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# Pryce Jones and the Election of 1880

John Evans, Curator



Sir Pryce Pryce-Jones, MP, 1895  
(public domain)

*The year 1880 saw Pryce Jones make his first sortie into national politics. Amongst our Pryce Jones Collection are several political posters which throw a light on how elections were conducted in the nineteenth century.*

By the end of the 1870s Pryce Jones, now into middle age, could look back on two decades of success. From humble apprentice boy, he had shown his drive, determination and vision as an entrepreneur. The opening of his state-of-the art Royal Welsh Warehouse was about to usher in a new era in his fortunes. Already patronised by royalty and recognised nationally and internationally for the quality of his produce, he was about to turn his business into a global brand, placing Newtown and Wales on the map.



Dolerw, with the Italianate campanile added by Pryce Jones

Pryce's status in the town reflected his rise. No longer living above the shop on The Cross, the family had moved out in the mid seventies crossing the river to take up residence in Plas Dolerw, the mansion built for Dr William Lutener fifty years earlier. From here, Pryce could operate his business thanks to a telephone connection to his new Warehouse. From here, he could also play the role of beneficent country gentleman,



Sports Day, 1879, in Dolerw, by John Owen

offering his spacious grounds to community events such as the, 'NEWTOWN WELSH WOOLLEN MILLS' ATHLETIC SPORTS.—These sports took place on Saturday, August 23, in a field kindly lent by Mr. Pryce Jones, of Dolerw', and attended by 'upwards of 700 persons'. In what might have been seen as a prophetic statement for PJ's political prospects in the following year, it was reported that, in the competitions organised that day, 'No one succeeded in climbing the greasy pole'<sup>1</sup>. He was fast becoming the country squire, taking part in such events as stag hunts organised by the Earl of Powis. One memorable event took place from Welshpool in the autumn of 1876 which was described as 'one of the severest runs ever enjoyed in this neighbourhood, and it will long live green in the memories of those who were fortunate enough to participate therein'. One of the Earl of Powis's stags had been released at Moat Farm Berriew and pursued without success all the way to Carno. Amongst the pursuers were both Pryce and his son Edward<sup>2</sup>.



Caricature of Charles Watkin Williams-Wynn, *Vanity Fair*, 1875 (public domain)

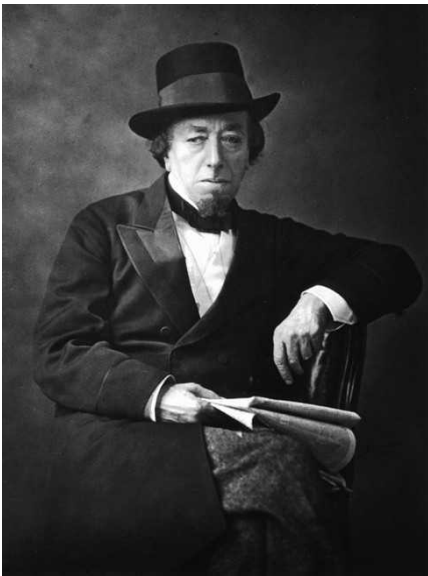
There were other opportunities for contact with the county's elite. Pryce had been inducted into the mysteries of the Masonic Society, whose Grand Master was none other than Sir Charles Watkin Williams-Wynn, Sixth Baronet of Wynnstay. He had further opportunities to be introduced to the great man, who was also the sitting MP for the County, for example when he was appointed by the High Sheriff of Montgomeryshire to the Grand Jury of the County Assizes<sup>3</sup>. Pryce had actively courted the Baronet and it was Sir Charles who would preside at the lavish opening of the Royal Welsh Warehouse in October 1879. Not surprisingly, as befitted a country squire, Pryce's political and religious views reflected the persona he was creating for himself. A staunch Anglican, he had been a member of the Llanllwchaearn vestry since his early thirties and he would later go on to donate land and money for the building of All Saints Church to the sum of £4,000. Pryce had also become active in local politics being nominated for election to the Local Board in 1877. Local Boards had been established in the aftermath of a succession of cholera epidemics which had hit the country in the thirties and forties and Pryce would have been active in bringing Newtown's first sewage scheme to fruition in these years. To complete the picture, Pryce had committed himself to the Conservative

<sup>1</sup> The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard, 29 August 1879

<sup>2</sup> The Cambrian News, 16 November 1876

<sup>3</sup> The Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard, 16 January 1880

party, being a member the County's Association for some years. In 1877 he played a small part in national politics when he was one of the Conservative Association members who nominated Lord Londonderry's son, Henry Vane-Tempest, of Plas Machynlleth as Conservative candidate in an unsuccessful by-election for the Montgomery Boroughs in 1877. As 1880 dawned, Pryce was contemplating spreading his political wings. Early in the new year, the local Association had unanimously voted to invite him to become their candidate in the forthcoming general election for the five boroughs of Montgomeryshire. Success in this venture could only further boost his social status, achieving something that no other humble Newtown trader had ever achieved: gaining a seat in the nation's Parliament as member of the party of the landed aristocracy. The prospect of a 'shopkeeper' and a distant relative of the radical Cooperative leader Robert Owen representing the interests of the landed classes could not have sat easily with some Tories. It was an irony not lost on the Liberal-backed press. 'What a slap in the face it would be for the Tories', declared *The Cambrian News*, 'if Mr. Pryce Jones happened to do what the Marquis of Londonderry's son failed to do. The victory in some respects would be more galling than defeat. The Tories never seem to see these things before hand'<sup>4</sup>.



Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli,  
1878 (public domain)

The 1880 election was fought against the backdrop of Liberal leader William Gladstone's 'Midlothian Campaign', regarded by many historians as the first modern political campaign. Conservative Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli had come to power in 1874 with a domestic agenda designed to appeal to the new urban working class voters, who had only gained the franchise in 1867. Legislation included a Public Health Act, an act to empower municipal corporations to demolish overcrowded slums, a factory act limiting working hours and an act placing employers and employees on an equal legal footing in industrial disputes. Meanwhile, in foreign affairs his audacious purchase of shares in the Suez Canal was immensely popular. However, as time went on, events abroad came to dominate. Disraeli's continued support of the Ottoman Empire as a bulwark against Russian expansion, despite Turkish massacres of Christians in the Balkans, was unpopular. There was a costly war in Afghanistan and a humiliating and disastrous defeat in South Africa, when Zulu chief Cetshwayo's forces massacred a British force of 1,300 at Isandhlwana. To top it all poor harvests had led to an economic depression. Gladstone viewed Disraeli's foreign policy as immoral and as an attempt to divert attention away

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<sup>4</sup> The Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard, 26 March 1880

from Britain's economic problems, accusing the government of financial incompetence, neglect of domestic legislation and mismanagement.

At this point it is worth remembering how different the electoral system was in Victorian Britain. In the nineteenth century, the voters of Montgomeryshire returned two members to Parliament: one representing the county and one to represent its five boroughs - Machynlleth, Llanidloes, Newtown, Llanfyllin and Welshpool. Traditionally, both seats had been in the controlling hands of the aristocratic families of Powis Castle and Wynnstay who ensured, by fair means or foul, that their nominees (always Conservative) were elected by the tiny number of electors who held the franchise. For example, the number of electors after the Great Reform Bill of 1832 for the five boroughs amounted to a mere 732, which meant bribery and intimidation was rife. Surely, as a Conservative candidate with the undoubted backing of Williams-Wynn, what could possibly go wrong? Times were changing, however. The certainties of Tory victory were no more. The widening of the franchise (1867) resulted in the granting of the vote in the constituency to more than 3,000 male heads of households, allowing the many flannel workers the right to vote for the first time. While the introduction of the secret ballot (1872) ended open voting and reduced the possibility of bribery and intimidation. Both measures made elections more difficult to control and, as a consequence, the outcome was becoming less predictable. True, it was still possible to offer inducements to voters either through money or by threats of eviction from property. Pryce Jones could also offer another important inducement; as the leading employer in the largest of the five boroughs, with 989 of the constituency's 3,100 voters, surely his workers could be relied upon to do the 'right' thing?

But there were wider issues at stake. The flannel manufacturing towns of Newtown and Llanidloes had a tradition as radical centres of Chartistism. Furthermore, the whole political map of Wales was changing. The country was essentially becoming a 'liberal' nation. This was due to the close link between politics and the rapid growth of non-conformism in the country, which as well as seeking freedom from the state-controlled Anglican Church, also campaigned for improvements in the lives of working and middle classes of Wales. The writing was on the wall as far as the Conservative establishment was concerned. In the election of 1874, for instance, which brought Conservative Benjamin Disraeli to power as Prime Minister, Liberals won 19 to the Tories 14 seats in Wales. Things were even less comforting for

a budding Conservative candidate closer to home. If Pryce Jones wanted to gain the Montgomery Boroughs seat for the Conservatives he would need to reverse a Liberal majority which had been in the ascendancy for the past seventeen years.



Caricature of Frederick Hanbury-Tracy, *Vanity Fair* 1884 (public domain)

Ironically, it was another landed family, the Hanbury-Tracys, who had held the constituency for the Liberals since 1862. Charles Hanbury-Tracy was succeeded by his brother, Frederick in 1877 when the former assumed the title of Baron Sudley on the death of their father. It was he who would be Pryce's rival for the parliamentary seat in 1880, should he wish to contest it. The Sudleys were a relatively recent arrival in Montgomeryshire. Their ancestral lands were in Gloucestershire but the family had also made a fortune in the iron industry of Pontypool, as well as in armaments in the north-east of England. At the end of the eighteenth century the Gregynog estate fell into their hands and it was the Hanbury-Tracys who remodelled the old hall using the revolutionary technique of concrete cladding to create a mock Tudor black-and-white mansion. Frederick was in many ways the epitome of the English upper classes. Educated privately and at Trinity College Cambridge, he had served as a Major in the Worcestershire Yeomanry. Through his mother Emma, daughter of George Hay Dawkins-Pennant of Penrhyn, further industrial connections were brought into the family, not to mention links to West Indian sugar.

The Hanbury-Tracys, despite their Liberal stance, were dubious of too much parliamentary reform. Charles had been a member of the so-called 'Adullamites', who had resisted further parliamentary reform in 1867. Nevertheless, with the subsequent extension of the franchise, the family clearly saw which way the wind was blowing and actively courted the new breed of voters. In an effort to revive the flagging flannel industry, Charles Hanbury-Tracy, soon after becoming the Boroughs' MP for the first time, formed the Cambrian Flannel Company of Newtown and Llanidloes with a capital of £50,000 taking over existing mills, including the Cambrian Mill itself. Whilst retaining the traditional handlooms, he introduced the latest power-driven machines and diversified production into the production of shawls, whittles and tweeds. In 1873, he formed a much larger company, the Welsh Woollen Manufacturing Company, expanding its capital to £150,000. Diversification and expansion led to a demand for expertise which could not be found locally. As a result workers were attracted to the town from other textile centres in Scotland, Lancashire and Yorkshire. They were housed in superior quality housing provided by Hanbury-Tracy in Dysart



Scottish tweed workers cottages, Dysart Terrace (Penny Mayes/Creative Commons)



Capel Coffa, Milford Road,  
erected 1865 (Robin Stott/  
Creative Commons)

Terrace. Not content with courting the flannel industry for votes, he also curried favour with Welsh-speaking nonconformists by financing the building of the Welsh Congregational Chapel on Milford Road, despite his strong Anglican beliefs.

Pryce had a lot to contemplate and, at his nomination meeting he gave notice that he would take a month to consider whether he would accept it. Nineteenth century elections could be bruising and expensive affairs. Pryce would go on to spend over £2,000 (the modern equivalent of approximately £150,000) in the election, nearly double that of his opponent Hanbury-Tracy. The news of his nomination was greeted with mixed reception in the press. 'The Conservatives of Montgomeryshire', proclaimed the pro-Liberal *North Wales Express*, '... have decided that they will contest the Montgomery Boroughs now represented by the Hon. F. Tracy'. Their defeat of 1877, it continued, 'ought to be sufficient reason for their abandoning the idea unless it can be shown that political opinion in these boroughs has entirely changed, which certainly is not the case'. Whilst concluding that the Tory nominee was a 'celebrated dealer in Welsh and other cloths', and conceding he was 'a successful man in business', it concluded that, 'We can only hope his sagacity will be equal to his ambition, and that he will devote his energies to fortify the endangered Tory seat for the county rather than enter upon the Quixotic task of contesting the Boroughs.'<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, *The Aberystwyth Observer* was more optimistic:

*A more suitable candidate than Mr Pryce Jones could not have been chosen. . . , for he is personally known to every person in Newtown, and to most of the residents of Montgomery, Welshpool, Llanidloes, and Machynlleth. Mr Jones is himself a large employer of labour, and will secure a larger number of votes than any preceding candidate.*<sup>6</sup>

Parliament was dissolved on March 8 1880, but it was not until Friday 12 March that Pryce entered the fray by announcing his candidature. The following Tuesday he made his first appearance, arriving at Welshpool by train with a host of his most prominent supporters, including his father-in-law Edward Rowley Morris. It was reported that his reception in the town was, '... very gratifying. . . evoking loud cheers and friendly hand shakes'. Later, in a speech made at the Conservative committee room in Broad Street, Pryce thanked his hosts for:

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<sup>5</sup> The North Wales Express, 27 February 1880)

<sup>6</sup> The Aberystwyth Observer 28 February 1880

*. . . the kindness they had paid to him, a commercial man, a neighbour, a friend, a brother - showed clearly that he had the support of the borough of Welshpool. All they would have to do was to carry it out to the end, and they would show the Liberal party of Montgomeryshire that they could not reckon upon the borough as belonging to one single family, and that even a commercial man, a tradesman, even a working man, had as much right to ask for the support of the independent electors of the Montgomeryshire boroughs as any person coming from what stock he might<sup>7</sup>.*

It was clear that Pryce would build his campaign around the novelty of a man of humble background against the might of the landed aristocrat. But it wasn't long before the Liberals were using this against him in the local press. On 17 March, The Oswestry Advertiser opined that:

*Mr Pryce Jones's address is admirably qualified to increase the Liberal majority, for it bristles with fallacies that will excite the indignation of the electors, and stir them up to inflict an exemplary defeat upon its author. . . To advance the personal interests of the electors by building up a large trade, is not exactly a qualification for parliamentary service . . . For the sake of the town and trade of Newtown, we must hope the electors will show their appreciation of Mr Jones's kindness in advancing their interests, by keeping him amongst them to bestow his undivided energies upon his business.*

The South Wales Daily News was even more dismissive, declaring that 'Mr. Jones is a commercial somebody, and a political nobody, and the reasons for his candidature are an inscrutable mystery'. Mr Ellis Roberts, Hanbury-Tracy's election agent, was quick to exploit such Liberal press articles to the full by reprinting them as election propaganda leaflets<sup>8</sup>. It wasn't long before more scurrilous attacks were being made through Roberts's handouts, often in rhyme, 'Where is the ancient county stock,/The proud old Tories' former boast?' asked one, 'The cards are played now very low,/ To take a tradesman from his post/ Not one! Amongst their stout array/ Of Herberts, Harrisons and Naylor's!/ But they must to the Warehouse go,/And choose the Prince of all the Tailors!<sup>9</sup>.

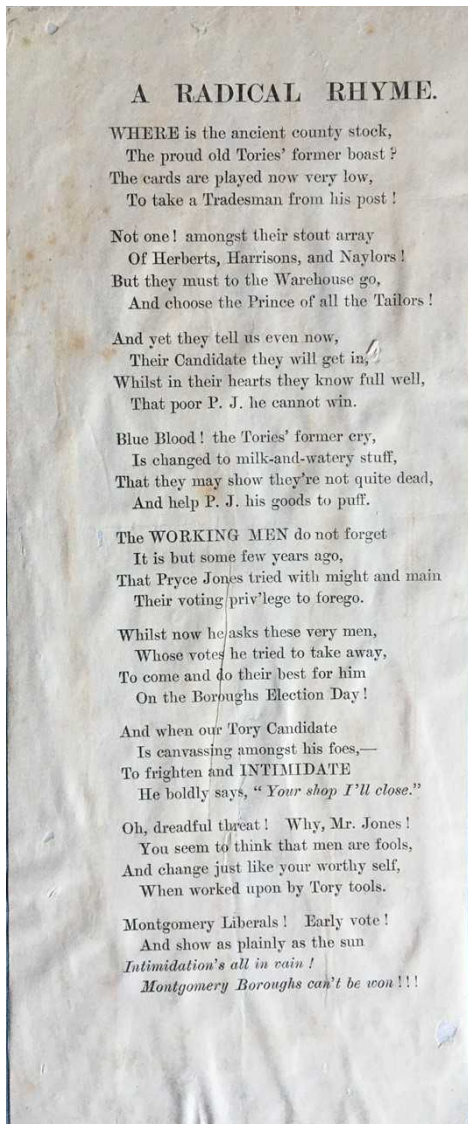
The Liberal attack on Pryce Jones became increasingly bitter. At a meeting in Welshpool on the eve of the election Hanbury-Tracy lamented that 'the contest in the Boroughs was being

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<sup>7</sup> The Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard March 19 1880

<sup>8</sup> 'What the Papers Say About Pryce Jones!', NTM N.1994.24.7

<sup>9</sup> 'A Radical Rhyme', NTM N.1994.24.5



Liberal election campaign literature,  
1880 style (NTM).

conducted in a manner in which political contests there had never been conducted before. (Hear, hear.) The speaker then referred to the extraordinarily large number of committee rooms engaged by the Conservatives, most of them at small beer houses. He thought it was a fair inference that their opponents hoped to be able to find a certain number of voters who would sell their consciences for a glass of beer<sup>10</sup>. In another ribald rhyme entitled 'Captain Jones's Tory Irregulars', the claim of election bribery was spelled out even clearer. In it, Pryce is referred to as 'Pwithy', perhaps a derogatory reference to a supposed lisp, who has 'warm supporters at *The Bell* and at the *Dirty Child* [*The Black Boy*],/*The Sheaf* too and the *Bricklayers Arms* they're told to draw it mild'. According to the writer, the chief orchestrator for such 'dirty tricks' was none other than his father-in-law, Edward Rowley Morris, who, as '... Chairman of the Local Board looks on me with pride'. It will be, concludes the anonymous rhymer of Ladywell Street, '... Rowley [who will] cause the taps to flow', should the Tory candidate win<sup>11</sup>. In yet another piece of election doggerel, entitled 'The Prince of Wales's Monkey', Pryce, 'the conceited pup', is accused not only of plying the voters with drink but closing down the shops of those who vote Liberal and buying up Newtown's woollen mills. He is even accused of threatening to ruin the town by removing his Warehouse to 'Paddy Land'<sup>12</sup> should he fail in the election.

It was clear that Pryce and his Tory backers were having difficulty countering the Liberal onslaught. In 'An Answer to Richard Cotton Ball' an attempt was made to counter 'the venom . . . and untruths':

*The hands he employs in his warehouse alone,  
Do number one hundred or more;  
And Welsh flannels he buys in his own native town,  
Gives employment to many a score.*

*Then his factory of hand-loom and power-loom too  
(Tho' small yet in number they've been);  
In fine textures they work out his "special design"  
To be worn by Kings, Princes and Queen.*

*See the good he does do: what money he spends!  
For the hands he employs must be fed.  
The goods which they use they buy in Newtown,*

<sup>10</sup> The Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard, 9 April 1880

<sup>11</sup> 'Captain Jones's Tory Irregulars' NTM N.1994.24.14

<sup>12</sup> 'The Prince of Wales's Monkey', NTM N.1994.24.3

*And the money he pays them is spread.*<sup>13</sup>

By the end of March, with the election just days away, morale in his camp was ebbing away. The Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser reporting that 'there seems to be no doubt about the Boroughs, as Mr Pryce Jones admits he will be defeated'. The paper concluded that 'Mr Tracy will have almost a walk-over, Mr Pryce Jones's candidature being very weak'<sup>14</sup>. His supporters were becoming increasingly desperate. At a 'Great Liberal meeting' held at Welshpool on 1 April, it was reported that 'an organised disturbance' of 'Conservative rowdies' had taken place, in which attendees, including Hanbury-Tracy and David Davies, had been verbally abused by 'a mob' as they made their way from the railway station to the town hall. Some of these interlopers, 'had obtained admission for the purpose of interrupting the proceedings; but they were very speedily and unceremoniously ejected. A systematic and persistent attempt was, however, made to disturb the meeting from the outside. The mob resorted to shouting, the playing of tin kettles, and other expedients for drowning the voices of the speakers'<sup>15</sup>. When election day (6 April) arrived the authorities in the town took the precaution of requesting a detachment of troops consisting of 78 officers and men of the 53rd Shropshire Regiment of Foot from Salford Barracks, Manchester. The force:

*. . . assembled in front of the Post Office at half-past seven, and were stationed in the Assembly Room during the day. Both Conservatives and Liberals were ready for the fight punctually at eight. By 10 o'clock about 300 had given their votes by 12 over 500; and by 4 about 730 out of 878. . . The town was most orderly; not a single disturbance taking place during the morning and midday, but about three the lively spirits of Thursday night and Friday*

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<sup>13</sup> 'An Answer to Richard Cotton Ball', NTM N.1994.24.11

<sup>14</sup> The Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser, 27 March 1880

<sup>15</sup> The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 9th April 1880

*began to come to the front, having, by their appearance, imbibed sufficient to keep them in the blues for the next fortnight, and challenges to single combat were many and very pressing. Mr. Pryce Jones's colour was to the front here, and lent a charm to many a countenance which, without it, was particoloured enough. The fights were mostly of a short-lived and tame character, and conducted under the stern eye of the law with great fairness. Some of them might have lasted three minutes had not a gentleman of the neighbourhood, amid many signs of dissatisfaction, made himself prominent in showing the police their duty and stopping the displays of fistic skill as soon as he appeared to find them out. This seemed to cast a damper on the spirits of the true blues, and by four all was quiet. The Liberals early in the day caught several dogs, Tory and Radical, and affixed a label to their necks with the following on the one side, "Vote for Tracy and reduced taxation", on the other, "2s. 6d. extra tax". This is what the Tories have done for me.<sup>16</sup>*

In the other boroughs of the constituency polling seems to have gone off with few incidents. In Montgomery, it was reported that most of the town's electors had polled before midday. The same was true in Machynlleth where "polling here was marked by far less excitement than at the last by-election". In Newtown

*. . . the polling was conducted throughout the day with exemplary order and good humour. It was market day, and the general appearance of the streets did not differ very much from that of ordinary market days, except that a very large number of persons were to be seen wearing the*

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

*Liberal favours. The flannel mills were closed for the day, as it was evident the hands took too keen an interest in the election to make it at all profitable to keep them open, and the young women employed in them displayed in some parts of their dress the colours of the popular candidate. In some instances daffodils were to be seen doing duty on that behalf. The Tory colours were no where to be seen. The supporters of Mr. Pryce Jones were evidently discreet enough not to make a show of themselves openly. Two men who were discovered wearing true blue rosettes were firmly requested to take them off<sup>17</sup>.*

When the result of the election was announced, it was apparent that the contest had, after all, been a close call with Frederick Hanbury-Tracy coming out the winner with 1,572 to Pryce Jones's 1,211 votes. In reality, Pryce was fighting an uphill battle. The Hanbury-Tracy's had been in firm control of the constituency for over seventeen years. The Liberals themselves were better prepared and better organised. Pryce's nomination as Conservative candidate and his acceptance had been a last minute affair and there had been little time to mount a coherent campaign. In the wider political context it was the Liberals who were in the ascendant. The tide of anti-Tory sentiment which had swept Gladstone back into power, had also destroyed the Conservative hold on Wales. The *Cambrian News* observed, 'that for the whole of the Principality there are only two Conservative members, to twenty- eight Liberals'<sup>18</sup>. Among the casualties was Charles Williams-Wynn whose defeat in Montgomeryshire ended the family's century-long control. Pryce could feel heartened by the way he had performed in his first political contest. In a report of his post-election speech, the Conservative leaning *Aberystwyth Observer* reflected that, 'In no contest throughout the country was more pluck shown than by Mr Pryce Jones who succeeded in polling a larger number of votes than any other previous Conservative candidate'. In a post-election address, Pryce acknowledged his success:

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> The *Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard*, 16 April 1880

. . . 1,211 of you have spontaneously recorded your votes in favour of Conservative Principles in these Boroughs - 100 more than at the contest in 1877. Although we have failed to carry the seat, we have every reason not to be discouraged. The forces against us were many - unlimited abuse in the local press; the vilest personal slander was scattered broadcast by our opponents, and even buildings dedicated to the sacred purposes of religion were turned into theatres for the display of the wildest political passions. It is only six weeks ago that my name was first mentioned as a candidate, and when it is remembered that we had to attack a party in possession, and which had for several years spent many thousands of pounds to make the seat a safe one, I think we may cordially congratulate ourselves on the result<sup>19</sup>.

As a result, the Conservative association, not wishing to make the same mistake again, was quick to re-adopt Pryce as their future candidate for the Boroughs, the news of which even brought a begrudging respect from one of the chief organs of Welsh Liberal politics, 'Mr Pryce Jones is a large employer of labour he has recently been investing a considerable amount of capital in mining he is a local man, and apart from his politics he is popular. In him the Conservatives have adopted the best man to fight for the seat for the borough'<sup>20</sup>.



A later view of *The Bricklayers*, when it had reverted to its previous name of *The Green Tavern*

In the meantime, there was fall-out to deal with from the preceding struggle in an incident which throws some light on Liberal allegations of intimidation on the part of the Tories. One of the public houses named in the Liberal attacks on Pryce in which the election beer flowed freely was the *Bricklayers Arms*. The beer house, situated in New Church Street, had previously been known as *The Green Tavern*, but in 1878 William Brick, a bricklayer by trade, took over the tenancy and renamed it in honour of his profession. In the

<sup>19</sup> The Aberystwyth Observer, 27 April 1880

<sup>20</sup> The South Wales Daily News, 17 May 1880

Spring of 1880, Brick went to court to seek legal redress for the way he had been treated by his landlord in the recent election. His landlord was none other than the unsuccessful conservative candidate. The case was reported eagerly by the Liberal press:

*To show the length to which partisanship will sometimes go in Tory circles, we have only to refer to a case which has just been decided by the Newtown county-court judge and a jury. Mr William Brick was a tavern keeper at Newtown, and is an elector . . . He is a Liberal, and when Mr Pryce Jones the defeated candidate at the last election - much to the surprise of the constituency, issued his address as a full-blown Conservative, Mr Brick declined to allow the production to appear in his window, although he accorded the privilege to the address of Mr Hanbury Tracy, his Liberal rival. Now, it appears that the house in which Mr Brick carried on his business as a licensed victualler belongs to Mr Pryce Jones, and a day came when those who acted in the name of the latter avenged themselves for the slight which this tenant had passed upon the printed professions of Mr Jones's political faith.*

As a consequence of his action in favouring Hanbury-Tracy, it was alleged that on Fair Day, 29 March 1880, 'the busiest day of the year'<sup>21</sup>, Brick was evicted from his tenancy in favour of a Mr Saunders, a more politically sympathetic tenant. In the ensuing case, both Pryce and his wife Eleanor were summoned to give testimony, but despite their best efforts, the judge found in favour of the plaintiff and awarded the sum of £25 damages.

So ended Pryce Jones's first attempt to gain a seat in Parliament. He had undoubtedly learned a great deal from the experience and, far from discouraging him, his determination was strengthened to seek the recognition he so craved. He

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<sup>21</sup> The Cambrian News, 15 July 1880

would have to wait a further five years before another opportunity came his way, but next time he would be prepared.