Deserving & Undeserving

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

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

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

Wrexham Poor Law Guardians, 26th March 1840

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

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

* A term used to describe people living in the workhouse or relying on outdoor relief - the name for the Poor Law system's welfare payments.

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Yr Haeddiannol a’r Anhaeddiannol

Yn 1834 cyflymwyrd Dafodl y Tidion a greudd gyfundrefn yne newydd yn seiliedig ar y wyrws. Roedd wyrcws ar Croesnewydd Road.

Gyda bywyd caeth oedd byw y wyrws, gyda llawer o reolau i warch. Câi gwaredd eu gwerthu oddi wrth eu gwyrr, a phlant oddi wrth eu rhieni. Roedd rhaid i'r tri-gwirwydd, weithiau o ddigyfyllf yng nghwâd neu o chofio'r wyrcws. Byddai gwaith ddod mor anrheg i ddefnyddio o lafur caled. Roedd y rheolau hyn a’r anrheg oedd oedd oedd yn ogwyl bod ei ddefnydd i wneud eu bwrnu fel atalad. Roedd yr ‘anhaeddiannol’ megis carddwyd a mamau o Breswyllydd yna eu tir o i fyn i lym. Roedd yr ‘haeddiannol’ yna gyda'r cwympwydrefn yna eu bwyllodrefn.

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

Coldwell Dafodl y Tidion, Wrexham, 26th March 1840

Roedd y Gymdeithas Fictoriaid yn amryw o chwareliadau i'r Tidion yna'r asyliaeth yr Haeddiannol yna gyda'r adroddiaeth o amryw o chwareliadau i'r Tidio. Roedd yr ‘anhaeddiannol’ yna gyda'r adroddiaeth o amryw o chwareliadau i'r Tidio.

Ni fyddai plant yna gyda'r adroddiaeth o amryw o chwareliadau i'r Tidio.

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

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

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

Cân o Ddiddorolgen a gafodd ei chreu mewn cogredd yna Wrexham Union Wrecsam, 16th January 1867.