

NORTH EAST POPULAR POLITICS PROJECT

Newsletter 3

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PROJECT ORAL HISTORY SESSIONS

Thursday, 28 April, 2-5pm - Oral history: what is it and how to do it well

Thursday 5 May. 2-4pm. Working with sound files - uploading, copying, simple editing, transcription.

Venue: Workers Education Association, Joseph Cowen House, 21 Portland Terrace Jesmond.

Organised by Jo Bath, Project Oral History Co-ordinator. There will be more of both of these if the interest is there. More oral history interviewers and/or transcribers welcomed, no experience or equipment necessary.

Please let Jo know if you are going on 28 April and/or 5 May or if you want a session on a different date. jo@gelfling.co.uk.

PROJECT ARCHIVE SESSIONS

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| Tuesdays. 2pm | Tyne & Wear Archives. Led by Peter Livsey |
| Wednesdays. 9am-4pm | Durham County Record Office. Led by David Tate |
| Wednesdays. 10.30am | Northumberland Archives. Woodhorn. Ask for Peter Nicklin |
| Thursdays . 11am-3.30pm | Gateshead Local Studies. Led by David Tate |
| Thursdays. 2pm | Newcastle Central Library Local Studies. Led by Peter Livsey |

OTHER PROJECT AND OTHER EVENTS DIARY

Tuesday 26 April. Door open 7.00pm, start: 7.30pm Siege and Storm/The Great Siege of Newcastle. 15 free tickets for Project members. Live Theatre, Broad Chare, Quayside, Newcastle. The evening will include the showing of a short 7-minute film set during the siege of Newcastle in 1644, a talk by authors of the book *The Great Siege of Newcastle* (recently released by the History Press) and a short presentation about the "Siege and Storm" exhibition currently at Newcastle Discovery Museum. The authors of the book and director of the film will also be available for Q&A.. To ensure a ticket email Sean by end of 23 April.

Tuesday 3 May. 7pm. Our Kingdom Comes Tomorrow: The Plebs League and Working Class Education in the North East 1909/1940. Talk by Project member Rob Turnbull at North East Labour History Society's First Tuesday meeting. Tyneside Irish Centre, Gallowgate, Newcastle. See Rob's article below on Page 7.

Saturday 21 May. 11am-3.30pm. Independent Working Class Education meeting. Working Class Movement Library, Salford. Since the first IWCE meeting in Sheffield in November the organisers have discovered people all over the country interested in

developing materials and approaches that respect the role of the working class in making history, and that seek to offer a diverse range of education materials. So, we decided to try and gather existing good materials, produce some more, make them available nationally. Several comrades have offered to make presentations. Are you able to attend? Could you bring/send materials and ideas? Can you pass/email this on to other friends? - Keith Venables: venablesk@yahoo.co.uk. See Rob Turnbull's article below on his research into the history of independent working class education in the North East.

Saturday 4 & Sunday 5 June. Newcastle Green Fair, Leazes Park. Last year's had over 15,000 visitors. Further details www.newcastlegreenfestival.org.uk. The Project is having a stall. Can you help at it? Please contact John Charlton, johncharlton@blueyonder.co.uk.

To Sunday 5 June. John Martin *Heaven and Hell* Exhibition. Laing Gallery. www.twmuseums.org.uk/laing/thingstoseeanddo/exhibition/2011/03/05/john-martin-heaven-hell. A letter writer in the *Guardian* has pointed out that the colours and apocryphal nature of John Martin's paintings reflect the industrial landscape of Tyneside as he grew up as a child.

PROJECT NEWS

Archive Working. More people are signing up to take part in the Project. Members of the Project are now hard at work at: Tyne & Wear Archives, Newcastle City Library Local Studies, Gateshead Local Studies, Durham County Record Office, Northumberland Archives (at Woodhorn) and Berwick Record Office. Steps are now being made to start within the next month at South Shields Local Studies and Teesside Archives.

Co-op Group. The Co-op Group is hard at work on a large collection held in a Co-op warehouse, the aim being to deposit it at Tyne & Wear Archives. See more in Kath Connolly's piece below on Joan Lamb.

Oral History. Several people have been trained in

oral history techniques and interviewing has started. Do you know anyone you think should be interviewed? See Oral History Diary above for details of next sessions. See also Kath Connolly's piece on Joan Lamb below.

Political Trial on Tyneside. Peter Livsey gave a talk on the 1793 trial of Alexander Whyte in 1793 to the North East Labour History Society's First Tuesday meeting on 5 April. This will be published in *North East History*. Peter writes about his research approach below.

The Cuts. It is with sadness that the ConDem cuts required of local authorities have led among others to the loss of several jobs at Gateshead Local Studies.

EARLY 19THC ELECTIONS

Peter Livsey writes:

As well as the extensive collection on the famous 1826 elections referred to in the last Newsletter, the Lit and Phil has the poll books and/or papers on many other general or by elections in the North-East in the 19th Century.

The actual election process was very different from today. Men voted publicly at a single hustings and their votes were recorded and published. The polls were kept open until it was accepted that no-one else

was going to turn up. Qualified voters could live anywhere. A major election expense was transporting voters to the polls and providing them with accommodation, food and, above all, drink. Actual bribery had to be much more blatant than this to qualify. The fact that constituencies had two members and each voter had two votes led to coalitions between candidates, often unacknowledged in public. Voters could split between candidates or “plump,” which in the counties meant giving both votes to one candidate; in the boroughs using only one vote.

Perhaps the most vivid picture of what an election was like even after the Reform Act was provided by Durham City in 1837. The Tory, the Hon. Arthur Trevor, came top of the poll. The radical liberal Thomas Colpitts Granger came 2 votes behind the traditional Whig candidate, William Harland, both government supporters. Granger had already congratulated the mayor on the low crime rate that allowed the police to be out canvassing for his opponent. At the declaration he dropped the usual loser’s courtesies.

He announced his intention to petition. In particular he wanted the two votes of which he was cheated by Mr. Marshall, attorney and Harland’s agent. An old gentleman, Seth Jackson, and a mason, Jonathan Cutler, had been whisked away before they could give a second vote and so were recorded as plumpers for Harland. When he asked how he had lost there was a shout of “by corruption” from the crowd. He then pointed out that Stephen Brooks, a tailor and “... chief bully and blackguard to the Harland party” had given one of his votes to the Tory, as had others.

Granger said they would rather have a Tory than a radical. They could both have beaten Trevor. Harland could hardly speak for the noise. There were scuffles at his chairing and the editor of *Durham Chronicle* was stabbed, but only through to his waistcoat!

Non-voters always had a role, attending the hustings to support their favourite and intimidate his opponent’s supporters. As late as 1852, in North Northumberland, Sir George Grey said that he prized the backing of those who could not vote. Yet they were described by the Conservative press as mainly a “noisy, brutal, drunken and debased mob” of non-voters, including “half-naked, drunken, wild, Irishmen” imported from Berwick.

In South Northumberland, at the hustings in Hexham, a butcher paraded a large loaf and a slice of beef, while a boy displayed a stale piece of bread and a rotten herring indicating the diets people could expect under a Liberal or a Conservative government. Police from Newcastle were present to prevent trouble from a “rough element.” The local “village patriot” John Ridley, a tanner, in the crowd repeatedly called for their removal - “dismiss the blue bottles.”

The Lit and Phil does not have a complete set of these elections. City Library, for example, although it has fewer collections, has another for the 1807 general election in Northumberland, in which Charles Grey, then Lord Howick, lost his seat after twenty years. There may well be accounts of other elections, or other versions, with extra details, in other museums, archives or libraries that would be of interest.

THE TOM MARSHALL COLLECTION

Rob Turnbull writes:

Tom Marshall was a socialist and a librarian at Gateshead, who was known to several people involved in the Project. He was able to buy in lots of socialist, labour movement and women’s suffrage newspapers, mainly on microfilm. He also built up a wide range of material, much of which is as yet uncatalogued and which Project members are now going through, listing and making notes on.

Rob Turnbull, who specialises in workers’ education, writes about Tom Marshall’s Collection at Gateshead Local Studies.

As a researcher on the NEPPP, we are fortunate to have access to some of the best research material outside of London, and I would venture to say in the whole of the U.K. Ok perhaps I’m being biased here, but some of the material and research facilities that are available, really do take the breath away. We have for example the magnificent collection that is

housed in the Lit and Phil, along with the nearby Institute of Mining, as well as archives such as that housed at Woodhorn, the Newcastle Central Library, and the Tyne and Wear Archives to name but four.

In my own field of education and in particular the history of working class education, I have been privileged to have access to the papers of the late Tom Marshall, librarian at Gateshead for many years, and prodigious collector of books, documents and assorted ephemera associated with the Labour Movement. I hope readers will appreciate the comparison with Eddie and Ruth Frow, the founders of the Working Class Movement Library in Salford. Both these working class autodidacts have left us a legacy of immeasurable value and a resource which is unparalleled

History is often accused of being dull, of being little more than a dry recitation of dates, wars and battles.

Many people would question if history has any value at all in today's celebrity driven, wealth obsessed society. Indeed for many of us brought up on the standard Whig interpretation of history at school, this is a charge which carries much weight.

It comes as a shock therefore, when reading Tom Marshall's papers to see history in the raw, to see history, if I may be permitted to use the phrase, as class struggle. The accounts of the suffering caused

to the people of the North East, both during and after the General Strike, are very real, and tell us more than a book ever can, what it must have been like to live through such times. Perhaps in years to come future generations will document the struggles of the current generation and draw comparisons with the hardship, poverty and politics of the 1920's. Perhaps somebody will write a biography of Tom Marshall. Now there is a challenge to end this piece on.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES FROM BOOKS

From P. J. Waller. *Democracy and Sectarianism. A Political and social history of Liverpool 1868-1939*. Liverpool UP.

- Durham Labour Candidate 1910. Alexander Gordon Cameron (1876-1944). Born Oban. Member Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners; Labour candidate Liverpool Kirkdale, January and July 1910; Durham Jarrow, December 1910; Mp. Widnes 1929-31. Became building contractor. Lived Brixton, London. (p. 482)
- James Conley (1859-). Born S. Shields. Boilermaker. Moved to Patrick, Scotland. Trade union official and Labour candidate Kirkdale (Liverpool) 1906. (p. 485)
- Richard Francis Herring (1858-1916). Born London, son of vicar. Educated Durham Univ. Curate at Morpeth, then vicar in Toxeth (Liverpool) from 1886. Active in Early Closing and Co-operative movements. Outspoken critic of Unitarianism. (p. 493)

From: Edward Royle. *Victorian Infidels. The Origins of the British Secularist Movement 1791-1866*. Manchester University Press. 1974.

- Stokesley. There were 18 subscriptions made in the village of Stokesley, near Stockton, listed in Richard Carlile's Republican newspaper in February 1822. The village had previously drunk the health of Paine in pure water. (p. 35).
- Charles Haslam (Junius). Born Northumberland 1811. Went to Manchester 1820. Active Owenite and Chartist. Wrote *Letters to the Clergy of All Denominations* in 1838. Settled in Newcastle 1860, and started a chemist's business. He retired in 1879. He died 1902 (*Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* 22 February 1902). (p. 311)
- Arthur Trevelyan. Born 1802. 2nd son of Sir John, 5th baronet. Total abstinence advocate and supporter of radical causes d. 1878 (p. 316)

From: D. J. Rowe. *London Radicalism* (p. 245)

This snippet is unexpected giving us hints about Tyneside Chartism in 1842. Three locals wrote to the (London) Metropolitan Parliamentary Reform Association:

- J. Lothington of Sunderland with 'names of active reformer' and 'saying the prejudices against chartists operate for the moment against the formation of an Association there.'
- S. Donkin of Bywell sent names 'of active reformers and will try to form an Association and doing anything in his power for that county'.
- Thomas Thompson of Bishops Wearmouth, sent names 'saying chartists are very strong there'.

READING

If you get the opportunity to read any of the following items these please make notes from them for the Project.

David Saunders. The papers of W. E. Adams (1832-1906). *Historical Research*. no 82.

John Flanagan. "A gigantic scheme of co-operation": The Miners' and Seamen's United Association in the North East, 1851-1854. *Labour History Review*. Vol 72(2)

David Wray. The place of imagery in the transmission of culture: the banners of the Durham Coalfield. *International Labour & Working Class History*. Vol 76(1)

Frank Neal. A statistical profile of the Irish community in Gateshead. The evidence of the 1851 census. *Immigrants & Minorities*. Vol 29(1)

Malcolm Smith and Donald. M. MacRaild. The origins of the Irish in Northern England: An isonymic analysis of data from the 1881 Census. *Immigrants & Minorities* Vol 27 (2&3)

Graham J Milne. Institutions, localism and seaborne epidemics on late nineteenth century Tyneside. *Northern History*. Vol 46(2)

John Flanagan. Workplace protest and popular politics on the north-east coalfield, 1844-69. PhD Sunderland 2008

Stephen Friend. Religious influences in north-east fishing communities in the nineteenth century. MPhil, Hull

FINDS IN THE ARCHIVES

Lots of relevant items are being identified and looked at in the archives and libraries by Project members. Of particular interest at Newcastle Central Library Local Studies are:

- *Barrington's Voyage to Botany Bay in New South Wales*, (Newcastle 1801) tells the story of the prisoners' journey and life there.
- *Felling Colliery disaster*. Rev John Hodgson (Heworth Chapel) had a sermon published in 1813 in which he argued: As to cause, "Let us with that charity which 'thinketh no evil,' refrain from enquiry into the causes which commenced and wrought in darkness." He discussed the Fund that was being set up for the families of those killed. In answer to objections to the fund-raising on the grounds that there is already provision through poor relief, that is the legal minimum - Christians can and should do more. On the argument that the coal-owners should pay he said that their profits are not great or reliable; there are other hazardous jobs - other forms of mining and seamen - and coalminers are better paid than most workers; other businesses and consumers also benefit from the work of the miners; owners already do a lot for their workers. He proposed a hospital for old and infirm miners and their aged widows, to be funded by a levy on coal sales and deductions from wages.
- *A series of songs, many of a political nature like the mocking the riotous events of the day of George IV's Coronation in 1821*. The former Prince Regent was unpopular with many Tynesiders, who had rallied to the cause of his estranged wife, Caroline.
- *The Anti-Slavery Harp - A Collection of Songs for Anti-Slavery Meetings*, compiled by William Wells Brown, and published in Newcastle in 1850. Brown was an escaped slave who came to Britain from the United States and campaigned around the country. He said that the best reception was that on Tyneside. The Newcastle ladies raised the money to buy his freedom.
- *Early Closing Movement*. A series of sermons by different denominations in the 1880s, arguing the case for shops and places of business closing earlier: health; mental culture; moral culture; Christian usefulness. One sermon states: "Capital has its duties to the employed, as well as its own rights and privileges." Many labour movement activists were supporters of the Early Closing movement on the grounds that shop workers should have shorter hours.

THE HEXHAM INSURRECTION 1761

On 9 March 1761 a crowd assembled to prevent Constables of Tindale Ward handing lists of those liable to service in the militia [*under the 1757 Militia Act*] to the Deputy Lieutenants and JPs at Hexham as crowds had done at other Northumberland towns. 6 companies of Yorkshire militia had been sent from Newcastle in anticipation of trouble. These 240 men faced a crowd of 5,000. After reasoning failed, the magistrates read the Riot Act. An officer was shot and the troops were attacked. The militia were ordered to fire, killing 40 and wounding considerable

numbers; the rest fled. One "ringleader" was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered, and actually hanged.

A sermon on the events argued that as well as "moral duties" to each other, we have "civil duties" to the whole community. Corinthians XII compares society to the human body acting in unity. Most must labour, but governors and instructors in morality and religion must be exempt. Our governors owe us protection - and we are one of the few countries where their power is not arbitrary. Inferior ranks owe them

obedience. In wartime, this includes personal assistance to the government. The Militia Act has proved its worth, freeing regulars from guarding forts and prisoners of war, "to smite our Enemies in the hinder Parts, and put them to perpetual Shame." The insurrection could have encouraged our enemies and filled the land with confusion. Duty of all to condemn it and denounce any attempt at follow-up. Militia confounded doubters and proved its effectiveness at Hexham. They and the magistrates did act in unity as

parts of one body. It is a matter of shame that Northumberland was the scene of the worst resistance to the Act. But "a just example of Terror" was also set here. Urge ringleaders to repent. To followers, express your sorrow; be grateful you live in this country; accept service under the best gentlemen of the County. If you had got your way you would have been guilty of mass murder and opened our coasts to French invasion. If you lament your error, the country will forgive you, eventually.

THE TRIAL ALEXANDER WHYTE, 1793

On 5 April Project member Peter Livsey gave a talk about the trial of Alexander Whyte at the First Tuesday meeting of North East Labour History Society. Several Project members attended. The talk will be published in the Society journal *North East History*. Meanwhile Peter writes for this Newsletter explaining the research approaches he undertook.

This time last year I was working on an article for North East History about Solomon Hodgson, owner and editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, a supporter of reform and opponent of the war against Revolutionary France. I was focusing on the events of 1794, but I noted an advert for a pamphlet written by a baker, Alexander Whyte, who had been put on trial for a seditious libel the previous year. When the Popular Politics Project started late last year I followed the topic up and have written another article for *North East History* about the trial.

It turned out that Newcastle City Library, one of the partners in the Project, has one of the few surviving copies of Whyte's account. I already had the title, but the systematic search now being conducted by the volunteers has turned it up anyway, bound with other pamphlets about trials in the Local Tracts series.

Whyte's own account, including the circumstances of his arrest and imprisonment, questions and answers in court, and his closing address to the jury, obviously provided the core of the article. But other sources provided valuable information to set it in context. Old prints in City Library showed the appearance at the time of Sandhill and the Guildhall, where the arrest and trial took place. The earliest trade directories, at City Library and Tyne and Wear Archives, enabled identification of two pubs referred to in the evidence. They also gave the names and

addresses of the town officials prosecuting the case - Recorder, Sheriff, Clerk and Sergeant of the Mace (an early policeman).

For the paranoid atmosphere in the town in 1793 I could draw on the *Newcastle Chronicle* and its Tory rivals, *Courant* and *Advertiser*, on microfilm at Central Library. For prison conditions and accounts of previous trials such as those Whyte used in mounting his own defence, the reference section of the Lit and Phil was my source. For the brief official account I could access the Quarter Sessions records deposited at Tyne and Wear archives.

The search ended, as it began, with a lucky find. The following year the government stepped up its repression of radical movements. It arrested the leadership of the London Corresponding Society and put its Secretary Thomas Hardy on trial for treason. Among his papers was a letter from a radical carpenter in Newcastle. This letter, or a copy, ended up in the papers of Sir Matthew White Ridley of Blagdon, landowner, businessman and Newcastle's MP. John Charlton had noted it in the Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn during the Remembering Slavery Project in 2007 and referred to it in a talk last year. This provided a crucial insight into the thinking of at least one group of craftsmen in Newcastle at the time Alexander Whyte fell foul of the authorities.

OUR KINGDOM COMES TOMORROW THE PLEBS LEAGUE AND WORKING CLASS EDUCATION IN THE NORTH EAST 1909/1940

Rob Turnbull writes:

In the last three decades, there has been a revival of interest in the history of adult education, and its political implications. Following on from the pioneering research of Stuart Macintyre some thirty

years ago, Richard Lewis looked at the history of the WEA and its ongoing conflict with the Plebs League in his book *Leaders and Teachers*, which focused on South Wales and its revolutionary traditions. Other

people such as Jonathan Rose and the late Eddie and Ruth Frow, have also explored the unique autodidact culture of the British working class through their research in Lancashire.

However it remains a mystery as to why nobody has attempted to research the history of working class education, and in particular the Plebs League in the North East of England. After all Tyneside was the cradle of the industrial revolution, and along with the likes of South Wales, and Red Clydeside has a unique place in the history and traditions of the British Labour movement, which continues to this day.

I am undertaking a dissertation which starts by looking at the background to the formation of a working class consciousness, among the people of Tyneside in the early years of the twentieth century, and how education was viewed in light of the massive, cultural, political and social changes that were happening in the period just prior to the outbreak of the First World War. In particular I am interested in the early years of the Clarion and other organisations that attempted to preach the socialist gospel such as the socialist Sunday Schools. What sort of education did people receive? Why and how did they read? What was their attitude to what they were reading?

I am looking at the background to the Ruskin strike of 1909, and the attempts to establish Independent Working Class Education, or IWCE, as an alternative to the WEA, through the formation of the Plebs League, and the National Council of Labour Colleges or NCLC, as a means of delivering a Marxist education to the working class. Out of all the currents and numerous sub currents that characterised British socialism in the first half of the twentieth century, perhaps none has been as influential as that of the Plebs League. Growing out of the Ruskin College strike of 1909, and the growing demand for

Independent Working Class Education or IWCE, its influence on a generation of working class activists can not be underestimated

How successful was this initiative? How was it received by the people of Tyneside, and did it come into conflict with the mainstream education being delivered by the likes of the WEA? What were its benefits, and what were the drawbacks? Who were the principal men and women involved in this movement? South Wales had notable figures such as Noah Ablett and Nye Bevan. Who were the Tyneside counterparts to the likes of Ablett, Arthur Horner, Charlie Gibbons, Will John Edwards and others? What was the influence of religion and in particular the Non Conformist Movement, in developing a form of education to which working people could aspire?

I am also exploring the impact of the First World War, and the perceived highpoint of IWCE in the years 1918/1924, just prior to and after the General Strike of 1926. What were the revolutionary implications of working class education? Did they help to reinforce a feeling of militancy or did the prevailing orthodoxy of the times prove too strong? Perhaps more importantly: what impact did the General Strike have on working class education on Tyneside in this period?

Finally I am looking at the depression of the 1930's, and the efforts of organisations such as the National Unemployed Workers Movement, the Communist Party, Labour Party, and others in attempting to maintain a tradition of working class education in the face of unprecedented social and economic catastrophe. My proposal ends with the defeat of the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War, and the outbreak of World War Two. In particular I am examining the impact of such initiatives as the Left Book Club in helping to form an alliance against fascism.

ORAL HISTORY: JOAN LAMB, NEWCASTLE

Kath Connolly, who co-ordinates the Co-op group taking part in the Project, writes:

Those of us involved with the Co-operative Movement meet on a regular basis to provide support and focus for future research. We identified a wide group who would have a good story to tell about the Co-operative and Co-operators in the North East.

Having visited a Co-op archive and discovered that historically there were very few women elected into senior positions, we identified one (Joan Lamb) who had broken through those barriers to sit on the Regional Board, hold National positions as well as important positions on Newcastle City Council. We were intrigued to find out how she had achieved this and so planned this as our first oral history interview.

We learned that on moving to Newcastle in the 1950s she became involved in the Co-operative Women's Guild and she tells us it was through the enthusiasm, training and political education offered by the Guild that she gained the confidence and skills to stand for public office.

This whetted my appetite to find out more about the Women's Guild. I had some awareness of their white poppies peace campaign but little else. I discovered they played a major role in challenging the inequalities experienced by working class women in the late 1890's and early decades of the 20th Century in areas of health, suffrage, divorce, maternity and living standards. Their inspirational General Secretary Margaret Llewelyn Jones, an Owenite, led this

campaigning organisation through these “golden years” often coming up against strong opposition from both inside and outside the movement.

Having carried out several pieces of research into poverty, the Guild made taking Co-operation to poor communities one of their priorities. The Sunderland Society took up the Guild’s challenge and opened a store in Coronation Street, Sunderland in 1902 which became known as the “poor store”. Unfortunately the experiment lasted only two years before the Sunderland Society withdrew its support. Our

challenge now as a group is to research this further and we have a visit to the Co-operative Archive at the Co-operative College in Manchester planned as well as a visit to Sunderland Local Studies.

Out of this oral history interview we have two clear areas to investigate: How were the North East Co-operative Women’s Guilds involved in campaigning for women’s rights and what were the social and political conditions which established the Sunderland Poor Store but did not sustain it?

Interesting times ahead!

CONTROLLING POPULAR POLITICS, DISSENT AND RIOT

The items on Hexham in 1761 and Alexander Whyte’s trial in 1793 are linked by the continual fear of Government and the ruling elite about popular political challenges to the system. Throughout the 18thC and early 19thC there are a series of Acts of Parliament dealing with meeting those challenges.

A useful listing ‘Major Acts by the British Government Directly Affecting Popular Association and Collective Action, 1750-1834’ (Appendix 2) is in the book *Popular Contention in Great Britain 1758-1834* (Harvard University Press 1995) by Charles Tilley.

Militia Acts

The 1715 Act enabled the use of troops to control civilian populations. Capital punishments under that Act were extended by Parliament in 1750, 1766, 1784 and 1797. A new Militia Act in 1757 established domestic military service for national defence and crowd control. It was revised in 1758, 1761 and 1802, 1803. The 1776 Act empowered king to call out the militia for a limited period in cases of rebellion if Parliament not sitting.

Policing

Organising policing began to emerge in London. In the 1774 period the Westminster Watching Act codified police practice in Westminster and adjacent areas. Then in 1780 ‘In response to the Gordon riots the government eased the conditions for military or police intervention in riot, regularized the Bow Street Patrol, and created a single Home Secretary with responsibility for domestic order.’ The 1792 Middlesex Justice Act established police offices and salaried justices in London. (Quotes above from p. 419)

1792-1815: Fear and Repression

The period of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars saw legislation to curb radical and revolutionary views and action.

The 1792 Proclamation against Seditious Writings and Assemblies empowered magistrates to take more vigorous action against subversion. This was softened on the initiative of the Whig Charles Fox of the Libel Act giving juries the responsibility for deciding whether words constituted libel, seditious or otherwise’. (p. 420)

The 1793 Aliens Act ‘strengthened political control of foreigners’.

The 1793 Act for the Encouragement of Friendly Societies made them subject to official registration. There were significant revisions in 1795, 1809, and 1819.

In 1794 habeas corpus was suspended and the United Irishmen made illegal.

1795 saw the Treasonable Practices and Seditious Meetings Acts restricting ‘the rights of speech, press, and assembly’. The Manning the Navy Act enabled vagrants and paupers to be impressed.

The 1797 Act against Unlawful Oaths prohibited swearing into secret societies. It was strengthened in 1812). There was a further Act in 1803.

The 1798 Act for the Defence of the Realm ‘authorized the calling out of civilian posses against threats to public order’.

1799 and 1800 saw the Combination Laws and the Unlawful Societies Acts banning combinations ‘in restraint of trade; and societies ‘established for “seditious and treasonable purposes”’. The United Irishmen were proscribed. In 1801 habeas corpus was suspended in Scotland. (Quotes above p. 420)

1815-1820: More Repression

After the Wars the economic dislocation and increased agitation for radical political reform posed fresh challenges, such as the reaction to the Peterloo Massacre in 1819 including the Cato St conspiracy in 1820.

The 1816 Malicious Damage Act (Scotland) 'increased penalties for attacks on property, including machines.' This was counterbalanced by the Habeas Corpus Amendment Act which 'generalized the right, including application to victims of press gangs'.

1817 saw the Coercion and the Seditious Meetings Acts, a one year suspension of habeas corpus. The 1798 Act's provisions against seditious meetings were extended, with 'renewed penalties for inciting soldiers and sailors to violate their duty'.

The Six Acts of 1819 provided for speedy trial 'in cases of misdemeanor, increased penalties for seditious libel, imposition of the newspaper stamp duty on periodicals containing news, the banning of training of persons in the use of arms, and the empowerment of magistrates to search for and seize arms. The Poor Law Relief Act of the same year 'authorized select vestries and paid assistant overseers for tighter control over paupers.'

The 1820 Malicious Trespass Act provided for summary punishment for wilful or malicious damage to trespassing on public or private property. The Unlawful Drilling Act 'outlawed armed processions.'

The 1820s: beginnings of humanisation

The 1820s begin to see a degree of humanisation of the law. Despite the times the Pillory Abolition Act 1816 replaced the pillory by fines and imprisonment. Many statutes imposing the death sentence for property crimes were repealed in 1823. Two years later the death sentence for assaulting or obstructing a revenue officer was repealed. On the other hand 1824 saw the Act for the Punishment of Idle and Disorderly Persons, Rogues and Vagabonds. 1827 saw Acts changing the criminal code and reducing the number of capital offences. (Quotes above p. 421)

In relation to organising the Combination Acts were repealed in 1824 (with amendments in 1825). However, policing was still being strengthened. The 1829 Friendly Societies Act 'eased restrictions on worker's mutual-aid organizations but imposed strict registration and a ban on politics.'

In 1827 the Remedies Against the Hundred Act 'consolidated citizen involvement in the suppression

of affrays, riots, and felonies'. Two years later the Metropolitan Police Act established uniformed London police. (Quotes above p. 422)

The Importance of the Irish Question

Irish affairs 'interacted closely with British domestic politics.' Tilley suggests: 'Irish Catholics made the question of Catholic Emancipation urgent in Great Britain and Irish mobilization over the question tipped the balance toward the compromise of 1829. That ratification of agitation by a mass-subscription association, in its turn, opened the way to greatly expanded agitation by political unions, workers' organizations, and other associations in the British campaign for parliamentary reform.' (p. 375) The next three years were again ones of heightened reform agitation and fear of violent overthrow. The responses in the first half of the 1830s was linked to the political nature composition of Parliament and Governments.

There was further legislation to tighten control. The 1830 Lighting and Watching Act gave municipalities a general power to set up police and lighting authorities. The Seditious Libel Act 'eliminated banishment for libel and increased the bonds required of newspaper publishers.' In 1831 the Special Constables and Tumultuous Risings Act 'strengthened policing of events like those of the Swing rebellion'. There was also a proclamation forbidding political unions organising along military lines. The 1832 Threshing Machine Act made the inhabitants of a hundred 'collectively responsible for damage.' In 1833 the Lighting and Watching Act 'tightened up' the police legislation of 1820 and 1830.

Humanisation also continued with further reductions of the range of the death penalty in the 1832 Punishment of Death and Forgery Acts. 1833 saw the Factory Act restricting women and children working. The 1834 Transportation and Hanging in Chains Acts further reduced the death penalty, and eliminated criminals being hung in chains.

However, the Poor Law Amendment Act 'instituted major changes in local poor relief, on the whole favoring incarceration, reduction of benefits, and diminished eligibility.' (Quotes above p. 422)

THE 18TH CENTURY ELECTORATE

Items relevant to the Project that are identified on catalogue listings and which are looked at in detail are like small pieces in a mammoth jigsaw. It is often difficult to see how they might be relevant. This is why we are taking a broadbrush and keeping an eye on context as much as the narrower more obvious items. We will build our own interpretation from the materials we look at. However, keeping an eye on what other people have researched and written is important. Sometimes national studies of the 18th Century occasionally refer to Newcastle, Tyneside or the North East. These give us clues about what to follow-up. But they also pose questions such as: have previous historians correctly interpreted the information? in order to present the national picture have they oversimplified?

Key information cited by H. T. Dickinson in *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth-Century England* (St Martin's Press) tells us the following about electoral issues and Newcastle.

Nature of Electorate. The electorate was composed of freemen and had c.40% of its adult males as electors, compared with the national average for Boroughs of up to 25%. The town was one of several which created hundreds of new freemen just before general elections. (p. 32-3)

The Corporation Electoral Process. 'In Newcastle upon Tyne all the members of the twelve incorporated companies of merchants and tradesmen started off the electoral process to choose the corporation, but there were seven further stages in an incredibly convoluted system and so the wealthiest men invariably ended up being elected.' (p. 100) We need to understand this system better. But we also need to keep in mind that even though the wealthiest men ended up being elected, it did not mean they were all conservative or anti-change. The Corporation support for anti-slavery from 1788 is one example.

Societies. Over 59 different societies were established in Newcastle between 1754 and 1785. (p. 97) We need to know who founded them, who were members, who ran them, and the extent to which they span political opinion or encapsulated political difference. We know from the 2007 Project analysis that the continued history of society building was very important in creating activist networks.

John Wilkes Affair. in 1769 Newcastle's electors 'instructed their MPs to support John Wilkes over the Middlesex election case and to press for short parliaments and an effective Place Bill. (p. 40) Dickinson draws on Thomas Rd Knox, *Wilkesism and the Newcastle Election of 1774*. (Durham University Journal. 72 (1979)) We need to look at and summarise this article.

Waiting for the Spark. 'One shipowner informed the Home Secretary in November 1792 that Tyneside was 'covered with thousands of pitmen, keelmen, waggonmen, and other labouring men, hardy fellows strongly impressed with the new doctrine of equality, and at present composed of such combustible matter that the least spark will set it ablaze.' (p. 156) How true was this, or was the shipowner exaggerating in order to get more attention from the Home Secretary?

Hospitals. Many towns like Newcastle 'established hospitals or infirmaries for the poor and they too were governed according to more democratic principles in that all those who subscribed to the upkeep of these charitable foundations were given a single vote in deciding how they were to be managed and conducted. This often resulted in several hundred subscribers taking an interest in these institutions and

in the wider interests of their town.' (p. 104) These health organisations need to be studied from this perspective of subscriber democratic involvement.

The Composition of the Electorate. At County level the main criteria to be an elector was freehold ownership of land valued at 40/- per annum. There were different criteria for different types of Boroughs. The electorate of nearly half of them were freemen. In some the vote was attached to specific properties. Dickinson estimates that 60% of voters were County based and 40% based in Boroughs. Is this true for Northumberland and Durham? In the approximate 100 years from 1689 the national electorate grew by 100,000 to 340,000, but as a percentage of the adult male population it fell from 20.6% to 17.2% because of population growth. Most voters were members of 'the middle ranks of society': retailers, traders, and craftsmen (60%), with the richest sectors (landed gentlemen, professions, merchants, and manufacturers) being up to a fifth (15-20%), while semi/unskilled workers and labourers made up n 15% (p. 33) How true is this in the North East, especially given Newcastle and Berwick's particular positions as freemen Boroughs?

The Importance of Local Issues. One of Dickinson's general conclusions is that most voters were concerned with local issues. 'Local loyalties and local concerns remained paramount for most voters and most of the political elite had no wish to bring national divisions into the constituencies.' (p. 49) The elite 'took a particular interest in local affairs, in the leadership of their local community, in the exercise of power and authority over them, and in their own future prospects in the constituency.' (p. 49-50) To what extent is this the case in the North East?

'Influencing Politics. The vested interests and pressure groups in eighteenth century Britain were of many kinds. Some represented very narrow and specific groups, whereas others enlisted very considerable support and appealed across a wide social and geographical range. Some worked very closely with the political elite, while others had to wage their campaigns from outside parliament and even in opposition to the ruling oligarchy. Some achieved political success and clearly influenced the decisions taken by government or parliament.' (p. 91-2) Given the divisions within the ruling elite over such issues as the abolition of the slave trade and then slavery and over political reform, this conclusion may be over simplified. It certainly seems a tactic in the North East and probably elsewhere that extra-parliamentary politics were partly seen as a way of strengthening the activities support of supporting elite in Parliament.

The Urban Context. 'All historians interested in the politics of the people must pay particular attention to urban communities. After all, it was in the towns especially the larger towns that popular politics in all its manifestations flourished most vigorously and most persistently. It was in the larger urban constituencies that parliamentary elections were more frequently contested and where the voters and even the non-voters were most often drawn into partisan activities. The activities of both popular radicalism and popular conservatism, where they involved distributing propaganda, organising petitions, forming associations or holding public meetings, were mainly based in urban communities. The overwhelming majority of riots and crowd demonstrations also occurred in urban settings.' (p. 93)

Organisations of the Poor. 'Although the urban poor were often hit by sudden fluctuations in the economy, they did learn to protect their interests by developing a range of organisations, including journeymen's associations, box clubs, friendly societies and worker's combinations. Unity among the poor sometimes allowed them to exploit the divisions in the ranks of the rich. In desperate situations the poor were also quite prepared to resort to crowd demonstrations and even to violent riots.' (p. 96) Does enough documentation and memoirs survive that will allow us to build up the picture of such organisation in the North East?

The Role of Churches. 'Churches provided an alternative society, capable of looking after their members, and their ministers were often able and articulate men who could give their congregations a clear lead on matters of importance. With a large membership, able direction and a ready platform, churches could provide an organisation capable of enlisting the support of significant numbers of townspeople.' (p. 96) This general conclusion chimes with the work that has been undertaken on North East anti-slavery which shows not only the important role of Dissenting sects like the Quakers and the Unitarians, but the cross-sect co-operation.

Voluntary Societies. 'Voluntary societies provided fellowship, entertainment and instruction for men in the middle orders and artisan trades. Many consciously engaged in the discovery and transmission of new ideas and deliberately encouraged debate and discussion. Their members displayed a commitment to intellectual innovation and social improvement and a growing willingness to participate in public life.' (p. 97-8) The Literary & Philosophical Society is a prime example of this kind of organisation. We are identifying the existence of many others, which we need to also look at in depth.

Controlling Food. Dickinson suggests: 'Both the central government and local magistrates showed particular sympathy for the poor involved in food riots and they sought a variety of remedies. One solution, urged by local magistrates and implemented by the government, was to regulate the grain trade more effectively.' There were bad harvests in 1709-10, 1740-1, 1756-7, 1766-74, 1789-90, 1792, 1795-7, and 1800. At times of food shortage Newcastle magistrates 'placed embargoes on grain leaving' the region'. (p. 154) Can we document the decisions and those of other magistrates in the North East?

Divide Between the Poor and the Radicals. 'The poor, who did face very harsh economic circumstances in the 1790s, were never fully radicalised. A fusion of popular hardship and popular radicalism might have produced an explosive mixture capable of shaking the foundations of the state but such a fusion never occurred. The radical leadership did not succeed in enlisting the poor in huge numbers and the elected attacked the material causes and limited the political consequences of poverty by expanding poor relief and private charity and by encouraging a moral revolution.' (p. 250) Does this reflect the situation in the North East?

Radicalism's Limitations. 'The radicals of the later eighteenth century failed to achieve their major objective, the reform of parliament. There were many reasons for this failure. Probably at no stage were the radical activists a majority of the political conscious classes and only intermittently could they count upon widespread support. The radicals were divided among themselves over ideology, aims and methods. They faced powerful and resilient institutions which were defended by the ruling elite and were supported by a sophisticated conservative ideology.' (p. 251-2) It is true that the radicals were divided. But perhaps the main reason for failure was the French Revolution which deepened divisions and put the Government on an oppressive wartime footing.

Radical Successes. 'The really important successes of the radicals however were achieved at the local level where they experimented in how to rally support among the middling orders of society. The radicals began to challenge local elites in many of the large towns and they exploited the press more effectively than ever before. (p. 253) How true is this in the North East and is this part of the growing success culminating in 1832 and 1833 in the three major legal changes: the expansion (however small) of the electorate, the introduction of a fairer distribution of Parliamentary seats, and the abolition of slavery. We need to understand the campaign strategies in the region better in the previous 10 years.

SHORT NOTES

The Simplified Spelling Society. Andy Simons, who works at the British Library, has provided information about the Wallsend based Simplified Spelling Society. Its premise was simple and reverberates today: 'learning to spell is a far longer process for the English child than for children in many other countries' not because of 'inferiority on the part of English teachers', but 'due to the unphonetic character of English spelling.' The Society argued for a rational spelling system. The promotional material from Andy was first published in 1913 and re-published in 1941.

George Rule. David Tate has been going through the Oxberry scrapbooks at Gateshead Local Studies. He has come across a Chartist activist who settles in Newcastle: George Rule. As a young man Rule was a fervent supporter of Chartism and wrote rhymes for the Chartist newspaper *Peoples Paper* which was edited by Ernest Jones. When Chartism declined he became a supporter of David Urquhart. He moved to Newcastle in 1856. He joined the Newcastle Foreign Affairs Association and studied the foreign policy of the British government. Malcolm Chase, the Chartist expert, who gave the first Project lecture, does not know anything about Rule. He tells us that Rule is not mentioned in Miles Taylor's essay on Urquhartism, or his book on Jones. There is very little about him on the web. There is a reference to him in the *National Reformer* (15 September 1872) as being at a meeting of the Newcastle Secular Union discussing Home Rule: www.holtmann-mares.de/National%20Reformer%201867-1874.pdf.

The listing also refers to a David Rule. The Cowen papers in TWA include a letter from George, and also some from David Rule. Neither Rule is mentioned in W. E. Adams autobiography or Joan Allen's biography of Cowen. So the search for more information begins.

Sport as Popular Culture. Many years ago someone gave a paper at a Sports History Conference in which sport in the East Northumberland Coalfield between 1800 and 1914 was tabulated. All other details of author, title of paper, Conference, etc have disappeared. The results are interesting:

1800s: evidence of cricket, football, pedestrianism, shooting, quoits, potshare bowling, boxing, rabbit coursing and pitch and toss, and evidence of organised competition in cockfighting.

1810s: As well as the activities in the 1800s there is evidence of handball (fives), and organised competition in potshare bowling.

1820s and 1830s: In addition to the activities in the previous decade evidence begins of pigeon flying.

1840s: continues on from the previous two decades but with evidence of organised competition starting in pedestrianism, rowing, shooting, quoits. **1850s:** evidence starts of organised competition in cricket

and rabbit coursing, the end of it in cockfighting, and evidence of fishing.

1860s: while cockfighting continues evidence of organised competition is lacking. The first cricket club starts in 1868, There is no evidence of fishing or in the 1870s.

1870s: the first cycling (1876) and pigeon racing (1877) clubs start, Fives now show signs of organised competition.

1880s: the first clubs emerge in swimming and golf (1880), fishing (1881), football (1882), lawn tennis (1887) and shooting (1888). There is new evidence of organised competition in pigeon flying and boxing, and evidence of billiards.

1890s: the first clubs emerge in rugby (1890), harriers and billiards (1892), rowing and quoits (1893), The first leagues emerge in football (1894), billiards (1895) and cricket (1897).

1900s: The first lawn bowling club starts in 1904 and a quoits league in 1907. Organised competition in fives stops. There is no evidence of cockfighting, fives or harriers.

1910s: A lawn tennis league starts in 1912. There is no evidence of cockfighting, fives or harriers

No of Clubs: from the start of clubs 156 are recorded in cricket, 25 of which were over 10 years old; 924 in football (15); 3 in rugby, 68 in cycling (12), 4 in golf (4), 25 in lawn tennis (7), 7 in swimming, 3 in lawn bowling, 14 in harriers, c116 in pigeon flying (10), 38 in shooting (3), 5 in fishing (5), 24 in quoits, and 66 in billiards.

Mass participation: The researcher only defines football, quoits, and billiards as mass participation sports.

Durham MPs Project. Francis Gotto, the Assistant Keeper at Durham University Library has informed us that the History of Parliament Trust is doing a trawl for portraits of M.P.s for Durham (and probably elsewhere in the North East) active between 1832 and 1868, and also election images for the same period. The Library is sending them a list of what it has. He wonders whether we have references to share with the Trust from other archives and libraries. The Library is providing the Trust with material from the following sections of its collections: John BOWES Add.MS 17/7; William Richard Carter CHAYTOR Add.MS 1300/206-206A; John HENDERSON BAK 193; Arthur HILL-TREVOR Add.MS 1300/176; Henry PEASE + Joseph PEASE Mackenzie & Ross History vol. 5, ex 16-17 (extra illus. Edition); Henry John SPEARMAN Add.MS 17/36; Sir Hedworth WILLIAMSON, 7th baronet ?Add.MS 1300/212; George ELLIOT Add.MS 17/56 + Fordyce History vol. 4, ex 55 (extra illus. Edition); Election scenes: BAK 193-197. Sean is getting in touch with the Trust. If you have any references you think are relevant please let him know.

RADICAL SONGS - Part 3

Self-Help Collective Organisations

One of the main features and attractions of working class collective self-help organisations, such as friendly societies, were the social events and the conviviality. Singing played an important part in their events. Linked to the friendly society movement from the late 1850s were the working-class loan societies called Friends of Labour Loan. K. E.P. of Branch 67 which met at the Duke of Sussex public house in Islington Green, wrote *A Friends of Labour Song*.

Around the lodge in friendship met,
Come listen to my story,
I sing to praise a noble set,
I sing our own dear glory.

Chorus - To help each other is our aim

To help an honest neighbour:
And not to shame, the name we claim,
Of trusty Friends of Labour.

Drink to the memory of the man -
The kind and gentle-hearted,
Who first began the happy plan.
And Friends of Labour started.

Chorus-To help, &c.

We pay our money with a smile,-
And lend it out with pleasure,
Each one assisting all the while
To guard our little treasure.

Chorus-To help, &c.

Long may we steer from falsehood
clear,
Beneath the surface lurking;
And never here, be roguery sear,
To spoil our useful working.

Chorus-To help, &c.

Up with the Friend of Labour light,
And it may never dwindle
Down with the greedy userer's blight,
And crush the loanshop swindle.

Chorus-To help, &c.

Following a cricket match on Peckham Rye, between Branches 74 (at the Railway, New Cross) and 197 (at the Hope, Rye-Lane, Peckham), they spent an evening

eating, drinking, singing and reciting at the Hope until midnight.

Mid-Century Union Songs

Trade Union songs include *Blackleg Miners* and *Striking Times* of 1853, published in John Ashton's *Modern Street Ballads* (1888) and a strike ballad sold in 1854 by the Preston Thistle Spinners strikers.

1871 is a particularly important year for the trade union movement, as well as seeing the Paris Commune defeated over the Channel in France. In addition to the formation of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, there was a stoppage of work in the North East as part of the movement for a nine-hour working day. Joe Wilson, a Newcastle printer of cheap songbooks and a stage comedian wrote *The Strike* for the workers at W. Armstrong's engineering works.

In 1872 Joseph Arch formed an agricultural workers' union in Warwickshire, which became the National Agricultural Labourers' Union. To commemorate his work *The Wellesbourne Tree* was composed in the same year to the tune of *Auld Lang Syne*. Another song was *The Agitator* in 1873. Many of the songs written were published in *Songs for Singing at Agricultural Labourers' Meetings*, which is said to have sold 120,000 copies. Many agricultural workers were victimised by their landlords for joining Arch's Union. John Gorman has suggested that it 'took a special kind of courage to stand with a few labouring brothers and sing:

Ye tillers of the soil
Assert your manhood then,
You get your living by lard toil,
Then all be union men.'

In 1875 in village of Cherhill William Durham and his family were evicted from their tied cottage, and his 12 year old daughter excluded from the village school. The Union organised a rally in support of the family in a field and in pouring rain 1,000 farmworkers sang *When Arch Beneath The Wellesbourne Tree*.

The songs of the farmworkers of the 1870s suggests Miller 'are militant songs'. 'Many of the local leaders of the Union were Primitive Methodists, and the early Union meetings were conducted on the lines of chapel services, beginning with a prayer, often without a chairman, men speaking as they felt impelled, in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm. This atmosphere was conducive to singing and the songs that were created must have had a tremendous effect on the workers who sang them.' Songs include *Justice of the Peace*, *My*

Master and I, and Now We Have Got a Union, Boys to the tune Auld Lang Syne.

The Durham Miner's Gala was started in 1871. Those attending sung a song written by a poetic miner from Staffordshire:

All men are equal in His sight
The bond, the free, the black, the white
He made them all, then freedom gave,
He made the man, man made the slave.

While visiting Cromer in 1867 George Holyoake was asked by the local fisherman to give a talk. In case they had a choir, he composed a variation of Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*.

'Like the leaves of the forest when summer's green,
Placards in the windows at sunrise were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn has blown,
The placards at sunset lay withered and strewn.

The vicar of Cromer came in with the blast,
And spoke at the door on each shop as he past;
And the hearts of the keepers waxed deadly and chill;
Their souls but once heaved and thencefore grew still'

However, he did not use it.

From the 1870s workingmen's and radical club social evenings included recitations and songs. The *Marseilles* seems to have been quite popular in the 1870s.

Additional Sources to Parts 1 & 2 (Newsletters 1 & 2)

Friends of Labour Monthly Circular

The Open University. An Arts Foundation Course. A102. Summer School Texts. Culture: Production, Consumption and Status. 1988

Stan Shipley. *Club Life and Socialism in Mid-Victorian London*. Journeymen/London History Workshop Centre. 1983.

George Jacob Holyoake. *Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life*. Vol II. T. Fisher Unwin. 1900

John Gorman, *To Build Jerusalem, A photographic remembrance of British working class life, 1875-1950*. Scorpion Publications, 1980,

However, not all trade unions saw their relationship with their bosses in class conflict terms. After expressing sympathy with the risks that capital had to run, a 1872 boilermakers' song ended:

So tis just and meet labour should co-operate
And to help with all their might
The masters to compete.

The meeting of the Eastern Question Association at London's Exeter Hall on 16 January 1878 opened with singing of William Morris' *Wake London Lads* to the tune *The Hardy Norsemen's Home of York* by a choir of the stonemasons' union. Morris commented 'It went down very well, they sang it well together, they struck up while we were just ready to come onto the platform & you may imagine I felt rather excited when I heard them begin to tune up; they stopped at the end of each verse and cheered lustily.'

During a meeting in Hyde Park on the Eastern Question in March 1878 addressed by Auberdon Herbert and Charles Bradlaugh, a Lieutenant Armit assembled a group of 'music-hall politicians', to disrupt and conflict resulted. At the time 'a wild and vain glorious ditty, calculated to excite the contempt of foreigners, was sung with ostentatious applause in their convivial halls.'

'We don't want to fight,
But by Jingo if we do,
We have the ships, we have the men,
And have to money too.'

Holyoake coined the word 'Jingoes' in a letter to the *Daily News*. He refers to the House of Commons having 'a Music Hall majority.'

TUC LIBRARY

At the Labour Heritage Annual Conference on Saturday 9 April Christine Coates of the TUC Library based at London Metropolitan University presented a fascinating glimpse of the rich material contained in the TUC Library Collections. There has been tremendous development of the Collections, including digitisation and of the website. These reveal a much richer range of material than you might expect. Do have a look at the website:

www.londonmet.ac.uk/services/sas/library-services/tuc.

Searchable Web Catalogue. The Collection's web catalogue can be searched e.g. by town. However only about 1/6th of the Collection is on the web catalogue. You can find that it has:

- annual reports and accounts of Sunderland Trades (& Labour) Council
- material relating to Gateshead
- the official souvenir book of the TUC's Annual Congresses in Newcastle in 1911 and 1932
- Newcastle Trades Council material

Specialist Topics. In addition to researching the TUC and the wide labour movement the TUC Collection can be used for researching:

- Caribbean studies
- the history of education
- colonial and commonwealth history
- the European labour movement
- women and gender issues
- housing, construction and city planning

Special Collections. There are also the following special collections:

- The Marjorie Nicholson Collection
- The Gertrude Tuckwell Papers
- Workers' Educational Association Library Archive
- Labour Research Department Archive
- Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust Archive

There is also has a collection of labour history journals - but unfortunately not North East History.

The linked Union makes Us Strong website is: www.unionhistory.info. It is divided into the following sections:

- Timeline - 200 years of trade union history
- General Strike
- Match Workers
- Ragged Trousered Philanthropists
- TUC Reports: full digitised Congress Reports 1868 to 1968

Please contact Sean if you want to do some work looking through the web catalogue at home.

Linked specialist websites:

- **The Worker's War. Home Front Recalled:** www.unionhistory.info/workerswar. It includes:
 - the transcript of oral history recordings inc. Len Robertson and Jack Johnston
 - A photo of a Gateshead factory Industrial discussion group. In April 1945 20 factories were still holding regular meetings on topics such as 'The Education Bill', 'The Colour Bar' and 'Is Britain a Democracy'.
- **Winning Equal Pay:** www.unionhistory.info/equalpay.

North East Popular Politics is a project consortium led by North East Labour History Society, with funding and support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Co-operative, the WEA and several trade union branches.