

# Y CHWYLDRO COPR THE COPPER REVOLUTION

“Robert Morris had at this time so complete a knowledge of copper-making that wherever he was concerned, he could answer for having good copper made...At this time copper-making was almost a secret art and mystery.”

Robert Morris yr iau ar waith ei dad yn y diwydiant yn 1727 o'i *History of the Copper Concern*, 1774

Robert Morris junior on his father's work in the industry, 1727 from his *History of the Copper Concern*, 1774

Louise Miskell / Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe | Louise Miskell / Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University

Rhaeadr Aberdulais, ger Castell-nedd, safle gwaith mwyndoddi copr cyntaf Cymru, a gwaith tunblat yn ddiweddarach Aberdulais Falls, near Neath, the site of the first Welsh copper smelting works, later tin plate works



Sefydlwyd y gwaith mwyndoddi copr cyntaf yng Nghymru yn Aberdulais ym 1584. Yng Nghwm Nedd hefyd, ddiwedd yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg, y daeth mwyndoddi, coethi a gweithio copr yn fusnes masnachol yng Nghymru am y tro cyntaf.

Roedd rhaeadrau'r cwm yn pweru dwy felin gopr ger Abaty Nedd; agorodd y cyntaf ohonynt ym 1694. Y gweithfeydd hyn oedd yn cyflenwi'r diwydiannau cynhyrchu copr a phres ym Mryste ac yn Wandsworth, Llundain.

Yn gynnar yn y ddeunawfed ganrif roedd entrepreneuriaid yn mentro'n fawr iawn am enillion digon ansicr. Gwelodd Dr John Lane o Fryste fanteision masnachol o fod wedi'i leoli ym mhorthladd allforio glo mwyaf Cymru a gadawodd Gastell Nedd i agor gwaith copr cyntaf Abertawe yng Nglandŵr ar lannau Afon Tawe yn 1717.

Aeth Lane yn fethdalwr yn 1726 a gadawodd waith Llangyfelach yng Nglandŵr i'w bartner Robert Morris. Arloesodd ffyrdd o redeg busnes proffidiol yn y cyfnod cyn bodolaeth cyfleusterau bancio lleol a rhwydweithiau camlesi a rheilffyrdd. Dyma oedd sylfaen goruchafiaeth Abertawe dros ddiwydiant copr y byd.

The first Welsh copper smelting works was established at Aberdulais in 1584. It was also in the Neath Valley, in the late seventeenth century, that copper smelting, refining and working first became a commercial concern in Wales.

The valley's waterfalls provided the power for two copper mills near Neath Abbey, the first of which opened in 1694. These works supplied the copper and brass manufacturing industries in Bristol and Wandsworth, London.

In the early eighteenth century entrepreneurs took great risks for uncertain rewards. Dr. John Lane of Bristol saw the commercial advantages of being based in Wales's largest coal-exporting port and left Neath to open Swansea's first copperworks at Landore on the banks of the River Tawe in 1717.

Lane became bankrupt in 1726 and left the Llangyfelach works at Landore to his partner Robert Morris. He pioneered ways of running a profitable business in the period before local banking facilities or canal and railway networks. This laid the foundations of Swansea's dominance of the world's copper industry.

“Great scarcity of money there [Swansea]: mostly dealings for credit and bad persons to trust. The neap tides no conveyance to Cornwall by shipping. By which it appears as if the River was not so good in its navigation then as now.”

Robert Morris yr iau ar waith ei dad yn y diwydiant yn 1727 o'i *History of the Copper Concern*, 1774

Robert Morris junior on his father's work in the industry, 1727 from his *History of the Copper Concern*, 1774

Abaty Nedd a'r gwaith mwyndoddi yn y cefndir, o *Excursions in South Wales and Monmouthshire*, 1805, gan Edward Donovan  
Neath Abbey with smelting works in the background from Edward Donovan, *Excursions in South Wales and Monmouthshire*, 1805

Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales

Louise Miskell / Archifau Richard Burton, Prifysgol Abertawe | Louise Miskell / Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University