, the similarities between the plans in Figure XI are remarkable.

In any case, there is abundant evidence to support the proposition that the symbols were important determinants of both the nature and function of farm and agglomerated settlement, at least during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

As has been implied, especially in the discussion of the inheritance custom of cyfran, the symbols were also significant in shaping the social organisation of the colony, which in itself had implications for the nature of settlement. In fact, the distinctive social organisation of the Chubut colony had rather wider implications for the landscape than may be apparent at first consideration, and it is to an investigation of this specific topic that we now turn.

There are certain distinctive features in the social organisation of the Welsh colony which may be interpreted in terms of the symbols. One of the most important of these was the spirit of co-operation evident in most aspects of community life. This ethos, like that of farm self-sufficiency, stemmed from the symbol of Y Llan, and, as will be discussed below, often had landscape implications. A second characteristic of community life was that of egalitarianism. Here the symbol of religion may be discerned to have been influential; dissenting religion, as opposed to the hierarchic concepts basic

218. Phillip N. Jones, Colliery Settlement in the South Wales Coalfield 1850 to 1926, Occasional Papers in Geography, No. 4, University of Hull, 1969.
to Anglicanism or Catholicism, had as the cornerstone of its practices the belief in personal communion with God. "All men," are thus seen to be "equal before God." This essential tenet was embodied in the internal organisation of non-conformist churches, which did not have bishops, and whose ruling bodies, or synods, were elected by direct suffrage of all the communicants. It was also reflected in the marked tendency towards lay preaching among the individual, non-clerical members of the church. To the Welsh in Chubut, with the deep permeation of religion in their daily lives, it would seem natural that this concept of absolute equality should be extended into secular pursuits. This was perhaps further reinforced by the Romantic vision of life on Y Llan having been one of idyllic freedom.

Ad hoc co-operation, in the form of sharing threshing facilities at harvest time, for example, is by no means an uncommon feature of organisation among agricultural pioneers, and is often simply a result of economic necessity and scarcity of services or materials. Such informal co-operative associations did exist among the Welsh settlers, and they require little further comment. What was significant and distinctive, on the other hand, was the extent to which the ethos of co-operation was formalised and institutionalised among the Welsh. It is my contention that institution co-operation represented something more than simple economic necessity in the Chubut colony; that it was one salient part of the re-creation of traditional Wales, and that it thus derived much of its meaning and purpose from the symbols held by

219. see Martin, op. cit., pp. 92-99, for a detailed and penetrating discussion of the role and effects of egalitarianism in the Welsh Dissident Churches.

220. For an Argentine example of this aspect of colonisation, see R. C. Eidt, Pioneer Settlement in North-East Argentina, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1971, p. 135 ff.
the settlers.

Co-operative work groups were organised by the colony's elected council during the first season, and they were engaged in clearing, ploughing and road construction. Indeed, for many years, most farmers did not possess their own ploughs, and all the ploughing in the community was carried out communally. These work groups were an important feature of the colony's agricultural practice for many years, but as farming became more commercialised, they became more specialised in nature. One of the factors tending towards specialisation was the advent of irrigation. The engineering and maintainence of a complex system of irrigation canals was outside the competence of small, peripatetic work-groups, and a Mutual Irrigation Society was formed to supervise the maintainence of the canals, and to regulate the use of water.

The organisation of the Society was on co-operative principles. Every colonist was entitled, on the payment of a nominal sum, to become a shareholder with full voting rights. A board of management, comprising a president and several managers, was elected at the annual meeting of the shareholders from among themselves. This board allocated each member of the Society a stretch of canal, which he was charged to keep in good order. (The length allocated varied according to local soil conditions and other considerations.) Large engineering projects were undertaken by larger work parties organised by the Board of Management. Small fees were charged for the use of irrigation water, calculated per unit irrigated acre supplied, and the capital thus acquired was either meticulously re-distributed to the

221. Williams, op. cit., p. 124.
members as dividends, or invested in mechanical aids to facilitate the up-keep of the system. In 1883, for instance, the Society purchased an American horse shovel to expedite canal excavation.

The impact on the landscape of the Irrigation Society's activities was considerable. Had it not existed, there is little doubt that the irrigation network would have developed much more slowly and would have lacked integration, thus probably having resulted in a much retarded expansion of settlement up the valley. As it was, by 1893, the entire length of the valley was covered by a network of canals. Three major canals drew water from the river and distributed it to farmsteads from the coast to the mouth of the Chubut gorge (Figure IV). In 1883, the total length of the network was 432 kilometres, and the largest canal had a cross-section of 25 x 3 x 12 metres. In 1897, the capital value of the system was quoted as exceeding $280,000.

A further manifestation of the co-operative ethos was the Co-operative Marketing Society, established at Gaiman in May 1885, and reputedly the first of its kind in the southern hemisphere. It was originally organised as a farmer's co-operative, to co-ordinate the shipping and sale of local produce to outside markets. Like the Irrigation Society, control was vested in an elected board of management, and profits were returned to the shareholders as dividend. The Society was very successful, and it soon diversified its interests by establishing retail stores, where its members could purchase food, clothing, household furniture and so on, dividends being returned as a

223. Ibid.
224. Spears, op. cit., pp. 176-77. The meaning of the measurements is obscure.
declared percentage of annual purchases. The headquarters of the Society was at Gaiman, and local branches were established at Dolavon and Trelew, but significantly, a branch was never set up in Trerawson.

Smaller co-operative enterprises were established in other fields. A Milling Society was organised, and it constructed a water mill near Trelew for the use of its members. By 1895, no fewer than five communal threshing establishments were in operation. In fact, as Williams notes, "the community interest was directly involved in the production, processing, transportation and marketing of the valley's agricultural commodities".

Co-operation was also a keynote of the less practical aspects of the colony's life. For instance, when a Welsh language newspaper, Y Drafod, was established, it was published not by a private organisation but by a Newspaper Society organised by Lewis Jones. Indeed, despite the fervent attachment of the colonists to their language, it was only through the strenuous efforts (and some pecuniary loss) of the members of the society Y Drafod survived. By 1897, it had gone through three series, and had been obliged to print articles in Spanish and English to cater for a growing non-Celtic readership.

The ethos of egalitarianism was expressed in several aspects of the legal and local government systems the Welsh had instituted. The government of the colony, up to and even beyond the incorporation of Chubut as an Argentine

226. Ibid.
228. Williams, op. cit., p. 136.
229. "The Discusser".
National Territory was, in contrast to elsewhere in Argentina, based on universal adult suffrage. The vote was extended to every settler over eighteen years of age, who had been resident for six months in the colony. The legislative body consisted of a council of twelve, presided over by the colonial Superintendent, who was elected directly by all the qualified colonists. Taxes were not imposed, and fines levied by "The Twelve" provided the only public revenue. As an aside, it is interesting to note, that although criminal cases were extremely rare in the colony, when they did occur they were tried by majority-verdict juries, which is another example of an ancient Celtic custom revived in the Chubut.

This distinctively "Welsh" system of government persisted almost without change, until the 1890's, and Argentinian practices and laws were only paid lip-service. All but the most serious cases were tried before "The Twelve", and they alone had the power to refer to the Argentine courts. As late as 1896, the only major modification that had taken place was that the minutes of meetings of the legislative council were issued in both Welsh and Spanish, the latter translation being mainly for the benefit of the Argentinian Governor.

Perhaps the remarkable aspect of the Chubut colony -- certainly in the Argentinian context -- was the nature of the contacts established between the Welsh and the Indians. As has been described in Chapter Two, the survival of the colony in its early years was due in no small measure to the aid provided by the Indians, and for many years the colony continued to be dependent on Indian produce in its external trade. Within the context of the present

234. see Blue Books, 1876, p. 818.
study, an investigation of Welsh-Indian relations is of particular relevance, since it again shows how the Welsh cultural symbols influenced the colonists to adopt a particular mode of behaviour.

The Indians who inhabited the Patagonian Plateau were related to the Araucanians of Chile in speech and culture, but their livelihood depended on hunting guanaco and ostrich, rather than on a gathering economy like the forest Araucanians. They shared with the Araucanians a strong sense of territoriality and pride in their way of life, which had brought them on more than one occasion into violent conflict with the Hispanic inhabitants of the North. The Spanish speaking Argentine had an ingrained apperception of the Indians as sub-human savages, and the very low value they placed on Indian life was reflected in a series of brutal and, apparently, unprovoked massacres of Indians by gauchos. To this harsh treatment, the Indians replied in kind. One of the major reasons the horsetraders who had built the earthwork at Trerawson had withdrawn was that they had been under almost continual Indian attack. At the exact moment the Welsh landed in Patagonia, there was an uneasy peace between the Indians and the Argentinians, but less than six years before, an Indian attack at Bahia Blanca, some six hundred kilometres north of the Chubut, had levelled the settlement, leaving all the inhabitants dead. Indeed, it was not until 1880 that the Argentines solved the Indian question, and only then in a military campaign under General Roca of such ruthlessness and violence that it can probably be counted as the most savage and devastating Indian War carried out in the entire Western Hemisphere, during the nineteenth century.

The Welsh, by contrast, provide an almost unique example of amicable and mutually productive contact between Europeans and Indians, in Argentina, or indeed, elsewhere. Relations between the two groups were good from the beginning. On December 8th 1865, Lewis Jones received a letter from a cacique of the Medio Pampas nation which was couched in the most friendly terms, offering to trade guanaco skins and wool for tea, tobacco, flour, sugar, bread and liquor. It is known that prior to the establishment of the colony, the envoys sent to Argentina by the Welsh Emigration Society had insisted that the Indians receive full and fair compensation for the land from which they would be displaced, and that this had made a favourable impression among the Indians. Certainly, the cacique felt that the Welsh would deal more fairly with his people than the Spanish Argentines had done. He wrote:

Be not afraid of us, my friend, I and my people are contented to see you colonise on the Chupat, for we shall have nearer place to go in order to trade, without the necessity of going to Patagonia [Carmen de Patagones], where they steal our horses and there the pulperos (tavern-keepers) rob and cheat us. 238

In order to cement the friendship, the cacique promised that;

I shall go and put up my tents ("toldos") in front of your village, in order that I may become acquainted with you and you with me and with my people; you see that I have a good heart and a good will. 239

This visit took place shortly thereafter and the Indians remained encamped at Trerawson for a month; there was, however, little trade, since the Welsh had, of course, hardly any food or material goods to spare, and their religious scruples with regard to alcohol prevented them from trading in liquor. Nevertheless, in terms of cultural contact, the visit was exception-ally successful. The Indians instructed the Welsh in hunting and plainsman-

239. Ibid.
ship, and in the use of hunting dogs and the bolas. The Indian women taught their Welsh counterparts the art of dressing and weaving guanaco wool. In return, the settlement's blacksmith made new iron balls for the Indians' bolas and shod their horses. Most of the Welsh, despite their urban origins, were quick to grasp the fundamentals of hunting, and there can be little doubt that it was this acquired skill that largely saved the colony from starvation when the crop failed, and its stocks of provisions became exhausted.

There were three nations of Indians who occupied the region, and although the Medio Campo were the main group with whom the Welsh maintained contact, trading visits from the Tehueleche of the south, and the Mauzanas of the north were also frequent. Indeed, most of the plains Indians were aware of the fairness and friendliness of the Welsh and sometimes groups of up to 300 would encamp at the colony. Once the colony's economy had begun to achieve some sustained progress, the Indian trade began to prove more lucrative. As late as 1876, Indian products—ostrich feathers, Indian rugs and wool, worth £3,850—comprised just about half of the colony's exports by value, and until the turn of the century, all the riding gear used by the colonists was of Indian manufacture.

The mutual trust between the Indians and the Welsh was manifested in many ways. In 1868, the Argentine had presented the colony with 36 muzzle-loading rifles, obviously intended for defence against the Indians, but

there is no record of these ever having been fired in anger, and indeed, some of them were apparently traded with the Indians. During General Roca's campaign of 1879-80, the Welsh refused to take up arms against the Indians, and at the conclusions of the campaign, the Tehueleche preferred to surrender at Trerawson, rather than at Carmen de Patagones, because they felt more assured of humane treatment at the former.

To attempt to explain why the Welsh behaved toward the Indians as they did, one has to make reference to the cultural symbol of religion, specifically to the non-conformist ethos of egalitarianism, as discussed earlier. I would contend that this aspect of the religious symbol was decisive in forming the Welsh attitude toward the Indians. With their deep-seated belief in the absolute equality of mankind, the colonists were obviously ready to accept the Indians as equals, and perhaps partners, rather than as savages to be exploited. Furthermore, the concomitant of their religion, the strict moral code, bordering on puritanism, made its presence felt in their dealings with the Indians. Unlike other Argentines of European extraction, not only were the Welsh unprepared to exploit the Indians economically, but neither did they, being strict teetotallers, provide them with quantities of alcohol, nor involve the Indian women in prostitution. As Commander Dennistoun drily remarked in 1871: "the testimony is unanimous as to the young men of the community having no intercourse with Indian women visiting the settlement."

Thus, in complete contrast to elsewhere on the Argentine settlement frontier, the familiar "frontier vices" of drunkenness, venereal disease and

244. Blue Books, 1871, Document No. 9, enclosure No. 3, p. 20.
gratuitous violence, were almost totally absent in Chubut and this absence doubtless contributed to the harmoniousness of the relations between the colonists and the Indians.

If relations between the Indians and the Welsh were harmonious, those between the Welsh and the Argentine Government may only be described as ambivalent. It will be remembered that at its inception, the promoters of the colony selected Patagonia mainly because of its isolation and lack of political organisation. The "Welsh Republic" had to be exclusively Welsh, and it was thus necessary to keep external interference in its affairs at a minimum. The Argentine Government viewed the colony somewhat differently. The colony represented their legal territorial claim to Patagonia south of the Rio Negro, and they were anxious to demonstrate that the Chubut was fully integrated into the national territory. This conflict between the nationalist exclusivism of the Welsh and the assimilation policy of the national Government, became a recurrent theme during the nineteenth century, and again points out the distinctiveness of the Chubut colony as opposed to other immigrant settlements in Argentina.

It has been seen how the ideals of self-sufficiency, equality and independence as the essential components of the Welsh symbols had pervaded the way of life of the colony. The political aim of the colony was to be left alone, to be self-governing, and to maintain the language, religion and culture of Wales free from external admixture. Yet, they had to come to terms with the social and political reality that the colony was under Argentine sovereignty and protection, and answerable to Argentine laws.

The Argentine government was determined to maintain a political presence in the colony from the very earliest. On the 15th of September, 1865 a party of soldiers arrived at Trerawson from Carmen de Patagones to raise the flag of the Argentine Confederation, and to declare the colony a part of the 246 National Territory. In the first instance, although most of the colonists were disappointed that the Argentine had decided to assert its sovereignty, the colony had reason to be grateful for the intervention of the Central Government. As has been shown, during the "hungry times", the Argentine Ministry of the Interior supplied the colony with food and clothing, and made several ex gratia payments for the purchase of seeds and implements. For this aid, the colonists appear to have been appreciative; nevertheless, they were still unwilling to admit absolute Argentine jurisdiction over the internal affairs of the colony.

The first Argentine governor, M. E. de Arenales, appears to have recognised this feeling, and he seems to have been content to serve as a figurehead, leaving the de facto government in the hands of "The Twelve". His successors, however, were not all so astute in their interpretation of the Welsh attitude, and some of their attempts to impose Argentinian practices on the colonists caused deep resentment. In 1876, for instance, one finds that Sr. A. Oneto, who had been appointed Governor the previous year, had already made himself unpopular among the colonists by his attempts to overturn decisions of the Council of Twelve.

By and large, however, it was only after Chubut became a National Terri-

tory in 1884 that real tension developed between the Welsh and the Argentines. The first Territorial Governor, Dr. Jorge Fontana, wisely delegated all his authority to "The Twelve", and he not only became popular and respected in the colony (he led the Andean expedition of 1885) but also helped to avert a direct confrontation between the colonists and Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, he could not stem the influx of non-Celtic institutions and functionaries that Territorial status necessitated. After 1884, education ceased to be the responsibility of the chapels, and Welsh children were obliged to attend National Schools, where Spanish was the language of instruction. Trerawson became the home of a sizeable Spanish-speaking bureaucracy. To a colony which was regulated largely by moral and religious principles, the Government saw fit to introduce a police force and a customs service. Taxes, an anathema to those who believed in freedom and self-sufficiency, were levied on land and produce. Worst of all, the Government encouraged the immigration of Italians and Germans into the colony.

The Welsh felt resentful and threatened. All their cherished symbols appeared to be under siege. Spanish language, Roman Catholicism and assimilation into the Argentine way of life posed what must have appeared to be extremely subversive threats. The Welsh were inclined to blame the national Government for this and claimed that they were pursuing an anti-Welsh policy.

249. The case has already been cited of the colonists who felt this threat so strongly that they petitioned the British Government for annexation. However, perhaps the high point of the confrontation came over the issue of

249. see Ferns, op. cit., p. 484.
Under the laws of the Confederation, each Argentine departmento was obliged to muster a local militia. This law had not been enforced in Chubut, but in the early 1890's, the Governor ordered the formation of militia, and, in accordance with the law, demanded that they drilled on Sundays. To the Welsh, this was a direct denial of the strict Sunday observance that their religion demanded, and they refused to turn out. The Governor, unwiseiy, had several prominent Welsh protesters arrested. The confrontation threatened to become violent, and it was only after President Roca himself intervened and allowed the militia to drill on weekdays that tempers cooled.

However, this incident among many others demonstrated to the Welsh that they were no longer their own masters, and that the dream of self-government and freedom from external interference that they had come to Patagonia to realise had been frustrated.

There is no evidence to support the thesis that the Argentine Government had a deliberate policy of extinguishing Welsh nationalism in Chubut, but certainly many prominent Argentines were disturbed by the militant exclusivism of the colonists, and felt they should be required to fall in with the laws and strictures applicable to all Argentinian citizens. Consider, for example, the following passage from the pen of D. F. Sarmiento, who had been President of the Confederation during the early years of the colony. Complaining about the drain the colony had been on the National Treasury, he wrote:

[los welches] no aprenden el espanol, no quisieran tener autoridades argentinas, ni admitir otras razas su seno.

The purpose of the above discussion of Argentine-Welsh relations and their deterioration during the 1880's and 1890's has been to introduce the final topic with which this study will deal. The question of why a considerable proportion of the colonists abandoned the colony and emigrated elsewhere. The above discussion has shown that during the 1890's the Welsh were under "cultural pressure". They could accept association with the Argentine, but not assimilation. The final chapter will be devoted to showing how this fear of absorption was one of the major factors in causing what was in effect the dissolution of the Chubut colony as a haven of exclusively Welsh culture.

251. D. F. Sarmiento, Obras, Volume 36, M. Moreno, Buenos Aires, 1900, p. 143. tr. "The Welsh did not learn Spanish, nor achieve positions of Argentine authority, nor admit other races in their place... They are a singular people, with racial pre-occupations...keeping themselves, by and large, separate from other people of European origin."
CHAPTER SIX

The Exodus:
The Role of the Symbols in the Welsh Migrations From the Colony

On 21st October 1896, Commander A. C. Woods, master of H.M.S. "Acorn" of the South American Squadron of the Royal Navy, visited the colony in the lower valley to report on its current state and recent progress for the Admiralty and the Foreign Office. He anchored at Puerto Madryn and took the train to Trelew, where he stayed with Mr. Williams, the Manager of the Railway Company. During his two-week visit, he went to Gaiman, toured some of the neighbouring farms, and paid an official visit to the residence of the Argentine Governor at Trerawson. He submitted a full and detailed report a month later, in which he made the following comments regarding the status of Welsh culture in the valley:

With regard to...the probability of the Welsh characteristics becoming obliterated, I am inclined to agree with...[the view that this will not occur]. The language and religion of the Colonists are two important factors tending to keep them together. Welsh has ceased to be the official and commercial language, but it is still that used in the household, and by the children generally, and they know very little of any other until they are six years of age, when they go to school and learn Spanish through its medium... During my tours through the valley, I noticed that all salutations and conversations were made in the Welsh language. They are essentially 'Protestant' in their religious views, and up to the present, the Roman Catholic priest has made little progress with them... With the rising generation it may be different, owing to their knowledge of Spanish.“253 (My emphasis.)

On the basis of a two-week stay, Wood's assessment of the healthy condi-

tion of the Welsh symbols was probably justified. He was, however, perspicacious enough to note, although he did not elaborate on certain underlying factors which were challenging the exclusive primacy of Welsh culture.

Many of the colonists were by this time of the second and third generation, and, as Woods perceptively noted, perhaps echoing an opinion expressed to him in the colony, the Argentinian way of life had already begun to make inroads among these young people. To those of the first generation, it was almost a case of *deja vu*. Spanish language and Roman Catholicism now appeared to pose as much a threat to the preservation of Welsh culture as English and Anglicanism had done in 1865. Moreover, the infiltration of non-Celtic ideology had been compounded by a substantial influx of non-Celtic settlers. Since Woods spent most of his stay in Trelew, he was probably unaware of the settlement of Italian and Spanish Argentines in and around Trerawnson. The arrival of Latin settlers had begun in a small way in 1885 with the Italian railway labourers, but the flow had greatly increased with rumours of the discovery of gold in the Andes, and the abandonment of some of the more marginal Pampas colonies. The Census return of 1895 for the *departamentos* of Gaiman and Trelew with Rawson, recorded that out of a

254. A superbly researched and written fictionalised account of the colony at the close of the nineteenth century is presented by Richard Llewellyn, *Up, into the Singing Mountain*, Michael Joseph, London, 1964. One of Llewellyn's main themes is the tension between the Welsh and those of Latin culture.... Llewellyn's sequel, *Down where the Moon is Small*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970, deals with the Welsh opening up of the Andean colonies, and is equally a very fine piece of researched historical fiction.

255. see *Blue Books*, 1897, p. 297.

### TABLE III

Population: Chubut National Territory

May 1895

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i.</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children of British Subjects</td>
<td>1070</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentines by Blood</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. British Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Italians</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Chileans</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Spaniards</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. Various</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3748</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Blue Books, 1897, enclosure No. 2
total population of 3,748,801 were of Latin origin (see Table III). The Welsh were still in an undisputed majority, but they could hardly have been unconscious of the fact that over a fifth of the colony's population now comprised people whose values, beliefs, language and culture, were at odds with their own. Moreover, it would have been clear to those of the first generation of settlers, at any rate, that the presence of this sizeable group of outsiders was inconsistent with the principles of isolation and exclusivism under which the colony had been set up. Apparently, the first generation still identified strongly with the ideals of 1865; when Michael Daniel Jones visited the colony in 1882, for example, he was universally feted and hailed as the saviour of Welsh nationhood.

Yet, the "melting-pot" was becoming a disconcerting reality in Chubut. To those who had not forgotten the reasons for the colony's establishment, the fact that Welsh was no longer the lingua franca of the colony, that Non-conformism was obliged to co-exist with Catholicism and that the traditional forms of agricultural husbandry were being supplanted by new forms of farming enterprise such as vineyards and olive-groves, must have seemed the precursors of an inevitable and complete assimilation. To this many of the colonists reacted in a characteristic fashion. They decided to reform in a new area, less open to such assimilative influences.

However, this process was not as straightforward or as clearly discernible as the previous paragraph may have implied. The fear of assimilation was only one, albeit the major one, in a whole system of complex and inter-

twined factors. The remainder of this chapter will attempt to reconstruct the factors which caused the migrations out of the Lower Valley, why they occurred, how the new areas were selected, and especially the role the fear of assimilation played in prompting the migrations. In so doing, it is hoped to show once again the pervading influence of the Welsh symbols in the "atmosphere" of the colony at this period, and how they influenced the behaviour of the colonists.

The original reason for Welsh emigration out of the lower valley had been pressure on land for new settlement, rather than cultural pressure. The settled area of the colony had advanced right up to the mouth of the Chubut gorge by 1882, and all the farm plots granted in the original contract of 1865 were occupied by 1885. Thus, as has been outlined in Chapter Two, as population increased, both by immigration and natural accretion, the supply of virgin land suitable for homesteading was abruptly cut off. Indeed, to be more precise, the quantity of usable farm land in the colony actually decreased after 1885. Two factors were involved in this; one directly a result of the symbol-influenced behaviour of the Welsh, the other more closely related to the nature of the physical environment.

The first factor, the impact of the custom of cyfran has previously been discussed in some detail and it will be recalled that this system of partible inheritance had resulted in the fragmentation of farms. The original land grants of 25 cuadras had been just large enough to support a family, but when reduced in size after division among heirs, the resulting plots tended to fall below the boundary of marginality.

This problem was compounded by the second factor, soil salinisation.

Although the practice of irrigation by inundation had been almost universally replaced by drainage irrigation using the canals, most farmers were very prodigal in their use of water. Most tended to saturate the soil and in those areas of broken topography, water tended to gather in small pools on the surface which most farmers apparently were content to let lie. The occasional floods added a natural aggravation to this process. Since the deposits that form the floor of the valley are marine in origin, and in several places, immediately below the gorge, salt naturally outcrops, soil saturation was predictable especially bearing in mind the high potential evapotranspiration that obtains most of the year and which tends to draw up the water table. As early as 1878, salts had begun to accumulate in the upper soils on several farms. At first this merely impaired soil fertility, but it eventually led to almost complete sterility and farms had to be abandoned. The first complete steading to be abandoned as a result of salinisation was Maes Hughes, near Gaiman, in 1890, but prior to this date many farmers had been obliged to remove a portion of their land from cultivation because of salt crust formation. Incidentally, the salt problem remains an intractable problem at the present day, and one of the less desirable legacies of Welsh settlement in the area.

The Fontana expedition of 1885 was mounted in order to locate new land suitable for settlement in the interior. As we have seen, the expedition discovered a relatively fertile, well-watered region in the Andean Piedmont and there two daughter colonies were established which absorbed landless Welsh newcomers and those displaced from their land in the lower valley.

That the behaviour of the Andean settlers was still closely influenced by
PLATE II
Sheep pasture at Esquel
PLATE III

Schoolroom at Trevelin, 1900.
Note traditional Welsh architectural form
the Welsh symbols is clearly demonstrated in the settlement patterns they created in the bolsons. In a natural setting that this time resembled Wales (see plate II) they lived in irregularly dispersed tyddnod, constructed of local stone, and in the severe, simple style of the traditional architecture (see plate III). Esquel and Trevelin were classic treflanau, housing only the communal buildings of school, chapel and mill. Co-operation and self-sufficiency were keynotes of the community structure, and though links were maintained with the colony in the lower valley, and trade was maintained with the markets in nearby areas of both Chile and Argentina, the valleys were remarkably isolated and self-contained units. Many of the travellers who visited the Andean colonies were struck by the "Welshness" of the landscape. The vivid description written by Colonel T. H. Holdich at the turn of the century provides a good example:

In the sweet valley of the 16 October...among the softly rounded grass downs of the valley, where the neat little cottages dot the slopes as they might in Monmouthshire, they live contented lives, making a living from their produce, but hardly growing rich, and their one great hope (a hope which I trust has ended in fulfilment) was to possess a title to the lands which they held, a title which would justify expenditure in building, planting, fencing and cattle rearing. Indeed, Holdich found the Andean settlers "more Welsh than the Welsh", noting that the Welsh language and non-conformist religion flourished to

264. Holdich, Countries of the King's Award, op. cit., p. 341.
the exclusion of all else. Welsh was the sole language of instruction in the schools, and the chapel was well attended. While Welsh culture in the lower valley was being diluted by external influences, that in the Andean colonies remained strong.

Thus, the Andean colonies kept their cultural integrity, and although they continued to accept de jure Argentine sovereignty (it was their presence that decided the crucial Argentine-Chile border dispute in 1904), de facto Argentine influence in the bolsons was indeed minimal. In fact, the Andean colonies ideally represented the idea of "association not assimilation" and as such they proved attractive to the remaining Welshmen in the lower valley, as both the tide of foreign immigrants and the assertion of Argentine authority mounted there. Increasingly after 1895, the emigration of Welshmen to the Piedmont consisted of those who had given up their valley farms in preference to the less culturally polluted air of the Andes. W. J. Rees reported that more than 150 families had made the move for these reasons by 1901. In 1902 alone a further 200 settlers abandoned the lower valley in favour of Cwm Hyfryd. Nevertheless, the capacity of the Andean bolsons was not limitless, and they were after all still in Argentine territory. To some of the settlers, flight to the Andes was not adequate protection from the blandishments of the latinoamericano. It seemed to some that for Welsh

265. Ibid.
266. Ibid.
267. Holdich was the chairman of the adjudicating board. See Countries of the King's Award, Introduction.
268. quoted in Baur, op. cit., p. 488.
269. The Times (London), August 26, 1902.
culture to survive, a complete break must be made with the Argentine.

The fear of total assimilation into Argentine culture, which had surfaced spasmodically during the 1880's and early 1890's was thus clearly discerned during the second half of the last decade of the nineteenth century. Hesketh Pritchard, who visited the colony in 1900, obviously recognised this, and although his prose is tinged with purple, his comments presumably clearly reflect the contemporary attitudes he found among the settlers.

The Welsh, in deep sorrow, left their own land to escape the tyranny of the English...and flying from Scylla they will fall (and to some degree have already fallen) a prey to Charybdis, typified by a dark-haired, dark-eyed, lissom maiden, who will bear them sons no longer of the old pure-bred Welsh stock, but of a mixed race. And so the efforts of the forefathers, who fared overseas to found a new home shall be made null and void.  

The problem arose, of course, as to where the Welshmen should go. The world of 1900 was very different from that of 1865; there were very few empty territories, like Patagonia, open to free settlement, and no matter where the new colony was founded it would have to co-exist with other cultures.

The first concrete moves to organise emigration of Welshmen from the Argentine took place in the closing years of the nineteenth century. It will be remembered that some of the more restless members of the colony had approached the British Foreign Office in 1899, requesting that Chubut be granted independent Dominion status within the British Empire, a claim based on the fact that the majority of the settlers still possessed British citizen-

ship. The British Government, whose relations with the Argentine were
delicate at this period, because of the perennial Falklands dispute and the
British commitment to adjudicate in the Chile-Argentina boundary question,
refused the request. Nevertheless, the move focused domestic Welsh interest
on the unhappiness of the colonists. Welsh members of Parliament took up
the issue, and between 1899 and 1901, questions relating to the "plight" of
the colonists occurred frequently in the pages of Hansard. By this time,
the Welsh Emigration Society of Michael D. Jones had apparently lapsed, but
a new organisation was formed under the patronage of Joseph Chamberlain, the
British Foreign Secretary, to organise and help fund the emigration of
Welshmen from Chubut to a new "national home".

It was perhaps characteristic of the period that there seemed to be
little doubt that the new colony should be sited somewhere in the British
Empire. The Transvaal was the first site considered, and Cecil Rhodes of-
fered the colonists free access to the lands of the British South Africa
Company. The Chubut Welsh seem to have been unimpressed by this proposal,
however. Perhaps the establishment of a Boer Colony at Escolanate, a few
kilometres south of the Chubut estuary had given warning that Afrikaans
and the Dutch Reform Church might prove as sapping to Welsh culture as Spanish
and Catholicism. In the event, the outbreak of the Boer War finally killed
this project.

Then Canada was suggested, and this proposal generated more enthusiasm,
both in Wales and in Chubut. In the acceptance of Canada as the site for

1901, p. 305.
272. see Rae-Smith, op. cit., p. 472.
the new colony, the hand of David Lloyd George is discernible. Lloyd George in many ways himself embodied the nationalist symbols which had inspired the Chubut colony; he was the most important Welsh politician of the period, a native speaker of the language, with a political radicalism born of his Non-conformist upbringing. Furthermore, he possessed a Romantic image that recalls that of Michael Daniel Jones. There is considerable evidence to suggest that his career was followed closely and with great interest by the Chubut Welsh. He in turn reciprocated by taking up the cause of the "oppressed" colonists.

In 1899, Lloyd George had been part of a delegation of prominent Welshmen who had toured the north-western frontier of Canada at the invitation of the Dominion Government. As the subsequent report he co-authored (December 31st 1899) patently shows, he considered the western territories of Canada, particularly Assiniboia, as an exceptionally suitable area for Welsh settlement. A few months later, he wrote personally to Lewis Jones, suggesting that Assiniboia become the site of a new colony of Patagonian Welsh. Apparently, he also discussed the matter with Lord Strathcona, Canadian High Commissioner in London, who took the matter up with Ottawa. The prospect of attracting a group of settlers with arid land experience to colonise the drier areas of central Saskatchewan appealed to the Dominion Immigration Branch, and they sent their Immigration Agent in Wales, W. L. Griffith, to

277. Public Archives of Canada, Department of the Interior, Immigration Branch, File No. 34768; W. L. Griffith to J. L. Smout.
Chubut to investigate. Griffith and W. J. Rees, who had been with Lloyd George in the Canadian north-west in 1899, arrived at the colony in August 1901, and they were greeted with enthusiasm and returned favourably impressed. As Griffith reported later:

The Welsh settlers are splendidly adapted for life in the new country; they can put up their own buildings; they are splendid stockmen, and thoroughly acquainted with what roughing it in a new country means. I think it may be fairly claimed for them that they are equal of the best settlers now being received by Canada.278

On his return to the United Kingdom, Griffith became the secretary of the committee to promote the emigration, and at one of its meetings he reported that over 500 Welshmen were ready to leave Patagonia for Canada. The sum of 12,000 dollars was raised to help pay for their passage, and to supply them with the basic necessities on arrival in Canada.

Although Griffith had found that such a large number of the Chubut colonists favoured the idea of re-settling in Canada, their removal did not take place immediately. Despite the considerable cultural pressure on them, they all had a considerable economic and sentimental commitment to Chubut, and this resulted in a certain amount of inertia. The cultural pressure provided, as it were, the pre-conditions for the move, but a "trigger" was required to set it off. This came in 1902 in the form of one of the Chubut's periodic floods which devastated many of the farms on the bottom lands of the valley. As we have seen, there had been disastrous floods before; indeed,

279. The Times (London), February 19, 1902.
those of the early 1870's had been much more severe and of greater detriment to the economy of the colony. However, that of 1902, together with the arrival of a new contingent of Italian immigrants, was the final straw. On May 14, 1902, 230 settlers left Puerto Madryn for Liverpool, arriving on June 7th. On June 10th, they sailed for Montreal.

They settled on sections that had been specially set aside for them by the Dominion Government in townships 21 and 22, in Ranges 3 and 4, West of the Second Meridian, near Saltcoats in Saskatchewan (see Figure 12). An advance party of 30 had arrived earlier to make arrangements to receive the main group. By the end of 1902, some 250 Patagonian Welsh had paid the entry fee of 10 dollars, and each family was in possession of a 160 acre quarter section.

The impact of their symbols on their settlement behaviour is as evident in Saskatchewan as it was in Patagonia. The ethos of co-operation was evident in their farming practice, and this was apparently such an unusual phenomenon that in 1904, J. O. Smith, the Commissioner for Immigration in Western Canada, remarked on it specially. The quarter sections the Welsh farmed formed a coherent group, and during 1903 and 1904, three school districts, named, not without significance, Glendwyr, Llewellyn and Saint David's, were organised. Welsh was the predominant language used in the schools. In February 1904, the School Board of Llewellyn insisted that "A knowledge of the language Welsh is an absolute necessity to teach in this school."

281. The Times (London), June 8th 1902.
284. quoted in Thomas, op. cit., 1971, p. 11.
SASKATCHEWAN
SETTLEMENTS OF THE WELSH
after Thomas

Scale
0 km 8 km

FIGURE XII
In 1903, the first chapel was erected, and reputedly it was the only one offering services in Welsh in the whole of Canada, apart from an old established chapel in one of the coal mining settlements near Nanaimo, British Columbia.

The rural settlement pattern also reflected the Welsh symbols. The first agglomerated settlement was Llewellyn but it housed little more than the school, the chapel and a small general store. After the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad was constructed through the area in 1907, a small settlement arose at Bangor, but it apparently comprised nothing more than a store, a schoolroom and a grain elevator.

The terminal date of this study is 1911, in which year the emigrations from Wales to Patagonia finally came to a halt, with the arrival of about 100 immigrants at Puerto Madryn on 27 November 1911, on board the steamship "Orita". However, the end of the colony, as the "Wales away from Wales" envisaged by Michael Daniel Jones and his coterie, came in 1902, with the emigration of the last of the settlers of extreme nationalist persuasion to Canada. This is not to say, of course, that evidence of Welsh settlement, or indeed that the Welsh language, religion or way of life, were immediately extinguished in Chubut. A current study being undertaken by Glyn B. Williams in the area is concerned with assessing the present status of Welsh culture in the area, and preliminary results indicate that it has left a considerable legacy. Nevertheless, since 1902, the process of assimilation has proceeded unabated. Although there are those of Welsh blood in the area who

still speak Welsh and go to chapel, their political allegiance is to the Argentine Republic, their language of commerce is Spanish, and their children leave the valley to be educated and to find work in Buenos Aires.

When Chubut achieved formal provincial status in 1958, a tribute was paid by the new legislature of the Province to the Welshmen who had established the first settlement almost a century previously; but it was a tribute delivered in Spanish, and the flag raised in Rawson was the blue and white bars of the Argentine, not the green, white and red dragon standard of Wales.
DOCUMENTARY APPENDIX

List of Documents appended:

(a) Argentine Colonisation Law, 1855
(b) Argentine Colonisation Law, 1862
(c) Project of Law enabling Welsh Settlement in Chubut, Draft version, 1864
(d) Handbill circulated in Wales by the Welsh Emigration Society, 1865 (English Translation)
'ARGENTINE CONSULATE GENERAL--Notice is hereby given, that the following REGULATIONS as to the COLONIZATION on the COAST OF PATAGONIA, and the admission of vessels trading to the Free Ports of Bahia-Blanca and the Rio Negro, have been decreed by the Government of the State of Buenos Ayres;--

Buenos Ayres, October 31, 1855

"The Senate and Chamber of Representatives of the State of Buenos Ayres, united in General Assembly, have sanctioned the following law on the concession of lands in Bahia-Blanca and Patagonia;--

"Article 1; Authorises the Executive Power to concede lands in perpetual right or proprietorship in the district of Bahia-Blanca and Patagonia to individuals and families, natives or foreign, who may be disposed to emigrate to and settle in those districts, the land for settlement not exceeding 100 square leagues in both districts.

"Article 2; The concession to which the previous article refers shall not exceed, in lands for cultivation, more than a farm allotment of 20 squares, of 150 yards per side; and in pasture lands in allotments, de estancis, of 3000 yards of front, and 9000 yards in depth; and in the towns that may be established, the ground allotted shall consist of 1000 square yards.

"Article 3; Titles of property will be granted to the individuals or families who have fulfilled the conditions of possession and labour that the Executive Powers may establish.

"Article 4; in their option, as respects the concession referred to in Article 1, the Executive Power will give a preference, in a parity of circumstances, in the first place, to the actual inhabitants of Patagonia and Bahia-Blanca, and in the second, to married settlers, native or foreign."

(remainder of Announcement deals with Free Port concessions in Bahia-Blanca)

Source: The Times (London)
September 8, 1856.
THE Senate and Chamber of Deputies of the Argentine nation, &c.

Article I. Let the Executive be authorized to celebrate contracts for foreign immigration, giving national lands.

Article II. The maximum of lands given shall be twenty-five square squares (about 100 acres) for each family, to whom shall be given the respective title deeds, after having complied with the conditions of settlement for two years, which the Executive Power shall designate.

Article III Let it be communicated to the Executive Power.

Given in the Chamber of Sessions of the Argentine Congress in Buenos Ayres, on the 8th of October, 1862.

(Signed) VALENTIN ALSINA.

NICANOR ALBARELLOS.

Forasmuch, let it be fulfilled, communicated, published and inserted in the "National Register."

(Signed) Eduardo Costo.

(Signed) MITRE.

Source: Blue Books, 1867.
Project of Law presented to the Argentine Congress relative to Settlement of Welsh Colony on the Chupat

(Translation)

THE Minister of the Interior of the Argentine Republic, Dr. Don Guillermo Rawson, in the name of its Government on the one part, and, on the other, the Commission recommended by the Welsh Emigration Society, composed of the following gentlemen, G. H. Whalley, Esq., M.P., David Williams, Esq., High Sheriff of the county of Carnarvon, Robert Jones, Esq., Merchant, M. D. Jones, Esq., D.D., and Captain J. L. D. Jones Parry, of Madryn Castle, in Wales, have agreed to conclude the following contract:-

1. The Welsh Emigration Society obliges itself to send during the term of ten years from 300 to 500 emigrant families each year, and to establish them in the territory of Patagonia, in the Argentine Republic, to the south of the Rio Negro.

2. The Government of the Argentine Republic cedes to each 200 families, in fee simple, a town site of two square leagues of land; the half of said land shall be destined to the object of establishing, and paying for, the buildings and public works, such as schools, churches, courts of justice houses of correction, and other appliances of a public character; the other half shall be distributed in building lots either by gratuitous cession to the first settlers or to others afterwards by sale, to obtain funds necessary for the support of the Colony.

3. In addition to the twenty-five squares of land, which according to law are ceded to each immigrant family, the national Government will concede an area of five square leagues of land, for each 200 families, adjoining the municipal boundaries, to be divided equally among them.

4. In the event of more lands being required by the settlers, they will be allowed to rent them or purchase them from the Government on the most moderate terms in agreement with the laws of the nation.

5. Whatever mine of metals, coal, or other mineral may be discovered, shall be the discoverer, without any further tax than that of the accustomed sovereignty, in accord with the laws of the subject.

6. The general direction of the affairs, and of the Government, of the Colony, shall be confided to a Commissioner or Governor named by the National Government in the manner and for the time which the laws, which shall be framed for the best government of the territories, may establish.

7. The Municipal Administration shall belong exclusively to the Colonist, in agreement with their own regulations.

8. The Colonists shall be free from every military contribution, either upon their persons or their property, for the term of ten years, but they compromise themselves to defend themselves unaided against the Indians.

9. When the population of the Colony shall have reached to the number of 20,000 inhabitants it will enter, as a new province, to form part of the nation, and as such all privileges and competent rights shall be accorded it. At the same time the limits of that province will be definitely settled.

10. The National Government, in view of the remoteness and uninhabited character of those parts, will provide the first company of immigrants with 4 pieces of artillery, 50 fanegas of Indian corn, 50 fanegas of wheat, 50 tons of wood for building, 200 tame horses (including 50 milch cows), and 3,000 sheep.
11. The Society will give the National Government timely notice of the probable date at which the first party of Colonists will reach the port of Bahia Nueva; that the articles cattle, &c., mentioned in the preceding Article, may be sent there or to any other point designated in sufficient time to meet them on their arrival.

12. The Colony shall be subject to the legislation which Congress establishes for the government of national territories.

13. The present Contract shall be submitted to Congress for its approval.

(Signed) G. RAWSON
J. LOVE D. JONES PARRY
LOVE JONES

Source: Blue Books, 1867.
The Welsh Settlement

(Translation)

The ship, A 1, "Halton Castle," Captain Williams, 700 tons, will be sailing from Liverpool on the 25th of April, 1865, with the first batch of emigrants to the settlement. Passage, 12L. for those of age; 6L. for children under twelve years of age; babies free. Deposit, 1L. for those of age; 10s. for children; to be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. O. Edwards, 22, Williamson-square, Liverpool; and the balance to be paid when the emigrants come to Liverpool to start.

There are 100 acres of land to be given to every three emigrants, and also, to the first batch, gifts of horse, cattle, wheat, implements, &c. The Committee have also sent agents to erect houses, and to prepare for the landing of the emigrants.

Particulars.

1. Land and Gifts.- There are 100 acres between every three of mature age, two children under age to be counted as one. Example: husband and wife, and a son or daughter upwards of twelve, 100 acres; if there be six more children under twelve, 100 acres more. The same also with the other gifts. (There is no certainty about the amount of these gifts, but it is judged that they will be at least 5 horses, 10 cows, 20 sheep, two or three pecks of wheat, a plough peculiar to the country, and a number of fruit trees to every "family" of three). One may sell his share of the land, and buy as he wishes, where he likes, for about 1s. an acre. There have been agents (Mr. L. Jones and Edwin Roberts), sent beforehand to take care that these gifts are in the valley of the Chupat, and to raise a row of huts to be residences for the emigrants until they have time to raise houses on their farms.

2. The Voyage.- The passage-money includes good food whilst on the voyage, and that prepared and given out to tables of twelve. Every emigrant is asked to bring with him a bed (for one) blanket, towels, knife and fork, a tea and a table spoon, a plate or two, a tin to raise water, a cup and a saucer rather large, a boiling pot, a quart tin, and one that will hold three gallons. These things can be bought in Liverpool for 15s. or 20s., but doubtless they will be already possessed by many families.

3. Clothing.- The clothing worn in Wales will do in the settlement, but it would be advisable to have light things for crossing the Equator. It is expected that there will be a merchant taking out abundance of clothing material for sale.

4. Implements.- Every emigrant shall take with him 15 cubic feet of im-
plements free; for all other goods payment must be made at the rate of 50s. a-ton. It would be advisable for every male upwards of twelve to take with him a rifle for fowling or hunting, which can be had at the office for 30s. Articles besides that would be useful are, spade, pickaxe, barrow, scythe, sickle, hammer, axe, shears, knife, saw, nails, and necessary household things. Anything besides would, of course, be convenient. It is expected that monied emigrants will take out mills, threshing machines, factories, &c.

5. Food.- It will be planned through the agents to have wheat for bread (as well as to sow) for four months, i.e., until the first crop from the earth. There will be abundance of animal food; but it would be useful for all to bring with them a little tea, coffee unground, and some other things not absolutely necessary that they may wish to have, sufficient for three or four weeks, until there will be time to re-supply them.

6. Money.- English money will do in the settlement, only let it not be in gold or in notes; nothing but silver and copper. The settlement will have its own paper money for sums of 10s. and upwards, which will be lent to the settler on the security of his lands, &c. Owing to this, it will not be necessary for the settler to have more than a few shillings after landing.

7. Rules.- The settlement will be ruled by a Council of twelve members, four of whom are now members of the home Council, and are emigrating with the first batch; the other eight will be chosen by the emigrants. All minerals that will be discovered to be the property of the discoverer, with a small toll to the settlement. The other general goods, such as trees, guano, &c., to be the property of the Council until all the loans and bonds are discharged. Every emigrant must sign a bond that he will act in harmony with the Council in the settlement.

Source: Blue Books, 1867.
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