

‘An Indefatigable Philanthropist’: Joseph Tregelles Price (1784–1854) of Neath, Wales

Richard C. Allen
Newcastle University

Abstract

Joseph Tregelles Price, the Quaker ironmaster of Neath Abbey, Wales (1784–1854),¹ was described by the *Cambrian* newspaper on his death in December 1854 as ‘a leading man of business and an indefatigable philanthropist. His character was one of singular energy, cool discrimination and inflexible integrity’.² Moreover, he was the outspoken advocate for the working class ‘martyr’ Richard Lewis (Dic Penderyn) who was condemned to death for having taken part in the Merthyr Rising of 1831—an event which was part of the drive towards democratic reform in Britain. He was a champion of minority human rights and visualised as a benevolent ironmaster and educationalist in a period of rapid industrial growth as well as social and political discontent in Europe. In this context, this study will consider many of Price’s additional humanitarian activities, particularly his advocacy of a peace society (c.1814 onwards) and his stalwart patronage of the anti-slavery movement.

Keywords

Wales, industrialisation, education, pacifism, democratic rights, slavery

1 For further information concerning the Price family and the Neath Abbey Ironworks see Southall, H., ‘The Price Family of Neath’, *Friends’ Quarterly Examiner* 28 (1894), pp. 189–203; Lodwick, B. M., ‘Peter Price and the Quaker Dames of Neath Abbey’, *Welsh Journal of Religious History* 5 (2010), pp. 36–78; Ince, L., *The Neath Abbey Iron Company*, Eindhoven: De Archaeologische Pers, 1984 and his *Neath Abbey and the Industrial Revolution*, Stroud: Tempus, 2001; Eaton, G., *Joseph Tregelles Price, 1784–1854. Quaker Industrialist and Moral Crusader. A portrait of his life and work*, Neath: Glamorgan Press, 1987; Jones, E. W., ‘William Jones of Ruthin: Quaker and Peacemaker’, *National Library of Wales Journal* 26/4 (Gaeaf/Winter 1990), pp. 401–26.

2 *Cambrian*, 28 December 1854.

Born in Penryn, near Falmouth, Cornwall, on 20 January 1784, Joseph Tregelles Price was the eldest son of Peter (1739–1821), a corn merchant, and his wife, Anna Tregelles Price (1759–1846).³ He was educated at Compton, a boarding school in Dorset, which he attended from the age of eight until he was 14. It is suggested that he was ‘active and fond of play’, but also ‘remarkable in his childhood for being very truthful’ and a conscientious scholar.⁴ After this he assisted his father in his businesses, including the Neath Abbey coal and ironworks in Glamorgan, and, in 1818, he became a partner with his brother, Henry Habberley Price, at the Neath Abbey works.⁵ In 1821, on the death of his father, he was appointed as manager of the ironworks and associated collieries, and by 1829 he was the Managing Director of the company which produced a considerable number of steam engines for various iron or tinworks as well as steamships.⁶ According to Thomas Mardy Rees, Quaker involvement in the development of Welsh industries was ‘a romantic chapter’ where many leading Friends were ‘enterprising individuals’ who sought to maximise their capital without the oppressive workplace regime.⁷ Although this is an oversimplification of the often fractious relationship between workers and the ironworks and coalowners in nineteenth-century Wales, Price was nevertheless recognised for his engineering prowess, diligence and caring attitude. Under his guidance the four hundred workers at the Neath Abbey ‘believed that the work of their hands, under the inspection of their beloved master, could not be surpassed anywhere’ and this was ‘readily acknowledged by engineers’.⁸ A contemporary testimony stated that he ‘won the respect and regard of the large number of persons over whom he presided, and he was ever alive to promote their moral and religious welfare’.⁹ Indeed, while for many years remaining the senior partner of the Neath Abbey Iron and Coal and Abernant Iron Companies, he advocated social welfare reform and educational facilities for the working class, and sought an end to poverty.

3 Ince, *Neath Abbey*, pp. 74–75.

4 Evans, W. B., ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, *Annual Monitor*, London: Headley Brothers, 1855, p. 156.

5 Peter was originally a Catholic but converted to Quakerism, particularly after receiving a vision of heaven and hell while in France (c.1754). He helped establish the Neath Abbey Ironworks in 1792 and took over the company from Richard Parsons in 1800. See Eaton, *Joseph Tregelles Price*, p. 9. Thomas Mardy Rees nevertheless suggests that in 1788 the firm of Fox and Price leased the Neath Abbey Coal and Ironworks from Lord Dynevor. See Rees, T. M., *A History of the Quakers in Wales and their emigration to North America*, Carmarthen: W. Spurrell and Son, 1925, p. 257. See also Williams, M. F., ‘The Society of Friends in Glamorgan 1654–1900’, MA thesis, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1950, pp. 205–10; Ince, *Neath Abbey*, pp. 31–38.

6 Williams, ‘The Society of Friends in Glamorgan’, p. 207; Eaton, *Joseph Tregelles Price*, p. 11; Ince, *Neath Abbey*, pp. 38–40, 47–69.

7 Rees, *History of the Quakers in Wales*, p. 252.

8 Rees, *History of the Quakers in Wales*, p. 258.

9 Evans, ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, p. 158.

The striking demographic increase in south Wales created new social problems as well as an awareness that educational provision was the optimum means of alleviating poverty and preventing unrest.¹⁰ For Price and other Quakers, education was central to the wider reform of society, as it offered opportunities for self-help and social security.¹¹ At Neath Abbey he was determined to provide schooling for his workers and their children. This was not the first time in south Wales that Quaker industrialists had offered such provision. In c.1786 the Quaker Harford family established a school at their Melingriffith ironworks, near Cardiff,¹² but this did not last for any length of time. A second attempt at creating a school for the workers' children, based on Joseph Lancaster's British and Foreign Schools movement, was established in the early nineteenth century.¹³ The Harford family were instrumental in providing educational facilities, including a library and reading room, and in 1812 John and Richard Summers Harford provided rudimentary education for workers and their children at the Ebbw Vale works.¹⁴ Significantly for the workers at Neath Abbey in the early nineteenth century, Peter Price had established a school on Lancaster's model (c.1802) and, in 1809, there were 40 female pupils in attendance.¹⁵ A newspaper report from

10 Evans, L. W., *Education in Industrial Wales 1700–1900*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1971, pp. 39–41, 43, 71–74, 84, 158.

11 For wider discussions on Quakers and education, see Hubbard, D. G. B., 'Early Quaker Education, 1650–1780', MA thesis, University of London, 1940; Stroud, L. J., 'The History of Quaker Education in England, 1647–1903', MEd thesis, University of Leeds, 1944; Mason, G., 'Quaker Women and Education 1642–1840', MA thesis, University of Lancaster, 1987; O'Donnell, E. A., 'Quakers and Education', in Angell, S. W. and Dandelion, P. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 405–19.

12 In 1786 Edward Williams, a schoolmaster, was the first signatory on the register of Harford's Melingriffith Tinworks Benefit Club, Whitchurch, and funds were used to repair the school. For details, see Chappell, E. L., *Historic Melingriffith. An account of Pentyrch Iron Works and Melingriffith Tinplate Works*, Cardiff: Priory Press, 1940; Cardiff: Merton Priory Press, 2nd edn, 1995, p. 48.

13 In October 1807 John Harford invited Joseph Lancaster to give a lecture on the importance of education at a meeting at Melingriffith. Consequently, a committee was set up and £53 3s. 3d. was raised to establish a new works' school. Sixty-two children from Whitchurch, Eglwysilan and Pentyrch attended the school in 1809. See Cardiff Central Library, Bute Ms. 4.999, Whitchurch School, Melingriffith, Subscription Book (1807) and Admission Tickets (1808–09); Chappell, *Historic Melingriffith*, pp. 48–50; Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales*, pp. 30, 158–59; Raistrick, A., *Quakers in Science and Industry: being an account of the Quaker contributions to science and industry during the 17th and 18th centuries*, London, 1950, pp. 150, 158–59. For Lancaster's intentions see Lancaster, J., *Improvements in Education as it relates to the Industrious Classes of the Community*, London: Darton and Harvey, 3rd edn, 1805. See also Taylor, J., *Joseph Lancaster: The Poor Child's Friend. Educating the poor in the early nineteenth century*, West Wickham: Campanile Press, 1996.

14 Chappell, *Historic Melingriffith*, p. 50; Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales*, p. 84 (Appendix 21).

15 Ince, *Neath Abbey*, p. 73; Williams, 'The Society of Friends in Glamorgan', p. 204; *Cambrian*, 4 November 1809, p. 3.

May 1816 further outlines the provision at the school during an inspection. The School for Boys was based on the earlier model

but it was conceived that an advantage would be obtained by the assembling parents and relations of the children together, and explaining to them clearly and fully the objects of the institution. The school-room was nearly filled, and several appropriate addresses were delivered, a gentleman who speaks the Welsh tongue fluently, acting as interpreter throughout. The progress made by many of the boys was highly satisfactory to the committee; and a number of New Testaments were distributed to the most uniformly meritorious. The attendance of scholars has been numerous and regular since the Meeting, which was most respectably attended; and we feel confident that the utility of similar schools would be considerably extended, if such public appeals to the feelings and common sense of parents were more frequent.¹⁶

At the Neath Abbey works, Joseph was following in his father's footsteps and was assisted by his sisters, Junia (1787–1845) and Christiana (1792–1879). Together they provided an education for the workmen's children. Their motives were undoubtedly philanthropic, as they sought to inculcate Quaker values among the workforce and even family members. And yet Price's cousin, Edwin Octavius Tregelles, who was employed as a carpenter, observed rather soberly about his experiences:

Here I lost ground as a Christian, being exposed to the rehearsal of vice, though there was not much open sin. True it is evil communications corrupt good manners; yes, and lay waste the serious impression of youth. I soon deviated from my habits of piety, but was preserved from descending to the depths of iniquity.¹⁷

Industrialists (Quaker and non-Quaker alike) thereby had to ensure that their businesses were not only competitive but wholesome places to work. To do this they sought a morally respectable, well-educated and technically skilled workforce. In this context, Price offered his workers a basic education in the works' school as well as practical training.¹⁸ He may well have been inspired by the work of Thomas Charles of Bala (1755–1814), a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist minister, who corresponded with Price shortly before his death. Charles was promoting the establishment of auxiliary British and Foreign Bible Societies as well as the Circulating Schools that he had helped establish throughout Wales.

16 *Cambrian*, 18 May 1816, p. 3. Also see Lodwick, 'Peter Price', pp. 47–48, and his *Neath Abbey School, 1802–2009*, Neath: privately published, 2009.

17 Fox, S. E. (ed.), *Edwin Octavius Tregelles, Civil Engineer and Minister of the Gospel*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1892, p. 5. For wider interpretations of moral conditioning see Hogan, D., 'The Market Revolution and Disciplinary Power: Joseph Lancaster and the psychology of the early classroom system', *History of Education Quarterly* 29/3 (Autumn 1989), pp. 381–417 (especially 382–83).

18 Details are provided in Eaton, *Joseph Tregelles Price*, pp. 13–18; Ince, *Neath Abbey*, pp. 77–78.

In a letter from May 1813 Charles expressed concern about the spiritual and moral welfare of the working class in Glamorganshire, who, he felt, were in ‘a most deplorable state of ignorance for want of exertions to instruct them. I will venture to assert that not half the population of the County are able to read any language.’¹⁹ So, what became of the school Price helped to establish?

In the late 1840s Commissioners, who were required to report on the state of education in Wales, offered a favourable account of the Neath Abbey school. In the initial Blue Book Report of 1847 the inspector, William Morris, reiterated Price’s view that it had ‘the most beneficial effect upon the working classes of the neighbourhood, who used to be notorious for their blackguardism’.²⁰ The Report then focussed on the nature of the school, which was, at that time, separate from the ironworks, as well as the impact it had on the local environment. Thus, ‘of all the scholars who since its commencement ... two only had become chargeable on the parish, and, of these two, one, a girl, had become insane, and the other, a young man, had lost the use of his arm’. In the period between the establishment of the school and the completion of the Report, Price had invested considerable funds in providing new buildings, enlisted the support of other leading gentlemen in the area, and paid for the employment of three male teachers.²¹

In his assessment of the school and its educational provision, Morris observed that Price was among the first to introduce a custom of weekly stoppages from the workers’ wage packets for the support of the school, and this followed the pattern he had instigated for medical relief at the Neath Abbey works. Indeed, Price had accepted that such a measure was cost neutral, and any surplus would offset the financial difficulties of keeping the school open in periods of economic depression. In this respect, according to the Commissioner, the payment not only provided but ‘insures (on the honour of the employer), the means of education’.²² The Inspector discussed the quality of teaching and learning in the Boys’ School, the Infant School and the Girls’ School. He noted that the Boys’ School had just reopened after a three-month closure and was fairly well provisioned

19 Library of the Society of Friends, London (LSF), Portfolio 8, 170. Thomas Charles, Bala, to Joseph Tregelles Price, Neath Abbey, 29 May 1813. For details of the origins of the Circulating Schools in Wales and the careers of Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire, and Madam Bridget Bevan of the same county, see James, E. W., ‘Griffith Jones (1684–1761) of Llanddowror and His “Striking Experiment in Mass Religious Education” in Wales in the Eighteenth Century’, in Siegert, R. (ed.) with Hoare, P. and Vodosek, P., *Volksbildung durch Lesestoffe im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert: Voraussetzungen – Medien – Topographie/Educating the People through Reading Material in the 18th and 19th centuries: Principles – Media – Topography*, Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2012, pp. 275–92.

20 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales...*, London: HMSO, 1847, p. 338. Also see *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales...* London: HMSO, 1848, pp. 64, 159–64.

21 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 338.

22 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 339.

with a 'raised gallery and desk for the master, parallel desks and fixed slates for the scholars, a border of black board running round the walls for writing or drawing', but was dispirited at the low level of attainment by the pupils. He observed that there were no boys who were 'capable of using a lesson-book higher than No. 2'; they were weak at arithmetic, had poor grammar, and had a limited understanding of the Bible.²³ In one particular example, Morris asked the class what Jesus did for the blind and one child responded that 'the Jews were frequently blind', which probably reflects nineteenth-century antipathy towards Judaism in the Welsh valley towns and more generally.²⁴ There was an acknowledgment that the parents were forced to remove their sons from the school when they were ten years old and when their 'labour begins to be valuable'.²⁵ He was also critical of the Girls' School, describing the teaching as 'very meagre', and observed that the girls were taught some practical skills, such as sewing, alongside reading and writing, but were often withdrawn at an early age to 'act as nurses at home'.²⁶

Price had been particularly concerned to retain his apprentices in the longer term so that he could protect them from what he believed to be the baneful influences of nineteenth-century consumer society, while at the same time ensuring the stability of his workforce.²⁷ In the Report, the Commissioner noted that Price had employed a young man who had been previously a pupil at the National School at Neath and who had, on occasion, assisted the teacher there to provide a basic education for his fellow students. In his application to work at the Abbey ironworks school, Price thereby 'bound him apprentice ... to learn the art of a schoolmaster', and sent him for mentoring at the British School in Swansea, which, the Commissioner observed, was a 'model school'. Upon his return to Neath Abbey, the school 'rapidly filled under his hands'. The teacher's development did not end there, as Price was conscious of the need to enhance his career. He paid for him to visit the 'best' schools in London, Bristol, and elsewhere, and the teacher subsequently became the headteacher of Colston School in Bristol. Regrettably, his departure was not followed up with a suitable replacement. The Commissioner stated that he was 'less efficient' and during his tenure the standard of the school declined and he was forced to resign.²⁸

It was clear that there were 'very different' educational conditions in the mining and manufacturing districts, 'where the workmen are left utterly without control of the schools ... [and] which are in a great measure maintained out of the wages'. The Commissioner was, however, not able to state exactly

23 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, pp. 339–40.

24 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 339.

25 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 340.

26 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 341.

27 Glamorgan Archives (GA), D/DSF/4, 20.7.1815. This sentiment was also reflected in the views of the Welsh Half Yearly Meeting. See GA, D/DSF/4, 11.10.1821.

28 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, pp. 338–39.

what these deductions were in these areas. Nevertheless, he noted that, in the case of the school at the Abbey Works, Price had established ‘one of the best of the schools’ and that the teachers had the ability to ‘provide effectually for the education of their people without further assistance’. He further recorded that the deductions were ‘trifling’ when compared to the wages, which varied from 15s. to 25s. per week (‘often much higher’) and that there was ‘fuel gratis in many instances’.²⁹

In conjunction with his commitment to educational advancement, Price embraced new scientific and technological innovations. He was a sponsor of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (£10),³⁰ regional societies and medical facilities. It is also noticeable that pupils at his school would later be appointed as the Superintendent of the British Company’s Steamers, the Chief Engineer of the *SS Great Britain* and *SS Great Western*, and many would secure their reputations as engineers on the London riverboats. As the Blue Book Report stated, Price ‘considered the mechanical employment in the adjoining works ... to be useful in promoting and carrying out the rudiments of education acquired in the school’, and he attributed the success of the Neath Abbey workforce to the ‘*tout ensemble* of the influences with which they were surrounded’.³¹ Indeed, his personal social standing enabled him to secure the services of high-profile speakers such as the Astronomer Royal, Sir George Biddell Airy, for public lectures in Neath.³² The benefits were twofold. First, his business was advantaged by this knowledge of new technologies and, second, he could disseminate a better understanding of science and the natural world to industrial workers in mid and west Glamorgan. Beyond this associational activity linked to his business interests, he was active in organisations that campaigned for peace and the promotion of minority rights.

Friends, as is well known, had a long-standing aversion to military action and their pacifist tendencies were certainly articulated in the post-Restoration years.³³ The revolutionary wars of the eighteenth century, and especially the Napoleonic Wars (1793–1815), certainly galvanised their thoughts on such matters. Indeed, as Martin Cadeal has observed, there was a transformation in attitudes towards

29 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 340.

30 *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian Glamorgan Monmouth and Brecon Gazette*, 29 July 1848, p. 2.

31 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 339.

32 *Cambrian*, 16 September 1837, p. 3. Also see Williams, ‘The Society of Friends in Glamorgan’, p. 177.

33 See also Ceadel, M., *The Origins of War Prevention: the British peace movement and international relations, 1730–1854*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, particularly chs 5 and 6, and his ‘The Quaker Peace Testimony and its contribution to the British Peace Movement: An Overview’, *Quaker Studies* 7/1 (September 2002), pp. 9–29. For a Welsh perspective and earlier peace testimonies see Jenkins, G. H., ‘The Early Peace Testimony in Wales’, *Llafur* 4 (1985), pp. 10–19; Weddle, M. B., *Walking in the Way of Peace: Quaker pacifism in the seventeenth century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

war, whereby fatalism was 'replaced by a variegated peace-or-war debate in which an articulate minority went as far to argue for the achievability of positive and lasting peace' and this 'affected all countries to varying degrees; but it occurred first in Britain'. Moreover, he argued that 'distinct defencist, crusading, *pacifist*, and *pacifist* viewpoints' had sufficiently developed by the end of the eighteenth century, and, following the post-Napoleonic period, 'public opinion became more optimistic about the capacity of governments to stay out of the war if they wish to do so'.³⁴ At the forefront of such developments was Price, who, in a letter to his sister Junia in May 1814, observed that he had yet to 'put things in train for establishing a Society for the sole purpose of aiming at such a diffusion of light and knowledge as shall tend to the general and universal preservation of peace'.³⁵ He informed her that he had 'a host ready to join'. On 7 June 1814 he discussed the establishment of such a society at Plough Court Pharmacy in Lombard Street, London, with, among others, William Allen (1770–1843), Basil Montagu (1770–1851), and Frederick Smith (1757–1823).³⁶ Evan Rees (1791–1821) was among this number and was employed by Price at Neath Abbey. He was the corresponding secretary of the Society and editor of the monthly journal, the *Herald of Peace*, which he began publishing in 1819.³⁷ This transition was important for the way in which Quakers and others were providing a moral compass for British people, particularly as the Religious Society of Friends was, at the same time, redefining itself as a reformist body rather than an introversionist community of believers.³⁸

It was not until after the Peace of Paris that a more formal structure was put in place at a meeting of peace activists on 14 June 1816.³⁹ This led to the establishment of the London-based Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace and a number of auxiliary societies, including the first of these—the Swansea and Neath Auxiliary Peace Society (7 December 1816).⁴⁰ The original London-based

34 Ceadel, *Origins of War Prevention*, p. 2.

35 Letter dated London, 28.5.1814, and cited in Evans, 'Joseph Tregelles Price', pp. 158–59.

36 This was the day that war between France and England was officially ended.

37 Also see his *Sketches of the Horrors of War*, London: London Peace Society, 1819, which offered graphic illustrations of the price of war, particularly noting the loss of half a million lives in 173 days during the Russian campaign of 1812. These details were extracted from Labaume, E., *Relation Circonstanciée de la Campagne de Russie, en 1812...* Paris: C. L. F. Panckoucke, 1814. Rees is discussed in Allen, R. C., "'Providing a Moral Compass for British People": the work of Joseph Tregelles Price, Evan Rees and the *Herald of Peace*', *Journal of the Friends Historical Society (JFHS)* 67/1 (2018), pp. 3–15. Presidential Address, June 2016.

38 This is discussed in Healey, R. R., 'Quietest Quakerism, 1692–c.1805', in Angell and Dandelion (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, pp. 47–62.

39 This was held at Allen's home in London. See Jones, G. J., *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1969, p. xiv. For full details of the protracted nature of the establishment of the Society, see Ceadel, *Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 206–21.

40 Minutes of the Peace Society Committee, 7 December 1816, as cited in Ceadel,

group consisted of ten participants, including the prominent reformers Thomas Clarkson and Joseph Hall, who argued that war was ‘inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity and the true interests of mankind’ and that they were ‘desirous of the promotion of peace on earth and good-will towards men’.⁴¹ Price’s mother was anxious that he avoid the political ramifications of such activity, but he reassured her by giving his ‘calm and solemn assurance’ that he felt ‘the subject so deeply, that if brought upon a death-bed, he believed he should not feel acquitted if he omitted to make this effort’.⁴² Indeed, despite intense derision and vehement opposition, Price and the other members of the Society produced a programme that advocated arbitration to prevent war, a reduction in armaments manufacturing, and an international court for the settlement of disputes.⁴³ The proceedings of the first meeting of the Swansea and Neath Auxiliary Peace Society were published in 1818 in *Seren Gomer*, the Welsh language periodical. Significantly, however, it was provided in both Welsh and English.⁴⁴ It was a subscription-based organisation, which entitled members to receive tracts amounting to half the subscription rate of 5s. per annum, but, whether because of the cost of membership or its largely Quaker orientation, it initially remained a small body of peace activists.⁴⁵

During the 1820s Price and other members of the Peace Society continued to promote its aims and encourage wider participation in the country. Consequently, in 1822 the Swansea and Neath Peace Society published in Welsh *A Summary of the Purposes of the Society for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace*, which was reviewed in *Seren Gomer*.⁴⁶ On 3 July 1827 Price made a speech at Swansea Town Hall on the tenth anniversary of the Swansea and Neath Peace Society, and helped pass a resolution to further disseminate their literature throughout Wales.⁴⁷ By this stage the Society had 40 registered subscribers (from various denominations) and had issued over 8,616 tracts in the

Origins of War Prevention, p. 216. Also see Evans, ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, pp. 159–61, who recalls an apocryphal story in which the *Clifton Union*, a collier (a cargo ship), was seized by the French while *en route* from Neath to Falmouth. Learning that the unarmed vessel belonged to Price, a man who advocated peace, they quickly released it; Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, p. 2; Hirst, M. E., *The Quakers in Peace and War*, London: Swarthmore Press, 1923, p. 243; Brock, P., *Pacifism in Europe to 1914*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972, pp. 345, 380. Also see LSF, unpublished Dictionary of Quaker Biography, entry for Price, Joseph Tregelles (1784–1854).

41 Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War*, p. 244.

42 Evans, ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, p. 159; Rees, *History of the Quakers in Wales*, p. 97.

43 Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War*, p. 244.

44 *Seren Gomer*, 1 (1818), p. 155.

45 For additional details see *Seren Gomer*, 2 (1819), pp. 294–95, which provides information on committee members; Owen, B. (Croesor), ‘Cymru a’r Mudiad Heddwch, 1814–1824’ (Wales and the Peace Movement, 1814–24’, *Y Geninen* 43 (1925), pp. 201–10; Lewis, T. H., ‘Y Mudiad Heddwch yng Nghymru, 1800–1899’ (The Peace Society in Wales, 1800–1899), *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1957), pp. 87–127.

46 *Seren Gomer*, 5 (1822), pp. 148–49.

47 *Herald of Peace*, n.s. 6, part 1 (1827), p. 131; *Cambrian*, 14 July 1827, p. 4.

ten-year period between its formation and the anniversary gathering.⁴⁸ Despite its best efforts, the Peace Society failed to establish any further auxiliary bodies in Wales in the 1820s and the early 1830s.⁴⁹

Beyond Wales, Price had also been a powerful advocate for pacifism. From 1819 onwards he was involved in the establishment of the Paris-based La Société de la Morale Chrétienne. This was an organisation in which he and several leading Frenchmen advocated peaceful resolution of conflict, as well as the abolition of slavery and the amelioration of laws concerning capital punishment.⁵⁰ In 1830 the conservative (Ultra) Prince Polignac, a principal advisor to Charles X of France, claimed that he had escaped execution because of the efforts of Price and his work with the Société de la Morale Chrétienne. It was argued that this organisation had been instrumental in changing the law for political prisoners just prior to Polignac's trial as a traitor.⁵¹

Throughout his campaigning Price doggedly refused to let his failing health obstruct his work for peace. In June 1843 he was a delegate at the international peace convention in London,⁵² and on 18 May 1847 Price chaired a public meeting at Finsbury chapel, London, which sought to persuade the House of Commons to adopt arbitration between Britain and other countries.⁵³ This sentiment was echoed in a meeting held at Neath town hall a year later, where he advocated petitioning parliament 'for the maintenance of peace' to ensure that all international disagreements 'might be settled by mediation or arbitration, and that such a reduction might be made in our large military and naval establishments'. This, he argued, would naturally reduce national expenditure, but he was aware that gradual steps might be needed to have these proposals fully adopted.⁵⁴ As Goronwy Jones observed, by calling for a reduction in national armaments, the advocates of non-resistance and those who did not agree with their extreme views on the use of force found it possible to share the same platform on the question of disarmament' and thereby collaborate on international arbitration.⁵⁵

Price continued to offer peaceful solutions to international disputes to the end of his life. He had great cause to do so, as from October 1853 Russia became

48 Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, p. 3 n.11.

49 Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, pp. 3–5. For a wider interpretation of this period see Ceadel, *Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 222–79.

50 *Herald of Peace*, 4 (1825), pp. 186–89; 5 (1826), pp. 139–42; Crossfield, J. D., 'Richard Smith and his Journal', *JFHS* 14/3 (1917), pp. 120–21 n.78. Also see Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War*, p. 244; Lincoln, V. F., 'Organizing International Society: The French Peace Movement and the Origins of Reformist Internationalism, 1821–1853', PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2013.

51 *Cambrian*, 13 November 1830, p. 4; Evans, 'Joseph Tregelles Price', p. 162.

52 Jefferson, J. (ed.), *The Proceedings of the First General Peace Convention Held in London, June 1843*, London: Society for the Promotion of Permanent Peace, 1843, pp. 8, 9, 23.

53 *Herald of Peace*, Fourth Series, 1838–50 (1847), p. 281.

54 *Cambrian*, 19 May 1848; Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, pp. 13–14.

55 Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, p. 14.

increasingly embroiled in a conflict with the Ottoman Empire (and subsequently France) over the rights of Orthodox Christians in Ottoman-held territories, as well as their determination to get a stronger hold over the Caucasus. The French promoted themselves as the defender of Roman Catholic rights there and their assumption of sovereign authority for Christians in the Ottoman Empire undermined previously negotiated eighteenth-century treaties.⁵⁶ The weakness of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the fear of Russian aggrandisement, made this an extremely complex international conflict. In March 1854 Britain and France declared war on Russia to rein back its territorial encroachments on the Black Sea and Crimean peninsula. The war was to last until February 1856. During the escalating violence, and particularly in the light of the deployment of modern military technology, the conflict attracted considerable newspaper coverage, some of which stoked up latent Russophobic attitudes in the wider population. One of the consequences was the establishment of several Foreign Affairs Committees to monitor the progress of the war.⁵⁷ Inevitably, Price and other members of the Peace Society sought a long-term settlement of the Eastern Question by negotiation. For those who worked in the armaments and ordnance manufacture, the question of peace and war posed a different challenge—one that might lead to unemployment and great financial hardship.

Many viewed the pacifist position as wholly unpatriotic.⁵⁸ Price chaired a meeting of the Peace Society in Neath on 28 July 1854 at which the speaker, William Stokes, was accused of being anti-monarchical and unpatriotic by a former mayor. Although Price was able to restore order to the meeting, it was again disrupted by an impromptu band playing 'God Save the Queen' to drown out the speakers.⁵⁹ Undeterred, in December 1854 Price delivered a speech in London in opposition to the Crimean War, but this was to be his last declaration for peace.⁶⁰ He would nevertheless have endorsed the unequivocal view of the 'Duty of Peace Men' that they were

56 For details of the war and its impact see Royle, T., *Crimea: The Great Crimea War, 1854–1856*, London: Little Brown, 1999; Figes, O., *Crimea: The Last Crusade*, London: Allen Lane, 2010; Lambert, A., *The Crimean War: British grand strategy against Russia, 1853–56*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2nd edn, 2011.

57 This is discussed in Taylor, M., 'The old radicalism and the new: David Urquhart and the politics of opposition, 1832–1867', in Biagini, E. F. (ed.), *Currents of Radicalism: popular radicalism, organised labour and party politics in Britain, 1850–1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 23–43.

58 For a wider discussion of this see Anderson, M. S., *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923: a study in international relations*, London: Macmillan, 1968; Macfie, A. L., *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923*, London: Longman, 1989.

59 *Cambrian*, 28 July 1854; Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, p. 32. According to George Eaton this was a German band who were playing outside the hall and when invited in the audience danced the polka! See Eaton, *Joseph Tregelles Price*, p. 25.

60 Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War*, p. 244. For further details of the Peace Society and the Crimean War see Jones, *Wales and the Quest for Peace*, pp. 28–34.

to abide faithful in their testimony to the truth This may be no pleasant or holiday task, in the present temper of the times. It may expose them to no little obloquy and misrepresentation. They may have motives and objects laid to their charge, which their innermost souls abhor. They may see the evils they have used their utmost efforts to avert, ascribed to those very efforts. They may find many men of feeble minds and wavering principles, unable to resist the torrent of opinion, fail in the hour of trial, and turn to persecute the faith they once preached. In the face of all of this, however, they must not swerve. Feeling that they are acting in harmony with the will of the Father of all, in seeking to establish peace among his children... they will go forward undaunted. Calmly, believing that, numerous and formidable may be the forces arrayed in opposition to their views, He that is with them is greater than all they that are against them.⁶¹

This last statement was consistent with his championing of Dic Penderyn—a condemned working-class man whose case in 1831 became a *cause célèbre*.

In Wales, the growing demand for a more democratic state was given expression in violent popular outbursts against the unrepresentative and oppressive parliamentary system.⁶² The owners of these industrial centres nevertheless forcibly challenged the growing solidarity of the working class.⁶³ In 1830, at the height of unrest in south Wales, the ironmasters and coalowners requested that troops be deployed to suppress riotous assemblies in the area. In contrast, Price and his cousins, Edwin and Nathaniel Tregelles, at the Neath Abbey ironworks initially tried to conciliate their workforce by emphasising that the joining of Friendly Societies (trade unions) and potential strike action would undermine the cordial relations between the workers and the owners.⁶⁴ After all, he had refused to employ child labour in his works (or at least made a distinction between those

61 'Duty of Peace Men', *Advocate of Peace*, 1847–1884, 11/7–8 (July and August 1854), pp. 122–26 (p. 125) for details of the London Peace Society's Anniversary.

62 For details of unrest in Wales in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries see Williams, G. A., *The Merthyr Rising*, repr. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988; Jones, D. J. V., *Before Rebecca: popular protests in Wales 1793–1835*, London: Allen Lane, 1973, and his *The Last Rising: the Newport insurrection of 1839*, Oxford: Clarendon 1985; Wilks, I., *South Wales and the Rising of 1839: class struggle as armed struggle*, London: Croom Helm, 1984; and, more generally, see Jones, I. G., 'People and Protest: Wales, 1815–1880', in Herbert, T. and Jones, G. E. (eds), *People and Protest: Wales, 1815–1880*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988, pp. 1–7; Evans, C., *The Labyrinth of Flames: work and social conflict in early industrial Merthyr Tydfil*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993; Chase, M., *Chartism: a new history*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, *passim*; *Llafur: journal of Welsh labour history*, 10/3 (2010) which published a Special Edition of the journal devoted to Welsh Chartism.

63 These included the Friendly Society of Coalmining, which in April 1831 joined forces with the National Society for the Protection of Labour. See John, A. H., *The Industrial Development of South Wales, 1750–1850*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1950, pp. 91–95. For a wider interpretation of the crisis, Jacobin/radical sympathies and the growth of unionism see Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, pp. 72–108.

64 *Cambrian*, 11 June 1831, p. 3 and 1 October 1831, p. 3; Williams, 'The Society of Friends in Glamorgan', pp. 238–39.

under the age of 13) and outlawed the use of pernicious ‘tommy’ or ‘truck’ shops, demonstrating that he had the workers ‘moral and social welfare at heart’.⁶⁵ This was not the case elsewhere, particularly in Merthyr Tydfil and environs, where in May 1831 there was a violent outpouring against William Crawshay and other industrialists who had lowered wages, as well as in those industrial areas where there were high levels of unemployment.

By the end of May industrial south Wales was in turmoil. The simple demands for ‘caws a bara’ (cheese and bread) from the starving and calls for better working and living conditions echoed the French revolutionaries of more than a generation earlier, while recent events in France, with the July Revolution of 1830, the abdication of Charles X, and the election of Louis-Phillippe, Duke of Orléans, exacerbated the concerns of the government and civic leaders throughout Britain. In this context, heightened unrest in Merthyr was viewed with growing unease and relations deteriorated further when the red flag was raised in the town.⁶⁶ In the ensuing days the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who had been dispatched to Merthyr, sought to disperse the crowds and defend the property and lives of the industrial ‘barons’. On 2 June a meeting at the Castle Inn between the industrialists and the High Sheriff of Glamorgan was disrupted when Lewis Lewis (alias Lewsyn yr Heliwr) issued the workers’ demands for cheaper bread and higher wages. These were rejected by Crawshay, other employers, and the local magistrates, and violence erupted. The Highlanders were told to seize control of the situation by whatever means, resulting in many casualties, some fatal. Nevertheless, for more than a week Merthyr was in the hands of between seven thousand and ten thousand rioters, who again hoisted the red flag, seized armaments, and assumed effective control of the area. A further wave of industrial protest and rioting threatened now to engulf the whole of industrial south Wales, as strikes occurred in the Neath and Swansea valleys as well as in Monmouthshire. A mass meeting was held on 6 June at Penyardarren House, but the resolve of the rioters was waning as the presence of well-armed soldiers began to have an effect, and a further mass gathering at Waun (Dowlais) was dispersed by nearly 500 soldiers.

The following day the local authorities had reasserted their control and arrested 26 rioters identified as leaders of the armed insurrection. In the ensuing trial they were imprisoned and sentenced to transportation, while two others, Lewis Lewis and Richard Lewis (Dic Penderyn), aged 23, received the death penalty. Penderyn

65 Eaton, *Joseph Tregelles Price*, p. 19; Williams, M. F., ‘Glamorgan Quakers 1654–1900’, *Morgannwg* 5 (1961), pp. 49–75 (p. 75). The ‘truck’ system, its operation and the tensions surrounding the Court of Requests and the reduction in wages are discussed in Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, *passim*; particularly useful are pp. 88–95, 111–13. It should be pointed out, however, that in a census of workers at Neath Abbey in 1841 there were 11 children under the age of 13 employed. See *Children’s Employment Commission*, London: HMSO, 1842, p. 564; Ince, *Neath Abbey*, p. 79.

66 Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 117.

had allegedly wounded a soldier by stabbing him in the leg with a bayonet. Lewsyn's sentence was commuted to transportation to Australia when it was revealed that he had protected magistrates from the rioters.⁶⁷ For Penderyn there was no such reprieve. Price had followed events closely as the unrest spread across the south Wales valleys. Yet, after the rioting subsided and the alleged leaders were arrested, Price began to take an interest in the grievances of the rioters and to question the allegations of seditious violence levelled at the ringleaders. He did not condone their actions, yet he visited Penderyn in prison on Sunday, 24 July and, persuaded of his innocence (long since corroborated), he solicited several witness statements and helped to petition for clemency.⁶⁸ Price now became the chief mediator in this case and risked his reputation and respectability by sponsoring the cause of such a notorious insurgent. This principled stand, although limited and by no means indicative of any deeper democratic impulse, was nonetheless based on an absolute commitment to the rights and liberties of the individual. In Penderyn's case, Price was determined to bring the truth of the matter to light. In so doing, he was following a tradition established by his co-religionists two hundred years earlier.

On 27 June, with 11,000 signatures, he presented the petitions to the Lord Chancellor (Henry Brougham) and the Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne.⁶⁹ In a later meeting with Melbourne, Price emphasised his sense of obligation to the condemned man: 'I felt his blood was on my head if I did not use every exertion ... I now transfer its weight from my conscience to thee.'⁷⁰ Despite the effort to save Penderyn's life there was a desire to punish someone for the actions of the rioters as a deterrent for the future. On 30 July, Major Digby Mackworth stated in a letter to Colonel Egerton that a reprieve would have 'a very injurious effect and induce the people to imagine the Government will not, and dare not visit them capitally for political disturbances'.⁷¹ Price nevertheless continued with his campaign and was able to persuade Lewis Weston Dillwyn, the foreman of the Grand Jury at the Assizes, of Penderyn's innocence. Furthermore, in a letter to Lord James Stuart on 4 August, Price provided additional information that another three 'gentleman' of Merthyr believed that Penderyn was not guilty of wounding the soldier, while he challenged the earlier witness statements. Significantly, Price was adamant that a reprieve would 'allay a feeling of irritation ... restore order and maintain tranquillity'. In the light of this new evidence, Melbourne ordered a brief stay of execution, but on 9 August he rejected the second petition. Five days later, on 13 August, the sentence was carried out and Penderyn was hanged

67 Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 120.

68 Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, pp. 185–87.

69 The National Archives (TNA), HO 17/28. Also see Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 185.

70 Southall, 'The Price Family of Neath', 201. Also see TNA, HO 13/58, pp. 162–63; *Cambrian*, 6 August 1831, p. 3; *Carmarthen Journal and South Wales Weekly Advertiser*, 12 August 1831, p. 3; Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 187.

71 TNA, HO 52/16, and cited in Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, p. 188.

in Cardiff gaol. Before he was hanged he stated his name and pseudonym, his participation in the rising, and the consequence of his involvement: 'O Arglwydd, dyma gamwedd' (O Lord, this is an injustice)!⁷²

Clearly Price had attempted to bring about a calm and peaceful resolution to this violent period, but he was unable to save Penderyn, who suffered an ignominious death on the gallows. Thereafter his death was characterised as symptomatic of the baneful conditions of industrial Wales and he was regarded as a working-class martyr. These events certainly cast a light on the souring of relations between workers and the industrialists, the demands for basic human rights, and the appalling working and living conditions prevalent at this time. They further show the growing awareness of the workers that parliamentary reform was not just the means of changing a corrupt and class-ridden political system, but that the securing of democratic rights as well as social and economic change would need strong and influential advocates. The efforts of Price and his family to negotiate Penderyn's release were not forgotten. He (and they) continued to be held in esteem by the Neath workforce,⁷³ even though he did not endorse the wider political changes sought by the Merthyr radicals or the later efforts of the Chartists to promote universal suffrage. Certainly, he was no radical spokesperson. When 50 men joined a union in September 1831 they were informed by the works' agent that they faced a stark choice: either withdraw from that association or lose their jobs. At a subsequent meeting of the workforce Price outlined his views concerning the proliferation of 'Union Clubs' and dispassionately explained their advantages and disadvantages. At least 150 workers were given the opportunity to debate the issue and, after a lengthy discussion, they voted not to join the union.⁷⁴

Price was nevertheless prepared to negotiate fair wages, and a later newspaper report commented on the 'liberality of the Neath Abbey Coal Company, who have raised the wages of their colliers'.⁷⁵ He was a peaceable man whose life was a testimony to the belief that 'property has its duties as well as its rights',⁷⁶ and it was this belief in the mutuality of rights and obligations between employers and workers that lay behind his intervention in pay disputes and in the case of Dic Penderyn. This is further illustrated in a report in the *Cambrian* newspaper

72 TNA, HO 17/128, HO 13/58, p. 198; *Cambrian*, 20 August 1831; Williams, *Merthyr Rising*, pp. 190–94.

73 In 1854 it was recorded that he was among those who offered employment to 'a vast number of people', but at the same time demonstrated 'fostering care' and carried out 'varied acts of benevolence in the village and neighbourhood'. See *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Brecon Gazette*, 11 February 1854, p. 4.

74 *Cambrian*, 1 October 1831, p. 3; Jones, E. J., 'Scotch Cattle and Early Trade Unionism in Wales', in Minchinton, W. E. (ed.), *Industrial South Wales, 1750–1914: essays in Welsh economic history*, London: Cass, 1928, p. 212.

75 *Glamorgan, Monmouth and Brecon Gazette and Merthyr Guardian*, 24 August 1833, p. 4.

76 *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian, Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Brecon Gazette*, 11 February 1854, p. 4.

on 25 May 1833 in which Price and other members of the Swansea and Neath Peace Society retrospectively discussed the events at Merthyr. They called on 'individuals of every class and every station in life' to search for peaceful means rather than taking up arms. They observed that communities who 'can so far forget their real interests, the interests of humanity, as to engage each other in mortal conflict' were but evidence of 'human degeneracy and corruption'.⁷⁷ There is also evidence to suggest that Price may have influenced the outcome of the Chartist uprising at Newport in November 1839. The increasingly physical means by which the Chartist movement put forward its arguments began to outweigh the moral principles advocated by other adherents, while the 'travelling agents' of the Peace Society were accused of acting as agents of the government. In the context of the uprising, Price's statement to the Peace Society's annual meeting the next year is illuminating. He commented that, after attending a public meeting at Merthyr two months before the attack on Newport took place, he had an opportunity to discuss peace with 'an eminent Chartist', potentially Dr William Price of Pontypridd. Price gave him the Society's tracts and the Chartist agreed to read them and weigh up their arguments. He stated that

Now that individual had planted six cannons on the side of the mountain to guard the valley in which he lived; and that individual did meet, on the night prior to the insurrection, with the leading Chartist; and they differed—on what point no one knows but themselves—but they differed. So this champion did not lead out his corps, which resided in Wales, to unite with the body at Monmouth.

As is well documented, Dr Price, the Pontypridd Chartists, and others from nearby industrial centres, including the workers from the Neath Abbey works, did not join in the march on Newport. As Martin Ceadel has observed from a close reading of the *Herald of Peace* in 1840, Joseph Tregelles Price had successfully persuaded his workers that 'however desirable every object sought by these Chartists may be', physical action was morally indefensible.⁷⁸

Price also took an active interest in the agricultural disturbances that were occurring in west Wales (the Rebecca Riots). On 25 August 1843 he was accompanied by several female Friends from Wales and Darlington, including Junia Price and Hannah Chapman Backhouse, at a prearranged meeting in Carmarthen with a number of magistrates who were concerned about the high level of violence in the area. This militant activity, alongside Chartism 'in the manufacturing areas', Backhouse recorded, was 'an insurrectionary movement directed against the number of turnpike gates and the heavy tolls on a population unable to bear them'. The magistrates took seriously the advice of the Friends and others listened attentively when the Quakers held a further meeting at Water

⁷⁷ *Cambrian*, 25 May 1833, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *Herald of Peace*, Fourth Series, 1838–50 (July 1840), pp. 126–30, and fully discussed in Ceadel, *Origins of War Prevention*, pp. 325–35 (for Price's role see pp. 327–28). I am grateful to Martin Ceadel for drawing my attention to this.

Street Chapel and ‘addressed a numerous congregation on the benefits of peace and the horrors of civil war’.⁷⁹ And yet it is often difficult to ascertain the wider impact of these advocates for peace in industrial and rural south Wales. As David Williams observed, the views and demeanour of the Quakers ‘must have seemed as strange to Rebecca as hers did to them’.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, in the area around Price’s ironworks the workers did not succumb to the activities of Rebecca or, as shown earlier, the persuasive rhetoric of the Chartists, as he ‘personally took an active and successful part in explaining the real nature of those movements to the workforce’, and consequently ‘no other means of suppression were employed’.⁸¹

This humanitarian impulse was articulated in Price’s attitude towards slavery and his commitment to abolition, both in a private capacity among Friends and publicly in anti-slavery meetings held in Swansea in the early 1820s. These meetings discussed slavery in the West Indies, particularly sugar plantations and the vested interest of the Pennant family of Penrhyn.⁸² In 1821 the *Cambrian* printed a statement from the London Peace Society that suggested that slavery was as pernicious and savage as war and, reflecting on the work of Thomas Clarkson, articulated the view that both were equally ‘repugnant to the spirit of Christianity’.⁸³ A more formal approach was taken in the creation of the Swansea and Neath Anti-Slavery Society, which existed from 1822 and had an overlapping membership with the Peace Society in west Glamorgan.⁸⁴ In the following May the *Cambrian* reported that a meeting was to be held in Swansea

79 Full details are provided in Backhouse, H. C., *Extracts from the Journal and Letters of Hannah Chapman Backhouse*, London: Richard Barrett, 1858, pp. 258–61; Evans, H. T., *Rebecca and her Daughters*, Cardiff: Educational Publishing Co., 1910, pp. 148, 153. For other assessments of the Rebecca movement see Williams, D., *The Rebecca Riots: a study in agrarian discontent*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955; Molloy, P., *And They Blessed Rebecca: an account of the Welsh toll-gate riots, 1839–1844*, Llandysul: Gomer Press, 1983; Jones, R. E., *Petticoat Heroes: gender, culture and popular protest in the Rebecca Riots*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015.

80 Williams, *Rebecca Riots*, p. 243.

81 *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry... 1847*, p. 344. In the section entitled ‘Evidence Respecting the Mining and Manufacturing Districts’, Price, alongside other respondents, was asked how the people felt towards their employers and ‘superiors’. He answered that they were ‘respectful and well conducted generally’ (p. 479); Hopkins, T., *Neath: the town and its people*, Swansea: West Glamorgan Archive Service, 2010, p. 126. I grateful to Tony Hopkins of the Gwent Archives for this reference.

82 *Cambrian*, 2 February 1820, p. 4. For wider studies on Quakers and the abolition of slavery, see Soderlund, J. R., *Quakers and Slavery: a divided spirit*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985; Cazden, E., ‘Quakers, Slavery, Anti-slavery, and Race’, in Angell and Dandelion (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies*, pp. 347–64; Carey, B. and Plank, G. (eds), *Quakers and Abolition*, Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2014.

83 *Cambrian*, 19 May 1821, p. 4.

84 Evans, C., *Slave Wales. The Welsh and Atlantic slavery, 1660–1850*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010, p. 111. Also see the *First Report of the Swansea and Neath Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Association* (1826).

in which the abolitionists sought the assistance ‘of our humane fellow-townsmen and neighbours’ in petitioning parliament for the end of slavery in the British colonies, which had disgraced ‘the British name and character’. They provided detailed information outlining their case in favour of emancipation and stated

shall we, the strenuous advocates of Liberty, the inhabitants of a soil whose glorious privilege it is to confer freedom upon every human being who once sets a foot upon its surface—shall we countenance a system of the most cruel and degrading slavery in those very Colonies which are dependent on us? Every principle of humanity, reason, and justice, forbids it. Let us, then, evince the sincerity of our efforts to induce other Nations to abandon this diabolical trade, by openly discountenancing its existence in our own Colonies.

Price undoubtedly endorsed these sentiments. With the other members of the Anti-Slavery Society, it was stressed that, despite the ending of the slave trade in British colonies, former slaves and ‘their miserable offspring’ were still ‘without the interference of the Legislature, in a state of perpetual bondage’.⁸⁵ In July 1824 the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson⁸⁶ visited Swansea, almost certainly at the behest of Price and the Swansea Friends Robert Eaton and Lewis Weston Dillwyn. And yet Clarkson’s tour of Wales, apart from Swansea, did not prove to be as successful as he would have hoped, as the Welsh gentry, with vested interests in colonial plantations, constituted a formidable opposition.⁸⁷ Undaunted, Price campaigned tirelessly throughout the 1820s and the early 1830s, and even after abolition was achieved in the colonies in 1833⁸⁸ he vociferously condemned the Negro apprenticeship system and the continuation of slavery in America and by rogue merchants.⁸⁹ He nonetheless recognised that the planters needed compensation in order to give ‘their fellow-men in bondage the inalienable right of freedom’.⁹⁰ Right up to his death on 25 December 1854 he was a resolute abolitionist, attending an anti-slavery convention only a few weeks earlier.⁹¹

85 *Cambrian*, 3 May 1823, p. 3.

86 He was the Secretary of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

87 National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ms. 14984A. Diary of Thomas Clarkson’s tour of Britain, 1823–4. Also see Owen, G. E., ‘Welsh anti-slavery sentiments, 1795–1865: a survey of public opinion’, MA thesis, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1964, pp. 38–40.

88 3 & 4 Will. IV c.73 (Emancipation of the Negroes in our Colonies). Freedom for slaves in the Caribbean was duly sanctioned on 1 August 1834, but as Chris Evans observes this was a ‘half-way house of “apprenticeship” in which they remained tied to their existing plantations for a transitional period’. Moreover, Swansea Friends referred to it as the ‘vile substitute for freedom’ and this pernicious activity was only ended after considerable protest in 1838. See Evans, *Slave Wales*, p. 111, and citing *Cambrian*, 11 November 1837, p. 2.

89 For example, see *Cambrian*, 24 March 1838, p. 3; 1 June 1839, p. 4.

90 Evans, ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, p. 160.

91 Evans, ‘Joseph Tregelles Price’, p. 164. He died of inflammatory bronchitis, aged 71, at Glenvellyn Cottage, near Neath. Price’s will was proved on 18 January 1855. For details, see TNA, PROB 11/2205/193.

Joseph Tregelles Price lived a long and meaningful life which was marked by handsome tributes in the Welsh press. The *Monmouthshire Merlin* singled him out as one of the very few men who had ‘led a long life of so much usefulness’ and had been widely recognised as a ‘talented and benevolent man’.⁹² Arguably his passing signalled the end of a particular period in which peaceful negotiation and reconciliation were the watchwords of so many of his fellow campaigners. By February 1855 the Peace Society, which he had long championed, was suffering a ‘temporary eclipse’, as the numbers of subscribers had dramatically fallen off.⁹³ Yet his life, dedicated to improving the lot of others, had a lasting significance. His advocacy of humanitarianism and justice represented a legacy and an example for future generations to emulate.

Author Details

Richard C. Allen is a Teaching Fellow in Early Modern History at Newcastle University and a former Reader in Early Modern Cultural History in Wales. His main research and teaching interests are in the social, cultural and religious history of Britain and America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He has published widely on Quakerism, migration and identity. His most significant works are *Quaker Communities in Early Modern Wales: from radicalism to respectability* (2007) and several co-edited books: *Irelands of the Mind* (2008); *Faith of Our Fathers: popular culture and belief in post-reformation England, Ireland and Wales* (2009); and *The Religious History of Wales: a survey of religious life and practice from the seventeenth century to the present day* (2013). Alongside Rosemary Moore as a co-author and several expert contributors he has produced *The Quakers, 1656–1722: The Evolution of an Alternative Community* (2018). He is currently completing *Welsh Quaker Emigrants and Colonial Pennsylvania* and co-authoring (with Erin Bell), *Quaker Networks and Moral Reform in the North East of England*. Mailing address: Armstrong Building, Room 1.21, School of History, Classics and Archaeology, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU, England, UK

Email: richard.allen@ncl.ac.uk

92 *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 29 December 1854, p. 5.

93 *Herald of Peace*, Fifth Series, 1850–1921 (February 1855), p. 170.