

**Moving Between Worlds:
Gender, Class, Politics, Sexuality
and Women's Networks
in the Diaries of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall,
Halifax, Yorkshire, 1830-1840**

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Abstract

This dissertation comprises an analysis of the interconnections of gender, politics, class, sexuality and female networks as these operated within the recorded life of Anne Lister (1791-1840), a 'masculine' and lesbian member of the minor landed gentry in the West Riding of Yorkshire. A scholar, traveller and businesswoman, Lister left an enormous, approximately four million-word journal, part of which was written in a crypt of her own devising. While other studies have focused on the production of discourses and their effect in creating passively-inscribed identities, this work will focus on Lister's reception of discourses, her active manipulation of these, and her creation of an identity based partly upon class, partly upon gender, and partly upon her sexual practice. Thus, it represents a major revision of at least one of Foucault's basic premises.

Few studies have analyzed the role of women in the gentry to this extent. Lister managed a landed estate in an industrializing area. Estate business included coal-mining, quarrying, mill-building, and investments in roads and canals. A staunch Tory Anglican, she felt that her property gave her the right to dictate the votes of her tenants, and this became more possible following the Reform Act of 1832. Over the course of her life Lister had a number of affairs with women in the gentry and aristocracy, but during the period focused upon here, 1830-1840, Lister had settled into a lesbian marriage with another local heiress, Ann Walker. The gendered power dynamics of their relationship are explored, as are the languages Lister uses to record sexual practice. Lister maintained an extensive correspondence with women in the gentry and aristocracy up to the time of her death. These networks operated both as systems of support and systems of constraint. After her death, the property arrangements she had made with her partner caused difficulties for both families. Property laws recognized only heterosexual transmission, upon which the landed gentry depended for its survival.

The Lister journals represent the earliest and most detailed personal evidence of upper-class lesbian lives known to Western historians. The wealth of detail available in matters of gender, class, politics and women's networks is also unprecedented. The journals are thus a vital source in women's history. They simultaneously show how Lister and the women in her world were fundamentally shaped by the dominant discourses of their time while also demonstrating the power of women's agency to resist and shape those discourses for their own benefit.

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Preface

Anne Lister's diaries are of great interest not only because of their relevance to modern discussions but also because of their inviting complexity. The task of the historian who attempts to paint, even with broad brush strokes, an approximation of Lister's reality, faces a difficult task. Questions of selection, bias, approach and style inevitably arise. It would be presumptuous to think that a full portrait of Lister, her language and her world has been presented here. Nevertheless, it is hoped it may lay the groundwork for future research.

Every generation asks its own questions of history. Perhaps this generation's questions have been even more demanding than some. No single approach may rightly claim to be the only valid approach, and each generation's questions must build on those of the last. The post-modern destabilization of our old ways of knowing has, I think, positively influenced historical enquiry. It is an epistemological revolution which also has its pragmatic aims. They are, one hopes, primarily emancipatory in nature. There may be some sense in which every honest contribution to knowledge has the aim of trying to be helpful - though some go further, and seem to be trying to illuminate some aspect of the human condition. Questions of discourse and agency inevitably come under that heading.

The weight of time and culture is heavier when unseen and unacknowledged. It is almost entirely impossible to gain certain vital perspectives about any present, however. That can only be imparted by history, the study of which can to some extent disentangle us, even if momentarily, from the discourses of our own time and culture. Women's history, as well as specifically lesbian history, teaches us about change, continuity, oppression, power, and tenacity. It teaches us about the power of language to create and destroy. It leaves us searching for agency, resistance and will in the face of many centuries of legal, emotional, political, social, biological, educational, sexual, financial and employment-related oppressions. Why have these oppressions been possible? How has the great illusion of gender hierarchy been enforced and reinforced in each generation? What material and linguistic factors are responsible for hiding our power of choice from us?

Change is not inevitable unless someone makes different choices and acts on them on a daily basis. That is how all change happens. It is action, not theory, that makes change possible or keeps it from happening. And that, I think, has been true for many centuries before our own. It was certainly true for Anne Lister, who managed to transcend and manipulate the discourses of her time and class in relatively limited ways.

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Grateful acknowledgment is extended to the staff at the Calderdale District Archives in Halifax, especially Dr. Alan Betteridge. Their professional, prompt and patient assistance has been invaluable. Staff at the J.B. Morrell Library at the University of York have also been helpful, not to mention invariably good-humoured.

There are a number of people whose interest in Anne Lister has led to long and fruitful discussions. Thanks are due to Helena Whitbread, without whose stropmy courage the Anne Lister material might yet be languishing secretly in the archives. Thanks as well to Jill Liddington, whose insight, cups of tea and historical expertise have been very helpful. Her dedicated, professional approach, as well as her searching questions, have taught me a great deal. Gratitude is also due to Ros Westwood, the open-minded and good-humoured curator at the Shibden Hall Museum. Her knowledge has been freely shared.

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Janet Roebuck, at the University of New Mexico, read a draft of the whole, and has long been an encouraging and inspirational influence. I must also acknowledge the kindness, hospitality, flower seeds and excellent meals provided by the late Dorothy Marshall, from whom I hope I have learned lessons that I will carry with me until I am 94.

A number of women have imparted their experience, strength, friendship and support to me during the long and often difficult period of research. (Whether they knew it or not.) A heart-felt thanks to Jo Rogers, Hilary Frances, Jules Morris, June, Pixie, Cas, Lucia, Vonne, Jane Gregory, Julia, Emma, Liz from Scotland, Evelyn, Di, Bridget, Joan, Anne Lee, Helen and Angie in Nottingham and both Vrons. My debt and gratitude to Helen John must receive a special mention. Her determined encouragement has been a real gift. I would not have made it without you all. I hope you receive something back out of what I have written.

To my parents

Author's Declaration

The work is my own, and responsibility for it lies solely with me.

Figure 1 (cont'd.):
Translation of Anne Lister's Journal 20-21 November 1832
 (Calderdale District Archives, SH:7/ML/E + M)

NB: The translation given here is a literal one. In the text of this dissertation, punctuation has been added if necessary and abbreviations have been spelled out in order to facilitate reading. The only adjustment I have made in the following translated passage is to separate and capitalize words as necessary in the coded passages, which all run together in the text. The letters in the left margin of the original page indicate whether she has received a letter or a note, the date, and the time of writing. She uses the old "y" form for "th" on occasion.

1832 Novr.

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.....settle for us abt. ft. pths. & watr. to Lower brea - at Lidgte. at 4³⁰ - I hd. met Mifs W-'s postboy wth. a no. askg. me to din. at 5 & stay all night tomor. - ye Mill hse. Rawsons cant. go to hr. till ye 3d. & ask whethr. ys. wd. interfere wth. our gog. to York - <<you know how glad I shall be to see you and remember how truly happy [y]ou will make me if I can be useful to you in any way in your enterprize au secret I reproached myself not a little yesterday that it did not occur to me to say this yesterday I thought of it before you had been gone five minutes Very good of her but thought I I shall take care of getting under obligations of this kind>> Declind. gog. tomor. - Mifs Parkhill [beg?]ged my gog. to thm. - sd. I ws. afrd. I cd. nt. evn. prom. for Thurs. - sat talkg. 3/4 hr. & yn. gt. up to co. away - <<Miss W took me into the dining room explained that I thought it better not to stay all night again during Miss P's visit & declined even breakfasting there & made Miss W agree that I was right She seemed glad to see me & more affectionate than usual Kept me twenty five minutes>> to call agn. at Lidgte. on Fri. - ho. in 1/2 hr., dark, at 6¹⁰ - changd. my thgs. - din. at 6 1/2 - Hd. Pickles wth. ye man he summonsd. ye othr. day for cuttg. sticks in ye hedges - pretendd. grtish. angr. & difficy. in lettg. ye man off, at Pickles's entreaty, for payg. for ye summons, & givg. Pickles 5/. - wr. ye follg. in ansr. to no. I fnd. on my desk fr. Mr. Mitchell ye land valuer, who hd. been to spk. to Mr. Carr abt. Godley, who sd. yt. out of gratitude to me, he shd. ma. me ye 1st offer of it) - "Shibdn. hall tues. 20 novr. 1832. Sir - I ws. nt. at ho. when yr. no. arrivd. - I shall be gld. to see you tomor. mornng. at ye earlst. hr. you can ma. it convent. to co. afr. 8 - at 8, if yt. hr. will suit you, will suit me best - I am, sir, &c. &c. &c. A. Lister-" - snt. ys. no. by John to "Mr. Mitchell, Cow Markt., Halifax" - wr. ye last 24 lines till 8⁴⁰ - yn. rd. fr. 100 to 113 vol. 1 Langhome's Plutch. [Plutarch] & hd. a lit. nap till 9 3/4 - yn. wnt. int. ye othr. rm. & sat talkg. to my at. till 10⁵⁰ - Let. fr. Ly. Stt. datd. 16 Novr. 4 pp. of 1 large sht. & a 1/2 sht. full fr. Ly. Harrt. de Hagemann, Copenhagen datd. 4 Novr. - bth. frankd. by Ld. Althorp & printd. ovr. ye top on his majesty's servce. - bth. ver. kind. lets. - bth. Lady S - & Ly. H. de H- wishg. to see me - Ly. S- wd. I hope rec. ye shawl ye day afr. she wr. - asks my intst. for Mr. Wortley - I shall expln. abt. ys. - still nt. knowg. wht. Vere will do - thick, hazy, soft novr. day bt. fine engh. for ye ti. of yr. - F 49⁰ at 11 p.m. -

 Wed. 21 F 51⁰ at 7¹⁰ ver. thick & hazy - ye light just beging. to try to peep thro' ye fog - ready in an hr. - readg. ye courier newspapr. of last night till ver. nr. 8 - yn. brfst. - hd. done bef. my fathr. ca. - Mr. Mitchell ye landvalr. ca. abt. 8 1/2 & std. an hr. - agreed yt. on Mr. Carr's givg. me ye 1st refusl. of Godley I shd. say I wd. apply to Mr. Mitchell to act as my agent in ye buss. - ye buildgs. might be worth £200 or £300 - wd. val. the place for me on my hearg. fr. Carr - vald. ye land proposd. to be purchasd. at N.gte. at 7/. a yd. - sd. I ws. lucky in sellg. ye land for St. James's chch. - Oates dd. nt. want to lose ye job so pushd. it on - on sayg. yt. 12/6 & last 11/6 hd. been givn. pr. yd. for land nr. mine, he ownd. it might be worth mo. bt. sd. I shd. nt. get my pr. 15/. a yd. - yet ownd. yt. it ws. intendd. to bring ye Keighley rd. out by Stannery & int. Broad Stt. thro' north parade in 4 or 5 yrs. & yus. my land wd.....

Figure 2:

Anne Lister's Code

(Courtesy Calderdale District Archives, papers of Phyllis Ramsden)

A	2		R	p	rr=	p
B	C	bb=	€	S	=	ss= ?
C	3	cc=	7	T	~	tt= x
D	0		U	6		
E	3	ee=	;	V	9	
F	U	ff=	ψ	W	8	
G	7		X	W		
H	0		Y	7		
I	4		Z	9		
J	4		Mr.	X		
K	1		Mrs.	✕		
L	6	ll=	:	Miss	✕	
M	—		th	✓		
N	/		ch	▽		
O	5	oo=	!	sh	^	
P	+	pp=	≠	and	X	
Q						

Underlining under or dot above or below letter or word = repetition

CHAPTER ONE:

Agency and Discourse: Reading the Anne Lister journals

" 'At heart [she] was nothing but an old Tory squire....with an incurably Tory soul.' " -Virginia Woolf, writing of her lover, Vita Sackville-West¹

This dissertation comprises an analysis of the interconnections of gender, politics, class, sexuality and female networks as these operated within the recorded life of Anne Lister (1791-1840), a 'masculine' and lesbian member of the minor landed gentry in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The time and place have enabled me to test certain post-modern theories within the context of a concrete historical situation. The data used has primarily been the vast (approximately four-million word) Anne Lister journals. Because of the necessity for translating numerous and lengthy coded passages and because of time limitations, this study has focused primarily on three years of the journal: 1832, 1835 and 1837. These were the years of the first three elections in the newly enfranchised borough of Halifax. I have also read the whole of 1829 and 1830, December of 1831, 1834 and 1836 as well as parts of her earlier volumes, especially from 1806 and 1816. Together with family and estate papers and an extensive personal and business correspondence, the Shibden Hall muniments represent an unparalleled and unusually detailed portrait of a specific social milieu, useful for histories of almost any aspect of early nineteenth-century English life.

This dissertation represents an analysis, not a biographical narrative, and some of Lister's life story is therefore missing. Nor have I attempted a comparative approach with other journals or

¹Quoted in David Cannadine, Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 231.

other female estate owners: it seemed challenging enough to get through even part of Anne Lister's journal in the three years allotted for research - though I am sure such comparisons will prove interesting in the future. This work enables some of those comparisons to take place with greater accuracy.

While reading these three years of Lister's journals, I tried to be constantly aware that I was reading Anne Lister writing Anne Lister, rather than reading a simple objective recording of the facts of her days.² I sorted through the material as I read it, assigning some information to the category "class," other information to the category "politics," "sexuality," "gender," and so on. In most cases there was tremendous overlap, and in some ways this dissertation is an unraveling and separation of information which was originally recorded side by side. Sentences juxtaposed to one another in the journal might end up in separate chapters in this work. (See journal facsimile and translation, Figure 1.) This kind of separation is artificial in one way, but rather essential for purposes of analysis. Drawing the threads of my themes out of their context has been necessary to weave a new contextualization of the whole. Perhaps the approach is analogous to the archaeologist digging test trenches at different levels: it is likely that information about food, architecture, ceramics and tools or weaponry will appear in each level. One cannot analyze one type of cultural information in isolation from the others, but they each must also be analyzed independently.

Throughout this dissertation I have emphasized how the analysis of one category is essential to the analysis of the other. While many historians have, for example, kept their analysis of

²What you are reading, of course, is Cat Euler writing about reading Anne Lister writing Anne Lister.

politics separate from that of sexuality, I have brought them together. I have attempted to show that those of us responsible for recording and analyzing the past cannot understand class without understanding the operations of gender, and vice versa. Lesbian history cannot be understood outside a context of class, nor outside the female networks specific to class. Women's history cannot be understood without trying to understand how gender happens. I believe that none of these things can be understood without examining both discourse³ and subjectivity and the relationship of agency to both.⁴ One of the most controversial aspects of histories written "after the linguistic turn" has been their insistence that discourse actually constitutes, (rather than merely reflects), historical events and subjectivities. I will argue for an historical understanding of agency, in the areas of politics, class, sexuality and gender, which mitigates what can be construed as the deterministic aspects of that position.

Each section in this chapter will begin with a quotation which I felt delineated what might be seen as an older, even classical approach to the topic in question. This was done not in order to critique but rather to illustrate an interesting comparison, nothing more. A brief historiographical discussion will ensue. Finally, each section will end by clarifying the specific discursive explorations I

³Discourse here is defined in a perhaps simple historical way, as oral and written language (i.e., conversations, journals, etc.), prescriptive concepts (what men or women or Quakers ought to be like), customs (i.e., religious events, speeches from the hustings, tenant dinners, chari-vari, etc.), symbols (i.e., unicorns in chains and red caps of liberty), representations (art, literature, drama, architecture, music, etc.), repeated practice (actions) and sets of meanings given to any aspect of life at particular time period.

⁴My focus on this particular theoretical issue has been stimulated by a number of historians, but most recently by Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History After the Linguistic Turn: Historicizing Discourse and Experience," Signs 19, no. 2 (1994): 368-404 and Monique Deveaux, "Feminism and Empowerment: A Critical Reading of Foucault," Feminist Studies 20 (Summer 1994): 223-247.

will make in Anne Lister's text in each of the corresponding chapters in my text.

1. a. Approaches to Class

The most profound and far-reaching consequence of the Industrial Revolution was the birth of a new class society. A class society is characterized by class feeling, that is, by the existence of vertical antagonism between a small number of horizontal groups, each based on a common source of income. - **Harold Perkin, 1969**⁵

In this dissertation it will be argued that class, (like gender), is at least two things simultaneously: it is a discourse⁶ and it is a subject position. My own understandings of class developed from an introduction to marxism coupled with a firm grounding in both women's history and a sociological approach to social history. I have obviously also been influenced by post-modern approaches to historical questions about class. I can see continuities and connections between all these approaches.

A simplistic marxist reliance on an individual's relationship to the material means of production as a method for determining his or her "class" has been critically refined by non-Marxists and Marxists alike. A primary historical problem has been the inter-mixture of landed and industrial property and capital, which various West

⁵Harold Perkin, "The Birth of Class" in The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969) quoted in R.S. Neale, ed., History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 165.

⁶By using discourse in this context I do not mean to imply that class is not related to the material, to the means of production. The meanings associated with those relationships to material reality can and do change over time. I accept, however, that a person becomes hungry not just because a meaning has changed or been contested, but because there is no food. Women give birth not because of a discursive subject position, but because their bodies are pregnant. However, the cultural meanings associated with work, hunger, food, and pregnancy change over time, and it is in this change that I am interested.

Riding historians have explored in some depth.⁷ Max Weber, rejecting an economic reductionism, has relied on more subjective notions of "status" as formed by restrictions on social intercourse, endogamous marriage, honorific preferences and rituals and patterns of consumption.⁸ Weber has pointed out, especially for the early years of the nineteenth century, that, "the social and economic order are not identical."⁹ This approach is certainly applicable to Anne Lister's situation, but remains theoretically problematic.

Gareth Stedman-Jones has criticized historians who depend upon Weberian sociological conceptions of "class" because in them, he writes, social relations have been subjectified: "...sociological theories of stratification have been persistently characterized by the evasion or denial of objective economic relationships,"¹⁰ and with this broad sweep he criticizes a number of social historians such as Harold Perkin, who have, he says, simply studied social structure and social stratification.¹¹ Stedman-Jones wants to retain a dynamic sense of power struggle and argues for an approach which examines relationships between, for example, servant-keeping or non-servant-keeping households.

⁷ J. Benson and R.G. Neville, eds., Studies in the Yorkshire Coal Industry (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976); J.T. Ward, Land and Industry: The Landed Estate and the Industrial Revolution (Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1971); G. Mee, Aristocratic Enterprise (Glasgow: Blackie and Son, 1975).

⁸ Max Weber, "Class, Status, Party," in R.S. Neale, ed., History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 56-72.

⁹ Max Weber, "Class, Status, Party," 58.

¹⁰ Gareth Stedman-Jones, "From Historical Sociology to Theoretical History," in R.S. Neale, ed., History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 81. He appears to reject any contribution to our understanding of class which includes the subjective, yet argues against a purely positivist, Rankean solution. What he proposes instead is unclear.

¹¹ Harold Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969).

Perhaps one of the most important contributions of E.P. Thompson to the discussions about class has been his persistent emphasis on experience and agency, which of course implies an examination of the subjective. He tries to unify "...experience and...consciousness" and sees class as

something which in fact happens....in human relationships....and class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences.....feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. The class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born...¹²

This experience of productive relations, he maintains, is an objective one, which can and ought to be studied in real class situations and in real historical contexts, not simply in terms of theoretical, methodological or ideological pragmatism. The problem here, of course, is that the actual effect of experience in creating identities is always a subjective one.

Recent developments in feminist historical theory have not only altered the points of reference with regard to these debates, but have significantly contributed to our ability to analyze certain theoretical difficulties which previous thinkers have only hinted at. What is often seen as a separate "women's history" has in fact redefined, refined and challenged the project of the entire discipline. Joan Scott has specifically criticized E.P. Thompson's concept of class on a number of points. Her work has crossed the older boundaries between the objective and the subjective and has particularly questioned our received notions about experience, discourse and the historical subject.¹³ As Regenia Gagnier points out,

¹²E.P. Thompson, "Class Consciousness," in R.S. Neale, ed., History and Class: Essential Readings in Theory and Interpretation (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 114-115.

¹³Joan Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); eadem, "The Evidence of Experience," Critical Inquiry

"the post-structural conception of subjectivity claims that the *I*, the apparent seat of consciousness, is not an integral center of thought but a contradictory, discursive category constituted by ideological discourse itself."¹⁴ Because the "I" is the one who experiences, who sees, who reads, who acts, E.P. Thompson's reliance on experiences as "objective" phenomena which explain class is no longer adequate.

With good reason, many marxist historians have criticized what are often termed "post-modern" approaches because they depart too radically from a materialist foundation. I do not think they are that incompatible. It is not just that one individual invests capital in a steam engine, for example, which enables him or her to increase the productive capacity of individual laborers, which increase is then skimmed off for the benefit of the capitalist. Both laborers and those investing in the means of production attribute certain meanings to their positions within this relationship and to their experiences of this relationship. Indeed, their subjective experiences of this relationship cannot be separated from the discursive attribution of meanings in which they participate. "Coal" may objectively be the same physical material from century to century and culture to culture, but it is not therefore ahistorical. It has been given different meanings depending on time and place, and depending on whether one digs it, carts it, leases it or owns it. Your subject position (how you view and present yourself) is partially created by your experience of your relationship to the coal (and vice versa - the meanings you give to your experiences are partially constructed by your subject position); the meanings of each (subjectivities, discourses and experiences) can and do change.

17 (Summer 1991): 773-97. There is a more complete discussion of Scott's ideas later in this chapter, pp. 38-39 and 61-62.

¹⁴Regenia Gagnier, Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832-1920 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Neither coal nor textiles nor soil nor individual bodies nor social groups nor subjectivities have meaning outside of the discursive communities into which we are all born. E.P. Thompson's understanding of class is based largely on the historical residues (written language) of individuals experiencing class. In presenting certain kinds of public evidence (from The Poor Man's Guardian or Cobbett's Political Register, for example) he is presenting the recorded experience of subjectivities whose experience was in turn informed by discourse. Yet this is the kind of material which historians frequently claim is objective and by that means attempt to demonstrate a greater validity, or a higher status, for their work.

Other historians have instead focused their studies of class on how meanings are contested. Some of the most useful work in this regard includes Epstein's "Understanding the Cap of Liberty"¹⁵ as well as Linda Gordon's Heroes of Their Own Lives.¹⁶ In both cases oppressed subjects retain their agency when dealing with the public discourses that intervene in their lives. Epstein indicates how a different identity, or subject position, can be put forward into a public arena through a conscious manipulation of language.¹⁷

To some extent I have drawn on all these historiographical traditions, both old and new. It remains important to recover specific information about Anne Lister's estate and its material resources in order to understand her class position, because Lister associates certain meanings with the exploitation of her dynastic inheritance. However, Anne Lister's perception of status (in a Weberian sense) is also integral to understanding her class. Chapter

¹⁵James Epstein, "Understanding the Cap of Liberty: Symbolic Practice and Social Conflict in Early Nineteenth-Century England," Past and Present 122 (February 1989): 75-118.

¹⁶Linda Gordon, Heroes of Their Own Lives: the Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston 1880-1960 (London: Virago, 1989).

¹⁷James Epstein, "Understanding the Cap of Liberty."

Four also includes glimpses of the power dynamics between Lister and her tenants, employees and servants: in this sense I have retained a dynamic, hierarchical notion of class which includes relationships to others and to the means of production. Lister's manipulation of the discourses about landed versus commercial wealth were informed by gendered discourses, which she also manipulated. Such strategies indicate she was not passive in the face of received ideas.

A complete bibliographical essay on agency in feminist historiography would be beyond the scope of this chapter. Kathleen Canning has particularly aided my understanding of these issues, however. "My own search for answers," she writes, "takes as its starting point the assertion that there is no turning back to the unreflective use of concepts such as experience or class....."¹⁸

¹⁸Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn," 373-374.

1. b. Gender and the Gentry in Particular

When, in 1878, John Bateman undertook an analysis of The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland, he discovered that out of 1,644 individuals with holdings of at least 3,000 acres,....fewer than a hundred were women....for the most part primogeniture and patrilineal descent ensured that women were of little importance where landownership was concerned. Only when a male heir failed did the property pass to, or through, a woman.- Pamela Horn, 1991¹⁹

It appears unlikely that the Anne Lister material will do much to revise our interpretation of the gentry as such, even though she was one of the minority women landowners mentioned by Bateman.²⁰ It will, however, help us understand how gender was a factor in those gentry dynamics in which previous historians have evinced an interest: the role of heterosexual marriage in determining both property and status,²¹ the role of the landed interest in financing extractive and other industries,²² and the management of landed estates in an era influenced by agricultural improvement, industrialization and the values of political economy.²³

¹⁹Pamela Horn, Victorian Countrywomen (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 39-40.

²⁰The term "landowner" is problematic. I use it here in the sense of one who held land without a strict settlement; those men and women who held land under a strict settlement might more properly be considered life-tenants through whom the land passed on its way to the next generation. There is a brief discussion of what strict settlement is in chapters 4 and 7 of this dissertation. Detailed discussions can be found in Barbara English and John Saville, Strict Settlement: A Guide for Historians, Occasional Papers in Economics and Social History, no. 10 (Hull: University of Hull Press, 1983), and Eileen Spring, "The Settlement of Land in Nineteenth-Century England," American Journal of Legal History 8 (1964): 209-223; Susan Staves, Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

²¹Barbara English, The Great Landowners of East Yorkshire, 1530-1910 (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990); Leonore Davidoff, The Best Circles: Society Etiquette and the Season (London: Croom Helm, 1973); Christopher Clay, "Marriage, Inheritance, and the Rise of Large Estates in England, 1660-1815," Economic History Review 21, no. 3 (1968): 503-518.

²²G. Mee, Aristocratic Enterprise and J.T. Ward, Land and Industry. *idem*, "The West Riding Landowners and the Railroads," Journal of Transport History 4 (1960), 242-251.

²³F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963); William L. Miller, "Primogeniture,

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall have pointed out the crucial role of gender in defining the 'middle class,'²⁴ and Peterson has discussed the lives of upper-middle-class women,²⁵ but very little has been done on the role of gender in the formation of the gentry. While Pamela Horn has some general information on women of the gentry,²⁶ and Joan Perkin has a brief but thorough discussion of upper-class women,²⁷ detailed analyses of gender and the gentry are lacking. Most historical work specifically on the gentry has primarily focused on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and these studies tend to leave out gender.²⁸

Comparatively scant attention has been paid to that prosperous, substantial social group which has passed quietly, firmly (but not yet entirely) off the historical stage. As F.M.L Thompson remarked in 1963, in what has remained one of the primary studies of both the aristocracy and gentry (distinct but fluid social groups), "The novel feature of the present century has...been the end of the rise of the new gentry...this is because an estate is no longer generally regarded as a worthwhile investment in status..."²⁹ Thompson focuses on the aristocracy and confines his research on the gentry to one chapter.

Barbara English deals almost exclusively with the wealthier members of the aristocracy. The minor gentry is nowhere to be

Entails, and Endowments in English Classical Economics," History of Political Economy 12, no. 4 (1980): 558-581.

²⁴Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850 (London: Hutchinson, 1987).

²⁵M. Jeanne Peterson, Family, Love, and Work in the Lives of Victorian Gentlewomen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

²⁶Pamela Horn, Victorian Countrywomen, 39-72.

²⁷Joan Perkin, Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England (London: Routledge, 1989).

²⁸H.J. Habakkuk, "English Landownership, 1680-1740," Economic History Review 10 (1940); G.E. Mingay, The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class (London: Longman, 1976); Lawrence Stone, An Open Elite? England, 1540-1880 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

²⁹F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society, 342-343.

seen.³⁰ Davidoff's The Best Circles deals with the women of the aristocracy, as in general it was the aristocracy which was wealthy enough to participate in the London season, whereas the gentry had a smaller, county-based season of their own. Her book also focuses on the later nineteenth century. Many of the descriptions of social expectations would no doubt have applied to the gentry of the early nineteenth century as well, though the forms may have been more or less highly evolved. Many of the social rituals described by Davidoff closely parallel those in Anne Lister's life.

In Family Fortunes, of course, Davidoff and Hall focus on the middle classes. They pay attention to the gentry only long enough to suggest that within it masculinity was "based in sport and codes of honor derived from military prowess, finding expression in hunting, riding, drinking and wenching."³¹ This is not only a critical, middle-class concept of gentry masculinity but is still inordinately linked to a certain physical, material form; Anne Lister does incorporate a gentry discourse on masculinity into her subjectivity, but because of dominant discourse (including laws) about her physical form is unable, for example, to enter the military, vote or drink in public. However, this does not inhibit her from the "wenching" aspect of gentry discourse on masculinity.

Most other work on the gentry has focused on its economic pursuits, rather than discussing it in terms of gender, or in terms of its formation in discourses or subjectivities. Some useful work has been done on the land laws peculiar to the aristocracy and gentry.³²

³⁰Barbara English, The Great Landowners.

³¹Davidoff and Hall, Family Fortunes, 400.

³²English and Saville, Strict Settlement; Spring, "The Settlement of Land." In another article Spring points out the interesting fact that the old land laws were challenged by classical economists in the 1840s as 'feudal.' This relates to changes in the meaning of the constitutional narrative, which had been dependent on a particular definition of property, which was also changing. See Eileen Spring, "Landowners, Lawyers and Land Law Reform in

Other studies have focused on the aristocracy's and gentry's economic exploitation of their estates.³³ Much relevant material on the gentry may be found within agrarian histories, but in that case it is often focused on agricultural practices and country life.³⁴ Other work is preoccupied with the tenacity of the landed elite and its influence, a concern related to the liberal narrative which primarily investigates the class as a barrier to political "progress."³⁵

Gendered examinations of the gentry include Amanda Vickery's work on elite women in Lancashire in the early nineteenth century, but she is less than explicit about the differences in her subjects between a landed and a mercantile elite, and hardly examines the role of discourse in shaping gender. These two factors lead her to conclude that among the "elite," (both landed and mercantile),

Landed gentlemen, professional gentlemen and gentlemen merchants served together on the lieutenancy and turnpike commission. They combined for hunting, shooting, fishing....meanwhile their wives exchanged information on childbearing and childrearing, servants, prices, fashions, recipes and remedies....biological and familial imperatives governed the chief roles available to elite women. Their

Nineteenth-Century England," American Journal of Legal History 21, no. 1 (1977): 40-59.

³³D. Spring, "The English Landed Estate in the Age of Coal and Iron, 1830-1880," Journal of Economic History 11 (1951): 3-24; J.T. Ward, "The Saving of a Yorkshire Estate: George Lane-Fox and Bramham Park," Yorkshire Archaeological Journal 42 (1967), 63-71; *idem*, "West Riding Landowners and Mining in the Nineteenth Century," Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research 15-16, (1963-64), 61-74.

³⁴Gordon Edmund Mingay, A Social History of the English Countryside (London: Routledge, 1990); Gordon Edmund Mingay ed., The Agrarian History of England and Wales. Vol. VI: 1750-1850, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Chambers and Mingay, The Agricultural Revolution 1750-1880 (London: B.T. Batsford, 1966).

³⁵Peter Jupp, "The Landed Elite and Political Authority in Britain ca. 1760-1850," Journal of British Studies 29, no. 1 (1990): 53-79; David Cannadine, "From 'Feudal' Lords to Figureheads: Urban landownership and aristocratic influence in nineteenth-century towns," Urban History Yearbook (1978): 23-35; David Cannadine, ed., Patricians, Power and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Towns, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982).

lives progressed through recognized stages - maid, wife, mother and perhaps widow....³⁶

This type of approach names the whole female experience of "the gentry" as that experienced by the women whose subjectivities (apparently all heterosexual and all married) Vickery happened to encounter in her particular sources. It informs us that some women chose to implement the dominant discourse. But it also implies that resistance or difference or indeed agency among these women did not exist. This is both a distortion of women's history as well as an accurate reflection: many gentry women's lives were probably partly characterized by these things - but if they were, their lives were not governed by biological imperatives but rather by the meanings associated with marriage, pregnancy and childbirth at that time. And even then, their lives were not totally governed by meanings - they still had some power of choice in the matter.

Most previous research on the gentry does not adequately reflect the kind of information which emerges from Anne Lister's journals. It is evident that Anne Lister was working with at least six pairs of contradictory discourses, related by class and gender. These are:

1. The idea that men should be knowledgeable about things like mathematics, engineering and business; versus the idea that upper class women should be leisured and not overly educated.
2. The idea that for the landed gentry certain kinds of business activities "blot the scutcheon" and that the only legitimate, respectable source of income was the land and its resources;

³⁶Amanda Vickery, "Women of the Local Elite in Lancashire, 1750-1825" (Ph.D. diss., London University, 1991), 332-334.

versus the idea (and material reality) that if you don't make more money you cannot travel and be leisured.

3. The idea that landowners are more powerful than their tenants, employees and servants; in tension with the idea that men are more powerful than women.

4. The belief that the land must be preserved for future generations, no matter what the cost; versus the paradigm that the masculine individual must make a profit, no matter what the cost.

5. The supposition that women are sentimental and soft-hearted about the poor; versus the concept that smart men are hard-hearted and ruthless in their public dealings.

6. The ideal of the estate as an interactive, interdependent community (albeit hierarchical); versus the belief that each individual's moral and political decisions are privately their own, even if made in a hierarchical context.

How these varying class-related discourses appear in the Anne Lister journal and how she negotiates between them will be addressed in Chapter Four. This approach allows for the application of my central theoretical preoccupation to the area of class: that is, how does Anne Lister write her own class and gender position with the cultural vocabulary available to her? How does she use the discourses of class to manipulate those of gender, and vice versa? How is agency affected by material conditions, as well as by discourses?

2. Politics

....the whole series of political and constitutional reforms in the decade between 1828 and 1838 was one composite attack on the legal privileges of the landed interest which the shift of wealth, power, and population to the towns and factories and ports had already rendered out of date and anomalous. - David Thomson, 1950³⁷

This dissertation is concerned with only a few aspects of British politics in the 1830s. It must narrow its scope because the sources I have chosen to use are correspondingly narrow. What can one landed but voteless woman, writing about her own political participation in the decade of reform, have to tell us about the meaning of politics?

James Vernon has called the period 1815-1867 "the most well-picked bone on the carcass of British political history," and has, I believe, succeeded in his project to "break the interpretive log-jam" in his post-modern cultural history of this period, Politics and the People. He aptly criticizes previous narratives (whether tory, liberal or marxist) for their basically teleological and "triumphalist" account of "England's democratic and libertarian constitution."³⁸ Narratives of the centre have argued about the exact timing of party formation, and whether Whigs or Tories were initially more successful at it, the aristocratic character of the reform cabinet, whether the intent of Reform was to restrain or encourage liberal progress, whether it actually accomplished this or not, and whether deferential tenants continued to exist on any meaningful scale in the post-Reform era.³⁹ Narratives of the periphery have focused on

³⁷David Thomson, England in the Nineteenth Century (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1950), 58.

³⁸James Vernon, Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c. 1815-1867 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 6, 338, 1.

³⁹D.C. Moore, "Concession or Cure: The Sociological Premises of the First Reform Act," History Journal 9, no. 1 (1966): 39-59; *idem*, "The Other Face of Reform," Victorian Studies 5 (1961): 7-34; Frank O'Gorman, "Electoral

reclaiming voices previously excluded, upon working-class politics, and upon the importance of local studies.⁴⁰ They have explored when various class consciousnesses were formed, whether the crowd was rational or not, and why England didn't have a violent revolution in 1832 or 1848. All of these questions have greatly contributed to our understanding of the period, but all entail certain assumptions about the very nature of politics which it is also helpful to deconstruct.

Vernon writes that "critical to this rethinking of politics has been our understanding of the ways in which political identities, subjectivities, and constituencies of support are created....This consideration of politics as power, as a discursive attempt to create or prevent a sense of agency, represents a significant step forward."⁴¹ While Vernon casts more than a passing nod at the contributions of feminist historians, his understanding of the subject, of agency and the creation of subjective identities remains

Deference in 'Unreformed' England: 1760-1832," Journal of Modern History 56, no. 3 (1984): 391-429; Alan Heesom, "'Legitimate' versus 'Illegitimate' Influences: Aristocratic Electioneering in Mid-Victorian Britain," Parliamentary History 7, no. 2 (1988): 282-305; Donald Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs 1832-1886 (London: Macmillan, 1962); Norman Gash, "The Organization of the Conservative Party 1832-1846: Part I: The Parliamentary Organization," Parliamentary History 1 (1982): 137-159; *idem*, Reaction and Reconstruction in English Politics, 1832-1852 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965); Peter Mandler, Aristocratic Government in the Age of Reform: Whigs and Liberals, 1830-1852 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); D.C. Moore, The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Nineteenth Century Political System (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1976); Ian Newbould, Whiggery and Reform 1830-41: the Politics of Government (London: Macmillan, 1990).

⁴⁰E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (London: Gollancz, 1963); D. Fraser, "The Fruits of Reform: Leeds Politics in the 1830s," Northern History 7 (1972): 89-111; *idem*, "Voluntaryism and West Riding Politics in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," Northern History 13 (1977): 199-247; J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12 (1976): 172-201; Robert Worthington Smith, "Political Organization and Canvassing: Yorkshire Elections Before the Reform Bill," American Historical Review 74, no. 5 (1969): 1538-1560; F.M.L. Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals in the West Riding 1830-60," English Historical Review 74, no. 291 (April 1959): 214-239; D.G. Wright, "A Radical Borough: Parliamentary Politics in Bradford, 1832-41," Northern History 4 (1969): 132-166.

⁴¹Vernon, Politics and the People, 1, 6.

stubbornly ungendered. While his project includes understanding both the production and reception of political discourse, for political reasons he has prioritized the less specifically literate sources such as the iconography of popular demonstrations, art, architecture and statuary. He takes for granted that the language of politics does not merely reflect but actively constitutes social experience, and predicates the creation of various subjectivities on this theory. Vernon's research leads him to the conclusion that "definitions of the constitution became increasingly exclusive during this period,"⁴² and that changes in political life in the nineteenth century primarily consisted of changes in the meaning of the constitutional narrative as well as battles about these meanings. This last approach is particularly applicable and helpful when trying to understand Anne Lister's daily narrative, especially when considered alongside Nossiter's work on influence and political idioms, which will be discussed in a moment.⁴³

However, there are two ways in which I disagree with Vernon's theoretical methodology. One is his simple acceptance of the idea that agency is entirely formed via discourse. I would maintain that if one is dealing with questions of "production and reception" one must attempt to interrogate subjectivities about their agency - not merely assume that agency is passively "instilled" or "endowed"⁴⁴ by certain discourses. Not only do I think that the relationship of individual agency to discourse can change over time and can be shown to have changed over time, I also think it varies by class and gender. Secondly, Vernon is overly careful not to privilege some subject positions (i.e., class, sex, desire, ethnicity,

⁴² *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴³ T.J. Nossiter, Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North-east 1832-1874 (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1975).

⁴⁴ Vernon, Politics and the People, 331, 335.

national identities, religious identities, etc.) over others. It may be that such an approach allows us to escape from a "historiographical preoccupation with class"⁴⁵ but it dilutes essential questions about power differences between subjectivities and how those may also affect agency. Vernon's reluctance to emphasize the influence of one or another subject position presupposes that everyone in nineteenth-century England was a decentered fragmented subject except perhaps for wealthy white males. I don't see why they ought to be excepted, and I don't see that we can actually prove such massive fragmentation of subjectivities in the face of all-powerful (albeit contested) discourses without more personalized examination of agency within narratives. This is exactly why the diary of a politically active woman in the early nineteenth century can give us so much insight into the problem.

Nossiter's study of political idioms in the post-reform period is also relevant here. "Consciously or subconsciously," he writes, "political actors, in the fifty years after the first Reform Act, held one of three competing conceptions of the political process, which turned on the notion they embodied of the essential nature of the act of voting: voting as an occasional facet of a wider social life, voting as essentially a financial transaction or voting as, ultimately, an independent area of the individual's life."⁴⁶ Here are three discourses. The first relates to the estate community and using the vote to express one's network of influence; the second relates to crude bribery as well as to extra work orders, rent reductions, etc; the third relates to that conception which triumphalist accounts describe as the final goal towards which all nineteenth-century

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁶Nossiter, Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms, 5.

political history, especially successive electoral reform bills, aimed: the rational individual voting according to self-interest.

These approaches provide the background for the questions I ultimately asked of the political passages in the Anne Lister narrative: first, which of these three conceptions of voting did she hold; which were held by her tenants and local tradesmen; how did the two interact; to what extent could they escape or modify these conceptions, and in whose interest was it to do so? I believe these questions relate to Vernon's central preoccupation: contesting interpretations of the constitutional narrative in the nineteenth-century. Secondly, what does it tell us about subjectivity and agency that Anne Lister participated in politics at all?⁴⁷ The vote has been seen as the primary symbol of political agency. In the nineteenth century the state barred women from voting. Does this mean Anne Lister lacked political agency? Or could she appropriate and strategically re-employ one conception of voting to suit her own purposes? These questions apply my central theoretical preoccupation to the area of politics: that is, what is the relationship between agency and discourse in this person at this place in this time? What else besides discourse affects agency? Chapter Five will explore Anne Lister's political discourses and how she negotiated among them.

⁴⁷There are a scattering of works that indicate that elite women's participation in politics was not such a rare occurrence. (My study, of course, is not concerned with determining how unique or ordinary Anne Lister was - an extremely difficult, if not impossible, task.) See, for instance, Judith Lewis, "Political Behavior of Elite Women in England, 1774-1832," in Proceedings of the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, 1750-1850 (1983): 242-270.

3. Sexuality

I am concerned here with two other matters as well: first, how and why women's choice of women as passionate comrades, life partners, co-workers, lovers, tribe, has been crushed, invalidated, forced into hiding and disguise; and second, the virtual or total neglect of lesbian existence in a wide range of writings, including feminist scholarship. Obviously there is a connection here. I believe that much feminist theory and criticism is stranded on this shoal....It is this history, precisely, from which feminists have so much to learn and on which there is overall such blanketing silence. - Adrienne Rich, 1980⁴⁸

Much of the earliest work on the history of sexuality came out of an emphasis on identity politics which assumed that homosexuality had been more or less the same thing from the time of Pericles to that of Queen Anne.⁴⁹ Other work focused on the socially constructed and historically specific aspects of sexuality, both homosexual and heterosexual, both practice and desire. Adrienne Rich, one of the first feminists to deal specifically with lesbian history, fits somewhere in between these two approaches. For example, she was criticized for half implying that heterosexuality was socially constructed but that most women were 'naturally' inclined to love their own. Rich, of course, was trying to counter the enormous weight of discourse which assumes that heterosexuality is "natural."⁵⁰

⁴⁸Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," in Desire: The Politics of Sexuality, eds. A. Snitow, C. Stansell and S. Thompson (London: Virago, 1983), 212-215. Reprint, Signs 5 (1980): 631-660.

⁴⁹Louis Crompton, "Gay Genocide: From Leviticus to Hitler," in The Gay Academic, ed. Louie Crew (Palm Springs, Calif.: ETC., 1978), 67-82; James Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Phyllis Birkby and others, eds., Amazon Expedition: A Lesbian Feminist Anthology (Albion, Calif.: Times Change Press, 1973).

⁵⁰ Some excellent work has been done on the changing meanings associated with "nature" and the political or power strategies behind these uses. See Diana Fuss, Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference (London: Routledge, 1990); Ludmilla Jordanova, "Natural Facts: A Historical Perspective on Science and Sexuality," in Nature, Culture and Gender, eds. Carol P. McCormack and Marilyn Strathern, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Foucauldian approaches challenged the nature/culture dichotomy and the focus on etiology and insisted that subjective sexual identities were primarily a product of discourse rather than sexual practices and desires.⁵¹ David Halperin summarizes this position in the title of his monograph, One Hundred Years of Homosexuality,⁵² in which he insists that people did not have subjective identities based on sexual practice before the advent of certain socio-medico discourses in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It will come as a surprise to many of these theorists that a woman existed in the first half of the nineteenth century whose personal identification with one kind of sexual practice was as conscious and explicit as it was. It will be argued that the evidence about sexuality in the Anne Lister diaries and letters allows a major revision of the positions of Foucault, and Halperin especially.⁵³ Two blind spots help to explain this revision: first, the masculinist denial of agency in histories written "after the linguistic turn" which have insisted that discourse totally constitutes passive historical events and subjectivities.⁵⁴ In the area of sexuality I will argue for an historical understanding of agency which mitigates the deterministic tendencies of post-modern approaches. I will explore how Anne Lister actively made choices and negotiated specific discourses about sexuality. Secondly, this revision is also possible

1980), 42-69; Gisela Bock, "Women's History and Gender History: Aspects of an International Debate," Gender and History 1, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 7-30.

⁵¹Among others, M. Foucault, The History of Sexuality Vol: 1: An Introduction (New York: Vintage, 1980); Jeffrey Weeks, Against Nature: Essays on History, Sexuality and Identity (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1991); Judith Butler, "Variations on Sex and Gender: Beauvoir, Wittig and Foucault," in Feminism as Critique: Essays on the Politics of Gender in Late-Capitalist Societies, eds. S. Benhabib and D. Cornell (Polity Press, 1986); *eadem*, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (London: Routledge, 1990).

⁵²David Halperin, One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love (London: Routledge, 1990).

⁵³Foucault, History of Sexuality.

⁵⁴Monique Deveaux, "Feminism and Empowerment" is a very coherent critique of that position.

because of the masculinist priority given to the public over the private, the production rather than the reception of discourses, the objective public text over the subjective private negotiation of that text.

This thesis will not only criticize Foucault on timing and agency, but also on the relationship between sexuality and class. Foucault's now classic dictum is the following:

If it is true that sexuality is the set of effects produced in bodies, behaviors and social relations by a certain deployment deriving from a complex political technology, one has to admit that this deployment does not operate in symmetrical fashion with respect to the social classes, and consequently, that it does not produce the same effects in them. We must return, therefore, to formulations that have long since been disparaged; we must say that there is a bourgeois sexuality, and that there are class sexualities. Or rather, that sexuality is originally, historically bourgeois, and that, in its successive shifts and transpositions, it includes specific class effects....the bourgeoisie set its own body and its precious sexuality against the valorous blood of the nobles.⁵⁵

Foucault maintains that the deployment of sexuality was historically constructed "around and on the basis of the deployment of alliance,"⁵⁶ that is, in reaction to the kinships systems of the aristocracy. I think it is obvious that this portrait of an exclusively bourgeois origin of discourses on "sexuality" is rather undermined by the Anne Lister evidence. Gentry discourses about sexuality in the early nineteenth century did not sound like bourgeois ones, but they were about "sexuality" in the strategic, controlling sense Foucault means it here. This will become clearer in Chapter Six, when it will be seen that in Anne Lister's world, sexual practice, identity and property were inextricably intermingled.

To put it crudely, Foucault posited that the bourgeois deployment of sexuality occurred in order to replace the older

⁵⁵Foucault, History of Sexuality, 127.

⁵⁶Foucault, History of Sexuality, 107.

systems of alliance and kinship within the aristocracy (and gentry). These new systems of control had specific class effects on subjectivities: they created "identities." I would argue that despite the fact that Anne Lister's subjectivity was formed partially around (the older) systems of alliance, she also had a subjective identity formed partially around sexual practice and desire. Anita Levy's analysis of Foucault,⁵⁷ while overstated in some ways, is nevertheless applicable to this question:

We know the language of kinship in early modern culture was a political language connoting position, place and power within the aristocratic community. Membership within that community rested, more than anything, upon the purity of one's blood. 'Blood' was a highly metaphysical notion. The special character of the ruling-class body lay in its unsullied blood, which, most important, retained its mystical power 'no matter the sex in which blood might be embodied.' ...when the kinship system could no longer adequately support economic processes or political institutions, it gradually lost some of its importance...[*rise of bourgeoisie*]⁵⁸....As gender replaced blood as the most revealing feature of the individual, the rules determining permissible and impermissible unions changed.⁵⁹

Unlike Levy, who suggests that aristocratic kinship systems were beginning to decline in the seventeenth century, I think the evidence for extensive kinship systems among landed aristocracy and gentry goes well into the late nineteenth century, not losing their full force until the almost unprecedentedly huge transfers of land immediately after World War I.⁶⁰ In other words, Anne Lister does not fit into the Foucauldian model, in so far as her subjectivity was formed not only by experiences of blood- and land-based alliances among the gentry and aristocracy, but also by an identity

⁵⁷Anita Levy, Other Women: The Writing of Class, Race and Gender, 1832-1898 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁵⁸Brackets and italics mine.

⁵⁹Levy, Other Women, 57-58. My own thinking on this issue has been helped in part by insights about gender and class shared by Dr. Jane Slaughter at the University of New Mexico.

⁶⁰F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society, final chapter.

formed partially around gender and sexual practice. The Anne Lister evidence must force us to rethink some of the primary Foucauldian assumptions about the effects of power, upon which so much subsequent theory is built.

In Foucauldian approaches, the very project of looking for the etiology of homosexuality was part of a (late nineteenth-century) bourgeois proliferation of discourses on sexuality whose aim was to police subjectivities by creating identities. Some historians have accepted this thesis to the point where they have feared that even by using the words 'homosexual' or 'lesbian' they were "colluding with the deployment of sexuality."⁶¹ I feel that we must deal with the language (and the identified subjectivities) as they are constituted within our own time period, the late twentieth century.⁶² The words we have now can be used to describe similar phenomena in the past, in the same way that historians use words like "nation-state" or "class" when looking at centuries which did not use those words. This does not mean that "lesbian" or "nation-state" mean the same thing from century to century.

I will use the word "lesbian" in this dissertation to mean women whose bodies/consciousnesses touched in passionate/sexual ways.⁶³ I recognize that this approach is controversial: but I think

⁶¹A. Ferguson, et al., "Forum: The Feminist Sexuality Debates," Signs 10, no. 1 (Autumn 1984): 106-147. Especially Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby, "American Feminism in the Age of the Body," *ibid.*, 122.

⁶²There is also work which suggests that the languages used to describe sexual passion between women stretch back at least as far as the late seventeenth-century. Emma Donoghue, Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801 (London: Scarlet Press, 1993).

⁶³There is also a growing body of literature (with an emancipatory aim) devoted to destabilizing any supposed boundary between sexual and nonsexual touching. While these theories/practices are fascinating, I must be able to use an intelligible symbol, or word, for my work in this dissertation. I do not mean by this that every time any women have ever touched each other in any culture that it has always carried the same meanings. See for example, Sonia Johnson, The Ship That Sailed Into the Livingroom: Sex and Intimacy Reconsidered (Estancia, NM, USA: Wildfire Books, 1991) and S. Tatnall and P. Balcerzak, "The Woofer-Tweeter Theory of Sexual Stimulus-Response," unpublished paper read at the National Women's Studies Association

this kind of simultaneous definition keeps lesbian history more open, in that we can study all kinds of patterns of women loving women while simultaneously embracing the erotic. Furthermore, I maintain that "lesbian," (like "class" and "gender") represents both a subjectivity and a discourse. While I am interested in the historical development of the modern lesbian identity, I also recognize that subjectivities are not stable, and that discourses can be contested. This dissertation, especially Chapters Three and Six, will demonstrate that Anne Lister's sexuality (or her subjective identity as a lesbian) stemmed partially from her sexual practice, partially from her reading of classical literature, and partially from growing up in a society with dominant discourses relating to heterosexuality and masculinity.

Martha Vicinus has identified a pattern in lesbian historiography in which authors favorable to one particular etiology (an innate propensity) emphasize butch-femme relations, whereas authors favorable to the other (social conditioning) prefer the romantic friendship model.⁶⁴ Here I will attempt to evade these dichotomies with three strategies: by making etiology itself irrelevant to this work (a Foucauldian position); by exploring Anne Lister's negotiation of slightly different etiological dichotomies (hers were, whether lesbianism was a result of hermaphroditic physical differences or inner natural desires) and by exploring butch-femme dynamics within the context of wider discussions on gender.

Historians have had varying opinions as to whether "butch-femme" roles among lesbians have reproduced or revolutionized the

conference, June 1990, quoted in Johnson, *ibid.*, 292; Helen Fenton, "Is Monogamy a Philosophically Coherent Ideal?" (B.A. diss., University of Durham, 1992).

⁶⁴Martha Vicinus, "'They Wonder To Which Sex I Belong': The Historical Roots of the Modern Lesbian Identity," Feminist Studies 18, no. 3 (Autumn 1992): 467-497.

hierarchical power relations of traditional heterosexuality.⁶⁵ An examination in Chapter Six of the internal power and material dynamics of Anne Lister's relationship with Ann Walker should help elucidate this point. I have heard and read the life stories of older butches who have been harshly judged by the "cuisinart blades of feminist rhetoric,"⁶⁶ which condemn them for their "male-identification" and reproduction of "patriarchal" power imbalances. Therefore I have tried to approach these issues in a nonjudgemental fashion. I have instead read the Anne Lister text in terms of how she actively negotiated gendered discourses about power and sexual practice.

I also wish to make it clear from the outset that I am making an important theoretical distinction between discourses about "gender" and those about "sexual practice." Although they intersect in the Anne Lister material, these discourses were not as closely associated in her time as in ours. In other words, she could publicly identify as masculine without this having any automatic relation to her actual sexual practice. I will deal further with gender discourses in the following section, and deal here with those related specifically to sexual practice and its effect on subjective identity.

Lillian Faderman, Sheila Jeffreys, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Carol Lasser have published research on nineteenth century female bonding which indicates that the acceptability of romantic/affectionate intra-female attachments declined at exactly the same time both the "deployment of sexuality" and the "First" wave of feminism intensified, at exactly the same time when "homosexuals" were being invented, that is, the last quarter of the

⁶⁵Sheila Jeffreys, "Butch and Femme: Now and Then," in Not a Passing Phase: Reclaiming Lesbians in History 1840-1985, Lesbian History Group, eds. (London: Women's Press, 1989); Joan Nestle, ed., The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader (Boston: Alyson Publications, 1992).

⁶⁶I was unable to find the source of this very appropriate quotation.

nineteenth and first quarter of the twentieth centuries.⁶⁷ The dual idea in Faderman's early work is that before women's love for each other became associated with sexual activity "the sexual possibilities of their relationships were seldom entertained"⁶⁸ and that afterwards women were thereby restrained from manifesting any affection for each other. In other words, loving expressions between women were at one time disassociated from sexual practice. This is not unrelated to my argument about gender and sexual practice being similarly disengaged from each other in the discourses of Lister's class and time, although in this dissertation both phenomena are seen as discourses which Anne Lister could and did use for her own benefit. The Anne Lister text also shows that these discursive phenomena were not necessarily constitutive of historical reality. That is, some people did associate Anne Lister's gender or her attachment to various women with her sexual practice, but this was because they knew her, not because the prevailing discourses told them it would be so.

I believe Faderman and Smith-Rosenberg have done an enormous service both to feminism and to women's history by establishing the historicity of these sorts of changes, even if some of their conclusions have been modified by later research. Their work has sparked off controversy for a number of reasons.⁶⁹ First it is

⁶⁷Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present (London: Junction Books, 1981; reprint, London: Women's Press, 1991); *eadem*, Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Sheila Jeffreys, The Spinster and Her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality 1880-1930 (London: Pandora, 1985); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," Signs 1, no. 1 (1975): 1-29; Carol Lasser, "'Let Us Be Sisters Forever': The Sororal Model of Nineteenth-Century Female Friendship," Signs 14, no. 1 (Autumn 1988): 158-181.

⁶⁸Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men, 414.

⁶⁹For other critical discussions see Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus and George Chauncy, eds., Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past (New York: Penguin, 1991).

maintained that they have subordinated the erotic in order to make the emotional respectable. I suspect that the researchers had no such plan, but are simply reflecting the attitudes which they found in their sources. The Anne Lister material (not available when Faderman did her early work) simply puts another piece of the puzzle in place by showing that some women did entertain erotic possibilities and were able to use the discourses about romantic friendship to mask them. One of the arguments of Chapters Three and Six is that Lister consciously manipulated these ideas in exactly this way in order to suit her own purpose.

To sum up: It was through studying much of the current work on the history of sexuality that I came to deconstruct seven discourses about sexuality which appear in the Anne Lister text. These are:

1. A sexual double-standard which told Anne Lister's masculinized subjectivity that she was free to form as many sexual liaisons as she wished, but if feminized women did so they were no longer worthy of respect.
2. The idea that in sexual practice the masculine is never penetrated.
3. The assumption that if you were planning on being long-term sexual partners with someone in the same class, you both had to exchange extensive financial information about your respective landed estates; this was a discourse about a specific type of property peculiar to the aristocracy and gentry.
4. The social rituals which supported the change in feminine status upon being sexually partnered for life with the masculine; this caused "marital" difficulties for two women whose sexual practice was not enshrined in law.

5. The idea that a masculine and feminine sexual partnership would also be characterized by separate spheres of activity for each.
6. The disassociative discourses which meant that a woman with masculine traits did not (because of those traits) necessarily have sex with other women; nor did women who had loving and affectionate relationships with other women necessarily (because of those attachments) have sex with other women.
7. And, of course, the idea that women were always supposed to be sexual with men, not with women (the discourse of compulsory heterosexuality).

These discourses reveal a certain overlap between information specifically about sexuality and that related specifically to gender, like separate spheres. These questions apply my main questions about agency and discourse to the area of sexuality: that is, how successful was Anne Lister in negotiating or transforming discourses related to heterosexual marriage or masculine power to match her own requirements? What types of practices shored up varying subject positions (a butch self, for example) and what practices, if any, threatened to destabilize her (feminine) respectability?

3.b. Female Networks

The inferior was always introduced to the superior....The higher in rank, the older and the woman (among women, the married) were those to whom the newcomer was introduced. If there was any question about supremacy, rank always took precedence. The socially more important then had the choice of following up the introduction or not by further recognition. (It should be noted that it was only in England that women acknowledged introductions which shows, perhaps, their very real social power.) -Leonore Davidoff, 1973⁷⁰

Chapter Seven is about Anne Lister's female networks, though there is also a brief discussion about how these functioned as a lesbian community at the end of Chapter Six. There is very little secondary literature related to the history of female networks. Much discussion has been generated by Lillian Faderman's books, all of which maintain that neither lesbians nor lesbian community existed before the last quarter of the nineteenth century at the earliest.⁷¹ These conclusions, of course, are based on how late twentieth century people understand the term "lesbian community." Faderman's communities in the late twentieth-century include (among other things) elements of highly gendered eroticism, nonmonogamy, class-related difficulties, racism, the threat of institutionalization and (later) a political feminism.⁷² The Anne Lister material demonstrates all these except the latter. I will contend that, in western civilization at least, a lesbian community begins to be formed when three or more women who have been sexual with each other know each other and exchange verbal information on relationship events happening among themselves. There may be a certain friction or jealousy when one liaison ends and another begins. A sense of a mutually shared identity may or

⁷⁰Leonore Davidoff, Best Circles, 41-42.

⁷¹Lillian Faderman, Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers and Surpassing the Love of Men.

⁷²Lillian Faderman, Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers, *passim*.

may not be pronounced, but before the late twentieth century there is a sense that at least one thing they have in common has to do with sexuality, and that this one thing needed to be kept hidden. There is usually some other linking aspect as well. The women may share similar political views or share financial support of some kind. They may socialize together in some way, such as visiting each other and eating together. Some of the women in Lister's community were also married to men (Mrs. Milne and Mrs. Lawton), but this does not in and of itself disqualify them from being, in effect, part of the lesbian community, any more than it does in the late twentieth century. Lister's journals represent probably some of the earliest and certainly the most thorough documentation of upper class lesbian lives available to historians. Anne Lister not only consciously analyzed her own sexuality, (though her understanding of what this meant may be quite different from late twentieth century understandings), but she interacted sexually and emotionally with a broad network of women drawn from both the gentry and aristocracy.

Historians such as Lis Whitelaw have argued that definitions of "lesbian" must include notions of female networks.⁷³ Thus, to understand an historical phenomenon like "lesbian," which is by no means an exclusively sexual phenomenon, the patterns of social networks and the affections of women for each other must also be understood. Janice Raymond has wrestled with the distinction between "female networks" and "lesbian communities" in her philosophical treatise, A Passion for Friends,⁷⁴ but no historical studies of women's communities in the nineteenth century have

⁷³Lis Whitelaw, "Theory of Biography." Paper given at Women's History Network Conference, Nottingham, September 1992.

⁷⁴Janice Raymond, A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection (London: The Women's Press, 1986).

dealt with the question. Raymond emphasizes a kind of relation she calls "Gyn/affection" but she while she includes she does not restrict this concept to sexual passion. She sees lesbian sexuality more as a social and political category than a sexual category.⁷⁵ For Raymond making a firm distinction between women's friendship networks and lesbian communities is not a priority - she sees all such contact as an empowering and beneficial experience for women.

In her 1973 study of aristocratic women in the late nineteenth century, Best Circles, Leonore Davidoff noticed that aristocratic women often played crucial roles in fostering or negating political alliance via the twin systems of visiting and marital match-making. "In nineteenth century England," she writes, "upper- and middle-class women were used to maintain the fabric of Society, as semi-official leaders but also as arbiters of social acceptance or rejection"⁷⁶

Chapter Seven will focus on this dual function of upper-class female networks. Basically, the social paradigms in women's networks at this time functioned to open or close the gate to meaningful social existence. I will argue that several threads of discourse armed them with the necessary tools to accomplish this. The intense hierarchy of these women's groups, manifested especially in elaborate visiting rituals, had perhaps the most overtly controlling effect on Anne Lister's subjectivity of any of the discourses that I have delineated thus far. This hierarchy was reinforced through languages which separated women forcefully into the "respectable" and the not. "Respectability" was predicated on not causing public scandal, rather than on what you did in bed with whom, as well as on strongly held opinions about what women of a

⁷⁵Raymond, A Passion for Friends, 13-14.

⁷⁶Davidoff, Best Circles, 16.

particular class ought or ought not do - such as, if you are a "woman," (subjective identity), you ought not to walk unescorted through certain areas, ought not to be overtly educated and ought not to publish anything in public.⁷⁷ On the other hand, if you were part of either the gentry or aristocratic networks, you were expected to be supportive to and communicate via correspondence with a number of women simultaneously, as well as share resources, advice and confidences.

Chapter Seven, then, will discuss Anne Lister's female networks not only in terms of how they overlapped with her lesbian network, but in terms of the effect of the above discourses on Anne Lister's subjectivity as manifested in the journal, as well as the degree to which she actively uses old meanings and renegotiates new meanings for her own purpose.

⁷⁷Occasionally women of the aristocracy circulated copies of their writings among an intimate circle of friends, but this was not considered "public." See Lady Louisa Stuart, Memoire of Frances, Lady Douglas, ed. Jill Rubenstein (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1985).

4. a. Approaches to Gender

Gender is a socially imposed division of the sexes. It is a product of the social relations of sexuality. Kinship systems rest upon marriage. They therefore transform males and females into "men" and "women"....Men and women are, of course, different. But they are not as different as night and day, earth and sky, yin and yang, life and death.....But the idea that men and women are two mutually exclusive categories must arise out of something other than a nonexistent 'natural' opposition. Far from being an expression of natural differences, exclusive gender identity is the suppression of natural similarities. - Gayle Rubin, 1975⁷⁸

An analysis of gender will provide the connecting thread for the entire dissertation. Gender (like class) is simultaneously two things: a private subjective position and a public discourse.⁷⁹ This dissertation is primarily concerned with how those two things meet in personal narrative. Gender is also affected by meanings given to certain body forms. For example, even when Anne Lister walked into a Paris salon in fashionable petticoats, she was mistaken for a man.⁸⁰ This was before she had spoken or otherwise displayed her personality. There was certainly something about her facial features which people of her time associated with masculinity.

Joan Scott writes that the meanings of gender "become contested politically and are the means by which relationships of power - of domination and subordination - are constructed."⁸¹ Vernon's definition of politics as "a discursive attempt to create or prevent a sense of agency,"⁸² also throws some light on how

⁷⁸Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex," in Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. R.R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 179-180.

⁷⁹It can also be a system of oppression, but I am concerned here with how that oppression happens.

⁸⁰Helena Whitbread, ed., No Priest But Love: Excerpts from the Diaries of Anne Lister, 1824-1826 (Otley: Smith Settle, 1992), 37. The subtitle of this section is "Confusion at Place Vendome Over Anne's Gender." In fact, there was more confusion in this instance over her sex than her gender. Her gender was apparently instantly recognizable.

⁸¹Scott, Gender and the Politics of History, 2.

⁸²Vernon, Politics and the People, 6.

domination and subordination are constructed. Meanings associated with certain bodies are attempts to create or prevent a sense of agency. Agency is an issue which goes to the very heart of historical work on gender. Discourse on gender is about stabilizing who you think you are (identity) and therefore limiting or defining what you think you can do (agency). Scott goes on to say that "the point of all new historical investigation is to disrupt the notion of fixity....in binary gender representation."⁸³ That is, she believes that power and hierarchy are stabilized through discursive attempts to define and delimit two opposite and stable gender identities. Her research is primarily concerned with the production of public discourses; I am concerned with its reception and reproduction, and therefore the focus on a particular type of source, the journal. Personal narrative is about as close as we can get to an historical source that tells us about the effect of discourse on subjectivity. Anne Lister's narrative does in fact do what Scott says ought to be the point of all new historical investigation: it demonstrates the instability of binary masculine and feminine subject positions.

Lister's journals also reveal specific methods used in this time period to reproduce gender. For example, Butler maintains that "gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time...through a stylized repetition of acts."⁸⁴ Anne Lister repeated specific actions which, at that time, helped her to construct and stabilize a masculine identity. These actions included her political manoeuvres, her work on the estate (class), and her sexual practice. The very fact that she was a woman doing these things destabilizes most received notions of gender, which get embodied in particular physical forms. Butler would maintain that this process not only reveals the instability of

⁸³Scott, Gender and the Politics of History, 43.

⁸⁴Butler, Gender Trouble, 140-141.

the so-called 'copy' but also of the so-called 'original.' Therefore the Lister material tells us a great deal about the methods used to shore up gentry masculinities among men at this time as well.

But this is not the only way in which the Anne Lister narrative destabilizes gender dualism. The complaint of many feminists against lesbian histories of butch-femme communities is that these identities are also presented as perfectly "stable." Of course, Anne Lister sometimes also acted in ways which supported a feminine subject position. The journal and correspondence together provide evidence of discourses and varying subjectivities which Lister presented to the outside world and perhaps to herself, depending on her daily circumstances. That is not to say that she was false or split or making it up. It means she made choices. She could choose various discourses which suited her needs at any particular moment. Lesbian history affords endless examples of women who moved between discursive worlds, exercising their power of choice. Agency is the reason lesbian history speaks to feminist issues of empowerment. Sometimes it is the only reason.

One of Butler's weaknesses, however, has been her ahistorical assumption that gender works the same way at all times. Butler writes:

In so far as social existence requires an unambiguous gender affinity, it is not possible to exist in a socially meaningful sense outside of established gender norms. The fall from established gender boundaries initiates a sense of radical dislocation which can assume a metaphysical significance. If human existence is always gendered existence, then to stray outside of established gender is in some sense to put one's very existence into question.⁸⁵

Certainly Anne Lister did exist in a socially meaningful sense outside of established gender norms, and this will be especially demonstrated in the work on female networks. This is perhaps

⁸⁵Butler, "Variations on Sex and Gender," 132.

one of the most surprising things about these records, contradicting as they do the vast majority of evidence about twentieth-century lesbian existence. Radclyffe (John) Hall's Well of Loneliness (1928), for example, is above all a record of social rejection and the threat of a meaningless social existence because of gender transgression. That is, Stephen Gordon's gender is aligned with the discourses about masculinity available in her class and time. (If Hall herself associates this with a particular sexual practice, or if she is inordinately preoccupied with etiology, that is because she was working within the cultural assumptions of her time.) For example, when Lady Massey dis-invites Stephen and Mary from the Christmas party at Branscombe Court, this exclusion from the upper-class female social networks brings on a sense of existential pain in Stephen.⁸⁶ It is precisely because Gordon is unable to provide her lover with, among other things, "friends whom she can respect and who'll respect her,"⁸⁷ outside the bars that the narrative reaches its tragic conclusion. As will be clear in Chapters Three and Seven, Anne Lister's "transgressive" gender did not automatically exclude her from similar social circles in the early nineteenth century.⁸⁸

Some of Butler's trouble also stems from a Foucauldian model of power which sometimes seems to over-ride agency completely. Butler insists on the illusory nature of gender and sexual identities⁸⁹ rather than simply the instability of these subject positions. Monique Deveaux has argued that much current scholarship is

⁸⁶Radclyffe Hall, The Well of Loneliness (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1928; reprint, Virago Modern Classics Series, London: Virago Press, 1982), 375 (page references are to reprint edition). In adult life Radclyffe Hall called herself John.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, 433.

⁸⁸The question of whether or not Anne Lister's friends knew about her sexual practice is a slightly different question, which must be addressed within the context of upper-class expectations of the prevention of scandal, rather than any specific position on sexual morality.

⁸⁹Bear in mind that I do not assume that the "differently" gendered are also the "differently" sexually-identified.

unhappy with post-modern approaches because they destabilize the subject "woman" and inadequately theorize agency. "These feminist writings on empowerment suggest the need to place the subject's interpretation and mediation of her experiences at the center of our inquiries into the how and why of power."⁹⁰ That in fact is exactly what I intend to do in this study.

4. b. Gender in Nineteenth Century England

A further source of strain was the ambivalent attitude towards women. On the one hand they were seen as delicate creatures, frail and emotional, to be treated with gentleness and respect. They were expected to be pure, untouched by the realities of life, and only slightly lower than the angels. On the other hand, they were expected to bear an enormous number of children, keep a large household running smoothly, and manage the lives of servants, dependent relatives, and total strangers when necessary.... - Janet Roebuck, 1974⁹¹

It is of course important to come to some kind of understanding about how exactly gender is (externally) socially constructed. There are, on the one hand, those who emphasize discourse and ideological constructions of gender, like Poovey⁹², Jordanova⁹³ and Scott. On the other hand, historians like Perkin, Peterson, Horn, Davidoff and Hall⁹⁴ have sought to locate the construction of gender in the material conditions of day to day life.

⁹⁰Deveaux, "Feminism and Empowerment," 243.

⁹¹Janet Roebuck, The Making of Modern English Society from 1850, Development of English Society Series (Newton Abbot: Victorian Book Club, 1974), 32.

⁹²Mary Poovey, " 'Scenes of an Indelicate Character': The Medical 'Treatment of Victorian Women,'" in The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century, eds. C. Gallagher and T. Laqueur (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). This book as a whole and all the articles in it, are concerned with demonstrating historically how the modern body was constructed, much to the detriment of women, often by means of science.

⁹³Ludmilla Jordanova, Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

⁹⁴Joan Perkin, Women and Marriage; M. Jeanne Peterson, Family, Love, and Work in the Lives of Victorian Gentlewomen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Davidoff and Hall, Family Fortunes.

In most of the latter work, class is a primary context. In respect of this dissertation, historiographical work on gender in the aristocracy and gentry is my prime consideration, but secondary work in that area is scarce. Comparisons with other classes are therefore analytically useful.

The construction of gender has persistently been linked not only with discourses about class, but with those about sexuality. Nancy Cott has suggested that nineteenth-century middle-class women's claim to moral power rested paradoxically upon both their passionlessness and their separate spheres.⁹⁵ A rather startling contrast to this is the picture which Joan Perkin presents of aristocratic women, who apparently did not need an ideology of passionlessness in order to create a base for public power. They had access to some forms of power without having to claim moral superiority.

"The English upper classes," Perkins writes, "were sexually permissive throughout the nineteenth century, not (as if often suggested) only in the Regency period; and women generally expected the same sexual freedom as men after they were married. What changed during the century was that they became much more discreet about it." She says that this was so because in the early nineteenth century "the moral lead passed from the aristocracy to the powerful middle classes who made the ideology of Evangelicalism their own. Some aristocrats adopted its values but most of them continued to live their private lives with little regard for middle-class mores."⁹⁶

Perkins associates the relative sexual laxity among the upper classes with the need to transmit landed property:

⁹⁵Nancy Cott, "Passionlessness: A Reinterpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850," *Signs* 4 (1978): 219-36.

⁹⁶Perkin, *Women and Marriage*, 89-96.

The unspoken understanding was as follows: the wife was expected to be a virgin when she married, and she took it as part of the marriage bargain that she would produce an heir or two for her husband before she 'played around.' Good breeding demanded that the outward conventions of marriage should not be violated, but few questions were asked about what went on below surface... Anything openly shocking was regarded with horror - not on account of the immorality but of the publicity....⁹⁷

This portrait of upper class life is the only one I have found which more or less matches what I have found in the Anne Lister diaries.

There is currently a rather vigorous polarization of opinion about whether or not upper-class or upper-middle-class or even middle-class women were oppressed in the nineteenth century. To some extent this has been possible because of inexact definitions of what constitutes oppression, and because of disagreement about those definitions. Some of the unclarity comes from a heterosexist failure to distinguish adequately between "women" and "wives." It is also because of a certain unclarity about the differences between upper-middle-class and specifically landed groups. Joan Perkin maintains that landed elite women were free from much of the oppression suffered by middle-class women:

At no time during the nineteenth century could it be said that most aristocratic women were stereotypical 'angels in the house' -What made them different from the middle-class ideal of womanhood was their power to distribute patronage, their economic independence of their husbands, their total self-confidence in their abilities and their own ideas, and their determination to live private lives free from the restraints of middle-class morality.... most aristocratic wives in nineteenth-century England were liberated beyond the wildest dreams of middle-class wives and had no understanding of why legal reforms were needed.⁹⁸

Pamela Horn, on the other hand, gives the picture of aristocratic women a different twist:

....the subordinate position of women in landed society was nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in financial matters. Although about

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 101.

10 per cent of all married women in the mid-Victorian years were protected by settlements, any wife who was without this safeguard lost control of her property upon marriage.⁹⁹

There is also disagreement about levels of oppression among researchers focusing on the middle-classes. The picture we get of middle-class women's lives in Davidoff and Hall's Family Fortunes is different from the one Peterson draws of upper-middle-class women's lives. Davidoff and Hall say, "Men were to be active in the world as citizens and entrepreneurs, women were to be dependent, as wives and mothers.....New forms of capital required novel methods of restraining women....Women's independent action was denounced as 'unwomanly,' 'unsexed,' or 'strongminded,' epithets designed to undermine core feminine identity."¹⁰⁰ And again, "The daughters and granddaughters of the Taylors' and Anne Knight's generation found a world more rigidly divided into separate spheres for men and women. The tensions were deeper, the opportunities less."¹⁰¹ The basic overall picture is one of oppression.

Peterson presents a slightly different picture in her monograph on upper-middle-class women: "Financial means and family environment alike allowed these gentlewomen a large degree of psychological and social independence."¹⁰² Peterson's women, however, appear to be more related to specifically mercantile rather than landed groups.

Overall the Anne Lister narrative most closely corresponds to the image we get of the aristocracy and gentry in Perkin's account rather than Horn's; it also suggests that landed women were more independent than the middle-class women studied by Davidoff and

⁹⁹Pamela Horn, Victorian Countrywomen, 66.

¹⁰⁰Davidoff and Hall, Family Fortunes, 450-451.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 453.

¹⁰²Peterson, Family, Love and Work, 187.

Hall, and just as intellectually and artistically active as Peterson's women.

The measurement of oppression seems to be the extent to which women participated in the public sphere, though historians define public sphere differently, so no exact comparisons can be made. Perhaps they are using different criteria to define both "public" and "private". Distinctions between married and unmarried or *femme sole* women need to be made consistently, and this is not always done when historians make heterosexist generalizations about "Victorian women." Furthermore, I don't think arguments about who was more oppressed or more independent than whom (based on older and unclear discourses about public/private) actually further our understanding of women's history; we can always find examples of the more or less oppressed. What I want to ask of my subject is rather, what discourses (of gender, class, politics, sexuality and female networks) contributed to the way you saw yourself, how did you manipulate these, and how did the way you saw yourself affect what you thought you could or couldn't do?

5. Gender and the Production of Texts:

the Anne Lister Journals

Long accounts in crypt-writing of her sentimental exchanges with her friends, excruciatingly tedious to the modern mind....are of no historical interest whatever.... - Phyllis Ramsden, 1970¹⁰³

Certainly material conditions affect whether or not individuals can choose to publish public or preserve private documents. Those who have more material resources and can maintain or enhance their power, respectability and status by entering the public arena are obviously more likely to publish. Therefore there will always be a masculinist bias in the published languages of the early nineteenth-century. And, because language itself is always learned and created in public, that is, in a sphere outside the self, private languages will also reflect masculinist assumptions.¹⁰⁴ Private languages, like journals, tend more often to be preserved in families with both resources and stability, and therefore will almost always be classist languages. Private languages may also be affected by masculinist or otherwise gendered languages, but at least these give us a particularly pointed opportunity to examine the historical relationship between subjectivities and the discourses they are born into. Personal narrative is where the effect of discourse on subjectivity becomes most apparent.

Regenia Gagnier has examined this relationship with a great deal of integrity and insight. She begins by criticizing a classical Lockean liberalism which prioritizes the mind over the body, and which therefore develops legal and political systems which stress

¹⁰³Phyllis Ramsden, "Anne Lister's Journal: 1817-1840," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1970), 4.

¹⁰⁴I do not mean here to re-emphasize a dichotomy between public and private, but am using that language, in the absence of any other, to try to express what I mean.

the rational individual's voting rights, for example, rather than the collectivity's bodily requirements for food. She suggests that this liberal narrative has helped to create and subjugate the subjectivities which are presented in the varying autobiographical narratives with which she deals. The hierarchical distinction between mental and manual labour created a situation in which, for example, laboring female subjects felt it was "'wrong to sit down with a book.'" Gagnier's concern with a "normative dualism [mind/body], the belief that the especially valuable thing about human beings is their mental capacity and that this capacity is a property of individuals rather than groups"¹⁰⁵ is a useful contribution for understanding Anne Lister's recorded subjectivity, except when that subjectivity relates to the communal, i.e., in her female networks and in the estate community.¹⁰⁶ Gagnier's working-class subjects reflected themselves as ordinary, as subjects who struggle to present themselves as worthy of the attention of others. Anne Lister's landed gentry subject position presented no such difficulties.

As in so many other works relevant to this dissertation, Gagnier analyses "working-class" and "middle-class" sources but those writings of the less successful social groups, like the minor landed gentry, are missing from the comparison. Gagnier's usage of class languages, comparing some narratives to "upper-class" situations, seems unreflective because of this lack of actual comparison. In her conclusion on the making of working-class subjectivity, she compares this with the making of public school Old

¹⁰⁵Gagnier, *Subjectivities*, 35, 38.

¹⁰⁶This exception will become more evident in Chapter Seven, when it is clear that Lister presented varying subjectivities (or subject positions) because of her need to stay within a communal, female setting; likewise, that the community itself encouraged or restrained varying manifestations of agency and subjectivity.

Boy "elite" subjectivity - but neither here nor in the following chapter on the making of middle-class subjectivity does she adequately distinguish among the terms "Victorian," "elite," "upper-middle," "upper-" and "middle-class." It all seems to dissolve in a late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century unclarity that means "middle-class."¹⁰⁷ Proper attention to different aristocratic and gentry subjectivities is missing.¹⁰⁸ Certainly her work on middle or upper (?) class women's educational experiences has absolutely nothing in common with Anne Lister's experience and the making of Anne Lister's subjectivity.¹⁰⁹

Neither does Lister fit into Gagnier's model of a feminine subjectivity which is so other-regarding it has no time to write or read. The absence of children in her identity (though not always her life) as well as Lister's material conditions gave her the leisure to write, and when she wrote she mostly did so as the self-interested rational enlightened individual (what Gagnier describes as a masculinized position.) This is so except to the extent that Lister is aware of her familial dynastic (estate) interests, which she sometimes sees as the same as or sometimes different from, her self-interest. This dissertation will try to avoid the illusion under which both John Locke and Anne Lister apparently labored: that the self has some pre-discursive, pre-social individuated integrity, and that its mental processes are more important than its physical ones.

Again, Lister does not fit into what Gagnier sees as a middle-class "introspective"¹¹⁰ model of narrative which has personal success and self-analysis as its pragmatic aims. The basic Anne

¹⁰⁷Gagnier, Subjectivities, 168-219.

¹⁰⁸Gagnier's main section on Florence Nightingale (93-98) for example, is impoverished by calling her "upper-class" but failing to specify the material landed conditions (a wealthy family with two country seats) of that position.

¹⁰⁹Gagnier, Subjectivities, 194-207.

¹¹⁰*Ibid*, 45.

Lister narrative is a string of factual events; personal and familial relations appear only rarely; it is marked by a singular lack of self-reflection.¹¹¹ She is primarily writing about what happened that day, not about how she felt about it. On the surface it appears to be almost scientifically "objective": but that is mainly the case when reading the normal, or Roman alphabet text. The Roman alphabet text reflects a self-conscious attempt to be scientific in the sense of rationally and objectively recording events; it therefore reflects a subjectivity more in line with what had become, since the seventeenth century, an increasingly dominant discourse.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Anne Lister journal is of course the code, apparently developed as a joint effort with her first lover. It demonstrates a mixture of Greek characters with symbols of her own design, with each sign corresponding to equivalent ones in the Roman alphabet. Its creation is in itself a powerful argument about the ways in which agency can help subjectivity evade dominant public discourses. A copy of the code is reproduced in Figure 2. Throughout this dissertation coded passages in the journal will be rendered in between <<brackets.>> It is clear that Lister did not intend the coded passages to be read during her lifetime, if ever. One may therefore assume that most of the coded material reflects a subjectivity at pains to hide itself from the dominant discourse. On the other hand, of course, she was a Lister who lived at Shibden Hall. She had seen family and estate-related documents which had been preserved for centuries, and, I think, fully expected that her writings would be similarly preserved. Whether or not she expected anyone ever to be able to read the code is perhaps unanswerable. Sometimes one does get the almost eerie feeling while reading this journal that she did expect that her

¹¹¹See extracts from the journal in appendices.

complete record (both Roman alphabet text and code) would be preserved for analysis by future generations. She will cross-reference, for example, between years in the diary and between diary and correspondence, and she indexed much of the diary herself. Of course, these activities could have been done with the simple pragmatic aim of making her life's events more accessible to her own memory, or a combination between this and an awareness of future preservation. There do not appear to be many specifically didactic elements, except perhaps for her own edification and future reference.

It is in the code that she reveals most clearly the effect of what Gagnier refers to as liberalism's "normative dualism." While the Roman alphabet text deals with external reality in an objective way, the code deals with almost any aspect of the body. Lister herself prioritizes the public and the objectively mental, while hiding the private body and its inner subjectivity. As frequently happens when women of a certain age live together for any length of time, Lister and Walker often menstruated on or about the same day.¹¹² Anne Lister preferred it if her partner never found out when she had her "<<cousin>>" as she phrased it,¹¹³ as this might "womaniz[e her] too much."¹¹⁴ Every mention of menstruation is in code, as is every mention of bowel movements, and every mention of the two women's sexual life together. Anything to do with the

¹¹²AL Journal 24, 26 January, 1835; 19 February 1835; 13, 14 April 1835; 7, 12 December 1835. Menstruation was always referred to as her "cousin," as in "<<so much cousin got up & came to my study & got worsted stocking prepared & put on.>>" AL Journal 27 January 1835. Her regular monthly periods were always mentioned, and always mentioned in code. She always put on worsted stocking or linen (3 September 1835) or flannel and riband (4 April 1837) in private, partly so her partner would not "be reminded of her petticoats," as she phrased it.

¹¹³AL Journal 20 February 1835.

¹¹⁴Whitbread, *No Priest But Love*, 85. Extract from AL Journal, 19 March 1825. Interestingly enough, the one mention I have found to menopause, phrased as "<<change of life>>" was also in code. AL Journal 14 July 1835.

body was given a more hidden, less public status. The code also records criticism of other women, emotional expression and motivation for emotional expression. Lister also uses the code to record how much money she takes to the bank, and how much money her lovers give her. She also uses it to record gendered or social-hierarchy comments from other persons which are unfavorable to herself, as well as her own fears about her social position. The fact that Lister used the code to record sexual desire and practice, as well as the history of the code itself, (which I describe later in this section), aptly illustrates what Adrienne Rich was trying to say over fifteen years ago: "...[it is] the physical passion of woman for woman that is central to lesbian existence: the erotic sensuality that has been, precisely, the most violently erased fact of female experience."¹¹⁵ Without the need to hide her erotic practice, she would not have used the code; yet by using the code she participates in the erasure.

Lister occasionally uses the code to comment upon why she is writing the journal in the first place. For example, she will write after a row with someone, "<<I am better for writing my journal.>>"¹¹⁶ or "<<I feel more comfortable after having written the above.>>"¹¹⁷ She expressed what a comfort her journal was, how she could "<<write in crypt all as it really is and throw it off my mind and console myself. Thank God for it.>>"¹¹⁸ That is, she felt it was the only place she could express her subjectivity without hiding part of her self. There was also a class aspect to her journal-writing. She

¹¹⁵Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality," 230.

¹¹⁶Anne Lister Journal 21 October 1837. SH:7/ML/E + M: The journals of Anne Lister, Volumes 1-24, 1817-1840. These include brief notes 1806-1810 and two exercise books 1816-1817. Shibden Hall Muniments, Calderdale District Archives, (CDA), Halifax Public Library, Halifax, West Yorkshire, England. See bibliography for a complete listing of the Anne Lister papers available in Halifax. Her daily record will hereafter be referred to as "AL Journal."

¹¹⁷AL Journal 15 April 1832.

¹¹⁸AL Journal 29 April 1832.

expressed a kind of superiority when describing one conversation with a constable who had been surprised at the details she could recall. He "...thought nobody so particular as I was. Poor fellow! Such a thing as a journal was quite foreign to him. He seemed quite astonished when I calmly said I could tell what I had said & done for these last 21 years past quite as well as for the last Sunday but one...."¹¹⁹

The rhetorical project or pragmatic aims of journal texts are different from those of published autobiographical texts. In this case, I believe that her pragmatic aims were at least four: first, that by a detailed recording of her daily events she could preserve an almost scientific record of her self; that by giving voice to disquiet she simultaneously soothed the self; that writing privately what must be kept hidden from public view constructed and maintained as coherent, her subjective identity (it also reveals varying subjectivities, but this was not her aim); fourth, that writing was itself the main means by which her agency negotiated and transformed the discourses about class, politics, sexuality and female networks that were available to her.

Gagnier provides some useful tools for analyzing the Anne Lister narrative, but only up to a point: journal-keeping is quite different from autobiography. It may, for example, represent subjectivities which vary by age; whereas autobiography tends to be produced by subjects at a particular point in their life-cycle. In journal-writing the temporal opportunities for revision are reduced and one can assume, especially in Anne Lister's journal, that the factual material she presents is accurate so far as it goes. There may be other things happening which she does not record, but that is

¹¹⁹AL Journal 25 May 1837.

because she herself did not participate in them.¹²⁰ Her journal is intensely ego-centric. When she writes, for example, "From about 11.40 to 1.20 checking my banking book, quite right, and looking over my rents of yesterday..."¹²¹ we may safely assume that that is exactly what she did do, (and probably would have done whether she wrote about it or not. But the only way we can know that she did it is through language.) A dogmatic interpretation of the post-modern dictum that language constitutes real events, rather than merely reflecting them, is clearly out of place here. Her life would have been lived with its varying subjectivities whether she ever recorded anything or not; but because she did record her life, historians are able to ask certain questions. Why did she write so extensively? How was her subjective identity affected by other discourses (indeed by her own), and by what means did her "I" actively engage the discourses of her time and culture? These are not questions which have been asked by any previous scholars who have worked on the Anne Lister material. But the work those scholars have done has been an invaluable aid to this.

There is an interesting and extensive historiography on Anne Lister alone, a literary history which is clearly delineated in Jill Liddington's work.¹²² John Lister, son of the immediate heir after Ann Walker, published extensive extracts from the diary in the

¹²⁰As will be seen in Chapter Six, on sexuality, there may also have been things she practised but did not record simply because they did have the potential to destabilize her subjective identity. The saying, "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence" is particularly apropos when dealing with a personal narrative of any sort. But if something is absent from the Anne Lister narrative, I cannot discuss it except by supposition, because I have no evidence for it.

¹²¹AL Journal 8 January 1837.

¹²²Jill Liddington, "Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax (1791-1840): Her Diaries and the Historians," History Workshop Journal 35 (1993): 45-77; *eadem*, Presenting the Past: Anne Lister of Halifax 1791-1840 (Hebden Bridge: Pennine Pens, 1994). Many thanks to Jill Liddington for discussions about the Anne Lister story in general, and for discussions about research challenges in particular.

Halifax Guardian in the late 1880s and early 1890s. These extracts focused primarily on Anne Lister as electoral manipulator and canal share owner.¹²³ Liddington locates the timing of the cracking of the code in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The cracking of the code was originally brought about by the antiquarian pursuits of John Lister and his friend Arthur Burrell. According to Burrell the code contained evidence that Anne Lister's "friendships were criminal"¹²⁴ and these portions were "entirely unpublishable."¹²⁵ Upon discovering their "criminal" homosexual content, Lister's friend advised the destruction of all 27 volumes.¹²⁶ Lister, an antiquarian, refused. He did, however, take his knowledge of the code to his grave. A copy of the code did not apparently reappear in Halifax until the 1930s, as a result of a correspondence between Burrell and the Halifax librarian Edward Green. It was hidden and locked in a safe.¹²⁷ The Shibden Hall muniments were organized by Muriel Green, Edward's daughter, and she wrote a thesis based on extensive extracts from the Anne Lister correspondence.¹²⁸

¹²³John Lister, "Social and Political Life in Halifax Fifty Years Ago," Halifax Guardian, May 1887-October 1892. Jill Liddington suggests that even his 200,000 word transcript represents only some five percent of the total mass of the diary.

¹²⁴Liddington, Presenting the Past, 15. Excerpt from letters from Arthur Burrell to Edward Green, 12 and 20 December, 1936. CDA, SH:7/JN/B/74/6 & 7.

¹²⁵Excerpt from letters from Arthur Burrell to Edward Green, 12 & 20 December, 1936. CDA, SH:7/JN/B/74/6 & 7.

¹²⁶There are 24 volumes plus brief notes 1806-1810 and two exercise books 1816-1817. These may together be seen as 27 volumes.

¹²⁷For a longer discussion of this fascinating process, see Liddington, Presenting the Past, 10-22.

¹²⁸Muriel Green, "The Shibden Hall Muniments," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1938), 61-70; *eadem*, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840" (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936). A condensed version of this was published as Miss Lister of Shibden Hall: Selected Letters (1800-1840) (Lewes: Book Guild, 1992). Jill Liddington's count of the letters which have been preserved stands at some 1, 850.

No major work was done until the 1950s when Vivian Ingham and Phyllis Ramsden learned the code and set out to read the entire diaries. Their research took them into the early 1980s, but because of fears around the sexual nature of some of the coded passages, both Ingham and Ramsden expurgated their research and only published a few accounts of Lister as a traveller and scholar in the local history journal, Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society.¹²⁹ Anything anyone wanted to publish about Anne Lister was at that time subject to the approval of the Libraries and Museums Sub-Committee of the town of Halifax, as the "best way to retain their right of ensuring that unsuitable material should not be publicized."¹³⁰

A good deal of transcription work was carried out by Dorothy Thompson at the University of Birmingham in 1986-1988.¹³¹ Patricia Hughes has also done some work on these documents but has focused her attention on producing a life of Eliza Raine, (Anne Lister's first lover), "A Lady of Colour."¹³² In 1988 Lister's diaries were brought to national and international attention by the work of Helena Whitbread, whose two volumes of published extracts of the journals have aroused the interest of scholars on both sides of the Atlantic.¹³³ These editions have been vulnerable to criticism on at

¹²⁹Vivian Ingham, "Anne Lister in the Pyrenees," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1969), 55-70; Phyllis Ramsden, "Anne Lister's Journal (1817-1840): An Unusual and Valuable Contemporary Record," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1970), 1-14; M.E. Kendall, "Miss Lister's Diary: Extracts and Comments," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1950): 69-80; D.M. Lang, "Georgia in 1840: The Lister Diaries," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1989): 47-50.

¹³⁰Liddington, "Anne Lister of Shibden Hall," 55-56. Excerpt from correspondence between Ramsden and the chief librarian, 1964.

¹³¹Liddington, "Anne Lister of Shibden Hall," footnote 55.

¹³²Work in progress.

¹³³Helena Whitbread, ed., I Know My Own Heart: The Diaries of Anne Lister 1791-1840 (London: Virago Press, 1988). (These are extracts taken from diary entries dated between 21 March 1817-23 August 1824); *eadem*, No Priest But Love: the Journals of Anne Lister from 1824-1826 (Otley: Smith Settle, 1992).

least two fronts: first, they represent only a tiny portion of the diary as a whole, and only a small percentage of the text for the years chosen, but one is not given this impression. That is, one does not know how much is missing. Secondly, no indication is given in these editions of which parts of the text are in code and which are not. Helena Whitbread has focused on and perhaps decontextualized Lister's lesbian relationships, but her work has been invaluable nevertheless. Work comparing Anne Lister to other early nineteenth-century authors and to other Yorkshire female landowners is also expected from researchers working at the Universities of Leeds and Warwick.¹³⁴

Liddington's painstaking research has established when the code was first broken, the enormous size of the diary (over 4 million words), as well as the importance of reading between the texts of the diaries and the correspondence. She has also contributed an interesting study on inheritance patterns in the Lister and Walker families which were disrupted by the Lister/Walker partnership.¹³⁵ Each of these researchers have focused on different aspects of the Anne Lister diaries and, with the exception of Liddington, the portrait we get of the woman herself is correspondingly different. That is another reason why I think it is not only important but essential to look at these records in terms of gender, politics, class and sexuality all at once - in order to produce a

(These extracts are from diary entries dated between 2 September 1824-13 October 1826).

¹³⁴Ann Choma, at Leeds, plans to compare Lister's images with literary images from the nineteenth-century. Sarah Richardson, at Warwick, compares Anne Lister and Elizabeth-Sophia Lawrence of Studley Royal near Ripon in "The Role of Women in Electoral Politics in Yorkshire During the Eighteen-Thirties," Northern History, forthcoming.

¹³⁵Jill Liddington, "Beating the Inheritance Bounds: Anne Lister (1791-1840) and Her Dynastic Identity." Paper given at the 20th annual Social History Society conference, York, January 1995; *ibid.*, forthcoming, Gender and History 7, no. 2 (August 1995): 260-274.

more balanced, more contextualized portrait. One aspect cannot be fully understood without the other.

At least two literary images of Anne Lister survive.¹³⁶ Both Charlotte Bronte's Shirley (1849) and Rosa Kettle's Mistress of Langdale Hall: A Romance of the West Riding, (1872)¹³⁷ contain images partly pieced together from images or stories of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall. In Kettle's account she is presented as a stubborn, embittered heterosexual spinster. Viewed only through a heterosexual lens, her life must have made little sense to those high Victorians who knew of her. Bronte's images include the very title of the book, a male name at the time, as well as the sense one gets of a powerful, gentlemanly, unmarried heiress of a former manor house rather interested in traveling with younger female companions. Appendix "A" considers the close alignment between images of Shirley Keeldar and images of Anne Lister which are present in the journal. Scholars now know that Emily Bronte taught at Law Hill, an establishment within walking distance of Shibden Hall, from at least October 1838 until March 1839. Bronte scholars believe Shibden Hall was the model for Thrushcross Grange in Wuthering Heights.¹³⁸ Miss Patchett, for whom Emily worked as a

¹³⁶Interesting and overlapping work done in the field of literary criticism which has mentioned Anne Lister and her diaries includes Terry Castle, ed., The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) especially Chapter Five, "The Diaries of Anne Lister"; Lisa Moore, "'Something More Tender Still Than Friendship': Romantic Friendship in Early Nineteenth-Century England," Feminist Studies 18, no. 3 (Fall 1992), 499-520. If I have failed to mention anyone who has done work on Anne Lister, please accept my apologies.

¹³⁷Charlotte Bronte [Currer Bell], Shirley, A Tale (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1849; reprint, Dent: Everyman's Library, 1955); Rosa MacKenzie Kettle, The Mistress of Langdale Hall: A Romance of the West Riding (London: Samuel Tinsley, 1872).

¹³⁸Edward Chitham, "Law Hill and Halifax," in A Life of Emily Bronte (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 101. Emily Bronte [Ellis Bell], Wuthering Heights (London: Thomas Cautley Newby, 1847). Anne Lister was in residence at Shibden Hall from December 1838 until she left for her final journey to Russia in the summer of 1839.

schoolmistress, rented a pew from Anne Lister. Miss Patchett and Anne Lister spoke to each other on at least two occasions.¹³⁹ (I include this information in this dissertation in the hope that it might be interesting or useful to other scholars, even though the main focus of this work is in other directions.)

My own search for answers centers around a particular theoretical preoccupation with agency, which I see as the place where subjectivities and discourses meet. This is where the Anne Lister text can be so helpful, by revealing the operation of agency within a particular individual in a particular place and time. As Gagnier points out, the subject's social embeddedness "becomes most pronounced when one begins to write."¹⁴⁰ It is therefore a highly subjective history which I am presenting: but one cannot understand agency without reference to both the production and reception of discourse. Journal writing reveals both simultaneously. Neither can one understand agency without reference to the material resources available to individuals. That is why we cannot yet entirely throw out our older understandings of class, but must eclectically incorporate pieces from newer and older theoretical positions in order to increasingly clarify our understandings of historical processes. If one does not understand agency, one does not understand processes of oppression and emancipation, of disempowerment and empowerment. We can better understand the relationship between subjectivity and material conditions and agency through looking critically at more private texts like journals.

¹³⁹AL Journal, 31 January 1837, Miss Patchett of Law Hill pays Anne Lister the rent on her church pew. See also AL Journal 4 March 1837, Anne Lister speaks with Miss Patchett of Law Hill who is collecting a subscription to the erection of a Church Sunday School. Mr. Hope was the incumbent of the church and Anne Lister thought he should do the collection work, not Miss Patchett. AL Journal 5 October 1837, Anne Lister walks past Law Hill.

¹⁴⁰Gagnier, Subjectivities, 10.

Many post-modernists, including Foucault, have focused their work on public discourses, and merely made assumptions about their effect in constituting subjectivities.¹ Even Scott and Canning have prioritized public over private discourse. In one article, Scott critically undermines the idea that a particular gay activist's (Delany's) subjective identity was formed through his public, collective experience in the gay baths.² That is, she questions the evidence of experience because of the effect of a public discourse on a subject position (Delany's) because that public discourse (his experience) is in turn constructed by previous discourses. Scott maintains that language actively constitutes social experience, as does Vernon. Canning, on the other hand, contends that not only did public discourse shape industrial conditions in late nineteenth-century Germany but maintains, in a position critical of Scott's, that actual industrial conditions shaped the public discourse. She too, however, seems to have focused primarily on public statistical records and public published documents for her research. Foucault's primary evidence has also been public writing and public documents, those relating to the power of courts and priests and prisons. To look exclusively at public discourse is to look only at one side of the equation: production. To find out how discourses affect subjectivities (reception) one must also look at private discourses like journals. Autobiographies written long after the life events recorded do not give the same immediate portrait of discourses and how they effect one's immediate sense of options. One can assume certain dynamics or wish for certain dynamics in the relationship of

¹⁴¹I am not including a bibliographical essay on work on autobiography here, although some work is certainly being done on these themes. For example, Carolyn Steedman's paper, "Linguistic Encounters of the Fourth Kind," explored the themes of agency, identity and culture mixture within John Pearman's autobiography. Paper given at the 20th annual Social History Society conference, York, January 1995.

¹⁴²Scott, "The Evidence of Experience"; Canning, "Feminist History After the Linguistic Turn"; Vernon, Politics and the People.

individual to society and one can argue about such processes, but the actual physical texts of private writings will reveal more about the particular intersections that I am interested in than any newspaper, court document or recorded speech.

My work indicates that "I"-identity, or the subject position, is not dependent on public performance or public discourse. There may be found evidence of identity even in the more or less private world of a journal. In this case it is not so much a political identity, because it has not been collectively formulated in public: but it is an identity. The mistake made by many marxist, feminist and gay histories has been to assume that in the absence of a collective and therefore public discourse identity (as 'workers', 'women' or 'homosexuals') did not exist. This reveals a masculinist bias which continues to prioritize the public. Varying senses of class, gender and sexual identities may be discovered by combing the archives for the hundreds of private documents, especially journals, which were written by authors who remain unread.¹⁴³

My primary interest is in reading the Anne Lister journal as an exploration into gender, class and political subjectivities; and in using them to explore themes like agency, which is critical to both lesbian and women's history. This study has explored multiple themes because Anne Lister's life was composed of multiple discourses. As Liddington points out,

....the coverage of the diaries ranges so widely that they overflow the neat categories convenient to historians. They record how a young woman without access to university education sustained a systematic programme of classical and scientific study; how industrialization helped reshape class relationships in a West Riding community; how

¹⁴³A bibliography of other journals and their collections is not within the scope of this chapter. Two places to start from include John Stuart Batts, British Manuscript Diaries of the Nineteenth-Century: An Annotated Listing (London: Centaur Press, 1976) and Cynthia Huff, British Women's Diaries: A Descriptive Bibliography of Selected Nineteenth-Century Women's Manuscript Diaries (New York: AMS Press, 1989).

political power was exercised by minor landed gentry both before and after the reforms of 1832; and they give uniquely frank and unrestrained insight into the web of affectionate female relationships Anne nurtured in Halifax, York and - as her European travels widened - further afield.¹⁴⁴

Chapter Two will present the historical background of Halifax and world of the gentry; Chapter Three will deal with Anne Lister's biographical background up to 1830, as well as the historical context of her female networks; Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven will explore Anne Lister's discourses of class, politics, sexuality and female networks respectively; Chapter Eight will provide a brief afterword on the life of Ann Walker as well as a conclusion to the themes introduced here.

¹⁴⁴Liddington, "Anne Lister of Shibden Hall," 48.

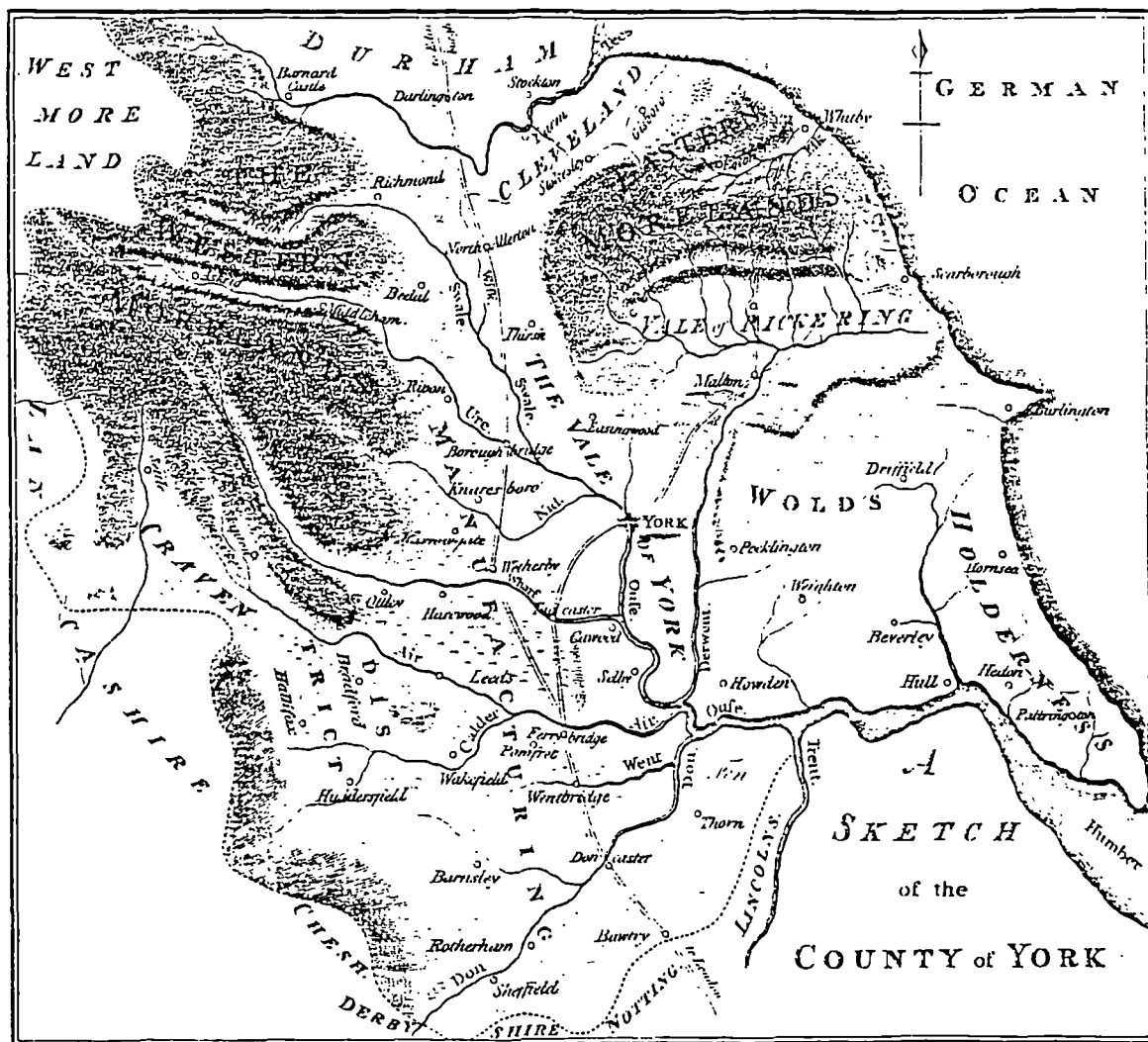


Figure 3. Map of the County of York, 1788.
 (Source: Marshall, *The Rural Economy of Yorkshire*. London, T. Cadell, 1788.)

CHAPTER TWO: **Anne Lister's Halifax and the World of the Gentry**

"Justus Propositi Tenax."

- "Just and firm of purpose," from the Odes of Horace, Book Three.¹
The Lister family motto carved at Anne Lister's direction
into an oak beam of the house-body, Shibden Hall.

The activities of a landowning gentlewoman in a rapidly urbanizing setting can give a great deal of insight into the interconnections of gender, class, politics and women's networks in the early nineteenth century. As the bulk of the dissertation will be concerned with these themes from 1830-1840, this chapter will set out the general background ca.1800-1830. The enormous population growth in Halifax, its changing methods of production, and its expanding financial and transportation networks all point to its position as a focal point of transformation. Yet, as we shall see, despite its reputation as one of the cradles of the "industrial revolution," the parish of Halifax also contained traditional landed families concerned with traditional themes of agriculture and estate management. Despite their investments in roads, canals and extractive industries,² the Listers were members of this landed gentry, rather than members of the emerging middle class. It was their base of landed power which gave them not only social status but a legitimate interest in the major religious and political questions of the day, though their direct influence on these matters was limited by their relatively low income. When Anne Lister inherited Shibden Hall in 1826 net income from the estate fluctuated just on

¹Horace *Odes* 3, 3, trans. James Michie (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1967), 147.

²These were not an unusual activities among members of the West Riding gentry and aristocracy. See G. Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise: The Fitzwilliam Industrial Undertakings, 1795-1857* (Glasgow: Blackie & Son, 1975).

either side of £1,000 p.a.. This chapter will trace the material base of Anne Lister's life and discuss those aspects that informed her sense of her own status.

1. Anne Lister's Halifax:

1. a. The Geographical Context

Anne Lister's home territory was the West Riding parish of Halifax. In this extensive Pennine community we can see reflected most of the major themes of English social, political, economic and industrial history between 1750 and 1850. One of the largest parishes in England, it ranged some 100 miles or some 75,740 acres across the foothills of the backbone of England. [See Figures 4 and 5.] It was split almost in half by the River Calder, which has several tributaries pouring into it, carving the parish into distinct peaks and troughs. Within a distance of fifteen miles the elevation drops from 1500 to under 500 feet.³

The natural geographical boundaries influenced the development of twenty-three distinct townships, including the township of Halifax itself.⁴ There were twelve townships north of the Calder, including Southowram,⁵ and eleven south of the river.⁶ Most of these twenty-three townships did not develop in the classic English "village" pattern, indeed the word was not used in this part of the West Riding.⁷ Local place names and dialects were heavily

³John Andrew Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church in the Parish of Halifax, 1740-1852," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society, (1990), 44-82.

⁴Thus, "Halifax" can refer either to the parish as a whole or to the smaller township. The distinction will be clarified in the text as needed.

⁵Also including Stansfield, Heptonstall, Wadsworth, Midgley, Warley, Ovenden, Skircoat, Halifax, Northowram, Shelf and Hipperholme-cum-Brighouse.

⁶These are, Langfield, Erringden, Sowerby, Soyland, Rishworth, Barkisland, Norland, Stainland, Elland-cum-Greetland, Fixby and Rastrick.

⁷T.W. Hanson, The Story of Old Halifax (Halifax: F. King & Sons Ltd., 1920), 16.

influenced by Old Norse, and the earliest settlers built scattered houses along the hillsides, using the characteristic local dark grey stone, millstone grit. When Daniel Defoe first visited Halifax in 1705, he expressed

astonishment at its situation, being so surrounded with hills, and those so high....as makes the coming in and going out of it exceeding troublesome, and indeed for carriages hardly practicable, and particularly the hill which they go up to come out of the town eastwards towards Leeds.....is so steep, so rugged, and sometimes too so slippery, that, to a town of so much business as this is, 'tis exceedingly troublesome and dangerous.⁸

As it happens, Shibden Hall is located precisely on the other side of this particular hill, shielded from view but standing directly on one of the main routes into town.

⁸W.B. Crump, Halifax Visitors Book, Vol. 1, (1937), 37-38.



Figure 4. Map of the Parish of Halifax

(Source: Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church in the Parish of Halifax, 1740-1852," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1990), 46.

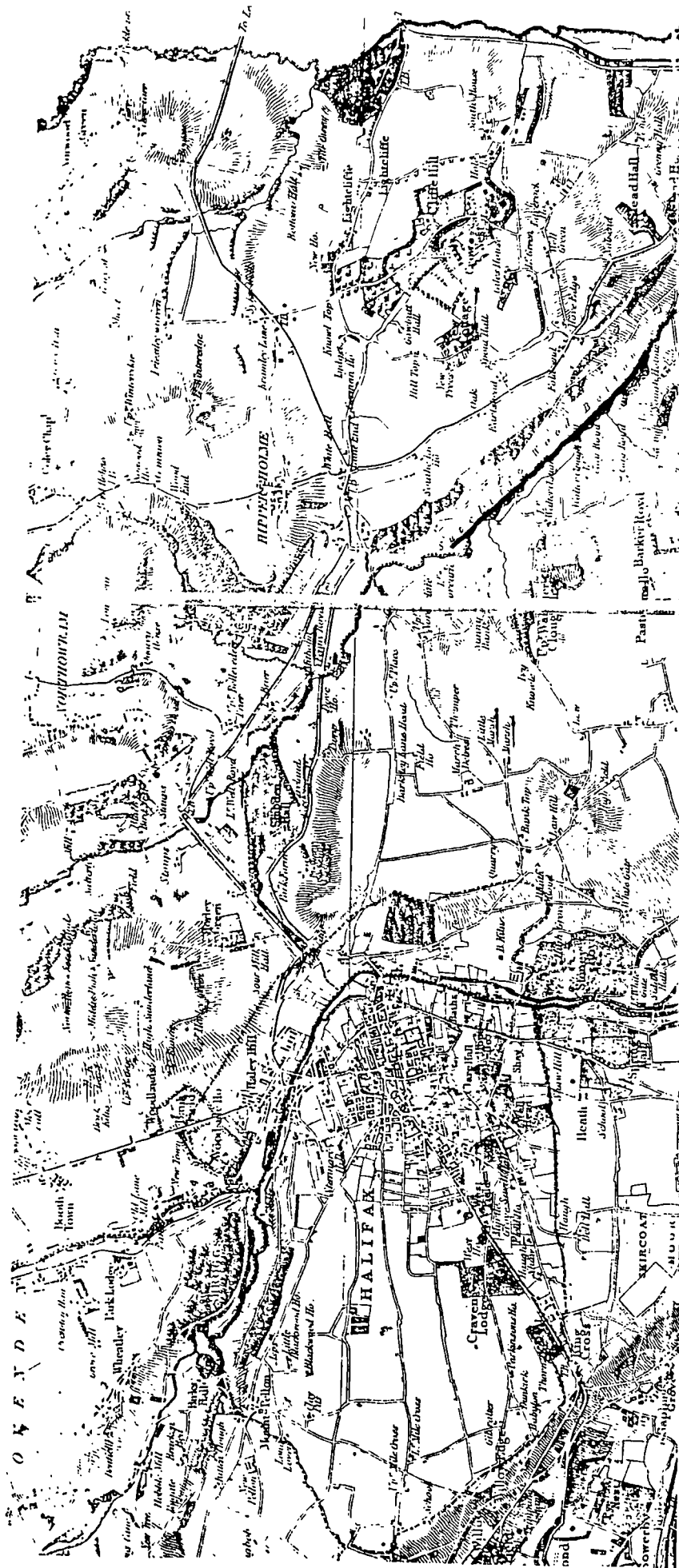


Figure 5. Map of part of Halifax Parish, showing location of Shibden Hall and Cliff Hill in relation to Halifax (Source: Ordnance Survey, 1921)

1.b. Demographic Change

Halifax was certainly not exempt from the massive and unprecedented demographic change which occurred in England and Europe at this time. The township of Halifax experienced the highest rate of population growth in the parish, some 129 per cent between 1800 and 1850, though the numbers of people in all of the townships grew to some degree. The township of Halifax had a population of approximately 8,886 in 1801; in 1831 it had increased to 15,382, and experienced its greatest decennial increase (29 %) throughout the century during the next ten years, ending up in 1841 with a population of 19,768. Southowram, the township where Shibden Hall was located, experienced a similar, though not so dramatic climb. Its population in 1801 was 3,148, increasing to 5,751 in 1831 and 6,478 persons in 1841. It is estimated that the population of the parish as a whole doubled between 1743 and 1801, and then doubled again between 1801 and 1851. In 1831 the population of the parish as a whole was estimated at almost 100,000.⁹ There was of course a slight sex ratio difference throughout this period. In 1831 the parish of Halifax had 44,126 males and 45,613 females; in 1841, 53,912 males and 55,161 females.¹⁰

⁹John Andrew Hargreaves, "Religion and Society in the Parish of Halifax, c. 1740-1914" (Ph.D. diss., Huddersfield Polytechnic, 1991), 29-31; John Crabtree, A Concise History of the Parish and Vicarage of Halifax (Halifax: Hartley and Walker, 1836), 308-309, 313.

¹⁰When discussing population figures for this area, it is slightly difficult to trace exact chronological comparisons from 1801-1851, because in the pre-1841 period the area for which statistics are available is the township, whereas after Halifax was made a parliamentary borough in 1832, the population statistics apply to that slightly larger area. Halifax was not incorporated until 1848, but the borough, parliamentary and municipal boundaries were all co-extensive.

1.c. Changes in the Mode of Production

Generally speaking, between 1700-1850 Halifax changed from being an area where people were primarily employed in their hillside farms spinning and weaving pieces of cloth to be sold to merchants at the market, to an area which increasingly focused on valley-bottom mass manufacturing of worsted thread.¹¹ At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Halifax area had begun to specialize in the production of worsted, as opposed to woollen, cloth.¹² The difference between the manufacturing process for woollen and worsted cloth is an important one.¹³ The increasing focus on worsteds influenced the whole structure of the industry. For instance, technological changes limited to this type of cloth meant that local women and children composed the majority of the work force in the new spinning mills.¹⁴ [See Figure 6.] It also meant a more hierarchical system of

¹¹Although some manufacturing of cotton and silk also took place within the parish in the early nineteenth century. See also Valerie Humphreys, "An Examination of the Halifax Textile Industry in a Period of Intense Technological Change, 1700-1850" (Ph.D. diss., Open University, 1988).

¹²Hanson, The Story of Old Halifax, 179.

¹³In the woollen industry, the short-fibered wool is carded and spun into a thick yarn; in the worsted industry, the long-fibered wool is combed into long slivers. These were more easily used in powered spinning. See R.M. Hartwell, "The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries, 1800-1850" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 1955), 573-578.

¹⁴D.T. Jenkins, The West Riding Wool Textile Industry 1770-1835: A Study of Fixed Capital Formation (Edington, Wiltshire: Pasold Research Fund Ltd., 1975), 75-76; Patricia Hudson, "Genesis of Industrial Capital in the West Riding Wool Textile Industry c. 1770-1850" (Ph.D. diss., University of York, 1981); Adrian Randall, Before the Luddites: Custom, Community and Machinery in the English Woollen Industry, 1776-1809 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 62: "In the West Riding, where much less spinning was put out to the wives of non-textile workers, the displacement among women employed in the Domestic System occasioned by the billy and the jenny would have been much greater. As in the West of England some undoubtedly obtained work in the larger jenny 'factories.' More worked small hand-powered jennies in master clothiers' workshops but perhaps four in five women had to find other work. There is evidence that many took to the loom. However, prejudice against women weavers was if anything stronger in the West Riding than in the West of England and it may well be that women found themselves playing a more peripheral role within the industry after [weaving] mechanisation, helping only with more ancillary tasks such as sorting, quilling or spooling, with perhaps occasional turns in the loom when deadlines were at hand."

organization, with power increasingly concentrated in the hands of larger merchant-capitalists, rather than with the smaller clothier-manufacturers, as in the woollen industry near Huddersfield.¹⁵ "This then was the great difference between the two branches of the cloth industry; in the woollen trade a large number of small men, in the worsted a small number of big men."¹⁶

Of the main processes involved in the manufacture of worsted cloth, spinning was the first to be mechanised. By 1830 it was a wholly factory-produced product.¹⁷ The streams in the valley-bottoms had been used since the Middle Ages to turn wheels for corn and fulling mills; in the late eighteenth century the great demand for worsted thread and its increasing mechanisation meant that streams and water-wheels were used to power many spindles at once.¹⁸ "In 1835 the Factory Inspectors recorded 43 worsted mills in the parish of which 14 were actually in the town."¹⁹ Most of these would have been manufacturing thread, though towards the end of the 1830s, weaving also began to be other-than-human powered, as technologies were developed that could adequately deal with the fragility of worsted thread.²⁰ Water remained the primary motive force for the new mills, and was still being used alongside the newer steam engines even in the 1830s and 1840s. Steam engines did not predominate in Halifax until the 1870s.²¹

¹⁵Patricia Hudson, "Proto-industrialization: the Case of the West Riding," History Workshop Journal 12 (Autumn 1981): 35-61.

¹⁶Herbert Heaton, The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), 297.

¹⁷E.M. Sigsworth, Black Dyke Mills (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1958), 30.

¹⁸D.T. Jenkins and K.G. Ponting, The British Wool Textile Industry 1770-1914 Pasold Studies in Textile History Series (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1982), 30.

¹⁹Jenkins, The West Riding Wool Textile Industry 1770-1835, 34.

²⁰Although a very few worsted power looms were being used in the 1820s. Hartwell, "The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries, 1800-1850," 592.

²¹H. Holroyde, "Power Technology in the Halifax Textile Industry 1770-1851," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1980), 73.

Township	No. of woollen mills	No. of worsted mills	Total employees	Males (%)		Females (%)	
				u. 21	0.21	u. 21	0.21
Bradford	0	25	4,166	1344 (32.2)	270 (6.5)	1,705 (40.9)	847 (20.3)
Halifax	0	14	769	224 (29.1)	81 (10.5)	402 (52.2)	62 (8.1)
Huddersfield	17	0	1,801	569 (31.6)	811 (45.0)	309 (17.2)	112 (6.2)
Leeds	42	0	5,420	1,812 (33.4)	2,250 (41.5)	631 (11.6)	727 (13.4)

Figure 6.

Sex of employees in woollen and worsted mills, 1835

(Source: Patricia Hudson, "Genesis of Industrial Capital in the West Riding Wool Textile Industry, c. 1770-1850" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of York, 1981), 155. From the Factory Inspectors Returns, 1835.)

Crabtree estimated that in 1831, out of a total population of 31,317 in the combined townships of Northowram, Southowram and Halifax proper, some 2,402 persons were employed in the various kinds of mills and factories. It was estimated that approximately 18 per cent of the total population of the parish was employed in the larger establishments which manufactured not only worsted but cotton, woollen and silk.²² Tanning, machine-making, wire-drawing and book-binding trades also existed in Halifax.

1.d. Transport and Finance

As trade increased in the eighteenth century, it became imperative for Halifax to have greater access to outside markets. The merchants of Halifax did a large export trade, but their cloth had to be transported by packhorse over Swales Moor to the canal docks in Leeds. It was decided to build a canal which could serve Halifax more directly.²³ In the mid-eighteenth century the Calder and Hebble Navigation company was formed to capitalize the venture. The Listers were early shareholders. In 1802 canal systems in Lancashire were joined to Sowerby Bridge, thus making a completely navigable link between the North and Irish Seas.²⁴ Not only did the canals make it easier for the textile manufacturers to sell their goods, the price of transporting bulky goods like coal was also greatly reduced. The availability of coal at the canal edge also made the valley bottoms a desirable location for spinning mills, once steam engines began to be slowly introduced.

²²Crabtree, A Concise History of the Parish and Vicarage of Halifax, 308-309.

²³Hanson, The Story of Old Halifax, 221.

²⁴*Ibid*, 222.

Turnpike roads were also proliferating, and for the same economic reasons.²⁵ Describing the main Halifax to Wakefield road in 1793, the agricultural improver Brown wrote that it was, "....in the most miserable condition; and if it was so when we travelled it, in the end of October, it must be nearly impassable during the winter months. This is a very public road, and no expence ought to be spared, to render it good and sufficient."²⁶ The old insufficient road went in front of Shibden Hall, so close that Anne could look out her window and count the number of coaches travelling to Wakefield. It was a turnpike road from which the Lister family also derived a regular income. In 1830 it was later replaced by another new toll road which was partly constructed by means of shearing off many tons of earth off the top of Bank Top hill, a move which Anne Lister hailed as a "feat of engineering."²⁷ The Godley road-cut went behind instead of in front of the Shibden Hall estate, and allowed for a grander, if more secluded entrance to the grounds.

Improved roads made mail delivery and travel by coach more economic and more comfortable.²⁸ In 1830 some thirteen daily mail coaches left the White Swan Inn in Halifax, bound for various destinations. Other coaches left from the yards of other inns.²⁹ Anne Lister's diary records a fairly constant use of this means of transport.

²⁵For a long and detailed discussion of eighteenth and nineteenth century turnpike roads and canals in this area, see Naomi Muriel Musto, "The Role of the 'Company Town' in Urban Settlement in Britain. An Investigation into the Influence of Entrepreneurial provision of Housing and Amenities on the Evolution of Urban Morphology. A Case Study of Halifax Parish in the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southampton, 1985), 76-84.

²⁶R. Brown, General View of the Agriculture of the West Riding (Edinburgh: Watson, 1799), 213.

²⁷CDA, MIC/1/13. Microfilmed TW Hanson papers. Undated, anonymous mss, "The Life of Anne Lister, 1791-1840." The manuscript is actually held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Because of the context, I suspect this short biography probably dates from the late 1940s, but this is uncertain.

²⁸Cyril Baker, "The History of the Posts in Halifax Parish," Yorkshire Postal History Society Publication 8 (1974): 1-33.

²⁹Hanson, The Story of Old Halifax, 231-32.

The railway did not reach Halifax until 1844, a development which is partially discussed in Chapter Eight.

The increasing size of the local financial industry mirrored the changes in transportation and technology. Between 1779-1837 some thirty-two banks were established, though only a few of these continued in operation. The 1830s particularly saw a burgeoning of local banking institutions, including branches of the Commercial Bank of England (1834-1835), the Northern and Central Bank of England (1834-1837), the Yorkshire District Bank (1834-1837), the Halifax and Huddersfield Union Banking Co. (1836-1910), and the Halifax Commercial Banking Co. (1836-to date).³⁰ The most important banks for this discussion were those of John, William and Christopher Rawson & Co., (1811-1836), and the Halifax Joint Stock Banking Co., (1829-1910). Anne Lister's sister Marian wrote to her in 1829 to tell her of the founding of this latter bank, saying, "They have allowed no one to take shares who would not keep their account with the Bank, and I believe ladies have not been privileged, probably you might be excepted..."³¹ The greater part of the shareholders for this bank were Radicals and Dissenters, however, whereas the Rawsons were "noted as much for their extreme Toryism as for their great generosity."³² Anne did her banking with the Rawsons. Both the Tory bankers and the Whig bankers, the Briggs, turned their respective establishments into joint stock banks in 1836.

³⁰Henry Ling Roth, The Genesis of Banking in Halifax (Halifax: F. King & Sons Ltd. , 1914), 21-50.

³¹Marian Lister, Shibden Hall, to AL, Paris, 14 January 1830. CDA, SH:7/ML/386.

³²Roth, The Genesis of Banking in Halifax, 31.

1.e. Social Hierarchies:

The Gentry, the Middle Classes and the Workers

Halifax society had been in a state of increasingly rapid transition since the mid-eighteenth century. A fluid, sketchy, portrait emerges of early nineteenth century hierarchies in which class differences manifested themselves in a myriad of ways: in attitudes to land and capital, in varied constructions of gender, in quantities of leisure time available, and in housing conditions, average diets, sanitation, and average life spans.

Certainly the Halifax experienced by Anne Lister and that known to "the working classes" seem to be almost two separate universes. The comparatively enormous quantity of time available to her for such activities as reading and writing and visiting is particularly striking. Lister lived in a relatively huge, clean, though somewhat draughty ancient manor house. Her diet was also different from that of the majority of the town's population. The gentry and aristocracy, because of the game laws, had access to a wide variety of foods. Lister's diary records the receipt of gifts of various game birds such as pheasants and partridges, and her recipe book contains one given to her by Lady Norcliffe on how to fricassée salmon and another for a cheese soufflé.³³ Account books from the years 1798-1830 record the frequent purchase by Anne Lister's Aunt and Uncle of sugar, tea, coffee, cocoa, raisins, figs, oranges, lemons, butter, cheese, mutton, beef, veal, fish, salmon and lamb.³⁴ In 1825 the

³³Lady Stuart de Rothesay, the wife of the British Ambassador to France, also gave Lister a recipe in 1832 for curing the cholera morbus, which was evident in Halifax at that time, no doubt because of the open sewers. A mixture of camphor, wine, sugar and water was supposed to help. CDA, SH: 7/ML/MISC/14/1.

³⁴CDA, SH:1/SHA/12-28. Shibden Hall account books.

butcher's bill alone came to £35.11.7, while an indoor servant, Eliza Cordingley, received £10.10.0 for a year's wages.³⁵

All of Anne Lister's food was prepared and provided by servants, who also emptied the chamber pots. In 1825 she tried to get her uncle to put up the funds for an inside water-closet, but he refused.³⁶ She did have a toilet and sewer system put into place in the Hall by the late 1830s, however. This is a particularly early example of such sanitation, which did not come to most middle and working class houses until later in the century.

Anne Lister grew up as a relatively privileged member of the gentry. While she occasionally visited the women of manufacturing families like the Crossleys, most of her visits were to other old landed families like the Waterhouses, Rawsons and Walkers. She also visited the Priestleys, who perhaps were considered "middle-class" in 1770; by the early nineteenth century, they were more akin to the gentry.³⁷ While Samuel Lister had been a merchant in 1700, the family had increasingly detached itself from concerns directly related to textiles. Anne Lister's class background is especially important in trying to understand her as an independent woman managing a small landed estate in an urban-industrial setting. Despite the fact that much of her income was derived from extractive industries and investments in canals and roads, Anne Lister was and considered herself to be a member of the landed gentry, and cannot be included as part of the emerging middle class.

In his study of the emergence of the middle class in eighteenth-century Halifax, John Smail notes the ways in which the

³⁵CDA, SH:1/SHA/25: Uncle James Account Book, 1821-end of 1825. 5 January and 6 July, 1825. SH:1/SHA/24: Aunt Anne Lister's Account Book, 1820-1826. 16 April, 1825.

³⁶CDA, RAM: 61: Chronology Anne Lister Diary Vol. 9. Aug. 1, 1825-Oct. 14, 1826.

³⁷John Smail, "From the middling to the middle: class formation in Halifax, Yorkshire in the century before the industrial revolution" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1988), 343-347.

larger merchants and manufacturers differentiated themselves from the "middling sort" of artisans. While the latter still lived in the same space in which the workshop was located, the middle class began to build large mansions which emulated the style of landed gentlemen.³⁸ The trend continued into the nineteenth century. When worsted manufacturer Edward Akroyd married in 1838 he bought a small house, Bankfield, and then extended it by having a Regency house built around it. By mid-century, he employed 25 domestic servants and five gardeners and stable men.³⁹ Gender construction also became an important element of class differentiation. The artisans continued to send both sons and daughters off to be apprentices or domestic servants. The manufacturers sent only their sons off to be apprenticed as manufacturers, whereas their daughters acquired a minimal education and training in "how to be gracious hostesses."⁴⁰ Middle-class women were often the primary recipients of luxury goods left in family wills, such as silver tea sets and linen tablecloths. The serving of tea and coffee, and the simultaneous exhibition of female leisure, became primarily a female activity. Meals for the nineteenth-century middle classes regularly included meat, expensive ingredients and luxury items which differentiated their diet from that of those below them in the social scale.

Incomes of the larger merchants and manufacturers easily outstripped those gleaned from the approximately £1,000 p.a. Shibden Hall estate. Anne Lister noted in her journal in 1834, for example, that James Akroyd's trade in only one type of cloth was valued at some £30,000 per year. He chaired a meeting in Halifax in

³⁸Smail, "From the middling to the middle," 343-347.

³⁹Eric Webster, "Edward Akroyd (1810-1887)," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1987), 36.

⁴⁰Smail, "From the middling to the middle," 351-352.

1831 in which the manufacturers of Halifax sent a number of resolutions to Parliament protesting the plan to reduce the hours and limit the ages of children who could work in the mills. On the other hand, he and Frank Crossley, the famous Dean Clough manufacturer of carpets, took an active interest in the housing and sanitary conditions of their workforce, and encouraged government investigations. Frank Crossley worked in his father's mill when he was a boy, married the daughter of another carpet manufacturer, attended the Congregational Church and won a Liberal seat in Parliament in 1854. For the men of this class leisure was not a priority. One mill owner, John Baldwin, was for many years "punctual in his [daily] attendance at the mill." The first Mayor of Halifax after incorporation in 1848, Baldwin had attended the Mount Zion Methodist Chapel for many years.

Housing, diet and working conditions for the labouring classes of Halifax were typically horrific. Rather than having their own schedules, the workers in the new mills became obliged to manufacture according to the schedule of the machines. "Leisure time" was generally limited to Sundays, when all the household work needed to be done. The women and children in the worsted mills experienced long hours, physical and sexual harassment and an ongoing exploitation in the frequent practice of paying wages in 'truck' rather than money. Often the wages were paid late if the company was short of operating capital.⁴¹ Severe fines were often levied for being even a few minutes late to work. It was the sight of the workers in the worsted mills of Bradford and Halifax which inspired the Tory Richard Oastler to write his impassioned and famous "Yorkshire Slavery" letter to the Whig paper, the Leeds Mercury, on 29 September, 1830: "Thousands of little children, both

⁴¹Patricia Hudson, "The Genesis of Industrial Capital in the West Riding Wool Textile Industry c. 1770-1850" (Ph.D. diss., University of York, 1981), 316-323.

male and female, but principally female, from seven to fourteen years of age, are daily compelled to labor from six o'clock in the morning to seven in the evening, with only... thirty minutes allowed for eating and recreation. Poor infants! ye are indeed sacrificed at the shrine of avarice..."⁴² Oastler's letter sparked off the Short Time Movement, as "In workshop and factory and public house men began talking about it, for here seemed a measure of hope that all could share... 'I remember my father reading it when it first came out,' said one of the mill hands later. 'It did make a stir among the factory folk! I was then a factory girl working fourteen hours a day, and tired as I was when my father was reading it my heart was lifted up to think that somebody felt for us.' "⁴³

Early nineteenth-century urban working-class diets consisted primarily of bread, butter, beer and, increasingly, tea, with an occasional piece of bacon during the week and, very occasionally, a joint of meat on a Sunday.⁴⁴ In the late 1830s and 1840s working-class housing in Halifax township was cramped and only partially sewered, and this with open sewers. One report from 1845 noted that "...near the margin of the river there are damp, wretched-looking dwellings and...folds, which are....courts or enclosed spaces. Most of these folds are very damp and filthy; the seats of poverty and disease. Such localities in every town are invariably found to be inhabited by the lowest grade of working people; but in the case of Halifax, [they].... are kept in a depressed condition by the outward filth and effluvium which assails them at every step..."⁴⁵

⁴²Cecil Driver, Tory Radical: The Life of Richard Oastler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 43.

⁴³Driver, Tory Radical, 50-51.

⁴⁴Dorothy Marshall, Industrial England 1776-1851 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), *passim*.

⁴⁵James Smith, Second report of the Commissioners for inquiring into the state of the large towns and populous districts (London: 1845), 158-160, quoted in Alan Betteridge and Derek Bridge, eds., Maps and Views of Old Halifax From the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (Halifax: Ryburn Publishing, 1991).

The dietary, housing and sanitation realities experienced in the various social echelons were related to variations in average life spans in the early nineteenth century. Edwin Chadwick's 1842 "Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain"⁴⁶ indicated that in rural areas of England, professionals and gentry had average life spans of 52 years; tradesmen, farmers and shopkeepers, 41 years, and mechanics and labourers, 38 years. Urban statistics were consistently worse, with one study giving life spans for the three groups in Manchester of 38 years, 20 years and 17 years respectively.⁴⁷

Anne Lister's Halifax was provincial but active. For a town of its size it appears to have had a fairly flourishing cultural and intellectual life. According to the estate account books, in the early decades of the nineteenth century the Listers of Shibden Hall attended plays and oratorios (albeit infrequently), subscribed to a public library and financially supported grammar schools and charities. Anne Lister obtained both printed books and blank journal books from Edwards the booksellers, who were considered to be "one of the best and most elegant binders in England."⁴⁸ While Halifax was growing into an industrial town, its growth was never as rapid nor as extensive as other nearby towns such as Bradford, primarily because of transportation and growth limitations imposed by topography. It was changing, however. Anne Lister commented in 1831, "In passing along, I could not help observing on the comparatively fine, clear air of Halifax. Never in my life did I see a more smokey place than Bradford. The great, long chimneys are doubled I think, in number within these two or three years. The same may be said of Leeds. I begin to consider Halifax one of the cleanest and most comely of

⁴⁶Marshall, Industrial England, 39.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸Crump, Halifax Visitors Book, 93.

manufacturing towns." By 1837, however, she found that even Halifax was "brightening into the polish of a large smoke-canopied commercial town."⁴⁹

⁴⁹Hanson, The Story of Old Halifax, 239-240.

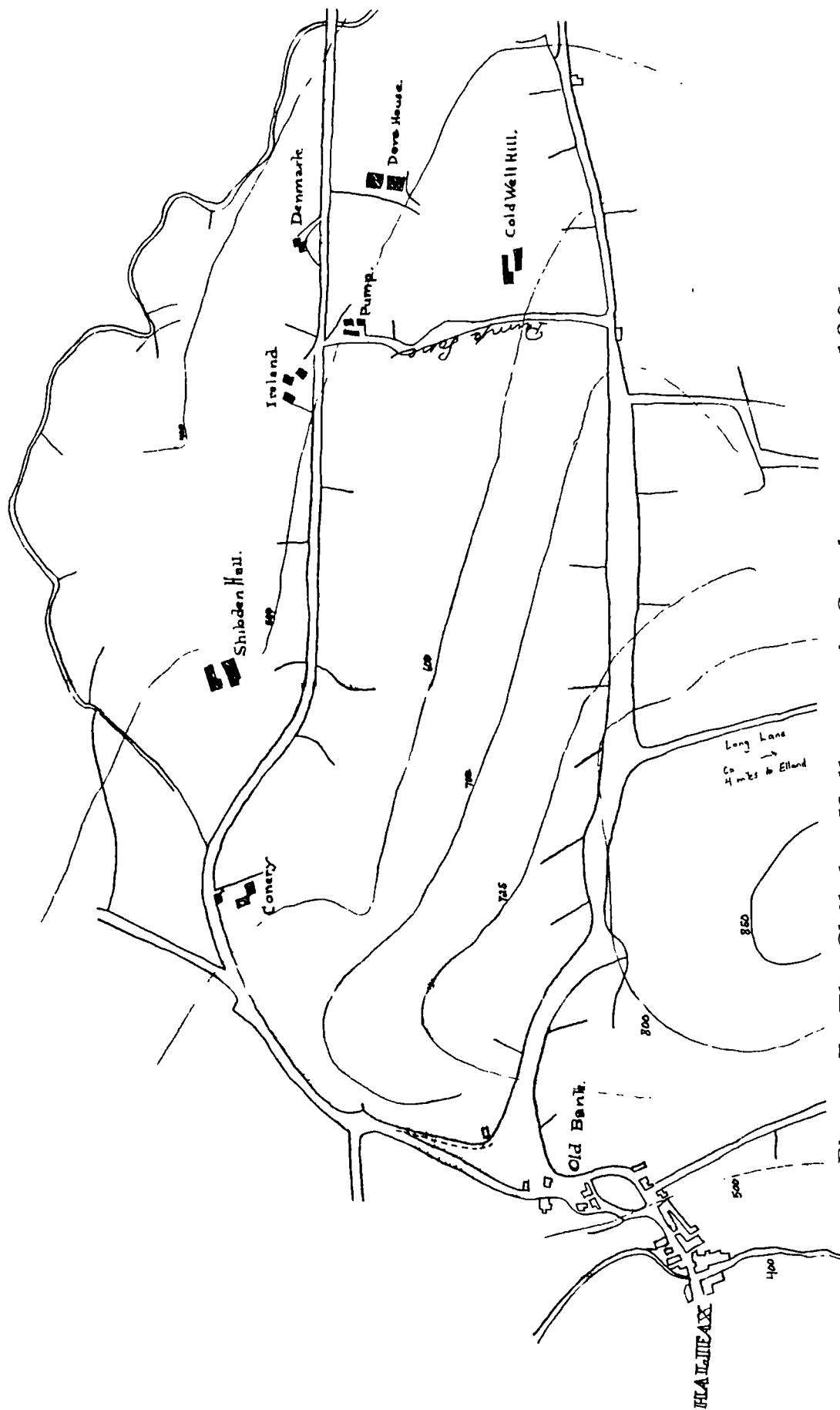


Figure 7. The Shibden Hall estate in Southowram, ca. 1866
 (Source: CDA, SH:2/M/5. Approximate elevations have been superimposed.)



Figure 8.
 Shibden Hall, eighteenth- and late-nineteenth-century views:
 before and after Anne Lister's architectural changes
 (Source: CDA, SH:2/M/20/1)

2. The World of the Gentry: Land, Religion and Politics

2.a. Shibden Hall and the Lister Family

Anne Lister was able to and believed she had a right to exercise political and economic power because of her position as the heir of Shibden Hall and its estate. She came to this understanding because of her specific temporal and class context. When she was quite young, she drew up a pedigree of Lister ancestors which stretched back to a rather fanciful connection to the Earl of Mercia in 797, and from him through the Roman emperors back to Adam himself!⁵⁰ Her sense of power, self-importance and status, in a Weberian sense, derived in large measure from the claim to antiquity possessed both by the Lister family and by Shibden Hall.

The mansion was originally constructed as a Tudor timber-framed building in the early fifteenth century, but additions and alterations were made by its succession of owners.⁵¹ Anne Lister's room to about 1826 was on the upper floor, in the east wing. Under her direction beginning in the mid-1830s and continuing for the rest of the decade, an attempt was made to change the hall's appearance from a rambling Elizabethan country house to a more respectable Gothic mansion. Her preoccupation with these changes is apparent in her letters and journal of the time, and reflects her own concern with status. [See Figure 8.]

The Lister claim to gentility rested primarily upon antiquity. Though the Lister family had been in possession of Shibden Hall only since the 1620s, the mansion had passed through a number of families since its first recorded mention in the first decade of the

⁵⁰CDA, SH:3/L.F./28/10: The Pedigree of Anne Lister of St. Helens near Halifax, Yorkshire.

⁵¹Peter C.D. Brears, "Shibden Hall: The Early Development of an Important Halifax House," Old West Riding 2, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 15-21.

fifteenth century.⁵² Built by a William Otes, it eventually descended through female marriage to a Robert Savile at the end of the fifteenth century. Savile was then the family name attached to the estate until one of the Savile daughters inherited and married a Robert Waterhouse. The Waterhouses held the estate from 1522 until 1619.⁵³

During this Waterhouse period Shibden Hall was at the zenith of its position as a seat of local power. The Waterhouses farmed the Great Tithes for the monastic lords of the manor of Halifax, the men at the Priory of Lewes, in Sussex. After the dissolution of the monasteries (November 1534), some of the tithes were temporarily leased elsewhere, but the Waterhouses still collected them.⁵⁴ Eventually the owners of Shibden Hall bought the manorial rights outright and became in effect the lords of the manor of Halifax, receiving the Great Tithes directly for themselves.⁵⁵ Though the family had their official residence at the Moot Hall in Halifax proper, the moot court was apparently sometimes held at Shibden Hall, and the Halifax Manor Court Rolls were held there.⁵⁶ Shibden Hall and its owners therefore, were traditionally set apart from and above the bulk of the people in the parish, and had been sometimes set in opposition to their interests. In the early seventeenth century Sir Edward Waterhouse got himself into extensive debt and it was during

⁵²John Lister, "Account of Shibden Hall, to 1854." Unpublished, handwritten manuscript. Leeds Central Reference Library, Local History Collection. It may be that some type of structure was present on the site in the early thirteenth century. See John Longbottom, "An Old Yorkshire Mansion: Shibden Hall, Halifax," Yorkshire Weekly Post (Leeds) 23 March 1895.

⁵³John Lister, "Shibden Hall - The Waterhouse Family," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1910), 109.

⁵⁴T.W. Hanson, A Short History of Shibden Hall, Bankfield Museum Notes, 3rd series, (Halifax: Wm. Patterson. Ltd., 1934), 9.

⁵⁵Martha Ellis François, The Social and Economic Development of Halifax, 1558-1640 (Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society Vol. XI Part 8, April 1966), 231.

⁵⁶John Lister, "A Visit to Shibden Hall," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1901), n.p.; Hanson, A Short History of Shibden Hall, 10.

his life that the fortunes of his family and those of Shibden Hall began rapidly to decline.⁵⁷ Between 1605 and 1619 the estate and the manor attached to it passed through several hands. A widow by the name of Crowther and her nephew John Hemingway purchased the property outright in 1612. John had four sisters, all co-heiresses, two of whom married Listers. The Lister connection to Shibden then continued from 1619 to 1933, when the last Lister heir died. The property was donated to the city of Halifax for use as a West Riding folk museum, which is what it is today.⁵⁸

Before their acquisition of Shibden Hall, the Listers were not generally listed among prominent members of the local gentry.⁵⁹ During the seventeenth century, however, they intermarried with other gentry families and their sons went to University.⁶⁰ Some Lister family members continued to be active in the local cloth trade, despatching locally made worsteds and kerseys to Blackwell Hall, London, by packhorse and ship on a regular basis. After Samuel Lister's death in 1702, James Lister, an apothecary in another branch of the family, inherited Shibden Hall.⁶¹ He was the son of a Samuel Lister of Over Brea, a cloth and wool merchant. His eldest son, John, took up a curacy after attending Cambridge, and went on to be the first master of Bury Grammar School, Lancashire,⁶² maintaining his post even after inheriting the estate. Other Lister brothers stayed in Halifax and became cloth merchants. John Smail notes,

⁵⁷Lister, "History of Shibden Hall," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1917), 66.

⁵⁸Hanson, A Short History of Shibden Hall, 13.

⁵⁹François, The Social and Economic Development of Halifax, *passim*.

⁶⁰Smail, "From the middling to the middle," 222.

⁶¹CDA, SH:2/SHE/1/1: Half-year Rentall of the Lands & Housing with the Apurtans's left me by coz. Samll. Lister of Shibden Hall which I entered to at his death being the 21 of June 1702: 19 tenants... [total amount is £190.15.4., doubled comes to £381.10.8 yearly income in 1702.]

⁶²Hanson, A Short History of Shibden Hall, 21-22.

Since James Lister's sons were particularly unsuccessful at reproduction, the estate passed from brother to brother in quick succession in 1759, each time mixing the landed fortune with money made in the textile industry. By the mid-eighteenth century the Listers, despite their pretensions, were no different from the families around them whose wealth was more obviously based in trade.⁶³

This is perhaps an overdrawn picture, but is a useful caution against overly rigid class definitions. Smail also argues that in eighteenth century Halifax "the middle class[es] were quite clearly different from the gentry, but at the same time, their social relations with the gentry were not antagonistic."⁶⁴ In the Lister case, it seems longevity could make up in social prestige that which suspect origins of funds removed. Despite the fact that much of her income was derived from extractive industries and investments in canals and roads, Anne Lister was a member of the landed gentry, and would never, by any stretch of the imagination, have considered herself "middle class." Anne Lister's rather constant preoccupation with "keeping up [her] dignity"⁶⁵ may be related to her family's less than ideal position just inside the gentry financial borders however.

Samuel Lister's seventh son, Jeremy Lister (1713-1788), eventually inherited after his brother John. He and his wife Anne had eight children, of whom only two sons, Joseph and Jeremy, married. [See Lister pedigree, Figure 9.] Neither of Joseph's children survived infancy, and so it came about that Jeremy, Anne Lister's father, although he was the fourth son, had children who were in line to inherit. James Lister (1748-1826), Joseph and Jeremy's brother, never married. As eldest, however, he inherited and ran the estate from about 1788 until his death. Anne Lister inherited Shibden Hall from him in 1826.

⁶³Smail, "From the middling to the middle," 253.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 218.

⁶⁵AL Journal 29 April 1817. Quoted in Helena Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart: The Diaries of Anne Lister (London: Virago Press, 1988), 2.

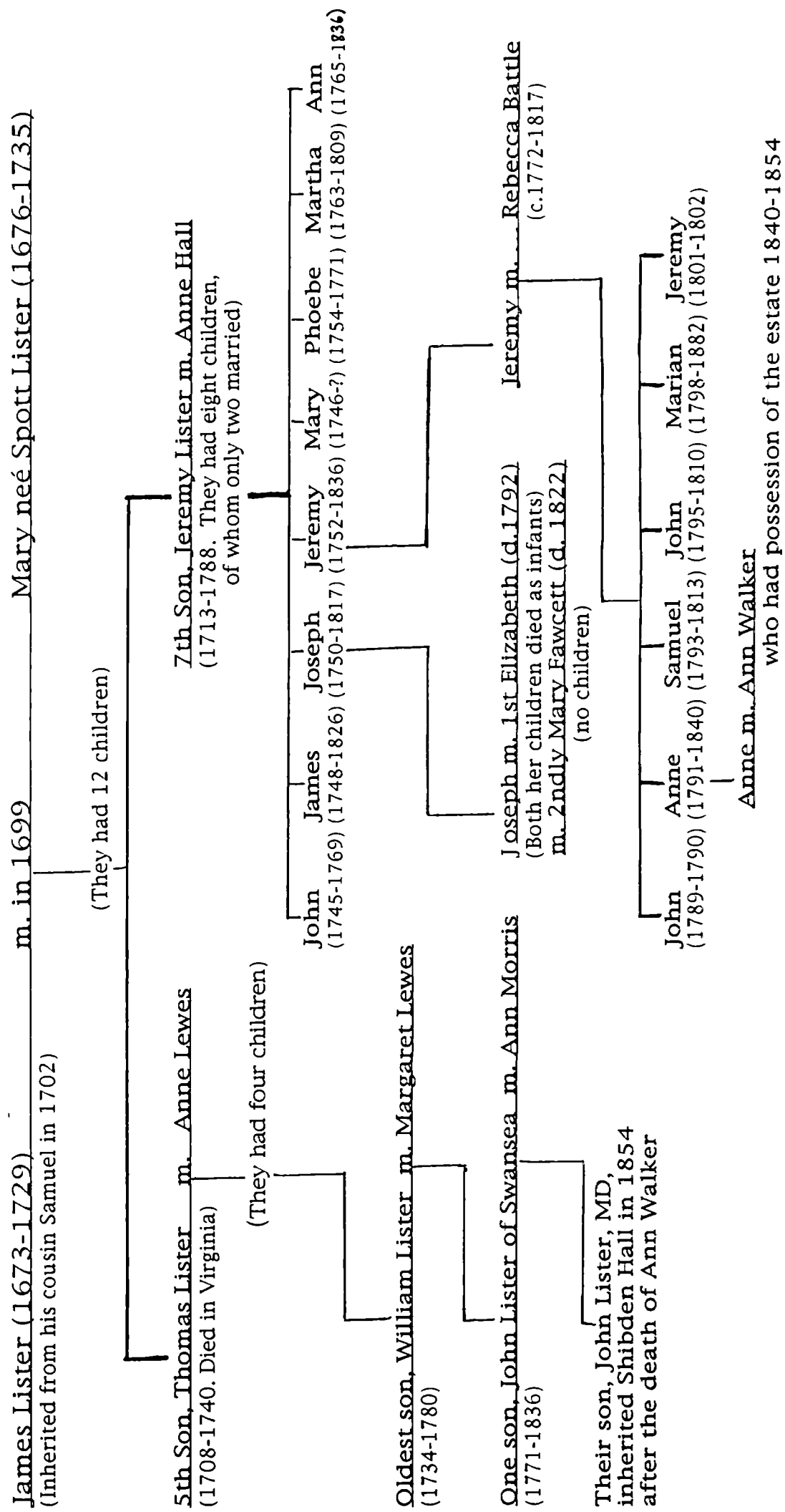


Figure 9. Partial Pedigree of the Lister family
(Source: Misc. Lister documents, CDA)

2. b. Estate Management and Lister Family Finances

When defining the landed interest, F.M.L. Thompson points out that for most of the gentry in the early nineteenth century the lower limit of income should for purposes of analysis be about £1,000, while the upper limit is set at £10,000, roughly equivalent to 1000-10,000 acres. Because of a greater number of small holdings in Yorkshire, however, the pattern is difficult to hold to. In 1873, for example, 12 per cent of Yorkshire estates were between 300-1,000 acres.⁶⁶ Jeremy Lister's farm⁶⁷ in the East Riding market town of Market Weighton however, generally conformed to the norm as set out by Thompson. At the time of its sale in 1820 it contained some 720 acres at a rent of about £750 per annum.⁶⁸ Shibden Hall in the West Riding did not conform to this model. Under James Lister's management ca. 1814-1825 its mere 431 acres contributed to a total income which fluctuated from a low of £690.16.10-1/2 to a high of £1,246.3, usually hovering on either side of £1,000 per annum. [See Figure 10.] The Thompson model does not hold for Shibden Hall because its position in the rapidly developing West Riding meant that estate income was greatly boosted by coal leases and dividends from canal and road investments.

The estate as a whole contained between 18 and 22 farms in the period 1800-1830, at least two coal pits and at least one stone quarry. The two coal pits, called the Willy Hill pit and the Trough of Bolland pit, were leased from at least 1824 to Messrs. Oates, Green, Walsh and Hinchcliffe.⁶⁹ F.M.L. Thompson states that "The gentry, unless actually seated on the coal measures, were much less likely to enjoy any

⁶⁶F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 113-115.

⁶⁷The farm was property Anne Lister's mother had brought with her to the marriage.

⁶⁸CDA, SH:7/JL/114: Particulars and Conditions of Sale of a Freehold and Copyhold Estate in the Parishes of Market Weighton, Shipton and Holme, in the East Riding of the County of York, to be sold by auction on March 20, 1822.

⁶⁹CDA, SH:1/SHA/23; SH:2/SHE/6-7.

mineral income, since very few of their estates were scattered over several counties." ⁷⁰ As it happened, Shibden Hall was situated just on the edge of the extensive West Riding (primarily soft bed) coal field. The coal leases to Messrs. Oates, Green, Walsh and Hinchcliffe provided a major component of estate income. In 1826 they paid £240 to lease the coals, in 1827, £187.6.9, and in 1828, £324.2.9. The single largest source of Anne Lister's income from 1826-1828, however, was from canal shares. In 1826 the Navigation dividends paid to her alone (not including those paid to her Aunt Ann) totaled £325.1.10, almost a third of the total estate income. Samuel Freeman's payment of £100 a year for stone was also significant. The old Wakefield and Halifax Turnpike Road, by contrast, had for several years been paying the comparatively small sum of £10 per annum.⁷¹

Farm rents and pew rents were comparatively small sums which also came in twice-yearly. It is difficult to find out exactly what was going on on each "farm". For example, between 1806-1826 Jonathan Mallinson is listed as renting "Mytham" farm (in Northowram) for £16.0.0 every half-year.⁷² In January 1821 a clue is given as to what else he does on his "farm:" he is paid £1.7.6 for the tenants' dinner. When the full valuation of Mallinson's "farm" is done in 1836, we discover that he is the lessee of the Stag's Head Inn public house, though his holding is listed as "Mytholm farm" (which includes a public house and brewhouse), as well as an orchard and a little over four acres of fields. In 1836 it is listed as having an annual value of £33.3.11, so at £32 a year he was paying slightly under what it was worth.⁷³ Some of the largest (over £30 half-yearly) farms were

⁷⁰Thompson, English Landed Society, 266.

⁷¹CDA, SH:2/SHE/6: Account book, AL's handwriting, 1826-1828.

⁷²CDA, SH:2/SHE/4/1: Account book, list of rent due from tenants and what they have paid 1808-1826.

⁷³CDA, SH:2/SHE/21: 1836. Particulars of the Shibden Hall estate, giving acreage, names of tenants, annual and real value.

Sutcliffe Wood, let to Samuel Sowden for £42 per half-year between 1819-1826 and Yew Trees and Hilltop farms, also let to Sowden after 1818 for a further £91.17.6 per half-year. John Balmfirth let Lower Place in Southowram for £36.15.0 per half-year and Abraham Hemingway tenanted Southolme at the rate of £52.10.0. George Robinson entered Lowerbrear Farm and five fields at Hipperholme at Candlemas 1818 and paid £55.0.0 per half-year.⁷⁴ Pew rents, by contrast, were quite small: in 1825 Sam Dyson paid for a pew in Halifax Church, (No. 10 in the middle aisle), a sum of £1.1.0 half-yearly; William Tong paid £1.15.0 for his pew.⁷⁵ The properties comprising the estate were held in four different townships: Southowram, Northowram, Hipperholme-cum-Brighouse and Halifax .

It was especially the Navigation investments which contributed to a specific set of gentry familial relations. Indeed, the financial and the familial were quite obviously inseparable within the Lister kinship group. While brothers and sisters received income from the Navigation, resources were also shared in the form what are called "loans." The unmarried sisters made "loans" to the brothers, who then paid them a regular income in the form of interest, but there seems to be no attempt to actually pay the loan off. In effect, the "loans" were a method of sharing familial resources with unmarried women and with younger sons in the family.

For example, James Lister's brother Joseph owned Northgate House, in Halifax, which he obtained through his first marriage. Before Joseph's death in 1817, he supplemented both his living sisters' income through the interest paid on two "loans" which they had made to him. Between 1805-1809, both women (Anne Lister's aunts) had an independent income from primarily two sources: interest on the

⁷⁴CDA, SH:2/SHE/4/1: Account book, list of rent due from tenants and what they have paid 1808-1826.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

"loans" to their brother Joseph, and interest on personally held shares in the Calder and Hebble Navigation. Aunt Ann's independent income from these sources averaged about £100 a year between 1805-1809. When her sister Martha died in 1809, she left Ann her shares in the Navigation, thus bringing Ann's average and independent income to a little over £166 p.a. for the next three years.

When Joseph died in 1817, Northgate House became part of the Shibden Hall estate managed by James until his death in 1826. At this point several charges became payable on the estate: Joseph left £50 annuities for both sisters Ann and Martha and for his brother Jeremy, Anne Lister's father. An annuity of £300 chargeable to the estate was also left to his widow Mary, which was continued until her death in 1822.⁷⁶ Aunt Ann's income continued to increase. The £50 annuity left her by Joseph was further supplemented by interest due on loans made now to James. She was able to save some each year, so that at the end of 1820, she recorded a total receipt in income from the Navigation, annuity and interest on loans of £310.9.0, of which she had £175.5.0 saved from the previous year.⁷⁷ On February 21, 1821, James recorded the payment to his sister Ann of £20, which is the half-yearly interest due on an £800 loan. The sum was duly debited from the income of the *estate as a whole*, and Aunt Ann faithfully recorded it as income received in her personal account book.⁷⁸

While James was apparently responsible for purchasing the major commodities needed by the inhabitants of Shibden Hall, Ann and Martha were responsible for purchasing their own favorite luxuries, such as concert tickets and cocoa, out of their own income.

⁷⁶CDA, SH:1/SHA/12: Account book of (Uncle) James Lister of Shibden Hall, 1798-1826. SH:1/SHA/16: (Aunt) Anne Lister account book, 1805-1809. SH:1/SHA/17: (Aunt) Martha Lister's account book, 1805-1809.

⁷⁷CDA, SH:1/SHA/24: Aunt Anne Lister's Account Book, 1820-1826.

⁷⁸CDA, SH:1/SHA/19: Account book. Commenced by Mr. Joseph Lister of Northgate House Halifax in 1808; continued by his brother Mr. James Lister 1817 to 1826. SH:1/SHA/24: (Aunt) Anne Lister's Account Book, 1820-1826.

Differentiating estate capital from the personal money available to each family member appears to have been the task of the heir as estate manager. Much of Anne Lister's managerial energy in the 1830s was taken up with proper distribution of resources to the members of her family still living.

Personal and estate expenditure was not always easy to differentiate, however. Who paid the two indoor servants' wages, for example, seemed to vary. Usually James did, though sometimes his sister Ann did. Up to at least 1826, both indoor servants were female. As far as I can tell they had only two servants living indoors, though occasionally they hired a woman for a few days if they needed extra help. In 1806 Hannah and Betty were each paid £7.7.0 for a year's wages. Outdoor servants seem to have been entirely male, and their wages were always paid by James. Regular outdoor male servants in this period also seem to have numbered two, though other men were hired for seasonal tasks such as mowing and spreading manure. In 1806 Luke Greenwood and James Smith were each paid £2.8.0 for 24 days' wages. The outdoor, male servants were thus paid some £36 per year in wages, some five times the amount paid to the indoor female servants, who, however, also received room and board.

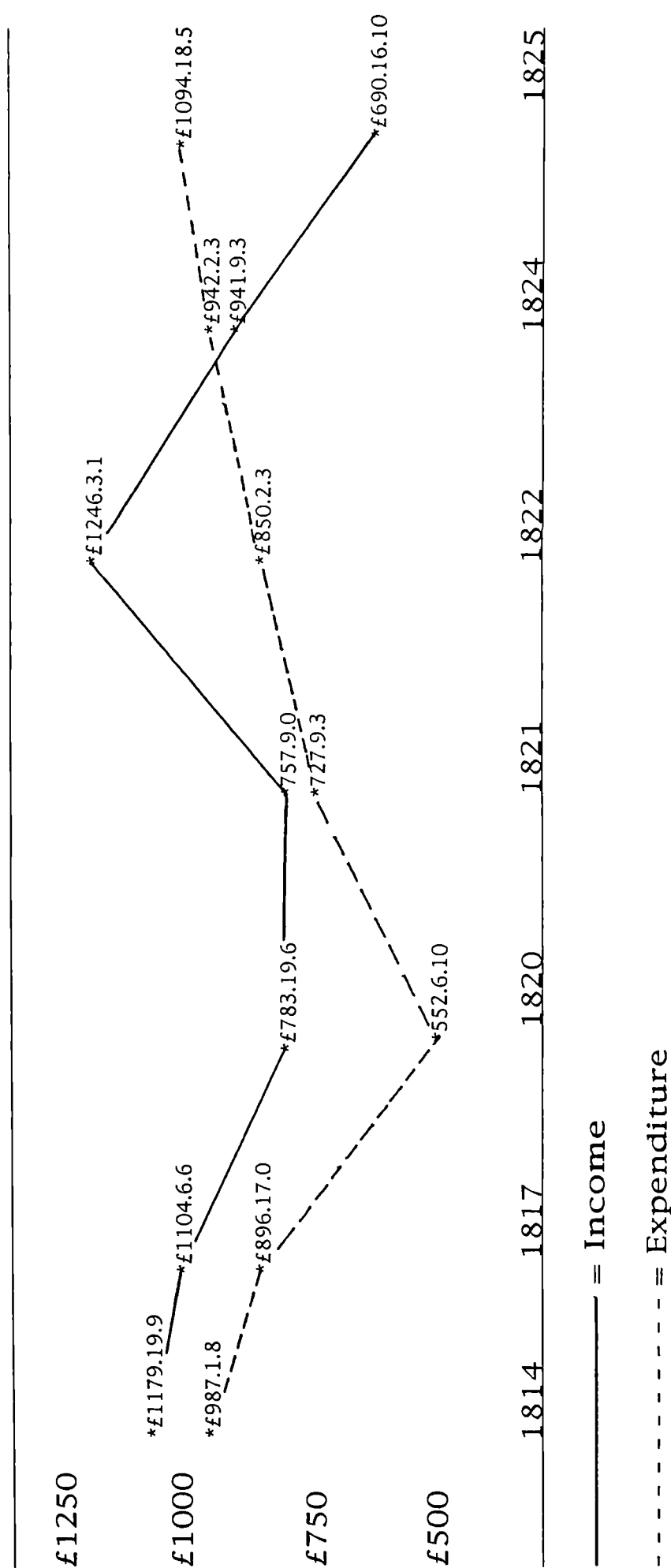


Figure 10.
Shibden Hall estate income and expenditure
under management of James Lister, 1814-1825
(Source: CDA, SH:1/SHA/22-25)

2.c. Estate Management and Agriculture

Though Halifax is best known for its reputation as one of the cradles of the "industrial revolution," it is clear that many of the local gentry, like the Listers, carried on with traditional agricultural concerns. A pair of agricultural improvers, touring the parish in 1793, spoke with Edward Walker of Crow-Nest, an estate within walking distance of Shibden Hall. His comments and concerns at that time are revealing:

.....The soil varies much, but in general is naturally poor. Proprietors both large and small. Farms mostly small, and occupied by manufacturers, for the conveniency of keeping a cow or two for the use of their families, and horses for conveying their goods to the mill and to the markets. The land is principally in meadow pasture grass, and is sown with natural hay-feeds, rib-grass, and rye-grass; and where it is not used by the manufacturer, as mentioned above, it is pastured with a mixed flock of horned cattle and sheep.⁷⁹

Daniel Defoe's 1720 comments on the intermixture of farming and textile manufacturing which he encountered in Halifax are often quoted:

...At every considerable house was a manufactory or work-house. Then, as every clothier must keep a horse, perhaps two, to fetch and carry for the use of his manufacture.....so every manufacturer generally keeps a cow or two, or more, for his family, and this employs the two or three or four pieces of enclosed land about his house, for they scarce sow corn enough for their cocks and hens.⁸⁰

It has been suggested by a local scholar that Defoe's picture of the agriculture in the district, or rather the lack thereof, is rather

⁷⁹Brown, General View of the Agriculture of the West Riding, 15-18.

⁸⁰Daniel Defoe, A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain (1720; reprint, London: Harmondsworth, 1971). The term "proto-industrial" was first used by Franklin Mendels, "Proto-industrialization: the first phase of the industrialisation process," Journal of Economic History 32 (1972). The model as applied to Halifax has been somewhat modified by Patricia Hudson, "Proto-industrialisation: the case of the West Riding wool textile industry in the 18th and early 19th centuries," History Workshop Journal 12 (1981), but the term is still nevertheless applicable.

overdrawn. Certainly oats, barley and even some wheat was grown in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and retails sales of milk and butter formed a regular source of income at the larger farms.⁸¹ W.B. Crump suggests that Charlotte Bronte's picture in Shirley of locals buying milk from the dairy of the Manor House could easily have described Shibden Hall.⁸² Relative to the rest of England, perhaps, the agricultural output of the parish of Halifax seemed small, but it nevertheless existed.

Certainly agricultural concerns were a major focus at Shibden Hall prior to 1830. In one 1825 letter Uncle James told his sister Ann that

the dry weather has enabled us to get the fallow field cleaned, the manure lead out & spread, the lime brought into the fallow-field, all our corn cut and housed, and some of the clover cut (a second crop) but not yet housed, being more than what the Horses could eat, even with mowing for Hotspur.... yesterday.... I met Mr. Parker at the top of Godley Lane coming to Shibden Hall, he had got Jas. Smith's lease with him, he returned back with me & I signed it at their office & Jas. Smith can call & sign it there also....⁸³

When James died in 1826 the inventory of his belongings listed the farming stock he used at Shibden Hall. This included: two heifers, five milch cows, two draught horses, a hackney horse, a quantity of hay and manure, a plough and two pairs of harrows, three "shovals," [sic] three muck forks, two pails, two wheelbarrows and an "old carriage."⁸⁴

At his death he left Shibden Hall with its farms and canal shares not to his younger brother, but to Anne Lister, his niece. She inherited partly because of the previous death of her three

⁸¹W.B. Crump, The Little Hill Farm (London: Scrivener Press, 1951), 14, 67.

⁸²Crump, The Little Hill Farm, 14.

⁸³CDA, SH:7/LL/396: James Lister, Shibden Hall, Sept.10, 1825, to his sister, Anne Lister, at Buxton.

⁸⁴CDA, SH:1/SH/1826/Apr: A Schedule of the Goods Chattels etc. belonging to the late James Lister Esquire of Shibden Hall. Dated April 1826 by John Williamson.

brothers.⁸⁵ From 1826 until her death in 1840 she was primarily responsible for the management of the estate. She had plenty of precedent. To some extent she simply followed in the footsteps of her uncle, though she had much higher social aspirations. Newer visions of what "business" was and how it "ought" to be conducted were filtering through, and Anne Lister did attempt to "modernize" the management of the estate on coming into her inheritance. However, during this period the basic economic concerns at Shibden Hall remained the same, at least through the 1820s: receiving rents, negotiating leases, improving farms, mowing hay, milling oats and selling milk and flour.

F.M.L. Thompson makes the general observation that relations of the old landed classes to their subordinates changed slowly because of their political isolation and their isolation from the "corrosive influences of industrial city life, safe within a self-contained traditional world."⁸⁶ The Shibden Hall estate, at least to 1830, was neither politically isolated nor isolated from industrial city life. Traditional gentry estate management practices nevertheless carried over into the rapidly developing urban setting.

The increasing professionalization of the management of estates which F.M.L. Thompson notes seems to have been happening on the Shibden Hall estate, albeit on a relatively small scale. Uncle James appears to have undertaken the majority of tasks for managing the estate on himself. Anne Lister originally employed a single steward and left the legal details of leases and bids to her solicitor, Mr. Parker. Later she employed at least two stewards, one of whom specialized in

⁸⁵In 1824 Anne Lister recorded a pertinent conversation in her journal: "On my uncle's death should come in for my uncle's estate, at my own disposal. He had no high opinion of ladies - was not fond of leaving estates to females. Were I other than I am, would not leave his to me...." Helena Whitbread, No Priest But Love. Excerpts from the Diaries of Anne Lister 1824-1826 (Otley: Smith Settle, 1992), 19.

⁸⁶Thompson, English Landed Society, 186-187.

the management of coal mines. The gentry pattern of having both a steward and a solicitor is one noticed by F.M.L. Thompson, and Anne Lister's practices appear to fit in with this.

As both Marshall and Thompson observe, landlords reserved to themselves the rights over "all mines, quarries, royalties, timber and timber-like trees with power to cut and carry at seasonable times."⁸⁷ A major component of Shibden estate management focused on the planting and harvesting of various types of trees. In addition, landlords usually paid out sums for building and gate repair, drainage and enclosure, while tenants paid their own land taxes and did their own fence repairs upon coming into a property.⁸⁸ This pattern seems so far to generally hold for the Listers and their tenants until 1832, when for strategic political reasons Lister began insisting that her tenants pay their own taxes.

Anne Lister's life as an estate manager was made vastly more complex by the fact that she had to deal with issues like urban rents and turnpike roads. For example, in 1829 she expended a great deal of energy negotiating with the commissioners of the new Wakefield to Halifax road. Her contact was John Waterhouse, a member of another old Halifax gentry family and one of the trustees on the committee. An Act of Parliament had provided for the new road to be cut through the top of Beacon Hill in a line running behind Shibden Hall, yet apparently some of the trustees still wanted to run the road along a lower trajectory, which would keep it in front of the house. Waterhouse told Lister that the amount of land which would revert to her from closure of the old road was double what was needed from her for the new:

⁸⁷Marshall, Rural Economy of Yorkshire, 43.

⁸⁸*Ibid*, 41.

I am authorized by the meeting to make you an offer of the entire old road in exchange for what is required from you for the new without any reference to any comparative quantity, and I really think you will not see any reason in future to regret embracing the offer....⁸⁹

The trade offer was rejected however. Lister wanted monetary reimbursement for land lost. She responded:

I have considered the proposal made by the trustees, but must decline acceding to its terms.....the ground wanted for the new line of the road by Lower Brea must of course be valued taking everything fairly into consideration; and it will be indispensable to pay the money, on my account, into the bank of Messrs Rawson & Co. before attempting to break up the ground....⁹⁰

In the end, the upper line was chosen. Throughout her dealings with other members of the gentry and with her family she attempted to mix tact with tough-mindedness, a balance which she did not always attain.

2.d. The World of the Gentry: Religious and Political Affiliations

The Listers' position as landowners gave them a legitimate interest in early nineteenth-century politics, a topic which often seems inseparable from that of religion. Political, class and religious sensibilities often overlapped, so that, in very general terms, many of the Whig manufacturers (like the Crossleys) were also dissenters, and many of the landed gentry (like the Waterhouses), though having investments in extractive and transportation industries, remained Church of England Tories.⁹¹

⁸⁹CDA, SH:7/ML/347: John Waterhouse, Halifax, to AL, Paris, 31 July 1829.

⁹⁰CDA, SH:7/ML/C/1: Business letters 1826-1830, from AL to misc. persons. Copy of letter to John Waterhouse, Well Head, Halifax, from AL, Paris, 10 August 1829.

⁹¹There are of course exceptions to this, and it remains a generalization only. Edward Akroyd, for example, one of the largest worsted manufacturers in Halifax, was very involved in the established Church of England, even though his family had a tradition of nonconformity and his grandfather had been a leader at the Mount Zion Methodist Chapel. Webster, "Edward Akroyd," 37.

Anne Lister's strict adherence to the Church of England is made more noticeable when one contrasts it with the 110 nonconformist chapels in the parish,⁹² which was home to groups of Presbyterians, Independents, Particular and General Baptists, Quakers, Unitarians, Moravians, Inghamites, Southcottians, Christian Brethren, Wesleyan Methodists, New Connexion Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Wesleyan Protestant Methodists, Wesleyan Methodist Associationists, Wesleyan Reformers, Congregationalists, and after 1846, Mormons.⁹³

In response to the combined challenges of dissent, urbanization and industrialization, however, the Church of England in Halifax was anything but passive. Between 1790 and 1875 Halifax had in succession three evangelical vicars. Both Samuel Knight (1817-1827) and more especially Charles Musgrave (1827-1875) were enthusiastic church-builders. Some nineteen Anglican churches were built or refurbished between 1798 and 1850.⁹⁴ One of the so-called "million pound" churches was St. James, built in 1829 on land purchased from Anne Lister.⁹⁵ By mid-century, 31 of the 126 places of worship in the parish were Anglican.⁹⁶

In general the Lister family was supportive of the Church of England, even if rather automatically so. In her youth Anne Lister was a fairly regular attender at morning services in the Halifax Parish Church, though later she reads prayers at home and/or attends the church in Lightcliffe. If she was at home, and when her father was living, they would together read family prayers.⁹⁷ After his death she took over this role. She records a fairly regular reading

⁹²Hargreaves, "Religion and Society in the Parish of Halifax," 87.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 60-153.

⁹⁴Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church in the Parish of Halifax, 1740-1852," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1990), 64.

⁹⁵CDA, SH:7/ML/302: AL, Shibden Hall, to Aunt Anne Lister, Paris, 20 January 1829. Deed of the sale of the land at Northgate for the new church.

⁹⁶Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church," 72.

⁹⁷AL Journal 1 February 1829. Sunday. "Mariana and I went down at 10.50/60 and we and my father read aloud the morning prayers...."

of scripture, especially the psalms, and when she does attend church, she generally records the scriptural passage on which the sermon was based, exactly how long the sermon was and what she thought of it.

Two examples will suffice here for giving some insight into the Lister relationship with the Church of England. Anne Lister's comments on the appointment of a vicar in 1817 and on a major tithe question in 1829 reveal some of the inter-connections between religion, politics and class. In 1790 a non-evangelical vicar in Wakefield had complained to the Whig Lord Lieutenant of the County, Earl Fitzwilliam, about the numbers of evangelical vicars being appointed to crown livings. It was alleged that this was partly due to the influence of William Wilberforce, the Tory Evangelical M.P. for Yorkshire. Later, in 1817, when Samuel Knight replaced the outgoing evangelical Coulthurst as vicar of Halifax Parish Church, Wilberforce wrote a letter of recommendation on his behalf to the prime minister Lord Liverpool.⁹⁸ Yet Knight's credentials were partially suspect, as his father, Titus Knight, had been a radical dissenter. A collier by trade, Knight's father had very likely at one time worked in the Shibden Hall collieries.⁹⁹ Influenced by Methodist preachers, he left the pit and opened a preparatory school. Anne Lister referred to Knight's father's history a few days before the new vicar was to give his inaugural discourse. She mentions Titus Chapel, and that it was built for "....Independents they call themselves - Calvinists, with which doctrine they say our vicar is a little tainted.... " Lister wrote, "I went by myself to hear Mr. Knight read himself in. He did not give St. Athanasius Creed, but was half an hour and three minutes reading the 39 Articles, and about four

⁹⁸AL Journal 11 February 1818. Quoted in Halifax Guardian, 9 July 1887. Also Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church," 55-56.

⁹⁹Halifax Guardian, 9 July 1887.

minutes reading the Archbishop's confirmation that he subscribed to them all..."¹⁰⁰ Apparently his religious credentials then satisfied her, for no criticism followed, at least in this extract. Lister had known Samuel Knight since at least 1806, when the Cambridge scholar was vicar of Holy Trinity Church, and with whom she had studied Latin, Greek and mathematics.¹⁰¹

Despite her close and long-term connection with Knight, in no place does Anne Lister appear to be a committed evangelical herself. Her friends seemed to assume that she was at the very least not unsympathetic to high church leanings.² She was not, however, an "extreme" Tory, as she was in general favorable to Catholic Emancipation. In one 1829 letter she writes that she does "not like Peel. You know I have always been for the Roman Catholics, but would do them a kindness handsomely, not reluctantly grant what I dare not withhold."³

In 1829 the major issue in Halifax centered around church tithes. The controversy was sparked by what Richard Oastler considered to be the greed of the new evangelical vicar, Charles Musgrave (1827-1875). When he became vicar, the living was estimated to be worth £750-£850,¹⁰⁴ but his predecessors had neglected to collect various small tithes which were, by rights, his. The parish was divided over his attempt to increase the value of the

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 15 February 1818.

¹⁰¹Muriel Green, ed., Miss Lister of Shibden Hall: Selected Letters 1800-1840, (Sussex: The Book Guild, 1992), 8. Also, CDA, SH:7/ML/49: Letter from Samuel Knight to AL, 18 December 1812. Arithmetical problems. SH:7/ML/66: Letter from Samuel Knight to AL, 13 January 1814. The meaning of some Greek words - an anecdote about Virgil.

¹⁰²CDA, SH:7 ML 376: Letter from Mrs. Ann Norcliffe, Langton Hall, to AL, Paris, 24 November 1829. "Eliza Belcombe's match will I hope prove a happy one, he is a very worthy little Man, a high Church Man of course, so [Sectarist?] - & I am told a very good preacher, & has 500 a year besides his preferment -..."

¹⁰³CDA, SH:7/ML/310: March 11, 1829. AL, Shibden Hall, to Aunt Anne Lister, Paris, 11 March 1829. See also AL Journal 5 March 1829. She writes that she has been favorable to Roman Catholic Emancipation for at least a dozen years.

¹⁰⁴Hargreaves, "The Georgian and Early Victorian Church," 49.

living, and in 1829 an Act of Parliament settled the matter by providing Musgrave with an income of a little over £1400. On January 30, 1829 Lister wrote,

...the tithe business settled - the Duke of Wellington as promise[d] had consented to the proposed arrangement of £1500 a year in lieu of all vicarial tithes & surplice fees &c. mortuaries, on condition of inserting a clause in the bill to be brought into parliament to enable [the] government on the death of our present vicar, to divide the living into 3 livings, if it be thought proper....¹⁰⁵

As a landowner, the tithes affected her directly, as the rate in Southowram was to be about a penny per acre.¹⁰⁶ After 1829 the rent roll recorded the subtraction of the vicar's rate from the rents received, so, at least until the rents were increased, the new tithes directly reduced the landowners' income.¹⁰⁷

The tithe question was closely bound up with local political alliances in Halifax. In 1827, despite the Tory Oastler's resistance, and apparently despite the effect on landowner rents, the main bulk of the Tory party in Halifax supported the Vicar's attempt to reimpose the tithes. Unlike many other West Riding towns, Halifax resisted both alliances between Tories and Radicals and between Whigs and Radicals, though the latter occasionally occurred. The Tories in Halifax avoided the appearance of supporting popular causes even though generally supporting factory reform.¹⁰⁸ Before the Reform Act, however, Halifax Tories had a weaker, less consolidated voice in county politics. In general, the Whigs at this

¹⁰⁵AL Journal 30 January 1829.

¹⁰⁶AL Journal 14 January 1829.

¹⁰⁷CDA, SH:2/SHE/7: Account book, 1826-32. For example: "Christmas Rents 1830: House & Garden & Spouthouse, Josh. Hopkins, 18.26.6, vicar's rate 0.14.4, recv'd 18.12.2; Hipperholme, Mr Hardcastle, 21.0.0, vicar's rate 1.1.0, recv'd. 19.19.0; Hilltop, Samuel Sowden, 18.18.0, vicar's rate 1.0.0, and Sutcliffe Wood, 36.15.0, vicar's rate 1.15.10-1/2, [rcv'd total from both farms] 52.16.4-1/2; Yew Trees, Mark Hepworth, 35.0.0, vicar's 1.19.9-1/2, recv'd 33.0.2-1/2....." In each case the received rent has been reduced by the amount paid to Musgrave.

¹⁰⁸J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12 (1976): 176-177.

period included the wealthier members of the aristocracy, whereas those who considered themselves Tories were largely smaller landowning gentry.¹⁰⁹

Political observers, F.M.L. Thompson notes, have long been interested in the question of the relative political strength of the gentry and aristocracy. Contested elections were generally too expensive for the gentry to participate in, and though some gentry began to be more politically powerful following the 1832 Reform Act, in some cases their influence was diluted by the new urban constituencies. Perhaps because of their relatively low income, there is no evidence that the Listers participated on any noticeable scale in county politics before 1832. Neither Anne Lister's Uncle James nor Uncle Joseph had done so, even though Lister support was solicited on a local level.

The seven general elections between 1800 and 1830 were in Yorkshire mainly conducted under the auspices of the great aristocratic county families: Lord Fitzwilliam and Wentworth House backed the Whig interest, while Lord Harewood, (head of the Lascelles family) and later Lord Wharncliffe were leading Tories. Major issues during this period included parliamentary reform, slavery, free trade and Catholic Emancipation. The City of York returned two members. Until 1826 the county returned two members, after that it had four. Anne Lister was aware of and interested in all the political activities of her day, though seems to have restricted herself primarily to private expression of these interests at least until 1832. In December 1825 she wrote to one of her lovers in Paris:

.....After much discussion, some time back, of the disenfranchisement of the borough of Grampound in Cornwall, the right of electing the

¹⁰⁹Again, this remains a generalization only. Obviously extremely wealthy members of the aristocracy, like the Duke of Wellington, were also Tories.

additional members was given to our county, and we are all on the alert. Six candidates will offer themselves. Our present members, Lord Milton and Mr Stuart Wortley, Lord Morpeth and Mr Bethel for the catholic emancipation; Mr Wilson and Mr Duncombe against it. The tide of popular feeling is strong; and the last two are almost sure to be elected.¹¹⁰

Lord Morpeth withdrew in the face of the anticipated expense of a contested election. Wortley's pro-Catholic Emancipation views did in fact cost him many supporters, and he also withdrew on the eve of the election. This resulted in the unopposed return of Duncombe and Wilson, as Anne Lister expected, along with Lord Milton and a relative newcomer to the scene, a flax spinner named John Marshall. The late withdrawals meant election expenses had already amounted to some £150,000.¹¹¹ Gentry families whose income fluctuated on either side of £1,000 could not be expected to participate in such matters on any meaningful scale.

Although the Tories predominated nationally in the first thirty years of the century, and the Yorkshire county representation was often shared between the two parties, the City of York was dominated by the Whigs. This was reflected in an overwhelmingly Whig press, and an almost exclusively Whig Corporation. The Corporation usually contained a representative of the Fitzwilliam family.

York was also the place where the Yorkshire gentry congregated to have their social "season," as it was less expensive than going to London, where the aristocracy tended to gather. Thus, York was also an important setting for much of Anne Lister's life. The gentry was the source of a great deal of Tory support in York. Other traditionally Tory groups in the city included the "clergy,

¹¹⁰Draft letter from Anne Lister, Shibden Hall, to Mrs. Maria Barlow, Paris, 3 December 1825. Quoted in Green, Miss Lister of Shibden Hall, 90.

¹¹¹The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York 1258-1832, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, no. 2, Vol. 96 (1938), 155.

officers and dependents of the Church, militia officers and soldiers." Together these groups made up about a quarter of the Corporation's citizens.¹¹² Following the Napoleonic Wars the Tories began to resist the Whig hegemony in the city. The Whig newspaper, the York Herald, sneered when the Tories founded the York Pitt Club in June 1815. In 1818 the York King and Constitution Club was created, and by 1819 the Yorkshire Gazette became the city's first Tory newspaper. Anne Lister's immediate social circle included William Duffin, chairman of the Pitt Club,¹¹³ with whom she frequently lodged when visiting in York. His services as a physician were occasionally used by the Listers. The two families had been socially connected since the early years of the century and she continued to write to the Duffins, especially his widow, throughout her life. John Wolstenholme, a bookseller and stationer, was also an early member of the Pitt Club. It was he who eventually became the publisher of the Yorkshire Gazette. In one of Duffin's many letters to Anne Lister he remarked, "...We are to have a Weekly paper published every Saturday as an antidote to the Shameful Herald, no doubt you have seen the prospectus....."¹¹⁴ In general, however, he seems to have avoided discussing politics in his correspondence with her, and limits himself to giving medical advice.¹¹⁵

The Gazette's anti-reform and anti-Catholic Emancipation positions were quite clear. The month before the Peterloo massacre, the paper printed an editorial denouncing the speeches of Leeds "Reformers." One of the speakers at the meeting had apparently said something to the effect of "'Why talk of petitioning a House, that

¹¹²A.J. Peacock, "York in the Age of Reform" (Ph.D. diss., University of York, 1973), 30.

¹¹³Peacock, "York in the Age of Reform," 71.

¹¹⁴CDA, SH:7/ML/85: William Duffin, York, to AL, Shibden, 14 March 1819.

¹¹⁵Duffin was closely connected with a number of major events in Anne Lister's life, and was aware that she kept an extensive journal. SH:7/ML/91: William Duffin, York, to AL, Shibden, January 1820.

deserved turning out of doors, that was made up of humbugs and not representatives of the people.' We," the editor remarked self-righteously, "are almost afraid to quote such seditious and atrocious expressions....The audacious lengths which these slanderers and libellers [sic] are permitted to go with impunity, afford a striking proof of the toleration, the liberty nay the licentiousness which are freely permitted and indulged under the present Government....the question now at issue is, whether the Constitution itself shall stand or fall."¹¹⁶

Its unsympathetic position towards labour was also clearly delineated, as in an editorial in 1829 against the turn-out of the Manchester Spinners when their wages were reduced from 28s-50s per week to 24-40s per week. "...the turn-outs deserve the most marked condemnation," the Gazette editor wrote, "and it is a pity that the law cannot reach and punish them....these are the fellows who will clamour for a repeal of the corn laws - when the poor agricultural labourer is content with 9s 10s or 12s per week: these are the men who will join Cobbett and Hunt in their call for radical reform; and who constitute the principal part of the knot of gin-drinking, ale-house politicians who preach up liberality and the march of intellect. If they marched to the tread-mill, or even the pillory, it would not be too bad a punishment for them."¹¹⁷ This then, was the paper supported by William Duffin, chairman of the Pitt Club, friend, correspondent and host of Anne Lister. This is the paper which apparently solicited financial support from her when it was first founded.

Things were not entirely so clear-cut, however. Another York paper, the Chronicle, advocated Whiggish principles but also declared itself against parliamentary reform, while Jonathan Gray, a

¹¹⁶Yorkshire Gazette (York), 3 July 1819.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, 25 July 1829.

prominent York Tory solicitor who would eventually be one of the trustees mentioned in Anne Lister's will, was favorable to Catholic Emancipation.¹¹⁸ York Tories were not entirely reactionary, and this is supported by their leading role in obtaining urban improvements such as gas lighting. Duffin and his allies were principal players in the eventual stand-off between the Tory-dominated Improvement Association and the Whig-dominated Corporation.¹¹⁹

Anne Lister's patterns of visiting in Yorkshire society seem so far to fall in line with her political and religious affiliations. Most of her friends, like the Duffins, were also Church of England Tories. Prior to the Reform Act, Anne Lister commented in private on the political questions of her day, but appears to have retained in public a respectable and ladylike detachment from such questions before 1832, when her involvement became quite overt. In fact, her comments in 1819 on a radical reform platform which included "women's rights" sound remarkably like something from the Tory Gazette: "What will these demagogues advance, careless of what absurdity or ruin they commit!"¹²⁰ She was then 29 years old.

In many ways Anne Lister's interests in politics and estate management overlapped with her social connections among the female members of the gentry. Most of these connections were developed and maintained over the entire course of her life, among people who knew where they were in the social hierarchy of Yorkshire, and whose constructions of class and gender deeply influenced Anne Lister's portrayal of her self. The next chapter will look at some of these issues, and illumine some of the interconnections between women's communities and political and social values in this early industrial period.

¹¹⁸Peacock, "York in the Age of Reform," 41 and 72.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 105-147.

¹²⁰AL Journal 6 December 1819.

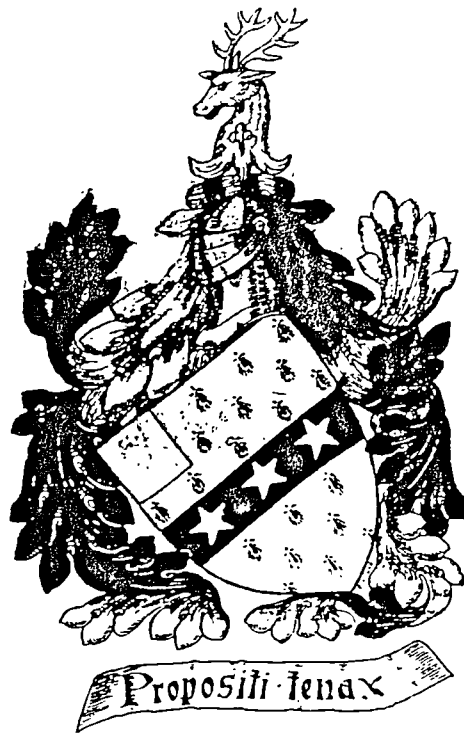


Figure 11. Anne Lister with Coat of Arms she had designed
(Sources: Charles A.H. Franklin, *The Bearing of Coat-Armour By Ladies*
(London: John Murray, 1923), 1185; photograph courtesy of Ros Westwood,
Calderdale Leisure Services)

CHAPTER THREE:

Family, Education, Friends and Sexuality: Anne Lister's Life, 1791-1830

Are there more Miss Pickfords in the world than I have ever before thought of? - Anne Lister Journal 5 August 1823

Since the bulk of this thesis will involve an analysis of the last ten years of Anne Lister's life, it is important to get at least a sense of the major events in her life up until that point. The proposed analysis of her later life will make more sense if something is known of her family relationships, education, gender, sexuality and female networks up to age 39. Especially in regards to the latter four categories, Lister was adept at challenging and manipulating existing discourses while still maintaining her own social respectability. Gender, defined as the meanings attached to certain physical and personality characteristics, was a major element of Anne Lister's relationship to her self, to her educational process, to her sexual practice and to other women in her circles. Obviously class also played a critical role. Both gender and class operate to either create or prevent a sense of agency. This chapter will show Lister freely making choices in these areas, though her sense of what was possible was also quite clearly delineated by the discourses of her time.

My research into Lister's early life is by necessity limited, since the amount of documentation available is immense. Only fragments of journals exist before 1817. For the period 1791-1817, therefore, the bulk of information will be found in the correspondence. Anne begins to keep her journal more systematically at age 26. By the time I begin to focus on her life, when she is 39, she has already settled into a certain pattern. By that time she seems to know a

great deal about herself and feel more at ease in herself. This chapter will set out the background to those themes which remained important during the last ten years of her life.

1. Family

Anne Lister was born in Halifax on April 3, 1791, the second child and first daughter of Rebecca Battle and Jeremy Lister. Anne had four brothers, three whom died in their youth. Her younger brother Samuel was born in 1793, the heir presumptive to the Shibden Hall estate. Her sister Marian, who was to outlive everyone, was born in 1798 and died in 1882 at the age of 84. Anne's mother had six children, only three of whom survived to adulthood: Anne, Samuel and Marian.

Discord, rather than harmony, was apparent within this family grouping. She felt that her father Jeremy, a former lieutenant, was too familiar with the wrong kind of people (lower in rank) and she did not respect the way he handled, or rather failed to handle, business matters. Anne and her mother did not get on well: at least, Anne did not seem to have much respect for her, although her mother confided family problems in her infrequent letters. In her later years Rebecca apparently had a drink problem which made home life unpredictable.¹ Anne had little to say to her sister. Marian was not an intellectual, she had a soft spot in her heart for hard-pressed tenants, and parted too freely with her money, in Anne's eyes, even for good causes.²

Marian seemed to get on better with their father than Anne did. His manners were too "vulgar" for Anne's taste. In one conversation she recorded Marian as saying, "...we always had been two families

¹Muriel Green, Miss Lister of Shibden Hall: Selected Letters (1800-1840) (Lewes: Book Guild, 1992), 20.

²AL, Shibden, to Aunt Anne Lister, Paris, March 11, 1829. When Mariana Lawton sent £20 towards the repair of York Minster, Anne commented snidely that "....Marian may not forgive her, is ready to give all she has towards its repair." CDA, SH:7/ML/310.

and so we should always feel -- if anything happened to my father, 'would not be condemned to live with my aunt or me' on any account - would have such a home as she could of her own..."³ Lister related more comfortably and amicably with her father's sister, Aunt Anne.

Anne was close to at least one other member of her family - her brother Samuel. In 1811 he obtained an Ensigncy in the 84th Regiment, a job his sister, somewhat to her chagrin, could never take on. "...Never till this moment," she wrote to him,

did I feel a wish to be freed from that petticoat slavery that but ill subdues a mind superior to its tyranny. But alas! discontent were folly, and to murmur would be to arraign the decrees of Heaven which gave the fiat. Sometimes I could envy you, if it were not impious and unjust, impious in sinning against the commandments, and unjust in wishing to enjoy a good at your expense. Of this no more...⁴

In 1813 he was sent to Ireland. All expected a promising career. She wrote to him,

...you my dear Sam, are the last remaining hope and stay of an old, but lately drooping family. Seize it in its fall. Renovate its languid energies; rear it with a tender hand, and let it once more bloom upon the spray. Ah! let the well-ascended blood that trickles in your veins stimulate the generous enthusiasm of your soul, and prove it is not degenerated from the spirit of your ancestors...⁵

However, within a few weeks of arriving in Ireland, Samuel, at the age of 20, died tragically and unexpectedly by drowning. It was only after Samuel's death that it became apparent that Anne Lister was going to inherit the estate, rather than her father, who was apparently not adept at handling business. Commenting later on the fact of her accession to the estate she explained that she

³ AL Journal 13 March 13, 1829.

⁴Muriel Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840" (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936), 50. AL, York, to Samuel Lister, Halifax, 13 April 1811.

⁵Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 68. AL, Halifax, to Samuel Lister, Fermoy, Ireland, n.d., 1813.

...did many things ladies in general could not do, but did them quietly. My education had been different from the common rule. I was suited to my circumstances. On my uncle's death should come in for my uncle's estate, at my own disposal. He had no high opinion of ladies - was not fond of leaving estates to females. Were I other than I am, would not leave his to me...⁶

The concept of ancient blood was very important to Anne's sense of family and dynastic importance, and she referred to it frequently.

"....the honour and pride of ancestry none can respect more than I do - but the inheritance of blood cannot be bought, nor should be sold by me, tho' wealth and poverty, and life and death, were all at stake....."⁷

"....Why do I so revere the pride of ancestry? Because how rarely, how very rarely we see nobility of mind among the lowly born! There is an upward bounding in some spirits, that the grosser multitude nor feels, nor understands -....."⁸ As is also apparent in her letter to Samuel, she apparently conceived of her class as a biological, rather than purely social phenomenon.

Her family background gave her access to women's networks within her class; both contributed to her sense of her own identity. This was true despite the fact that her father and mother and sister did not capitalize upon their "inheritance of blood" in the way that Anne Lister did. A sense of family, blood and inheritance was a prime motivation which spurred her to active involvement in politics, estate management and female networks. Her sense of her rank also informed her choice of female sexual partners.

⁶AL Journal 20 September 1824. Quoted in Helena Whitbread, ed., No Priest But Love: Excerpts from the Diaries of Anne Lister, 1824-1826 (Otley: Smith Settle, 1992), 19.

⁷AL, Shibden, to Sibella Maclean, Cheltenham, 7 April 1824, CDA, SH:7/ML/136.

⁸Letter from AL, Shibden, to Sibella Maclean of Coll, Tobermory, 10-14 July 1824, CDA, SH:7/ML/142.

- 1791: Anne Lister is born in Halifax.
- 1793: Anne Lister's brother Samuel is born and becomes the heir presumptive to Shibden Hall estate.
- 1799: Attends Miss Chettle's school for young ladies in Ripon.
- 1806: It is about this time that she meets her first lover, Eliza Raine, at the Manor House school in York. Begins keeping journal.
- 1812: Anne Lister becomes lovers with Mariana Belcombe.
- 1813: Anne's brother Samuel drowns while serving in the army in Ireland; Anne will now inherit Shibden from her Uncle James.
- 1814: Eliza Raine committed to Dr. Belcombe's private clinic for the insane.
- 1816: Mariana Belcombe marries Charles Lawton of Cheshire.
- 1822: Anne Lister visits the Ladies of Llangollen.
- 1826: Death of Uncle James; Anne Lister inherits the Shibden Hall estate.
- 1830: She travels to Spain with Lady Stuart de Rothesay, wife of the British Ambassador to France, just before the July Revolution.
- 1832: Reform Bill is passed; the affair with Vere Hobart ends; Anne Lister becomes lovers with Ann Walker.
- 1833: Rawsons refuse to sign coal lease; Anne Lister plans to get her own coal.
- 1834: Anne Lister and Ann Walker take communion, exchange rings; Ann Walker comes to live at Shibden Hall. Anne Lister and Mariana Lawton have sex for the last time.
- 1835: Anne Lister's Tory candidate wins Halifax election.
- 1836: Death of Anne Lister's aunt and father. Anne Lister's will leaves Ann Walker a life interest in the estate.
- 1837: Anne Lister's Tory candidate loses Halifax seat.
- 1840: Anne Lister dies near the Black Sea; Ann Walker sends her body back to Halifax. Continues living at Shibden Hall.
- 1843: Ann Walker declared insane and removed from Shibden Hall.
- 1844: Railway line laid through the estate.
- 1849: Charlotte Bronte publishes Shirley.
- 1854: Ann Walker dies at Cliff Hill.

Figure 12. Partial Chronology of Anne Lister's Life

2. Education

To a great extent Anne Lister was given the education apparently available to young gentlewomen of the time. This included music and drawing lessons, and some knowledge of heraldry, geography and literature. Her friends, the Norcliffe daughters, for example, "learnt *solids* at home, dancing at Bath, and finish in society and abroad."⁹ Yet Lister was skeptical about the formal lessons she had been given. "It is to be observed by Gibbon," she wrote to her lover, Mrs. Barlow, who was making inquiries about the education of her own daughter,

that a man has two educations, one that is given to him, one that he gets himself. How far this may be the case with ladies, perhaps it might be more difficult to determine, but I have seen from very many examples that it is [possible] for girls to have been at what are called the best schools in England, yet still....know too little of everything to know too much of anything.....The young lady must learn like the rest, and then, if she will have her literary building *solid* must, like Gibbon, dig her foundation deeper, and throw in new materials of her own...¹⁰

This, in fact, is exactly what Anne Lister did. Her formal education consisted first, of a stint when she was seven at a school for young ladies in Ripon. (See Figure 12, "Partial Chronology of Anne Lister's Life.") Then she was tutored by a George Skelding in Market Weighton, then sent to the Manor House School in York, then was again privately tutored by the Rev. Samuel Knight in Halifax. Yet it is clear that her auto-didacticism continued for her entire life. She was fluent in Greek and Latin, and absorbed classical writings with great energy. She obtained a workable use of Hebrew; she also spoke French well and in later years picked up a smattering of Italian, German, Russian and Dutch. Besides classical studies, she had an

⁹Green, Miss Lister, 82.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 83-84.

ongoing interest in mathematics, science and natural history. One friend observed, "...you are a strange being you know, who would rather pore over a musty, dusty leaved classic, than cry with Byron, extasier with Moore, or die with Amelie Mansfeldt...."¹¹ While she did occasionally read novels, it was a very rare occurrence.

When at Shibden, she tried to keep herself to a rigorous schedule of study, looking after the estate, keeping her accounts and writing her journal. In 1817, her schedule included:

Between 1 & 2, the 1st 7 propositions of the 1st book of Euclid, with which I hope to renew my acquaintance & to proceed diligently in the hope that, if I live, I may some time attain a tolerable proficiency in mathematical studies. I would rather be a philosopher than a polyglot, and mean to turn my attention, eventually and principally, to natural philosophy. For the present, I mean to devote my mornings, before breakfast to Greek, and afterwards, till dinner, to divide the time equally between Euclid & arithmetic....I must read a page or 2 of French now & then when I can. The afternoons & evenings are set apart for general reading, for walking, 1/2 an hour, or 3/4, practice on the flute.¹²

In 1823 she wrote, "...I ought not to talk of being busy without giving some reasons for it. My average hour of getting up in a morning, is half past five. Dressing and (keep the secret, and do not laugh) going to look at my horse, take me an hour and a half; from 7 to 9, I read a little Greek and a little French; from 9-10, looking after the workmen; from 10-11, breakfast; from 11-12, out of doors looking one thing or other, workmen, etc.; from 2 to 3-3/4 walk out Isabella - ... from 4-1/2 to 6, at dinner, and sitting afterwards; from 6 to 6-1/2, dawdle, trifle, call it what you please, with Isabella; from 6-1/2 to 8, write letters or notes, or 'the book,' [her journal], or take a little miscellaneous reading, and indeed it is a little, for some days I never

¹¹AL Journal 12 May 1824. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 204.

¹²AL Journal 13 May 1817. Quoted in Helena Whitbread, ed., I Know My Own Heart: The Diaries of Anne Lister 1791-1840 (London: Virago Press, 1988), 6.

open an English book; at 8, go downstairs to coffee, and we all spend a sociable evening together till 10. Isabella retires about 1/2 hour after me, and my uncle and aunt sit up till 11. Such is the model of my present days...."¹³

Some ten volumes of language exercises and another nine volumes of "Extracts from Books Read," are a partial testament of her daily labors to educate herself. Hardly a day goes by in the journal where she does not note the page numbers of the books she has read that day. The extracts from classical works are punctuated by notes in code, most of which reveal her study of homosexuality or aspects of female anatomy. The Sixth Satire of Juvenal, for example, was used as a way of communicating about same-sex desire in discussions with Miss Pickford, who was also a 'masculine' woman, also a lesbian and also self-educated.¹⁴ Lister was quite familiar with the so-called "vice of the Greeks"¹⁵ and had read passages about tribades and the use of leather dildos.¹⁶ "<<....my surmise was probably true when I fancied that Catharine's classics might have taught her the trick of debauching Miss W[alker]>>¹⁷ she once wrote. She understood that classical learning opened doorways to non-Christian interpretations of sexuality. One extract from Dr. Paley's Evidences of Christianity read in part, " 'Some stain pollutes ye morals of almost every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver. Zeno the Stoic, and Diogenes the Cynic, fell into the foulest impurities; of which also Socrates himself was more than suspected.' "¹⁸ Anne herself commented in

¹³Draft letter, AL, Halifax, to Mariana Lawton, 15 March 1823. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 181b.

¹⁴AL Journal 26 July 1823. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 268. It is apparent that she had read the satires as early as 1808, when she was 17. See also letter to AL from George Skelding, her Latin and Greek tutor, 14 July 1808. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 13.

¹⁵Latin, French and Greek notes and extracts, 1820-1821, CDA, SH:7/ML/F/3.

¹⁶Extracts of books read, 1820, p. 27. CDA, SH:7/ML/EX/6.

¹⁷AL Journal 11 October 1832.

¹⁸Extracts of books read, 1821-1829. Vol. E. CDA, SH:7/ML/EX/7.

one letter to Mariana, "...There is much, very much, not only in the fairest models of classical taste but even in the fathers of our Church which is not fit for general reading; and everyone to whom these sources of ancient learning are laid open, is bound in prudence and in honour to use them carefully..."¹⁹ She herself carefully indexed each volume of extracts so that she could cross-reference certain topics, like "tribades,"²⁰ or "Eleusinian Mysteries," between volumes. A partial list of her classical reading in the original would include works by Pliny, Ovid, Virgil, Homer, Eusebius, Euripides, Lucretius, Plato, Horace, Propertius, Maximus Tyrius, Pindar, Martial, Sophocles, Demosthenes, Plutarch, Euclid, Herodotus and Thucydides. Yet she once "spoke against a classical education for ladies in general. It did no good if not pursued & if [it was], undrew a curtain better for them not to peep behind."²¹ This sounds very much like an opinion she heard elsewhere, but one which she actively chose not to apply to herself.

Works of travel and natural history also fascinated her, and she also used this source as a means of discovering sexual information about people and places far removed in time and culture. For example, in her notes from M. Maillet's Long Account of the Conquest of Egypt by the Caliphs of Africa, in the Year 970, we find in code an account of a queen who was "<<desperately fond>>" of another female. "<<...This queen had the same passion as saffo [sic] is said to have had for the Lebian [sic] maids...>>"²² Her scholarship thus allowed her not only to create a powerful sense of self-worth, she used the discourses she found to inform herself of the presence of others

¹⁹Draft letter, AL, Halifax, to Mariana Lawton, 15 March 1823. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 181b.

²⁰Actually one of her index categories.

²¹AL Journal 20 September 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 20.

²²Extracts from books read, CDA, SH:7/ML/EX/2, 81.

whose sexual interests were like her own. A partial listing of books read from the 1810s-1830s would include Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; Humboldt's Political Essays on New Spain; Sir Humphrey Davy, Elements of Chemical Philosophy; Morier, Travels in Persia; Maurice, Indian Antiquities; Beckmann, History of Inventions and Discoveries; Hoare, Classical Tour Thro' Italy; Johnson, Tour of the Hebrides; Norden, Travels in Egypt and Ellis, An Account of the Embassy to China Under Lord Amherst.²³ "Without some intellectual superiority over the common mass of those I meet with," she once commented, "What am I? *Pejus quam nihil*. [A worse than nothing.]"²⁴

She eventually turned her attention almost entirely to natural history. In 1819 she went to Paris and there discovered the "Jardin des Plantes.....of the thirteen professors attached to this noble establishment, each gives an annual course of lectures *gratis*, and equally open to foreigners as to the French themselves!"²⁵ In the

²³CDA, SH:7/ML/EX/1-11. Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (London: W. Strahan, T. Cadell, 1776-88, 2nd ed.); Baron F.H.A. von Humboldt, Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain, Trans. J. Black from original French, (London, 1811); Sir Humphrey Davy, Elements of Chemical Philosophy (London: J. Johnson & Co., 1812); Thomas Maurice, Indian Antiquities (7 vol. London, 1793-1800); *ibid.*, The History of Hindostan (London: R. Faulder, 1795-98); James Justinian Morier, A Journey Through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople in the Years 1808 and 1809 (London: Longman, 1812); Johann Beckmann, A History of Inventions and Discoveries (London: J. Bell, 1797, 1814); Sir Richard Colt Hoare, A Classical Tour Through Italy and Sicily (London: n.p., 1819); Samuel Johnson, A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland and Remarks on a Voyage to the Hebrides (London: n.p., 1775); Frederik Ludvig Norden, Travels Through Egypt (London: n.p., 1785); Henry Ellis, Journal of the Proceedings of the Late Embassy to China (London: John Murray, 1818). Other titles which Anne Lister records but which do not appear in the British Library Catalogue include Pallas, Tour Thro' Siberia; Watson, Chemical Essays; Webster, Elements of Chemical and Mechanical Philosophy; and Brandes, Outlines of Geology. Lister read a number of things on geology in the 1820s, but very few of these works appear in British Library titles in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century. It may be that she had access to some titles in France.

²⁴AL Journal, 23 September 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 133.

²⁵Letter from AL to Mr. and Mrs. Duffin, after her return from Paris, 22 October 1819. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 111.

1820's her education continued, therefore, in Paris. She sat, along with other ladies, in the ladies gallery, listening to various thrice-weekly lectures at the Jardin du Roi and the Royal Institute. M. Desfontaine lectured on botany; Langier lectured on chemistry; Bronguiart on mineralogy; Cordier and Pelletier on geology and M. Geoffrey St. Hilaire on the natural history of mammals. For this course she had a tutor in anatomy, M. Juilliart, who came to her rooms each Saturday to give lessons in dissection.²⁶ The lecturer who she most admired, however, was Cuvier, to whom she had written in 1819, asking for help with her studies in natural history. The Halifax archives contain three volumes of Cuvier lecture notes which she took between 1830-1831. She noted in 1830 that "Cuvier's 25th lecture brought us down to the sixteenth-century from which time to now he will divide the subject into five branches[:] anatomy and physiology, zoology, botany, mineralogy and chemistry....."²⁷ Her reading for the 1820's and 1830's turned more and more frequently to publications such as the Royal Institutional Journal, the Zoological Journal, Fleming, The Philosophy of Zoology; Samonelle, Entomology; M. Flouren, Memoir on the Properties and Functions of the Nervous System; Dr. Paris, Pharmacologia.²⁸

²⁶He brought dead rabbits and parts of human bodies to her flat, and she, regularly overcoming her disgust in code, vigorously attempted to achieve a scientific attitude. She had regular discussions with her tutor about details such as the differences between tendons, nerves and ligaments.

²⁷AL Journal 20 March 1830.

²⁸Extracts of books read, 1821-1829. Vol. E., CDA, SH:7/ML/EX/7. John Fleming, The Philosophy of Zoology, or, a general view of the structures, functions and classification of animals (Edinburgh: n.p., 1822). The rest of these books were perhaps published in France, and do not appear in the British Library Catalogue.

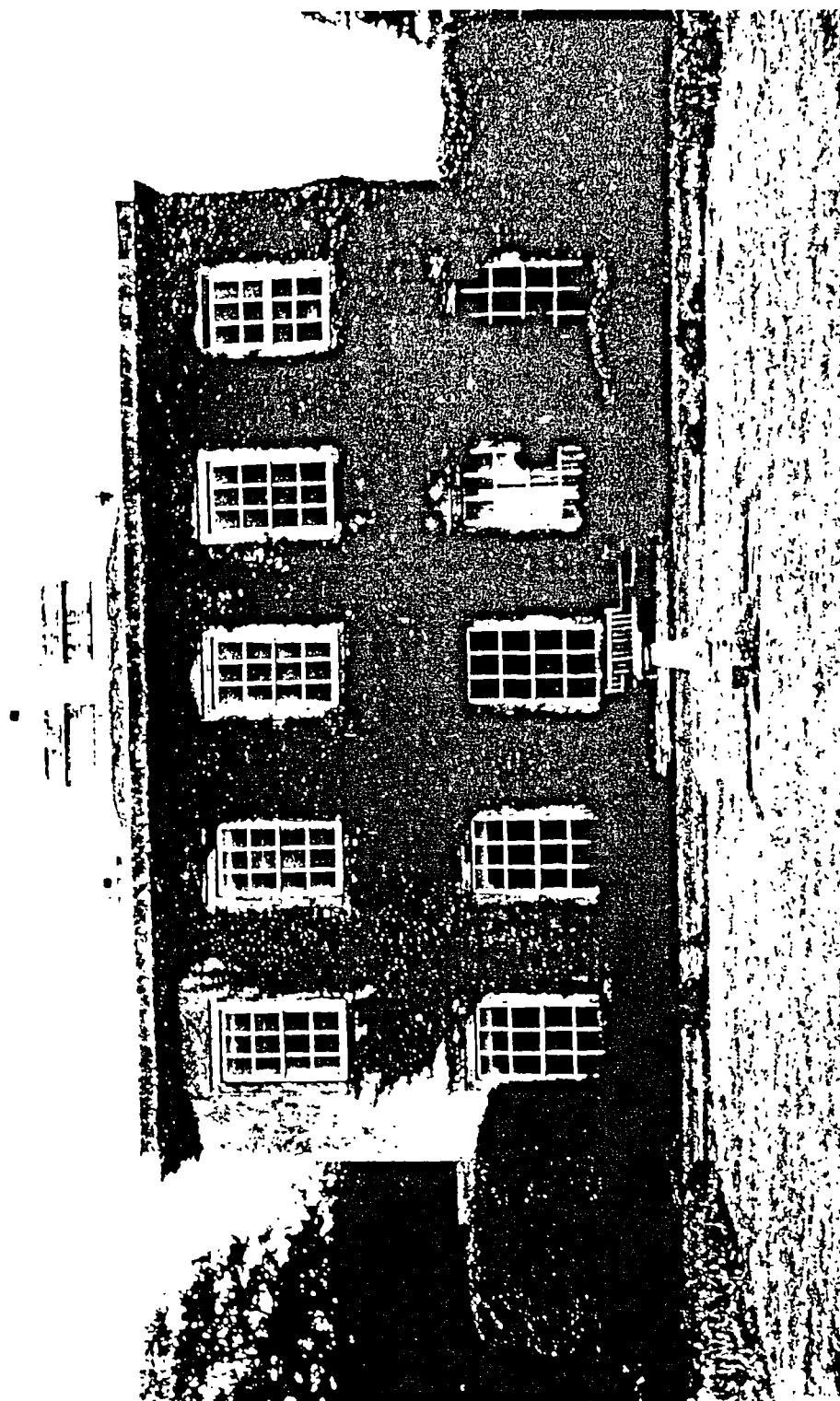


Figure 13. Langton Hall, near Malton. Home of the Norcliffe Family.
(Photograph by author, 1995)

3. Gender

Her scholarship served seemingly mutually exclusive ends. The intense study of science and the classics had clearly 'masculine' implications. She knew that topics like science were gendered. When Mme. Cuvier showed Anne Lister her husbands' rooms, Lister observed ".....the divisions in his library for so many different divisions or departments of science....the salon too lined with books - these on literature, history and etc. and these he called the ladies' library....."²⁹ No doubt her early perception of herself as "masculine" helped to make it easier for her to engage in such "masculine" studies; at the same time immersing herself in these "masculine" reading patterns reinforced and helped to construct her gender identity. Once again, she actively chose to ignore gendered prescriptions in order to pursue her own interests.

Yet, as with some of her other gender-bending activities, she had to be careful to whom she revealed the extent of her scholarship: obvious deviations from feminine respectability threatened her social standing.³⁰ A living paradox, who was both female and "masculine," she had to move in her world as if balancing on a tightrope. From an early age it became apparent to her that any hint of extraordinary scholarship would endanger her social status. For example, even when she wrote to Isabella Norcliffe describing how she spent her days studying, she was sure to add at the end, perhaps sarcastically, perhaps not: "Believe me I pray most fervently that I may never be

²⁹AL Journal 27 March 1830.

³⁰Lady Louisa Stuart's attitude towards her own literary activities are perhaps a classic statement of this problem for women in the aristocracy. She had a "strong aversion" to publishing any of her writings because of "a wholesome dread that she had of being classed among the numerous tribe of lady scribblers of her time, for whom she had little respect...there was perhaps [another]....reason - a prejudice more of her younger days than of later life - that it was a loss of caste for a 'lady of fashion' to be an authoress." James Home, ed., Letters of Lady Louisa Stuart to Miss Louisa Clinton (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1901), vii-viii.

deservedly ranked among that odious class of animals commonly called Learned Ladies..."³¹ After one of her first great social outings with the Norcliffes, to Bath in 1813, Eliza Raine told her that Lady Norland "knew you at Bath - but as she heard you were a 'blue stocking' did not at all like you- ..." ³² In 1830 she was still being careful. She refused, for example, to tell the two Maitland girls that Miss Pickford had borrowed an Armenian grammar because this would have been certain proof of "*basblueism*," and thus a danger to social respectability and status.³³

Both the perceptions of others and her own perception of herself were that she had "masculine" characteristics. When she was courting Sibella Maclean, a woman of higher social status than herself, she was eager to present herself as eminently respectable. Sibella had told Anne that she thought her "odd, very odd." Anne replied,

...Perhaps you are right - I am an enigma even to myself, and do excite my own curiosity. But this, at least, is comprehensible.....There is something (but it breathes not of dishonour) that parts me from the world I meet with....Do not mistake me. The freedom I venerate, will never offend you. The independence I feel and practise, will never shock even the gentlest of thoughts like yours. I always supplicate assistance to enable me to do my duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call me, and, humbly trusting in that mercy which endureth forever, I cheerfully look for the things which are to come...³⁴

By thus obliquely referring to her gender, she made it clear that her honour and respectability were compatible with it - indeed, honor itself was a chivalrous discourse related to gentry masculinity.

Perhaps one of the reasons why she was able to continue with her scholarship, despite the potential risk to her social standing, is,

³¹AL, Halifax, to Isabella Norcliffe, York, 26 November 1810. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 40.

³²Eliza Raine, Sulton Hall, York, to AL, Langton, 3 December 1813, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/81.

³³AL, Paris, to Miss Pickford, Marseille, 17 January 1830, CDA, SH:7/ML/387.

³⁴AL, Shibden, to Sibella Maclean, Coll, 21 June 1824. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 191.

first, because she carefully avoided the temptation to publish anything, and secondly because she had been perceived as a gender "oddity" frequently throughout her life. She had become accustomed to a running gender commentary, and had discovered a means whereby she was able to do more or less what she wanted to do in the way of scholarship and travel, and yet maintain her respectable social connections. She was eccentric, extraordinary, even odd, but an exception, and quite respectable.

Muriel Green makes the comment that Anne was sent to the school in Ripon when she was seven "because her parents found her an unmanageable tomboy."³⁵ Phyllis Ramsden comments in a similar vein that "she must at a very early age have shown the exceptional physical energy and force of character which were her chief personal characteristics in later life, for by her own admissions her mother found her such an incorrigible tomboy that she was sent away to school."³⁶ During a conversation years later, a neighbor said that she found Anne "very odd & asked if it was owing to education. I said no, I had not begun the sort of education she meant until my native character was sufficiently developed...Was always talking to the girls instead of attending my book. Talked a little of my being whipped everyday at Ripon,"³⁷ apparently an attempt to vitiate the "force of her character."

Both the perceptions of others and her own perception of herself were that she had "masculine" characteristics. In 1808 (when she was 17) an anonymous gentleman sent her a Valentine which read:

³⁵Green, Miss Lister, 7.

³⁶Phyllis Ramsden, "Anne Lister's Journal: 1817-1840," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1970), 3.

³⁷AL Journal 10 March 1819. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 83.

All hail! thou beauteous charming fair
 Whose great designs thy noble mind declare
 Permit a poet male in humble lays
 To sing to thee an amazonian praise
 With thy great Drum*
 oh! lead thy troops to war
 And let its dreadful sound be heard afar
 Thy needle, distaff, puddings and thy pies
 Thy much liked cheesecakes and thy curds despise
 Let nobler objects emulate thy mind
 By grammar rules and classic laws refin'd
 Let great Maonedes with sounding lyre
 Or softer Virgil all thy thoughts inspire
 In thy charm'd soul let fam'd Anacreon sing
 Or Roman Horace touch the lyric string
 With these acquirements thou wilt lovers gain
 And future ages shall immortalize thy name - Eugenio.
 (*Alluding to my beating the Drum which you will recollect that I
 sometimes used to do) ³⁸

An entry in her journal for 1809 reveals that "it was Anne Lister's custom to sleep with 'pistols loadened with ball' under her pillow, and a sword. On June 20th of this same year she had her 'first lessons in ye broad sword exercise' from a soldier who had dined with the family, and a few days later she wrote that 'John and I got each of us a wooden sword from our neighbor ye joiner.' "³⁹ This sort of activity was quite in line with a construction of "masculinity" within the landed gentry, since the representations of such "masculinity" all around her were strongly imbued with military imagery. Her father and brother were both military men, and the great pride of the Lister family, General Fawcett, had married one of her great-aunts. The sense of superiority conferred by a "masculine" component in her identity was offset by the fact that she was still a woman, and could not pursue those military careers to which her father and brothers were committed.

Her gender-bending behavior sometimes caused alarm for her on the part of her friends and lovers. The exact context of the following early extract is unknown, but apparently Anne's first lover,

³⁸AL, Halifax, to Eliza Raine at William Duffin's, Micklegate, York, 21 February 1808, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/8.

³⁹Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 12-13.

Eliza Raine, had written to her in some alarm about some threatening comments made about Anne in York society. Obviously some of her gender characteristics had led another young woman to suggest that Lister ought to be committed to an insane asylum. Anne brushed it all off with bravado and good-humour:

...As Mrs. R. Swann thinks I so much want a polish I hope she will be good enough to assist me in attaining it. Should Miss Salmond or any other find the good order of my brain damaged the asylum will be most opportunely near.....I promise neither to alarm you with swords or pistols or Orpheus like to draw away the very house with music. No flutes, no fifes, no drums shall disturb you on my account, no neighborhood shall be kept in awe by my skirmishing, were I never so much inclined to it. I positively durst not attempt what would put me in such imminent dread and danger of Miss Salmond and the asylum. In truth Eliza rather than frighten me with all this you ought to encourage me in time least continually increasing terror steal the few remaining wits I have. As for Miss Salmond I shall be panick struck as soon as she appears in sight. I shall shiver and shake like a paralytic, I shall creep as close to Miss Marsh as ever I can, hoping that she will at least do her best to save and protect me but goodbye or my terror of Miss Salmond will make me too late for the post."⁴⁰

Playing the flute was at that time constructed as an exclusively male activity, and doing it therefore contributed to the construction of a masculine gender.

Anne's perceived gender characteristics did not vary much throughout her life. In 1818 she wrote, "The people generally remark, as I pass along, how much I am like a man. I think they did it more than usual this evening. At the top of Cunnery Lane, as I went, three men said, as usual, 'That's a man' & one axed [sic] 'Does your cock stand' I know not how it is but I feel low this evening...."⁴¹ In 1824 she recorded that Mrs. Barlow ".....said I astonished Mme. Galvani at first, who once or twice said to the Mackenzies she thought I was a man and the Macks. too had wondered. Mrs. Barlow herself had thought at first I wished to imitate the manners of a gentleman

⁴⁰AL, Halifax, to Eliza Raine, York, 19 November 1809. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 87.

⁴¹AL Journal 28 June 1818. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 48-49.

but now she knows me better, it was not put on..."⁴² In 1826 "[Mme. Galvani]....Gave a good imitation of me, saying both she and Mariana were '*plus femme que moi*' [more womanly than me]. I have the figure and nature of a man. Have not beauty but agreeable features tho' not those of a woman. I joked, pretended to be shocked...."

While traveling through Malton in 1829 "....the people stared at my greatcoat<that taking me for a man annoyed me a little....>"⁴³

Yet there is no evidence that she was either a hermaphrodite⁴⁴ or that she cross-dressed, although she did, when 18, buy a pair of gentlemen's braces for 2/6 ⁴⁵ - but these she wore under her dressing-gown, petticoat or pelisse. In fact, she had no desire to have been brought up as a male: "....It would not have done at all," she wrote, "...I should have been shut out from ladies' society..."⁴⁶ In Chapter Six, on Gender and Sexuality, I will examine the meanings which Anne Lister gave to her masculinity.

Obviously Anne Lister had physical features, probably facial, which her time and culture associated with maleness. It is more than likely that in every culture and time some women are born with physical characteristics associated with the other sex; in some cultures it may be that these characteristics are also associated with women. These characteristics are often but not always associated with same-sex desire or compatibility. Gender and sexual practice are not necessarily causally related. The meanings women associate with their gender, and their sexual desire, are informed by the class, culture and language which surrounds them from birth. Anne Lister confronted and transformed these meanings to suit her own needs.

⁴²AL Journal 26 October 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 37.

⁴³AL Journal 10 February 1829.

⁴⁴"No exterior formation accounted for it," as she told Mrs. Barlow, AL Journal 13 November, 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 49.

⁴⁵AL Journal 2 April 1817. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 1. Records buying them in 1809.

⁴⁶AL Journal 25 October 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 36.

4. Sexuality and Female Networks to 1830

In this section I will argue that Anne Lister self-consciously analyzed her own sexuality, and her subjective identity was partially formed by this. Many of the women in her immediate circle of friends were aware of her same-sex desire. Because she was aware of the need for secrecy about it, however, she consciously used the concept of romantic friendship as a way to mask erotic components. Loving and long-term bonds between these women were formed despite the landed-class culture which depended for its very survival upon compulsory heterosexuality. Lillian Faderman's lesbian communities in the late twentieth-century include (among other things) elements of highly gendered eroticism, nonmonogamy, class-related difficulties, racism, the threat of institutionalization and (later) a political feminism.⁴⁷ The Anne Lister material demonstrates all these except the latter. Because the female networks within which she moved dealt with issues of race, institutionalization, class and nonmonogamy, I will further argue that these networks represented a rudimentary form of lesbian community.

⁴⁷Lillian Faderman, Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers, *passim*.

4. a. Identity, desire and sexual practice

At least three sources indicate that Anne Lister's sense of her own identity was based partially on her sexual desires and practices: first, as already mentioned, the extracts from classical and historical works which indicate that among other topics of interest, she took notes (in code) whenever she came across a reference to female homosexuality. Secondly, at least two visits which she made indicate that some sense of lesbian identity was in formation: the first was to the Ladies of Llangollen, whom she clearly suspected of more than platonic attachment,⁴⁸ and the other was made with a lover to the prison cell of Marie Antoinette, whom she knew also had female lovers.⁴⁹ Thirdly, her self-conscious analysis of her same-sex desire is clear in a number of diary passages.

In one fragment from August 1816, when she was 25, she recorded a conversation with her lover Mariana's sister, Anne Belcombe:

<<Anne sat by my bed side till 2. I talked about the feelings to which she gave rise lamented my fate said I should never marry could not like men ought not to like women at the same time apologizing for my inclination that way by divers arguments made out a pitiful story al[t]ogether & roused poor Anne's sympathy to tears...>>⁵⁰

⁴⁸AL Journal 3 August 1822. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 210. After speaking at length with Miss Ponsonby, she commented that she "could not help thinking" that the relationship with Lady Eleanor Butler was surely "not platonic."

⁴⁹AL Journal 14 October 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 31. She discussed with Mrs. Barlow the fact that Marie Antoinette was accused of "being too fond of women," and Anne prevaricated, saying she "could not understand or believe it," though she admitted having heard the charge. After their relationship had developed, she and Mrs. Barlow visited the "dark, damp cells" where the queen had been incarcerated pending her execution. AL Journal 14 March 1825. Quoted in *ibid.*, 83.

⁵⁰AL Journal 15 August 1816, CDA, SH:7/ML/E/26 + M.

The next day she apparently regretted being so open about her self and in a move almost purposely devised to either create confusion or back track from fear she wrote:

<<...I contradicted all I said last night. Argued upon the absurdity & impossibility of it & wondered how she could be such a gull as to believe it. She said she really had been very sorry for me & she thought I hardly behaved well to make such a fool of her I begged pardon &c. &c....>>⁵¹

Anne was very aware of her desire for other women, and apparently thought that this could mark her out as an object of sympathy, since she "ought not" to like women in the way that she did. In a detailed conversation with Miss Pickford, she lied about her own sexual practice in order to protect Mariana after the other woman had let her into "her secret." She wondered, however, if there were "more Miss Pickfords in the world than I have ever before thought of?"⁵² She obviously extended the notion of identity based on sexual practice to an unknown larger group of women. She had thought about her identity and had things fairly sorted out by 1824, when in a conversation with Mrs. Maria Barlow she

got on the subject of Saffic [sic] regard. [I] said there was artifice in it. It was very different from mine & would be no pleasure to me. I liked to have those I loved near me as possible.....⁵³

There are at least two possible interpretations of this passage: one is that her understanding of "Saffic regard" was informed by late eighteenth-century French notions of an aesthetic but not physical passion. She differentiated her own feelings by saying that she wanted those she loved "as near [her] as possible." Alternatively, this passage could be interpreted as though her understanding of "saffic

⁵¹AL Journal 16 August 1816.

⁵²AL Journal 5 August 1823. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 273.

⁵³AL Journal 13 November 1824. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 49.

regard" was that women who were saphists would, like Marie Antoinette, also have male lovers, and would not live with the women who were their sexual partners.⁵⁴ When she says she wants those she loves as close as possible, and that she is not a saphist, she perhaps means that she is exclusively a lover of women, and that she wants a life-companion who lives with her. Either interpretation is viable.

That some of her immediate circle were also aware of Anne's sexuality is indicated in a letter from Miss Marsh to Anne dated August 31, 1816, in which she details a conversation she has had with her sister. In it there appears to be evidence of incipient homophobia:

.....many many hints were given... about your Want of Sincerity to me - ... she had told you I said I thought you an unfit Person to have young People with you, I asked her how She could say so, & she answered She did not know but She thought I said so; I coolly said I did hear that among a hundred other things which were all forgot by me & that I bore no Malice to any one - She said I should find you out in time & that there was another World when all things would come to Light - ... she said she had often been disgusted in seeing how fond we were of each other....⁵⁵

Anne replied to this threat in her usual cool, diplomatic, give-away-nothing manner:

How far she may have been "often disgusted in seeing how fond we were of each other" (by the way how often has she seen us together under these fondling circumstances [?]) she herself is the best judge....⁵⁶

Anne Lister was quite careful in her correspondence, aware of what in her judgement ought to be saved and what ought to be burned. One 1825 letter from Mariana, she felt, "ought not be seen,"

⁵⁴This latter interpretation seems more probable in the light of Emma Donoghue's work on the eighteenth-century uses of the word in Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801 (London: Scarlet Press, 1993), 253-268.

⁵⁵Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 31 August 1816, CDA, SH: 7/ML/74. Miss Marsh later married Mr. Duffin after the death of his first wife.

⁵⁶AL, Shibden, to Miss Marsh, York, 10 September 1816. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 94.

because of some ambiguities that might be "turned against us. Yet there is nothing, I think, I could not manage to explain away to warm friendship if I had the letter before me and was obliged to defend myself."⁵⁷ She thought it was possible, in other words, to hide even the longest and most obvious of her sexual liaisons under the guise of "warm friendship" should it have proved necessary. In other words, she knew that the concept of romantic friendship could be used to mask the sexual aspects of their relationship, and could use that discourse to suit her own purposes.

⁵⁷AL Journal 3 November 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 138-139.

4. b. Friends and Lovers: Lister's Female Networks

As I examined the Anne Lister papers it became quite apparent that she lived within the context of an extensive and complex female community. The women with whom Anne Lister interacted seemed to all know each other and some correspondence took place between many of them. [See "Anne Lister's Female Networks," Figure 14.]

Isabella Norcliffe, for example, wrote to Mariana Belcombe, Mariana to Miss Marsh, and all three to Anne. Both Isabella and Miss Marsh mentioned Eliza Raine in their letters. Isabella and Eliza visited each other independently. In 1810 Anne and Isabella Norcliffe were engaged in an intense exchange of letters, though exactly when they became lovers is as yet uncertain; they were still being sexual in 1826.⁵⁸ Isabella knew Mariana Belcombe in 1810, and was apparently quite taken with her.⁵⁹ In one early letter to her brother Samuel, Anne referred to Mariana as "Isabella's most intimate friend."⁶⁰ Of this group, it is certain that Anne Lister was lovers with Eliza Raine, Mariana Belcombe and Isabella Norcliffe; that Isabella at one time was very close to Mariana and at least once kissed Eliza; that Isabella spoke openly about hoping to spend the rest of her life with Anne, and that Miss Marsh was acutely aware of the intensity of Anne's relationships with these women. Miss Marsh discussed Anne with both Isabella and Mariana. I surmise that Miss Marsh knew the relationships were of a sexual nature, though I have not yet found direct statements of hers to this effect.

⁵⁸AL Journal 14 February 1826. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 159.

⁵⁹SH:7/ML/27-35, 37-39: Letters covering the time period July 21, 1810-December 25, 1810.

⁶⁰AL, Bath, to Samuel Lister, Fermoy, Ireland, February 1813. Quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 66.

In the cases of Frances Pickford and Isabella Norcliffe, Anne was acquainted with at least two other "masculine" women who openly spoke to her of sexual relationships with other women.⁶¹ She and Miss Pickford corresponded for some years, with Miss Pickford sometimes making the passing reference to a Miss so-and-so, who was travelling with her.

It was through the Norcliffes that she was introduced to Sibella Maclean, and through her relationship with Miss Maclean that she was introduced to Lady Stuart and Parisian embassy society.

Because the themes of racism, nonmonogamy and institutionalization also appear in twentieth-century lesbian history, I would like to briefly explore these as they appeared in Lister's early nineteenth-century community. The best way to do this is to look more closely at Anne's relationship with her first lover, a Black woman named Eliza Raine. Eliza Raine's mother was an East Indian, her father an English army surgeon who brought her back to York and supported her in her relatively elite education and introduction to gentry society. Lister met Eliza Raine in 1804 when she shared a room with her at the Manor House School in York.⁶² This was a momentous event in her life, and the ensuing ramifications, complications and difficulties affected her for many years afterwards. It was their separation in 1806, when Anne was 15, which motivated her to begin writing a journal in the first place.⁶³ Initially

⁶¹AL Journal 5 August 1823. Quoted in Whitbread, I Know My Own Heart, 273. AL Journal 12 September 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 127.

⁶²CDA, SH:7/ML/13: List of girls at Manor School, York, in the Xmas half year of 1805. See also CDA, CN:103/2. Among other documents in this collection of Walker papers is a copy of Eliza Raine's father's will, dated 1799.

⁶³At least three earlier Anne Lister researchers thought that the 1806-1810 and 1816 journal volumes were lost. They are indeed fragmentary and incomplete. According to Halifax archivist Dr. Alan Betteridge, those fragments which do exist were apparently rediscovered during a re-organization of the Shibden Hall muniments in the 1970s.

it consisted primarily of one line entries. A small sample should suffice to give an idea of the bulk of its early contents:

Monday August 11th [1806] Eliza left us. Had a letter from her on Wednesday evening - Wrote to her on Thursday 14th Wrote to her again on Sunday 17th put into the Post Office at Leeds on the Monday following that Evening the 18th had a parcel from her Music Letter & Lavender - had a Letter Wednesday August 20th. Answered on the 21st. Sunday 24th - wrote to ER put into the Post on Monday. Wednesday 27th, had a Letter from her in answer. Friday 28th Rec'd a parcel from ER....⁶⁴

By 1808 the diary had become more complex, but she still faithfully recorded each exchange of letters with Eliza Raine. In October of 1808 Eliza Raine visited Anne in Halifax. Anne uses the Latin word "Felix" to indicate that they were by that time being sexual together. In 1832 she wrote in retrospect that her relationship with Eliza Raine had begun when they were both 13 or 14, and that though neither of them were sexually aware, they discovered sexual activity in this, their first relationship.⁶⁵ The intensity of Eliza and Anne's relationship apparently continued, so far as I can tell, from about 1804 to 1812. Both Eliza and Anne were keeping diaries in 1809, and both were using the same code to record things both intensely personal and things banal. When Eliza visited Shibden Hall in August 1809, she kept of record of their relationship in her own diary.

[Diary of Eliza Raine]

August: 15. [1809] A party drank tea here. 16. <<?L[ister] and I had a difference which happily was made up before the conclusion of the day but left me exceedingly ill.>> 17. <<My husband came to me and finally a happy reunion was accomplished.>> August 22. Wednesday. Dined spent ye whole day at Mifs Listers. <<The night precious.>> ⁶⁶

Their commitment to each other existed within the context not only of nonmonogamy within the female networks of which they were a

⁶⁴AL Journal 1806, CDA, SH: 7/ML/E/26 + M.

⁶⁵AL Journal 20 October 1832.

⁶⁶Journal of Eliza Raine, 1809, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/14.

part, but also within the context of compulsory heterosexuality. The correspondence is rife with advice from somebody for somebody else to get married.

On June 5, 1811, Eliza, staying at Shibden Hall, wrote to Anne in York:

.....A fortnight ago young Thompson of Leeds called & drank tea with me unasked, his visits are rather too frequent, a young woman in my unprotected situation is improvident in admitting such conduct, therefore I have ordered him never more to be admitted - Your Mother who sadly wants me to be married called me a prude, but finding many approve my determination & on reflection agreeing to its reasonableness herself she has changed her tone and become my votary... <<My darling husband will you stay?dear object of my love & best darling of all my...>>[illegible]⁶⁷

The following summer, in June 1812, it became clear that Eliza had yet another suitor in the person of a Captain Alexander. At first she put him off by insisting that she had a "pre-engagement" of her heart. He repeatedly insisted on knowing who it was, and she eventually confessed that it was Anne Lister. He was apparently relieved, and mockingly made comments about his "dreaded rival" in one letter to Anne. Eliza meanwhile appears to have conceived of a real affection for another young officer named Montagu. She confessed to Anne that she really was "in love" with him. The passage from this letter is a notable one:

....It is very odd, I am always wanting to write to you & yet when I get my pen I don't know what to say - Once! How different was it! Now I feel afraid of appearing a fool by being natural; but if not to you I speak the undisguised feeling of my heart, to whom then shall I do it?... My heart says that if I ever marry, Montagu must be my husband; for I know that he doats on you, that you approve him & I have heard you say, 'You would be fortunate indeed Eliza if you married Mr Montagu - Well, teach me if you think my regard founded upon an empty foundation, teach me to root up this prepossession; if you would have me never marry tell me so - & I obey - I can say no more - than that Mr. M. is going soon to Sea & I perhaps may never see him again....⁶⁸

⁶⁷Eliza Raine, Shibden, to AL, York, 5 June 1811, CDA, SH: 7/ML/A/30.

⁶⁸Eliza Raine, Halifax, to AL, York, 5 July 1812, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/42.

In the event Eliza married neither Captain Alexander nor Mr Montagu. The following month Eliza expressed undying affection for Anne again:

In this day, month, & hour I first saw you - judge that in such a reflection how many past scenes of my life rise to swell the pleasures of memory!....What says my Welly? for affections & our long friendship tell me that our fates are ever inseparable; & that in the detail of the one we include much if not all of the other's - Eight years then I have been blessed with, & invariably happy in a friend - & Time seems only to swell the tide of our affections & our joys - Thus let it ever unvarying, flow with our lives...⁶⁹

Anne's feelings for Eliza, however, began to cool in 1812. Soon after, or in the midst, of the Captain Alexander events, Anne fell in love with Mariana Belcombe.⁷⁰ The two women would be intensely involved for many years. The effect on Eliza was devastating. In a letter to Anne the following year, 1813, when Anne was 22, Eliza wrote:

Of the instability of your character of which you so complain that you are complained of, I have ceased to believe, tho' you know that I once yielded my credence to the charge, & if your own conscience that infallible tribunal acquits you, you may not only not care for the injustice of mankind but be happy....The lovely Mariana will be happy to be so closely enjoying your friendship & conversation - she seems most amiable & none can wonder at your predilection for her....On Wednesday I dined at the Belcombe's....⁷¹

Eliza sounds quite well in this letter, but the following summer, in 1814, she began to have serious problems of some kind. The earliest indication that I have seen so far comes in a letter from Miss Marsh to Anne in August, 1814. She says Eliza was just recovering "from a dangerous illness." She gives a long summary of Miss Raine's behavior in the previous three weeks, and says she never intends to speak to her again, as Miss Raine has been extremely rude to her.

⁶⁹Eliza Raine, Halifax, to AL, York, 2 August 1812, SH:7/ML/A/45

⁷⁰CDA, RAM: 52.

⁷¹Eliza Raine, York, to AL, Langton, October 1813, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/80.

....we were upon barely civil terms on Saturday [-] on Saturday Mrs. C. came to ask me to ride with her to Acomb to call upon Mrs. Grere - Eliza was in her Room weeping (which generally took up many hours in the Day)...⁷²

Eliza and Miss Marsh were staying with Mr. and Mrs. Duffin in Red House, York. (See Figure 15, "Mrs. Duffin's Dining Room.") Eliza was left out of some social visiting and became upset, apparently believing it to be a deliberate slight. She was rude to Mr. Duffin, who seemed to be in turn rude to her. She apparently also began expressing her dislike of Anne Lister herself. She left the Duffins and found other lodging in York:

...No one sees her, what a miserable wretch she must be... She desires nothing from you to whom she has & does [behave] with the [blackest] Ingratitude - My Lady {Crawford} has taken no notice of her nor invited her all summer [this] I think has [vexed?] her & made the black Blood to boil however I have got forever quit of the Rubbish even to speak to⁷³

The following extract gives some further clues as to what was happening to Eliza Raine. Her expressions of sadness, of jealousy, or of any behavior not in keeping with that expected from a respectable young lady, were attributed to her race rather than to nonmonogamy, which was there but concealed. Marsh writes:

.....Miss Raine is still about I shall not be surprised to find she quits York, for ever which I think would be a wise act - for she will not long have many friends there or perhaps anywhere - for kindness seems to make her hate People or why that inveterate Dislike to the Belcombes which she was constantly shewing whilst here - I gave her some good Lectures upon it What can all this be but Derangement or the Waste of a Heart, or if she has one, it is a black one. She has never been herself since She lost your Intimacy & Friendship - I have often heard of Pearls [been] thrown before Swine here it is fully [justified?]. You are a good Christian to be interested about her now. I admire it in you - tho' I do not feel the least inclined to follow your Example - I have done with her & all the black Progeny for ever - being now quite of my former opinion that where black Blood is there can be nothing amiable -.....I congratulate you that you are so soon to have that dear Girl Mariana - in her Society you will feel completely happy, wanting nothing.....⁷⁴

⁷²Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 31 August 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/58.

⁷³Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 31 August 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/58.

⁷⁴Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 24 September 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/59.

Lady Crawford, with whom Eliza had lived for a while, had for some unknown reason conceived of a great dislike for both Anne and Eliza, possibly because she knew they were lovers. Miss Marsh told Anne that Lady Crawford

...was astonished when Mr. D[uffin]. told her of Miss R[aine]'s Behavior to you, as she looked upon you as the Golden Calf set out by Miss R[aine] to worship. She declined having anything to do with Miss R[aine] unless she makes an apology & was shocked at all her strange Conduct to Mr. D[uffin] & her sister.⁷⁵

At some point between October 28, 1814 and December 7, 1814, Eliza Raine was committed to an insane asylum, ostensibly under the care of Dr. Belcombe, Mariana Belcombe's father. Miss Marsh wrote to Anne again, describing Eliza at the institution:

Mr. Mather forbid her the use a Pen & Ink not more than half an hour in the Day, for he very properly thought She strained her Faculties by writing so very much - such strange wild incoherent Letters to Mrs. B[elcombe] - 2 & 3 a Day - now She has taken to Sketching & has Done many little things - of the melancholy kind - all wretchedly wild except one which she calls Mariana's Tomb, & it is tolerably executed - poor Soul too well does this direful Malady account for all her strange Conduct, nothing but Pity & Commiseration can be felt by any one...⁷⁶

With her half hour of writing allowed to her Eliza managed to send off a couple of apologetic letters to Anne:

I thank you for a kind and affectionate letter - I shall feel extremely pleased to hear from you soon an account of your health - its uninterrupted continuance I wish sincerely. Thro' the parental kindness of Mrs. & Dr. Belcombe I am progressively recovering my reason, & the enjoyment of a contented mind.... [Mrs. Belcombe added a note at the end:] 'Eliza has written to you very rationally but she is evidently Jealous of your attachment to Mariana.⁷⁷ Mr. Duffin went to see her this morning - but she was not in good humour - as she expresses a wish to hear from you again I would wish you to write to her in about a week - & as affectionately as you well can...Good Night my dear Welly....Mrs Belcombe⁷⁸

⁷⁵Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 28 October 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/63.

⁷⁶Miss Marsh, York, to AL, Shibden, 7 December 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/64.

⁷⁷Obviously a very irrational thing to be.

⁷⁸Eliza Raine, York, to AL, Shibden, 12 December 1814, CDA, SH:7/ML/A/92.

The last letter in the collection of Eliza Raine's letters to Anne reads in part as follows:

.....will you forgive all I may have said of you in the moments of my derangement - to my dear friends Dr. & Mrs. Belcombe I am indebted for the care and kindness they have shown me since I have been at Clifton -From Dr. Belcombe you must learn how far I am or am not restored to my reason. He & Mr. Mather are in constant attendance at this Retreat - where every gentle, thoughtful method is adopted for the recovery of unfortunate patients of Lunacy. Write to me soon - assure me that you believe I will try to deserve your regard...."⁷⁹

Eliza Raine apparently remained confined to Dr. Belcombe's private clinic near Clifton Green for some years. In May 1815 there was some discussion of making her a Ward in Chancery, but her moments of lucidity were so frequent that Mr. Duffin was afraid they might not be able to convince the examiner of her derangement. In 1819 Mr. Duffin told Anne that Eliza was incurable. In 1820 Anne and Mr. Duffin argued, politely, about her will. At one point Lady Crawford temporarily removed her from the asylum, but Anne was still regularly visiting her there in the late 1830s. In 1832 she recorded in retrospect a discussion of this relationship with the woman with whom she was eventually to settle, Ann Walker. "<<Talked of my attachment to Eliza Raine that began at thirteen or fourteen each unknowing at first. That there was a break between us. My fault. I too giddy tho' not caring in reality for anyone else and the poor girl from that time began to be not quite herself.>>"⁸⁰ During one visit Anne made in the 1830s Eliza was apparently lying incoherent on the floor, mumbling, recognizing no one, and unable to clean up after herself.

⁷⁹Eliza Raine, Clifton Asylum, York, to AL, Shibden, n.d. [December 1814], CDA, SH:7/ML/A/93.

⁸⁰AL Journal 20 October 1832.



Figure 15.

"Mrs. Duffin's dining room York, early 1830s." Portrait by Mary Ellen Best. It is possible that the woman portrayed is Mrs. Duffin, who, twenty years before, Anne had known as 'Miss Marsh.' Anne Lister occasionally stayed with the Duffins when she was in York in her youth, and continued to correspond with them for many years. Eliza Raine also stayed with the Duffins before her committal to Dr. Belcombe's private clinic for the insane in Clifton. It is quite likely that Miss Marsh, later Mrs. Duffin, was aware of the sexual nature of Anne Lister's relationships with Isabella Norcliffe, Eliza Raine, and Mariana nee Belcombe Lawton. Source: Caroline Davidson, *The World of Mary Ellen Best* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985).



Figure 16.

"Dining Room at Langton, family at breakfast, c. 1832-1834." Portrait by Mary Ellen Best. The woman wearing the cap is the artist's grandmother, Ann Norcliffe, owner of Langton Hall. Mrs. Norcliffe was a long-time friend and correspondent of Anne Lister's. The man opposite her is her son and heir, Norcliffe Norcliffe, whom Anne Lister also knew, but who barely enters her record. The two women at the end of the table are Charlotte and Isabella Norcliffe, both life-long friends and confidants of Anne Lister. Anne Lister and Isabella Norcliffe were also lovers for a period of time. Anne Lister often dined in this dining room during her regular visits to the Norcliffes.

See also Figure 13., "Anne Lister's Female Networks, ca. 1806-1840."

Source: Caroline Davidson, *The World of Mary Ellen Best* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985).

Another important relationship in Anne's life was that with Isabella Norcliffe, one of the daughters of Anne and Norcliffe Norcliffe of Langton Hall, in the east Riding of Yorkshire. She and Isabella had been particularly close from about 1810, but their relationship continued, in various forms, with ups and downs, until Anne's death in 1840. Anne scolded Isabella about her lack of self-discipline, sleeping in late, drinking intemperately and taking snuff. Sometimes it seemed as if Isabella and Anne would finally end up living together, but this never occurred. Anne often went to visit at Langton Hall in the winter, where she socialized with Isabella and her sisters and any other young ladies who were also visiting. Isabella Norcliffe never married. Her manners were also sometimes seen as masculine, and she and Anne had at least three times quarreled over the same woman: in the case of Eliza Raine, Mariana Belcombe and Mary Vallance.

Yet the problems of nonmonogamy do not appear to be extreme in this early-nineteenth-century gentry setting. The ladies were all expected to be polite. If they were not able to be polite, their sanity was questioned. Indeed, highly polished manners seem to be the main method whereby they all continue interacting with each other, year after year, despite jealousies, intrigues and disruptions. The formal rules of etiquette continued to be observed. For example, when Anne and Isabella were in Bath in 1813, they both went to pay a visit to Eliza Raine (this was before her incarceration). One diary scrap shows that although Isabella lost her temper, "I.N. in a fury before tea...." she certainly regained her composure, "again, *pro forma*, before supper."⁸¹ In 1826, when Mariana accompanied Anne to pay a visit on Mrs. Barlow and was not only kept waiting longer

⁸¹AL, Bath, to Samuel Lister, Fermoy, Ireland, February, 1813 and AL Journal, March 1813. Quoted in Green, "A Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 66-67.

than expected, but was "overwhelmed with miserable reflections," she nonetheless "behaved beautifully." On another occasion of social visiting, Mariana sat with Mrs. Barlow's daughter Jane while Anne sat by Mrs. Barlow's bedside. The latter, she reported, "behaved very well." When the two women met again, Mrs. Barlow's "lips trembled" and "Mariana...nervous" but again, "all behaved very well."⁸²

Bad manners could not only involve a "loss of caste," but shut you out from social visiting in the future. As Leonore Davidoff writes, "The domesticating of public life via the dictates of Society was combined with control of individual behavior and face-to-face interaction through a rigidly applied code of personal behavior...."⁸³ We have seen this in operation when Eliza Raine "behaved badly" to Mr. Duffin, and thereafter no one went to visit her. A woman's entire social life, her sense of personal identity, her sense of self-worth, could be based upon the Society to which she had access through the elaborate visiting rituals (i.e., leaving cards, status used to determine who gets introduced to whom, special visiting times for certain purposes, etc.) used by the gentry and aristocracy at this time. "The upper classes, representing less than one per cent of the population, dominated social life in Society, and this was almost entirely controlled by women."⁸⁴ Mistakes could cut you off, even if temporarily, from wider human contact. Leonore Davidoff refers to this institutionalized etiquette as "one of the most effective instruments for social control ever devised."⁸⁵

In the female networks of which Anne Lister was a part, much could be said, but all that was said, even the most trenchant criticism

⁸²AL Journal, 5 September, 11 September and 3 October 1826. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 191, 195, 199.

⁸³Leonore Davidoff, The Best Circles: Society Etiquette and the Season (London: Croom Helm, 1973), 33-34.

⁸⁴Joan Perkin, Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England (London: Routledge, 1989), 311-312.

⁸⁵Davidoff, The Best Circles, 36.

or the most violent jealousies, had to be couched in terms of elaborate politeness. It was this social system which enabled Anne Lister for many years to carry on complex behavior patterns of nonmonogamy within the women's community without suffering open scandal.

Anne Lister's relationships with various women over the next few years of her life, from 1816-1830 and beyond, form a central theme of her life. Her relationship with Mariana Belcombe, however, became of paramount importance. In 1816 this daughter of a town doctor married a member of the Cheshire landed gentry, Charles Lawton. It seems that the Lawton family benefitted financially, while the Belcombes' social status was enhanced. Mariana's brother Stephen Belcombe, also a doctor, helped supply Charles Lawton with a £10,000 dowry, to be used to secure a £500 a year annuity for Mariana in the event of Charles' death.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, both Anne and Mariana for many years considered themselves married to each other; this was especially the case when they discovered in 1825 that Charles had still not broken her hymen.⁸⁷

Through her friendship with the Norcliffes she was introduced in 1820 to Sibella Maclean, the sister of the laird of the Isle of Coll in Argyllshire, Scotland. Her earnest courtship of Sibella did not apparently begin until about 1828, when they exchanged financial confidences in preparation for living together, a plan which never materialized.² It was through her relationship to Sibella, the aunt of Vere Hobart, that she became acquainted with Lady Stuart, mother of the British Ambassador to Paris, and also Vere Hobart's

⁸⁶CDA, SH:7/ML/72: 6 March 1816. Bond between Charles B. and William Lawton, and Edward Darvall and H.S. Belcombe, to secure an annuity for Mariana Belcombe in the event of her marrying Charles B. Lawton and surviving him.

⁸⁷AL Journal, 4 September 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 125.

⁸⁸CDA, RAM: 62. Chronology Vol. 10, Oct. 15, 1826 to May 31, 1828. Any reader of Jane Austen novels will know that an exchange of financial information was a common preliminary to marriage among the gentry and aristocracy.

aunt. Lister wanted to be lovers with Vere Hobart, but as discussed in Chapter Six, this relationship apparently never became genital.

Sometimes Lister's relationships became the topic of open discussion. Once when Charles Lawton was drunk he came home and told Mariana what was said about Anne, and Mariana passed this along: "....She told me how much had been said in York about my friendship for Miss Maclean. Mr. Lally had been visiting at Moreton last September & said he would as soon turn a man loose in his house as me. As for Miss Norcliffe, two Jacks would not suit together⁸⁹ & he did not blame there but Miss Maclean's was a last resource & therefore she took me....Mariana had turned it off gravely saying I had been brought up by my brothers. Had a masculine mind - more sense than most people & therefore people said these things...."⁹⁰

She often discussed Sibella Maclean with Lady Stuart when she visited at the embassy, and Sibella's failing health was a frequent topic in the letters she and Lady Stuart exchanged. Once she complained to Lady Stuart that Sibella was not considering living with her at Shibden Hall, but would only come on visits. "<<...She said after hearing of my engagement to M[ariana] that no one would come to me, but merely on a visit. No-one would like the prospect of being turned out...>>"⁹¹ This indicates that even in the highest aristocratic circles in which she moved there was a clear awareness of her preference for female companions; whether or not this also implied an awareness of the erotic element in these relationships remains uncertain. It is highly unlikely that she would impart information to Lady Stuart that would undermine her own social position. Knowledge of her engagement to Mariana, therefore, must

⁸⁹Both had gender characteristics associated with masculinity at that time.

⁹⁰AL Journal 12 September 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 127.

⁹¹AL Journal 15 June 1829.

have been acceptable and respectable at some level, if only in private conversation.

Indeed the frankness with which she discussed some of these matters with her aristocratic companions may seem astonishing to a post-Victorian middle-class culture. Listen, for example, to one conversation she had with Lady Caroline Duff Gordon in 1829:

<<She had been talking of our (Lady G & me) living together two years in Paris & what proportion I ought to pay. She would order all my dresses. I ought to have four gowns a year. She would take care of the salon. Have all nice. Would take the woman's part. I then talked of the misery it would be to me to be happy two years, & then left. Better not to taste of happiness at all than have it so limited. I said at dinner she would never meet with any lady whom she could live so happily as with me. She agreed, saying I was more like a man. She did not mean anything disagreeable, but that I took all things *en grand*. Felt more as a man would. I said there could be no rivalry between us. If she chose to flirt, I could feel no jealousy, etc. etc. I thought a person might be comfortable with me. Married women more pleasant than single. She would see that I should choose one who had been married...>>⁹²

It is intriguing that Lady Gordon offered as a matter of course to "take the woman's part," knowing, in some way, that the actions she performed in that role would be just that - performative. The power-politics of gender within Anne Lister's lesbian relationships will be a theme taken up in a later chapter, but it seems important to know that these patterns were already well developed. While Anne Lister argued that her gentlemanly manners and physique were "natural" and not "put on," she nevertheless learned from somewhere what constituted masculinity. Four examples of her gender actions dissenting from the constructed "feminine" should suffice as a background to this theme.

With Mrs. Barlow, she was what 1950s lesbians would have called a "stone butch." She recorded that "...In getting out of bed, she suddenly touching my queer [vulva], I started back. 'Ah,' said

⁹²AL Journal 28 September 1829.

she, 'that is because you are a *pucelle* [virgin]. I must undo that. I can give you relief. I must do to you as you do to me.' I liked not this & said she astonished me. She asked if I was angry. No, merely astonished.....Mariana would not make such a speech. This is womanizing me too much."⁹³ And again, "It struck me not to choose Mrs. Barlow. She does not satisfy me in several little things & the connection would be imprudent. Besides, she lets me see too much that she considers me too much as a woman. She talks to me about being unwell."⁹⁴ I have aired napkins before her. She feels me, etc. All which I like not. Mariana never seems to know or notice these things. She suits me better...."⁹⁵

She and Mariana seemed to have fairly open discussions about their gender arrangements. "...We had talked of the management my temper required. Mariana knew it well. It had its peculiarities but she did not fear....Talked of....my sensitiveness of anything that reminded me of my petticoats. Mariana behaved very well & I was satisfied....I do not, cannot doubt her affection.....We both of us better know ourselves & what we are about."⁹⁶

It is not only Mariana who "behaves well." In one draft letter to her in early 1830, Anne described the dress she had worn to a fashionable ball in Paris. Such descriptions were common among women at the time, when the colors of ribands, size of sleeves, and type of hair style were details exchanged with great enthusiasm. However, when Anne read over her letter to Mariana again, she

⁹³AL Journal 19 March 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 85.

⁹⁴Frequent reference to illness, doctors and health in the documents seems to indicate that ill-health was an expected and respectable part of the construction of femininity within the gentry and aristocracy at this time. For Mrs. Barlow to ask Anne about her health undermined Anne's gender position. Such a use of illness within female circles served many purposes; invalidism, for example, was always useful as a social excuse. In line with her own construction of masculinity, Anne rarely discusses her own health in her correspondence, though constantly harps on that of others.

⁹⁵AL Journal 31 March 1825. Quoted in Whitbread, No Priest But Love, 88.

⁹⁶AL Journal 25 May 1826. Quoted in *ibid.*, 173.

chose not to "<<send to her what I then wrote of my dress that day.
Too much *en femme* to be becoming from me to her>>...burnt what I
wrote on Friday."⁹⁷

⁹⁷AL Journal 18 February 1830.

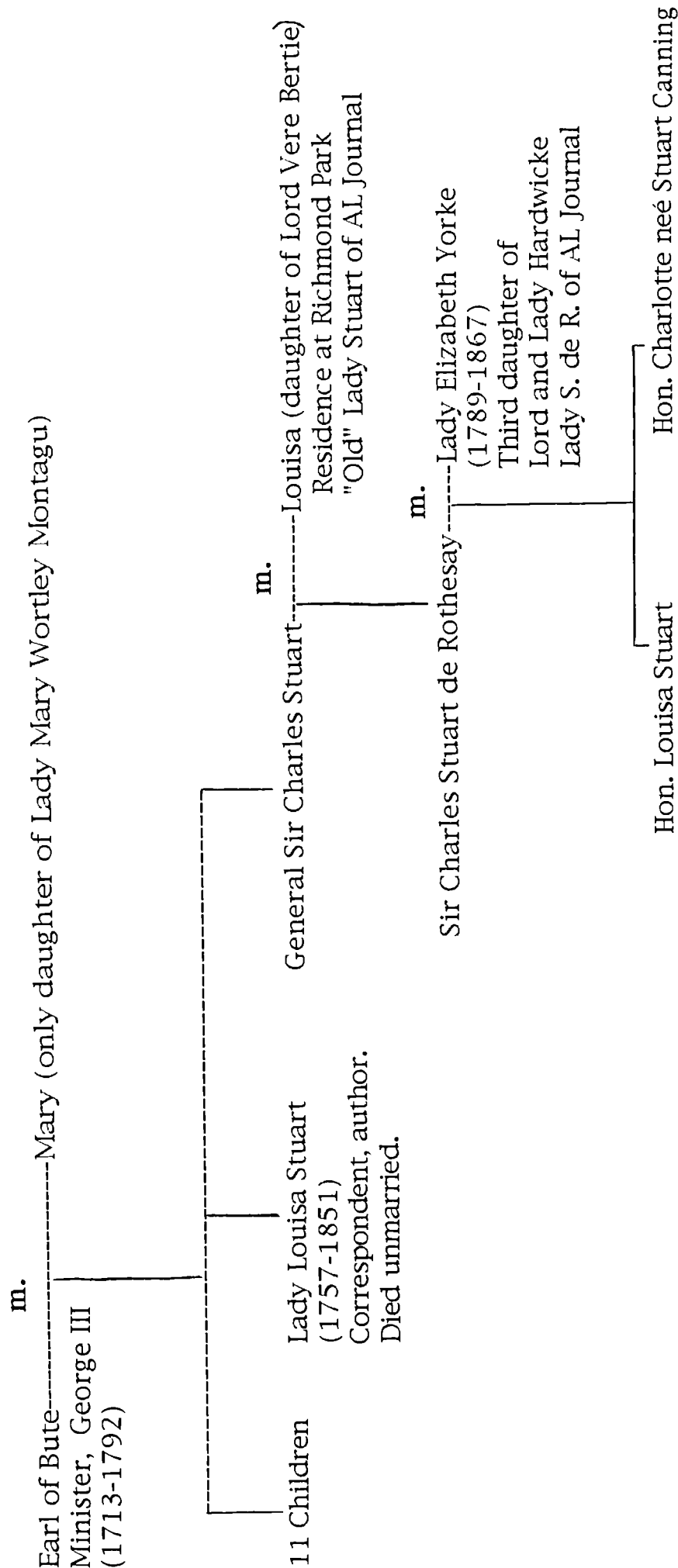


Figure 17. Partial Pedigree of Stuart Women Mentioned in AL Journal

Sources: Augustus Hare, ed., The Story of Two Noble Lives (London: George Allen, 1893); The Complete Peerage, Vol. XII, 409-410.

5. Manipulating Discourses: Social Respectability and Compulsory Heterosexuality

We are hardly surprised to find such attitudes in a butch lesbian who lived before the advent of mass feminism. It is only recently that we have begun to glimpse what women's relationships might be like without the constant mirror and context of heterosexual gender and commitment patterns. Joan Nestle's point in The Persistent Desire: A Butch-Femme Reader⁹⁸ that *sui generis* gender patterns can arise within lesbian communities and relationships without it necessarily implying heterosexual mirroring is well-taken. But the power and hierarchical implications of any gender difference must still be analyzed, and this will be explored in Chapter Six.

It is clear that one of the ways that men and classes retain their power is to foster, through gender and marriage patterns, the illusion of "fixity," of "timeless permanence in binary gender representation."⁹⁹ Things have always been this way, and always will. Much of the discourse related to class and gender is itself an attempt to create or prevent a sense of agency, that is, it is an attempt to create or prevent a sense that you can choose anything different. Between women, however, gender and commitment patterns are much more clearly in flux. It takes more obvious effort to fix gender and commitment patterns into concrete, as it were.

Just before the conversation where Lady Gordon told Anne that if they lived together she would "take the woman's part," Sibella Maclean had asked Anne if she had ever received a proposal of

⁹⁸Joan Nestle, ed., The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader (Boston: Alyson Publications, 1992).

⁹⁹Joan Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 43.

marriage. Anne told her she had had six offers in the course of her life. "<<In my mind I meant from Anne Belcombe & Louisa & Mrs. Milne, Miss Vallance, Mrs. Barlow & Madame de Rosny.>>"¹⁰⁰ By a slight dissimulation Anne was able to participate in the conversation on her own terms. Or, phrased in a more theoretical way, she exercised her agency and manipulated the discourse of compulsory heterosexuality to suit her own reality.

But of course lesbian marriage was not what Society thought of when it conferred status upon the married state. "The higher in rank, the older and the woman (among women, the married) were those to whom the newcomer was introduced."¹⁰¹ For women in Society, "...their 'career' line depended on using every personal attraction they could to reinforce what status they inherited through their family in order to manoeuvre a marriage and thus gain the first rung on the ladder of Society.....public attention in Society went to the married women and any real power to influence the social circle came rather late in the woman's life."¹⁰²

This is perhaps why towards the end of the 1820s, when she began to move in embassy circles, Anne Lister seriously contemplated "heterosexual" marriage: "<<...Then thinking. Made up my mind, if I could get an old earl, on my own terms, to marry him for rank, would arrange the matter with M. Have thought in this way several times since my last return home...>>"¹⁰³ And again in early 1830: "<<...Have thought often lately if I could get an old nobleman on my own terms (that is, never to attempt any particular connection together) I would for the sake of rank. And yet, would all this rank make me really happier? I have no name, nor rank, now. I should

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 1 April 1829.

¹⁰¹Davidoff, The Best Circles, 41-42.

¹⁰²Davidoff, The Best Circles, 93.

¹⁰³ AL Journal 14 December 1829.

like to have both. Well, but I might be happier in peace & quiet with M....>>"¹⁰⁴

Thus the institutionalized etiquette of Society not only served to prevent open sexual scandal, its rules of hierarchy tended to pressurize women towards formal heterosexuality. It was marriage, after all, that promised continuity for ancient and illustrious bloodlines. It was through marriage that landed property was passed on. The entire survival of the class depended upon it.

Yet married women among the gentry and aristocracy who had separate incomes (as an estimated 10% did at this time) "were the most liberated group of women in nineteenth-century England. These women could generally do as they pleased, and usually did...."¹⁰⁵

Sexual morality, for the non-evangelical among them, did not mean what it meant to other generations and perhaps other classes. Joan Perkin gives a classic example of this phenomenon in the person of Lady Londonderry, who was approximately of the same age cohort as Anne Lister (Londonderry was 35 in 1835), and who inhabited many of the same circles (her husband was the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg). After bearing a son and daughter to her husband, she had a dramatic love affair with the Tsar without anyone batting an eyelid:

....she took it as part of the marriage bargain that she would produce an heir or two for her husband before she 'played around.' Good breeding demanded that the outward conventions of marriage should not be violated, but few questions were asked about what went on below surface.....Anything openly shocking was regarded with horror - not on account of the immorality but of the publicity....¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴AL Journal 12 February 1830. It was a plan that never materialized.

¹⁰⁵Perkin, Women and Marriage, 74-76.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid*, 76, 82, 90.

Certainly women in the aristocracy and gentry of the early nineteenth century who were able to practice the techniques of public secrecy with artistic skill rarely suffered loss of caste or husband for sexual infidelities. Perkin gives numerous examples of this phenomenon. Anne Lister secretly practised nonmonogamy with various women with great skill, and thus avoided public scandal.

Within the context of upper-class female networks, Lister enjoyed a semblance of what we would today call lesbian community. Several discourses from heterosexuality were incorporated into her vision of how the world ought to be. There was, for example, a sexual double-standard which told Anne Lister's masculinized subjectivity that she was free to form as many sexual liaisons as she wished, but if feminized women did so they were no longer worthy of respect. That aspect will be fully discussed in Chapter Six. As we can see from the evidence presented in this chapter, Lister incorporated into her own sexual practice the idea that the masculine is never penetrated. She was also able to use for her own purposes the ideas common at her time which did not associate masculine women with same-sex practice; nor were women who had loving and affectionate relationships with other women necessarily (because of those attachments) assumed to have sex with other women.

She also transformed the discourse of compulsory heterosexuality, never married, and continued to be sexual with other women throughout her life. This practice informed her sense of her self as someone different, but someone who had an identity common to the Ladies of Llangollen, Marie Antoinette and however many other "Miss Pickfords" the world held.

Chapter Four will explore the material bases for her class status, as well as explore how she manipulated discourses specific to class.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Gender and Class: A Woman's Power Over Land and People in an Industrializing Age

There is this difference between play & trade - the one is illegal the other legal gambling - the legal blots our scutcheon, the other leaves it clear.

- Written inside Lister's book of expenses¹

At Leicester at 7.40. Bell Inn. Might be comfortable enough but nobody seems prepared for gentry gentlewomen....the chambermaid too slow for us to wait for towels...8.10 before we alighted at the Bull & Mouth Inn. Again no expectation of gentry. Some time before we could get room or anything....

-AL Journal 3 August 1835.

Then reading tonight's [London] paper till 9.20. Among the departures see my own, for my seat in Yorkshire.

-AL Journal 21 August 1835.

Annoyed. Said I would not have Mr. Husband or anybody else contradicting my orders.

-AL Journal 20 April 1837

This chapter will discuss Anne Lister's written experiences of power over her land, i.e., water, coal, stone and timber, as well as her experiences of power over people, i.e., tenants, employees and servants. It will be one of the aims of the chapter to illustrate not only the gendered context of class, but also the class context of gender. The gendered context of class includes the idea that power itself has traditionally been masculinized within the discourse of nineteenth century western civilization; for Anne Lister to have power over so much land and so many people reinforced her masculine identity and simultaneously bolstered her class identity. She used her class-based power to reinforce her masculine image,

¹SH:7/ML/AC/28: Expenses 25 December 1836-24 May 1837. Notebook begins with this quote, written in Anne Lister's hand, dated 8 January 1837.

and in turn used the latter to reinforce the former. It is clear that Anne Lister constructed an identity dependent upon both class and gender simultaneously, and that the meanings of these were associated with some material basis. This chapter will set out the material basis of Anne Lister's life. It is particularly interesting to note how once again Anne Lister moved and balanced herself between worlds: between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ways of doing business, between the 'landed' and the 'industrial,' between the 'public' and the 'private' and between the 'masculine' and 'feminine' - more than ever, perhaps, demonstrating the fluidity and instability of many of these terms.

It depended on the circumstances whether it was to Anne Lister's advantage to destabilize or stabilize gender and class discourses. Her journal reveals how she received certain discourses and transformed them or manipulated them to suit her own purposes. In some cases those discourses were contradictory. For example, the intelligent, active, entrepreneurial landowner was supposed to be knowledgeable about engineering and mathematics, but the fashionable woman was supposed to be leisured and not overtly educated. In gentry discourses, the land was supposed to be preserved and improved for future generations, no matter what the cost; in more entrepreneurial discourses, the masculine individual was supposed to make profit in the short-term, no matter what the cost to the land or the people on it. In the older discourses, each member of the estate community was involved in the others' business; it was an interdependent, albeit hierarchical community. Newer expectations involved the idea that each individual was free to make personal and moral decisions for themselves, without particular reference to the rest of the community.

On occasion, Anne Lister chose to emphasize either her masculine or more traditionally feminine activities.² In writing of her business dealings with men on the estate, she emphasized her mastery of necessary details of geology, mathematics, engineering and physics. In writing to her female friends, she emphasized her desire to be free of business in order to pursue the leisured life of the travelling upper-class woman. The destabilization of gender did not in and of itself, in this instance, destabilize specifically class paradigms, although these also appear as fluid within the context of the journal. She might choose to emphasize either the entrepreneurial or leisured aspects of her economic activities. Class and gender were categories around which her primary experiences of identity were organized, and it is difficult to say whether one took priority over the other. Her subjectivity interpreted as gendered experiences those someone else might have interpreted as only class-related. Indeed, to make a hierarchy of subject positions is a different thing from exploring the very important power implications of each. Certainly both would have been significantly different without the substantial material basis of her life, however. Had she not been the unmarried heiress of a landed estate, her class and gender identities would have looked and would have been experienced and recorded somewhat differently. "Class" in this context was both a phenomenon relating to material reality as well as an identity she herself helped to create by various means, not the least of which was the journal itself.³ Such an enormous written work could not have been created had it not been for her inherited

²Of which she evinced very few, and these are usually written about in code. This area of inquiry will be further expanded in Chapter Six.

³She was so preoccupied with estate concerns during this period that I believe the record she has left, detailed as it is, indicates only the outlines of what she was involved in, and this chapter, unfortunately, can only reveal a fraction of the fascinating detail in the journal.

land-base which gave her a more or less leisured income from rents. Her discourse had material support. This is often the case when one examines the reasons why some verbal and symbolic discourses survive and/or enter a more public, i.e., higher status, realm. Her material resources definitely enhanced her agency, that is, her ability to make a variety of choices in all areas of her life.

But her social status was not entirely dependent on experiences of wealth. As we have seen, her income was at the lowest end of what F.M.L. Thompson considers "gentry." Anne Lister was enormously conscious of class differences between herself, who by the late 1830s was perhaps able to generate an income of £2,000 a year, and carpet manufacturers like the Crossleys, who might perhaps have an income of £60,000 a year. In the record she has left, she appeared to be secure in the knowledge that her social status was superior to theirs. In all her business dealings she maintained a distance from the ordinary entrepreneur or tradesman; in her construction and understanding of things, to do business with a member of the gentry was quite a different thing from doing business with a tradesman.⁴ She consistently demonstrated her disapproval when her sister was found to be engaged to a man who had made his money from trade. She would not speak to him or acknowledge the engagement.⁵ When she found some eighteenth-century letters and cloth patterns relating to her tradesmen Lister ancestors, she burnt them all,⁶ as if destroying unwelcome evidence of unfavorable connections. In Anne Lister's universe it was familial antiquity and the land that gave rise to the most desired status, not trade and capital.

⁴AL Journal 21 October 1837.

⁵AL Journal 1 December 1834. This might also have been because of the threat to her own legacy plans which Marian's potential children posed; but in the journal she resists the marriage because of status considerations.

⁶AL Journal 2 April 1835.

"Class" was not a word Anne Lister used to describe social and economic hierarchies. She understood these things in terms of "rank" and "respectability." From about 1815 to 1830 she concentrated much of her energy on enhancing her status by associating with women on a higher rung of the ladder than she. This involved the transformation of class identity not so much on the basis of a changing relationship to material reality,⁷ but upon the basis of shifting female networks, and upon the basis of her experiences of these. During the 1830s she maintained these relationships, but focused more and more of her attention on increasing the income of the estate, the material base for her activity. However, in her letters to her women friends she continued to emphasize a class and gender identity based on economic nonchalance, leisure and travel; her journal however reflected day-to-day dealings with men on estate business, where she emphasized an identity based more or less on that of the economically anxious entrepreneurial squire.

It is not surprising to find elements both old and new in her ideas of land use and lease agreements. Nor is it surprising that she, as a landowner, was so intimately involved in the details of leasing coal, which has often been seen as an industrial product. There is abundant historical evidence to show that such involvement was the norm among the landowning classes when their estates also contained coal fields.⁸ Some of this evidence also indicates that other women had managed estates and negotiated coal leases: but I suspect that each time they did so, as in this instance, they moved in what was supposed to be the "other" sphere. When her agent told her competitor, Jeremiah Rawson, that Lister was going to mine her

⁷Although her relationship to the means of production did change when her uncle died and she inherited control of the estate, and she spent a good part of the decade 1830-1840 trying to increase her income.

⁸J.T. Ward, Land and Industry: The Landed Estate and the Industrial Revolution (Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1971).

own coal and had said "if other people can make coal pay, she has the same chance they have," Rawson responded with "'Oh!'....as if enlightened and dropt the subject."⁹ For a woman entering as completely as she did into such a business in the early nineteenth century, a consciousness of gender must have tagged at her heels, or those of the men around her, everywhere she went.

Because past generations had left their record of estate improvements for future members of the family, all of her business concerns were tinged with dynastic awareness.¹⁰ When she planted trees on the estate, she planted oaks and hollies in their thousands, with less regard to profit and loss than in almost any other area of activity.¹¹ The continuity of family was essential to her understanding of her class. She believed that the most ancient families in the area had the most right to political power and social status. If a family died out or lost their estate through profligacy, they lost both. Lister had the advantage of having a stable landed income from farmers' rents which allowed her to invest in riskier ventures such as steam engines and worsted mills. She knew the coal would run out in a matter of years, and invested in coal with a higher expectation of short-term profits at a higher percentage. She knew that income from cottages, trees and the soil itself had the potential to be there for generations, and expected a far smaller percentage return in those areas. If there is a difference between 'landed' and 'industrial' expectations, it is surely in the matter of these profit percentages, even if both kinds of investments were taking place on the same estate. According to F.M.L. Thompson,

⁹AL Journal 20 July 1837.

¹⁰For example, SH: 3/L/68/1 contains lists of trees and shrubs planted in the grounds at Shibden Hall in March 1765.

¹¹AL Journal 18 May 1832, 20 May 1832, 7 July 1832, 8 July 1832, 17 November 1832, 31 March 1835, 21 November 1832, 22 November 1832, 27 November 1832, 30 November 1832, 3 December 1832, 4 December 1832, 5 December 1832, 11 December 1832, 18 December 1832, 2-4 May 1837, 8 October 1837.

landowners expected only 1.5 to 4 per cent return on the investments made in improvements, and Anne Lister's expectation was more or less in line with this. Her expected return on other estate activities, such as coal mines and worsted mills, ranged between 6-10 per cent of initial investment, per annum. Stone and coal were non-renewable resources upon which she both hoped to make a profit within her life-time and make a contribution to the profitability of the estate for another generation or perhaps two. Other estate concerns, such as timber and hay, as well as building, wall and gate renovation, involved renewable resources and investments from which an even longer-term, but lower profit might be expected.

However preoccupied with business she was, when she wrote to Lady Cameron she emphasized her family seat and its antiquity, and distanced herself from business. "I could not help exclaiming to myself it will cost me £10,000 to make Shibden equal to what I might have for £200 a year, with a clean atmosphere and no din of trade! But here is my natural place, and that of fourteen generations before me,"¹² she wrote.

Lister's partner, Ann Walker, was increasingly distressed at what she saw as a huge financial drain, and about Anne Lister "having so much upon [her] hands. Did not suit her [Ann Walker]. Had always said she would not marry a man in trade. Could not bear the anxiety. In tears. I tried to convince her all would go well at last."¹³ Anne Lister told Mariana that she had "many jobs in hand, draining, walling, wood-felling, planting, drift-driving,¹⁴ etc. I have

¹²AL Journal 3 November 1835.

¹³AL Journal 29 September 1837.

¹⁴A drift was a tunnel or channel used primarily for draining water away from the main coal mine, though coal could also be extracted during the digging of the drift. They were often lined with stone to keep the roof from falling in and help the water flow.

had from 12 to 20 workmen employed ever since my return."¹⁵ It was "difficult to say" what she was so busy about, she wrote, "I am driving drifts for water, sinking & repairing coal pits, [&] making a farm yard at home..."¹⁶ In a long letter to Lady Harriet de Hageman she said "I have been building a very large Inn, not yet finished, am thoroughly repairing Shibden & opening an extensive colliery, besides numerous smaller jobs. My hands are far too full."¹⁷ Ann Walker continued to be worried and depressed because Anne Lister had "<<so many concerns.>>"¹⁸ Indeed, Anne Lister consistently laid out more money than she expected, and by the end of 1836 she was cast around (successfully) for someone from whom she could borrow £8000 and even £15,000.¹⁹ However, as David Cannadine points out, aristocratic (and perhaps gentry) indebtedness was characteristic of the nineteenth century.²⁰

When she and Ann Walker began living together at Shibden, many of their mutual estate operations were merged under Anne Lister's charge. The Walker coal pit was one of Lister's major interests during this period. Much of Ann Walker's estate business fell to Anne Lister, but then much of Ann Walker's capital helped Lister improve the Shibden Hall estate. She often wrote or helped to write notes for Walker on subjects related to the latter's estate. When a tenant was in arrears, she suggested harsher measures and these suggestions were often taken up by Walker.²¹ Both women shared the same steward, Samuel Washington, and when he came to make recommendations about a tenant for Ann Walker, Anne Lister

¹⁵AL Journal 4 March 1835.

¹⁶AL Journal 18 October 1835.

¹⁷AL Journal 1 February 1837.

¹⁸AL Journal 27 November 1835.

¹⁹AL Journal 31 December 1836, 1 January 1837.

²⁰David Cannadine, Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain (New Haven: Yale University Press), 37.

²¹AL Journal 16-17 December 1834, 20-21 December 1834.

sometimes wrote it down in her journal.²² Anne Lister sometimes went with Walker to help her oversee the men who were planting or working at Cliff Hill.²³ They both set out holes, for instance, one day when thorns were to be planted at Cliff Hill.²⁴

When the issue of the division of the two Walker sisters' inheritance and property came up, Anne Lister had plenty of advice for her partner.²⁵ Walker's share of the moiety was £1187.10.0. "She agreed before Mr. Parker to let me have the whole at 4 p.c., a note of hand from me to her to be made out by him for £1000 at 4 p.c. and the rest to be settled between ourselves."²⁶ In other words, Ann Walker was helping to capitalize coal, mill building and other projects on the Shibden Hall estate. Lister helped Walker calculate the value of the coal on various portions of her estate, in order to make sure she had the most benefit at the division. For example, she calculated that the colliery on Ann Walker's Golcar lot would be worth £100 a year for 35 years to come at 4 p.c., and was therefore worth £1725 outright.²⁷ Both she and Anne Walker contributed money towards the purchase price of £500 for a field they bought from Washington.²⁸ This issue of the mixture of the two estates is one which will be gone into in more detail in Chapter Six, "Gender and Sexuality."

Gender, class, female networks, politics and lesbian history are, in this record, inextricably intertwined. The boundary line between what we might see as 'industrial' and 'agricultural' was quite fluid, as was the boundary between 'public' and 'private.' Powerful

²²AL Journal 19 December 1834.

²³AL Journal 27 December 1834.

²⁴AL Journal 28 January 1835.

²⁵AL Journal 21 December 1834.

²⁶AL Journal 26 January 1835.

²⁷AL Journal 11 March 1835.

²⁸AL Journal 10 January 1835.

gentlemen in the community, such as the Rawsons, leased the rights to her coal and at the same time were her bankers and political allies. Jeremiah Rawson was the coal negotiator who spoke directly with Anne Lister. Christopher Rawson, his brother, introduced the Tory candidate from the hustings during the 1832, 1835 and 1837 elections. The Radical candidate, Michael Stocks, of Upper Shibden Hall, was also involved in nearby coal mining operations²⁹ and she sometimes consulted his son Joseph about colliery matters.³⁰ The son of the 1832 Whig candidate, Briggs, was also a stockholder in the navigation company, and she and Briggs commiserated together at the threat of railroads to the canals.³¹

There was a great deal of mixture and overlapping of tasks and roles on other levels as well. Tenants who paid rent and harvested their own hay also did waged work for her, such as carting and walling, or sold her stones from quarries they leased from her. Her steward Washington was also a surveyor and map-maker.³² A tenant of Ann Walker's might be an employee of Anne Lister's.³³ Mr. Freeman leased a quarry from her and also loaned her money. George Robinson leased a stone-cutting mill from her as well as pasture land; he also advised her on other mill matters. She was quite clear about the differences between tenants, workmen and hired servants, however. The first two could be combined in one person, but the last was a distinct category. Pickells, for example, was a tenant and also shot game on the estate, among other jobs,

²⁹J.T. Ward, "West Riding Landowners and Mining in the Nineteenth Century," Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research 15-16, (1963-64), 61-74.

³⁰AL Journal 21 July 1832.

³¹AL Journal 11 June 1837.

³²AL Journal 6 February 1837.

³³AL Journal 24 May 1837.

which he did partly by wages and partly by job, but, she wrote, "he is not my hired servant."³⁴

³⁴AL Journal 29 January 1835.

1. Power Over Land

The routine business of running the Shibden Hall estate in the early nineteenth century can be roughly subdivided into those activities dealing with coals, stones, trees, water, canals, roads, buildings, and general improvements. (She also had a working farmyard in the back of Shibden Hall, but this rarely enters the record except for the occasional reference to hay or milk or the new brewhouse.³⁵) She had to learn an enormous amount of detail relating to geology, engineering and physics in order to succeed at these enterprises. Women at this time were not in general expected to be knowledgeable in these areas. By familiarizing herself with them, she reinforced both a class and a masculinized gender identity simultaneously. In a world where certain manifestations of power itself had been masculinized, even steam engines were gendered. Industrial progress was seen as the result of ambitious and energetic men forging a new world. Anne Lister wanted power: so she familiarized herself with the various types of steam engines available and bought one to bring coals up out of her land. During the 1830s she became increasingly aware of the great demand for power in the Halifax area - whether that power came from water, steam or coal. She tried to extract as much profit/power as she could from the control of each.

There is evidence of coal mining on the Shibden Hall estate since at least the sixteenth century, with evidence of local use of coal dating back to the thirteenth.³⁶ Anne Lister resisted sinking her own coal pits until she felt forced by competition to do so; she would have preferred to simply lease the operations and receive rents and

³⁵AL Journal 25 May 1837, 12 October 1837.

³⁶W.B. Drigg, "The Halifax Coalfield," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1930), 117-158; *ibid.*, (1931), 73-111 and *ibid.*, (1932), 261-289.

sale percentages at her leisure. Nevertheless, by 1837 she was involved in very complex and inter-related works regarding coal pits, strata, the angles of inclines, drainage, ventilation, water pressure, the construction of a water-wheel, and calculations about the part a steam engine would play in all of this. She was practically obsessed with questions of water drainage and the use the drained or pumped water could be put to. She had a lake (or meer) built at the bottom of the estate in order to feed a water-wheel with sufficient horse-power, she hoped, to do various things. It might pump the water out of a pit, raise coals up an incline, power corn-grinding machinery or even looms for making worsted cloth. Some of the tasks might be performed by a steam engine, or the engine might run in tangent with the wheel. For example, the water brought up by the engine from a coal pit might be diverted to feed the wheel.

Engineering problems plagued her: for example, would there be sufficient water with 9 in. pipes and so many feet of fall and so much width of the channel to power and lease 17 worsted looms? A small miscalculation of water quantity could decrease the amount of horse-power available and upset such plans, as indeed eventually happened. By the end of 1837 her final plans were as yet uncertain. Certainly she had invested a lot of money, and she wanted both the water wheel and the steam engine to give back a reasonable percentage: but by the end of the period under examination exactly for which purpose the power would be leased was still uncertain. These operations took up by far the majority of her time and the majority of the journal space for 1835 and 1837 is primarily devoted to her estate concerns, especially those having to do with coal.

There were minor income-producers of course. She leased stone quarries and she was constantly planting a variety of trees and

shrubs on the estate. She also gave a great deal of time to landscaping, i.e., walling, leveling and making paths. She created income by selling hay³⁷ and at one point contemplated using clay deposits to manufacture and sell bricks,³⁸ something which later Listers certainly took advantage of. The land she owned in Halifax contained a building which she spent an enormous amount of money converting into the Northgate Inn, to which she attached an adjoining casino. This project was also part of her management of the Shibden Hall estate and took up a great deal of her time and money. She contemplated various other projects, such as the construction of cottages in town and the use of some land near the present-day train station for a cattle market. Improvements and changes to Shibden Hall itself were also going on during this period, but they do not take up a great deal of journal space and did not result in direct monetary return.

Many of her ideas never materialized, but she was constantly on the alert for the opportunity to increase her income. Her motivations for all this activity range from a desire for immediate profits to improving the land for future generations. Her main object in life however was not simply to make more money, but to establish a stable situation in which a regular income would accrue to her and at the same time give her the leisure and freedom to travel.

³⁷AL Journal 8 May 1837. She expected the estate to eventually produce some 50 tons of hay. The expense of producing 2 tons was to be £3.10.0 per DW (a unit of land about 50 x 50 yards). The selling price was to be some £10 for 2 tons, leaving her with a profit of £6.10.0 per DW on land in her own hands. AL Journal 28 June 1837.

³⁸AL Journal 26 November 1835, 1 December 1835.

1. a. Coal

Britain alone of European countries gave ownership of minerals to the owner of the land, instead of to the state. Throughout the history of coal mining in Britain, landowners were sometimes colliers³⁹ as well, though they often leased the coals to others. This latter trend became more pronounced after 1830, which has been given as a turning point in the history of coal mining.⁴⁰ Anne Lister went in the other direction: from an emphasis on leasing she moved to an emphasis on getting her own coals. But even after Anne Lister began sinking her own pits she had no thought of having direct contact with the miners: her agent or digging contractor (two different men) dealt with and employed them.

Many of the major themes in the history of British coal mining are herein represented in microcosm, and, since the scope of this chapter must be limited, it must be said that much of the everyday detail, particularly interesting to a historian of coal-mining, has been omitted. Ventilation, drainage, geological conditions, transport and landowner capital investment are all briefly touched upon, however. The cost of labour is present in these documents only in so far as it relates to the probable profit of the lessee and therefore to the amount of rent that ought to be charged; or, in the case of her own pits, it is relevant only to the amount of profit she expected to glean out of each collier⁴¹ per corve, or load.⁴² Labour

³⁹'Collier' is used here in the sense of a landowner who contracted labour to dig their coal rather than leasing the whole process to some one else. The term 'collier' could also refer to the man in the pit with the pick and shovel, but it will not often be used in this latter sense in this chapter.

⁴⁰Michael Flinn, The History of the British Coal Industry, Vol. II: 1700-1830: The Industrial Revolution (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 38.

⁴¹Used here in the sense of miner.

⁴²It was apparently more common to pay miners for the amount of coal dug rather than by day's labour. The latter was also done in the Halifax area, but it frowned on by other colliers; they said some such companies switched briefly

and relationships with labour were exclusively dealt with by the lessee or the agent. In Anne Lister's journal the colliers who worked in the mines appear only as distant numerical entities: those who increased operating costs. Only occasionally do we find out small details, such as the fact that her contractor paid his men 2/. a day for a 12 hour day,⁴³ and that when the men worked two shifts, the first was from 4 a.m. to noon, and the second from noon to 8 p.m.⁴⁴ Because of the nature of the sources the perspective given here on early nineteenth century coal mining will of course be primarily that of a landowner concerned solely with wresting a profitable return from her investment. The emphasis will therefore be on the leasing process and, once she begins sinking her own pits, upon her day to day geological and engineering problems.

The competition in the local Halifax coal market seemed to become more intense, more cut-throat, one might even say vicious, as the 1830s wore on. When James Schofield of Sawood Hall called on her in order to discuss the possibility of leasing some of her coal she smiled at him and said she hoped he would not, "for all of us coal people were bad alike, & I did not wish to make Schofield as bad as ourselves."⁴⁵ In the hope of improving her own share of the market, she investigated buying other coal in the area. Well thought-out moves in the coal chess game could bankrupt another player, and all their investment in plant would fall to another. She hoped that Rawson's colliery "would eventually fall to me, & Stocks would get Wilson's loose & thus Stocks & mine would be the two great collieries in this neighborhood...."⁴⁶

to paying per load, then refused to pay the men if they got too much. See AL Journal 8 December 1834, comments of Hinscliffe on the Low Moor Company.

⁴³AL Journal 24 January 1837.

⁴⁴AL Journal 16 May 1835.

⁴⁵AL Journal 25 May 1835.

⁴⁶AL Journal 1 December 1834.

It was a system of competing private landowners and tenants, but because the coal beds themselves did not respect surface boundaries, each of the combatants had to negotiate rights of way through other people's land; and, what each of them did in terms of leasing coal or draining water or letting shafts fill up again, had the potential for affecting someone else. It resembled a chess game, with each player having to be aware of what the other players on the board were doing in order to avoid being pushed out of the market. By 1835 competition with the Rawsons had forced her to contemplate getting her own coals and she herself, with Holt as agent, and Hinscliffe advising, managed the bottoming of the Walker pit and the opening up of the Listerwick pit. In all these activities she demonstrated an eagerness for scientific procedure, a mastery of engineering and geological detail and a stubborn ruthlessness which destabilized traditional categories of gender.

1. b. Leasing Her Coal

The situation between the two partnerships bidding for Anne Lister's coal in 1832 (Hinscliffe & Co. and the Rawsons) was rather complex. Both partnerships were competing for a larger share of the market for soft bed coal in the town of Halifax. "If Rawson could buy the few coals in question of mine," wrote Anne Lister, "he would have Hinchcliffe at his mercy."⁴⁷

The Rawsons, with a pit-head near Law Hill, were apparently already mining coals which were technically under the Shibden Hall estate, before the lease between the two parties had been signed. She believed Rawson was not aware of how aware she was of his trespass, and this gave her a bargaining edge. He had to sign the lease before he was found out. She became convinced that the Rawsons were in fact "stealing her hard bed."⁴⁸ So the Rawsons had two very strong reasons for not being outbid on the coal lease: competition and perhaps the fear that, if they were illegally taking coals, that they would be found out. She consistently demonstrated a knowledge of geology which the men in her life apparently did not expect her to have, and this gave her a certain advantage.

Her mathematical skills were also enormously useful in calculating whether a lessee would have a certain amount of profit and therefore what she could or could not ask for in rent. She had several talks with men in the parish who also knew about coals. Her estimates of labor costs and selling prices were accordingly revised. None of her early conversations included ideas of a more

⁴⁷AL Journal 9 July 1832. She herself varies the spelling of Hinscliffe's name, but most often spells it the way I have it in the text.

⁴⁸AL Journal 6 November 1832 and 13 November 1832. Hinscliffe, however, might have had a vested interest in informing AL of this. The Halifax coalfield consisted of three separate beds, of which the most used were the soft bed, for domestic purposes, and the hard bed, primarily used for engines.

sophisticated method of calculating profit (i.e., taking into account all of the capital expended, not just costs and prices per corve, or load of coal) but by 1837 she was taking capital investment in plant into consideration. Her conversations with other and male colliery owners paid off, and she learned an enormous amount about her business.

She played with numerous variables in almost each of the calculations she toyed with, such as whether each working collier got either four or five corves per yard, (with 4840 yards per acre), and whether the expense to the lessee per corve was 3-1/2 d., 4d. or 5d.. Using different methods she calculated and recalculated the amount of profit the lessees ought to be able to obtain, and thus was absolutely iron-jawed when insisting that the rent she wanted was a fair one. And, in fact, using the estimates of costs submitted by Hinscliffe & Co., and those put forward by the Rawsons and by her friend Stocks it does seem that her price must have been a relatively fair one, especially when compared with the usual percentage of profit expected by coal partnerships at this time. She appeared on all sides as a formidable negotiator, and this is where the sometimes murky operation of gender was also a pertinent force. She was a woman who was very stubborn when it came to maintaining or indeed increasing her personal income; some of the men with whom she did business thought she was unreasonable. Yet it is clear that her coal lease negotiations were done from a basis of knowledge which they perhaps did not expect her to have, and that her tenacity in requiring a certain price did not make that price unreasonable.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Comparisons with simple profits made by other coal entrepreneurs in this period indicate that the price she demanded was indeed a fair one, and tables are included to demonstrate this. Simple profits are those profits calculated by dividing net profit into total costs, rather than the more complicated and, for these sources, impossible one of calculating profit with allowances made for depreciation, interest, previous capital outlay and redemption of that capital. Only on rare occasions did she make a calculation of profit which included

Her scientific knowledge and her iron will both contributed to a destabilization of gender which gave her a business edge.

Neither Hinscliffe nor Jeremiah Rawson wanted to pay her more than £200 per acre per year. She had done her initial calculations, and was convinced she could get at least £230 an acre. Neither party's recalcitrance, however, deterred her in the slightest from insisting upon her price. On one of Jeremiah Rawson's numerous negotiating visits to Shibden he asked her what rent she wanted for the coal he wanted:

Asked what he would give. No! I must name a price. Said I had made up my mind not to take less than my uncle sold it for - £230 for what came out of Trough of Bolland pit and £205 for what was pulled at Willy Hill pit. It was well sold. The price frightened him, Mr. R[awson]. [I] Said I was indifferent about selling or not - but Hinchcliffe wanted it.... I said...that if they gave me what I asked for the coal they would gain as much more. This he denied, saying they sold at 7d. a corve and the gap was 5d. a corve. I answered that they sold at 8d. a corve and the expence would not be, or ought not to be, more than 3-1/2 [d.] a corve. He owned they sell some at 8d. but still maintained that the expences were 5d. a corve. Then, said I, I think I could beat you. There must be something wrong in the works, and you had better look narrowly into it. I promised however that I would not sell my coal without first letting them know and said that nobody else should have it unless on paying me something more than Messrs. Rawson would pay. He thanked me and nothing more passed on the subject.⁵⁰

Rawson and Lister's ongoing disagreement about labour costs was critical to the leasing negotiations. Rawson insisted that labour and miscellaneous costs were 5d. a corve. Lister insisted that he ought to be able to do it for 3-1/2d. or 4d. a corve at most. This seemingly small difference became enormous when multiplied by the 24, 200 corves each collier might get out of each acre. The higher the costs, the less the profit if each corve was sold at 7-10d.; the less profit, the less she could reasonably charge in rent. Rawson

total previous capital outlay. In regards to other types of tenants, she had a certain idea of the exact percentage she expected to receive back in rent after investing a certain amount in some improvement. Usually she applied those same expectations to coal-mining and the capitalization of mills.

⁵⁰AL Journal 19 July 1832.

consistently offered much less than she demanded and this seemed to make her even more resilient. "Probably they are stealing my coal already. Holt says I should not take less than £200 per acre... (I ought to have £230 per acre)...."⁵¹

The effect of a further discussion with Hinscliffe about her mathematical calculations was quite dramatic, for he came back a week later and bid her £230 an acre. At that instant she had Rawson where she wanted him, for she knew he would bid above that in order to prevent Hinscliffe from getting those coals. One Sunday she spent most of the day "writing out minutes of all the backwards and forwards work with Mr. Jeremiah Rawson about the coal, from his first call 13 July up to my last note to him yesterday. Tiresome. I only get vexed as I look more into it and shall surely be able to pin him down tomorrow..."⁵²

Jeremiah Rawson came on Monday for what was supposed to be the final round in the negotiations. She showed him the estate coal plan and said she was certain he could get ten acres, and insisted on that figure being stated in the agreement, though if they really could not get so much she would not insist upon them paying for it. "It was not my intention," she told him,

to take unfair advantage of anyone.⁵³... [He] Still maintained the coal would cost them getting 6d. a corve and there would only be 4 corves per square yard. [I] Said the collier ought to have as much as the landlord, i.e., Messrs. Rawson and I ought to divide equally the profit. All the terms before proposed agreed to, and conclude, as no objection then made that there has ended this tiresome business tho' I shall not feel myself secure from pother till all is signed and sealed. Mr. R[awson] said Holt said the coal was not worth more than £160 per acre. 'Did you hear him say so?' 'No!' 'Then I don't believe Holt said any such thing.' <<Mr. R. said he was never beaten but by ladies and I had beaten him. Said I gravely, it is the intellectual part of us that makes a bargain and that has no sex or ought to have none.>>⁵⁴

⁵¹AL Journal 6 November 1832.

⁵²AL Journal 23 December 1832.

⁵³Perhaps implying it was his?

⁵⁴AL Journal 24 December 1832.

She was not amused by his, what we would today call, sexism. By demonstrating a working knowledge of collieries, she was transgressing gender boundaries; by using a perceived (and higher status) 'masculine' approach she improved her material wealth.

When the lease was drawn up, it included a clause to prevent Rawson from turning any water back into the old works after he had got the coal. Otherwise he might "drown [her] in water" and thus prevent her getting the coal below where he had been digging.⁵⁵ Rawson's colliers were quite aware of the competition between the two parties, and had told Holt that they would "throw all the water on us they can - but it will not signify; for, as Holt says, water will run downhill, and we can get rid of it..."⁵⁶ One of the major considerations of a coal mine for both the landowner and the lessee was this matter of drainage. When she turned her attention to getting her own coal, drainage became her great preoccupation. In the end, the Rawsons refused to sign the lease, and she felt she was forced to get her own coal in order to protect it from the Rawsons as well as to maintain her income. It may be, however, that she expressed it as being a "forced" decision in order to protect herself from looking too dedicated to business in an era when most gentry should have preferred to lease and thus give themselves more of that precious commodity, fashionable leisure.

⁵⁵AL Journal 6 November 1832. See also SH:2/CM/1833: Copy of an uncompleted draft of a lease of coal in Southowram. Anne Lister of Shibden Hall to Christopher Rawson of Hope House, Halifax.

⁵⁶AL Journal 1 December 1834.

Figure 18. Potential Coal Profits on Shibden Hall Estate

(Source: AL Journal, 9 July and 6 November, 1832)

AL's Calculations from July 9, 1832:

Corves per yd.	Price per corve	Gross per acre (4,840 yards)	Cost per corve	Cost per acre	Rent (per acre/yr.
5	8d.	£806.13.0	3d.	£302.10.0	£200

Net profit per acre to lessee: £302.10.0

Percentage of profit to lessee: 60%

AL's Calculations from 14 July, 1832:

Cost per corve at 3-1/2 d. = £352.18.4 per acre. Rent: £226.17.6 per acre /yr.

Net profit to lessee: £226.17.6

Percentage of profit to lessee: 39%

AL's Calculations from 6 November, 1832

Corves per yard	Price per corve	Gross per acre (4,840 yards)	Cost per corve	Cost per acre	Rent (per acre/yr.)
5	7-1/2d.	£756.3.0	3-1/3 d.	£332.9.0	£250

Net profit to lessee: £173.10.0

Percentage profit to lessee: 30%

Based on Holt's estimates of expences at his coal mine:
(Per 20 corves or one score)

Colliers: 4/.

Banksmen: 1/.

Wear and Tear: 6d.

Total per score: 5/6d.

Total cost per corve: 3-1/3d.

1. c. Getting Her Own Coal

When Anne Lister decided in favor of working her own coal rather than leasing it, she focused her attentions on buying coal from bargain sources, bottoming the Walker pit, sinking a new Listerwick pit, stopping up the looses, or water drains, of other colliers,⁵⁷ as well as on building water-wheels and buying steam engines. Competition remained intense.

A local collier named Wilson tried to undercut Rawson's price for hard-bed in the town, while Rawson responded by lowering his price from 9d. to 7d., "a very unhandsome proceeding to the trade in general,"⁵⁸ commented Anne Lister, who foresaw her own loss by this turn of events. The people in Halifax told Holt, who sold coal on his own account, that he would have to lower his price in turn. Hinscliffe criticized Rawson, telling Anne Lister that he "was not a gentleman" for lowering his coal 2d. a load.⁵⁹ She rather haughtily told Hinscliffe that Rawson's prices "were nothing" to her but that "Mr. R[awson] had forced me into sinking to look after my property, and I should go on with my purpose at all events."⁶⁰ Rawson, apparently, had the advantage in this *melée*, being the only one who brought his coal out in the town itself, thereby saving carting expenses.

Rawson's steam engine gave him the power to pump water from a greater depth, and the greater depth he could pump, the

⁵⁷A 'loose' could apparently refer either to the actual water drain or the right to that drain. Used as a verb, it meant draining enough water off the coal in order to free it, i.e., be able to mine it. W.B. Drigg comments most accurately, "The great art of driving a sough [loose or drift] was to plan it in such a way that no adjoining coal owner could possibly derive any advantage from it." W.B. Drigg, "The Halifax Coalfield," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1930), 120.

⁵⁸AL Journal 1 December 1834.

⁵⁹AL Journal 8 December 1834.

⁶⁰AL Journal 9 February 1835.

more coal he could loose from the water and thus sell.⁶¹ Lister familiarized herself with as many of the geological and engineering details of her competitors' mines as she could obtain. These included information about the depth of the pit, the amount of horse-power his engines had, how much water they could pump, how much water she might be able to direct into his mines, and how much additional water was necessary before Rawson had to buy a more powerful steam engine to pump it.⁶² According to Lister's informants, Rawson had invested some £5,000 in plant, including gas lighting and the steam engine. "Coal here will not pay for all this," wrote Lister, hoping the financial strain on the Rawsons would eventually be of some benefit to her.⁶³

The sinking of the Walker pit was apparently her first step into the murky waters⁶⁴ of colliery owning, rather than simply leasing the whole job to someone else. Since Rawson would not let anyone into his works, it was necessary to "be after him"⁶⁵ with her own tunnel in order to prove he was stealing her upper bed. Competition in fact was one of her driving motivations for sinking the Walker pit and its attendant drifts and vents. The contract for the job was signed in October 1834 between the three Mann brothers and Anne Lister. Two separate agreements were drawn up: one for the sinking of the pit drift, for drainage and ventilation, and one for the pit shaft all the way to the soft bed coal.

The drift was supposed to be "driven at 4/. a yard worked night & day - to set their own vent, and to find all tools, scoops and picks - and A.L. to find flags and vent stones - to be 1 yard or 1 yard

⁶¹AL Journal 26 March 1835.

⁶²AL Journal 28 January 1835.

⁶³AL Journal 1 December 1834.

⁶⁴No pun intended.

⁶⁵AL Journal 16 May 1835.

2 inches high, and to be driven as narrow as possible..."⁶⁶ The pit shaft agreement included the stipulations that the contractor was "to sink the said pit or shaft upon the soft bed coal, eight feet six inches long and five feet six inches wide, and find tools of every description and gunpowder...banksman and gin driver..."⁶⁷ Anne Lister was supposed to supply "a gin, ropes, tubs, bellows, materials for framing and sheeting, and stone for walling the pit top, but the framing and sheeting and the walling to be done by the contractor and included in the price agreed upon,...[and] a gin horse after the first fifty yards..."⁶⁸ Holt told her the iron gin ought to cost between £22 and £30. The rim of the gin wheel was to be 12 feet in diameter; the "horse-tree" was to be 16 feet in diameter and the balance beam another 16 feet, giving 32 feet of leverage, being the diameter of the circle in which the horse would walk.⁶⁹ She herself examined the place where the gin was to be set out and decided that "the gin would be enough. No engine would be required - and coals could be pulled at this pit for 50 years to come."⁷⁰ Getting a gin horse, however, proved to be a long drawn-out fiasco, involving horses that were either too big, too small, too ill or too expensive. It was months before she was able to obtain a proper horse for the gin.⁷¹

Hinscliffe told her the Walker pit colliery could be set up "and everything for £1,000 but that it would be under £1,500, including

⁶⁶AL Journal 14 January 1835.

⁶⁷AL Journal 14 January 1835.

⁶⁸AL Journal 14 January 1835. One shift was to be worked until the following March, after which time two shifts per day were to be worked until the pit was completed, which was to be within 12 months of the signing of the agreement or the contractors would face a £20 fine for every month's delay.

⁶⁹AL Journal 14 January 1835.

⁷⁰AL Journal 17 January 1835. An engine was in fact needed, and her estimate of the length of time was not far off. The coal beds under the Shibden Hall estate did not run out until the early twentieth century.

⁷¹AL Journal 25 February 1835, 7 April 1835, 8 May 1835, 29 May 1835, 18 June 1835.

water-wheel at Tilly Holme...."⁷² The latter was for draining the pit by pumping the water out of it. Her ambitions about the Walker pit included pulling out the coal with iron rails instead of using "corve-wheel stones." She calculated that a ton of rails would do 60 yards, at £8 per ton.⁷³ The iron rails represented an innovation which she hoped would improve the efficiency of her operation, reducing costs and increasing profit.

When they had dug about thirty yards of the Walker pit drift, Hinscliffe informed Anne Lister they were digging it four feet instead of three feet wide.⁷⁴ This represented a serious threat to her investment, as it increased costs. She therefore went into the pit drift herself in order to measure it, which she did with her umbrella. She discovered it was in fact nearly four feet wide. "Five minutes in going in and out,...." she commented,

a very fatiguing journey on account of the stooping through the drift a yard high. Driving a dead level. Water standing in the bottom a couple of inches deep. Went up to Joseph Mann sinking the vent chimney. Told him I would not have the drift so wide. I was a little out of breath and spoke perhaps as if angry, more so than I really felt, - the old man turning, bringing the stuff out the chimney vent begun yesterday and five or six yards deep now, begged me not to be in a passion. I merely said his request was not necessary. I was out of breath with hurrying into and out of the drift. But the observation struck me. I stood talking quietly - then wound up one bucket. Said I ought therefore to pay a footing for this and going into the drift, so gave the man 2/. for them all four.⁷⁵

The passage is unusual in the diary, showing as it does some direct human interaction with the men who were actually doing the digging. She rarely wrote about any such meetings. Class hierarchy, of course, oozes out of the passage. Paying the men a footing for doing one of their tasks was one of the practices, one of the rituals, if

⁷²AL Journal 13 January 1835.

⁷³AL Journal 2 January 1835, 10 January 1835.

⁷⁴AL Journal 9 January 1835.

⁷⁵AL Journal 10 January 1835.

you will, which, like paying for drinkings, reinforced such hierarchies. But it demonstrates more than this. She was learning what she needed to know about a traditionally masculine sphere of activity, and was constantly on the alert for ways to improve her profit margin. The means she chose to use to protect her investments were perceived as masculine. One man standing by at the pithead after she went down into the pit in a corve, or basket, commented that he "never saw any one so hard in his life."⁷⁶ Certainly gender is an issue here: hadn't he seen men going down into the pit every day? The discourse about what women ought or ought not to do did not seem to deter Anne Lister from doing those things - like personally examining drifts and pits - which destabilized gender.

The men with whom Anne Lister worked occasionally expressed their surprise at her engineering or mathematical knowledge. But really their recorded comments are few and far between. Her geological studies, which she had maintained for many years, were particularly useful in the management of coal mines. One day Joseph Mann brought her several specimens of stone and coal from various strata. These helped her to estimate that there remained 61 yards before the Walker pit was bottomed.⁷⁷ Problems came up during the last part of bottoming the pit, such as not being able to drain the water out quickly enough. Her solution was to think of driving another drift. "These drifts will be in the coal and the coal will pay for driving...."⁷⁸ Again, her working knowledge of the strata gave her the confidence to think of making certain investments she might not otherwise have made. The water gathering in the pit was a major problem, but Holt told her he had no

⁷⁶AL Journal 21 October 1837.

⁷⁷AL Journal 24 April 1835.

⁷⁸AL Journal 10 June 1835.

fear about the pit. "If they can't get through the post into the upper bed works, will bore to the latter & has no fear of getting the water off that way."⁷⁹ She had a working knowledge of the behavior of water in the area, along with an accurate appraisal of the extent of the coal beds, the strata it contained and the interconnections between her works and Rawson's.

In a letter to Mariana Lawton she wrote, "I told you ages ago, I was obliged to look after my coal, for fear of having it stolen. My first pit, begun about fifteen months ago, was sunk to the bottom last week - is about a hundred & ten yards deep, and said to be one of the handsomest pits in this county. Some time next Spring, I hope to be ready for beginning a 2nd pit [the Listerwick] to be about 60 yards deep."⁸⁰ Her contractor Joseph Mann told her that if they lost no time, and worked night and day, "we may have the engine pit & wheel & drift & dam done, & the pit at Pump [Listerwick] & thus be down at the coal by the end of next August...."⁸¹ Delays and higher than expected costs at Listerwick became the norm. By the end of 1836 she expected the the total cost of drifts, labour, and materials to be some £6,000.⁸² By driving a new pit, she hoped to gain an income of at least £150 per acre for the soft bed and at least £80 per acre for the hard bed, at the rate of 4 acres per annum (£600), for about 28 years. Holt told her that between the Listerwick pit⁸³ and the Walker pit she would "have the best coal-concern hereabouts."⁸⁴

⁷⁹AL Journal 11 June 1835.

⁸⁰AL Journal 29 November 1835.

⁸¹AL Journal 2 December 1835.

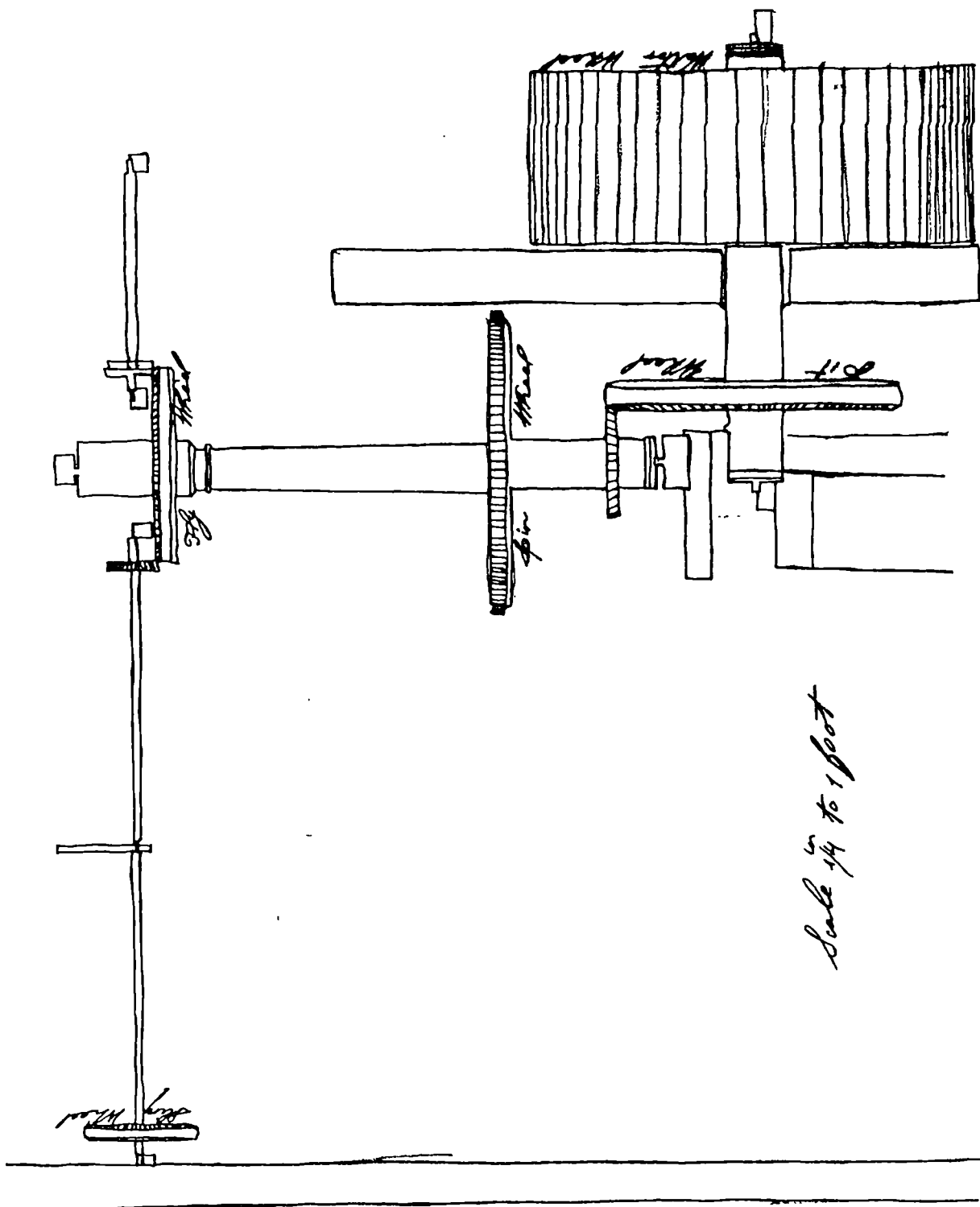
⁸²AL Journal 31 December 1836.

⁸³AL Journal 14 September 1835.

⁸⁴AL Journal 21 February 1835.

Figure 19.
 Plan for Using Water Wheel
 to Pump Coal Pit and Power Worsted Mill -
 Given to Anne Lister by engineer for her perusal

Source: CDA, SH:2/M/4.



1. d. Water

Understanding the behavior of water in the area was critical for her calculations of the costs involved in sinking a new coal pit. Enough water would power a wheel-run engine that could in turn inexpensively pump water out of the projected new mine. If there was enough water, the wheel could power both a pump for the mine and, hopefully, for some other profitable enterprise as well, such as a corn or worsted mill. The plans for a mill and the plans for the new coal mine were inextricably linked. She wrote, "perhaps I shall want a coal engine - if I can make one wheel grind corn and pump the water off the coal, it will be well...."⁸⁵

The main problem she faced was getting an adequate quantity of water for the wheel. She had built a lake, or meer, at the bottom of the estate, which would hold the water coming from Red Brook and feeder streams as well.⁸⁶ She needed enough water to enable the wheel to "both work the mill & pump the coal water....Holt said if there was not water enough just in summer, there could be a small fire [steam] engine to keep all going."⁸⁷ She even went so far as to plug up a drain used by another colliery in order to increase her own supply of water, drowning their works at considerable financial loss to themselves.⁸⁸ Ruthlessness was essential to success.

Both her architect Mr. Harper and her engineer from Manchester had some input into the planning of the new water-

⁸⁵AL Journal 30 January 1835.

⁸⁶AL Journal 9 February 1835.

⁸⁷AL Journal, 19, 20, 21 February 1835.

⁸⁸The entire saga of the Spiggs loose took up a huge amount of her energy and time during the whole of 1835. See especially AL Journal 8 December 1834, 9 January 1835, 13 January 1835, 22-23 January 1835, 27 February 1835, 16 May 1835, 21-22 May 1835, 21-22 August 1835, 26, 27, 29 August 1835, 3 September 1835, 14 September 1835, 14-15 October 1835, 9, 10, 11 November 1835.

wheel.⁸⁹ Harper told her there would not be enough water "for a 30 ft. diameter wheel more than 8 months in the year. Better to have a 20 ft. diameter wheel."⁹⁰ She had to personally make decisions about engineering problems such as this, which could affect the costs and profits involved. She therefore approved of the Manchester engineer's scientific methods. He used gauges to measure average quantities of water over a period of months. He told her 8 inches of water in a goit, or channel, 2 feet broad over 24 hours would generate about 15 horse-power.⁹¹ Based on the information they provided she used her own mathematical knowledge to calculate that 1,512-1/2 cubic feet of water would be needed to work the wheel for one hour. She designed the meer, or lake, which still lies below Shibden Hall, with this calculation in mind.

She made further detailed calculations about how many cubic feet per minute each pipe could pump and how high they could pump it, and these calculations helped her to make decisions about the shape and design of the water-wheel.⁹² She wrote, "Say it requires 6 cubic feet to pump 1 cubic feet through 30 yards or 6 revolutions of the wheel & six lifts of the pump to bring up one cubic foot. I suppose 1 cubic foot of water with 18 feet of fall would lift the same quantity 18 feet if there was no friction...."⁹³ The prescriptive activities of the late Regency upper-class woman might have included embroidery and drawing, but not this. Somehow Lister made active choices which allowed her to bend the gender paradigms of her time. Activities such as these reinforced her partially self-created masculine identity. That very identity, in turn,

⁸⁹AL Journal 4 April 1835.

⁹⁰AL Journal 30 July 1835.

⁹¹AL Journal 30 July 1835.

⁹²AL Journal 31 July 1835.

⁹³AL Journal 25 August 1835.

contributed to her freedom to choose to engage in these activities. Making active choices improved her material base, just as her material base bolstered her power of choice.

She was having difficulty finding enough water to give her the power to both dry the coal and run a corn-mill. At least 20 horse-power was needed to power both a pit pump and a corn mill. "Mr. Harper mentioned a steam engine. I said it would be too great a nuisance but if he could consume the smoke and sublime it into ivory-black I should be satisfied to have it. Told him to consider of this. The ivory black works near the great colliery....near St. Etienne had given me the idea."⁹⁴ She had carefully informed herself about other industrial methods during her travels. Even though a steam engine would help, it was unsightly. Her concern for the aesthetics of her family's landed estate seemed occasionally to be a higher priority than making higher profits more easily.

Water was at once an expensive nuisance and a source of income: the water for the wheel meant she could pump the water off her coal, and vice versa. She often asked Holt for his opinion about the costs involved in such a project. At first Holt tried to convince her that a wire-mill would be less expensive than a corn-mill. On the other hand, if the wheel had "only coal to pump," there would be little expense."⁹⁵

But it didn't make any economic sense to use the wheel just for one purpose - she could make profit on her investment much more easily if she was able to get enough water from one source or another in order to lease a corn mill to Aquilla Green, who wanted 20 horse-power to turn 3 pair of stones.⁹⁶ She told Green she would be

⁹⁴AL Journal 30 July 1835.

⁹⁵AL Journal 9 February 1835.

⁹⁶AL Journal 28 March 1835.

laying out some £2500 on the mill⁹⁷ and therefore wanted to rent the buildings for at least £150. "Said I could not build mills for 5 p.c.....should want...6 p.c."⁹⁸ Two years after making the agreement, however, she discovered that a mistake had been made in the driving of one of the drifts into the meer. This meant she would get 9 inches less draw of water than she had expected and this would have a negative effect on the amount of horse-power the wheel would produce.⁹⁹ Her steward, Samuel Washington, told her

the wheel would have had 20 horse power had there been 32 feet of fall...but now that there were only about 28 feet of fall the power will not exceed 17 horse-power at full power. Five pair of stone will take 20 horse-power. There will not be water enough or not more than enough for 15 horse-power & if all is taken for the mill, there will be nothing left for the coal...Looking into Mr. Harper's papers, calculations, respecting the water-wheel - 2 acres of meer 3 feet deep will contain about 5-3/4 hour's consumption of water - I think of sending for A[quilla] G[reen] & being off building a mill if I can.¹⁰⁰

She was furious about the mistake in driving the drift. The next day she told Washington that the plans for the mill should be given up since there was not enough water for the power required.¹⁰¹ When she told Green of her plans for giving up the mill, she saw that he was "terribly disappointed...mentioned the 9 inches of level lost....He said if I put up a steam engine...he would pay more. He would wait for the mill 2 years from this time. He thought of its being a provision for himself and his family. The rent was a very good one. I advised his building a mill at Bailey Hall....Well! he A.G. would wait to see the wheel going & if it was then proved there would not be

⁹⁷This figure must have included the costs of the coal pit as well.

⁹⁸AL Journal 6 January 1835.

⁹⁹AL Journal 22 April 1837.

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 23 April 1837.

¹⁰¹AL Journal 24 April 1837.

water enough for 20 horse-power he would give it up."¹⁰² In the end the agreement was set aside.¹⁰³

She continued to investigate the idea that the 15 horse-power from the water-wheel could, however, be used for a worsted mill. Mr. Freeman, not knowing of the corn-mill plans, had told her she could let a worsted mill for £300 per annum. "Two horse-power = 3 worsted frames which let easily at £17 per frame....I said this satisfied me the mill would let..."¹⁰⁴ The idea of a worsted mill was one she explored rather intently. She made numerous estimates of costs and had detailed plans drawn up. These suggested that another £1000 would be needed to get the 3-storey building constructed and the wheel properly geared.¹⁰⁵ "Asked Holt what he would do in my case - build a mill or not all things considered. Ann against it. I thought of the money thrown away if no use was made of the wheel & water. Holt said he thought of this too, & owned he would build a mill. Nothing against it unless I thought it would bring too many children about. But this objection does not seem very appalling."¹⁰⁶ Holt told her a worsted mill at Listerwick would be a great advantage for personal reasons as well - his two daughters had a long distance to cover to get to the mill where they currently worked!¹⁰⁷ Mrs. Sowden, the wife of one of her tenants, told her encouragingly that she would like to lease about 40 worsted frames somewhere closer to Halifax.¹⁰⁸

Her foray into the world of manufacturing did nothing to change her perceptions of her class position. The worsted mill was to

¹⁰²AL Journal 25 April 1837.

¹⁰³AL Journal 25, 27 April 1837.

¹⁰⁴AL Journal 4 January 1837.

¹⁰⁵AL Journal 26, 27 September 1837, 16, 17 October 1837, 31 October 1837, 27 November 1837, 28 November 1837.

¹⁰⁶AL Journal 28 November 1837.

¹⁰⁷AL Journal 25 September 1837.

¹⁰⁸AL Journal 29 September 1837.

be part of the estate because she needed to make some profitable use of the water, one of the resources related to the land. In any case the mill was to be leased, the same way a coal mine or a cottage or a field was leased. It was not going to be a direct manufacturing enterprise on her part. She interpreted her experience of planning the construction of a worsted mill as an experience related to her upper-class landed identity, not one related to a middle-class manufacturing identity.

She was in a quandary about the amount of money she was investing and the amount of money she needed to get in return; the fact that she considered the difference in return between coal and worsted frames demonstrates that an exploration of such options was available. "Supposing that the colliery did not pay me sufficiently," she mused late one evening, "my wheel would turn 20 frames & my steam engine, 2 horse-power = 3 frames, 9 frames = 29 or 30 frames at £18 = £540, at least interest for £7000 of outlay & save my coal. But I do not despair of the colliery."¹⁰⁹ She continued to make extensive calculations, including in these calculations estimates of the power needed for the worsted frames at the same time she analyzed the amount of coal each collier could get per day. Her mastery of the technical detail needed for these calculations was extensive and, from what I can tell, quite accurate. Her interest in science helped her acquire the necessary knowledge. In effect, her gender-bending interests and experiences allowed her to make choices which increased the income of the estate. Identity influenced actions and her actions helped to reinforce identity. Both increased her sense of her own agency.

¹⁰⁹AL Journal 8 September 1837.

1. e. Steam

She wanted her new Listerwick pit to have a competitive edge against the Rawsons. Immense benefit, it seemed, was possible from having a steam engine to draw the coal out of the mine. She contracted an engineer, Mr. Cole of the Bowling Iron works, to consult him about the engine. He told her a five horse-power low-pressure engine should have a reservoir containing 250 to 300 cubic yards of water.¹¹⁰ "I understood Mr. Cole to say that they would furnish a high pressure engine of 6 horse-power & all its appendages for £300..."¹¹¹ It would consume 5 or 6 loads of coals per day "and if no reservoir made will require a constant run of water = 1 inch bore pipe..."¹¹² The engineer told her the engine would require 300 gallons of water per hour.¹¹³ At first she intended to drive a drift off the Godley Lane road in order to provide water for her "coal-steam engine,"¹¹⁴ but later decided on putting the pit-head in a different location, where a 700 yard incline would have to be built within the mine for transporting the corves efficiently up & down the shaft. The steam-engine was particularly useful for transporting corves along this incline.

The engineer told her that "with a four horse-power high pressure engine, 30 lbs. pressure per square inch would bring out 15 corves in 7 minutes and send them back in the same time. Suppose said I we say 1 corve per minute. Holt said we should have 20 colliers. Could not reckon one collier to get more than 22 corves a day working 8 hours."¹¹⁵ She did some rapid calculations and

¹¹⁰AL Journal 6 January 1837

¹¹¹AL Journal 1 February 1837, 19 February 1837.

¹¹²AL Journal 2 March 1837.

¹¹³AL Journal 3 March 1837.

¹¹⁴AL Journal 17 January 1837.

¹¹⁵AL Journal 1 February 1837.

concluded that 6 acres per annum could be got with the steam engine if there were 20 colliers working 7 hours for 300 days. The engine would "pull" between 15 and 20 colliers per day, she concluded, that is, would pull enough coal to keep so many working.¹¹⁶ Holt had previously told her one collier would get 25 loads or corves per day "but including holidays might average...20 loads a day - then taking off Sundays, $365 - 52 = 313 \times 20 = 6260$ loads a year & at 5 loads to the square yard of coal-bed $6260 / 6 = 1252$ yards of coal will be got by one collier in a year..."¹¹⁷ She calculated that she would make 20/. per week net profit per collier, so that 5 colliers would pay her £5 a week net profit.¹¹⁸ She knew Mr. Rawson had 13 colliers getting soft bed and 5 getting upper bed and wondered if he cleared £50 per collier per year. Holt apparently had 10 colliers and cleared £500 a year.¹¹⁹ In other calculations, she assumed she might be able to make £15 per week profit or 30/. per collier per week, or £780 per annum.¹²⁰

She spent some time one evening re-calculating the cost of "incline & steam engine, £2212. I may say the engine, boiler, pumps, rails & chain = £900, the incline £1000 & the platform & buildings at least £300. Calculating all this and looking into old accounts till 11.55."¹²¹ The incline and the steam engine meant her coal would be sold at a competitive price. Holt's calculations indicated that after she had invested in the the incline & steam engine her coal would cost 1/. less per score than Rawson's coal.¹²² As she looked even further into her concerns, she began to realize more and more the

¹¹⁶AL Journal 1 February 1837, 19 February 1837.

¹¹⁷AL Journal 20 March 1835.

¹¹⁸AL Journal 23 September 1837.

¹¹⁹AL Journal 25 September 1837.

¹²⁰AL Journal 13 November 1837.

¹²¹AL Journal 10 July 1837.

¹²²AL Journal 12 July 1837.

value of the coal on the Shibden Hall estate. Holt indicated that 10 or 12 colliers at Listerwick might pay the whole expense of sinking the pit within 2 or 3 years.¹²³ She apparently expected to have 112 acres of coal loosed within two years.¹²⁴

But she was anxious about the amount of money she had invested, and told Holt that

the colliery must pay - I was going towards the fourth thousand. He said the incline would cost £3000. On the outlay he agreed I ought to have 10 p.c.. £7000 at 10 p.c. = £350. The steam would cost £100 a year. Then if I could only sell 3 acres a year & clear £300 per acre = £900 - 450 = £450 or £150 per acre for the coal. I said I would not do like Mr. Rawson - give the coal, doing no more than make interest on outlay. I would rather turn both water & steam power to mill work. Holt said yes! it would be better. Perhaps I had better put off the incline - it could not be done under 2 years work night & day - I could let worsted frames at £18 to £20 a piece and perhaps by & by there might be power to spare to work 18 or 20 frames....I did not give in to delaying the incline; for if I should delay it, better times might come & then I should be behind hand two years....¹²⁵

She became annoyed about all the problems, whether to have a mill or not, and of what kind, and whether to have a steam engine or not, and of what horse-power, and whether or not the water-wheel could be of some use to the coal mine after all. Finally she declared, "Must let or give up - so much pother terrible."¹²⁶ She did not give up, however, and the steam engine and works in which she invested so much money and labour turned out to produce income for later Listers, one of whom won a contract in 1881 for the supply of 18,000 tons of soft bed coal to the town of Halifax.¹²⁷ Her mastery of technical detail proved profitable in the long-term dynastic interests of the estate, until the coal beds ran out in the early twentieth

¹²³AL Journal 20 July 1837.

¹²⁴AL Journal 11 August 1837.

¹²⁵AL Journal 8 September 1837.

¹²⁶AL Journal 5 December 1837, 7 December 1837, 9 December 1837.

¹²⁷SH:2/CM/1881/1: Coal mining. Extract of articles of agreement between John Lister of Shibden Hall and Halifax Corporation for the supply of 18,000 tons of soft bed coal. June 20, 1881.

century. However, the amount of work she put into overseeing the coal mines and the other aspects of the estate actually defeated her main goal, which was to have the income to lead the life of a leisured gentlewoman. That ambition vied with her desire to improve estate income, though one was dependent upon the other. In the end, her desire for a leisured status won out. She and Ann Walker eventually left their business concerns behind in the hands of their steward and went to the continent. Socializing at the Russian court apparently held greater charms than calculating the horsepower of condensed versus high-pressure steam engines.

2. Power Over People

The section on tenants, employees and servants is included in order to illustrate other aspects of the exercise of her class power, without which the context of her life could never be fully understood. The tenant who became too old or too poor to farm profitably was immediately considered a poor tenant, and a replacement was looked for. Anne Lister's stern estate management techniques allowed her to dismiss sentimental considerations. Here again perhaps we see the operation of gender as it was perceived at that time. The tender heart was not the best asset when one was engaged in the serious and "manly" business of protecting and increasing one's revenue. Tenants were of course expected to vote as she wished (see Chapter 5) or lose their lease. She also threatened to evict tenants who held union meetings on her premises and further exercised her class power by refusing to have as tenants unmarried men with girlfriends. Her experiences of these hierarchically ordered relationships - tenants and servants were different - reinforced and indeed were crucial to the construction of her class identity. Her servants were essential to what E.P. Thompson saw as the gentry's "studied self-consciousness of public theatre."¹²⁸ Yet the Anne Lister journal allows us a few very revealing glances backstage. It seems that the more superficial, public concern about colorful livery for footmen, appropriate deferential responses from maid servants, etc., vied subtly against the very human interactions which one could not, apparently, avoid having with a human being who was constantly with one for a period of years. Servants passed on information about family health and about gentry gossip; they

¹²⁸E.P. Thompson, "Patricians and Plebs," in Customs in Common (London: The Merlin Press, 1991), 44.

were also able, in no uncertain terms, albeit occasionally, to let their mistress know when she was being unreasonable. Sometimes power was exercised in these relations in a very raw form: she tried to control her servants' sexual morality and expected to have control over all their living time. In return, she sent for a doctor when they were ill or paid their funeral expenses when they died. In this, she was probably not very different from other women of her class and time; but it is important to see how her personal experiences of power contributed to the formation of her class and gender identity. Power differences were constantly reinforced through a series of repetitive practices which included linguistic and symbolic rituals. Almost every Sunday, for example, she, as head of the household, read prayers to the assembled servants, with Ann Walker at her side. None of these relationships would have occurred in this form without her landed familial base.

Both Anne Lister's class identity and her masculinity were reinforced by her experience of hierarchical interpersonal interactions with tenants and servants. The journal reflects an increasingly business-like approach to both. At times her concern for cutting costs and making profit conflicted with older customary practices. Usually her forceful, authoritarian and insensitive style pushed aside all such objections. Her power over the tenants on the estate was not, however, absolute. Each had the option to give so many months notice and find themselves a farm elsewhere, though this is rarely noted in the journal. In day to day affairs her power was limited by the practices of making financial deals with tenants and by her tendency to consult various members of the tenant community when she was making important decisions. Her authoritarianism was also moderated by a class identity which included concepts of patronage and charity. Thus, for instance, when

she had tickets to a concert in Halifax, she sent one along to her steward's widow, Mrs. Briggs, as an act of kindness related to her late husband's service to the estate.¹²⁹ When one of her older tenants needed help mowing his acre field, she sent two of her workmen over to help. "He did not ask me, and seemed much obliged by my offering. Behaved very well about it. Pleased when the people behave handsomely,"¹³⁰ she commented. Instances of this kind, however, are rare. Usually "gifts" to servants were actually part of wages already too low, given in order to reinforce the hierarchical relationship. Anne Lister's neighbor Mrs. Priestley paid her housemaid twelve guineas and her cook fifteen guineas a year but the place, she said, was actually worth twenty pounds. "<< She and Mr. P. each gave the cook a pound at the fair at midsummer. She thinks my giving my maid, a thoroughly good one, sixteen pounds a year and a pound on New Year's day enough with all my cast off clothes.>>" As Lister was one of the major subscribers to the new Philosophical Society natural history museum in Halifax, she had access to tickets: she made sure 2 of them were given to her servants Oddy & Cookson.¹³¹ The gifts, which were not gifts, were a display of gentry paternalism which was not really paternalism. It reflected self-interest more than philanthropy.

Patronage could also extend to making decisions about the future of tenants' children. Discussions were held among the three women living at Shibden, and between Anne Lister and Booth's father, about whether his son Matthew should be a scholar, a wool-sorter, a shoemaker, a labourer or a footman. Anne Lister expected to be of some assistance in any of these paths.¹³² There has been a

¹²⁹AL Journal 14 December 1834.

¹³⁰AL Journal 23 July 1835.

¹³¹AL Journal 15 March 1837.

¹³²AL Journal 28 December 1835, 29 April 1837, 12 May 1837, 14 May 1837.

great deal of historical scrutiny of both the form and the content of such *noblesse oblige*. Whatever its real purpose or desired effect, it did form part of the discourse about class identity. Anne Lister preferred it, however, if someone other than she was perceived as the merciful charitable one, and usually left such matters to Ann Walker.¹³³ The debate about "paternalism" and "patronage" has left out these gendered considerations: masculine words, Anne Lister preferred her more "feminine" partner to be seen doing it, supposedly to avoid the implication of any 'maternal' softness in herself. (Was it 'matronage' if women did it?) Thus, patronage related to constructions of both gender and class identity. It could be exercised for either tenants or servants, but in either case, was not exercised very often by either of the landladies living at Shibden Hall. Giving things away was simply not good business, but it was a practice that had to be repeated occasionally in order to again reinforce the gentry class identification.¹³⁴ A related theme can be found in the practice of pronouncing judgement upon the sexual behavior of both tenants and servants. The concern for respectability is where the discourses of class and gender most obviously overlap.

2. a. Tenants

Estate management increasingly became a business to Anne Lister. When tenants farmed well, they were "rewarded" with small improvements and renewal of their leases. When for some reason

¹³³See, for example, SH:7/ML/1092. Letter from Lister and Walker, Moscow, to Booth, Halifax. Also, when one employee was hired again after being fired for being drunk one afternoon, Ann Walker was to take the credit for the change. AL Journal 27 June 1835.

¹³⁴A philanthropic mill owner might give things away, but in this case the experience would be interpreted as being constitutive of a different class identity.

they did not farm well, philanthropic considerations were irrelevant to the business at hand. The story of Benjamin Bottomley illustrates this. Benjamin's father (also named Benjamin) first leased a farm at Bank Top from James Lister in 1762.¹³⁵ When Anne Lister concluded that the present and rather elderly Benjamin was not farming well, she attempted to evict him. She wanted to find a tenant who would farm well and keep up the value of the property. She was traveling at the time but, as always when she traveled, she kept a tight rein on estate business. Her aunt Anne wrote to her

about a little annoyance I have had respecting Benjamin Bottomley...Said he was exceedingly distressed at the idea of leaving the farm; indeed, when [Marian] saw him, he could scarce speak only, that they had been tenants to the family for seventy years. Marian also said it was thought it would shorten his life, and she had been told by a person...that it was not so ill farmed. As to that, I replied, I believed you had looked it over yourself, and might possibly be as good a judge, as others, but, after what she said I should certainly mention all this to you, for I would not have it on my conscience, to think, by omitting to mention what she had told me, that I should be accessory to the hastening Benjamin's death....¹³⁶

Anne replied, "I fear Marian would think me very hardhearted about Benjamin. But what could I do? Depend upon it, he is doing no good to the farm or to himself - he is only losing the bit of money he has...."¹³⁷ Bottomley was not about to let the matter drop so easily however, and in this he was no doubt acting from a sense of right or custom. He began demanding compensation, or "tenant right" for certain aspects of the farm as he left it which were considered to be of financial benefit to the landowner. It is not known in this instance

¹³⁵SH:2/SHE/SM/1762: Lease. James Lister of Shibden Hall to Benjamin Bottomley of Southowram, a farm at Bank Top, Southowram, for 1 year. February 3, 1762.

¹³⁶Muriel Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840" (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936), 418. Aunt Anne, Shibden, to AL, Hastings, 6 December 1831.

¹³⁷Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 419. AL, Hastings, to Aunt Anne, Shibden, 27 December 1831.

whether that benefit consisted of manure or some hay left in the field. In any case, Anne Lister realized that "there would be great trouble and expence in getting rid of Benjamin Bottomley."¹³⁸ By March 1832 Bottomley's claims had increased to £50 or £60. After a few months had passed and attorneys had been consulted, Bottomley was evicted with no payment of any kind.¹³⁹

There is no question here but that class gave her an enormous sense of power to deal with such problems; there are indications, too, that because her gender self-image was masculine, she felt the need to take decisive, authoritarian action. In negotiations both with tenants and lessees, she scrupulously avoided any hint of vacillation, compassion, emotion or other symptoms of what she would have called "womanish weakness."¹⁴⁰ It would be impossible to say whether or not she acted more harshly than other landowners, or whether the fact that she was a woman made her feel obliged to be even tougher than usual in order to protect her interests. Probably each landowner had a slightly different way of dealing with the tenants on his or her estate. Wide generalizations on interpersonal interactions seem as impossible as they do unfair. Certainly the experience of the relationship was constitutive of both a class and a gender identity.

Like other early nineteenth century landowners, Anne Lister invested money in tenants' buildings and in making little improvements to increase the value of the property. She did not expect to increase rents without improving their property a little. It was a two-way deal. Hemingway, for instance, asked her to finance the building of a mystal, or shed, for four cows. She expected the

¹³⁸AL Journal 7, 11 and 12 February, 1832.

¹³⁹AL Journal 16 July 1832.

¹⁴⁰AL Journal 11 March 1832.

cost of this improvement, at 9/. a rood just for the stone, to be recompensed in increased rent. She talked to Hemingway

about 5 per cent on what laid out. He said he did not know what to say, times so bad....talked a good while and at last I said well! it should all be done and we would manage about it as well as we could. I would consider his new gates and good farming and all the bits of jobs he did himself. [i.e., his capital and labour input into the bargain.] I have never done nor been asked by him to do anything and would do the best I could....¹⁴¹

In the end Anne Lister agreed to build the mystal for £60 and Hemingway agreed to pay £2 a year additional rent, a return of about 3% per annum.¹⁴² Such a scene would have been common on many small landed estates. According to F.M.L. Thompson, landowners expected only 1.5 to 4 per cent return on the investments made in improvements, and Anne Lister's expectation was in line with this.¹⁴³ (Note that her expected return on other estate activities, such as coal mines and worsted mills, ranged between 6-10 p.c.) Mutual 'deals' were made all the time. Her tenant Riley showed her a cottage and cellar that needed draining, and Moore showed her his brewhouse that needed draining, and she agreed to pay for both these jobs. In return, she told them they must henceforth pay their poor-rates.¹⁴⁴ She also agreed to mend the windows and fireplace in Joseph Smith's cottage on condition he paid his taxes himself.¹⁴⁵ When she negotiated a land lease with Aquilla Green she told him she would "put everything in good repair

¹⁴¹AL Journal 17 July 1832.

¹⁴²AL Journal 26 July 1832.

¹⁴³There are two or three other examples from 1832 of AL investing in a cow shed or a bit of walling for the benefit of some tenant's farm. There is also an interesting story about a fire at one of the cottager's houses on Pickergill's farm which had caught fire from his wool-combing stove. AL and a number of tenants all joined in to bucket water onto the roof. It is impossible to know whether she did this out of a sense of estate community or was simply protecting her property. AL Journal 29 December 1832.

¹⁴⁴AL Journal 24 February 1835.

¹⁴⁵AL Journal 8 May 1835.

[i.e., hedges & gates]. He himself might have the draining to his own fancy,and agreed, besides all this to be laid out, to give him £20 for tillage, i.e., in consideration of the run-out state of the land - on these terms the bargain was made."¹⁴⁶

This was still an age where the definition of private property had not become so fixed, and the old idea of tenant right was still in place - that is, a certain amount of value needed to be given to an outgoing tenant because of the labour investment he had made in the property or because of little items he might leave behind him. Thus when Thomas Pearson gave up Mytholm farm, Lister gave him £41.17.6-1/2d. in order "to pay Pearson's tenant right on giving up Mytholm farm."¹⁴⁷ Such things had once been a matter of course. However, the newer ways increasingly came into the foreground. When Pearson (who may or may not be related to the other Pearson) gave up the Stump Cross Inn, he left several brewing pans and things which the new tenant was not going to use, thinking them too small. Lister refused to pay for them, saying "it was not law" but her steward, Washington, said "it was custom." Anne Lister remained adamant. "If Pearson chooses to be awkward, let him," she said.¹⁴⁸

The tenants on the Shibden Hall estate formed a kind of community of their own, with a sort of hierarchy of their own, with some of the elite in that hierarchy being privy to information about the others, and still others being the regular confidants of Miss Lister herself. To her, a man who leased coal or a mill from her was in a slightly higher category from a man who leased a pasture or a cottage. Rent-days came twice a year, at the beginning of January and at the end of July. The tenants would gather at the Stump Cross Inn to pay their rent while Anne Lister paid for their dinner. When

¹⁴⁶AL Journal 22 March 1835.

¹⁴⁷AL Journal 31 January 1835.

¹⁴⁸AL Journal 7 February 1835.

tenants were late paying, they came to Shibden to pay. This could also be a cosy affair. Thomas Greenwood stayed for an hour and a half talking to her about the election, "then he paid me the xmas rent of the sheep croft & his pew in the old church - & I paid him the amount of both - 5/. in full of a bill he had against me for timber in Lower Place in May 1833...."¹⁴⁹ Greenwood also recommended an engineer for her to see about the mill at Mytholm for Aquilla Green. They were all familiar with each others' business. Some tenants were tempted to miss the rent-day if she happened to owe them money for a service or a product, but she told her steward, "I would not allow anyone to miss the rent-day. If I owed him thousands the rent must be paid at the day."¹⁵⁰ Her general estate policy of being rigid when it came to decision-making also applied in her business dealings with tenants.

Among the more elite members of the tenant community on the estate were apparently Matty Pollard, a woman with some kind of business out of her own home, and Hannah Green, Aquilla Green's wife, who gave Lister advice and information on various estate-related issues. Sometimes Lister just stopped by to chat, it seemed. When George Robinson's tenancy at the Mytholm Mill came up Hannah told her landlady that if Robinson's wife did not drink so much they might do very well but that Robinson "did a great deal of good in the neighborhood by employing the people, & the men said he was a very good master to work for."¹⁵¹ This was part of the consultation process with other people living on the estate which prevented her tyranny from being absolute.

Family connections and length of tenancy were weighty factors. For example, when the Stump Cross farm tenancy came up, a Mrs.

¹⁴⁹AL Journal 9 January 1835.

¹⁵⁰AL Journal 22 July 1837.

¹⁵¹AL Journal 30 January 1835.

Bottomley came to Shibden Hall to speak in favor of Mrs. Dewhirst. Mrs. Bottomley was "sister to Mrs. Dewhirst and to Pearson....came to ask if I had an objection to a woman for tenant of Stump Cross farm. I said no! I had no objection to anybody who would be a good tenant. The place would be let by ticket on the 16th of next month and anyone was at liberty to bid."¹⁵²

She may have expressed an equal opportunity policy when it came to sex, but not when it came to politics or, for that matter, morality. When Mrs. Dewhirst's son wanted to rent the Stump Cross farm, he came to her and

said upon his word & honor it was not true, that he had had a child by his woman servant, & I said I was very glad to take his word, and disbelieve the scandal..... if he married Pearson's daughter, of the Stump Cross Inn, and his uncle Thomas Pearson's father & the rest of them would set him up, I would say nothing against him...¹⁵³

John Pearson came to speak for the young Dewhirst about Mytholm farm, but Anne Lister again said that although she "would not have it on [her] conscience to make D[ewhirst] marry if he did not like it, but that I would not take him as a tenant so long as he continued unmarried."¹⁵⁴ Dewhirst himself came to her again at Shibden to plead for the Mytholm farm. She told him she had no objection to him, but rather to his "present want of respectability - that he, in his present circumstances was not sufficiently respectable for a tenant of mine."¹⁵⁵ Other people on the estate came to speak for Dewhirst and each time she reiterated her position, "if he had married and become a respectable family man he should have had the place."¹⁵⁶

¹⁵²AL Journal 29 December 1834.

¹⁵³AL Journal 1 January 1835.

¹⁵⁴AL Journal 5 January 1835.

¹⁵⁵AL Journal 8 January 1835.

¹⁵⁶AL Journal 18, 19 February 1835.

Even Hannah Green was unable to say much for his character, wrote Lister, when he ran after a girl he had no intention of marrying.¹⁵⁷

She had hesitations about letting Whiskum Cottage to Joseph Mann (one of the contractors digging the Walker pit) after he told her his unmarried daughter was within 2 or 3 months of giving birth. Neither was she going to be married, said her father, to "a worthless young man about 19 the father of two other natural children." Lister said she "could not do with her being confined at Whiskum cottage and Joseph promised to get her off for the time. He said it was a great trouble to him. I told him if I was in his [place] I would give the fellow such a licking as he never had in his life before."¹⁵⁸ She criticized her mason, Booth, when he employed two men at the wheel-race who had previously come before the magistrates on charges of assaulting a woman.¹⁵⁹

Thus, her concepts and perceptions of morality were powerful forces influencing important estate decisions. In this sense, 'sexuality' was something which was inter-connected with her business concerns, but it was something which came up only in hierarchical situations. That is, she did not lecture Rawson or Stocks or Briggs on their sexual behavior, whatever it may have been, as she considered them to be more or less peers. A concern for sexual respectability was directly related to hierarchical relationships. In her relationships with tenants and servants, their respectability reflected upon hers. It was not a case of each individual acting for themselves, but rather a community where one's behavior reflected on the respectability of the highest person in the hierarchy. It is difficult to know whether or not she was unusual in this. She was an

¹⁵⁷AL Journal 19 March 1835.

¹⁵⁸AL Journal 19 December 1835. See 4 January 1837 for another instance of morality influencing her decision about whether or not to let someone have a cottage.

¹⁵⁹AL Journal 19 January 1837.

unmarried female landowner, to whom respectability represented not only social status but social survival. Perhaps a male landowner, like Charles Lawton, who had committed incest with his wife's young niece and had sired at least one child by one of his female tenants, would not have had the emphasis on morality. It may be that he was just an exceptionally bad apple, but it may also be that Anne Lister's emphasis on morality is related to gender, to the growing perception that those concerns were women's concerns, that morality was the woman's sphere of influence. In other words, it may be that her concern for respectability related more to her feminized rather than her masculinized subject position. It is difficult to know, however, exactly how usual or unusual she was in this. Certainly she tended to discuss these kinds of personal and sexual matters more with her female tenants, while she discussed the bulk of purely political and business matters with male tenants and employees. It is clear that her own identity as a respectable heiress was related to the sexual morality of her tenants, as well as that of her servants.

2. b. Servants

The employment of servants was in itself a major cultural signal about class and status. It might not tell you the difference between old wealth and new wealth, but it distinguished the employers of servants from the non-wealthy quite markedly. As the century wore on, domestic service grew to be the single greatest category of female employment. There are numerous insights into the power dynamic of this kind of social relation which may be found in the Anne Lister journals. Perhaps some of these insights are almost stereotyped - 'my dear it is so hard to get good servants these days' - but on the other hand the starkness of this power relation serves as a fascinating historical instance of the kind of distortions of interpersonal relationships which can occur within a hierarchy.

Servants were to appear in public with clean hands and clothes and act appropriately deferential. Their behavior bolstered the display of class power which any serviced woman could wield. When planning on setting up an establishment in York with Ann Walker, in order to socialize there, they were to "take plate and linen and have a good handsome lodging and to call James by his surname and make him powder...."¹⁶⁰ A new Lister manservant had for his livery "an Oxford mixture jacket and waistcoat and plush breeches and plain yellow buttons...."¹⁶¹ This conspicuous display added to respectability. No "respectable woman" would go about anywhere without her servants. Servants delineated and helped to define the boundaries of respectability. Upon giving George a raise in wages in June of 1830, to £20 a year, in honor of his ten years' service, she

¹⁶⁰AL Journal 8 December 1832.

¹⁶¹AL Journal 26 December 1832.

told him she only "wished him to be a little more tidy about his work, and be as particular as possible about his dress and appearance and keeping his hands and nails clean - Poor fellow! he is [a] good hearted and attached, but sadly illiterate, vulgar servant - <<whom I cannot keep eventually.>>"¹⁶² She needed a servant who would add to, not detract from her prestige.

Anne Lister's manner of speaking or not speaking to her servants contributed to a construction of class which was based especially on this type of relationship. She must have given them verbal instructions on a regular basis but these instructions were so routine they did not enter the record. They hardly appear in that portion of the contemporary discourse which the journal represents except when she spoke to them for reasons of discipline, or when they were entering or leaving service. Because of their place in the hierarchy they almost disappear from the written record even though she had daily interactions with them. As easily as servants [women] seem to disappear from private record, they were nonetheless very much part of the gentry's [male's] public display. Both the written journal and the public symbolism formed part of the discourse of class [gender].¹⁶³

To exclude servants from discourse could literally be a way of disciplining them. It was a practice that needed to be repeated in order to construct identity. George Playforth was Anne Lister's manservant from June 19, 1820 until his sudden death on June 2, 1832 from an accidental gun shot wound to the head. They had had a long history together. Once when they were in Paris in 1829 her

¹⁶²AL Journal 20 June 1830.

¹⁶³Words in brackets are there to emphasize some of the possible theoretical overlapping. As we shall see in Chapter Six, when servants were not available to do certain things such as dress Anne Lister's hair, she expected her more 'feminine' partner Ann Walker to do it.

carriage was late. She was annoyed and told George it was up to him to look after these matters:

<<He answered that it was not his fault in a manner I did not quite like, tho' it was not exactly impertinent. I pothered over this in my own mind and meant to speak to him about it afterwards, but happened to hear Henry do quite as bad to Lady S[tuart] so determined to say nothing to George but merely give him less opportunity in future. The more, thought I, he speaks to me, the less I will speak to him. Hardly uttered at dinner. The less one speaks to servants the better.>>¹⁶⁴

This last generalization was obviously a rule of thumb which she more or less seemed to follow in later years. To not speak to servants, to exclude them from basic everyday discourse, if you will, reinforced the difference between the two parties and thus reinforced the power imbalance, which was crucial to the construction of identity. To exclude a group from discourse is an attempt to put them in a lower place.

A servant's misbehavior could be cause for widespread gossip among the gentry. Again morality was a central issue, and it is in this area that the hierarchical nature of the interaction becomes most obvious. In Hastings a Miss Wilbraham told Anne Lister that George Playforth had been seen drunk several times in the streets and had frightened "a gentleman's child." It was Mr. Walingham's child - but he would not have his name mentioned. He had told Lady Anne Scott about the incident but she, out of delicacy, had declined saying anything. Miss Wilbraham "would not for the world have herself brought in. [I] promised she should not. Expressed my thanks very much and my annoyance."¹⁶⁵

Issues of sexual practice were also part of the hierarchical discourse of class. Anne Lister's servants did not often engage in behavior which could be the cause of permanent unemployment:

¹⁶⁴AL Journal 17 July 1829.

¹⁶⁵AL Journal 11 February 1832.

their material position limited their agency. Most such issues were recorded in code. One evening the senior female servant, Oddy, came to the library and told Anne Lister that two other servants, Eugenie and Matthew, were "too intimate...more her fault than his...hoped she would pluck up spirit to keep Matthew out of the room...she thinks Eugenie would have him if she could get him."¹⁶⁶ George told his employer that Matthew "<<walked out>>" with Eugenie and "<<plays cards with her after all the rest have gone to bed. George does not like to see things go on as they do in this house.>>"¹⁶⁷ Oddy again came to speak to her "<<about Eugenie & Matthew. They sit on each other's knee in the kitchen & all is sad. Told Oddy I would try to find them out but if I could not in the course of a fortnight she really must tell me what was going on.>>"¹⁶⁸ It took her a bit longer than a fortnight, but when she finally discovered Eugenie and Matthew together "in the hut," it was the beginning of the end for them both.¹⁶⁹ She immediately sent for Eugenie and asked if she had any intention of marrying Matthew. Caught off guard, perhaps, Eugenie responded with a surprised, "No, Madame!" Lister then told her she was "at liberty this day month. Eugenie attempted to excuse herself but I merely replied, 'I have nothing more to say' and walked off."¹⁷⁰ A few days later Eugenie told her they did intend to be married and begged to keep her job until Matthew could get a farm. She said he had had a letter from his father about one on the 15th, the day after they had been discovered, and Lister "suspected some trick." She told Eugenie that she did not consider her "very fit for a farm, but

¹⁶⁶AL Journal 17 February 1835.

¹⁶⁷AL Journal 27 February 1835.

¹⁶⁸AL Journal 27 February 1835.

¹⁶⁹AL Journal 14 May 1835.

¹⁷⁰AL Journal 14 May 1835.

they must judge for themselves."¹⁷¹ Matthew also told her they intended to marry, as a result of which she retracted the dismissal.¹⁷²

A few months later, however, there was another household scene. She had all the servants before her in the north parlour, with Eugenie accusing John Clarke of swearing at her, and (a new) George accusing Eugenie and Matthew of stealing. "Gave all a little sermonizing & said I should know what to do about Eugenie. The talkation and cross examination lasted an hour. Had had Marian in at the last. Told her I meant to send Eugenie away, and Marian said she would send away Matthew."¹⁷³ Two days later Eugenie and Matthew had their bags and boxes packed - which Anne Lister took the liberty of examining before they left.¹⁷⁴

This distressing tale ends with Eugenie's sister sending a worried letter to Lister at the end of October, wondering where Eugenie was. She wrote back to Eugenie's sister saying that she could not "in conscience vouch for her being a well-conducted person. Conclude she is already married & in want of no other protection than that of her husband."¹⁷⁵ Towards the end of November Eugenie's sister wrote Lister a 3-page letter, saying Eugenie was in lodgings in Doncaster, ill, with not enough money to return to her family. "Repents having ever known Matthew. Not married."¹⁷⁶ Lister again wrote back, saying that Eugenie and Matthew had spent 3 or 4 days at a little Inn four or five miles away from Shibden and she had merely "concluded" that she was married. "It is not my intention to keep any servant who acknowledges sending out to buy wine, gin & brandy....if any guarantee of good

¹⁷¹AL Journal 21 May 1835.

¹⁷²AL Journal 30 May 1835.

¹⁷³AL Journal 1 October 1835.

¹⁷⁴AL Journal 3 October 1835.

¹⁷⁵AL Journal 1 November 1835.

¹⁷⁶AL Journal 19 November 1835.

conduct is required, I am very sincerely sorry that I am not the person who can conscientiously give it."¹⁷⁷ She did not offer any further help to Eugenie, and it is at this point that the woman completely disappears from the record.

Anne Lister was impatient and severe with the slightest demonstration of rebellion. One day (the new) George mumbled that he was treated no better than a dog, and she gave him notice the very next day, though promised to help him in getting a new place. "Told him of his badness of temper which without correction would be the cause of his unhappiness thro' life. Poor fellow! He said he now [saw] it very differently from what he did before. Would try to correct his temper. I should never have to find fault with him for impertinence again. Would do anything he could. Would lay down his life for me. Sure I should never get one who would do more than he would & after about an hour it ended in my saying I would try him again."¹⁷⁸ Dismissal without good reference might mean the end of employment for someone whose skills were solely in service.

At the same time, if the servants were ill, she and Ann Walker paid for doctors to come see them¹⁷⁹ and if, as happened in 1835, one of them was so ill they could no longer work, they offered to send money while the woman went home to recover. She told Mary "gently and kindly I thought she had better go home. Consoled and cheered her. She would not want for money. That I as well as Miss Walker should be very glad to do anything for her."¹⁸⁰ When Cookson's sister died suddenly, Lister gave her leave to go home for

¹⁷⁷AL Journal 21 November 1835.

¹⁷⁸AL Journal 14 June 1835.

¹⁷⁹AL Journal 20-22 December 1837.

¹⁸⁰AL Journal 2 December 1835.

a week as well as six sovereigns on account of wages.¹⁸¹ When Mrs. Heap broke her arm in a coach accident, she immediately sent for the doctor, Mr. Jubb, to look after her.¹⁸² "She seemed low, and was in tears. I cheered her as well as I could."¹⁸³ Servants were also occasionally allowed holidays, as when George was given leave to go home for Christmas,¹⁸⁴ but in general she kept a tight rein on their movements, and became annoyed if George was out late at night or if the women became too friendly with people in Halifax.¹⁸⁵

The journal reveals a series of practices which reinforced the respective power positions of both mistress and servant, but it is also clear that both parties had independent bargaining power, even if that power was unequal. Anne Lister had often criticized Cameron for her lack of skill in hairdressing or other activities. In Paris Cameron decided to give notice, but Anne Lister slyly suggested that she might not be able to get home if she did so.¹⁸⁶ It was not until they had safely returned to England that Cameron gave notice again, after outlining her mistress' faults to Anne Lister's friend and lover, Mariana Lawton. Mariana listened to Cameron and then, breaking her promise of confidentiality to Cameron, passed the gist of the conversation on to Anne:

<<....it seems Cameron has been miserable with me. I was so impatient and cross with her. She could do nothing to please me. Could not like me nor serve me with any pleasure. Dreaded to hear my bell ring. Determined not to go abroad again. All the complaint part was not to be told to me. M. said she did not wonder. She would not be my maid for fifty pounds a year. I am so proud and haughty to my servants. Why, said I, I really never dreamt of all this but I am as I am. How can I change myself all at once? I am hopeless of that. Well, M. said, I was so

¹⁸¹AL Journal 19 May 1837. Her full year's wages amounted to £16. AL Journal 10 July 1837. Upon her request AL gave her a raise to £18 per annum, 21 November 1837.

¹⁸²AL Journal 18 June 1837.

¹⁸³AL Journal 18 June 1837.

¹⁸⁴AL Journal 26 November 1837.

¹⁸⁵AL Journal 10 July 1837.

¹⁸⁶AL Journal 13 May 1830.

odd and particular it would be a very difficult thing to get a maid for me. Would not have met one under thirty. Derby a good place for servants. Better give twenty pounds a year or anything to be suited. Well, said I, if I get a sensible clever person who [will] let me have my way she will certainly have hers and lead me by the nose...>¹⁸⁷

To suit her own purpose she attempted to reverse the traditional power discourses. She wants the maid to let her, Anne, have her way. The servant is to lead Anne by the nose. Cameron gave her warning the next day and Anne replied with an insult about the level of Cameron's intelligence. "I merely said I thought she had done right, [that] she had not quite head enough for me."¹⁸⁸ Many months later she told Mariana that "Somehow or other I never dreamt of anybody's being unhappy with me. How little we know ourselves! You did me a lasting service by telling me. Everybody will gain by it."¹⁸⁹ Mariana told her that she must not expect attachment from any one of them unless they were more like a friend to her than a servant.¹⁹⁰ Mariana, who was not as interested in improving her social status as Anne Lister, had less invested in keeping them in their place. Anne Lister had an investment in continually clarifying a power imbalance through a repetitive series of linguistic practices and concrete acts. These practices, whether manifested in speech or dress or where servants sat, ate or slept, reinforced a hierarchically-based identity. Anne Lister's experience of these practices contributed to her self-image as a powerful, respectable landowner. This is reflected in the discourse of the journal. The servants' experiences of the same interactions, of course, constructed a different sense of identity (subjectivity). These identities

¹⁸⁷AL Journal 4 May 1832.

¹⁸⁸AL Journal 5 May 1832.

¹⁸⁹AL Journal 3 October 1832.

¹⁹⁰AL Journal 15 October 1832.

(subjectivities) could not have been constructed outside of the oppositional hierarchical relationship.

3. Conclusion

It has been one of the aims of this chapter to illustrate not only the gendered constitution of class, but also the class constitution of gender. What you are reading is Cat Euler writing about reading Anne Lister, which often means reading Anne Lister who writes about listening to Holt recounting how he has listened to Rawson or Mann; it means reading an interpretation of Anne Lister writing herself, constructing herself, writing with her class bias her perceptions of what Eugenie's sister has written, or what the estate gossip about Dewhirst's sexual adventures meant, etc., i.e., a discourse within a discourse within a discourse, and all immensely complicated by the passage of time. My primary interest as an historian is to discover not only the means by which women's oppression has been constructed within social discourse, but the means by which women have used their own agency to defeat or distort or manipulate what appear to be, on the surface, almost deterministic aspects of those oppressive constructions. I am interested in what degree women have colluded or aligned themselves with those constructions (class, for example) for whatever reasons, and to what extent those constructions have affected the development of women's agency itself. Obviously Anne Lister acted in ways which did not fit easily into the discursive categories of her time; her agency manipulated these discourses for her own purposes. Anne Lister's economic activities on the estate distorted certain constructions of gender (women were supposed to be ignorant about engineering), and reinforced others (women in her

class were supposed to have enough income to be leisured). She similarly moved between class discourses of, on the one hand, high profit investments and cut-throat competition and, on the other, gentlemanly honor, clean hands and distance from the vulgarities of the market. In her relationships with her tenants and servants, discourse about sexuality was a major aspect of the construction of the hierarchy. She chose to collude with some hierarchical constructions and distort others for her own ends. These ends were to increase and maintain both her status and her income. This motivation allowed her to engage in her own time's discourse in a powerful fashion: not only was she a successful estate manager, developing her own coal mines and planting thousands of trees, but she created, at the same time, a four million word monument to her activities.

Experiences are like ingredients which the cook, agency, may form into various identities. The same experience may be interpreted by one individual's agency as an experience of class, and by another as an experience of gender, thus contributing to the formation of identity more firmly around one rather than the other category. It is possible in Anne Lister's case that her experiences of estate business contributed simultaneously to both her class and her gender identity. The record she left depicts a series of confrontations, conflicting information and a long-running example of her basic estate policy: never change your mind in public. She never looked back or vacillated but pressed stubbornly ahead with her own plans. She represents herself as an extremely tough negotiator, consistently refusing to give an inch. If this is accurate, such a reputation would have made her business negotiations more effective. The men with whom she dealt were involved in cut-throat competition, willing to do anything to ruin the next man. In an era

of economic transition, competition was rife, even on a landed estate. Her behavior was not unusual. She simply followed suit. Ruthlessness was essential to success. While she was able to manipulate some discourses, she obviously did not fully escape the discourses of her time, and both her class and gender identities reflect this.

Chapter Five will explore Anne Lister's record of her political involvement. She interpreted many of her political actions as stemming from or contributing to her masculinized gender identity. However, her gentry identity as a respectable, propertied woman of society was also crucial.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Gender and Politics: Two Women's Tory Influence in the Age of Reform

The Reform Act of 1832 created new parliamentary constituencies and changed the laws about who could vote and why. In boroughs such as Halifax, men owning or occupying property worth £10 a year became eligible for the franchise, as well as tenants in the counties who paid at least £50 a year in rent. Before the Act Halifax had no Parliamentary representation at all; because of it, Halifax was given two members, and a small percentage of its male population was given the franchise. The Whigs under Lord Grey passed the measure after resistance by conservative members of the House of Lords and much popular excitement in favor of the bill. Intended to be a limited and final reform, it eliminated some rotten boroughs and gave Members of Parliament to previously unrepresented large cities and towns. As a "reform," the Whigs said it would eliminate the corruption of the older voting patterns.¹ That, at least, was some of the propaganda in its favor.

Some hailed the reform bill as a victory for the emerging middle classes of the great manufacturing towns; others have pointed out that the landed influence, if not increased, at least lost no ground, because greater numbers of tenant farmers gained the vote. But it was not the measure the working classes had hoped for: the basis of representation remained property, not the male individual.

¹John Phillips, The Great Reform Bill in the Boroughs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 2-3.

This chapter will trace Lister's increasing political involvement from the initial dramas and debates of the Reform Bill through the borough and county elections of 1832, 1835 and 1837. As is so often the case with Halifax, events occurring on a national scale were reflected in a minor way in the newly created borough. The Tory candidate, James Stuart Wortley, lost his first bid in 1832 to two Whigs, Rawdon Briggs and Charles Wood. In 1835, the number of Tory members increased nationally, and Wortley, by one vote, was one of these. In Westminster, the Whigs and radicals had by that time joined in a sort of coalition in order to maintain power; in Halifax they joined forces in an attempt to win the election. The Tories responded with more plumpers² than before and "the activity of all parties was unprecedented."³ Wortley lost the 1837 election and Halifax sent the respectable Whig, Wood, and the more radical Protheroe, to Parliament.⁴ We shall see how Anne Lister's political assurance was shaken by the Tory failure that year in both borough and county. This loss, combined with growing union activity in the district and the awareness of local Poor Law disturbances, pushed her to even greater political involvement. After the Tory defeat she pronounced it as her ambition to have [influence] over 50 votes and began trying to organise meetings with the Borough and County Chairmen of the Conservative Registration Committees.

In this chapter it will be argued that the Reform Bill of 1832 actually gave Anne Lister and Ann Walker, female members of the

²Each £10 householder had two votes - one for each MP that Halifax was allowed. Electors could vote for one or two candidates, but not use both votes for one candidate. A vote for one candidate only was known as a "plumper." A split vote meant the votes had been shared between two candidates.

³John Crabtree, A Concise History of the Parish and Vicarage of Halifax (Halifax: Hartley and Walker, 1836), 539.

⁴In order to avoid confusion, I have endeavored throughout to distinguish between James Stuart Wortley, Lord Wharnccliffe's third son, Tory candidate for one of the two new parliamentary seats of the borough of Halifax in 1832, 1835 and 1837, and his brother, John Stuart Wortley, who stood for the West Riding in 1835 and 1837.

landed classes, more influence over voting and male voters than they had ever previously exercised. At first they were slow to organise themselves, but by 1835 they were canvassing more tenants and by the elections of 1837 they had become intensely partisan. The days preceding both borough and county polling days were full of bustle at Shibden Hall, with notes sent furiously to and fro between the women and the male chair of the conservative election committee or his representatives. Both women were willing to dash off at a moment's notice to cajole a recalcitrant tenant, hoping against hope even in the face of appalling defeat, as with John Wortley's loss of the West Riding race in 1837.

It is well to keep in mind that Lister was a woman exercising political power in an era in which the odds were stacked against her. She and Ann Walker could only vote when it came to relatively minor issues like the election of Poor Law Guardians⁵ or the new clerk of the Navigation Company.⁶ Neither woman could vote in Parliamentary elections. If she wished to maintain her public image of respectability Anne Lister could not attend political dinners and speeches. When her workmen went off to hear Wortley's speech there is no record that she ever attended any of these speeches, despite the fact that other ladies were sometimes present in a special gallery erected behind the hustings.⁷ When a petition against the abolition of church rates was being circulated in Halifax she urged her solicitor and tenants to sign it but there is no record that she signed,

⁵They voted for Mr. Higham but even these votes were sent by proxy through their solicitor. See AL Journal 4, 6, and 10 February 1837. There is growing interest in women's ability to vote in non-Parliamentary situations before 1918. See particularly Patricia Hollis, Ladies Elect: women in English local government, 1865-1914 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

⁶See AL Journal 11, 12 June 1837 and 21 July 1837. In a rare conversation with a leading Whig, she discussed the Navigation clerkship with Mr. Rawdon Briggs. Both agreed there could be no better investment. She went on to make the rather unfortunate statement that "the railroad will not hurt the canal - the former will never pay." AL Journal 11 June 1837.

⁷AL Journal 15 July 1837 and Crabtree, Concise History of Halifax, 535.

solicitor and tenants to sign it but there is no record that she signed, thought of signing or would have even been allowed to sign the petition herself.⁸

In ladies' company she often maintained that she was "no politician," yet when she visited the leading conservative men of Halifax in the summer of 1831 she aggressively pushed forward her favorite candidate. She believed that all property should be represented, even if that property happened to belong to women. As a result of this, she and Ann Walker pressured their various tenants into voting Tory so as to make sure their own property was satisfactorily represented. To her this was not blatant corruption but the taken-for-granted exercise of power by property. She felt fully justified. Once, when her behavior was being described by people in Halifax as intimidation, she said she would gladly explain herself to the House of Commons Select Committee if need be. She made little or no attempt to hide what she was doing in the code, except on only two or three occasions.⁹ In general she was quite forthright. By 1837 it was an established estate policy that men who refused to vote for a Wortley would never get or keep a Lister farm, cottage, contract or favor. In this sense Anne Lister's idea of how and why political activity occurred conforms to the first two of Nossiter's discourses, as mentioned in Chapter One. That is, she saw the voting process "as an occasional facet of a wider social life, [and she saw] voting as essentially a financial transaction...."¹⁰ She took for granted the discourse of legitimate influence. Her political views were part

⁸AL Journal 31 March 1837.

⁹She used it in 1830 to privately contemplate women's suffrage and she used it to privately express positive thoughts about the Reform Bill. She also used it later to record her kick-back payment to a tenant whose rent she had raised in order to give him a vote.

¹⁰T.J. Nossiter, Influence, Opinion and Political Idioms in Reformed England: Case Studies from the North-east 1832-1874 (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1975), 5.

and parcel of how she thought the estate and national community ought to work.

It will further be argued that Anne Lister's political activity was an act, or a series of acts, which constructed gender. The entire process not only contributed to her gender identity, but her gender identity in turn gave her a greater sense of her right to participate. It is more difficult to analyze the role of Anne Lister's more 'feminine' partner Ann Walker. She seemed to follow Anne Lister's lead, and, though she also attempted to influence her tenants politically, it was primarily Anne Lister who engaged with powerful local male political actors. It must always be kept in mind however that this is the received portrait we have from Anne Lister's writing itself, and she was quite capable of a masculine bias in the linguistic portrayal of her own and Ann Walker's experience. Both Lister and Walker threatened to evict tenants who would not vote blue, or conservative, and there is some evidence that in at least some cases, these threats were carried out. Few tenants, however, seemed willing to lose their farm or cottage for a political principle.¹¹ Most tried to accommodate their landladies who, after all, believed in the increasingly unpopular, older constitutional political principle that property, not people, ought to be represented. Anne Lister refuted allegations that she was intimidating people. She had no wish to unfairly influence anyone, she would say. She only wished that her property would carry the weight of her opinion.

Embedded within the discourse of her time and class was the expectation that tenants would be deferential. Certainly D.C. Moore's research indicates that the electorate continued to be open to

¹¹A classic example, perhaps, of a situation in which material conditions, not discourse alone, adversely affect agency.

influence and corruption after 1832,¹² and, although this has since been questioned,¹³ I think it is safe to say that Anne Lister was part of a struggle during which an older discourse was contending with a newer one: sometimes the two were simply unintelligible one to the other. Certainly her tenants voted Tory if they wished to retain their farms. She saw this as totally acceptable, whereas a radical Halifax tradesman would have seen it as a prime example of what was wrong with the *ancien regime*. These two varying concepts of the constitutional narrative in the early nineteenth century were constantly at odds.

There was little she did which was historically surprising. We have here simply a portrait of known practices painted with unusual detail; we have an unusual woman engaged in ordinary squire-type activities. Had she been a man, her enormous diaries would have been extraordinary only because of the wealth of detail which they contain. F.M.L. Thompson has amply recorded the practice of landlord pressure, though notes that not every landlord indulged in it.¹⁴ He mentions the practice of splitting larger tenancies into £50 a year voting tenancies in the county, and the creation of £10 householder properties in the boroughs.¹⁵ Landowners with property could create votes by building new £10 houses in a borough and installing sympathetic tenants, or by building a new farmhouse and putting two £50 tenants on a £100 county property which, for example, previously held only one. After a required

¹²D.C. Moore, "The Other Face of Reform," Victorian Studies 4 (1961): 7-34; *Idem*, "Concession of Cure: The Sociological Premises of the First Reform Act," Historical Journal 9 (1966): 39-59; *Idem*, The Politics of Deference: A Study of the Nineteenth Century Political System (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1976).

¹³Phillips, The Great Reform Bill, 27-29.

¹⁴F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963).

¹⁵F.M.L. Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals in the West Riding 1830-60," English Historical Review 291 (April 1959): 214-239.

amount of time, the landowner's political influence would be thereby enhanced.¹⁶ Since the Shibden Hall estate included properties in both borough and county, Anne Lister used every means at her disposal to increase the number of votes over which she had some influence in both areas. She had close association with men in charge of the Halifax district of the Conservative Election Committee. F.M.L. Thompson writes that "where they were in parliamentary boroughs these district associations were the party headquarters for both Riding and borough affairs, and thus gained double experience if not double influence."¹⁷ This was certainly the case for the Conservatives in and around Halifax.

It is clear from the diary material that the two women saw the political situation simply as a question of party. Newbould's reluctance to speak of "party politics" in the 1830s may or may not be true at a national level;¹⁸ but at the local level it was quite obviously appropriate. The Conservative party was represented by the color blue; Whigs by yellow or orange. These are the terms by which Anne Lister began referring to various men: was he a blue or a yellow? His specific opinions were irrelevant. Phillips' assertion, that reform "generated and strengthened partisanship,"¹⁹ based on studies of voters in southern boroughs, is also a fair assessment for Halifax.

¹⁶See John Prest, Politics in the Age of Cobden (London: Macmillan Press, 1977), 17-22, for a discussion of the fairly complex requirements for even the £10 householder franchise.

¹⁷F.M.L. Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals," 223.

¹⁸Ian Newbould, Whiggery and Reform 1830-41: the Politics of Government (London: Macmillan, 1990).

¹⁹Phillips, The Great Reform Bill, 300.

1. Anne Lister and Political Power 1830-1832

1. a. The Pre-Reform Context: Votes for Women?

In this period Anne Lister was involved in a struggle within at least three strands of discourse. These three strands may be braided together in order to analyze her daily life. First, there is the general contradiction between women and politics. Secondly, there is the particular way in which Lister not only interpreted her political interests as masculine, but the way having a masculine gender identity partially helped her to pursue those interests. Thirdly, we have the older, conservative discourse of community-based deference and the legitimate influence of property conflicting with the newer discourse of individual (male) political rights. This section will examine Anne Lister's views on women and political power in a pre-reform context and will then examine her experience and her choices in the first borough election of 1832. Her experiences led her to be even more politically active and to develop concrete strategies for winning the election. These will be examined in Section Two.

To breathe the words "female" and "politician" together in the same sentence in 1830 was cause for respectable eyebrows to raise a millimeter or two. Intelligent and lively women frequently had a thought or two on current events, however, and so strategies were developed to communicate these and at the same time maintain one's respectability. One warm Paris day in June 1830 Anne Lister was engaged in conversation with Harriet de Hagemann, Lady Stuart de Rothesay's sister. The two ladies discussed the recent revolution in Belgium and then the relative political merits of Prince Leopold and the Duke of Wellington, who was to be Prime Minister only five months more. Madame de Hagemann supported the former (a rather liberal stance) while Anne Lister supported the conservative duke. It

soon became apparent that they did not agree. "But of course," recorded Lister, "we neither of us supported our opinions very warmly - each professing to be no politician. She thought ladies had never any business with politics. I said [usually], but there were exceptions, e.g., ladies unmarried who had landed property had influence arising out of that property and might and perhaps ought to use it moderately." She then added, in code, "<<I wonder what Madame de H. thinks of me. Am I too energetic in my opinions for her? She seems milk and watery to me. I wish I could [learn] to keep my opinions more hidden from such persons. I always forget to be restrained till it is too late. I am too much a man at heart.>>"²⁰

She attributed the warmth of her political opinions to gender; yet as the 1830s wore on, and she retired from social life to spend more time on the estate, the apparent contradiction of her sex and her political activity seemed to fade. She recorded no comments in 1835 and 1837 relative to this aspect of gender and politics. Perhaps she had become accustomed to herself. For most women the fact of being a woman, unmarried or not, precluded participation in politics, but Anne Lister evaded the dominant discourse and even manipulated it for her own ends.

When the July 1830 revolution occurred in Paris Anne Lister was traveling in Spain with Lady Stuart de Rothesay, wife of the British Ambassador to France, and their two daughters. During and after this trip she and Lady Stuart de Rothesay had a number of private evenings together; they discussed a whole range of taboo subjects such as bestialism, homosexuality,²¹ hermaphroditism,²² the sexual habits of the duchess of Wellington,²³ and votes for

²⁰AL Journal 6 June 1830. Passages in crypt are <<inside brackets.>>

²¹AL Journal 17 August 1830.

²²AL Journal 9 October 1830.

²³AL Journal 14 October 1830.

women. Finally Lady Stuart declared that she thought "<<too much mind [was] bad for a woman>>" and that women were men's "<<inferiors in mind and body. More littleness and trick and childbearing marked the difference,>>" she asserted. Anne argued "<<gently that both were, in some sort, the work of education, from being kept and from dress. On politics she asked if I would have women vote. (Proof she has heard this question agitated?) No, said I, not if married, but I would have property represented.>>"²⁴

Her idea of women's interests in the "Age of Reform," were formed more around class identification than from any sense of political identification with women as a group. The political subject was "property" not "women." Yet during this period she never gave any indication that she thought being a woman, per se, excluded her from political interests. She accepted that even her feminine partner Ann Walker had a legitimate political interest when she was considered as an unmarried property owner influencing the tenants of her property.²⁵ Strong political pressure on those tenants was therefore acceptable. Yet women's involvement as women was a topic she recorded strictly in code.

One Sunday early in April of 1831 Anne Lister happened to be musing on the political situation of women as she walked to and from church. She conceived of an ambition to write "<<a work on women to follow up a petition [sic] to Parliament for women under proper restrictions being allowed to vote. I have long thought of the latter and that they have in fact the right.>>"²⁶ Her thoughts on this occasion seem to be some of the most radical with regards to women

²⁴AL Journal 24 October 1830.

²⁵Their own 'marriage' did not appear to abrogate this in Lister's eyes, at least as its implications concerned Ann Walker.

²⁶AL Journal 10 April 1831. I do not know for certain whether she had heard of a petition being circulated or whether she intended to circulate one herself, though the latter is highly unlikely.

that she has recorded.²⁷ These ideas did not arise from thin air, but from a specific political and cultural milieu. Madame de Hagemann had just the day before shared with her a book on St. Simonianism (which Lister thought hopelessly idealistic). The Reform Bill had been introduced in the House about five weeks earlier, and had passed its second reading by a majority of one only ten days previously. She had been reading the Parliamentary debates on the subject throughout the year and was well aware of arguments about representation as well as Wellington's arguments against reform.

Despite speaking and hearing the required feminine rhetoric of being "no politician" she always expected a political exchange of some nature in her correspondence with her female friends. When the Duke of Wellington resigned as Prime Minister on November 22, 1830, the ministerial changes were a frequent topic in these letters. Lady Gordon "rejoiced" at the downfall of the Tories, but then she had also supported the revolution in Belgium. Vere Hobart, later to be Lady Cameron, "grieved" over the ministerial changes. Anne Lister herself "heartily regret[ted] the circumstances which made the resignation of our late premier so expedient, and think we shall have him back again by & by..."²⁸ Her most biting comment on the rise of the Whigs was "there comes clamour and all the old over again....."²⁹ She later spoke with her aunt about the difficulty the new ministers would have "with their schemes of reform....I much doubt whether all the reforms the people want can ever be brought about under the existing order of things....."³⁰

²⁷ Anne Lister received some of her most energetically political letters from the highly respectable Mrs. Norcliffe of Langton Hall, with whom she stayed up late one night talking about politics. They agreed that since women were not allowed to vote, and since they had no political rights, why should they care for politics? Yet even this thought was recorded in code, since it was a potentially disreputable one. AL Journal 8 June 1832.

²⁸AL Journal 29 November 1830.

²⁹AL Journal 29 November 1830.

³⁰AL Journal 8 December 1830.

Yet the political comments she shared with her female friends were always limited to a few lines and when she did express political opinions among her female friends, she tried to be careful to express sentiments she knew would be acceptable. This was part of the balancing act that included not only gender but class considerations as well. In the privacy of her code she admitted that "<<I am not committed on the reform question as yet. I have always lately and to the Stuarts and people here professed my self a friend of the Duke of Wellington. In my heart I scarce know whether to wish for the reform or not. I think I rather incline towards it but I shall wait for circumstances before I declare myself. Not even my aunt as yet know[s] what I wish about it...>>"³¹ And yet, two days later, when Madame de Hagemann professed herself firmly in favor of the Reform Bill, Anne Lister spoke out for the first time in front of her aunt as being firmly opposed to it.³² It was only after the enfranchisement of Halifax that she became more positive about political reform - she saw how it would benefit her.

When she realized at the beginning of 1831 that Halifax was to have its own Parliamentary member (later it was changed to two), she at once began intriguing with Lady Stuart over possible candidates.

Lady Stuart, speaking of the news of the day, said there would be members for Halifax, as one of the towns of 10,000 inhabitants. [I] asked if Lord Pollington's next brother was of age. No! Lord Pollington would be next June. Then said I, he would do very well for one of our members; and I have another in mind who would do all the business (meaning Mr. W. Priestley). Lady Stuart thought the thing would be very corrupt and expensive. Oh! no, said I, we should manage all this better.³³

³¹AL Journal 5 March 1831.

³²AL Journal 7 March 1831.

³³Extract from AL Journal 5 January 1831 as quoted in John Lister, "Social Life in Halifax, early in the Nineteenth Century," Halifax Guardian 21 September, 1889.

This exchange was part of the discourse of deference: the upper classes would choose the representative, not the majority of the population. As it turned out, Lady Stuart's nephew James Stuart Wortley ran as the Conservative candidate in the three Halifax elections which are recorded in Anne Lister's diary. Both he and his brother John Stuart Wortley, who ran in the county elections, received financial contributions from Lister as well as the full force of every vote she could influence. Lister sent regular reports of both Wortleys' progress in letters to her old friend Lady Stuart, who in turn expressed her gratitude for her support of their candidacies.

Anne Lister continued to keep up with the changes in the bill and to read the latest political commentary. In April, just as the bill was about to go to committee, a move was made to maintain the present number of members. "Hunt's speech capital," noted Anne Lister, "in showing that the Bill will please nobody but those who gain a vote by it; all the rest dissatisfied and awakening from their delusion on the subject."³⁴ When at the end of April the amended bill was killed by a majority of 8 Anne Lister recorded that she was "very glad."³⁵ The government appealed to the country. The king prorogued Parliament and the election which followed was a clear mandate for reform, the Whigs being returned with a majority of 130 seats.

Thus when Anne Lister returned to Halifax that June of 1831 it looked likely that eventually Halifax was going to have two members. She immediately began visiting some of the leading conservative men of the parish, asking to whom they had committed themselves and suggesting as a candidate Lord Pollington, the man she had discussed

³⁴Extract from AL Journal 16 April 1831 as quoted in Lister, "Social Life in Halifax," Halifax Guardian 28 September, 1889.

³⁵Extract from AL Journal 22 April 1831 as quoted in Lister, "Social Life in Halifax," Halifax Guardian 28 September, 1889.

in January with Lady Stuart. In fact, she seemed to plunge into political intrigue, racing around the parish energetically before she went traveling again. On June 10 she

called at Mr. Parker's. [Her solicitor.] Just said I hoped Stocks [who later ran as the Radical candidate] would not be our M.P.,³⁶ and begged Mr. Parker not to pledge himself to anyone, but wait a little. I thought I could find a better M.P. than Stocks. Whiteley, too, is against Stocks. [Whiteley the bookseller.] At Mill House at 12.45. Long talk after dinner on the subject of an M.P. for Halifax, Mr. William H. Rawson [old gentry family; local Tory bankers] seeming seriously to think Stock's chance very good... I said, anyone but Stocks;³⁷ asked who else had been thought of. Three had been named...I said I thought I could name a better than any of them - of a family originally from Halifax, the name familiar to us all, particularly at Shibden. Who? Declined mentioning at that moment; would hear what Mr. Waterhouse said...off to Haugh End; their politics much more blue or Tory than theirs at Mill House. We had hardly had tea before Mr. and Mr. [sic] Edwards came. Mentioned my M.P. to Mr. Edwards and that it was Lord Pollington. Speaking to Mr. Edwards about the persons sent down by Government to take the census of the voters there would be in the town. 'Yes! he had been at his house yesterday. There would be 1,036 in Halifax and 4,004 in Manchester.'³⁸

She also pushed her candidate, Lord Pollington, during a visit to James Edward Norris of Savile Hall, who had already pledged himself to William Lascelles, who later withdrew. He had made out a private list of all the voters, noting for which candidate they would probably vote, and gave a copy to Anne Lister. "He had 18 votes himself, and had 20 houses that he meant to raise to three stories, and that would

³⁶She was in fact in a curious relationship to Stocks, as he that very month was again appointed as one of the Leeds and Whitehall Road Commissioners. (Extract from AL Journal 20 June 1831 as quoted in Lister, "Social Life in Halifax," Halifax Guardian 5 October 1889.) She would have future dealings with Stocks in this capacity, as the road went through the estate and when she wanted to plant trees along the right of way for her own profit she needed to interact with him on this matter.

³⁷Presumably because he had radical leanings.

³⁸Extract from AL Journal 10 June 1831 as quoted in Lister, "Social Life in Halifax," Halifax Guardian, 5 October 1889. I assume this figure was arrived at by multiplying the number of voters by two. In 1832 there were 531 voters (or 1,062 votes), representing some 92.65 per cent of the registered electorate. On the other hand, the pre-Reform report on the Borough of Halifax estimated that there were 1,330 houses there worth £10; but possibly not all were occupied, or not all of the owners or occupiers of these houses paid their rates and taxes, or had lived there twelve months, or had resided within seven miles of the borough for six months before 31 July, and therefore would not be entered upon the register of electors by the overseers. Parliamentary Returns, Borough of Halifax, 1832. See also J. Prest, Politics in the Age of Cobden, 17.

give him twenty votes more."³⁹ All of these meetings with the leading gentry men in the parish involved exchanges between what she perceived of as equal political agents: she and they.

Anne Lister knew exactly where the blue political power in the borough lay: with those old gentry families with whom she had been on visiting terms since her youth. She made a point of visiting the men who would consistently play their part for the next decade: James Edward Norris, Christopher Rawson and John Waterhouse. The latter two gentlemen proposed the Wortley candidacy on the hustings in the Piece Hall and seconded his nomination at each election. Both men had also been talked of as potential Tory MPs for Halifax. On the other side of the question were ranged, among others, the prominent Whig manufacturer, Jonathan Ackroyd, and the banker, Rawdon Briggs. Briggs and Ackroyd presided over a Halifax meeting in May 1832, regretting that the Lords had rejected reform measures. The meeting resulted in a pro-reform petition with 11,700 signatures being sent to Parliament.⁴⁰ The Halifax Whigs decided to put forward two candidates, initially approaching Mr. Wentworth, the eldest son of Viscount Milton, who later declined and was replaced by Rawdon Briggs himself, and Charles Wood, of Hickleton Hall, Doncaster, later Lord Halifax.⁴¹

The entire country was in turmoil as the Lords refused time and again to pass the bill. The correspondence within Anne Lister's female networks reflects this agitation. In a letter to her aunt from Hastings that November Anne asked, "What political news have you?.... I suppose the Parisians are in despair for us, thinking us on

³⁹Extract from AL Journal 16 June 1831 as quoted in Lister, "Social Life in Halifax," Halifax Guardian, 5 October 1889.

⁴⁰Eric Webster, "Parliamentary Elections in the Parish of Halifax 1806-1837," Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society (1993), 46-47.

⁴¹Crabtree, Concise History of Halifax, 534.

the point of being the prey of pestilence [the cholera] and civil war...."⁴² Her aunt responded,

Every possible precaution is taken to prevent the cholera, that we do not alarm ourselves. Indeed, I think it would be very wrong to do so, but trust in Providence to avert so great an evil from us. Riots, incendiaries and murders are, I think, more to be dreaded....We shall be very anxious for news now that Parliament has met, and what they will make of the Reform Bill. Now that Lord Grey has provided for all his friends, and is in delicate health, he most likely will be glad to resign office.⁴³

Mrs. Norcliffe at Langton Hall wrote to inform Anne that what with "incendiaries, cholera, and reform," she had decided to stay at home and not go to Bath that winter as she often did.⁴⁴

When the Lords again defeated the bill and the king delayed the new creation Grey resigned in early May of 1832. During the brief period while Wellington discovered his inability to form a ministry, Anne Lister noted, "Ministers out. Joy go with them. We have had enough of Lords Grey and Brougham." Writing to Lady Stuart de Rothesay later that same day, she "could not resist writing them a little word of congratulation on the changes of ministry."⁴⁵ She was soon to be disappointed. Back in Halifax by May 17 she heard from a tenant that "the town was like a fair - the people had a bonfire of almost or quite three cart loads of coals for rejoicing at the speedy return to office [of] Lord Grey and his colleagues - the Duke of Wellington unable to make a ministry."⁴⁶ The next day she stayed after dinner talking "despairing politics with Mr. Saltmarshe.

Revolution certain by more or less sudden degrees. He has serious

⁴² Anne Lister, Hastings, to aunt Ann Lister, Shibden Hall, 10 November 1831, as quoted in Muriel Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840." (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936), 417.

⁴³ Aunt Ann Lister, Shibden Hall, to Anne Lister, Hastings, 6 December 1831 as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 418.

⁴⁴ Mrs. Norcliffe, Langton, to Anne Lister, Hastings, 6 December 1831 as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 419.

⁴⁵ AL Journal 11 May 1832.

⁴⁶ AL Journal 17 May 1832.

thoughts of investing money in the United States bank or buying an estate in Canada, and going there."⁴⁷ She told Lady Vere Cameron that a demonstration had just been held in Halifax where the people were "parading a straw figure of the king with a petticoat over his head and then burning him....then came at 8 p.m. news they liked better and the church bells rang till 12 at night - Thursday the town crammed and one of the largest bonfires ever seen....the Duke of Wellington himself can do nothing for us now, unless by drawing off his friends, he saves the house of peers for some while longer."⁴⁸

Which in the event, of course, is exactly what happened. The threat of the new creation was enough to keep those in opposition from attending on the day of the crucial vote and on the 4 June, 1832, the final reading of the bill was passed in the Lords by 106 to 22.

⁴⁷AL Journal 18 May 1832.

⁴⁸AL Journal 19 May 1832.

Figure 20.
Borough and County Election Results, 1832

Halifax Borough Election December 14, 1832:
492 electors voted

	Plumpers	Wood	Splits Stocks	Wortley	Total
Briggs (W)	4	150	69	19	242
Wood (W)	6		31	48	235
Stocks (R)	59			27	186
Wortley (C)	80				174

West Riding of Yorkshire, County Election December 20, 1832,
[uncontested]:

Viscount Morpeth (W)
Sir George Strickland, Bt. (W)

Sources: F.H. McCalmont, The Parliamentary Poll Book of All Elections from the Reform Act of 1832 to October 1900, (London: Edward Stanford, 1900); J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12, (1976): 172-201; Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1835 and 1837, (Halifax: Hartley and Walker, 1835 and 1837); William Wardell Bean, The Parliamentary Representation of the Six Northern Counties of England...from 1603, to the General Election of 1886, (Hull: Charles Henry Barnwell, 1890).

1. b. First Borough Election - 1832:

The Tories are surprised by Wortley's defeat

Halifax held its first borough election in December 1832.⁴⁹ There were a relatively tiny number of electors. Out of a population of some 30,000⁵⁰ only 531 men were eligible to vote - this was approximately 7.48 per cent of the total male population over twenty years of age.⁵¹ In the event, 492 men actually voted. Only about 5 per cent of these were considered to be labouring men. Figures for Huddersfield, Leeds and Bradford are similar: there 4.5, 3.5 and 6 per cent of voters respectively were members of the working classes.⁵² Of the 6,487 houses in Halifax in 1831, 1,330 were assessed as being worth £10 per annum.⁵³ The new franchise requirements included the stipulation that all voters must have paid their own taxes and poor-rates. Because of this, Anne Lister started making her tenants pay all their own taxes and had all the poor-rates put in her tenants' names.⁵⁴ There is ample material analysing the voting patterns of Halifax electors in all three election years,⁵⁵ but for clarity's sake I have included voting tables.

⁴⁹Though it had, briefly, elected Members of Parliament under Cromwell.

⁵⁰The exact population of the borough in 1831 will always be an estimate. Census figures for that year showed the township of Halifax to have 15,382 people, and the townships of Northowram and Southowram 10,184 and 5,751 respectively. However, the new borough included the whole of Halifax township but only parts of North and South Owram. Conveniently enough, those parts included parts of the Shibden Hall estate. This cartographic phenomenon also creates difficulties when trying to distinguish how many Lister tenants voted in borough versus county elections; I was not able to pinpoint the exact locations of farms on either side of the borough line and some tenancies shifted from year to year.

⁵¹J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12 (1976), 173.

⁵²Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax," 173, his footnotes 6 and 7.

⁵³J. Holladay Philbin, Parliamentary Representation, 1832. England and Wales (Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1965), 229.

⁵⁴AL Journal 24 and 27 February 1835. In order not to create too much hardship, she sometimes agreed to do various little repairs for them in return - as her part of the deal, so to speak.

⁵⁵See Crabtree, Concise History of Halifax; Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax;" Webster, "Parliamentary Elections in the Parish of Halifax;" and Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals in the West Riding."

Soon after the bill was passed, Anne Lister walked into Halifax to conduct some estate business and met Mr. Waterhouse of Well Head. They briefly discussed the speeches the candidates (Wortley, Wood, Briggs and Stocks) were giving in town that day and the next.⁵⁶ Wortley had been so hooted and hissed by the crowd that his speech was hardly audible. Nevertheless Lister wrote to Lady Stuart de Rothesay to say that "from the two fold division among the Whigs, I hope Mr. James Stuart Wortley has some chance of being brought in....[he] made a good speech this morning in the Piece Hall, but hissed and hooted at by the radicals....perhaps the radicals will bring in Stocks and the two Whig candidates, Wood and Rawdon Briggs junior, will be left in the lurch." To old Lady Stuart⁵⁷ and to Isabella Norcliffe⁵⁸ she echoed this same perception, that the the Whigs would be "left in the lurch" and that Stocks and Wortley would be the victors. She repeatedly told Lady Stuart de Rothesay⁵⁹ and Mrs. Norcliffe⁶⁰ that Wortley was "sure of his election." Old Lady Stuart wrote to her to ask for her interest for Mr. Wortley.⁶¹

In the months preceding the election she had exercised some influence over one or two voters, but was not engaged in the extensive canvassing she later displayed. There are various reasons for this. She was over-confident of Wortley's success. She later came to realize the value of making sure each of her voters had registered but the necessity for this was not as obvious in 1832 as it became afterwards. Also, she spent most of her time courting Ann Walker that autumn, and had given up even much of her estate work while she visited at Cliff Hill.

⁵⁶AL Journal 29 June 1832.

⁵⁷AL Journal 30 June 1832.

⁵⁸AL Journal 2 July 1832.

⁵⁹AL Journal 11 July 1832.

⁶⁰AL Journal 22 July 1832.

⁶¹AL Journal 20 November 1832.

Still, the rudiments of what would later be formalized as the Conservative Election Committee were already in place. One warm Friday morning late that July Anne Lister was watching over her workmen on the estate when Mr. Rawson's servant came to her with a copy of her account at Rawson's bank and a note asking her to get John Bottomley's vote for Mr. Wortley.⁶² She immediately set off but he was not at home. She then "told his wife to send him to speak to me, saying he must give me his vote."⁶³ Bottomley came up to Shibden Hall the following Monday. He had signed some sort of paper for Lord Grey and Milton, he said, and was therefore pledged. But Anne Lister told him the latter was not going to be a candidate after all so that Bottomley was in fact "at liberty and must give me his vote which he therefore did." That evening she wrote a note to Christopher Rawson, esq., Hope Hall:

Dear Sir: I have signed and enclose you the receipt - John Bottomley says, he 'signed for Lord Grey and Milton,' but as I told him that Mr. Wentworth having declined coming forward he, Bottomley, was at liberty, he has promised me his vote for Mr. Wortley, and therefore you may count upon it. I am, dear Sir, very truly yours, A. Lister.⁶⁴

⁶²Of the two Bottomley's mentioned in the estate ledger, 1826-1828, one is probably Benjamin and the other John. CDA, SH:2/SHE/SM/1834/5: Lease. Anne Lister of Shibden Hall to John Bottomley of Breasley (Brierley?) Hill in Southowram, a messuage called Breasley Hill (or Willey Hill) for 1 year. 9 October 1834. See also: CDA, SH:2/SHE/NM/1838: Lease. Anne Lister of Shibden Hall to George Harper of Yeadon and John Bottomley of Bradford, Stump Cross Inn in Northowram, for 3 years. 5 February 1838.

⁶³AL Journal 26 July 1832.

⁶⁴AL Journal 26 July 1832. "Charles Wood, the son of Sir Francis Lindley Wood and already an important figure in West Riding Whiggery, had with his marriage in 1829 to Mary Grey, daughter of the second Earl Grey, the prime minister, become a member of the leading Whig family of the day. The Tories were quietly engaged in attempting to get the Hon. W. Lascelles as their candidate and so matters remained until the following year. In May 1832 hostilities between the Radicals and Whigs broke out again when the Whigs requisitioned Wentworth, son of Earl Fitzwilliam, the head of West Riding Whiggery, to stand even though he was under the legal age to take his seat in Parliament. The meeting at which this decision was taken broke up in disorder and made complete the split between the Radicals and Whig-Liberals. Before the election, however, Wentworth withdrew and the Whig leaders under increasing attack from Radical taunts of a possible alliance with the Tories to ensure election, nominated one of their own local leaders, the banker Rawdon Briggs, Junior, to stand. The Tories, having failed to secure the Hon. W. Lascelles, had their nomination declined by three local Tories, John

Speaking to Mr. Mitchell, her land valuer, she heard on 21 November 1832, apparently for the first time, that it was "doubtful whether Wortley will come in or not."⁶⁵ The election was less than four weeks away. Yet after Wortley gave two long speeches in the week before the election, she still felt he was sure to be brought in. She sent a letter to old Lady Stuart at Richmond Park to tell her "she knew how sincerely Mr. Wortley had my good wishes....sure of his election. Our cause was drooping and many given up for lost till Mr Wortley's eloquence and admirable management won it back. His two last speeches had fixed all his old friends and gained him many new ones - sent her...this morning's Halifax paper for her to judge for herself."⁶⁶ (This was the second issue of the new Tory paper, the Halifax Guardian, whose editor was also overly confident of his party's success.)

The day before the election Anne Lister again sent for John Bottomley to tell him to vote for Wortley. Bottomley promised to do so but complained that

they had all been at him, and some said they would not employ him again if he would not vote their way, but he told them how I wanted him to vote and seeming to care nothing about it but that he thought he ought to oblige me - It is quite useless to leave such men as he uninfluenced - he knows nothing and cares nothing about it, and is literally best satisfied with the idea of pleasing somebody he knows.⁶⁷

Her journal records that Anne Lister canvassed only one tenant for the borough election in 1832 - yet this became the normal pattern for many more as the decade wore on. Everyone became the object of her political attentions - not only tenants but local businessmen, tradesmen, doctors and solicitors were asked their color. Her regular

Waterhouse, George Howroyd and Christopher Rawson, before eventually securing James Stuart Wortley, the second [third?] son of Baron Wharnccliffe." J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," 177-178.

⁶⁵AL Journal 21 November 1832.

⁶⁶AL Journal 8 December 1832.

⁶⁷AL Journal 11 December 1832.

nurseryman, Throp, told her he had no vote this time because his landladies paid his taxes but that he would vote as she liked all his life if she could get him a shop window made, and give him a new and higher roof.⁶⁸

The poll took place on the 12th and 13th December, 1832. The two Whigs came out ahead: Rawdon Briggs, with 242 votes and Charles Wood with 235. The Radical Michael Stocks received 186 votes and poor James Stuart Wortley, the Tory in whom Anne Lister had placed so much hope, came in fourth with 174 votes.⁶⁹

Her post-election letter to Lady Vere Cameron expressed her thorough disappointment at the unexpected loss of the election:

I have never got up my political spirits since. All the *soi-disant* knowing ones, and *soi-disant* leading people, had made themselves so sure of success, that the failure burst upon us like a thunderbolt. There was decidedly clever management on the other side, and this and the popular cry bore down everything. I hardly thought myself capable of such strong political excitement and mortification. I fear the elections are bad enough - far too many anti-church men. I am completely sick of public events. The unions are still in full force. Many of the Delvers (stone quarriers) have turned in to their work again; but they have gained the day, and the advance of wages.⁷⁰

In her post-election letter to Lady Stuart she wrote,

There must have been foul play somewhere or other. Our party is now bouyed [sic] up on the belief that, should there be a vacancy....Mr. James Wortley is sure to be elected. I trust there is some chance of this; but I have no longer much dependence on the strength of the conservatives just at present. The spirit of radicalism is fearfully strong; and the dissenters are so united against us, I do not see how we can make head against them. It is quite clear that if we could not bring in Mr. James Wortley, whom everybody professes to like, we should have no chance at all with anybody else. But I am sick of politics....⁷¹

⁶⁸AL Journal 12 December 1832.

⁶⁹Crabtree, Concise History of Halifax, 537.

⁷⁰Anne Lister, Shibden Hall, to Lady Vere Cameron, Italy, 31 December 1832 as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 435-436. See also AL Journal 31 December 1832.

⁷¹Anne Lister, Shibden Hall, to Lady Stuart, Richmond Park [?], 17 January 1833 as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 436.

2. Strategies for Winning, 1832-1837

In this section we will see how Anne Lister used the experience she gained in the election of 1832 to develop strategies for increasing conservative political influence and winning the elections. Anne Lister began meeting with 'other' political men in the parish, pressuring her (male) tenants whether an election was near or not, altering rent records, artificially creating properties, and regularly contributing to Tory party funds. Finally, we will look at the allegations of intimidation which were directed at her. These were particularly poignant reminders that her language was not the language of her adversaries. In Section Three, we shall see how these strategies succeeded in actually electing Mr. Wortley.

2. a. Unofficial Tory Committee Meetings at Shibden Hall

Anne Lister met with the leading Tory men in the district both before and after each election. She was an important part of the male political network. Local Tory political players consistently sought not only "her" votes but her financial assistance for the registration of voters and for the election of candidates to both borough and county. During polling days there was a constant exchange of notes and information about voters between the ladies at Shibden and the Conservative men, such as Mr. Adam, Mr. Jubb, Mr. Hey, Mr. Drearden, Mr. Craven, Mr. Norris, Mr. Edwards, the Rawsons and the Waterhouses, meeting in the committee rooms at the White Swan.⁷²

⁷²Each of these men, except Mr. Hey, gave a plumper for Wortley in each of the elections. Mr. Samuel Waterhouse gave a plumper in 1835 but split his vote in 1837 between Protheroe and Wortley. Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1832, 1835, 1837. Mr. Hey is not named in the poll book.

One or another of the men on the committee would sit with her and discuss the current party strategy. These occasions formed the basis for what became a series of informal Tory committee meetings at Shibden Hall. Since she could not go to the committee, the committee came to her.

After the 1835 elections Mr. Darcey Hey, the local chairman of Mr. James Wortley's committee, invited Anne Lister to a post-election meeting at the White Swan or to attend by proxy - she supposed it was to solicit further funds to pay for the election.⁷³ He did in fact ask her for £10 more.⁷⁴ Mr. James Norris, secretary of the Halifax District of the West Riding Election Committee for Mr. John Stuart Wortley, also requested her attendance at a meeting at the White Swan, again in order to solicit funds. There is no record that she ever attended any of these meetings but this, of course, would be in accord with respectable behavior for a woman of her class at the time. Instead, she sent him a note enclosing her payment.⁷⁵ In the autumn she received a circular requesting her attendance at another meeting "to consider upon the best means of supporting the registration of conservative voters for this borough, on the approaching revision." She of course did not attend, but decided to send money to support the registration effort.⁷⁶ Mr. Samuel Waterhouse later called at Shibden to ask directly for her financial support for the registration drive. He said Mr. Wortley had put down his name for £25 and ten others had put down their names for £10 each. She told him to put down her name for £10 as well, but that she hoped not to be further called upon.⁷⁷ In 1837, however, she

⁷³AL Journal 21 June 1835.

⁷⁴AL Journal 25 June 1835.

⁷⁵AL Journal 8 July 1835.

⁷⁶AL Journal 14 October 1835.

⁷⁷AL Journal 21 October 1835.

sent Mr. John Waterhouse a further £10 to help with the expense of registering conservative voters.⁷⁸

After each election Anne Lister became even more determined to be better organized politically. One day soon after one of the county elections she met with Mr. Jubb and told him,

We must not be beaten again. Must manage better. I thought of sending for Messrs. John Dearden jr., chairman of Mr. John Wortley's county committee and Mr. John Edwards Dyson chairman of Mr. James Wortley's borough committee and of the conservative association and Mr. Adam and Mr. Jubb himself to talk over my plan for the better management of voters. Mr. Jubb not to breathe about what I had said. Should send for them for 12 noon on Monday and J[ubb] to be here at that hour.⁷⁹

She also asked her solicitor, Mr. Adam, to "come up some evening and talk over election matters...thought I, A[dam] may come when he likes, I will not send for him or Mr. D[earden] jr. Mr. J.E.D[yson] will be enough."⁸⁰ No mention is made in the journal, however, that more than one gentleman at a time ever discussed politics with her.

At one point Lister and Mr. Jubb discussed the possibility of asking Mr. Christopher Rawson to run for Parliament at the next borough election. Anne Lister said she preferred to ask Mr. Henry Priestley, as Christopher "had too many trades, and had been too unlucky in offending some influential people..."⁸¹ Besides, she urged, Mr. Priestley's niece had lately married Lord Torrington, and this was a favorable connection for the borough.

In fact, one of the influential people Mr. Rawson had offended was Anne Lister herself. She had proof that he was stealing her coal, as she put it, by digging under her estate. Privately she told Mr. Jubb that she had some doubt of Mr. Rawson; that he had "behaved

⁷⁸AL Journal 15 June 1837.

⁷⁹AL Journal 5 August 1837.

⁸⁰AL Journal 5 August 1837.

⁸¹AL Journal 26 February 1835.

very unhandsomely" to her about the coal and she "could prove him not a man of his word. But private feeling of this sort should not be mixed up with public matters. I should not let private feeling operate against my best endeavors to serve his, R[awson]'s election for the borough - should give him a hundred votes if I had them."⁸² When her tenant John Bottomley asked her about Rawson, she gave an answer which again indicated her understanding of a public/private divide: "Had John Bottomley to ask me if he should vote for Mr. Rawson, Christopher.... Had come to ask me because he knew Mr. R[awson] had not behaved very well to me about the coal. I said that was a private affair. His election was a public one. He was a good conservative, and therefore if I had a hundred votes he should have them."⁸³ Party loyalty came first, no matter what the difficulties between personalities.

Tory strategy in the borough included the creation of votes via the manipulation of property. She always phrased the connection between new votes and property in subtle and polite fashion. Anne Lister wanted Mr. Jubb to see the sense of better and more regular organisation of both borough and county voters. She had a long discussion with Jubb following the 1835 elections. "I again pressed our having a regularly organized plan, and said we should bring in two members instead of one the next time. I only wished for three years time and by the end of that I hoped to have the command of 20 votes. Mr. Jubb said the Constitutional Committee gained ground fast. John Edwards a sort of standing chairman till another election.....The Edwards making a great many votes, ditto the Rawsons, particularly Mr. William Henry -...."⁸⁴ After the 1837 elections were over she told her tenant Hainsworth, also a member of the conservative

⁸²AL Journal 2 May 1835.

⁸³AL Journal 22 April 1835.

⁸⁴AL Journal 26 February 1835.

association, that "A[nn] and I were determined to have voters. Would not rest till we had about 50. H[ainsworth] much pleased. Entering upon a long recital of our praises at the conservative association, now consisting of 600 members."⁸⁵ When they next met, Hainsworth told her he was "all for my association system. He himself can influence - can count upon (had made?) 20 votes."⁸⁶ He told her that Mr. Holroyde the attorney was the present active secretary to the conservative association, of which Mr. John Edwards Dyson was chairman. All applications were to be made to, and information given to, Mr. Holroyde. But, as Anne Lister noted, Hainsworth himself could give a great deal of information. He said he and Mr. Dyson and Mr. Holroyde would be glad to come to Shibden and talk things over. "Said I should be glad to see them."⁸⁷

2. b. Creating Votes and Pressuring Tenants

There were various ways in which Anne Lister could create new votes - splitting a property was one, and raising the rent of an existing property was another. When she told her tenant Hainsworth to get her two tenants for her two fields in town this meant "two votes."⁸⁸ She told her steward Mr. Washington that she "wanted to make a vote or two." She talked to him about the fields and mentioned her intention "of building two ten or twelve pound houses at Northgate - thought of a butcher and a blacksmith..."⁸⁹ When discussing the possible sub-letting of Northgate with Greenwood, the two of them calculated that this would give her "seven good blue

⁸⁵AL Journal 9 August 1837. Thomas Hainsworth, a timber merchant at Hatter's Close, gave a plumper for Wortley in 1835 and 1837. Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1835 and 1837.

⁸⁶AL Journal 11 August 1837.

⁸⁷AL Journal 11 August 1837.

⁸⁸AL Journal 9 August 1837.

⁸⁹AL Journal 22 July 1837.

votes"⁹⁰ in the borough elections - but this was only because Greenwood promised to secure his own, three of his tenants' and a foreman's vote. This technique of making votes by splitting properties apparently became more and more widespread.⁹¹

Her tenant Charles Howarth paid an annual rent of £46, which she raised to £50 in order to give him a vote. After the rent-day, she told him, he must "get himself registered and give me his vote. He behaved very well about it, and said he would not forget to do as I had asked him. He asked me to return him something out of the increase of rent. No! I said I would not do that. The rent should be really £50 per annum but he must trust to me."⁹² When it came to the rent-day she recorded in crypt, "<<Charles Howarth's rent raised two pounds that is four per annum to give him a vote for the Riding. I made him a present of two pounds before he paid his rent.>>"⁹³

She also raised George Naylor's rent slightly so he had a vote for the Riding. He told her he was

Afraid if he was a blue nobody would buy milk or anything of him. Oh! said I never mind - never [mind] what you are. You may give a yellow vote for anything they know. But get registered. I don't want to hurt you.⁹⁴

In the days of the open ballot, this was not quite true. After the poll book was published, everyone in town knew how electors voted.

Some tenants, like Mark Town, worked for the Whig Jonathan Ackroyd. Because his loyalties were torn, she refused to "make him a

⁹⁰AL Journal 22 January 1835.

⁹¹F.M.L. Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals," 221. Thomas Greenwood, variously described as a cabinet maker and a timber merchant at Old Market, Halifax, gave a plumper for Wortley in the borough elections of 1835 and 1837. Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1835 and 1837.

⁹²AL Journal 26 June 1835.

⁹³AL Journal 1 July 1835.

⁹⁴AL Journal 8 July 1835.

vote."⁹⁵ "If I did make him one, and he voted against me, I should take away his vote as immediately as possible."⁹⁶ Clearly she was certain of her own ability both to create and to destroy the ability to vote among the men who came within her sphere of power.

She not only influenced tenants just before elections and revisions but also whenever a property became open for a new occupant. She interviewed over half a dozen men who wished to lease the Stump Cross Inn, in each case asking for their (county) vote. Hinscliffe was a man who in the past had leased some of her coal, but he was a Whig. His son was interested in running the Inn, but she refused to consider it until the father turned conservative.⁹⁷ One young Stump Cross Inn hopeful, James Crompton, told her he and all his family were blue "and if he had had 100 votes would have given them all to Wortley. Said I did not wish to influence anyone unfairly, but was anxious to have all my people conscientiously of my own way of thinking in politics."⁹⁸ Shaw the plasterer's half-brother, Picard, turned out to be a radical. She told him he "needed not trouble himself to make further inquiries about the Inn."⁹⁹ A Mr. Smith "wished to have as little as possible to do with politics but promised to give me his vote quietly. Enough....S[mith] seems the most likely person I have yet had to offer."¹⁰⁰

When she leased Little Marsh farm to Womersley, a man who also did some walling for her, she said she "hoped he would stay

⁹⁵AL Journal 4 November 1835, 21 January 1837.

⁹⁶AL Journal 4 November 1835.

⁹⁷AL Journal 9 January 1835; Re., Stump Cross Inn tenancy, her comments on Mawson and Walton's politics: AL Journal 17 January 1835.

⁹⁷AL Journal 19 January 1835. When she had a gameskeeper's position open, she also refused to consider Hinscliffe's son for the job because of his father's politics. She wanted to hire a man who had already voted blue. AL Journal 27 June 1835.

⁹⁸AL Journal 19 January 1835.

⁹⁹AL Journal 21 November 1837.

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 28 November 1837. For more potential Stump Cross Inn tenants, see 30 November 1837, (Unknown) 12 December 1837 (James Holt), 14 December 1837 (a Mallinson), and 29 December 1837 (Mr. Davison).

there his life and give me a quiet vote. Yes! He thought between farm and quarry he should have a vote and would give it me."¹⁰¹ She later told Womersley that "Only one [tenant] had refused me a vote and, of course, he knew how it would be."¹⁰²

2. c. Allegations of Intimidation: a conflict of principles

What one Whig or radical meant by 'intimidation,' a Tory might conceive of as the legitimate interest of property. The Whigs and radicals in the district frequently complained of undue pressure and intimidation on the part of the blues.¹⁰³ One of the members of the Halifax Conservative election committee, with whom Anne Lister had spoken on a number of occasions, Mr. William Craven, was in fact called before the House Select Committee on bribery and corruption in June of 1835. He answered the 302 questions put to him in a manner which threw all blame for unfair intimidation in the parish upon the yellows.¹⁰⁴ Some two years later Mr. Craven sent Lister a note about "looking after" her county voters. In it he also asked Ann Walker to "see after" her tenants John Pearson and one of her Radcliffe tenants.¹⁰⁵ After that election Anne Lister had a long talk on politics with Mr. Craven, who had called at Shibden Hall. They discussed "the system of conservative unions" and she explained her ideas on the subject "as to finances and securing votes and property. Mentioned..... << that A[nn] would quit Mallinson and Hartley.>> Mr.C[raven] seemed to think about what I had proposed. Said he should be glad to call again."¹⁰⁶ Her system of "conservative unions"

¹⁰¹AL Journal 2 February 1837.

¹⁰²AL Journal 11 September 1837.

¹⁰³Webster, "Parliamentary Elections," 52.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁰⁵AL Journal 18 July 1837.

¹⁰⁶AL Journal 21 September 1837.

seemed to involve every conservative in the area banding together to form a united business and property front against all who might vote against them.

As far as Anne Lister knew, her name was rarely mentioned in allegations of unfair intimidation. On a couple of occasions, however, she recorded that both she and Ann Walker were the objects of such discussion. Once she almost let Mytholm Farm to John Mallinson, the son of a very old Lister tenant. She offered to drain some of the land and rebuild some fences, and asked John for his vote. However, "M[allinson] wished to be neuter [sic] - I said these were not times for that. The exclusive dealing system forced on us by the Whigs left us no choice what to do. We must support our friends. M[allinson] is evidently a Whig at heart?"¹⁰⁷ she queried herself. She called the deal off and told him she was "very sorry. But I found he ought to be and must be a yellow, and therefore we could not agree. He seemed sorry but said as little as he could. Really did not dare give a blue vote. Said I would make no attempt to change him. Did not want to do that. Only wanted the blues to come to me for anything I had to dispose of. Told Jonathan, with a smile, he must bring up his other two sons blues - if he did and one was a skinner, he should have Mytholm old house and the skin-pits..."¹⁰⁸

Her old tenant Hannah Green, with whom she sometimes chatted, told her she ought not let Mytholm to Mallinson because he was a yellow. Hannah told her she ought to let it to Dewhirst but Anne Lister constantly refused to let Mytholm to Dewhirst because of his character - because of "this girl he goes after but with no intention of marrying."¹⁰⁹ Later she explained to Aquilla Green, Hannah's husband, why the letting to John Mallinson had gone off:

¹⁰⁷AL Journal 23 February 1835.

¹⁰⁸AL Journal 2 March 1835.

¹⁰⁹AL Journal 19 March 1835.

"Did not wish to influence any man's vote unfairly but would not have any tenant living in the town and having a vote upon whose help at a dead lift I could not count. A.G. thought the conservative side was the better and we got on very well on this part of our subject."¹¹⁰ One of her workmen, Thomas Greenwood, came the next day to say that the problem between herself and John Mallinson was all over Halifax, "that all was ready for signing but that I would have all off on finding that John Mallinson would not give me a conservative vote. This mentioned as intimidation. Explained. Said I supposed they would have me before the house of commons. Would go with pleasure."¹¹¹ On another occasion Mr. Crapper, a staunch blue rope-maker,¹¹² wanted to see Ann Walker in order to find out whether or not it was true that she had told Mallinson of the Black Horse that if he did not vote for Wortley she would evict him.

C[rapper] had betted 3' sovereigns to one that A[nn] had not said any such thing. No! I believed she had not. She had called to remind him of his promise not to vote at all and told me his wife was very civil but he did not seem quite knowing whether to be civil or not. He said he must look to his customers and I (said A[nn]) must look to my tenants and rode off - but she had not quitted him. He is not under notice to quit whatever he may be and if, as C[rapper] said, he, M[allinson], had plumped for Protheroe, he had broken his promise given some time ago to A[nn] and I believed she would quit him.¹¹³

By a careful manipulation of language, Lister was able to discuss innocuous matters such as "finances and securing votes and property" without sounding as if she was really discussing an

¹¹⁰AL Journal 22 March 1835.

¹¹¹AL Journal 23 March 1835. Later, when another of Mallinson's sons was competing for a local scholarship against one of Sowden's sons, she seemed willing to write a letter of recommendation to the vicar for him because of the elder Mallinson's political support. See AL Journal 18 May 1835.

¹¹²John Crapper, a rope-maker of Bull Green, Halifax, gave a plumper for Wortley in the borough elections of 1835 and 1837. Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections, 1835 and 1837.

¹¹³AL Journal 1 August 1837. Later that year she spent time with Mr. Crapper discussing the possibility of building on two fields in town which would make another two blue votes. AL Journal 30 November 1837.

organised plan for every Tory landowner to evict tenants, change property valuations, and do business exclusively with blue tradesmen. She spoke from within the cultural tradition of deference and influence. Sometimes those to whom she spoke rejected that tradition out of hand. But material reality, i.e., the roofs over their heads, limited the degree to which they could actually reject that older discourse.

2. d. Landlady-Tenant Exchanges: aid for votes

Anne Lister did not simply exercise power over her tenants. It was sometimes a two-way exchange. Because those male individuals had something she wanted (their rent), she was likely, in the style of *noblesse oblige*, to give them some favor in return for their vote. Her class power over these men actually reversed the usual gender dynamic, 'feminizing' those men who were supposed to be deferential, and 'masculinizing' she who demanded obedience. By entering the political arena on these terms, she reinforced the perception of herself as a powerful local squire, a political equal of the Rawsons and Edwards, who also influenced votes in this way. She further reinforced the perception of her political power by inscribing every such exchange in her own ink.

Over and over she expressed the idea that she did not wish to influence any man unfairly of course, "but that any kindness I might ever have in my power, would of course be done for one of my own opinion...."¹¹⁴ Often she would do little favors for those whose votes she had, or wished to gain. During the county election of 1835, among others, she canvassed her tenants Hardcastle,¹¹⁵ George

¹¹⁴AL Journal 23 April 1835.

¹¹⁵AL Journal 23 April 1835.

Robinson,¹¹⁶ John Oates and Thomas Hall¹¹⁷ for their blue votes. Often she visited them more than once. If they weren't at home she might speak to their wives. In all cases the conversations were very similar - often they did not wish to vote at all. Many of them also had business with people whose chosen political party was not that of Anne Lister. They were in the difficult position of pleasing either their landlady or pleasing their customers.

When canvassing Hopkins, the conversation about his giving a blue vote was mixed with her promising him a new barn.¹¹⁸ When canvassing the Halls, she bought his turnip bed for 50/. Despite the fact that his son was a radical, the elder Hall had promised to vote for Wortley. She told the younger Hall that "when there was nobody of my opinion I would change, but so long as there were people who thought as I did, I should get them round me as much as I could."¹¹⁹ John Oates, she recorded, was also

a Morpeth but very civil about it. Said he had voted on that side all his life and could not change his principles - but that he was not registered and had no vote. I smiled and said it was very well for surely he would not vote against us. I mentioned the circumstance of Joseph Hall saying that it was his father that was tenant. That new tenants and old ones, that was a different thing. J.O. said he was glad to hear that.¹²⁰

Voting according to your landlady's wishes could certainly have its benefits. One of Ann Walker's tenants ran a pub called the Hare and Hounds. His wife came out one day to meet the two landladies walking in the lane and told them of her distress. Apparently Ely Taylor, who ran a nearby beer shop, wanted to get a regular public house license. He had been promised one if he voted for the yellows.

¹¹⁶AL Journal 23 April 1835, 1 July 1835.

¹¹⁷AL Journal 23 April 1835, 1 May 1835.

¹¹⁸AL Journal 8 June 1835.

¹¹⁹AL Journal 1 May 1835.

¹²⁰AL Journal 1 and 2 May 1835. I think this is the same Oates that is in the coal business with Hinscliffe & Green.

She was afraid the competition would be detrimental to her business. They consoled the woman and told her Taylor could not get such a license - that Ann Walker would oppose it.¹²¹ We are not told the details, but by the end of the month Mr. Adam sent a note to inform her that Ely Taylor "had not got a licence, and was not likely to apply again seeing his chance so small."¹²²

Anne Lister's tenants could also count upon her protection in difficult circumstances. When Abraham Hemingway came to Anne Lister to explain about his vote he said he was

a blue at heart but if he gave a blue vote for Mr. the honorable John Stuart Wortley, Mr. Holland would take away the road for which he pays 6/. per annum. There is only a right of pack and prime, that is, a horse road, by [St?]ead syke - and Abraham brings all his Halifax tillage that way, so could not do without the right of cart road.... Had the large plan down to see how I could manage about the road.¹²³

She later spoke with George Naylor about building Hemingway a new cart road and by the polling day it was all arranged. Anne Lister told Hemingway to give them his vote. "I would not be humbugged by Mr. Holland or anyone," she recorded herself as replying to Hemingway. "I would stand between Abraham Hemingway and Mr. Holland as to the road. A[braham] H[emingway] very well satisfied and went off to the polling booth."¹²⁴

¹²¹AL Journal 17 August 1837.

¹²²AL Journal 31 August 1837.

¹²³AL Journal 20 July 1837.

¹²⁴AL Journal 4 August 1837. In fact she did build a new road for him, see AL Journal 29 September 1837.

3. The Impact of Agency

This section will outline Anne Lister's specific political actions before, during and after the county and borough elections of 1835 and 1837. Her strategies for increasing her political power worked in so far as the conservatives won the election of 1835 - but only by one crucial vote. Without her specific individual influence in the borough, it is unlikely that Wortley would have won this election. Had she been a woman uninterested in politics, i.e., exercised her agency differently, it is possible the Whigs might have won by one or more votes. When the 1835 election did not go their way, the people of Halifax responded violently, and there were two days of riots. The majority were not allowed a vote any more than Anne Lister was, but they did not have the property to create surrogate votes for themselves.

3. a. Borough Election - 1835: Wortley finally wins

The failure of Wortley in 1832 did not make her give up politics after all. She became, instead, even more interested in success, and from the moment she became aware at the end of 1834 that a new general election was to be held, she began concentrating most of her energies in that direction. In one letter she told Charlotte Norcliffe "that there is some hope for Wortley here....."¹²⁵ That same evening she again called for her tenant John Bottomley, "to get his vote for Mr. Wortley - he is all for him now of his own accord. So said nothing pleased me better and that I was much obliged to him and only wished he could persuade some others to be as wise...."¹²⁶ On 9 December she wrote to Lady Stuart saying that James Wortley was expected in Halifax to give his election speech,

¹²⁵AL Journal 2 December 1834.

¹²⁶AL Journal 2 December 1834.

Figure 21.
Borough and County Election Results, 1835

Halifax Borough Election January 8, 1835:
601 electors voted; 47 did not

	Plumpers	Splits		Total
		Protheroe	Wortley	
Wood (W)	5	275	56	336
Protheroe (R)	13		19	307
Wortley (C)	233			308

West Riding of Yorkshire, County Election January 17, 1835,
[uncontested]:

Viscount Morpeth (W)
Sir George Strickland, Bt. (W)

On Lord Morpeth being appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, new writ. County Election May 6, 1835:

Viscount Morpeth (W)	9066
Hon. John Stuart Wortley (C)	6259

1835, District of Halifax:

Morpeth Voters	Wortley	Total Votes	Total Registered
1108	331	1439	1691

Sources: F.H. McCalmont, The Parliamentary Poll Book of All Elections from the Reform Act of 1832 to October 1900, (London: Edward Stanford, 1900); J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12, (1976): 172-201; Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1835 and 1837, (Halifax: Hartley and Walker, 1835 and 1837); William Wardell Bean, The Parliamentary Representation of the Six Northern Counties of England....from 1603, to the General Election of 1886, (Hull: Charles Henry Barnwell, 1890).

but that she had not heard yet whether or not he had arrived. She did not make any particular inquiries about him, she wrote, because she had several reasons for remaining "politically quiet just now."¹²⁷ But she assured Lady Stuart that Wortley had her "best wishes and every vote I could influence privately. Our tactique improved. I was well informed to know this and that the strength of our party was increased and that Mr. W[ortley]'s election, I believed, might be counted upon."¹²⁸ Before leaving Halifax Wortley and one of the town's leading Tories, Mr. James Edward Norris, called at Shibden Hall but they did not find Anne Lister at home and merely left cards.¹²⁹

One morning she received a note from Mr. John Edwards "with the compliments of Mr. Wortley's committee begging me to 'convert' Shaw the plasterer's vote for "W-[ortley] from a single to a plumper...."¹³⁰ She continued to have frequent communications with the local election committee. Mr. John Edwards, the local Tory Chairman, called on her at Shibden and asked if she would put her name down on a list of "subscribers" for Mr. Wortley's election expenses. Looking at the book she found only three names down - Christopher Rawson, Christopher Saltmarshe and John Waterhouse, each for £50. So she put her name under these as "A. Lister, £50." Mr. Edwards showed her his private book of the promised votes which had the votes tallied thus: Wortley, 333; Wood, 358; Protheroe, 280.¹³¹ That afternoon she received a letter from Lady Stuart de Rothesay saying she hoped that Lister would do what she could for Mr. Wortley.¹³² Her solicitors, Parker and Adam, were also Tories

¹²⁷AL Journal 9 December 1834.

¹²⁸AL Journal 9 December 1834.

¹²⁹AL Journal 18 December 1834.

¹³⁰AL Journal 12 December 1834.

¹³¹AL Journal 30 December 1834.

¹³²AL Journal 30 December 1834.

and also involved with the election committee. Just prior to the election they sent her a list of the unpromised votes.¹³³ She visited all on the list who concerned her and pressured them to vote blue.

The state of the two-day poll when it closed after the first day at 4 p.m. on 6 January 1835 was, according to a note delivered to Lister at Shibden from the central committee meeting at the Swan was "Wortley 260, Wood 294, Protheroe 273." Anne Lister commented,

Sad rough work in the town - almost all the blue flags torn in pieces by the orange, radical mob. Matthew knocked down and a little, though not much, hurt. A.G.[Aquilla Green, mill tenant] said the committee had not voted and there was hope for Mr. Wortley. Mr. Hodgson split his vote, tho' a Whig, between Wood and Wortley - told AG I did not want any one to change his opinion against his conscience for me, but I had made up my mind to take none but blue tenants so long as there remained people of this way of thinking; and when there were none, then I must try to change myself. Said a good deal on the subject but all very quietly and fairly as he himself owned.¹³⁴

The final day of the poll was 7 January. Her tenant Booth came to Shibden and told her a man named Jennings at Cow Green had cast a deciding vote in favor of Protheroe. But soon after him came her steward, Mr. Washington, who had spoken with Wortley himself at the Swan committee room. His information was that the casting vote was in favor of Wortley, who had in fact won the election by only one vote. She wrote down the state of the poll and commented, "What a hard run race!"¹³⁵

She immediately went upstairs and wrote to Lady Vere Cameron, who was staying with Lady Stuart at Whitehall, to say that she

hoped we had succeeded. Gave the state of the poll, saying I heard there were two bad votes - would not be made known till tomorrow to whom they belonged. But the weight of property certainly on our side, and I

¹³³AL Journal 1 January 1835.

¹³⁴AL Journal 6 January 1835.

¹³⁵AL Journal 7 January 1835.

hoped they did not belong to us - I had not seen Mr. Wortley - out when he called - but no matter - he was sure of all the support I could give him - Vere herself has asked me to do what I could for him and I had thrown in my mite - we none of us thought the radicals could have pushed us so hard but we hoped better times would come, and that before another election we should one and all of us (blues) [crossed out] conservatives be stronger - hoped that my own influence would not be decreased...¹³⁶

Riots broke out when it was discovered the Tory candidate had won. Anne Lister blamed the disturbances on the "yellow mob," but Benjamin Wilson, later a Chartist, blamed the initial disturbances on the Tories. It was only after they had attacked the liberal band, he wrote, that "...thousands of people congregated in the streets and marched to the Tories' headquarters, breaking the windows and doing other damage; Hope Hall the residence of Mr. Christopher Rawson, many hotels and other places belonging to the Tories were visited, much damage being done."¹³⁷ The contemporary Halifax historian John Crabtree wrote that "From the noon of Wednesday until six in the evening, the town was at the mercy of a mob of not less than 500 ruffians, armed with various weapons and missiles, who made a general attack upon the dwellings of those who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the popular cause."¹³⁸ The windows at the White Swan were broken, as were the windows of the residences of both Mr. Christopher and Mr. Jonathan Rawson. The rioters broke into James Edward Norris' dining hall and drawing room at Saville Hall and his furniture, books and paintings were scattered all over the lawn and garden.¹³⁹

Anne Lister told Lady Stuart that

... the town was in a sad turmoil - the windows, glass and frames, of many of the principle houses, Inns and shops, blues, smashed to atoms - the

¹³⁶AL Journal 7 January 1835.

¹³⁷Benjamin Wilson, The Struggles of an Old Chartist: What He Knows, and the Part he has Taken in Various Movements (Halifax, n.p., 1887).

¹³⁸Crabtree, Concise History of Halifax, 541.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, 542.

two front doors of the vicarage broken down - Mr. Rawson's carriage (the banker with [whom] Mr. Wortley had been staying) completely broken up - one of our servants going to the post yesterday had been knocked down but escaped without much harm - another of our servants escaped with difficulty to day, having seen a poor blue taken into a surgery, almost trampled and bruised to death.¹⁴⁰

The day after the election she was approached by one of her workmen, Charles Howarth, who wanted something for himself and 11 or 12 others, workmen and pitmen, to drink in honor of Mr. Wortley's election, which she gave. She then walked into Halifax to conduct some business when she found at the bottom of Old Bank "a yellow mob of women and boys. Asked if I was yellow. They looked capable of pelting me. "Nay!" said I, "I'm black - I'm in mourning for all the damage they have done." This seemed to amuse them and I walked quietly and quickly past. At Mr. Parker's office before 1 - he hardly expected me - thought I might not like to venture out...."¹⁴¹

No property damage occurred at Shibden Hall, but a crank advertisement in the *Leeds Mercury*, no doubt meant to annoy the two women, might well have been related to the election harassment received by other leading Halifax Tories. Their steward, Washington, showed them the list of marriages for the election date, one of which read, " 'same day, at the parish church Halifax, Captain Tom Lister of Shibden Hall to Miss Ann Walker of Lidgate, near the same place.' I smiled and said it was very good. Read it aloud to A[nn] who also smiled and then took up the paper and read the skit to my aunt and on returning the paper to W[ashington] begged him to give it to us when he had done with it. He said he would and seemed agreeably surprised to find out what was probably meant to annoy, taken so quietly and with such mere amusement. Said not a word of it to my father and Marian....<<A. did not like the joke. Suspects the Briggs. So

¹⁴⁰AL Journal 7 January 1835.

¹⁴¹AL Journal 8 January 1835.

does my aunt >>...."¹⁴² The next morning sister Marian came to their breakfast table with an anonymous note directed to "Captain Lister, Shibden Hall" containing an extract from the *Leeds Mercury* of January 10th 1835 and concluding with " 'we beg to congratulate the parties on their happy connection' - probably meant to annoy, but if so, a failure...."¹⁴³ Some days later Mr. Parker, her solicitor, presented her with a note of apology from the editor and she told him that "we - A[nn] and I - were quite satisfied."¹⁴⁴ The publication two months later of petitions from both the Whig (Briggs et al) and Tory (Rawson et al) sides against the return of Wortley and Wood respectively coincided in time with the receipt at Shibden of another anonymous letter. The three pages contained extreme abuse of Anne Lister, pity for Ann Walker and a promise to aid the latter to get away from Shibden Hall.¹⁴⁵ Unable to attack the two ladies for their political activity, someone had apparently tried to harass them on the basis of their lesbian sexuality.

3. b. County Election - 1835: two women influence approximately 3% of the new voters

When she spoke with Mr. Jubb about the impending election for the county, both of them were in despair of John Wortley's success against Morpeth. He told her he hoped this would at least be an introduction and "we shall bring him in at the next general election."¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it is apparent that Lister was able to influence many more county than borough voters, and she immediately set about her task. There were 6,187 new £50 occupier

¹⁴²AL Journal 10 January 1835.

¹⁴³AL Journal 12 January 1835.

¹⁴⁴AL Journal 23 January 1835.

¹⁴⁵AL Journal 15 March 1835.

¹⁴⁶AL Journal 5 May 1835.

voters and Ann Lister and Ann Walker spoke to roughly ten of their tenants during this election, and probably exercised, or attempted to exercise, influence over approximately ten others who were not their tenants.¹⁴⁷ There was a 63 per cent increase of registered county voters in the West Riding of Yorkshire in the year prior to this election,¹⁴⁸ the second largest increase of anywhere in the country. Anne Lister and Ann Walker were apparently not the only enthusiastic landowners in the area.

During the county election it seemed their influence was more sought after than ever. A Mr. John Stansfield of Field House and a Mr. Dawson called on them at Shibden asking both women for their interest for Mr. (John) Wortley's election to the West Riding. Mr. Dearden sent her a note, dated from Mr. Wortley's committee room at the Swan asking her to get the votes of her tenants George Robinson, Thomas Pearson and James Holt. She noted that Pearson "fancies he had a right of vote from paying £50 a year rent - said no! because he was not under 20 years' lease - but I would say nothing about it - got his vote such as it is...."¹⁴⁹ The Wortley committee for the county was just as busy getting subscriptions as the borough committee had been. "Mr. D[earden] asked for my name to the subscription for Mr. Wortley's (John) election for the West Riding - about 7 or 8 names down for £50 - said I would turn over the leaf and give them £30 - Mr. Dearden urged so well that I laughed and said well! if you will secure me the license [sic]¹⁵⁰ I will put down my name for £50. Yes! said he, 'I will answer for the license [sic]' and I put down my name for £50...."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷F.M.L. Thompson, "Whigs and Liberals," 216.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁴⁹AL Journal 4 May 1835.

¹⁵⁰Mr. Dearden was one of the magistrates whose signature was required for the issue of the public house licence for Anne Lister's Northgate Inn. She obtained the licence with no difficulty.

¹⁵¹AL Journal 5 May 1835.

She received a note of thanks from Captain Dearden the next day which asked her to use her influence with three more of her tenants, including William Moore of Staups. She wrote in answer, that she had secured Thomas Pearson's vote, did not despair of gaining Holt's, and had neutralized George Robinson's, who would be in Scotland. She sent this new communication by a Mr. Bent, "a warm friend to the cause," who had brought Mr. Dearden's note to her. Her main coal advisor, Holt, promised her his vote but their steward, Samuel Washington, was "more close, but will give in I think at last..."¹⁵² She at once went out to call on William Moore. He was not in so she left instructions for him to call at Shibden that evening. Moore evidently not having followed instructions, she went out to Staups again the following day. He declined voting at all, "but said he was a blue at heart."¹⁵³ He explained by saying he was a paid parish officer, in receipt of a salary of some £60 a year, and thought it not right to vote for either side; he would have come the night before but for the rain.¹⁵⁴ Next she sat with her old tenant Wilkinson at his house, but he had already promised himself to the yellows.

The next afternoon she spoke with her tenant Sowden about his vote. It was to be her most dramatic confrontation with any of her tenants. He flatly refused to vote at all:

...I said I was sorry for it. He said he had friends on both sides and none but independent men should vote. Then, said I, there would not be as many hundreds of voters as there are thousands. Better, said I, to take a side. Those who took neither made no friends and in case of anything happening had nobody to talk to. It was as if they set themselves on a hill to be pelted by all parties. S[owden] said that in some counties the tenants talked of turning off the landlords, instead of the landlords turning off the tenants. Well! said I, then we must make as good a fight as we can - perhaps you may get the better - we must try for it - but is not this like the unions and men talking against masters?¹⁵⁵

¹⁵²AL Journal 6 May 1835.

¹⁵³AL Journal 7 May 1835.

¹⁵⁴AL Journal 7 May 1835.

¹⁵⁵AL Journal 7 May 1835.

She apparently threatened him not only with the loss of his farm but further threatened not to give him any more orders for stone:

S[owden] asked if I should not want a good deal of rough stuff [stone] for my job at Mytholm (meaning coal water-wheel). Yes! said I, but I must think of my friends for this, and then wished S[owden] good day. W[illiam] K[eighley] told me S[owden] was an arrant yellow - he and Eastwood of Brighouse two of the yellowest in the township....¹⁵⁶

Later when Sowden wanted Mr. Freeman to employ his, Sowden's, team of horses to cart stone, Anne Lister let it be known that nobody need employ him to please her, and mentioned how annoyed she had been about his vote.¹⁵⁷ The repercussions of disobedience could be severe and ongoing. That summer she sent him a notice to quit.¹⁵⁸ Later that year, in September, Mr. Sowden visited at Shibden and said he was

sorry he had offended. Hoped I should look over it. Would have given me his vote but had been first canvassed by the yellows and had promised not to vote at all. Otherwise did not care how he voted. Then, said I, will you vote with me? I will not call upon you unless pressed but may I count upon your vote? Yes. Very well said I, then I will think no more of what has passed - meaning he might keep his farm. Said I would not take a new tenant who would not give me his vote but I had not meant to send away an old one. However, I must now consider S[owden] as a new tenant, and ask his vote. He promised to give it me. I said dinner was waiting, ordered him beer, and came away.¹⁵⁹

The day before the county poll of 1835 a Mr. Henry came "to ask A[nn]'s and my influence with one or two voters, Mr. Sowden, John Pearson, Abraham Mallinson - we declined further interference - I mentioned S[owden]'s speech about tenants turning off Landlords instead of vice versa and my not being quite pleased with him....."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶AL Journal 7 May 1835.

¹⁵⁷AL Journal 15 June 1835.

¹⁵⁸AL Journal 6 July 1835.

¹⁵⁹AL Journal 2 September 1835. She has a note in the margin which reads, "Explanation with Sowden about Hill Top."

¹⁶⁰AL Journal 10 May 1835.

Figure 22.
Borough and County Election Results, 1837

Halifax Borough Election July 27, 1837:
793 electors voted; 139 did not

	Plumpers	Splits		Total
		Protheroe	Wortley	
Wood (W)	7	466	14	487
Protheroe (R)	12		18	496
Wortley (C)	276			308

West Riding of Yorkshire, County Election August 7, 1837:

	Plumpers	Splits		Total
		Strickland	Wortley	
Morpeth (W)	309	11816	451	12576
Strickland (W)	98		98	11892
Wortley (C)	10936			11489

1837, District of Halifax:

Morpeth	Strickland	Wortley	Total Voters Registered
1276	1246	630	2321

Sources: F.H. McCalmont, The Parliamentary Poll Book of All Elections from the Reform Act of 1832 to October 1900, (London: Edward Stanford, 1900); J.A. Jowitt, "Parliamentary Politics in Halifax, 1832-1847," Northern History 12, (1976): 172-201; Poll Book, Halifax Borough Elections 1835 and 1837, (Halifax: Hartley and Walker, 1835 and 1837); William Wardell Bean, The Parliamentary Representation of the Six Northern Counties of England...from 1603, to the General Election of 1886, (Hull: Charles Henry Barnwell, 1890).

3. c. Borough and County Elections - 1837:

A further increase in influence

In the Spring of 1837 Anne Lister wrote to Lady Stuart and speculated about a change of ministers. She hoped there would not be a general election too soon. "If there be," she wrote, "shall have a thousand fears for Mr. James Wortley - these are queer times."¹⁶¹ By June the king was ill and not expected to live long.¹⁶² Each newspaper brought some word of the ups and downs of the king's health.¹⁶³ While walking down the road one bright June morning with one of her workmen, she met a Mr. Kitling, who told her that the king had died. They immediately had a long talk about politics. That very day she began canvassing for blue votes, speaking to her tenant Matthew Booth and expressing her hope that he would "vote right this time." That same day she also talked with Mr. Firth, who was doing some work for her, and discovered he was already a blue.¹⁶⁴ A few weeks later she told Lady Vere Cameron in a long letter that "we are all bustle within and without, county and borough. It is quite terrible. A company of police and military sent to Huddersfield to enforce the poor-law. Two-thirds of the population out of work vow vengeance against it...The quiet days of old have parted never to return."¹⁶⁵ The canvassing of this year had an intensity, almost an edge of bitterness, which had not been obvious in previous years.

Ann Walker became particularly stern about her tenants' voting patterns, but she was not as subtle about it as her partner.

According to Anne Lister's gender-biased record, Walker had

¹⁶¹AL Journal 27 April 1837.

¹⁶²AL Journal 16 June 1837.

¹⁶³AL Journal 17 June 1837, 20 June 1837.

¹⁶⁴AL Journal 21 June 1837.

¹⁶⁵AL Journal 17 July 1837.

previously influenced one or two tenants,¹⁶⁶ but did not seem to become truly enthusiastic until the elections of 1837. According to Anne Lister Ann Walker told Washington she would evict Mallinson "and every other tenant who voted for Protheroe."¹⁶⁷ Walker's tenant Ogden promised to give a vote for James Wortley without much difficulty.¹⁶⁸ Mr. Craven, a member of the committee, sent Walker a note asking her to "see after" her county tenant John Pearson and one of her Radcliffe tenants.¹⁶⁹

Hinton, one of Ann Walker's Hatter's Street tenants, came to talk to her about the votes of John Mallinson, Hartley and Standeven. Hinton wanted to know if Ann Walker "would be contented to let them split their votes. No! Would say no more to the first or second and the latter could not vote. Might Hartley stay if he gave a split. No! Let [him] give a plumper for Wortley and then talk about staying. Hinton said he could get 20 votes for £100. Then said, tell some of our committee. I think there are 20 blues who would be glad of the votes."¹⁷⁰

One day both women went to Shibden Mill to canvass the votes of the two Walker tenants, both Bottomley sons. The oldest was not at home so Ann Walker spoke to George, who refused to vote at all:

A simple looking young man but said it in a way that shewed he would not be persuaded by A[nn]. His mother evidently for his not giving A[nn] his vote. Said what could they do - they had their trade to consider. A[nn] said not much but that she thought her tenants ought to vote on her side which would otherwise not be represented at all.¹⁷¹ The young man looked sullen. I said 'Well! You have refused your landlady the only favor she has ever asked. I hope you will not have an opportunity of

¹⁶⁶AL Journal 26 August 1835. She agreed with her tenant Brook for Empsall's cottage. He promised to pay £50 per annum and give a conservative vote.

¹⁶⁷AL Journal 8 July 1837.

¹⁶⁸AL Journal 11 July 1837.

¹⁶⁹AL Journal 18 July 1837. This was a very rare instance of direct communication with Ann Walker. Usually the male members of the committee communicated directly with Anne Lister.

¹⁷⁰AL Journal 23 July 1837.

¹⁷¹This is evidently one of the few references to their lack of a vote because of their sex.

refusing her many more favors.' He answered, 'I hope not.' Very well, said I, when you have a favor to ask what will you expect [?] I heard no answer and A[nn] and I wished good morning and came away, she determined to quit the people and I quite agreeing she was right.¹⁷²

The lease negotiations between Ann Walker and her mill tenants Bairstow, Tetley and Cunliffe were complicated by the upcoming election. Squabbles about subletting and insurance were interspersed with suggestions about how each of them should vote. Anne Lister was in the room during the tough negotiations. Bairstow said he wanted to let off a room to power some worsted frames. "Times so bad, or should not have thought of it. I said A[nn] would willingly take back lease and mill too, if he liked. But no! That was not the thing desired. They had laid out - Bairstow, Tetley and Cunliffe, a great deal of money....I think B[airstow] was persuaded not to split his vote but to give a plumper for Wood - not vote for Protheroe the radical candidate at all, and perhaps he could persuade Tetley to do the same. Cunliffe was a radical but is rather changing....¹⁷³ Apparently anything was better than a radical - even the Whig Wood! It was certainly one method of trying to break up the powerful Whig-Radical coalition, in any event.

In the borough the polling day was July 26. One of her workmen brought her the state of the poll, which she marked in her diary as "Protheroe 400, Wood 392 and Wortley 264." Wortley had lost by a large majority. Her booksellers, Whiteley and Booth, sent her a copy of the poll at Leeds which the radical Whig newspaperman Edward Baines had won. She compared the results in the two cities thus: "Leeds like Halifax has thrown out the conservative - and has two radicals to one Whig and one radical - the ministerial and

¹⁷²AL Journal 4 August 1837.

¹⁷³AL Journal 8 July 1837.

corporation interest all powerful at Leeds. The people for Becket [C]. Our people are for the radical."¹⁷⁴

She may have felt powerful when telling her tenants how to vote, but she was clearly fighting a very unpopular battle. After hearing the results she sat talking with Ann Walker for about an hour. "Mr. Wortley's being so far behind incomprehensible," she commented. "A[nn] and I very sorry. But never despair. We will manage better in future? A[nn] will have a vote from Throp or quit him."¹⁷⁵ The day after the election she consulted a builder about her property in St. Anne's Street. She had a plan to build cottages in town and put her colliery people in them - "Holt as agent, the two Manns as bottom steward and banksman and the bookeeper, blacksmith and carpenter as voters for the borough."¹⁷⁶ It is not known whether this plan materialized or not. The pressure to create blue voters seemed even more intense once Wortley had lost. She continued to discuss politics with her coal agent, Holt. He continued to want nothing to do with voting. "No! No! said I, that won't do. You really must vote. He had just come from Mr. Ackroyd [leading Whig manufacturer] - getting water for him. Eh! bien. But H[olt] shall give me a vote, or give up his agency for my colliery."¹⁷⁷

The two days of polling for the county took place only a week after the borough elections and created some chaos at Shibden Hall. The two women were both determined to flush out as many of their tenants as possible and they were both constantly in communication with the committee. The activity of those two days was quite intense. On the first day of polling Mr. Parker sent her a note asking about the county votes of Charles Howarth, George Naylor and Henry Dodgson.

¹⁷⁴AL Journal 27 July 1837.

¹⁷⁵AL Journal 26 July 1837.

¹⁷⁶AL Journal 27 July 1837.

¹⁷⁷AL Journal 27 November 1837.

She wrote a note back to him in pencil which read "Yes! They have promised."¹⁷⁸ Yet that afternoon "a man" came to tell her the three were "shaffling." She got up immediately and went to Naylor's farm but found he was not at home, so spoke to his wife. "She said he should vote. Explained that I understood his farm to be at £50 and he had paid that once. It was well worth it. I had shown favor to him but did not intend losing a vote....Then to Dodgson's. The wife evidently bad to manage. D[odgson] wished not to vote at all. Explained that I would not neutralize my estate..."¹⁷⁹

On her way back to Shibden she saw a yellow handkerchief being displayed at her Dumb Mill cottages. She told the tenants that "it seemed a disrespect to me who was known to be so blue. I did not ask them for blue, but hoped they would not put up yellow. Three or four women came. Very civil. Very sorry. It was a boy who had just put it up at the top of the chimney. It should be taken down again."¹⁸⁰ She also stopped by Hannah Green's on her way home and asked about her husband's vote. He would have voted for them, the [rather clever] woman explained, but through some mistake was unable to vote at all. That afternoon Mr. Barber came to ask again about George Naylor and Dodgson. She told him she had seen to them herself. "Hoped they would vote for us. Poor Mr. Barber," she recorded, "had dined with 20 at the Swan. Agreed we had been beaten in the borough for want of looking after. Very hearty in the cause, and shook hands with me 3 or 4 times on finding me so staunch. Dinner at 7.25. Just going in to coffee when Messers. Schofield and Henry [Flather?] came with a note from Mr. Dearden about George Robinson and two of A[nn]'s Shibden tenants.... Stood talking at the door till my head felt cold. Then a few minutes in the

¹⁷⁸AL Journal 3 August 1837.

¹⁷⁹AL Journal 3 August 1837.

¹⁸⁰AL Journal 3 August 1837.

upper kitchen. Schofield would answer for the county in future and I for the borough - so all in good spirits - but Mr. Wortley above 30 behind tonight."¹⁸¹

The second day of polling was even busier. Imagine all of the following occurring within a few hours: first she sent a workman after George Robinson and Simeon Shaw. He returned with the message that Shaw had already voted blue and Robinson had gone off with Mr. James Norris to vote. Then Mr. Barber came up to the hall again with George Naylor in tow, and they had a long discussion about his eligibility to vote as he paid £50 per annum. Naylor told her Dodgson would have voted for them "but for his wife. Said I was very sorry. For that I was determined to have all my tenants vote for my side [of] the question and those who could not make up their minds so to do must provide themselves with farms elsewhere."¹⁸² Naylor said he would go back and try Dodgson again and Mr. Barber said he would go for Abraham Hemingway, to accompany him to the polling place. George Robinson then arrived and announced he had given his vote very willingly. At noon one of Ann Walker's tenants, Mr. Outram, arrived. He had promised his vote but was very infirm and needed help to get to the polling place. Ann Walker explained that she had just received a note to see after William Hirst's vote, so she flew out the door and left Mr. Outram to Anne Lister's care. With some difficulty Anne Lister got him onto a horse headed in the direction of the polling booth and then ordered a carriage for Ann Walker to be sent to William Hirst's. When Ann Walker returned to Shibden she told how she "had dexterously put her tenant, William Hirst, into the fly, in the faces of Mr. Whiteley and another yellow, and saw the driver drive off at a famous rate..."¹⁸³

¹⁸¹AL Journal 3 August 1837.

¹⁸²AL Journal 4 August 1837.

¹⁸³AL Journal 4 August 1837.

The preparations for the county election of 1837 had been even more strenuous than at either of the other elections. "After all our exertions," she wrote, the close of the poll at Halifax on 4 August showed the Whig Lord Morpeth in the lead with 1275, Strickland with 1245 and "poor Wortley" with "629!"¹⁸⁴

The loss astonished Anne Lister, whose post-election missive to Lady Stuart was full of regrets about the election results. "Our young queen," she wrote, "seems to acquit herself marvellously well. What a pity we have not been able to send her a greater majority of conservatives! Our party seemed to count upon success for the county - the borough I myself had little hope of - our exertions were too late; and, as I thought and said long ago, our opposition was not sufficiently well organized for the struggle we must all have known awaited us. The populace, not the property, of our borough is represented - but this cannot last forever."¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

Anne Lister spoke with men of all classes in her efforts to gain more blue votes. Halifax may have been a growing manufacturing town but it had many small-town qualities. People knew each other. The ballot was open and Anne Lister, with the help of the local Tory Committee, made sure she knew exactly who had voted for whom and who was qualified for the franchise. Anne Lister and Ann Walker both did their best to get blue votes, either borough or county, at every possible opportunity, even from people who were not their tenants. She recorded that either she or Ann Walker tried to convince a number of men from lower classes than her own to vote

¹⁸⁴AL Journal 4 August 1837. The official poll book shows the numbers in her journal to be only one vote under the official figure in each case.

¹⁸⁵AL Journal 15 August 1837.

conservative, including quack doctors, Sunday school teachers, workmen, tailors, saddlers, plasterers, glaziers, shoemakers, engineers, blacksmiths, corve-makers, horse-dealers, tinnerns, coal agents, and nurserymen.¹⁸⁶ Her political enthusiasm seemed to overcome her normal social reticence; or rather, the causes of both sprang from the same conservative root. Ann Walker spoke to only a couple of these gentlemen; usually it was her more 'masculine' partner who did the active canvassing. 'Women' were not supposed to be politicians, but Anne Lister's gender somehow placed her outside of firm categorization. Local tradesmen and local gentlemen alike accepted her as a political player. If they gave her any indication that they did not, she certainly did not record it. This strand of contradictory discourses, i.e., that women ought not to be politicians, was successfully resolved through Anne Lister's agency in creating a gender identity which overcame it. Ann Walker's political role, at least in so far as Anne Lister has left a record of it, was relatively far less active than her partner's.

It was neither their lesbian-ness nor necessarily their genders which allowed Anne Lister and Ann Walker to exercise the political power which they enjoyed: it was their legally-recognized status as *femmes soles*. They were unmarried women and heiresses in their own right: their property was not legally owned by, and therefore represented politically by, a male. Therefore they could use it to control male voting behavior in the Halifax area. It was their only means of ensuring that their property did not go unrepresented. Their use of property for this purpose increased in intensity with each of the elections of the 1830s. Any speculation as to the exact number of votes which they influenced must remain just that. By

¹⁸⁶AL Journal 15 December 1832; 2 May 1835; 27 December 1832; 11 February 1835; 28 February 1835; 3 June 1837; 26 April 1837; 14 June 1837; 14 August 1837; 19 August 1837; 12 September 1837; 11 October 1837; 30 November 1837; 29 December 1837.

1837 a rough estimate of their direct influence over either tenants or local tradesmen might be five or so of the borough electors, and rather more like twenty-five or so of the county electors.

Another strand of contradictory discourses, whether (male) persons or property ought to be represented, was one which Anne Lister attempted to resolve by resolutely ignoring the existence of any political stance other than her own. When Sowden thought only "independent men" should vote, Lister thought that plan would only radically decrease the numbers of electors. To her the vote was a way of expressing one's network of influence. She would protect her friends and punish her enemies. Large sections of the working classes in the area were of course leaning more in the direction of a universal male suffrage. The idea that only property should be represented was anathema to the majority of the population in Halifax by the end of the 1830s. The idea that the populace, and not the property, ought to be represented, was anathema to Anne Lister. By the end of 1837 both she and Ann Walker had a great deal more political experience and could clearly identify those forces which were ranged against them. She developed several strategies for winning the elections: these ranged from having frequent communication with other local Tories (male), using both threats and favors to influence tenants, raising rents to qualify voters, and manipulating her property in other ways to create votes. Anne Lister may have escaped some aspects of oppression, but at the expense of colluding with what we would see as some of power's worst manifestations. It is too easy to exclude any value-judgements whatsoever from the analysis of an historical subject. Anne Lister was simply not a nice human being; I could use stronger language but it would not be polite. No one who threatens to make people

homeless for the sake of increasing their own political power can be described as anything other than a really distasteful human being.

Even in politics, the various facets of Anne Lister's life were all connected. Her estate management included keeping only blue tenants. While Shibden Hall was not damaged during the riots of 1835, the two women were the targets of harassment on the basis of their lesbian partnership. The women's network also played an important part in Anne Lister's political life. She usually wrote post-election missives to Mariana Lawton, Lady Stuart and Lady Vere Cameron - the latter two women were relatives of the two Wortley candidates. Most of these letters contain some political comment. By supporting the Wortleys, she was strengthening her ties to her aristocratic friends. Her connections with the Stuarts must also have made her sense the importance of her political role.

The women's networks, gender and class combined, then, to give Anne Lister more political influence after the Reform Act of 1832 than she had ever had before the passing of that Bill. She liked to think she commanded votes, and had ambitions of commanding 50. But these were always other men's votes. Neither Anne Lister nor Ann Walker could vote on their own account, as the leading men of the committee could. Women in their position would have to wait another 80 years or so before that would happen.

CHAPTER SIX:

Gender and Sexuality: Lesbian Marriage and the Construction of Desire

In the Introductory Chapter I dealt with theoretical questions about whether or not it is useful to use the word 'lesbian' in this period, and have found that it is appropriate in this case; in Chapter Three I presented evidence that even before the advent of the socio-medico discourse about homosexuality in the late nineteenth century, Anne Lister, even in her early life, had a sense of identity formed partially around her sexual practice. It was clear in the earlier evidence that while she felt that her own sexual identity was "natural" to her, she never felt that other women's interest in her was "unnatural," primarily because of her masculine gender identity. I will continue to distinguish theoretically between gender identity and sexual identity, which have no automatic relationship.

In this chapter I wish to explore several related themes which have emerged from the Anne Lister evidence. The discourses about sexuality listed in Chapter One will all be explored. I shall discuss to what degree Anne Lister's lesbian relationships were a reflection or emulation of heterosexual practice for her class and time and to what degree they were a kind of *sui generis* lesbian marriage. Courtship, finances, gender roles, rows and everyday 'married' life will be described. For heterosexual couples of this class and time, the sexual and the financial were inextricably linked. Lister definitely assumed that if she planned to be long-term sexual partners with someone in her own class, both

of them had to exchange extensive financial information about their respective landed estates. Because in this case both persons were women, a perfectly stable recreation of heterosexual discourse was not possible. The representation in the journal, however, reflects a constant attempt to do so. Within her marriage to Ann Walker there was an expectation of both joint and separate spheres. She expected that she would be the main decision-maker, focusing upon estate business, while Ann Walker would "<<take the woman's part>>"¹ and deal with indoor servants, philanthropy and the Sunday School. This approach to her personal life is certainly consistent with her conservative politics.

Another theme relates to the historical controversies regarding whether, as Lillian Faderman puts it, ".....in an era when women were not supposed to be sexual, the sexual possibilities of their relationship were seldom entertained."² As Martha Vicinus has pointed out, lesbian history has been characterized by scholars interested in either romantic friendship or in butch/femme issues.³ It is quite obvious that the two themes intersect very strongly in the Anne Lister material. Anne Lister consciously used the assumption of asexual female friendship as a cover for her sexual practice. Her culture did not assume either that masculinity in a woman or deep intra-sexual emotional attachments automatically indicated a certain type of sexual practice. Lister did have nonsexual but nevertheless lesbian relationships, as well as having sexual lesbian relationships. It will not be argued simply that women were sexual together in the early nineteenth century.

¹AL Journal 28 September 1829. This quote is discussed in Chapter Three.

²Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present (London: Junction Books, 1981; reprint, London: Women's Press, 1991), 414.

³Martha Vicinus, "Sexuality and Power: a Review of Current Work in the History of Sexuality," Feminist Studies 8, no. 1 (Spring 1982), 133-156.

Instead, women and gender and power are the foci of analysis. Anne Lister's sexual practice reflected a "masculinity" arising out of her class and time which had to be constantly stabilized through a repetitive series of acts. Her journal records fairly explicit sexual practice. Not only was she a "stone butch,"⁴ but she took it for granted that there was a double standard of behavior for men and women. It did not seem to occur to her that she might also be judged by standards set for women, and she seemed to judge herself by standards set for men. However, she did not think of herself as male but rather as 'masculine.' Her "stone butch" sexual practice both arose from and reinforced her gender identity. It was one of the repetitive practices which shored up a potentially unstable gender identity.

Another theme which will be briefly explored again, as it was in Chapter Three, is the issue of to what degree the women's networks also functioned as a lesbian community. I will argue that the overlap between the two was such that it is impossible to distinguish between them. Neither Anne Lister's sexual practice nor her gender excluded her from respectable society, so long as the explicitly sexual remained implicit, unspoken and hidden, as it was, in code. Despite the fact that she was never open about her sexual practice except to potential lovers, her sexual identity was an identity. It just never entered the public arena; it never became politicized - and she could thus remain comfortably within the boundaries of respectable society.

⁴"Stone butch" is a term which comes from 1950s America. It indicates a woman whose sexual practice includes only making love to other women and never allowing them to make love to her.

1. Lesbian Marriage

During the 1830s Anne Lister was sexually involved with at least four women: Sibella Maclean, who died in 1830; Vere Hobart, who married a Scottish laird in 1832; Mariana Lawton, with whom she was involved from 1812-1834; and Ann Walker, who was to be her companion from 1834 until her death in 1840. From 1813 Mariana Lawton knew Lister was going to inherit Shibden Hall, but despite this she had married Charles Lawton in 1816, and thus secured a comfortable life and future for herself. Lister made sure to mention at the beginning of most subsequent relationships that she would provide for whoever lived with her, and that she was willing to leave a life interest in the Shibden Hall estate to that same woman. She expected financial disclosures and support in return. She exchanged financial information in almost all of her sexual relationships with a view to how much money a woman could provide for her own immediate use if they made a commitment to each other. After twenty years or so she finally gave up the idea that Mariana Lawton might live with her after her unexpectedly long-lived husband's death. Following an unsuccessful courtship with Vere Hobart, she began looking in earnest for a marriage partner, and by 1832 she had set her sights on Ann Walker, a local heiress.

Her marital expectations are the same we might expect to find in a young gentleman of the gentry at about the same time. Upon marriage, a settlement agreement was drawn up which specified how much of the fortune of the young lady was to be given over to the use of the young man and his estate (a dowry), how much money a woman would receive annually during her marriage for her own use (annuity or pin money), how much would be settled

on her in the event of her husband's death (jointure), and how much would be settled on their children in the event of their marriage (portion). While Common Law gave all the property of a woman over to her husband upon marriage, the gentry and the aristocracy often took advantage of property-protection agreements possible in the Equity Courts. They made sure that the women of their class, married or unmarried, would have independent access to an annual sum of money. (It was also possible to maintain part of a woman's estate separate from her husband's use, to be passed on to a second son, if any, who sometimes took the mother's maiden name.) Unmarried sisters, aunts or elderly unmarried sons sometimes received an annual income from the proceeds of an estate as well. It is estimated that in the 1850s about one in ten women were provided for by some kind of settlement.⁵ Usually the annuity and jointure were some percentage of the dowry. For example, when Mariana Lawton's male relatives were able to raise a £10,000 dowry for her marriage to Charles, she was guaranteed £300 a year out of the income of the Lawton estate both annually and in the event of his death. However if Mariana had chosen to 'marry' Anne Lister instead, her relatives would not have provided such a sum, and she would not have gained the same status nor the same guaranteed annual income, though no doubt Lister would have tried to create some degree of financial security for her to the extent that she was able.

⁵⁵Joan Perkin, Women and Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England (London: Routledge, 1989), 13-18, 65-67. Barbara English and John Saville, Strict Settlement: A Guide for Historians, Occasional Papers in Economics and Social History, no. 10 (Hull: University of Hull Press, 1983), 21; Eileen Spring, "The Settlement of Land in Nineteenth-Century England," American Journal of Legal History 8 (1964); G.E. Mingay, The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class (London: Longman, 1976), 41; Susan Staves, Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

1. a. Courting Vere Hobart

No one of Anne Lister's class and time expected sexual practice within a committed relationship to exist without a financial exchange or contract of some kind. Despite the paucity of expressed emotion and physical warmth between them Anne Lister and Vere Hobart often spoke of their finances and made plans for the future as if they were a heterosexual couple. One evening after dinner they had a rather oblique discussion about their own relationship:

<< [I] talked of having a right to provide for the person who lived with me if I married⁶ and [that] I had a right to do so none would dispute. Said she innocently, but I don't think you have a right to marry, meaning I was too unlike a woman for that. This spo[k] e volume. [sic] I said well, but I have apparently a right the world must suppose I have. In fact her manner is much more what it would be to a lover than a mere friend.>>⁷

There were certainly some half-joking, half-serious assumptions that if the two ladies lived and/or traveled together, their financial arrangements would mirror those of heterosexual marriages:

<<In walking home.....joked and said I should have seven hundred a year from her and leave her three. She thought four would be enough as much as she should cost me.... Then joked with Miss H. that our match would be off on account of pecuniary matters and we both laughed and called each other mercenary. She afterwards laughed and said she would have all I had for her life. Well, said I, I have no objection to leave all I have for one life to the person who may be with me. She laughed and said, oh that ought really to be known. I see she knows quite well what she is about as I do....>>⁸

That evening Vere gave Anne her cheek to kiss and Anne again joked (as if she, Lister, were to be the husband) that Vere

⁶Certainly a statement that turned usual gender roles upside-down.

⁷AL Journal 1 January 1832.

⁸AL Journal 3 April 1832.

would have nothing of her own with her.⁹ The next day Vere continued the theme and made a joke about how when they lived together, the longer lived of the two would take all the income of the other for life.¹⁰ Anne again "joked" about taking all Vere had "<<just, she says, as if we were going to be married tomorrow...>>"¹¹ As they sat together on the sofa Anne commented that if all Vere had ever did belong to her and Vere lived with her "<<I thought she would be happy. Yes, said she, I think so too...>>"¹²

Then suddenly, after dinner one Sunday evening, Vere accepted a proposal of marriage from a Captain Donald Cameron, who had visited her once or twice previously. This was a fortunate match in terms of rank, but one which took Anne Lister by surprise. "<<The murder is out. We talked it over. She will not say no. So 'tis done.>>"¹³ Yet that very morning before church they had laughed together and Anne had said,

<<well if it was not for the petticoats the thing would be clear enough. Yes that it would said she. Perhaps said I laughingly it is pretty much the same thing in spite of them (the petticoats) - how little dream [sic] what so few hours would bring forth.>>¹⁴

The next day Anne wrote three full, very emotional pages almost entirely in code. They are full of revealing sentiment, such as, "<<I neither want her pity nor her ridicule both which I might count upon.....>>"¹⁵ She confined herself to her room and tried to hide her swollen eyes and will herself out of having a broken heart. She thought of a previous suitor of Vere's, Henry Yorke, who had given

⁹AL Journal 3 April 1832.

¹⁰AL Journal 4 April 1832.

¹¹AL Journal 9 April 1832.

¹²AL Journal 13 April 1832.

¹³AL Journal 15 April 1832.

¹⁴AL Journal 15 April 1832.

¹⁵AL Journal 16 April 1832.

her up: "<<...he may marry more happily and so may I too....>>"¹⁶ In the journal she represents herself as heroically displaying the appropriate responses of a female friend, while concealing the despairing responses of a disappointed suitor. She wrote a letter, for example, to Vere's aunt, Lady Stuart, expressing all that was properly flattering about the man and the match.¹⁷ Social propriety was essential at all times.

On her way back to Shibden Hall Lister visited Mariana, with whom she had been involved for some twenty-five years, at Lawton Hall, Cheshire. They spoke seriously of the need for Anne to settle down with someone, and of the financial arrangements which would accompany this. She told Mariana that she meant to make her will in such a way as to leave all her property for life to whoever lived with her and made her comfortable.¹⁸ It was clear to Anne Lister that her best means of attracting and keeping a sexual partner was through her estate. It was only because she remained unmarried (to a man) that her property gave her enough masculinized power to arrange a favourable marriage with a young woman.

¹⁶AL Journal 16 April 1832.

¹⁷AL Journal 19 April 1832.

¹⁸AL Journal 30 April 1832.

1. b. Courting Ann Walker

In 1832, for the first time in many years, she considered herself fully and honorably released from her engagement to Mariana. She began thinking of whom to approach as if she were a young gentleman of the gentry.

The thought struck me of going from Croft to Edinburgh <<to see the Mackenzies. Lady Eliza [...] Thackeray and Miss Hall to try first. First for Miss Mack. Thought of Miss Freeman and Miss Walker of Lidgate as people here. Louisa Belcombe and Miss Price in York besides Miss Salmon. Surely I shall get some sort of companion by & by.....>>¹⁹

At 29 Ann Walker was considerably younger than Anne Lister who was then 41. She had "pretty flaxen hair" and was co-heiress with her sister of a large estate in Lightcliffe, about an hour's walk from Shibden Hall. On 6 July 1832 Miss Walker paid a social call at Shibden Hall. Anne joked with her about traveling together.²⁰ They had been acquainted for some time, both being members of the relatively small circle of gentry in Halifax who could comfortably interact socially. Anne returned the call and the two ladies embarked upon an increasingly intimate exchange. Miss Walker consulted Anne Lister about estate business, asking her advice about the legal technicalities of things such as tenant right.

<<Thought I she little dreams what is in my head. To make up to her. She has money and this might make up for rank. We get on very well so far and the thought as I returned amused and interested me.....>>²¹

Anne approached the relation with a degree of covert cynicism which was no doubt born of long experience. "<<If she was fond of

¹⁹AL Journal 18 May 1832.

²⁰AL Journal 6 July 1832.

²¹AL Journal 17 August 1832.

me and manageable I think I could be comfortable enough with her,>>"²² she wrote. One bright fall day they sat talking together in the little hut that Anne Lister had had built near the goldfish pond below Shibden Hall. Miss Walker confided that she had been told by her aunt and uncle that Anne Lister was not to be depended upon. Whether this referred to sexuality or traveling plans is unclear. They confidentially discussed servants, traveling and their respective estates. "<<She seems to take all I say for gospel,>>" wrote Anne.²³

<<We laughed at the talk our going abroad together would [create?]. She said it would be as good as a marriage. Yes said [I] quite as good or better. She falls into my views of things admirably. I believe I shall succeed with her. If I do I will really try to make her happy and I shall be thankful to heaven for the mercy of bringing me home having first saved me from Vere, rid me of M[ariana] and set me at liberty. We shall have money enough. She will look up to me and soon feel attached and I after all my turmoils shall be steady and if God wills it happy.....I can gently mould Miss W[alker] to my wishes and may we not be happy? How strange the fate of things if after all my companion for life should be Miss Walker....How little my aunt or any one suspects what I am about nor shall it be surmised 'til all is settled.>>²⁴

From this point on things developed rather rapidly. They agreed not to name their plan to anyone except their respective aunts (who were also both named Anne). Anne Lister paid regular court to Ann Walker and they saw each other almost every day.

<<....The object of my choice have [sic] perhaps three thousand a year or near it probably two-thirds at her own disposal. No bad *pisaller*²⁵ even if I liked her less. A better take than Lady Gordon or even perhaps than Vere either. Well now I will be steady and constant and make the poor girl as happy as I can so that she shall have no reason to repent....perhaps after all she will make me really happier than any of my former flames. At all rates we shall have money enough....>>²⁶

²²AL Journal 3 September 1832.

²³AL Journal 27 September 1832.

²⁴AL Journal 27 September 1832.

²⁵*Pisaller*, French: stop-gap, temporary expedient.

²⁶AL Journal 28 September 1832.

After dinner at Lidgate one Saturday evening the two women sat talking of how happy they would be together. "<<She said yes she had often looked at all her things and said what was the use of having them with nobody to enjoy them with her. She said it all seemed now like a dream to her....I begged her to take up her French and sketching again and we already begin to feel at home together and very much (however little she may understand it) like engaged lovers.....>>"²⁷

They proceeded in this lesbian courtship in much the same manner as a heterosexual couple of their class would have done. They exchanged financial confidences, and a formal meeting was arranged between Miss Walker and Aunt Anne Lister once her new status was revealed. Anne spoke to her aunt about the impending match. "<<My aunt not to appear to know anything about it even to Miss W[alker].seemed pleased at my choice and prospects. I said she had three thousand a year or very near it....She thought my father would be pleased if he knew and so would both my uncles.>>"²⁸

There were complications, however, which might not have arisen had they not both been women. Anne Lister began pressuring Ann Walker to rent out Cliff Hill, one of the properties in which Walker had a life interest. [See Figure 23.] She would not need it, said Anne, when she came to live with her at Shibden. Miss Walker resisted this plan, even when Anne told her she would have a life interest in the Shibden Hall estate.

<<Said I expected to have ultimately two thousand a year. She told me it was more than expected from my manner of speaking before. I then asked if she thought she could be happy enough with me to give up all

²⁷AL Journal 29 September 1832.

²⁸AL Journal 29 September 1832.

thought of ever leaving me. This led her into explaining that she had said she would never marry but that as she had once felt an inclination not to keep to this she could not yet so positively say she should never feel the same inclination again. She should not like to deceive me. Begged not to answer just now. I said she was quite right. Praised her judiciousness. That my esteem and admiration were only heightened by it. That no feelings of selfishness should make me even wish my happiness rather than hers. That I would give her six months 'til my next birthday.....to make up her mind in and should only hope that as we saw more of each other my reasons for despair would not increase.....on the plea of feeling her pulse I took her hand and held it some time to which she had no objection. In fact we both probably felt more like lovers than friends....I wanted to hint at the propriety of her leaving me for a minute or two on our getting to Lidgate but she was too modest to seem to understand me at all. I see there is evidently coming on all the shyness usual in such cases. Well I shall like her all the better for it and am already fairly in love myself.....thought I she is in for it if ever girl was and so am I too.....>>29

This discussion was tantamount to a regular engagement, and from this point on sexual and financial issues became even more inextricably enmeshed. A few days later Lister was surprised to find Ann Walker passionately returning her kisses and even inviting her to spend the night, though this latter event was delayed through mutual coquetry related to sexual respectability. Anne was anxious about how she would perform sexually the first night she spent with Miss Walker, believing that if she did well then Miss Walker was certain to give up Cliff Hill and accept her proposal to come and live at Shibden. Both women were indecisive: Ann Walker about saying yes or no to what she knew was a proposal of marriage, and Anne Lister about whether marrying Ann Walker was in fact the good plan it had originally seemed to be.

These complications meant that by the end of 1832 Lister's relationship with Ann Walker was uncertain, though certainly intense. In February 1833 Ann Walker went to Scotland to visit her sister Elizabeth, though she continued to correspond with Anne

²⁹AL Journal 1 October 1832.

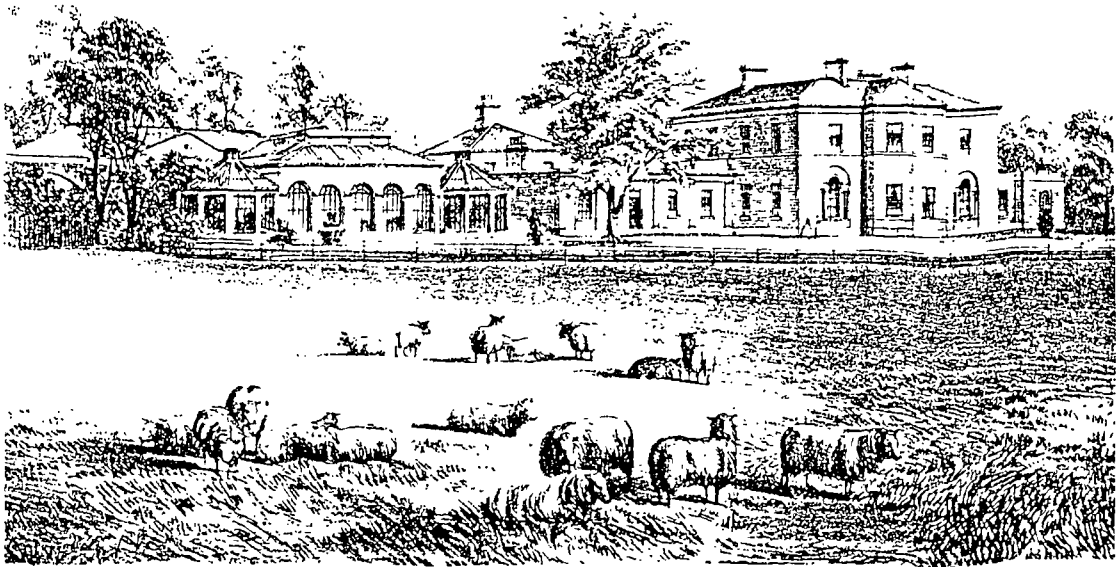
Lister. In June of that year Anne Lister went on a long trip to the continent, not returning until December, alarmed by her aunt's declining health. In January 1834 she heard that Ann Walker had returned to Lightcliffe, and resumed the courtship. That same month they made arrangements for Ann Walker to move into Shibden Hall, and on the 10 February 1834 they pledged to spend the rest of their lives together, exchanged rings and took communion at church together.³⁰ It was a date they would later consider their anniversary. On the 10 of February 1835 they celebrated their "first anniversary of being together so comfortably and so happily" by eating "an excellent plum pudding." She wrote, "May we live to enjoy many more such anniversaries!"³¹ On 10 February 1837 Ann Walker surprised Anne Lister as she slept downstairs in her easy chair with an anniversary gift of a silver pencil.³²

By 1835 they were living as a heterosexual married couple might, engaged in their various activities, eating meals together, talking, occasionally having rows, occasionally having sex. This section has so far considered their courtship and 'marriage.' It will now go on to discuss their financial interactions within a committed relationship, the everyday activities which were part of their relationship at this time, the rows they had, and the private and public rituals which cemented their relationship. I will also analyze the gendered power relations between them during the (relatively) more settled period from 1834 until Anne Lister's death in 1840.

³⁰CDA, RAM: 52, 68, 73.

³¹AL Journal 10 February 1835.

³²AL Journal 10 February 1837,



Crow Nest



Cliff Hill

Figure 23.
Ann Walker's Crow Nest and Cliff Hill Properties
(Sources: etching, nineteenth-century, Calderdale Reference Library;
photograph by author, 1995)

1. c. Finances Within Her Marriage to Ann Walker

Both in their courtship and later 'marriage' Lister and Walker's relationship was closely connected to financial exchanges, as was common for this class. When both she and Ann Walker were wavering over whether or not to commit to each other Lister commented privately, "<<I know she would like to keep me on so as to have the benefit of my intimacy without any real joint concern.>>"³³ Yet after they were 'married' Lister wrote "....I am anxious that Ann's concerns should never appear to have interested me less than my own."³⁴ Anne Lister attempted to place herself in the financial role of the husband in so far as it was possible, but this mirroring of heterosexual arrangements was not supported by the legal and class structures in which they were embedded.

Their financial lives became inextricably intermingled. Lister herself paid the steam engine engineer some of the money due on an engine which Walker had bought for her Water Lane Mill.³⁵ Ann Walker gave her a hundred pounds in December 1834, but this gift was recorded in code,³⁶ as was Walker's fifty pound gift at the end of the month.³⁷ Another gift of £100 in January 1835 was not recorded in code, however.³⁸ When Ann Walker received her moiety from the division of her family's estate, most of the money, some £1187.10.0, was loaned to Anne Lister at 4 p.c.³⁹ Using both

³³AL Journal 20 October 1832.

³⁴AL Journal 1 April 1837.

³⁵AL Journal 1 June 1837. See also 8 July 1837, an example of Anne Lister paying for a repair bill on Ann Walker's property.

³⁶AL Journal 13 December 1834.

³⁷AL Journal 30 December 1834. For more examples of Ann Walker's money gifts being recorded in code see 24 November 1837, 2, 6 December 1837.

³⁸AL Journal 13 January 1835.

³⁹AL Journal 26 January 1835.

their money they jointly bought a field belonging to their joint steward Samuel Washington, and this was added to the Shibden Hall estate.⁴⁰ Ann Walker signed a note authorizing Mr. Waterhouse to pay her navigation dividends directly to Anne Lister.⁴¹ Anne Lister's manservant George collected Ann Walker's half-year country rents of £515.13.6 and brought them to Lister.⁴² It may be that Lister deposited these for her and did not have the use of them, but when Walker received her Halifax rents she gave them to Anne Lister outright.⁴³

The division of the Cliff Hill estate between the two Walker sisters occupied a good amount of Anne Lister's attention in 1835.⁴⁴ Both Lister and Walker were astonished to learn that Mrs. Sutherland (Ann Walker's sister) had conveyed all her own property to her husband - because this occurred after their marriage and its pre-nuptial financial settlement.⁴⁵ Ann Walker told her aunt that her sister had done this, and she and her aunt had a long discussion about wills, each sharing with the other the details of their own. "<<The long & short of it is she thought Ann had left all she had to me & so she, Mrs. Ann Walker, had the next thing to cut her out for it...Ann pleased by saying she had left all to Sackville. [Her sister's son.] Nothing yet settled about me but if Ann

⁴⁰AL Journal 28 January 1835.

⁴¹AL Journal 31 December 1836.

⁴²AL Journal 9 January 1837. Twice this number does not comprise the whole of Ann Walker's income, as it probably does not include navigation dividends or coal rentals. Walker's Halifax rents were paid on a different date, being some £360 per half-year when paid in full. AL Journal 11 January 1837.

⁴³AL Journal 12 January 1837.

⁴⁴See an interesting entry on this topic, AL Journal 19 September 1835, in which it appears that Mrs. Sutherland was being stubborn about the settlement, not her husband. For a brief account of the final settlement, see 25 September 1835.

⁴⁵AL Journal 13 March 1835. There is a collection of letters exchanged between Ann Walker and her sister on this subject in CDA, CN 103/4. The journal evidence indicates that many if not most of these were drafted at least in part by Anne Lister.

did not marry should probably stay with me & we should mutually give each other a life estate in all we could.>>"⁴⁶ In another long talk between Ann Walker and her aunt the latter told her, "<<...furniture, plate, linen and china first left to Ann now to her sister but as Ann has not given all she has to me her aunt may change back again in her favor....>>"⁴⁷ Mr. Parker, Lister's solicitor, made an allusion "to reports circulated here against Ann and myself, my tricking or getting out of her all she had, all which Mr. Parker heard. Explained. Mr. Parker thought people were already beginning to think very differently. The right would come out at last."⁴⁸ Heterosexual marriage in this class meant that women gave their partners much of what they possessed in exchange for a certain annual allowance and security in the event of their partner's death; but in a lesbian marriage the same concept was seen as something odd and threatening. It was acceptable for a man to have control over most of his wife's fortune, but not for a woman.

Ann Walker sometimes regretted that her property was willed to the Sutherlands, who were having babies, and once told Anne Lister that she wished for children of her own, primarily so that her property could be passed to them. Lister recorded herself as replying, "<<'You shall never find me any obstacle to anything you have much at heart,'....How can I think of permanence with Ann?>>"⁴⁹ Lesbian marriage was clearly incompatible with one of the primary aims of heterosexual marriage within this class at this time - the transmission of landed property to someone of one's own blood. The other aim of heterosexual marriage within this class at

⁴⁶AL Journal 13 March 1835.

⁴⁷AL Journal 30 March 1835.

⁴⁸AL Journal 8 April 1835.

⁴⁹AL Journal 29 April 1835.

this time was to transfer land and capital from women to the men they married. Anne Lister had a similar expectation. Sometimes Ann Walker seemed "<<queer about money. This will never do. We shall never stick together. I will labour at my accounts and set myself straight & prepare to do without her in case of need.>>"⁵⁰ Nevertheless the admixture of the business of the two estates continued.⁵¹

Anne Lister was partially dependent financially upon Ann Walker but continually schemed to make sure she was independent in case their relationship should end, since she had none of the financial security a male husband would have had.⁵² There were no laws against lesbian divorce. Despite their ever more frequent rows, Anne Lister struggled to maintain her temper, writing on one such occasion, "We owe two great duties to society, to be useful, and to be agreeable. And we more especially owe these duties to those upon whom our welfare more immediately depends."⁵³ Sometimes Ann Walker expressed her anxiety over the sheer number of estate projects Anne Lister had committed herself to - "had always said she would not marry a man in trade."⁵⁴ Lister tried to reassure her. Between them they tried to devise ways of living comfortably and distributing their income.

<<I told [her] if she would keep me, that is the household, taxes, servants, wages & all so as to leave me my own income clear I could do very well. She seemed not averse. I asked [her] to consider what she would like to be spent for we might spend just what she could spare out of her income. A thousand a year would do....>>⁵⁵

⁵⁰AL Journal 11 August 1835.

⁵¹AL Journal 28 November 1835; 1, 8 and 22 December 1835.

⁵²AL Journal 7 March 1837.

⁵³AL Journal 13 June 1837.

⁵⁴AL Journal 29 September 1837.

⁵⁵AL Journal 30 September 1837. A thousand a year, it seems, would be sufficient to keep up the whole establishment, including a footman, groom, gardener, under-gardener, the senior farming man John Booth, one farming man under him, the two lady's maids Oddy & Cookson, a housemaid and a

1. d. Joint and Separate Gender Spheres

Many of Lister and Walker's daily activities involved a kind of togetherness in which gender roles were not distinctive. They often talked together in the evening, played cards, went shopping in town together⁵⁶ or went on brief excursions, as when they went to Bolton Abbey at Easter so Ann Walker could sketch.⁵⁷ Often Anne Lister would walk by Ann Walker's side when she rode to Cliff Hill or elsewhere.⁵⁸ Once in York they rode their chestnut ponies together out to Sheriff Hutton and back.⁵⁹ Sometimes Anne Lister would read in the evening while Ann Walker wrote letters or sketched.⁶⁰ Sometimes Anne Lister read things like Burton's Lectures on Ecclesiastical History or J.B. Bernard's Theory of the Constitution aloud to Ann Walker.⁶¹ They often discussed family matters. They both visited and expressed regard for the other's aunt. When Lister's aunt died, both women went into mourning for a year.⁶² They played backgammon together in the evenings.⁶³ Anne Lister frequently rubbed her partner's back "with spirit of wine and camphor" for 15-20 minutes in the evening to relieve discomfort.⁶⁴ On another occasion she rubbed Ann Walker's foot

kitchen maid, 3 saddle horses, 2 farm horses, one gin horse and a cow. AL Journal 12 October 1837.

⁵⁶AL Journal 15 April 1835. In London they bought pencils, books on drawing, gloves, silk stockings, Swedish shawls, and knitted woollen petticoats. AL Journal 7, 11 August 1835.

⁵⁷AL Journal 23-27 March 1837. At Bolton Abbey Lister signed the vestry visitor's book "Mrs. Lister & Miss Walker Shibden Hall," 25 March 1837.

⁵⁸AL Journal 23, 26 May 1835.

⁵⁹AL Journal 14 July 1835.

⁶⁰AL Journal 5 February 1835.

⁶¹AL Journal 22, 24 June 1835; 26 December 1837; Edward Burton, Lectures upon the Ecclesiastical History of the First Century (Printed for the author: Oxford, 1831); James B. Bernard, Theory of the Constitution compared with its Practice in Ancient and Modern Times (J. Ridgway and Sons: London, 1834).

⁶²AL Journal 12 October 1837.

⁶³AL Journal 28 February 1837.

with brandy after she had slipped.⁶⁵ Sometimes Lister would send Walker notes if the latter happened to stay at Cliff Hill overnight. On one of these occasions Lister commented, "Poor dear Ann - how different all is without her!"⁶⁶

One of the most regular private rituals of their partnership was the Sunday morning gathering of the inhabitants of Shibden Hall in the south parlor for prayers. In this case, the activity itself took place in a gendered and even patriarchal context. Had Anne Lister's father still been alive, it would have been he who led the household in Sunday prayers. Her typical entry on these occasions ran something like, "Then Ann and I....read prayers to my aunt & Oddy & Eugenie & George [the servants] in 35 minutes...."⁶⁷ The language of the journal on these occasions is always "Ann & I." It was the most family-type occasion of the week. They both attended church together on a Sunday as well, usually in Lightcliffe, and both contributed money towards the building of churches.⁶⁸ The constant repetition of these acts simultaneously reinforced both their respectability and their respective gender roles.

Of their more public joint rituals, visiting was of paramount importance. Visits were an occasion on which Anne Lister could either emphasize the fact that she was carrying out a respectable feminine duty, or they could be opportunities for emphasizing her masculinity. The two women usually called on other ladies in the

⁶⁴AL Journal 7, 8 December 1834; 13, 14 January 1835; 5 February 1835; 5, 6, 24 June 1835. This back-rubbing was primarily recorded in code but occasionally it was not.

⁶⁵AL Journal 13 May 1837.

⁶⁶AL Journal 12 January 1837.

⁶⁷AL Journal 14, 21 December 1834; 25 January 1835; 12 April 1835; 1 January 1837; 26 November 1837.

⁶⁸AL Journal 5 November 1837.

Halifax area,⁶⁹ though occasionally went visiting in York as well. When in York they called on the Belcombes together, as well as on the Norcliffes at Langton.⁷⁰ On a single afternoon in the summer of 1837 they both went off in their yellow carriage to make calls in the local Halifax neighborhood, speaking or leaving cards with Miss Briggs, Miss Ralph, Mrs. Dyson, Miss Dyson, Mrs. Henry Priestly, Mrs. William Henry Rawson, Miss Wilkinson and Mrs. Veitch.⁷¹ Certainly such extensive visiting was something women usually did, and was quite in keeping with usual feminine roles for women of the gentry.

Yet obviously the local gentry had been aware of Lister's gender differences for many years, and did not associate these with an overtly alternative or disreputable sexuality:

Called at the vicarage. Mrs. Musgrave not at home. Ann left her card & I wrote my name on it in pencil. Then to Wellhead. Saw Mrs. Waterhouse [&] her son John. Mrs. Musgrave & Mr. Musgrave for a minute and a Mr. English? came in & was introduced to us. We found Miss Bramley there on our arrival. Mr. John Waterhouse the only one with her. Introduced her to me. My stately freezing bow forbade all advances....Mrs. Waterhouse hoped Ann would not learn to walk and be like me. One Miss Lister quite enough. Could not do with two. One quite enough to move in such an excentric [sic] orbit.⁷²

Anne Lister represents herself in the journal as responding to some social calls in the way in which gentlemen of the gentry might have responded. When the two then unmarried Rawson daughters, Catherine and Delia, paid them a visit at Shibden Hall, Anne Lister sat with them about half an hour, "then left them to Ann"⁷³ while she worked on her correspondence. When Mr. & Mrs. Stansfield Rawson paid the two of them a visit at Shibden Hall Anne Lister left

⁶⁹AL Journal 5 January 1835.

⁷⁰AL Journal 16, 17 April 1835.

⁷¹AL Journal 19 June 1837.

⁷²AL Journal 11 February 1835.

⁷³AL Journal 22 May 1835.

Ann Walker and Mrs. Rawson together and took Mr. Rawson out to the Trough of Bolland Wood to show him the new approach road, asking his opinion about a lodge. Mrs. Rawson got a tour of the rooms of the house.⁷⁴ This strongly suggests gender differentiation.

When Ann Walker's sister and her husband came for a business visit, Anne Lister directed most of her talk to Captain Sutherland, letting the two sisters carry on in silence.⁷⁵ When the Sutherlands came to visit the two women at Shibden Hall, Lister's record of the scene reflects the social interactions of two married couples. Ann Walker showed her sister the kitchen, bedroom and blue room, while Anne Lister took Captain Sutherland and showed him the north chamber and discussed her alterations to the Hall.⁷⁶ These types of visits always involved precise and repeated social rituals, and indicate not only that the two women's partnership was accepted for its asexual public face, but also that such visits allowed gender differentiation between the two women.

Lister and Walker's partnership obviously involved both a private and a public aspect. In one remarkable scene, the two women attended a public ceremony together in the Halifax town centre in which Lister was referred to as Walker's "particular friend."⁷⁷ One of Anne Lister's major estate projects at this time was the conversion of her uncle's former residence at Northgate into a prosperous Inn, an improvement which she expected would require some £5,000.⁷⁸ There was to be an adjoining casino, and when the first stone of the casino was being laid there was a public ceremony at which Anne

⁷⁴AL Journal 24 April 1835.

⁷⁵AL Journal 17 September 1835.

⁷⁶AL Journal 24 September 1835.

⁷⁷AL Journal 26 September 1835.

⁷⁸AL Journal 1 May 1835.

Lister and Ann Walker officiated. They arrived in Halifax in their carriage with two footmen in livery behind them. They put a time capsule, consisting of a green glass bottle filled with old coins into a hole drilled into the cornerstone of the Northgate casino. "There must have been a hundred people gathered round the spot - two neatly dressed young ladies and some respectable looking men & the rest rabble..."⁷⁹ Ann Walker gave a speech directed at the main contractor. She said her friend Miss Lister had asked her to lay the first stone, and she said that "we" felt interested in the prosperity of Halifax. Anne Lister spoke and said "My friend Miss Walker has done us a great honour....I earnestly hope that the work we are beginning will do credit to us all."⁸⁰ The inscription on sheet lead which was also put into the bottom of the foundation said that the first stone of the casino had been laid "by Miss Ann Walker the younger, of Cliff Hill, Yorkshire, in the name & at the request of her particular friend, Miss Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Yorkshire, owner of the property."⁸¹ Later Anne Lister gave Ann Walker a silver trowel with the Lister coat of arms engraved upon it and the inscription, "To Miss Ann Walker the younger, of Cliff Hill, Yorkshire, for laying the first stone of the Casino, to be annexed to the Northgate Hotel, at Halifax. 26 September 1835."⁸² They appeared in public together at a public ceremony to lay the foundations of a public building. Obviously they were not in any way hiding the fact that they had joint enterprises, joint interests, or that they they lived and traveled together.

In both their private and public rituals the two women looked for all the world as if they were involved in a romantic friendship. While some local women who had known Anne Lister for many years

⁷⁹AL Journal 26 September 1835.

⁸⁰AL Journal 26 September 1835.

⁸¹AL Journal 26 September 1835.

⁸²AL Journal 26 September 1835.

might have surmised that there was a sexual element in the relationship, this was apparently not discussed. When both Anne Lister and Ann Walker visited at Langton Hall, Lister's former lover Isabella Norcliffe "<<wanted to joke about my warming Ann in bed but I put off all talk of this kind.>>"⁸³ Lister had the power of her class to help her surmount any social difficulties which a lesbian marriage might entail. Because of this, if she was hidden and reticent about her sexual practice, she was particularly bold about her relationship and its gendered aspects.

These gendered aspects were very apparent in their interests and work, and sometimes (though certainly not always) amounted to separate spheres. The repetition of certain actions within certain spheres helped to construct and stabilize genders which were potentially unstable. It is not easy to discover instances where Ann Walker displayed a certain competence in business, for example, but they do exist, even in letters written after Anne Lister's death.⁸⁴ However, Anne Lister's journal focuses on Ann Walker's more feminine activities, and this record survives in greater abundance than any other. Lister's record emphasizes more rigid gender roles, and the record itself was an important method of constructing the illusion of fixity in these gendered activities.

There are numerous examples of how Lister perceived the operation of separate spheres. For example, it was Ann Walker's business to deal with providing shirts for poor people in Hipperholme,⁸⁵ and any expression of philanthropy mainly fell to her.⁸⁶ Ann Walker had to be consulted when Anne Lister and her

⁸³AL Journal 17 April 1835.

⁸⁴See, for example, CDA, CN:102/2 and 3. Also, Letter from Ann Walker, Shibden Hall, to David Booth, 6 May 1841, CDA, SH:7/LL/407.

⁸⁵AL Journal 6 January 1835.

⁸⁶Letter from Ann Walker, Moscow, to David Booth, Halifax, 7 October 1839, CDA, SH:7/ML/1082, instructing him to make various dispersions of potatoes,

sister were determining who should pay household expenses, including servants' wages, "for all the indoors trouble would fall on her.....Ann quite against having anything to do with housekeeping."⁸⁷ Anne usually left her partner at Whiteley's bookshop while she went to her solicitor's office.⁸⁸ Walker's main participation in Anne Lister's business life seemed to be when she occasionally copied business letters for her,⁸⁹ though Anne Lister was apparently in the habit of telling Ann Walker what business concerns currently occupied her.⁹⁰ Certainly Anne Lister dictated or wrote the first draft of most if not all of Ann Walker's most important business correspondence.⁹¹ This fact was almost always hidden in code. "<<Then till nine & a quarter writing for Ann copy of what she should write to her sister about the coal account. Wrote for her this morning what she should write about Patterson's cond[uct].>>"⁹² When Ann Walker told her she thought she heard someone in the house it was Anne Lister who got out of bed to explore, "with a pistol in one hand and a candle in the other."⁹³

Ann Walker sometimes mended Lister's petticoat or made things for her partner, such as knitted handkerchiefs.⁹⁴ One evening Lister and Walker sat upstairs; while Walker knitted a blanket for Aunt

tea, flour, calico, to various women on the estate and near Halifax. Letter from Lister and Walker, Moscow, to their steward, David Booth, in Halifax, 17 December 1839, CDA, SH:7/ML/1092; Note from Ann Walker, Moscow, 1840, CDA, SH:7/LL/406.

⁸⁷AL Journal 20 January 1835.

⁸⁸AL Journal 21 January 1835; 13 February 1835.

⁸⁹AL Journal 16 February 1835. Once, however, she made a suggestion about the Northgate Inn public house licence. Anne Lister expressed some surprise at her insight on this occasion. AL Journal 1 May 1835.

⁹⁰AL Journal 30 July 1835.

⁹¹AL Journal 25 February 1835.

⁹²AL Journal 25 February 1835. For other examples of this phenomenon see 27 February 1835; 21-22 and 28-29 April 1835; 30 May 1835; 1, 11, 13 June 1835; 30 July 1835; 27 August 1835; 24 February 1837; 10 August 1837; 7 November 1837, etc. When Anne Lister makes a note of writing Ann Walker's business letters for her it is always in code.

⁹³AL Journal 16 March 1837. Another pistol incident, 14 April 1837.

⁹⁴AL Journal 25 November 1835, 23 January 1835.

Anne Lister, Anne Lister read the London papers.⁹⁵ Ann Walker knit a pair of slippers for Mariana Lawton.⁹⁶ To my knowledge Anne Lister never recorded herself knitting anything. Ann Walker was apparently a competent and regular artist, always drawing or sending drawings to her drawing master, Mr. Brown, in York. Anne Lister rarely attempted drawing anything, and that poorly, even though it was considered one of the graceful skills a gentlewoman ought to possess. Ann Walker stayed at home, rode her pony to visit her aunt at Cliff Hill, received visits, sketched, looked over old manuscripts,⁹⁷ worked on her own estate accounts, spoke with her own tenants (usually with Anne Lister in the room), and arranged for some estate improvements of her own. Anne Lister sometimes supervised these for her.⁹⁸ Anne Lister recorded Ann Walker supervising her workmen only twice that I can find during 1832, 1835 and 1837.⁹⁹ Anne Lister was outside for most of the day every day supervising her workmen in the various projects described in Chapter Four. When Anne Lister wanted to buy two chestnut horses, she made sure to order a slightly shorter one (14-1/2 hands as opposed to 15) for her partner to ride.¹⁰⁰ Ann Walker was quite involved in initiating and supporting a Sunday School at Lightcliffe, and though both of them were involved in interviewing potential school teachers, Anne Lister left the final decision to Ann Walker, who often vacillated between

⁹⁵AL Journal 16 May 1835.

⁹⁶AL Journal 22 May 1835.

⁹⁷She was apparently working on a history of the Walker family and pedigree.

⁹⁸AL Journal 9, 11 September 1835.

⁹⁹AL Journal 22, 23 October 1835. Of course it is always important to keep in mind, especially with this kind of source, that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 18 April 1835.

candidates.¹⁰¹ "[Mr.] West is the best," wrote Lister, "*.... mais c'est égal - Ann m'aime pas sa femme - Ann must decide.*"¹⁰²

The day after Anne Lister's lady's maid, Eugenie, left in disgrace (see Chapter Four), Ann Walker did Lister's hair instead. This fact, however, was recorded in code.¹⁰³ But Ann Walker did not take on the missing servant's duties all by herself. In the absence of Eugenie, "Ann and I dressed each other," Anne Lister dressed herself "without any help" and helped "<<Ann to tie up preserve pots....>>"¹⁰⁴ Thus, even Anne Lister participated in traditionally feminine activities, but made sure to record these instances in code. Even though a record may appear to give evidence of separate, gendered spheres, these may nonetheless remain unstable and shifting to a certain degree.

¹⁰¹Both boys and girls were to be educated equally at the school, though with more boys than girls allowed in. For information on the school in general see AL Journal 26 April 1835; 24 May 1835; 16 July 1835; 12, 13, 15 September 1835; 19, 23, 24 October 1835; 26 November 1835; 7, 8 December 1835; 12 March 1837.

¹⁰²AL Journal 31 October 1835. Trans., "*....to me it is all the same - Ann does not like his wife....*"

¹⁰³AL Journal 4 October 1835.

¹⁰⁴AL Journal 4, 5, 8 October 1835. In one letter Lister referred to her "utter helplessness as to toilette" in the absence of a maidservant. AL Journal 18 October 1835.

1. e. Disagreements and Tensions

Within the context of a lesbian "marriage" in the early nineteenth century, with gendered differences between the two partners, it is not surprising to find several instances where Lister tried to take command over Ann Walker, whom she described as the more emotional, more indecisive partner. During their courtship Lister had quite frankly told Walker she would begin to make decisions for her.¹⁰⁵ Lister definitely imposed her own idea of appropriate gender roles onto the relationship. But this was not their main point of contention. Money, rank and sex seemed to be the main areas of tension in their relationship almost throughout its existence. Rows occur in many if not most intimate relationships, and they were certainly a regular part of Lister and Walker's relationship.

Ann Walker's emotional expressions led Anne Lister to complain of the latter's temper and vow to 'manage' her more 'feminine' partner better. "<<A[nn]. rather queer with me this evening because I said her four mahogany hall chairs would not look well in the blue room. Her temper is certainly odd but perhaps I shall manage it. At any rate I hope I am sure of my own temper & all its patience will probably be required.>>"¹⁰⁶ Almost every time they had a row (only once in the first six months of 1835) Anne Lister vowed to herself that she would manage her partner's temper better in future.¹⁰⁷ This idea of "managing" a more 'feminine' partner certainly has gendered power implications. On one occasion she wrote, "<<What a temper Ann has. But I will

¹⁰⁵AL Journal 7 December 1832.

¹⁰⁶AL Journal 6 December 1834.

¹⁰⁷AL Journal 6 July 1835.

master it someway or other or give up altogether....>>"¹⁰⁸ and on another, "<<while she is with me I must hold the rein tighter>>"¹⁰⁹ After a fight about carriages Anne Lister commented privately, "<<I see there will be a struggle for the upper hand. I shall not give way come what may.>>"¹¹⁰ And again, "<<I see I must not give up to her too much.>>"¹¹¹ She perceived emotional expression and confrontation as an occasion for a demonstration of her power.

In August 1835 they began having more serious arguments. Ann Walker was upset because Anne Lister had been unable or unwilling to introduce her to her aristocratic female friends. Ann Walker cried and "<<said the sooner we parted the better....I took all well but thinking to myself, there is danger in the first mention, the first thought that it is possible for us to part. Time will shew. [sic] I shall try to be prepared for whatever may happen.>>"¹¹² Rank was an intermittent but consistent problem between them, and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Seven. As detailed there, their visits to Anne Lister's friends among the aristocracy in London were occasions of great stress within their relationship, because Anne Lister did not introduce Walker, a woman of lower rank. Lister and Walker may have considered their partnership to be a kind of marriage, but it was not recognized as such by Lister's aristocratic friends. No one had sent congratulations or presents as they had on the occasion of Charlotte Stuart's marriage to Mr. Canning. In fact, in an atmosphere of

¹⁰⁸AL Journal 7 March 1837. Similar language of "managing" and "mastering" Ann Walker's temper is also used elsewhere. See 15, 19 March 1837.

¹⁰⁹AL Journal 17 August 1837.

¹¹⁰AL Journal 26 October 1835.

¹¹¹The context for this statement was a row about the servants, of which there are several examples: AL Journal 3, 4, 21 March 1837; 30 April 1837; 1, 17 May 1837.

¹¹²AL Journal 1 August 1835. See Chapter Seven for a further discussion of this issue in terms of the status hierarchy within the women's networks.

compulsory heterosexuality, the relationship had no social status. Lister invariably referred to Walker in the diminutive when she to referred to her at all in her letters to these friends. When Lister told Lady Vere Cameron about her travel plans she wrote, "I shall have the pleasure of presenting my little quiet amiable friend, and we will spend 2 or 3 days...with you *en passant*..."¹¹³

When they began to have problems Anne Lister often thought of being "<<*au large* again>>"¹¹⁴ but aside from her visit with Mariana and her brief flirtation with the Russian Princess Radziwill,¹¹⁵ she was apparently faithful to Ann Walker from their engagement in 1834 until her own death in 1840. Anne Lister recorded one row they had because Ann Walker was upset at having to go to church in the yellow carriage. [I do not know why this was upsetting.] Lister said she would order it differently immediately, but, disillusioned and tired of Ann Walker's moods, at once began fantasizing of being companions with someone else.¹¹⁶ At one point Lister wrote, "<<I feel now at last resigned to my fate and take it very quietly. She has no mind for me. I shall not meet with one that has in this world. Let me be thankful for all the mercies, the blessings I have, rather than sigh for more>>"¹¹⁷ After another row Lister commented,

«She has a queer temper & as *she gradually begins to have a will of her own* [ital. mine] her queerness, her requiring much attention, her emptiness as a companion strike me more & more. Her leaving me shall be her own doing, but I hope I shall be ready when the time shall come & not fret myself to death about it.>>¹¹⁸

¹¹³AL Journal 1 February 1837.

¹¹⁴AL Journal 14 August 1835.

¹¹⁵CDA, RAM: 74. Muriel Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840" (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936), letters from 1839-1840.

¹¹⁶AL Journal 23 August 1835.

¹¹⁷AL Journal 29 August 1835.

¹¹⁸AL Journal 10 November 1835.

Lister periodically but secretly dreamt of being out of the relationship while she was still in it. "<<I think more & more seriously of being off....look into my accounts, settle all & be off as soon as I can. Be perfectly civil.....it is a *mesalliance* to me. The sooner I am quietly rid of her the better. I wish it was over at this moment...>>"¹¹⁹ Not happy with Walker, Lister constantly planned how to manage financially without her, while at the same time becoming more dependent on Walker's income. At one point Ann Walker actually wrote a note to Lister saying that she was leaving.¹²⁰ Walker even made plans for buying furniture and taking it to Scotland, and wrote to her sister to that effect.¹²¹ In the ensuing row Lister told her that she

<<should have no trouble with me. She had only to do as she liked. She began crying. I changed my manner. Said all this was ridiculous. She wanted a good whipping & I got her right. I told her I must buy a rod & in truth I must not indulge her too much. Said I should take her by Hull to Rotterdam the end of next month & she made no objection.>>¹²²

I think this passage certainly sheds some light on Lister's perceptions of the gender and power hierarchy within their relationship.

After a few of these fights she would write the whole scene out and then comment, "<<I am better for writing my journal.>>"¹²³ Apparently Ann Walker had some access to the journal but there is no indication she was able to read the passages in crypt.¹²⁴ Ann

¹¹⁹AL Journal 15 June 1837. See also 16, 24 June 1837; 3,4 July 1837.

¹²⁰AL Journal 29, 30 June 1837.

¹²¹AL Journal 4 July 1837.

¹²²AL Journal 30 June 1837. In fact they did not get off to the continent until the following year.

¹²³AL Journal 21 October 1837.

¹²⁴AL Journal 30 October 1837.

Walker had her own journal which has apparently not survived,¹²⁵ or we might have a valuable counterpoint to Anne Lister's perspective.

¹²⁵AL Journal 17 November 1837; 13 December 1837.

2. Sexual Discourses

2. a. The Social Construction of Desire

Anne Lister was able to be an upper-class "mannish" lesbian without losing social approbation. In this early nineteenth-century context, "mannish" gender attributes in a woman were not immediately equated with erotic lesbianism. However, the evidence for lesbian sexual practice in the Anne Lister journals is not only more detailed but also earlier than any other similar sources that have so far come to light. But to conclude, "women were not only romantically but also erotically involved in the early nineteenth-century," is simply not sufficient. This section will also offer an analysis of the gendered aspects of Anne Lister's sexual relationships.

This section will primarily focus on Anne Lister's interactions with Vere Hobart, later Lady Vere Cameron, and with Ann Walker. Both were intensely emotional relationships, though perhaps Anne Lister's feelings for Vere Hobart were stronger than those for Ann Walker. In Vere Hobart's case the physical contact never became genital whereas in Ann Walker's case it was frequently so. Yet it would be false to name the one as a romantic friendship and the other as a lesbian marriage. The Anne Lister material cannot help but illuminate the false dichotomy between romantic friendship and erotic lesbianism. Women's historical affection, attention, support and love for each other ought not to be delimited by oppositional analyses simply for the sake of categorical convenience. Such dichotomies may be more academically digestible but they are not helpful when trying to understand the complexity of women's relationships in this period. Certainly there

was a dividing line among the women themselves between what was clearly sexual and what was not - but this line was quite mutable. It could change depending on who Anne Lister was with, what stage their relationship was in and, in fact, what she wanted from the relationship or was likely to obtain.

Some of the quotations from the journal in this section are lengthy and explicit. Lister's language to describe her sexual practices and attitudes is unique, and, particularly with this topic, to describe her describing herself seems unnecessarily removed. There are many clues in this material not only about early-nineteenth-century gentry constructions of desire, but about how these relate to gendered moral attitudes, especially the double-standard. In most of her sexual encounters she recorded a sense of a double standard. If a woman she was with demonstrated a proper reluctance to be sexual, Anne Lister respected her more than if she was too willing. Throughout, Anne Lister attempted to maintain the control and initiative. She never, in those parts of her four million word journal that I have read, recorded any instance where a woman made love to her rather than vice versa. It is more than likely that one or more of her lovers did, at some point in her thirty-five or so years of sexual activity, make love to her, but as this fact was inconsistent with a masculine construction of gender, she may have been more reluctant to record it, even in code. Her journal reflects the cultural discourse of her time, i.e., that the masculine ought not to be penetrated.

Her masturbatory fantasies also reflect a construction of desire which was masculinized in line with gendered discourses in her class and time. She often made reference to concepts such as "mistress," or used literary references to male and female genitalia. Because she was a stone butch, her record of her own orgasms is

always one of autosexual stimulation. In referring to her own orgasms, she always used the terminology "<<incurred a cross>>" and the reference is always made in code. In 1830, for example, while she was studying anatomy in Paris, she recorded, "Reading anatomy from 12 to 1.5[0] <<Chiefly dictionary, clitoris, etc., & at last, in trying if I had much of one, incurred a cross on my chair.>>"¹²⁶ Or again, "<<As I lay in bed this morning, felt suddenly a little on the amoroso at a quarter before twelve & thinking of Lady S[tuart]. de R[othersey]. & if I had a penis, etc. etc. actually incurred a cross for her!>>"¹²⁷ After Ann Walker began living with her at Shibden, she always masturbated when Walker was absent. One day's journal began: "<<No kiss. She left me & incurred a cross.>>"¹²⁸ In most of these instances she records that she "<<...incurred a cross thinking of Mariana as a mistress.>>"¹²⁹ A "mistress" after all, was something primarily restricted to upper-class men, who could have one and still retain, if not enhance, their sexual respectability. These and other examples in the journal point to a cultural, discursive, construction of desire.¹³⁰

¹²⁶AL Journal 23 February 1830.

¹²⁷AL Journal 25 June 1830.

¹²⁸AL Journal 21 May 1835.

¹²⁹AL Journal 3 December 1835.

¹³⁰AL Journal 16, 18 April 1837; 30 May 1837; 1 June 1837.

2. b. Romantic Friendship and the Double Standard

In her relationships with both Vere Hobart and Ann Walker, Lister demonstrated an attitude to female sexuality which might be expected from a young gentleman of this class and time, pretending to esteem sexual reticence while plotting conquest, and ceasing to respect when her desire was fulfilled. She no doubt recorded a discourse which in turn reflected the discourse in which she grew up.¹³¹ It was precisely because Vere Hobart was so reluctant to be sexual that Anne's esteem for her remained high. As we shall see, in Ann Walker's case the opposite seemed to be true. Because Ann Walker engaged in sexual activity so willingly, Anne Lister's respect and esteem for her seemed to decline correspondingly.

Since their meeting in 1829 Anne Lister had had a growing emotional interest in Vere Hobart. In 1830 she wrote,

wherever I go I shall think of Vere - I think of her very often - I feel as if by instinct to like every person and thing she likes.....V[ere] reserved and has never communicated her sentiments unqualifiedly to any one - She is a rather singular little person [-] as singular perhaps as the interest that some may feel for her.¹³²

Certainly Anne was in love with Vere, and at Hastings she often kissed her on the forehead. However, one of the pivot points of their power struggle was precisely around the issue of physical contact. Too much of it led to Vere becoming more reserved, which in turn led to feelings of absolute mortification on Anne's part. Certainly Anne was not as 'successful' sexually with Vere as she would have liked. Instead of flaming passion, Vere Hobart tried to

¹³¹Without a widely available feminist consciousness to inform her, this is hardly surprising.

¹³²AL Journal 1 January 1830.

enforce a cold and proper affection. The emotional pain which Anne Lister went through as a result of this was clearly articulated in the journal. Anne Lister began to withdraw from Vere. Their relationship became strained.

Anne's desire for physical contact was a regular topic in after dinner discussions between the two women. Anne told Vere she (Anne) "<<should be less naughty>>" if she had her (Vere) always. Vere replied, "<<You don't know you will not.>>" [Have her always.] She then "<<scolded>>" Anne about her "<<oddity>>" and yet "<<owned she liked what was not commonplace.>>"¹³³ Their terribly romantic interactions continued, with Anne even reading her love poetry on occasion.¹³⁴ Anne believed Vere was becoming "<<less and less pothered>>" by her attentions. "<<I had kissed her forehead and she rather came nearer for it than drew back and afterwards as if getting her sets [sic] lightly kissed mine - she wishes me better of my folly yet always says but not to change too much...>>"¹³⁵ One evening Vere was at the piano. They began speaking of "<<warmth.>>" Anne said she wanted no more warmth than what Vere "<<was just then. This seemed to make her half repenting and she said nobody liked warmth. It was disagreeable. I should never get it from her etc. 'Til tho' without shewing [sic] it I came away more impatient and vexed than I have felt with her for long...>>"¹³⁶ One evening after dinner Anne described herself as being "<<in good spirits.....but Miss H[obart]. damped me as usual for fear of my being too affectionate. I soon said well I am better.....>>"¹³⁷

¹³³AL Journal 5 January 1832.

¹³⁴AL Journal 6 January 1832. "<<Somehow owned my taste for poetry. [Wrote] 'She wed her,' in pencil which I then burnt....>>"

¹³⁵AL Journal 6 January 1832.

¹³⁶AL Journal 13 January 1832.

¹³⁷AL Journal 16 January 1832.

Anne followed her from the dinner table and was going to kiss her forehead but Vere refused, "<<saying it was indecent. Not a usual time.>>"¹³⁸ Anne decided to restrain any display of affection towards Vere, who had apparently made some kind of disparaging comment about Anne's "<<unaccountable phrensy [sic]>>"¹³⁹ Anne lay in the morning in bed thinking of her and sorting out her emotions, alternating between affection and aggravation. "<<My whole life with her,>>" Anne mused in her journal, "<<is one effort to be what I am not naturally...."

.....Hang it I don't like all this. Perhaps were I of high rank I might never think of it. As it is she would be more wise to act differently. She certainly treats me *oddly & so she thinks of me too, for yesterday morning on my saying something that the occasion brought forward about petticoats* 'Indeed,' said she, 'I think from your difficulty in getting accustomed to them you must have spent a great part of your life without them.'.....>>¹⁴⁰

It is interesting to note that Anne Lister could have interpreted Vere's reticence as either class-based or morality-based, as became an unmarried woman. There is no sense that Vere rejected her purely because Lister was a woman, except in so much as Vere was aware that partnering with a woman brought less or even no social status and financial security compared to partnering with a male member of the landed gentry.

Lister portrays Vere Hobart as enjoying their romantic asexual friendship, along with the sexual tensions and power imbalances inherent in such a situation. "<<She would have the influence of love,>>" remarked Anne, "<<without allowing me one of its comforts or privileges.....>>"¹⁴¹ In another journal passage Lister

¹³⁸AL Journal 17 January 1832.

¹³⁹AL Journal 22 January 1832

¹⁴⁰AL Journal 17 January 1832.

¹⁴¹AL Journal 10 March 1832.

wrote "<<She said at last she liked me to long for it and not get it. I took no notice apparently but helped myself without her anger to one kiss after breakfast another after dinner and ditto now on wishing goodnight.>>"¹⁴² Lister, however, continued to portray her self as suffering emotionally under these circumstances. After Vere married Captain Cameron Lister returned to Shibden Hall as quickly as possible.

¹⁴²AL Journal 12 April 1832.

2. c. Lesbian Sexual Practice

She sought out a young heiress with whom she could comfortably live and be sexual. Her relationship with Ann Walker was frequently sexual both during their courtship and during their later formal marriage relationship. There is even one remarkable passage which provides some evidence that other women in the local gentry were in fact aware of the sexual aspects of the relationship. One afternoon during their courtship Lister and Walker were engaged in a great deal of passionate kissing on the sofa at Lidgate when Mrs. Priestley unexpectedly arrived:

<<I had jumped in time and was standing by the fire but Ann looked red and I pale and Mrs. P. must see we were not particularly expecting company. She looked vexed, jealous and annoyed and in bitter satire asked if I had [been] where I was ever since she left me there. No said I, only ought to have been. My aunt had been in a host of miseries Mrs. P. said as if turning it all on this. Yes she was quite vexed with me. I laughed and said I really did not intend doing so again. 'Yes' she replied 'you will do the same the very next time the temptation occurs.' Plain proof thought I of what you think and that you smoke a little [sic]. I parried all with good humour saying I really must stay all night. She only stayed a few minutes and went off in suppressed rage probably giving me far more credit than deserved for plotting the visit of yesterday and being there all today and having refused breakfasting with her not to go to Stonyroyde but be with Miss W. Mrs. P. probably believes her confidence insecure me insincere and the lord knows what. Miss W. laughed and said we were well matched. We soon got to kissing again on the sofa. She said I looked ill. I denied then said if I did look so I knew what would cure me. She would know what. Said I really would not could not tell her. At last I got my right hand up her petticoats and after much fumbling got thro' the opening of her drawers and touched (first time) the hair and skin of queer. She never offered the least resistance in any way and certainly shewed no sign of its being disagreeable. However having not uttered before I now fell upon her neck seemed sickish just whispered that I could not stand it and stood leaning my hand off her shoulder till apparently composed. Then entreated her forgiveness in general terms saying she behaved beautifully. No she said she knew she led me on. I would deny this tho' owning that I was of course sure she cared for me. Oh yes said she or should we go on as we do.[?] In fact she likes my attentions and the first night of my being there will give me all I am able to take. When dusk she asked (I had said I was at no time likely to marry. How far she understood me I could not quite make out) 'if you never had any attachment who taught you to kiss?' I laughed and said how nicely that was said. Then answered that nature taught me. I could have replied, and who taught you? She told

me as she had done yesterday that she had always a fancy for me and thought how much she should like to know me better.....>>¹⁴³

Lister dealt with the scene with her usual bravado. Despite her best efforts to convince Ann Walker that what they were doing was acceptable, Walker continued to have her doubts. The 1832 journal records only two or three surprisingly brief but straightforward conversations about homosexuality.

<<She [Walker] had doubted whether it was right to engage herself to me if this sort of thing was so bad between two men. It must be so. I answered this in my usual way. It was my natural and undeviating feeling etc. etc. but said I, the moral responsibility is already incurred. She seemed better satisfied.....>>¹⁴⁴.....<<She seems getting attached to me said she had never felt for me as she did now.....Said it was not my intention to make violent [love?] after what she said on Tuesday as to its being wrong. This objection she seems to have almost got over.....>>¹⁴⁵

Since she was in her teens Lister had told inquiring, doubtful or potential lovers that her sexual desire for women was "natural," but she certainly never recorded any indication that their feeling for her might be unnatural. Rather, the fact that feminine women were attracted to her was perfectly explicable to Lister in view of her masculine gender attributes, which she also saw as "natural."

Ann Walker continued, however, to express scruples about their sexual interaction:

<<Grubbed her a little.¹⁴⁶ Did not do it well enough or she was not much in humour for it. So lay still. She thought me asleep but I was not. About two turned round and grubbed her again rather better than before but still not well. She said it had not been so agreeable to her the last few times. She thought I was nervous and she said she did not think it right. Wished we could do without it. At breakfast I referred to her scruples and wishes and said I would try not to care for her in that particular way and promised her that if I once seriously

¹⁴³AL Journal 8 October 1832.

¹⁴⁴AL Journal 27 November 1832.

¹⁴⁵AL Journal 30 November 1832.

¹⁴⁶Lister used the verb "grub" to indicate penetration. It comes from an old English term meaning to dig, as in the earth.

tried I would succeed but I was not quite sure whether we should be the happier for my success or not. Sat talking all the morning combatting her scruples and really thought I had made some impression and done her good till on going away and asking her to write and tell me how she was tomorrow she said oh no she should be no better and burst into tears and I left her thinking I never saw such a hopeless person in my life. How miserable said I to myself. Thank God my own mind is not like hers. What could I do with her?>>¹⁴⁷

Miss Walker sent a note later saying that her "<<'convictions as to its being right and against my duty remain. I think we had better not meet again'.....Poor girl. What a miserable state of mind. All for nothing.>>"¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless they continued to be sexual together. Miss Walker seemed to change her mind frequently about whether she wanted to continue the relationship or not.¹⁴⁹ Yet Anne tired of the wavering and had little respect for Miss Walker, partly because she was willing to be sexual with her.

Anne Lister continued to be surprised by Ann Walker's willingness to be kissed, for example. Her respect for Ann Walker continued to decline.

<<....She thinks me over head and ears with her. She is mistaken. Her mumbling kisses have cured me of that.....It has struck me more than once she is a deepish hand. She took me up to her room. I kissed her and she pushed herself so to me I rather felt and might have done it as much as I pleased. She is man keen enough. If I stay all night it will be my own fault if I do not have all of her I can. I really [think] she wishes to try the metal I am made of and I begin to fear not being able to do enough and doubt whether even fun will be amusing or safe....My real and romantic care for her is set at rest and all I shall now feel for her will not get the better of me. Shall I or shall I not give in to fun with her? Stay all night and do my best without caring for the result....at all rates I may handle her as I like if I choose to venture it. How changed my mind. Respect so staggered yesterday is gone today. I care not for her tho' her money would suit...I am cured.>>¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷AL Journal 25 December 1832.

¹⁴⁸AL Journal 25 December 1832.

¹⁴⁹AL Journal 26 December 1832.

¹⁵⁰AL Journal 5 October 1832.

Anne reported to her aunt that perhaps the match might be off because Ann Walker was not willing to give up Cliff Hill, but that she would still wait the six months to get the answer to her [marriage] proposal.¹⁵¹

Once the two women began being sexual they saw a great deal of each other for a few weeks. Their encounters were always tinged with Anne's semblance of romantic despair and Miss Walker's insistence that she had not yet said 'no' to the proposal of marriage. Anne Lister recorded the first time she put her "<<right middle finger>>"¹⁵² inside Ann Walker, some weeks after their first kiss, and also recorded Miss Walker's lack of resistance. Anne felt that Miss Walker had had some previous experience, "<<taking it altogether as if she had learnt her lesson before in this way too as well as in kissing. She whispered that she loved me then afterwards said her mind was quite unmade up and bade me not be sanguine....>>"¹⁵³

The next time they met to have a sexual encounter Miss Walker pushed Anne's hand away, saying that she had suffered from the previous occasion, that she was "<<very tender there.>>"¹⁵⁴ Anne talked to her soothingly and said how gentle she would be and expressed anxiety for her health. The next time they met Anne recorded that she used only one finger but Walker was still tender. "<<I think she was more intact and virgin than I had latterly surmised.....>>"¹⁵⁵ wrote Lister. "<<She whispered to me how gentle and kind I was to her and faintly said she loved me or else how can you think said she I should let you do as you do.>>"¹⁵⁶ Obviously

¹⁵¹AL Journal 5 October 1832.

¹⁵²AL Journal 11 October 1832.

¹⁵³AL Journal 11 October 1832.

¹⁵⁴AL Journal 13 October 1832.

¹⁵⁵AL Journal 15 October 1832.

¹⁵⁶AL Journal 15 October 1832.

Walker was aware of the attitudes which might endanger her status with Lister.

Miss Walker apparently had physical ramifications resulting from their sexual activity, with genital tenderness and a soreness in her back. She told Anne they had to give up their fondling. In her diary, Anne expressed a certain degree of sexual insecurity as a result of this.

<<She did not think she should have suffered so much.....If she was really married it would be different. Would be easier. Oh oh thought I to myself I see how it is. My difficulty in getting to her on Monday night and my being able to do so little was not what she expected or relished. I combated her idea that she would suffer less with a man. Thought her mistaken unless she spoke from experience which she denied....."¹⁵⁷ <<explained why I thought her mistaken thinking she would bear a man more easily than me. Explained the sizes of men. How Caesar was biliber [sic], as big as two books. Mentioned some women taking even an ass and the woman in Paris with a dog to be seen for ten franks etc. all which she listened to with interest and composure.... >>¹⁵⁸

Anne continued to lose respect for Ann Walker, and clearly expressed values arising out of a sexual double-standard. "<<She wants my services and time and friendship and to keep her money to herself.....I left her with less care than ever and more resignation at being rid of her. I may use her person freely enough. I cease to respect.>>"¹⁵⁹

Once they were 'married,' however, the issue of respect disappeared. They almost always slept together in the same bed, except for one long period when Walker's snoring disturbed her so much Lister slept in the kitchen chamber.¹⁶⁰ In the diary she displays a consciousness of sexual practice on a daily basis, even though by 1835 and 1837 she and Ann Walker were less

¹⁵⁷AL Journal 19 October 1832.

¹⁵⁸AL Journal 20 October 1832.

¹⁵⁹AL Journal 22 December 1832.

¹⁶⁰AL Journal 11, 12, 13, 14 April 1837.

frequently sexual than they had been during their courtship. Anne Lister's recorded version of her 'married' sexual life with Ann Walker was uniformly prosaic. If they did not have sex she started the day's journal entry with "<<No kiss.>>" If they had had sex she would write something along the lines of, "<<Very quiet good kiss last night.>>"¹⁶¹ or "<<A nice quiet good kiss last night.>>"¹⁶² or "<<A kiss last night but only a tolerable one.>>"¹⁶³ One or the other of these is always the very first sentence in each day's journal entry, unless they slept apart or Ann Walker was at Cliff Hill overnight, (a rare event) in which case that was noted instead.¹⁶⁴ Occasionally she varied it by writing things like, "<<Pretty good one last night but she said I had half killed her & she would have no more & she awoke me two or three times in the night to tell me she could not sleep.>>"¹⁶⁵ or "<<A goodish kiss last night. All her own bringing on. I never spoke but took it. We did not sleep till near two tho' lay quiet without speaking.>>"¹⁶⁶ or "<<A pretty good kiss last night. Her own bringing on. Not a word said by either of us & she did not seem so overdone as in general tho' she was last night & always is long about it.>>"¹⁶⁷ Such entries are the first line in every day's journal, and almost all sound like some variation of the above.¹⁶⁸ Some might question the meaning given for "kiss," but there is abundant evidence that it refers to sexual activity of some kind, and quite possibly to orgasm. "<<No kiss tho' Ann rather on the

¹⁶¹AL Journal 5 January 1835.

¹⁶²AL Journal 10 January 1835.

¹⁶³AL Journal 13 August 1835.

¹⁶⁴AL Journal 18, 19, 20 September 1835.

¹⁶⁵AL Journal 25 February 1835.

¹⁶⁶AL Journal 23 March 1835.

¹⁶⁷AL Journal 25 April 1835.

¹⁶⁸See also AL Journal 26, 27 April 1835; 18, 23 May 1835; 9, 15, 17 June 1835; 13, 14 August 1835; 6, 26, 28 January 1837; 5, 6, 7, 15, 16, 27, 28, 29 March 1837; 3, 12, 14, 15 April 1837; 16, 21, 27 May 1837; 11, 14, 18, 19 August 1837; 2, 5, 13 September 1837; 2, 5 October 1837.

amoroso last night but she had put on a napkin having a little of her cousin & I said kissing would be bad for her.>>"¹⁶⁹

Lister recorded her erotic exchanges and married sexual practice with a language and a detail rarely found. However, she also recorded interactions strained by heterosexual moral standards, the cultural origins of which related to the inheritance of landed property. Over the years she had become comfortable with who she was, but her lovers always needed time to deal with and process their new experiences - or what they told her were new experiences. Erotic lesbianism, as well as romantic friendship, could clearly exist within the single context of one woman's life. However, lacking the political context more common to twentieth-century lesbians, she masked the erotic by being open about the acceptable romantic face of her relationships. The most striking aspect of the Anne Lister material is not that she was sexual - most human beings are - but rather that despite the lack of a politicized homosexuality, she remained so well entrenched in respectable social circles.

¹⁶⁹AL Journal 8 November 1835.

3. Lesbian community

I have discussed definitions of lesbian community in an introductory fashion in Chapters One and Three. This section will deal briefly with three of the characteristics mentioned before, nonmonogamy, a gendered eroticism, and a verbal exchange of relationship information among three or more women. One may choose to call it gossip, but it served important functions. As we saw in Chapter Three, there was a great deal of fluidity and nonmonogamy in Lister's community. This was the case partly because the women were not bound by legal requirements to stay together and partly because in an atmosphere of compulsory heterosexuality there was little support for them to do so. Anne Lister never needed to get an Act of Parliament to end a sexual relationship, unlike married heterosexual women at this time.

At the end of 1834, only a few months after Ann Walker moved to Shibden Hall, Anne Lister spent Christmas at Lawton Hall with Mariana, who was enormously distressed at the final ending of their 'engagement,' which had been a constant theme in both their lives since about 1813. Although when she first got there Lister wrote, "<<I never felt less in love's danger,>>" and certainly intended to be faithful to Ann Walker, by the end of her visit the two women had been sexual.¹⁷⁰ "<<She says she is glad to see me but talks of the difference there is when my interest is hung on another peg....but she would lead me astray if she could....>>"¹⁷¹ Mariana evinced a considerable jealousy about Ann Walker, and after Lister's engagement to her Mariana refused to visit Shibden Hall.¹⁷² She told Lister she was sure she would like

¹⁷⁰AL Journal 22, 23 December 1834.

¹⁷¹AL Journal 23 December 1834.

¹⁷²AL Journal 26 October 1835.

Walker during the daytime "<<but could not bear her at night. Could not bear to see her go to bed with me. I kindly parried all this....[I] spoke highly of Ann's high principle & honorable feeling & that even in any case if it cost me life itself I would not willingly give her uneasiness. She trusted me & she was right.>>"¹⁷³ In a later letter Mariana wrote,

'Fred if it is destined that another should take my place, I will wish for your every happiness but do not ask my friendship for more than yourself, above all do not ask to see me again....How much of all this feeling is still hanging 'round my heart, and yet we have met, and Adney sends me her kind regards, and I am on the point of returning them. She hopes to see me some of these days - yes, some of these days perhaps we shall all meet, but we we wait a little, wait till sorrows are rather more forgotten. Now they are consoled rather than unremembered.' !!! And all these sorrows were her own forcing on!¹⁷⁴

The case for an early lesbian community is strengthened by such things as visits, letters, and the existence of the expectation of polite friendship among women who felt jealous of one another. As will be seen in Chapter Seven, the women who were part of this lesbian community were often also part of the female networks, and vice-versa.

There was an abundant exchange of information about relationships which had been going on among some of these women for about twenty years. Mariana had told both Charlotte Norcliffe and her own sister, Mrs. Milne, that Anne Lister's decision in favor of Ann Walker was her own (Mariana's) fault because she had married Charles instead of staying with Anne Lister. Anne Lister reminded her of this during this visit. It was the final ending of their relationship. Mariana said,

¹⁷³AL Journal 24 December 1834.

¹⁷⁴AL Journal 26 April 1835. By this Lister means not only that Mariana chose to marry a man in 1816 instead of herself, but also that she chose to break off their engagement in 1832. 'Fred' was a nickname which Mariana used for Anne Lister.

<· she had often thought she had known me too soon or too late. Had she been another year with me [at the beginning] her mind would have been above minding all she heard against me, but before my first visit there her father had said I should not enter the house till she cried & made herself ill. A separate bed was then made up for me but Eliza listened to hear if I went to her. Mariana felt that I should have made her happier than anyone else could.>>175

Mariana, perhaps startled at her life's choices, and realizing she had really and finally lost Anne Lister for good this time, became

<<so low she could not stand it. Drank cold water, sobbed & was almost in hysterics. Then asked if I loved her. Yes said I you know I do. We then kissed our lips seeming glewed [sic] together and somehow tongues meeting she sobbed & said it is hard very hard to be a friend for one who has been a wife. I was *attendrie*. We both cried our eyes nearly when we were obliged to go down to tea after nine....it occurs to me that I inadvertently kissed her rather too warmly just after dinner. Was it this that upset her...? It is very sad. I am very sorry but my own indifference makes me safer than she thinks...!>>176

The following day was Christmas. They began kissing again until Lister's right hand

<<...wandered to queer outside till she took up her petticoats & put it to her & I gave her a thorough grubbling....what is the meaning of all this? Can this be the conduct of a pure minded virtuous woman! I despise it. She has tried all ways to upset me. I have done what I have done but she shall never gain more nor ever I hope a repetition even of this. I could have done without it but somehow I thought gratify her passion by one parting grubble. It ought not to have been...My respect is gone....She sends Ann a little pocketbook yet she will try to lead me astray from her! But she shall do no worse & I hope & trust the scene of tonight cannot recur. Is this the chaste & quiet Mariana?>>177

The following day was the scene of mutual recriminations between the two women. "<<She...argued against my fancying anything wrong in it.....said it had done her good.... said I did not know what it was to be obliged to restraint where formerly she

175AL Journal 24 December 1834.

176AL Journal 24-25 December 1834.

177AL Journal 25 December 1834.

had only to ask & have...>>"¹⁷⁸ That evening Anne Lister returned to Shibden and to Ann Walker, telling her she "<<was astonished how little I had thought of Mariana either going or returning. Very glad to be back again. Mentioned how I had offered her the use of Shibden in the event of Charles' death etc....>>"¹⁷⁹ That evening she had sex with Ann Walker, recording in the prosaic style usual to such occasions, "<<One very good kiss after getting into bed & not long after this another not quite so good but very fair.>>"¹⁸⁰

During the visit to Lawton Hall it was clear that the flow of information within the women's network approached the kind of gossip one might expect in a lesbian community. Mariana had heard a rumour in York that Ann Walker had £3,000 a year. Anne Lister told her that her connection with Walker had nothing to do with money, but that between their combined incomes "<<we should have five thousands a year.>>"¹⁸¹ Anne Lister said she had been determined to have a companion after Mariana's break-off and had thought immediately of Ann Walker. Mariana said Charlotte Norcliffe had told her that Ann Walker

<<...was not ladylike & she and Mrs. Milne thought she [Mariana] would not be flattered if she saw her successor but that I [Lister] could not do without money. Mariana took all well. Said [to Charlotte and Mrs. Milne] she thought I had done right and perhaps she herself was the cause of it. They wondered.>>¹⁸²

Anne Lister reassured Mariana that Ann Walker knew the history of their long friendship but nothing of their sexual connection.

¹⁷⁸AL Journal 26 December 1834.

¹⁷⁹AL Journal 26 December 1834.

¹⁸⁰AL Journal 27 December 1834.

¹⁸¹AL Journal 23 December 1834.

¹⁸²AL Journal 23 December 1834.

"<...Nor did any know of this or ever would. This seemed to satisfy her.>>"¹⁸³

The fact that Mariana Lawton failed to visit Anne Lister at Shibden though she had passed by there twice was also cause for gossip among the women at York who had long known the two women. Mrs. Duffin expressed her wonder at it, and the gossip returned to Halifax by way of Marian, Lister's sister, as well as through Mariana herself. Lawton told Lister she had answered Mrs. Duffin's questions as she thought Lister would like:

.....she [Mrs. Duffin] ended by saying 'well Mariana I am sure you will be pleased to know that dear Miss Lister says she never was so happy in all her life. My lips might, and probably did say, yes, but I felt my cheek blanch a little, for I felt, that I could endure to think Miss Lister was as happy as she had ever been, but that it would be hard and painful to believe, Freddy was happier than she had ever been - but Mrs. Duffin knew not what she said & I did not tell her.¹⁸⁴

When Anne Lister visited Lady Vere [née Hobart] Cameron, the latter told her, apparently in jest, that she was jealous of Ann Walker. Anne Lister merely alluded to the fact that her partner was helping the estate financially, and concluded the journal entry with the comment, "<<I almost fancied she [Vere] really liked me in some degree, as great as her small quantity of warm feeling would permit.>>"¹⁸⁵ At least half a dozen women were aware that Lister had given up on Mariana and had started a stable relationship with Ann Walker. These women gossiped about these changes with all

¹⁸³AL Journal 23 December 1834. It is highly likely that Ann Walker and the Norcliffe and other Belcombe sisters and Miss Marsh (later Mrs. Duffin) did know that Lister and Mariana had been sexual. Lister did try to keep it a secret, certainly, from Mrs. Barlow, for example, and Miss Pickford. Lister always told Mariana that no one knew in order to calm her fear of a public and disreputable scandal.

¹⁸⁴AL Journal 26 October 1835, 29 November 1835.

¹⁸⁵AL Journal 8 August 1835.

the diplomatic curiosity common to lesbian communities of the late twentieth century.

Conclusion

Lister believed most women lacked virtue because they offered no resistance if advances were made. Once she had made a sexual conquest she lost much of her respect for the woman involved. She consistently lied to women to hide her sexual identity and experience. When she finally did 'marry' and settle into a more or less domestic pattern, it was one structured around gendered separate spheres. She insisted on always being the one in charge, the one who made decisions, the one who managed things. These gendered characteristics, of course, are those she recorded - and she tended to record those things which were consistent with her own self-image. There may have been contradictory characteristics or events, but she may have failed to write these down.

Certainly it must have been rare for anyone of whatever sex or gender to record every time they did or did not have sexual contact with another human being, but is something Anne Lister did as regularly as clockwork. While it is important to maintain a theoretical distinction between gender and sexual practice, it is clear from Anne Lister's record that they reinforced one another. Her power rested partially on repetitive practices which aligned her with masculinity; to alter the practice threatened both power and the identity of the self. She recorded herself as only ever making love to other women and never, so far as can be discovered from the records I have read, allowed women to make love to her. Any other practice, or any other record, (if by any chance this

record fails to accurately reflect practice), might have revealed both to her own self and to her lovers the actual instability of her gender identity. It would therefore have threatened the stability of her personal power.

Power was certainly a gendered issue within her interpersonal relationships with both Vere Hobart and with Ann Walker, especially the latter. The journal reveals a gendered division of labor between the two women, separate spheres if you will, which manifested in various ways, both public and private. At the same time they were both women, and some of their practices, such as joint church attendance and joint visiting, reveal a concern for gendered feminine respectability. It is not so much that Anne Lister recorded only one construction of lesbian desire, or only one gender identity - only that she attempted to.

As we have very few such detailed records of early nineteenth century lesbian relationships, the actual 'marriage' between Anne Lister and Ann Walker has been explored. Their fights, regular habits, conversations, finances and family relationships are all detailed. These reveal several features important to specifically lesbian history. First, that fixed gendered power imbalances and expectations contributed to neither party's long-term peace of mind - Ann Walker sometimes resisted being managed, and Anne Lister was sometimes restless with her role as the decision-maker. Secondly, lesbians with financial privilege could live openly together in this period without being excluded from society, especially if the specifically sexual aspects of their relationship were never openly discussed. Their relationship was widely known to be a kind of marriage, even in respectable circles, but no one openly referred to sexual contact, even though it is clear that many of Lister's friends knew this was occurring. Their

financial arrangements reflected common expectations for heterosexual marriages of this class and time - but these arrangements were difficult not only for the two women, but also for their families, who mistrusted in a woman what would have been common in a man.

In Anne Lister's record sexual practice was not limited to what she did in bed, but included a set of courtship, financial, and marriage expectations similar to those one might find in a heterosexual relationship among the gentry. Her constant reflection of the double standard is particularly indicative of this. Lister thought and acted as if acting from heterosexual assumptions, but there were three important differences. First, any marriage settlement between herself and a female partner could not be valid in law; secondly, she and a female partner could decide to separate at any time without fear of social or legal ramifications, and without an Act of Parliament; and thirdly, one of the the main reasons for the mingling of the sexual and the financial among the gentry was to insure familial security and the inheritance of landed property. Lister's insistence on linking the sexual and financial in her relationships ensured that her partners would have some economic security, but it was ultimately destabilizing to sexual constructs because it took place within a heterosexual context. As will be discussed briefly in my concluding chapter, lesbian marriage and its attendant finances were quite simply not understood.

Many authors have dealt extensively with questions of language usage, lesbian existence, identity and romantic friendship. This chapter has not been an attempt to prove that lesbians existed; there is evidence for this stretching back many hundreds of years. It has, rather, been an attempt to disclose the

meanings given to lesbian desire by an individual lesbian in a particular class and time. Anne Lister knew she was not physically different from other women, nor did she cross-dress. But she did repeatedly state that her "oddity" was "natural." By this she meant that she believed both her masculine gender attributes and her sexual desire for other women were "natural." She recorded that she had never felt drawn either sexually or emotionally to a man. She reported that being attracted to women was her natural and undeviating pattern. Yet she never implied that it was unnatural for other women to be attracted to her. In her eyes, her masculinity itself would have made that natural as well. She had recourse to the word "natural" not only because it legitimized the desire she discovered in her self, but because it was her strongest argument against the sexual scruples of her lovers. Not only was Lister fully embedded within the blood-based kinship networks of the aristocracy and gentry, she also had a sense of personal identity based partly upon lesbian sexual practice. She was not a "victim" of a bourgeois "deployment of sexuality." In this sense, the private discourses of the Anne Lister journal represent a major revision of Foucault's assumptions about class and sexuality.

Some post-modern writers have actually maintained that the "mythic mannish lesbian,"¹⁸⁶ only came into existence in the twentieth century, in the wake of the development of that stereotype by sexologists. The stereotype, however, certainly existed even in ancient Rome, long before Havelock Ellis or Radclyffe Hall ever published a word. "Stereotypes linking lesbianism with masculinity date back to the Romans. In Martial's epigrams, women who make love to women lift weights and engage

¹⁸⁶Esther Newton, "The Mythic Mannish Lesbian," *Signs* 9, no. 4 (Summer 1984), 558-575.

in men's sports. A female character in Lucian's *Dialogues of the Courtesans* brags of being 'a man in every way.' With the fall of Rome, classical learning declined, and the stereotype of lesbians as masculine disappeared. It does not inform the few references to sexual relations between women in early Christian and medieval writings."¹⁸⁷

Classical learning may have declined, but it was certainly still a part of Anne Lister's world. As was pointed out in Chapter Three, Lister was incredibly familiar with classical texts, including Martial's epigrams, and had translated several texts from the original Latin and Greek.¹⁸⁸ If any discourse influenced the formation of her masculinity and her sexual identity, it was obviously not that of socio-medical writers of the late nineteenth century but rather classical Greek and Roman authors. When she read works on natural history or antiquities, she discovered references to hermaphrodites, tribades and exotic African lesbian queens. She actively sought out such examples and made notes of them, and this kind of reading also influenced her. When she visited the Ladies of Llangollen or the prison cells of Marie Antoinette and her female lover, she recognized she and they had something in common. But it was not only such experiences or her reading which influenced the development of her identity. The repetitive sexual and gender practices which were a constant part of her life also contributed. She made active choices to repeat

¹⁸⁷D.F. Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 373-374. The stereotype does not appear again, apparently, until the early modern period, when there was an upsurge of stories about women who dressed as men and married other women. See Rudolf M. Dekker and L.C. van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Cross-Dressing in Early Modern Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1987).

¹⁸⁸There is an excellent discussion of classical sources and their implications for lesbian history in Emma Donoghue, *Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668-1801* (London: Scarlet Press, 1993), 28-33.

certain practices, in some cases colluding with oppressive discourses and in other ways manipulating or transforming them to suit her own ends. She did not accept the dominant culture's discourse and settle comfortably with a man. She rejected the discourse of compulsory heterosexuality. She herself struggled with and recreated meanings for her identity and her desire. The development of her sexual and gender identity was not solely determined by the dominant discourse. The Anne Lister material makes it clear that discourse does not aggressively inscribe, create, construct and penetrate subjectivity and agency. Subjectivity and agency are not the reclining, passive recipients of cultural knowledge. Rather, one woman's subjectivity and agency can actively construct herself and contest the meanings of all the received knowledge of her time and culture. This may be the most important insight lesbian history has to offer.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Gender and Female Networks: Systems of Support and Constraint

Heterosexuality may be a prevalent example of male dominance, but it is not the prime mover of patriarchy - hierarchy is.
-S. Tatnall and P. Balcerzak, 6.

Anne Lister interacted with two distinct networks of women which only rarely overlapped. Her early contacts were limited to the Halifax and York gentry and upper-middle classes: primarily the Norcliffes and Belcombes. Through Sibella Maclean she gained access to the Stuart circles of the aristocracy. Both female networks overlapped with what I have called Anne Lister's lesbian community. Indeed, at times they are virtually indistinguishable. At a personal level, the women of each network functioned as an extended kinship or familial group for Lister. At a social level, they functioned as a means to social status and valid social existence, as well as functioning as arbiters of what was acceptable and what was not. In short, the networks functioned both as systems of support as well as systems of constraint.

It is precisely in the area of female networks that the interconnections of my themes of class, politics and sexuality reveal themselves most clearly. Different women in the networks reacted differently to her partnership with Ann Walker, but the partnership itself had its place in the wider women's community. Her business ambitions for the estate enabled her to maintain and increase an income sufficient to allow her to travel on the continent and mix socially with the ladies of the aristocracy. Her most lucid explanations of what she is trying to accomplish on the estate come

in her letters to her friends. Political themes recur over and over again in the letters exchanged between the two Lady Stuarts (mother and wife of the British Ambassador to France) and Anne Lister. In the post-Reform period these letters often mention James S. Wortley, Lady Stuart's nephew, who became the Tory MP for Halifax in 1835. Anne Lister pressured many of her tenants and suppliers to vote for him. He won the election by one vote, and it must be said that Anne Lister's support for his candidacy was partly a matter of honoring her friendship with Lady Stuart.¹

In this chapter I will examine the power and function of the female social communities within which Anne Lister lived her life. It is helpful to think of Anne Lister's main women's networks as drawn from two slightly overlapping circles or "clusters": that of the gentry and that of the aristocracy. Both circles practised elaborate rituals of etiquette: the lower in rank was always introduced to the higher in rank, never the other way around. The socially more important then had the choice of carrying on the acquaintance by leaving cards or not; formal visits and invitations were similarly organized according to rank.² One of the main purposes of this hierarchy was to ensure that young women were introduced to suitable young men, so as to guarantee continuity of wealth and estate. Needless to say, this was not a primary focus for Anne Lister, and the theme occurs in her writings only in a peripheral way. In Lister's world, the communities were clearly important for other reasons.

The hierarchies within both gentry and aristocratic communities maintained themselves both through systems of

¹Most of the correspondence with the Stuart women for the elections of July 1837 also bears this out.

²Leonore Davidoff, The Best Circles: Society Etiquette and the Season (London: Croom Helm, 1973), esp. Chapter Three.

constraint and through systems of support. It will be argued that Anne Lister's female networks represented an alternate, occasionally lesbian, kinship structure embedded within the hetero-patriarchal kinship structure common to the upper-classes at this time. Anne Lister's egocentric network was a tiny fragment of the wider kinship structure, whose existence, it has been argued, was predicated upon the subjection of women.³

Because of this, it will be argued that when the imbedded female network functioned as a system of support, it did so to the extent that it subverted the more general gender system. And conversely, it was precisely when the networks operated to reinforce the gendered paradigms of upper-class society that their effect in constraining women was most evident. Sisterhood is in fact powerful, but the effect of its power may be either to support or to constrain members of the sisterhood, depending on the degree to which such a network is aligned with dominant cultural systems. In this case, it was the obsessive, occasionally vicious, hierarchical ranking of women in the networks which most obviously mirrored the dominant cultural system. Hierarchy was essential to the functioning of the female networks, especially as a means of behavioral control. Because of the exchange of various kinds of resources, women benefitted from and were therefore supportive of, one might say, complicit in, the maintenance of these hierarchies. It was a perpetually hierarchical situation of class within class or, as Anne Lister would have phrased it, each

³Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the Political Economy of Sex," in Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. R.R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), 179-180. In this sentence, "egocentric" is used as a technical sociological term indicating a network structure focused on one person. See Barry Wellman and S.D. Berkowitz, eds., Social Structures: A Network Approach (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), *passim*.

woman was placed somewhere within different gradations of "rank."

The community reinforced rather rigid standards of decorous female public behavior: to break the rules meant expulsion from the community. Leonore Davidoff's observation is important in this regard. "...the rules were being used to protect the social fabric; personal morality was secondary."⁴ Expulsion from the community meant isolation, the severance of all respectable social contacts, perhaps the loss of one's identity itself. These women did not need men to tell them to be decorous, restrained and ladylike and, in "public" at least, apolitical and chaste. To a large extent they trained themselves and each other.⁵

There were specific means by which these behavioral standards were enforced: the hierarchy itself was the most effective. In a hierarchical situation the same tool could be used both for support and for constraint: the power of introduction, for example, both opened and closed the gates to higher rank. Within this system gossip was a very powerful tool, as was the social "cut," i.e., not recognizing someone to whom you had been introduced. Subtle and not so subtle hints were dropped in conversations with friends as to what was and was not acceptable. Ideas about what women were or were not, should or should not be, could or could not do, were transmitted through conversation.

While in many ways this hierarchical situation amounted to a system of constraint, there were many ways in which the network also functioned as a system of support. It was Etiquette itself, the

⁴Davidoff, Best Circles, 79.

⁵I do not mean to "blame" these relatively privileged women for the oppression they meted out to each other, only to illustrate the extent to which they were themselves oppressed and enmeshed in the discourses available to them; as well as the extent to which they tried to manipulate the available discourses for their own benefit.

gatekeeper, as it were, to the upper circles, which ensured that the women took care of each other. Within both gentry and aristocratic circles this etiquette involved almost ritualized support. When ill old Lady Stuart was looked after by her niece and by her niece's friend and lover, Anne Lister. Gifts and money were exchanged. Patronage was solicited. Travelers found safe companions. Confidences on all sorts of publicly taboo topics could be exchanged. Mournful hearts could be unburdened. Husbands and servants could be found. Philosophies were shared. On occasion Anne Lister's role extended to that of accountant, travel agent and legal advisor, though in these cases it appears that her perceived "masculine" gender was a factor.

Anne Lister's early social circle was primarily limited to the women in the county gentry, a community with outposts in York (Belcombess), Langton (Norcliffes), Darlington (Daltons) and, after Mariana's marriage, Cheshire. Anne Lister's circle of county gentry had their primary watering holes at Harrogate, Bath and Leamington Spa. Those were the fashionable places to be seen. For the gentry, trips to fashionable places on the continent were possible but not frequent. For the women of the aristocracy, traveling on the continent was a way of life. She often saw the women in the more aristocratic cluster when she was in Paris or Copenhagen, though she occasionally also visited them in their London houses or in their country seats at Richmond Park or in Hertfordshire.

On occasion the gentry circles overlapped with those of the aristocracy. It was by this means that Anne Lister was first introduced to the Stuarts with whom was to maintain some contact until the end of her life. Sibella Maclean, daughter of Hugh Maclean, laird of the Isle of Coll, first encountered Anne Lister in a

gentry drawing room in York. Sibella was the niece of the Lady Stuart who was the mother of Lord Stuart de Rothesay, the then British ambassador to France. Through Sibella Anne Lister became part of the Stuart circle,⁶ corresponding for the rest of her life with old Lady Stuart, her niece Vere [Hobart] Cameron and her daughter-in-law Lady Stuart de Rothesay, as well as with the latter's sister, Lady Harriet de Hagemann, through whom she was eventually introduced to the Danish court. [See Chapter Three, Figure 16.]

It is apparent, however, that Anne Lister herself did not have the all-important power of introduction to these circles. Her partner Ann Walker, a local and relatively unknown Halifax heiress, remained excluded. Her former lover Mariana [Belcombe] Lawton also remained excluded. A doctor's daughter, Mariana had married into the minor Cheshire gentry. Because of the problems with rank, Mariana would never have been a suitable traveling companion for Anne, as she could not have socialized comfortably with, as Anne termed it, "the great ones of the land." This is one reason why Anne Lister had at one point pursued Lady Stuart's niece Vere [Hobart] Cameron with such tenacity: this connection gave her an opportunity for climbing the social hierarchy. They could, for instance, receive visitors together. Vere functioned almost as Anne's patron in aristocratic society, introducing her to women she might not otherwise have had any contact with.

Rank was a problem, however, when Lister later settled into a long-term partnership with Ann Walker. When the two of them went to London, Anne Lister alone visited the Stuarts, much to Ann Walker's annoyance. In heterosexual marriage the wife's rank

⁶AL Journal 15 July 1830.

changed to that of her husband.⁷ No such change automatically took place within Anne Lister's partnership, however, much to Ann Walker's disappointment. Lady Vere [Hobart] Cameron did not expect to lose or gain any status through her association with Anne Lister and neither did Lady Gordon. Lister, on the other hand, did expect her status to rise as a result of her association with them. Her rank within the hierarchy, however, remained that of an unmarried minor gentry-woman socializing with the aristocracy on sufferance as it were, because of her social and scholarly talents. She was welcomed to the upper circles as a special case. They, not she, had the power of introduction. Indeed, had she attempted to introduce formally any of her lower-rank friends such as Mariana Lawton or Ann Walker, her own position would have been jeopardized. Rules were rules. Anne Lister was able to continue her contact with the Stuarts because she was obsessively careful to observe prevailing social etiquette.

⁷Davidoff, Best Circles, 53.

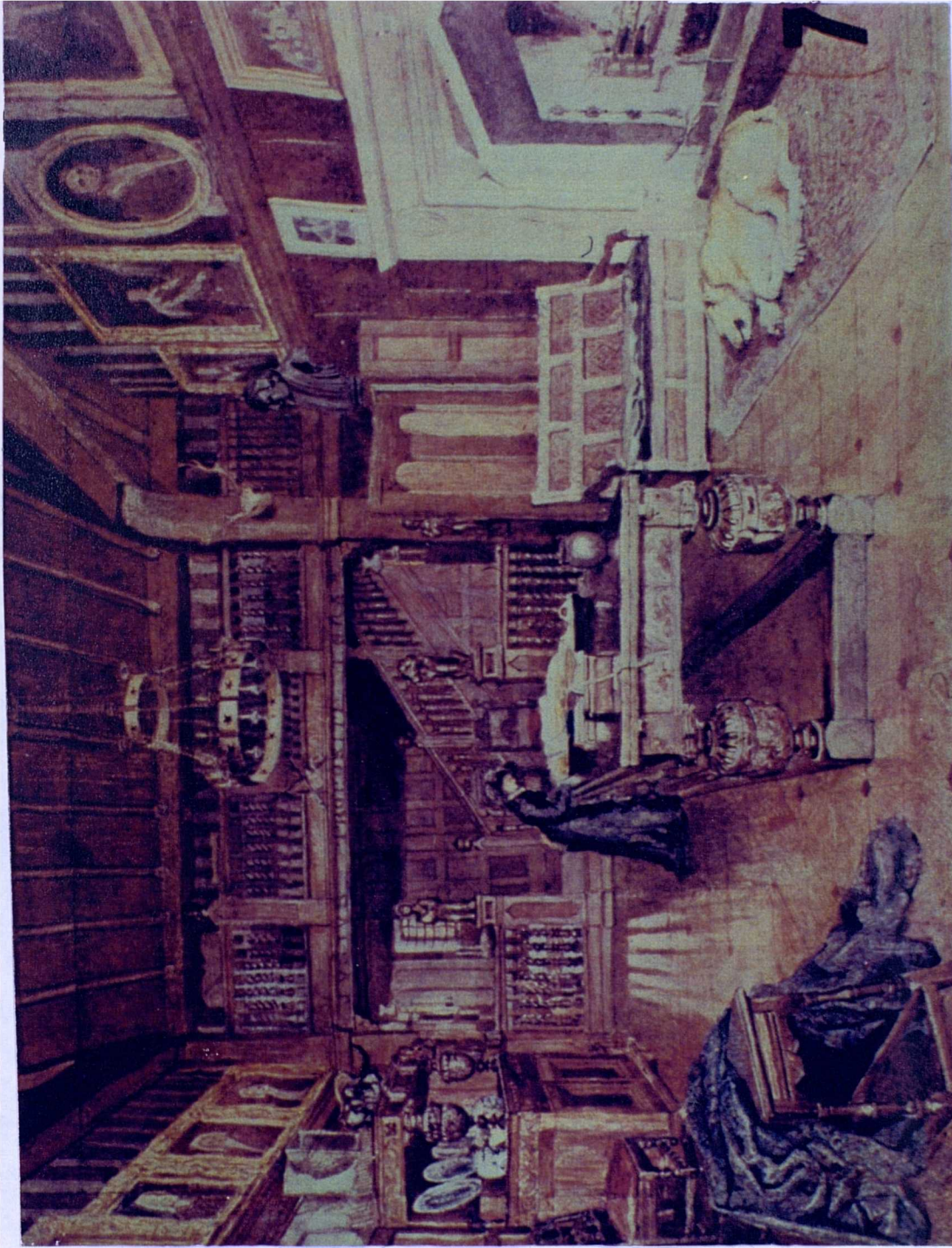


Figure 24.

Anne Lister with Papers, House-body, Shibden Hall.

This watercolor is believed to have been painted by H. Sykes sometime in the 1840s, after Anne Lister's death. Constant correspondence was the lifeblood of Lister's friendships.

(Painting held at Shibden Hall. Courtesy of Ros Westwood, Calderdale Leisure Services)

1. Systems of Support

1. a. Finances

Anne Lister supported her friends and lovers especially in those areas where ladies might be expected to have "masculine" support of one kind or another. She ordered the carriages, for example, and made sure they were properly repaired.⁸ When Charlotte Norcliffe wished to make a tour of Scotland Anne wrote out an itinerary and what the expenses of such a journey might be based on her own experience.⁹ When Ann Walker wanted advice on how to deal with troublesome tenants she turned to Anne Lister.¹⁰ In fact Anne Lister proved to be a fruitful source of advice on many issues dealing with the management of the Walker estate. She wrote letters to Ann Walker's attorney, to her bankers and to her sister's husband regarding the Walker navigation stock.¹¹ She taught Vere [Hobart] Cameron how to calculate the value of stocks.¹² She dictated Vere's letters to her banker, interpreted letters from her solicitor and helped her to sort out her financial affairs.¹³ She did the same for Mariana Lawton, even though the latter was married. At times it seems as if Anne Lister functioned as Mariana's personal accountant,¹⁴ on occasion even loaning her money.¹⁵

⁸Vere Hobart, London, to AL, London, 9 April 1829? "Aunt says I had better leave the carriage arrangements entirely to your judgement." CDA, SH:7/ML/313.

⁹AL Journal 18 March 1832.

¹⁰AL Journal 28 September 1832.

¹¹AL Journal 10 November 1832, 4 December 1832.

¹²AL Journal 25 March 1832.

¹³AL Journal 5 March 1832.

¹⁴AL Journal 6 March 1832.

¹⁵AL Journal 15 March 1832.

Anne Lister usually wrote out Mariana's personal accounts for her and when Mariana wanted to secure her niece's future and education, Anne Lister sent her £50 for the purpose, even though by that time they were no longer lovers.¹⁶ This kind of interaction went both ways. Mariana had frequently loaned Anne Lister money when she needed it for traveling, especially if she were traveling with her aristocratic friends. Money and their relationship were always bound together: "...I begged her to send it," wrote Anne Lister, "saying that as I was obliged to draw before the rent day, I should like to have this hundred sent as soon as possible, but it should be ready for her whenever she wanted it...."¹⁷ Mariana sent the money, accompanied by a not-so-subtle bit of advice: "I think it will be well," she wrote, "if you do not find the rent roll of Shibden much below the mark of your wants."¹⁸ Anne also knew that she might borrow as much as £100 of Mrs. Norcliffe if she was low on cash during the last couple of months of the year before the rent day.¹⁹ They all knew that such support was possible. Vere once expressed her concern that Anne Lister would ruin herself with her building and estate improvement plans. "If I do," replied Anne, "my little friend Miss W[alker] must help me out." Vere responded, "Come to me...I will keep you." Anne told her Miss Walker had a good fortune. Vere said she was jealous, but said it half in jest.²⁰

Mariana consulted her about how to keep her money out of Charles Lawton's hands, naively believing that if she kept it in her writing desk or opened a savings account of her own her husband

¹⁶AL Journal 8 September 1835; 13, 18 October 1835.

¹⁷AL Journal 1 July 1830.

¹⁸AL Journal 1 July 1830.

¹⁹AL Journal 23 September 1832.

²⁰AL Journal 8 August 1835.

would have no access to it. Lister wrote to Mariana regarding some unlucky investments she had made in railroad shares: "Had you told me before you bought the shares, I should probably have prevented your losses; as I have been better informed on the subject of rail roads in general than it seems you suspected me to be - I do not quite understand how you will manage about the savings bank - as a married woman, whatever you put there, and by law C[hables] ought to be a consenting party to it, will be in the same predicament as if it was in your writing desk...."²¹

Male control over women's financial arrangements was an ongoing theme, despite whatever protection these women had under equity. Among the upper classes, legal methods had been found to ensure independent incomes for women dependent in various ways on primogeniture-centered estates. Yet problems remained even for the elite. For unmarried women who were not direct heirs, a small sum drawing on the estate income was usually settled on them by their brothers or other male relatives. Upon marriage a woman received both an annual allowance based partly on income from the estate and the guarantee of an income after her husband's death, which figure was usually a percentage of the dowry she had brought with her. When Ann Walker's sister married Captain Sutherland the marriage settlement specified certain income to be reserved to herself alone. Yet after a few years in the relationship she was persuaded to sign her remaining property rights over to him. There are a few instances of Anne Lister supporting other women in their attempts to maintain control of their funds. Anne Lister was not only concerned over Charles' control of Mariana's money, she also took some hand in the marriage settlement negotiations between Vere and her fiancé.

²¹AL Journal 20 January 1832.

These marriage negotiations were in turn related to Vere's negotiations about money with her male relatives.

At one point Vere expected the proceeds of six hundred consols to be deposited to her account.²² When they were instead paid into her brother's account, Anne Lister encouraged her to sort the matter out. In fact, Anne Lister wrote the necessary letters. Vere thought one of these was "<<beautiful and to the purpose. Wonders what she shall do without me and we are capital friends. Her brother's debts now three thousand three hundred and twenty. Put her up on getting her fifth share with interest.....seventeen hundred and twenty two pounds eighteen and eight pence which will make her claim upon Lord C. to near five thousand pounds.>>"²³ When Vere's brother sent her "a disagreeable unfair sort of letter" the two ladies "talked it over." Anne "would not let her give way."²⁴ A letter from Vere's solicitor revealed that her brother, the present Lord, had cheated the other children "out of the Wray estate and the thirty thousand it sold for. I instantly advised her having her five thousand due from him paid and not to leave it in his hands at all but to say as little as she could about it. No chance of doing any good in the business with him....>>"²⁵

Both women knew that more money for Vere, from whatever source, would enhance her marriage options. For example, the possibility of getting money from Lady Goderich put Vere "in high spirits. Then she could get Mr. Gregory and would exchange him next day for Mr. Protheroe. Young and handsome against old and ugly."²⁶ Anne wrote to Vere's aunt, old Lady Stuart, to tell her that

²²AL Journal 5 March 1832.

²³AL Journal 5-7 March 1832.

²⁴AL Journal 30 March 1832.

²⁵AL Journal 20 April 1832.

²⁶AL Journal 25 March 1832.

because of the "very considerable arrears due from her brother" Vere "would by and by have a nice little addition to her income and as I laughed and told her, be quite a catch."27 Anne was still involved in the financial arrangements when Vere agreed to marry Donald Cameron. Vere wanted to give Donald the five thousand owing from her brother. Anne registered a strenuous objection to this and her arguments prevailed.28

Anne Lister's support had partially enabled a woman she was in love with to enter into a status-enhancing heterosexual marriage; her advice after the engagement was intended to enhance Vere's position of power within the marriage. Anne Lister's financial advice, therefore, was supportive in so far as it subverted a tendency within the wider Society to undermine even aristocratic women's financial independence.

However, Anne Lister's own financial well-being could be enhanced by her exchanges within the female networks. She knew, for example, that she could borrow £100 from Mrs. Norcliffe if she was a bit short before the rent-day. She tried but failed to borrow money from Ann Walker's aunt,29 but succeeded in borrowing £15,000 at 4 per cent from the Miss Prestons, who otherwise do not appear in the record.30 Among Anne Lister's friends there was reciprocal exchange of goods, money, influence and intellectual and emotional support whether they had been lovers with her or not. Certainly there was a greater expectation of resource exchange if they were being or had been sexual with each other. Yet there was no clear cut line, in regard to the exchange of resources, between what might be termed the lesbian community and the female

27AL Journal 28 March 1832.

28AL Journal 17 April 1832.

29AL Journal 31 December 1836.

30AL Journal 1, 4, 6, January 1837.

network. There is a large amount of overlap between the two and no defining boundaries between them can be maintained.

The networks managed to provide some resources to which married or even single women inadequately provided for in their family's estate, might not otherwise have access. For example, sometimes the women bought shares of stock with some other female friend's future in mind. Ann Walker bought five shares of stock with the view of settling these on her friend Mrs. Plowes and after her death upon her two goddaughters.³¹ When word came through the York gentry network of two Swiss gentlewomen in need of aid, Ann Walker sent them £5.³² Mariana bought shares in an alkali company in an attempt to ensure her niece's educational and financial future, meanwhile soliciting Anne Lister's advice about the wisdom of such a purchase.³³

³¹AL Journal 17 December 1832.

³²AL Journal 6 January 1837.

³³AL Journal 26 April 1835.

1. b. Gifts

There are frequent instances of consumer goods, as well as money, being a vehicle for female bonding and mutual support. When Anne Lister was traveling on the continent her friends in the Yorkshire gentry expected her to run errands for them. From the Daltons near Darlington she received an order for a black chantilly veil at 150 francs; Isabella Norcliffe wanted her to buy her silver earrings and ivory and gold buckles.³⁴ After Mrs. Norcliffe died she left a china inkstand to Anne Lister. Mariana had given it to Mrs. Norcliffe many years before.³⁵

Anne Lister sent locally-woven alpaca shawls to Vere, Lady Stuart de Rothesay and to old Lady Stuart, "one for herself to wear and the other to dispose of as she thought best."³⁶ Both of Lady Stuart's daughters also received alpaca shawls.³⁷ Anne Lister sent "Nanroot muslin" to Lady Vere Cameron for a frock for one of her daughters.³⁸ Lady Stuart's sister Lady Harriet de Hagemann sent Anne Lister a drawing of her boudoir in Copenhagen for the latter's album.³⁹ When Lady Stuart de Rothesay's daughter Charlotte Stuart was engaged to Mr. Canning Anne Lister wanted to send her either a fancy dressing-box as an acknowledgement gift or "something useful" like stock. She asked Vere's advice as to which would be most appropriate.⁴⁰ She ended up buying her an

³⁴ AL Journal, 1 February 1830; 21 April 1831.

³⁵ AL Journal 10 December 1835.

³⁶ AL Journal 13, 14 January 1835. She wrote to Lady Stuart de Rothesay, "The inventor and manufacturer of these alpaca [sic] lama shawls has sent some to London this winter for the first time. He is an ingenious man, and one of the tenants of my little friend [Ann Walker] who traveled with me in the summer."

³⁷ AL Journal 11 February 1835.

³⁸ AL Journal 26 March 1835.

³⁹ AL Journal 8 March 1835.

⁴⁰ AL Journal 28 June 1835.

envelope and note paper holder "very pretty and novel" with a little gold padlock for six guineas.⁴¹ After she began living at Shibden, Ann Walker knitted a pair of slippers for Anne Lister's former lover, Mariana. Mariana had previously loaned Ann Walker one of her drawing books.⁴²

Gifts of food were by no means uncommon between the women in this community. When she was traveling in Marseilles, Anne Lister thoughtfully sent a box of figs to Vere and Lady Stuart at Richmond Park.⁴³ She sent them braces of moorgame by coach from Shibden to London.⁴⁴ She also sent gifts of moorgame, shot on the estate, to the Norcliffes near Malton⁴⁵ and to the Duffins in York.⁴⁶ When Mariana's sister's son was killed on his way back from India she sent the family two brace of moorgame as part of her condolences.⁴⁷ Ann Walker's aunt at Cliff Hill was also the honored recipient of a brace of moorgame.⁴⁸ Isabella Norcliffe sent Anne a brace of pheasants and two braces of partridges shot on their estate at Langton.⁴⁹ Ann Walker's sister sent her a hive of honey from Scotland: Anne Lister sent one of her own workman over to Lightcliffe to help her get the honey out.⁵⁰

⁴¹AL Journal 4 August 1835.

⁴²AL Journal 22 May 1835.

⁴³Vere Hobart, Richmond Park, to Anne Lister, Paris?, 8 June 1831, as quoted in Muriel Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman: The Letters of Anne Lister of Shibden Hall, Halifax, 1791-1840" (Master of Library Science thesis, Halifax Public Library, 1936), 404.

⁴⁴AL Journal 14 August 1832.

⁴⁵AL Journal 16 August 1832.

⁴⁶AL Journal 27 August 1835.

⁴⁷AL Journal 5 September 1835.

⁴⁸AL Journal 15 September 1835.

⁴⁹AL Journal 3 December 1835. See also 15 August 1837, gifts of moorgame to Lady Stuart, Lady Stuart de Rothesay and Isabella and Charlotte Norcliffe.

⁵⁰AL Journal 6 December 1832.

1. c. Patronage/Rank

These women had other ways to acknowledge their relationships besides money, consumer goods and food. Rank itself could be an important source of influence and support, though overt instances of patronage among these circles were rare. There were some, however. Mrs. Norcliffe at Langton Hall was central to Anne Lister's local gentry circle. She knew that Anne Lister's friend Lady Stuart de Rothesay was a subscriber and a voting member of the National Benefit Society. Mrs. Norcliffe asked Anne to have a word with Lady Stuart about her (Mrs. Norcliffe's) friend John Wilson, who was applying to the charity for a pension. The matter was both a personal and a political one. Anne Lister told her,

.....I will do the best I can for the interest of your friend, with the ladies you mention, and with anyone else I may happen to know, who is a subscriber to the charity in question.....I am sadly afraid of not being able to profit you much; for all I am acquainted with who have influence have always so many people of their own, and are so deep in promises, that they are never free - Among the fearful signs of the times are the crowds of applicants for everything that is worth a halfpenny....⁵¹

Anne Lister herself took only very rare advantage of her aristocratic friendships. She seemed quite satisfied with the social lustre that accrued to her. She did directly benefit, however, from the practice of franking mail for free through the diplomatic channels of Lord Stuart. After Vere married, it became apparent that her new husband had a cousin who worked in the Home Office, who was also willing to pass along a certain amount of post free of charge. And once, when she was having difficulty importing a

⁵¹AL Journal 1 January 1832.

textured model of Switzerland, Lord Stuart had a word with the Treasury for her and the problems disappeared.⁵² The Stuarts were definitely useful to her in other ways. When she applied for a joint passport for herself and Ann Walker prior to their journey to Russia, the Russian Embassy was apparently slow in forthcoming. She wrote to Lady Stuart, "I think Lord Stuart would be so good as to vouch for our being true people. Conservatives at home - no meddlers in politics abroad - respecters of the powers that be, and quiet observers of prescribed rules...."⁵³ Lord Stuart was able to hurry things up and the joint passport was soon sent.

Anne Lister's aristocratic circle was much enhanced overseas, where, as at the Danish court, her connections were the source of a great deal of social support. These friendships furthered her own sense of social importance. One woman's connections stretched web-like to embrace yet another. During her trip to Denmark she spent a good deal of time with Lady Stuart de Rothesay's sister. "Lady Harriet and I spent two days in the country last week....," she wrote to her aunt, "...we went to sleep at a friend of Lady Harriet's, the widow of the late Danish prime minister Rosenkrantz, and born a Russian princess, a very charming person....."⁵⁴ In another letter from Denmark she told her aunt,

I go out a great deal in the evening. Since writing to you last, I have been presented at Court, to the King and Queen, and the rest, had separate audiences of the queen, and the five princesses, and was at the queen's ball on her birthnight, and at the ball the other night at Prince Christian's. Prince Christian is heir presumptive to the throne; and his princess is one of the handsomest and most dignified women I have ever seen. She is clever, too, and most graciously agreeable. The queen is a very superior person - a woman of great tact and talent, and still preserving her good figure, and good style of dress. You would be pleased to see how well I am received here. I am

⁵²AL Journal 5 August 1835.

⁵³Anne Lister, Shibden, to Lady Stuart, Whitehall? 22 February 1838, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 501.

⁵⁴Anne Lister, Copenhagen, to aunt, Shibden, 15 October 1833, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 456.

invited everywhere. At a ball the other night at the Swedish Minister's I think one of the princesses stood talking to me at least ten minutes.⁵⁵

When she and Ann Walker went to Paris together in 1834, some of the resources available in the aristocratic network also became available to Ann Walker, even though the social connections apparently did not. Anne Lister wrote to her aunt, "Lady Charlotte Lindsay and the Miss Berrys are here. I am going to them this evening. They sent us their ticket for one of the royal boxes at the Comédie Française yesterday, that we went in style and enjoyed ourselves...."⁵⁶ The aristocratic network rarely extended to embrace Anne Lister's lower-ranking lover, however. When she and Ann Walker traveled together rank was a constant problem. Usually Ann Walker had to make herself invisible or at least secondary. Often Anne Lister visited her friends by herself. As we shall see, the women's networks could also function as a system of behavioral restraint.

1. d. Intellectual Support

To a certain extent women in the community could speak freely among themselves about topics that might open them up to ridicule if men were present. Certain intellectual topics exposed Anne Lister to the ridicule of her sisters, however, unless she chose carefully. But she did find a few women within both her aristocratic and gentry circles with whom she could safely discuss chemistry, for example, or botany.

⁵⁵Anne Lister, Copenhagen, to aunt, Shibden, 9 November 1833, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 459.

⁵⁶Anne Lister, Paris, to aunt, Shibden, 20 June 1834, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 472.

During one half-hour visit with Lady Anne Scott, Anne Lister "Found her exceedingly civil and exceedingly sensible and agreeable on politics, botany and general subjects." Later Lister received a note from Lady Anne Scott, who sent her the previous Quarterly Review and asked "for my little French book of botany that I mentioned this morning, Mirats' Elemens, which I sent her with a civil note in answer <<directed to the Lady Anne Scott Pelham Place. I think if we had staid longer we should have got on a little together.>>"⁵⁷

In one letter exchanged with her old friend Miss Pickford, Anne Lister discussed things like "naptha fires" (from oil geysers) in Baku, chemical reactions of various sorts, techniques of dissection and botanical insights.⁵⁸ The letter is very unlike what she usually writes to her friends, but Miss Pickford was also interested in these things, and was therefore unlikely to jeopardize herself by speaking unkindly of Miss Lister. Other letters between the two women also exhibit a tendency to mutually support each other's intellectual curiosity.⁵⁹ However, Anne Lister carefully protected herself from charges of *bas-bleuism* and avoided discussing natural history, geology and chemistry with most of her friends. While the Stuarts were aware that she attended lectures in natural history, geology and anatomy in Paris, this fact was hardly ever mentioned in conversation. Apparently one kept that sort of activity to oneself. While she did find some intellectual support among her friends, it was rare. In adulthood her auto-didacticism was primarily a solitary pursuit.

⁵⁷AL Journal, 29 March 1832.

⁵⁸Anne Lister, Paris, to Frances Pickford, Marseilles, 17 January 1830. CDA, SH: 7/ML/387.

⁵⁹See, for example, Frances Pickford, St. Gervais, to Anne Lister, Paris, 28 August 1830. CDA, SH:7/ML/442.

1. e. Emotional Support

Emotional support was also forthcoming within this upper-class women's community, albeit of a staid and practical nature. During the April 1832 visit to Mariana in Cheshire, Anne Lister's long-term illusion that one day either Charles would die and Mariana would come to her, or that the two of them would leave society forever and run off together, was finally smashed as it had never been smashed before. Mariana told her she was more or less content with things as they were, seeing as there was no way to change them. Charles might live for another twenty years yet. Anne, still reeling from the shock of Vere's marriage and her perceived rejection by Lady Gordon, was heart-broken by Mariana's attitude, even after all those years. She went next to Croft, where she unburdened her heart to Isabella Norcliffe. Then she went to the Norcliffes' estate at Langton Hall near Malton and there exchanged numerous confidences with Charlotte Norcliffe, who was inevitably kind, sympathetic and sparing with her advice. She told Charlotte a little summary of her whole history with Mariana, apparently painting her as a woman who had exchanged a true love for the financial comfort of marriage, and then kept her hanging on all these years. "<<Charlotte owned her surprise and will take my part in future. She kissed me twice and said she was sorry for me. Should never suspect what I had told her but it should never pass her lips.>>"⁶⁰ In another talk a few days later Anne told Charlotte that she "<<should probably leave all society and go and live quietly in Paris or somewhere. Would not in any case spend more than a thousand a year. Disappointed about M. Might not see much of her again.>>"⁶¹ In yet another talk she told Charlotte "<<the

⁶⁰AL Journal 5 June 1832.

⁶¹AL Journal 12 June 1832.

Blackstone Edge story and the worldliness of her marriage. How that she knowingly brought on the offer and how she said it...>>"⁶² Even Mariana tried to comfort her. In one letter, Mariana shared a bit of her life philosophy in order to do so. "<<You always teach me that 'whatever is, is right,' and I shall believe it so, come what may. It is long since I have felt so calm, - so reconciled to things that be, as at present.>>"⁶³

The women shared affection, advice and philosophy, confiding in each other when they had difficulty in their relationships or when someone in their family was ill or had died. When her own aunt was dying Anne Lister wrote philosophically to Lady Stuart de Rothesay, saying, "There is something indescribably melancholy in long and constantly witnessing acute suffering we have no power to relieve. But affliction does come, and ought to come to us all; and perhaps in our blindness, we lament where we ought to rejoice."⁶⁴ Mariana remained Anne Lister's staunch friend even after they were no longer lovers. When Anne Lister was uncertain about her travel plans in 1833, Mariana turned it into an occasion for compliments. "Your uncertainty," she wrote, "may well surprise your friends who probably have never seen anything in you but that quickness and promptitude which is so often met with in genius. You ought not to wonder that others are not like you, the weaknesses of human nature are much more predominant than sense and genius, and to judge others by yourself is not fair to either...."⁶⁵

⁶²AL Journal 13 June 1832.

⁶³AL Journal 9 June 1832.

⁶⁴Anne Lister, Shibden, to Lady Stuart de Rothesay, 29 March 1834, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 469.

⁶⁵Mariana to Anne Lister, 1833, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 444-445.

2. Systems of Constraint

The system of hierarchy within the women's networks mirrored that in the wider Society and was a major element in the construction of appropriate femininity and in manipulating the behavior of these women. For many women its most immediate pragmatic purpose perhaps was competitive: to edge others out of the top places in a marriage market. But that was not Anne Lister's primary reason for engaging Society on its own terms. It is clear from the journal that the constraining effects of the discourses within these intensely hierarchical female networks were among the most powerful of any when it came to controlling public manifestations of Anne Lister's subjectivity.⁶⁶ The hierarchies also limited access to the resources discussed previously, and created strict boundaries between the women themselves. Matters of rank within the wider network caused problems not only within her specifically sexual relationship with Ann Walker but with her other friends as well. Restraint, rank and issues of gender were inter-related. That the control of gender was possible is most obvious in various conversations she had with Lady Stuart de Rothesay, whose critical comments about women and their activities helped to delimit appropriate feminine behavior within that particular rank.

⁶⁶This is analogous, perhaps, to what Mill calls "the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling," which he compares to the "tyranny of the magistrate." John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (London: Walter Scott, 1898), 8.

2. a. Etiquette and Rank

Anne Lister was indeed "pleased with the high ones of the land," and alternated between her own insecurity about the precise rules of etiquette and criticizing others for their lack of conformity. Rank and etiquette were inextricably linked. At one dinner at the embassy in Paris in 1830 she encountered a Miss Thomson, whom she had met in York. Lister commented privately, ".....<<somehow did not admire her much - something rather too ---- what? free & easy, old girlish, *je ne sais quoi* ?....>>" Yet she shook hands with another woman at the same ball whose rank was higher and whose acquaintance was therefore desirable. "On her going, asked where she was that I might call. She said with Lord & Lady Lonsdale. That this business about the king⁶⁷ would, of course, hurry them off, & that she had no time for civilities. I very calmly said, 'Oh, I shall have the pleasure of meeting you somewhere else.' It was foolish in me to offer to call. Take lesson from this & be very backward in such cases.....>>"⁶⁸ Lister, of course, was mortified by the polite rejection. In another case Anne Lister called at Lady Granville's, who was not home. She wrote afterwards, in code, "....<<foolish to have asked for her. Should have merely left my card. She will never be at home to me or to any one of my rank in life unless she is particularly acquainted.....>>"⁶⁹ In yet another instance Anne Lister mused, "<<Odd enough, Lady Eastnor [sic] has never returned my call & yet always shakes hands with me, & nobody can be more civil. How is all this? Madame Zamoyska left her [pp?] card at the Embassy on the eleventh instant. Left none on me, nor has Lady Isabella Blatchford left any on me, yet she was very civil

⁶⁷George IV was dying.

⁶⁸AL Journal 11 June 1830.

⁶⁹AL Journal 25 April 1832.

the other day. Perhaps I shall understand it all better, by & by. Wait & see.>>"⁷⁰ Lister was still learning her way through the hierarchical rituals of women born to a higher rank than she.

Women in these circles had subtle ways of showing their regard for each other, and just as subtle ways of excluding certain women on certain occasions. Almost all of these occasions related to questions of rank within the hierarchy. When Anne Lister attended a birthday party for Louisa Stuart, Lady Stuart de Rothesay's daughter, she noted that

<<....Lady Sarah Savile came & took my fan & left me hers which I brought away instead of my own. Good friends with her & Lady Mexborough. Miss Taylor seemed as if she did not seek my acquaintance.....spoke to Lady G[ranville] but she did not invite me to her ball tomorrow nor Miss de H[agemann] either who said she was asking everybody right & left & it was odd to be left out. She said she did not care but said it with less truth apparently than I did. I really do not care. Should have gone if asked but really better & pleased to stay at home....>>⁷¹

Rank was a constant consideration in the matter of choosing an appropriate female companion - as it would have been for a young squire. The women in Anne Lister's network had clear opinions about who would or would not be an appropriate companion for her. She discussed her lack of a companion one day very matter-of-factly with Lady Stuart. "<<.....Lady S. thought better not to lose my time seeking a companion,>>" Anne wrote in code.

<<Such extraordinary caprices people took, I might be disappointed.....Well, said I, perhaps you are right. The finding a companion may be a chimera....'But,' said I, 'how delightful it would be to have a companion.' 'Oh,' said she, 'But that should be one you have gone on with all your life & then you might have one & you would be much the most agreeable & people would be obliged to ask her & you would have such management to have the invitation given to her & make her believe it was for her sake.' These words struck me forcibly, but I did not let it appear, but quietly said, 'Oh, but I should so like to have a person more agreeable than myself, then all would be right. I

⁷⁰AL Journal 24 June 1830.

⁷¹AL Journal 14 April 1831.

should feel no jealousies, but be delighted to be left quietly at home....She asked if fat Mrs. Wynn, Sir Watkins' sister, would suit me.....>>⁷²

Of course, calculations of rank and social prestige also entered into Anne's own thinking about potential companions. When Lady Duff Gordon suggested that they travel together Anne was indecisive for reasons of rank. "'What should you say,'" wrote Lady Gordon, "'to proceeding via Nice to winter at Rome, etc., besides [-] tho' married to each other, we would be a fashionable pair....'"⁷³ Anne considered the offer in code thus: "<<How would Lady S.[tuart] de [Rothsay] like the plan [?] Had I better stick more to her [?]. I am as worldly in this respect as Lady G[ordon]. The money, too, is a consideration. Would it answer to marry a person of such manners as I know everyone does not like [?] I doubt whether she stands high with Lady S.[tuart] de R.[othsay] I shall refuse but most amiably & civilly.>>"⁷⁴ In another case Anne mused thus: "<<Lady Ann [Scott] is plain & not perhaps likely to marry. If such were possible she would suit me. Her rank would hide the want of my own & I think we should do very well together.....>>"⁷⁵

The problems Lady Stuart had foreseen came up later when Lister, for all intents and purposes, married Ann Walker. Walker was not a welcome part of the high society circle. One evening at Shibden Hall Ann Walker read over one of Anne Lister's letters to

⁷²AL Journal 27 October 1830.

⁷³AL Journal 28 June 1830. See also SH:7/ML/431.

⁷⁴AL Journal 28 June 1830. She did in fact reply most amiably: "Your plan is excellent. I should have liked it exceedingly, and should have hastened to accept the most amiable offer of Marriage that surely ever was made, had I been 'free as air,' but sight of 'human ties' alarms me for next winter." Anne Lister, Paris to Lady Gordon, London, 30 June 1830. No catalogue number of its own. In bundle with SH:7/ML/431.

⁷⁵AL Journal 26 January 1832. This could also be seen as support, i.e., Lady Scott's rank enhancing her own.

Lady Harriet de Hagemann and burst into tears. Upon further inquiry Anne discovered that the mention she had made of her in the letter was, to Ann Walker, not complimentary enough. At last Anne Lister told her it was exactly the same kind of mention she would have made of Lady Vere Cameron and this seemed to comfort her temporarily.⁷⁶ However, she asked Anne to eliminate the passage entirely before sending the letter, and this was done.⁷⁷

They had another argument about contact with the upper echelons of the women's network once when they were in London together. Anne Lister went off to spend the day at Richmond Park with Lady Stuart and left Ann Walker to visit with her respectable but unknown friend, Mrs. Plowes. Ann Walker let her know she was not pleased about the arrangement. Anne Lister told her if she were in her place she wouldn't care to be taken just to be looked at, she would think it bad taste. Something in the conversation led to them discussing the "<<power to introduce.>>" Ann Walker told her angrily, "<<'You should not have claimed powers you did not possess.' I reminded her of my saying I hoped to succeed but if I could not my failure would be better than many people's success.>>" Ann Walker rejoined with a curt suggestion that perhaps it would be better if their relationship came to an end.⁷⁸ A few days later Ann Walker sat in the carriage for thirty-five minutes while Anne Lister visited Lady Stuart and Lady Vere Cameron at Whitehall.⁷⁹ When Lady Cameron unexpectedly called upon them both Anne Lister finally introduced her, but reported in her journal that Ann

⁷⁶AL Journal 13 January 1835.

⁷⁷AL Journal 14 January 1835. (Copied from a letter from Anne Lister, Shibden, to Lady Harriet de Hagemann, Copenhagen). The passage in question reads: "You used to wonder who would be my companion. I think I have provided one whom you will like. She is little and amiable with a great deal of good sense and good feeling. She is now with me here, and I have never before [been] so comfortable at home."

⁷⁸AL Journal 1 August 1835.

⁷⁹AL Journal 5 August 1835.

Walker had looked "pale and nervous" during the introduction.⁸⁰ Even after Lister and Walker had been together several years, it was still apparent "<<...that her society is no[t] prized above mine & here is & will always be the sore. Well I must make the best I can of it but I think we cannot get on together forever.>>"⁸¹ Problems of rank in the women's networks threatened the relationship itself.

Even amid Anne Lister's more local Yorkshire gentry circles Ann Walker's appropriate placing was difficult. One Spring the two of them went to visit the Norcliffes at Langton Hall near Malton. She recorded that everyone was "very kind and civil." Mr. Norcliffe in particular had told her that Ann Walker was agreeable. "<<In fact,>>" wrote Anne about her partner, "<<she talked and acquitted herself very well, but I see they don't want me unless they can have me alone.>>"⁸² It is quite likely that the same difficulty would have occurred if Anne had attempted to introduce any unknown and lower-ranking woman, and that rank, not sexuality, was the deciding factor. A couple of years later, once Ann Walker had become known to the York circle of women, it apparently became easier for her to socialize. When Walker and Lister had coffee and sandwiches with the Norcliffes one evening in York, all passed off normally.⁸³

The social circles in which Anne Lister moved in Paris were not the same ones open to Ann Walker or Mariana Lawton. It seems Mariana had not a little curiosity, or perhaps envy, as to why this should be so. Responding to some inquiry of Mariana's, Anne Lister wrote,

⁸⁰AL Journal 7 August 1835.

⁸¹AL Journal 20 November 1837.

⁸²AL Journal 17 April 1835.

⁸³AL Journal 16 November 1837.

.... the élite of society in Paris, as in London, is fastidious. The same sort of credentials are required in both places - connections, rank, wealth, or beauty - or talent, if agreeable, and of that sort which mixes well with fashionable life. In short, my dearest Mary, I should as soon hope to prescribe successfully for hydrophobia 'as to get into society.'⁸⁴

At one evening party at (old) Lady Stuart's⁸⁵ at Richmond Park Anne Lister socialized with Lady Vere [Hobart] Cameron, old Lady Stuart, Lady Louisa Stuart [the author] and Mrs. Robinson, Lord Goderich's aunt. She recorded, "<<I got on very well this evening. All agreeable and it did me good. Alas! Come what may I am spoilt for all lesser society. I must have good or none. Either will do but nothing between....>>"⁸⁶

Anne's life in this type of setting had in fact changed her. It meant she was not quite so content with the county gentry as she had once been. During one visit to Lawton Hall Mariana criticized her for her rank-consciousness.

<<She had contrived to tell me first thing she had seen and flirted with Lord Skelmerdale and told him she hated all lords and had laughed and gone on in this way which after all he must have thought vulgar enough. She said this morning she did not think my society would suit and I might take my lords and dukes. Perhaps we can never really suit again.>>⁸⁷

After a later discussion with Lady Gordon about accommodation plans in Italy she wrote,

<< I felt myself in reality gauche and besides in a false position. I have difficulty enough as to the usages of high society and feeling unknown, but I have ten times more [difficulty] on account of money. Had I the five thousand a year Miss H. [Vere] thought of I could do. As it is how can I? Yet there is none not even M.[ariana] to whom I can really tell the whole thing as it is. My high society plans fail. Unknown and without connections money should abound. I have had

⁸⁴Anne Lister, Shibden, to Mariana Lawton, Cheshire, 22 July 1836, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 490.

⁸⁵'Old' Lady Stuart was the mother of Lady Stuart de Rothesay's husband.

⁸⁶AL Journal 26 April 1832.

⁸⁷AL Journal 3 May 1832.

my whim, tried the thing and pretty much it has cost me. I shall in future perhaps do more wisely and within my compass. My pride needs not be wounded for none needs guess the truth. M.[ariana] will attribute all to my affection for her. Miss H. [Vere] will put it in some sort to my care and disappointment about her. All the rest will never dream that it is want of fortune and I shall now get out of my scrape as well as I can.....I have been an Icarus but shall fall less fatally for I can still live and be happy providence willing.....What a comfort my journal is. How I can write in crypt all as it really is & throw it off my mind and console myself. Thank God for it.>>⁸⁸

Lack of money did in fact limit her high society plans but not to the extent she had envisioned. She spent more time on the estate at Shibden but continued to correspond with the two Ladies Stuart and with Lady Harriet de Hagemann, wife of the British Ambassador to Denmark, until the end of her life.

2. b. Gender

Rank was an important way to control access to certain kinds of social benefits. Gender was another. Ideas about the behavior of women were reinforced by means of the intimate conversations or correspondence which took place among these women. Once when speaking with Lady Stuart de Rothesay about the education of girls the latter expressed her opinion that "the great thing is to make them agreeable....<<Too much mind bad for a woman. Good sense & judgement the main thing, she argued. A man never prized a woman so much for mind as person, & that women are the inferiors in mind and body. More littleness & trick & childbearing marked the difference.>>" Wrote Anne, "<<I argued gently that both were, in some sort, the work of education, from being kept & from dress.>>⁸⁹

⁸⁸AL Journal 29 April 1832.

⁸⁹AL Journal 24 October 1830.

Some of the internalization of gendered and uncomplimentary notions about themselves can be glimpsed in a few passages. Lady Vere Cameron, writing perhaps of her husband's sister, told Anne Lister that they were expecting Miss Cameron to visit "and she is a person who you will find very superior in many respects to the generality of women."⁹⁰

In another conversation Lady Stuart told Anne Lister a story about a sailor who came to Paris and, feeling isolated, had tried to poison himself with laudanum.

<<I said a man ought never to feel isolated or long unhappy. He had so many resources. She thought a woman had more. Oh, surely not. A man was independent, could do anything. Console, employ himself in a thousand ways, etc. A woman's employment knitting, netting, etc. hardly occupied her mind. No animal in creation so helpless as a woman particularly if young & handsome, possessing that precious jewel she was so little able to guard yet upon the safekeeping of which her whole reputation & happiness depended. (chastity). She scarce could stir in safety, etc. etc. I saw Lady S.[tuart] thought my train of thought singular but she said she had never wished to be a man. She should not have done the duties well. "Oh," said I, "I don't mean that, but simply that the one has many more resources than the other," and so we talked talked on, cozily as usual...>>⁹¹

The July revolution found her traveling in the Pyrenees with Lady Stuart de Rothesay and her children. On the 2nd of August they had heard wild rumors of 30,000 people being killed in the streets of Paris. Anne Lister's aunt and Lady Stuart's husband and relatives were still in Paris. Because of the crisis, the borders were closed and they were prevented from returning immediately. The two women discussed what they would have done had they still been in Bordeaux.

<<I said it would have been best to remain quiet where we were, at the hotel. 'We could not,' said she, 'without protection.' 'Well,' said I, 'I am pretty sure I should & if I had moved at all, it would have been to Paris. I could not have gone to England, leaving my poor aunt. It would have

⁹⁰AL Journal 8 March 1837.

⁹¹AL Journal 12 November 1830.

seemed cowardly.' Said she hastily, 'What is a woman's bravery?' I answered calmly, 'I should not call it bravery. I should feel it right.'....>>⁹²

I suspect she had to answer calmly because her masculine sense of chivalry was grossly offended by the comment. At one stop in another town during that same trip she wrote, "<<I would have walked, but thought Lady S.[tuart] would think it not proper, as I had heard her say one could not walk about here, so many soldiers and sailors, without a gentleman....I tortured myself & saw nothing...>>"⁹³ The rules about gender also restricted her movements sometimes while she was in London. "<<In my salon at eleven and five minutes,>>" she wrote, "<< Fine day but I too fine to take a good walk out. What splendid slavery! Fine rooms, dressed in my silk redingote [sic] all for company and somebody to see. Musing of taking to M.[ariana] again, giving up finery and fine people...I have had a little trial of great people. I have had my whim which has cost me pretty dearly...>>"⁹⁴ Yet that same day after she had made her salon comfortable and made herself at home she felt better. "<<Everything looking ladylike. In better spirits. My taste for good society in vigor again...>>"⁹⁵ During the course of her life she moved from a relative unknown to being well-respected in the Yorkshire gentry, to socializing with the upper echelons of the aristocracy. Her personal sexual practice became less relevant in the higher circles, but the public manifestations of gender (respectability) became more controlled. If she was to socialize with the Stuarts in London, it was important that her salon looked "<<ladylike.>>"

⁹²AL Journal 2 August 1830.

⁹³AL Journal 22 October 1830.

⁹⁴AL Journal 25 April 1832.

⁹⁵AL Journal 25 April 1832.

Other gendered discourses were common among both gentry and aristocratic groups. In one unusual passage in the journal, Anne Lister repeats certain ideas about motherhood in her attempt to console the bereaved daughters of Mrs. Best, Isabella Norcliffe's sister:

Do give my affectionate condolence to Rosamond & Ellen. Perhaps there is generally a very peculiar feeling of sorrow on the loss of a mother, which we cannot feel on any other occasion. There is an indescribable sacredness in the remembrance of her who has borne us thro' our first development into being. We cannot look into ourselves, we cannot contemplate the wondrous scheme of living entity without recurring to the hallowed thought of her who, the chosen instrument of heaven, breathed into us the first breath of life.....⁹⁶

I have included this quotation about motherhood in the section on "constraint" because it is a reproduction of controlling discourses, however idealistic they might seem. This type of discourse delineated not only what women who were mothers ought to be like, but also how women who were daughters ought to feel.

2. c. Gossip

If a daughter failed to demonstrate the appropriate degree of sorrow, network gossip could become a potent weapon against her. In April of 1837 Mariana Lawton wrote to Anne Lister to tell her that Isabella and Charlotte Norcliffe were "disgusted at Ellen's indifference on the loss of her mother Mrs. Best."⁹⁷ The information had circulated to at least four women other than the mother & daughter concerned.

⁹⁶AL Journal 18, 19 March 1837. Ellen Best was the artist whose paintings are included in Chapter Three.

⁹⁷AL Journal 1 April 1837.

Other types of behavior were also frowned upon within the networks. If a woman seemed too forward in her relations with men, if she drank too often or if she seemed likely to disregard the social separations necessary to maintain the hierarchy, these facts were remarked upon. It was not simple back-biting but shared ideas on how women should behave. Gossiping with Vere one afternoon after the departure of Miss Wilbraham Anne commented that <<Miss W. too much dressed & her gown all slipping off her shoulders & thick ended fingers & bites her nails....>>"⁹⁸ The unfortunate Miss Wilbraham called upon them on a later occasion whereupon Anne Lister remarked, "<<Miss Wilbraham does not improve upon me in a tea. Not a fine person or of first fashion in London. Do not much like her manners. Not high bred enough for me. Give me the Scotts. I know not how it is that I am at heart so pleased with the high ones of the land. Their stateliness & dignity suit me.....>>"⁹⁹ Yet even among the "high ones of the land" intimate communications became vehicles for subtle gender-based restraint. In one letter to Anne Lister Lady Stuart explained that she was no longer socializing with the two Miss Berrys, who were developing a public reputation for scholarship. "I do not encourage them here," she wrote, "for they are much too exciting folks for us."¹⁰⁰ Comments like this were certain to discourage anyone else who wanted to be Lady Stuart's friend from also making the mistake of becoming "too exciting."

That Anne Lister was occasionally a little too exciting for the local Halifax gentry is revealed in only a few recorded comments. One afternoon Anne Lister and Ann Walker made a formal social call on the elderly Mrs. Waterhouse. Mrs. Waterhouse said she

⁹⁸AL Journal 18 January 1832.

⁹⁹AL Journal 26 January 1832.

¹⁰⁰AL Journal 20 January 1835.

"hoped A[nn] would not learn to walk and be like me - one Miss Lister quite enough - could not do with two - one quite enough to move in such an eccentric orbit."¹⁰¹ Mrs. Waterhouse and Mrs. Rawson met Anne Lister's sister one day in Halifax and told her they thought Anne was spending so much on estate improvements she would ruin herself.¹⁰² One morning at breakfast Marian Lister made the comment that a certain woman in the neighborhood, Mrs. Bewley, "was not a respectable person." No friend of hers, she added, would ever be caught in Mrs. Bewley's house. It turned out Mrs. Bewley had drunk so much at a party that "it was all an officer could do to get her downstairs," and she and the officer had apparently "tumbled one on the other."¹⁰³ Certainly no Listerian visit could be forthcoming after such a public *faux pas*.

Gossip was a constant tool among the women's networks, not only for exchanging important information, but for trying to enforce certain codes of behavior. In the absence of a magistrates' court, gossip could be almost as effective. In all these cases, decorous female behavior (gender) was reinforced in the women's networks by means of social rank and the implicit threat of being entirely excluded from society. Social etiquette was used to manipulate interpersonal interactions, and was especially effective in reducing women's friendships to a question of rank. It must also have instilled a subjective sense of superiority in those at the higher end - but almost always rank was relative. There would always be someone inferior or superior, and these women spent a huge amount of energy figuring out who was who and then in controlling the other woman's or their own behavior. If Anne Lister met a woman unlikely to improve her status she was unlikely to pursue

¹⁰¹AL Journal 11 February 1835.

¹⁰²AL Journal 26 November 1835.

¹⁰³AL Journal 26 October 1835.

the acquaintance. Among this particular network of upper-class women, ideas about women's appropriate behavior were reinforced not only by means of intimate conversation and gossip, but also via the threat of ending the friendship itself. The network functioned as a system of restraint upon women to the extent that it mirrored the hierarchical culture within which it was embedded. The network functioned as a system of support in so far as it gave its participants greater access to certain kinds of resources, but overall hierarchy had a negative effect on the women's relationships and upon their lives. All restrained themselves from becoming too exciting, too scholarly, too public, too vocal or indeed too independently physically mobile, for fear of being cut off from other women's friendships. Her social interactions created a status for Anne Lister which she prized very highly. Indeed, one might almost see her social ambitions as a career. Since she could not join the military or run for Parliament, she directed her most powerful energies into increasing her social status by those means available to her.¹⁰⁴

Neither her 'masculinity,' nor her obviously powerful emotional bonds with various women, nor her sexual activities, (carefully veiled from public view), cut her off from society. Sometimes the lesbian community and the female network were virtually indistinguishable. It was problems with rank that threatened her relationship with Ann Walker and her connections to the aristocracy, not questions of sexual morality. Her aristocratic friendships gave her a certain lustre which helped offset any threat of scandal which might have arisen from her gender eccentricities alone. She was eminently respectable. In the letter to Lord Stuart both she and Ann Walker could quite

¹⁰⁴Many thanks to Jill Liddington for discussions about these issues.

reasonably maintain that they were "true people. Conservatives at home - no meddlers in politics abroad - respecters of the powers that be, and quiet observers of prescribed rules....."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵Anne Lister, Shibden, to Lady Stuart, Whitehall?, 22 February 1838, as quoted in Green, "Spirited Yorkshirewoman," 501.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

Postscript on Ann Walker and Conclusion

After Anne Lister's death in September 1840, Ann Walker had her body brought back from the Black Sea area via Constantinople. Lister was buried in the Halifax Parish Church the following May.¹ Walker continued living at Shibden Hall until 1843, when she was declared insane and forcibly removed. Yet as the life tenant named in Anne Lister's will, Walker was entitled to receive all the rents from the estate and income from any sales until the day of her death, at age 50, on 25 February 1854. It was only then that a relatively distant male relative, Dr. John Lister, could inherit the property. After his death the estate passed to his son, also John Lister, the antiquarian and founding member of the Halifax Labour Party and the last Lister heir, who died without issue in 1933.² The property was donated to the town of Halifax, and is now a West Riding Folk Museum.

While Ann Walker was alive, however, she received as promised all of the income of the Shibden Hall estate, as specified in Anne Lister's will. She was not as good with business matters as her partner, and for various reasons which will soon be discussed, Walker was declared insane in 1843, removed from Shibden Hall and taken back to Cliff Hill, where she died. Because the two women's estates had been so closely connected, the two families found them difficult to disentangle. Despite Lister's best efforts in

¹Letter from James Gratrix to Robert Parker, 19 February, 1841. He is glad to hear Miss Walker is returned. Public Record Office, London, Chancery Masters' Exhibits, C106/60. Ann Walker (GM Sutherland) vs. John Lister (William Gray); Lister's body returns and is buried, Halifax Guardian 1 May 1841.

²H. Drake, "John Lister of Shibden Hall (1847-1933): First Treasurer of the Independent Labour Party" (Ph.D. diss., University of Bradford, 1972).

her will, the financial aspects of a lesbian marriage confused and disturbed the surviving Lister and Walker relatives. Walker, for example, had directed that all of the rents from her own estate should be deposited into Lister's bank account during their sojourn in Russia. Lister's relatives later took the Walker estate to court over these monies, claiming that Walker was responsible for the debts incurred during the journey. During Ann Walker's lifetime part of the Lister estate in Halifax was sold to the railroad company for a station platform and the monies were placed into chancery as was usual in cases of lunacy. Later a Walker heir successfully obtained these monies for himself.³ Dr. John Lister, the secondary heir who had to wait from 1840 to 1854 to come into his inheritance, became bitter over what he could not understand. Lister wrote the following letter to Ann Walker's sister's husband, Captain Sutherland, marking it "confidential." His understanding of the relationship was this:

From your long and frequent intercourse with Miss Walker I doubt not you are as sensible as I am of how perfectly simple a matter it was for any designing or unprincipled person to [...] or dupe her and I unhesitatingly say that Mrs. Lister did so to an enormous extent. Step by step I have traced her proceedings. She first instils into Miss Walker's Mind a mistrust & hatred of her [...] relatives. When this is accomplished, she prevails on Miss Walker to leave her her estate and as if this was not sufficient [...] insult?] to her Family she persuades her to direct that the proceeds of her estate should be placed to her (Mrs. Lister's) credit during their absence abroad. Whether Miss Lister intended that Miss Walker ever should return God only knows!!...the injury Mrs. Lister has done me, my wife and [...]son?] I sincerely feel and who would not...⁴

Lister may have been an unpleasant character but she would not have committed murder. What was common behavior for men, i.e., taking their wife's money and leaving estate proceeds to their

³Various documents, CDA, Crow Nest (CN):100/2. That the railroad was opposed by some owners of Shibden and that Parker was responsible for selling shares in 1845, see CDA, FW: 120/51.

⁴Letter from Dr. John Lister to Captain Sutherland, dated Abbey Lodge 27 September 1844. CDA, CN: 103/2.

widows, became something suspect and even evil when it was done by someone who, to her age, for all intents and purposes, appeared to be a greedy, eccentric and designing spinster.

Lister thought and acted as if acting from heterosexual assumptions, but there were important differences. First, any marriage settlement between herself and a female partner could not be valid in law; secondly, she and a female partner could decide to separate at any time without fear of social or legal ramifications; and thirdly, the main *raison d'être* for the mingling of the sexual and the financial within the landed gentry at this time was to ensure long-term male dynastic interests. One effect of compulsory heterosexuality was the protection of the property interests of the landed classes. In the end, Anne Lister made a complex will which did in fact leave all she had to Ann Walker for the latter's lifetime, but, in the absence of children, she salvaged the family's long-term dynastic interests by settling the estate after Ann Walker's death on a distant Lister relative. This was an apparent, though easily explicable, contradiction. She simply tried to accomodate the interests of both her class and her sexuality.⁵

The reasons behind the committal of Ann Walker are nowhere proven, other than that she was behaving in a way which seemed eccentric to her sister and the solicitors involved. There are, however, several clues. Soon after Anne Lister's funeral, Ann Walker wrote out her will.⁶ In it she gave a £300 annuity to Anne Lister's sister Marian (as long as she continued unmarried) and left the rest of her estate to her sister's son, George Sackville Sutherland. Then she apparently carried on with the day to day

⁵See also Jill Liddington's forthcoming article, "Beating the Inheritance Bounds: Anne Lister (1791-1840) and her dynastic identity," Gender and History 7, no. 2 (August 1995): 260-274.

⁶CDA, CN: 100/2.

business dealings of Shibden Hall as best she could. She wrote coherent and logical personal memoranda and business letters to Parker and her architect in at least January, July, and December of 1842. During this time she also carried on what she had begun during Anne Lister's lifetime, extensive researches into the Walker family history.⁷ She may also have gone through some of Anne Lister's papers, as there is a substantial amount of early Eliza Raine material scattered amidst letters Ann Walker received at this time.⁸

On the 11 June 1842 Ann Walker signed an agreement with the Manchester & Leeds Railway for the purchase of some land in Halifax which they needed for the new train station. They agreed to pay her £1,000.⁹ Meanwhile, surveyors were planning the new line of the railway, which was to emerge from a tunnel and run directly through the middle of the Shibden Hall estate some 76 yards from the house itself.¹⁰ [See Figure 25.]

There was another ongoing piece of business, which was to become very significant to the committal process. On the 27 of September 1842 her long-time steward Samuel Washington signed a purchase agreement on her behalf with a man named Horncastle for the purchase of some property.¹¹ Later Ann Walker expressed surprise about the purchase. Her signature is not on the agreement, and it is possible that she knew nothing about it. It is also possible that she was beginning to be ill with tuberculosis, and was therefore losing her ability to cope with estate business, at which she never

⁷CDA, CN: 102/2.

⁸CDA, CN: 103/2.

⁹CDA, CN: 100/2.

¹⁰R. Carter to Parker & Adams, 27 March 1845. CDA, FW: 120/51.

¹¹CDA, CN: 103/2.



Figure 25. Watercolor painting of Shibden Hall estate with and without railroad, ca. 1840s
(Artist unknown. CDA, SH:2/M/20/1)

seemed overly adept. In any case, she never paid Horncastle the money Horncastle said she had agreed to pay. On 1 July 1843, about a year later, Horncastle sent a demand letter. On 17 July 1843 someone, possibly one of the solicitors Grey or Parker, sent a letter to Ann's sister, Elizabeth Sutherland, in Scotland, suggesting that her signature and the opinion of two medical men would be needed to declare Ann Walker a person of unsound mind. The incomplete document finishes abruptly: "The Smith House & Railway contracts will have to be completed. Very many accounts with....to be settled....Should she recover there might be an attempt....."¹² [Incomplete manuscript.] On 23 July of 1843 Ann Walker wrote a letter to Horncastle's London solicitors suggesting that she was surprised about the purchase, and stating that she wanted different clauses in the purchase agreement. Again, this letter appears to be perfectly logical and coherent.¹³ The railway business and the Horncastle business are coincidental in time, but the exact relationship of one to the other or to the committal is partly conjecture.

Horncastle's solicitors began sending threatening demand letters and acquired a subpoena in Chancery. Grey, in York, and Parker, in Halifax, exchanged a flurry of letters which show they were aware of the situation, which was quickly deteriorating. Ann Walker, Grey wrote, was paying no attention to Horncastle's letters. Grey suggested that Parker should write to Captain and Elizabeth Sutherland with news of what was happening. "I think it would not be well that she should hear of her sister's being sold up

¹²CDA, MAC: 73 3.

¹³Ann Walker, Shibden Hall, to Messrs. Barker & Rose, solicitors, 50 Mark Lane, London, 23 July 1843. CDA, CN: 103/2.

and arrested by a mere accident...."¹⁴ The potential for public exposure horrified Walker's family.

There was another embarrassing factor - Ann Walker had apparently been publicly stating her opposition to the railway in letters to newspapers. Elizabeth Sutherland wrote to Parker to say she approved of his selection of Dr. Belcombe, who ran a private clinic for the insane near York, as the medical man to commit her sister.¹⁵ "It is quite evident that my poor sister gets worse by being left to herself - if she were allowed to go to London there might be some outburst upon the Railway which would be of course reported in the newspapers....."¹⁶ In another, undated letter, which must have been written in the same period of time, Elizabeth Sutherland refers obliquely to some embarrassing incident which had occurred, which I would guess also involved the railway or the surveying of the railway. Again she expresses her approval of the committal process and remarks of her sister, ".....what if she should sally forth with a number of Men and again send off Captain Dunnsford's party!....to think of her having six Men living in the house & only Pearson's little Girl!"¹⁷ One can only conjecture about the exact meaning of this passage, but it appears Ann Walker felt she was under siege in some way, and perhaps was using some of the estate workers to help her in her opposition the railway.

Above all, the Sutherlands wanted to avoid the embarrassment of having Ann Walker arrested for failure to honor

¹⁴William Grey, York, to Robert Parker, Halifax, 12 August 1843. CDA, MAC: 73/5.

¹⁵This Dr. Belcombe was the son of the Dr. Belcombe who had committed Anne Lister's first lover, Eliza Raine, back in 1814. He was also Mariana Lawton's brother.

¹⁶Elizabeth Sutherland, Fortrose, to Robert Parker, Halifax, 17 August 1843. CDA, MAC: 73/6.

¹⁷Elizabeth Sutherland to Robert Parker, August 1843. CDA, MAC: 73/9.

the Horncastle purchase agreement, and asked Parker and Adam if they would please pay the amount in the interim, in order to avoid the risk of further public exposure. This they did.¹⁸

On the 8 and 9th of September 1843 Dr. Belcombe made plans with Parker for Ann Walker to be removed from Shibden by trickery and by force if necessary. She was bundled into a carriage on the morning of the 9th and taken to his asylum near York, possibly in Osbaldwick. Robert Parker made a private memorandum that afternoon of what he found at Shibden when he entered. Ann Walker's room was locked and the constable had to lift the door off its hinges to enter. Parker described Ann Walker's room as filthy. The shutters were closed. There was a pair of loaded pistols on one side of the bed. There was a dirty candlestick covered in wax, "as if the Candle had melted away on it.....Papers were strewn about in complete confusion.....[there] were many handkerchiefs spotted all over with Blood."¹⁹ This is the only evidence we actually have of a disordered state of mind on Ann Walker's part, but it also reflects what might be the scene in the bedroom of a severely tubercular woman who was engaged in family researches. She had been threatened with arrest for failing to pay money which she had never personally signed for, and she had publicly resisted the railway line through the Shibden Hall estate. Captain Sutherland expressed his opinion that she must have been insane for years and that "some people might be mistaken enough to think, indeed say that I had pressed matters to an extremity, when there was no necessity, but merely to obtain

¹⁸Receipt for money owed by Ann Walker paid by Parker & Adams. CDA, MAC: 89/19/1.

¹⁹Memorandum of Robert Parker of what he found in Miss Walker's Red Room, 9 September 1843. CDA, MAC: 73/29.

her Property for my children. (Better they go without than that there should be news of insanity in the family.)"²⁰

The Lunacy Commission was held in November 1843 and Ann Walker was declared a person of unsound mind as from 15 October 1841, though how and why they decided on that date is very unclear. The Lunacy Committee of Ann Walker's person included Captain Sutherland, and, at one stage, John Rawson, who in this capacity attempted (unsuccessfully) to make arrangements to use Lister's coal shafts.²¹ Parker apparently had some control over those railway shares connected with the Shibden Hall estate, and was the recipient of several letters from potential share buyers in 1845.²² There were at least two law suits arising from the Walker drama. One involved an attempt by Dr. John Lister to have the expenses of the Russian journeys paid for out of the Walker, rather than the Lister estate.²³ In this he was apparently unsuccessful.²⁴ The eventual Walker heir, Evan Charles Sutherland Walker of Skibo Castle, was still trying in 1879 to obtain the proceeds of the 1842 sale of land for the Halifax train station.²⁵ Some of Ann Walker's funds were still tied up until at least 1884, which is the last year for which a record exists of William Grey's accountancy as executor of her will.²⁶

²⁰George Walker Sutherland to Robert Parker, 24 August 1843. CDA, MAC: 73/16.

²¹An account of the assessed duty on the legacy of Ann Walker of Cliff Hill. **The incident referred to in the text had apparently taken place in the late 1840s.** The vice chancellor decided against the committee in November 1848, and Rawson was unable to use the mines. CDA, CN: 100/2.

²²CDA, FW: 120/51.

²³CDA, SH: 3/LAW/41/3, SH:7/DRL/47. See also Public Record Office, Chancery Masters' Exhibits, C106/60. Ann Walker (GM Sutherland) vs. John Lister (William Gray).

²⁴CDA, SH: 7/DRL/48.

²⁵Draft petition for the funds from Emmet & Walker. From Evan Charles Sutherland-Walker of Skibo Castle in the County of Sutherland, Scotland, 1879. CDA, CN:100/2.

²⁶Account books of the executor (Wm. Gray esqr.) of late Miss Ann Walker 1854-1884. CDA, CN: 99/6/2-7.

A brief account of Ann Walker's story is important for at least three reasons: firstly, it avoids the fault of many heterosexual narratives, which often end when the male partner dies. Secondly, it demonstrates how difficult it must have been for upper-class Victorian society to comprehend the financial affairs of a lesbian relationship. Thirdly, the tale helps to demonstrate gender inequities. Both Anne Lister's first and her last lover ended their lives with the legal status of "spinster of unsound mind." Anne Lister herself had been threatened with such a fate at one time in her teenage years because of her eccentric gender behavior. Yet she kept off the threat with her usual "butch" bravado. (See Chapter Three). Her lovers were declared insane not so much because they were lesbians, but because of the emotional and financial complications arising both from their sexual choices and their socialized femininity. Nothing is clearer in the lives of these women than that they were simultaneously both the victims and the agents of their gender, that they simultaneously resisted and colluded in the discourse of their time.

Questions of gender and sexuality are particularly fraught with problems of agency. How much choice is involved in the feminization or masculinization of individuals? Does feminization itself involve an attempt to prevent a sense of agency? It does not really matter whether we look at nature or culture or a combination thereof. The dichotomy between the two is a waste of energy, even if we are trying to understand how the dichotomy itself is discursively created. Feminist historians have often been fascinated by the theoretical dichotomies between culture and nature or public and private. "Nature" and the "private" are sometimes seen as ahistorical and deterministic while "culture" and

the "public" have been associated with potential liberation.²⁷ In fact, social constructionism and the public realm can be just as deterministic as "nature" and the "private." And vice versa. Perhaps there are liberating aspects of what we conceive of as "nature" and the "private" that women's history has yet to explore. The essential question for feminist histories is how and why, and under what conditions, women have or have not made choices which have increased their freedom. Of course, when women choose to embrace the gendered political and social discourse of their time, their agency is more or less hidden, though it may still be there. (Though how can it be detected except in rebellion?) Agency exists in women whose lives cohesively reflect dominant discourses, it is just harder to see. One of the difficulties of lesbian history - actually seeing and recognizing agency in the "femme" woman in a partnership, stems from this. This is important to remember in order to avoid a kind of theoretical hubris. We must also ask of what that freedom can consist if it is divorced from the interconnected questions of class, politics and sexuality. Women with greater access to material resources have a greater degree of agency in some respects, but women without that access may have developed other kinds of agency. More research is needed, especially in private documents and personal narratives. More acute understandings of agency and the options available to women, and the way they can manipulate discourses, are essential to understanding women's history as a whole.

In discussions with various women during the course of researching and writing this dissertation, I have heard comments

²⁷See also Gisela Bock, "Challenging Dichotomies: Perspectives on Women's History," in Writing Women's History: International Perspectives, ed. Karen Offen, Ruth R. Pierson and Jane Rendall (London: Macmillan, 1991), 1-23.

about Anne Lister which reflect our late twentieth-century hopes, but which bear no relation to Lister's life. Some women have suggested that Lister was interested in empowering women. She espoused no ideology which might even vaguely be regarded as feminist. Anne Lister was certainly no heroine. She was not "ahead of her time" in any obvious way. She was a cut-throat business-woman, a coal mine owner who had more regard for profit than for safety, a snobbish but untitled member of the lesser gentry, and an enthusiastic Tory who threatened tenants with eviction if they did not vote according to her wishes. The Halifax known to the greatest percentage of the population at the time barely skirts the edges of her recorded consciousness. When hundreds of local women and children were rising before dawn and labouring at the spinning and weaving machines until after dark, Lister was planning her next continental itinerary. Lister lived in a gentrified goldfish bowl, in a universe apart. She was an upper-class Tory landowner whose primary concerns were to increase her wealth and social prestige, and she opportunistically used relationships with other women to attain these ends. She was anything but progressive, and there are many ways in which she is less than admirable. Lister devalued women because she aligned her identity with masculinity, and the masculinity of this time and class was dependent for its very existence upon a material and discursive devaluation of women. She devalued working people, the "rabble," as she put it, because she aligned her identity with the upper classes, which were dependent for their existence upon both the discursive and material devaluation of the majority of other people living in the same society. She was as she was because of the culture in which she grew up, a passive recipient of the discourse of her time. Yet she simultaneously manipulated those

discourses for her own benefit at every opportunity. Nothing is clearer in the life of Anne Lister than that she was simultaneously both the victim and the agent of her gender and her class, and that she simultaneously resisted and colluded in the discourse of their time. It is this simultaneous existence of agency with a passive reception of discourse that makes Anne Lister both a frustratingly traditional and an incredibly bold woman at once.

In all points except two she aligned herself with the dominant cultural, gender and class establishment. One of these was the (culturally-created) apparent contradiction between her masculine gender (and the practices which went with it) and her physical sex. The other was the (culturally-created) apparent contradiction between her sexual practice and her physical sex. She herself exercised a certain amount of agency in subverting compulsory heterosexuality; her reasoned insistence on the naturalness of her sexual feelings and practice was part of this process, as was her obsessive concern for respectability and appearances. It is perhaps too obvious to state that Anne Lister's class empowered her, and enabled her to make choices not available to less economically privileged women. Yet exclusive lesbian sexual practice threatened the core method whereby the landed classes maintained their grip on property and power. Because of this, Lister created extensive legal guarantees in her will which ensured that the Shibden Hall estate would eventually go to a male heir. Again, there is a contradiction here which is one of the many we must accept about Lister's life if we hope to understand her within the context of her class and time.

Why, and especially how, did Lister manipulate public discourses for her own benefit? There is one very apropos sentence in Joan Nestle's collection which helps to contextualize

Anne Lister and the questions about subjective gender identities that I have asked of this material. "Everyone has taken a turn at denigrating the butch-femme couple," she writes, "from the sexologist at the turn of the century who spoke about the predatory female masculine invert and the child woman who most easily fell her victim, to the early homophile activists of the fifties who pleaded with these 'obvious' women to tone down their style of self-orientation, to the lesbian-feminists of the seventies who cried 'traitor' into the faces of the few butch-femme couples who did cross over into the new world of cultural feminism - yet this form of self - and communal - expression has persisted."²⁸ Nestle is talking about internal forms of gender construction, as well as how subjectivities manifest that, but she is also talking about agency in the face of powerful discourses to the contrary. An analysis of butch-femme identities in the Anne Lister material provides one way of understanding the formation of gender identities in a specific historical setting, as well as providing a way in to understanding the relationship between gender and agency.

Anne Lister's life and her journal can give extremely important insights into how subjectivities actively innovate successful identities and manipulate dominant discourses. While she might record herself as presenting a more masculinized entrepreneurial subjectivity to her workmen on the estate, she recorded a more respectably feminine gentry subjectivity in her interactions with her aristocratic female friends. When she moved between class worlds and moved between gendered separate spheres, she could present a gendered subjectivity appropriate to either.

²⁸Joan Nestle, ed. The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader (Boston: Alyson Publications, 1992), 14.

Anne Lister used her class-based power to reinforce her masculine image, and in turn used the latter to reinforce the former. Both gender and class are constructed through repetitive discursive practices. These practices include such activities as the head of the family reading prayers, reading Greek, Latin and Hebrew, studying geology and engineering, fixing barns and walls for Tory tenants, pressuring tenants to vote Tory, receiving rents at rent-day dinners, not vacillating when it came to a decision, being the sexual initiator and writing her journal. Alternatively, gender and class could be constructed through visiting continental watering holes, attending fashionable Parisian balls, writing well-phrased private letters, having well-groomed and sexually restrained servants, not publishing anything, not entering the public sphere and not voting. Repetition of the same actions was necessary to stabilize a potentially unstable relationship of oppositional hierarchy in the construction of class, just as it was necessary in the construction of gender. If the actions change, the hierarchies are destabilized, at least in the sense that that become more fluid and amorphous. Lister challenged prevailing discourses through different practices or actions, not merely through different languages. I would definitely emphasize the effectiveness of the one over the other, even though both have been seen as "discourse." That is a large part of the answer to the question, how did Lister manipulate public discourses for her own benefit? Actions always speak louder than words.

Lister's sexual identity, while very important, was not the only, defining fact about her life. In this respect, it is always important to contextualize lesbian lives if we do in fact wish to avoid collusion with what Foucault termed "the deployment of sexuality." Lister led a life in which her personal relationships

were interconnected with her activities as an estate manager, a scholar, a continental traveller, a politician and a social climber. Sexual practice and sexual identity are not the only relevant facts about a human being. While we can identify her as a lesbian in sexual practice, we cannot therefore postulate a "core identity" based on "sexuality," though her sexual practice did form a part of her subjective identity. Also, let us not look for static, universal meanings attributed to certain kinds of sexual practice. Sexuality is an historical subject because the meanings attached to the body and to various desires and practices change over time. The question is not, did women have sex with women in early nineteenth-century England? It is quite obvious they did. Rather, how did women innovate identities and practices in opposition to prevailing discourse; to what extent did they incorporate prevailing discourse into their sexual and gender practice; and how did this in turn affect (either positively or negatively) further possibilities for agency?

One of the most striking things about the Lister journals is not that they record lesbian sexual practice, but, as Faderman has pointed out, that close female friendship was not automatically regarded as erotic or disreputable. Indeed, Lister successfully used this cultural assumption to mask the erotic components of her relationships. Even when two women lived and slept together for years, as Lister and Walker did, they were still accepted visitors in York and Halifax gentry drawing rooms. Even when Lister spoke openly to Lady Stuart about being "engaged" to life-long female companions, this did not in and of itself make Lister disreputable in her aristocratic circles. While public affection and love between women was often accepted and even praised in the nineteenth century, this was not generally viewed as stretching along a

continuum to overt sexual expression, primarily because female sexuality in particular was constructed as passionless and sexuality in general was constructed as phallogentric. (Only the more elite readers of classical texts would have had textual glimpses of intra-sexual practice). These constructions are the result of conditions wherein males and masculinity have greater access to and control over public discourse. There was no threat in lesbian relationships so long as the status and the long-term economic health of the highest status social group, the landed family, was so completely dependent upon marriage to a male.

Lister could be an interesting and even welcomed eccentric friend in the aristocratic female networks, so long as she played by all the other rules. To them she was a novelty, a fashionable talent, a passing and infrequent phenomenon. Lister might have used words like 'marriage' and 'divorce' when discussing her lesbian relationships with her friends, but she kept her specifically erotic practices as hidden as possible. Even if they had guessed or surmised her erotic practices, which they may well have done, these gentry and aristocratic women would probably not have discussed it with Lister and it would not therefore enter her written record. The female networks provided a socially, financially, intellectually and emotionally supportive environment. However, of all the discourses Lister encountered, those in the female networks had the most severely constraining effect on her sense of agency.

'Lesbian,' like 'masculine,' and 'feminine,' 'upper-class,' and 'working-class,' 'black' and 'white' is both a public discourse and a private subjective position. We must understand sexuality and gender both in their external and internal (subjective) construction and manipulation. If our only understandings of sexuality and

gender are related purely to their external socially constructed senses, how can we hope to understand and explain the existence of women involved in food and Poor Law riots, women who cross-dressed, women who demanded the vote, women who demanded a just wage apart from the family wage, women who were sexual with other women, women who adored other women, women who organized trade unions, women who undermined systems of slavery, women who demanded property rights and divorce laws, women who demanded access to universities and careers, women who demanded equal pay, women who demanded an end to violence against women, women who pushed for control over their own reproduction, and women who left their families and homes to work for peace? These are all women who took some risk, who contested the meanings of gender in the face of dominant discourses which tried to fix a static, hierarchical, binary notion of gender. If public discourses are really all-powerful in creating reality, then rebellions and resistances like these are theoretically impossible. When it deals with women who live lives not in line with dominant discourses, women's history is primarily a history of agency. It may also be a history of agency when it deals with women whose lives appear to be completely harmonized with dominant discourses, but in those cases much more critical questions need to be asked about who is benefitting and why.

It is hoped that this dissertation has proved helpful to others working in similar fields. It has, however, analyzed only a part of the whole. A great deal more room exists for further analysis of the Lister journal and correspondence from varying scholarly viewpoints. I wish those future endeavors much good luck.

Appendices

Appendix A:

Images from Charlotte Bronte's Shirley which closely match images of Anne Lister found in the Anne Lister diaries:¹

From: Charlotte Bronte, Shirley (Dent: Everyman's Library, 1955 [1849]).

"This was neither a grand nor a comfortable house: within as without it was antique, rambling and incommodious. A property of a thousand a year belonged to it; which property had descended, for lack of male heirs, on a female. There were mercantile families in the district boasting twice the income, but the Keeldars, by virtue of their antiquity, and their distinction of lords of the manor, took the precedence of all....[The manor house]of course, as was to be expected in such a gothic old barrack, this parlour was lined with oak: fine, dark, glossy panels compassed the walls gloomily and grandly...." (218)²

"Shirley Keeldar (she had no christian name but Shirley: her parents who had wished to have a son, finding that, after eight years of marriage, Providence had granted them only a daughter, bestowed on her the same masculine family cognomen they would have bestowed on a boy, if with a boy they had been blessed.).....She was not a blonde.....clear and dark were the characteristics of her aspect as to colour: her face and brow were clear, her eyes of the darkest grey.....her hair of the darkest brown." (222)³

".....and then she put her hands behind her, and stood, bending slightly towards her guest, still regarding her, in the attitude and with something of the aspect of a grave but gallant little cavalier." (223)⁴

Shirley speaking: "I have been obliged to see him: there was business to transact. Business! Really the word makes me conscious I am indeed no longer a girl, but quite a woman, and something more. I am an esquire: Shirley Keeldar, Esquire, ought to be my style and title. They gave me a man's name; I hold a man's position: it is enough to inspire me with a touch of manhood; and when I see such people.....before me, gravely talking to me of business, really I feel quite gentlemanlike. You must choose me for your churchwarden, Mr.

¹I am not maintaining that the character Shirley was drawn solely from Anne Lister, only that she was partially so. It may be that Charlotte Bronte pulled elements of this character from more than one person.

²There are many houses in the Halifax area which are lined with oak. Shibden Hall is the only one in the area that used to be a manor house. The estate had an income of about a thousand a year. Lister was the female heir of a family which matched this description.

³The physical description of Shirley Keeldar matches that of Anne Lister in so far as we can ascertain it. Anne Lister's masculine appearance and manners were well-known among the local people. Part of the novel is set in 1816; Shirley Keeldar was 21 in that year; Anne Lister was 25.

⁴Lister's masculine manners towards her female guests were also known.

Helstone, the next time you elect new ones: they ought to make me a magistrate and a captain of yeomanry....."(224)⁵

"Shirley might be brilliant, and probably happy likewise, but no one is independent of genial society; and though in about a month she had made the acquaintance of most of the families round, and was on quite free and easy terms with all the Misses Sykes, and all the Misses Pearson, and the two superlative Misses Wynne, of De Walden hall; yet, it appeared, she found none amongst them very genial: she fraternized with none of them: to use her own words, if she had the bliss to be really Shirley Keeldar, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Briarfield, there was not a single fair one in this and the two neighboring parishes, whom she should have felt disposed to request to become Mrs. Keeldar, lady of the manor. This declaration she made to Mrs. Pryor, who received it very quietly,...responding...'My dear, do not allow that habit of alluding to yourself as a gentleman to become confirmed: it is a strange one. Those who do not know you, hearing you speak thus, would think you affected masculine manners.'" (234)⁶

Shirley speaking: "Five generations of my race sleep under the aisles of Briarfield Church: I drew my first breath in the old black hall behind us." (237)⁷

Shirley speaking: "I consider myself not unworthy to be the associate of the best of them - of gentlemen, I mean..." (240-241)

Shirley suggests she prefers independence to marriage: (242)

"In Caroline, Miss Keeldar had first taken an interest because she was quiet, retiring, and looked and seemed as if she needed someone to take care of her." (251)

Shirley speaking: "This season I propose spending two months either at the Scotch lochs or the English lakes: that is, I shall go there, provided you consent to accompany me: if you refuse, I shall not stir a foot." (273)⁸

"...when Captain Keeldar is made comfortable, accommodated with all he wants, including a sensible genial comrade, it gives him a thorough pleasure to devote his spare efforts to making that comrade happy. And should we not be happy, Caroline, in the Highlands?" (274)

Shirley speaking: "Upon my word, I could have found it in my heart to have dogged Moore yesterday evening with dire intent: I have pistols, and can use them." (294)⁹

⁵Again, there is a strongly gendered component to these descriptions which match what is known of Anne Lister, who very much styled herself as the local squire.

⁶This is the type of declaration which Lister made to the elderly Mrs. Rawson, whose response was quite similar.

⁷In common with other local gentry families, the Listers, including Anne, are buried under the aisles of the Halifax Parish Church.

⁸Lister always spoke of obtaining a traveling companion; it was important to her that any potential partner be willing to travel. She and Ann Walker traveled together extensively.

⁹Lister mentions keeping pistols under her pillow, and occasionally firing them out the window to discharge the powder.

Shirley speaking: "I am fearless, physically: I am never nervous about danger. I was not started from self-possession when Mr Wynne's great red bull rose with a bellow before my face, as I was crossing the cowslip-lea alone, stooped his begrimed, sullen head, and made a run at me." (298-299)

"Captain Keeldar was complimented on his taste; the compliment charmed him: it had been his aim to gratify and satisfy his priestly guests: he had succeeded, and was radiant with glee." (307)¹⁰

¹⁰Again, a very heavily gendered component is apparent in these passages.

Appendix B:

Three Examples of General Estate Work Pattern, 1832, 1835 and 1837

1. AL Journal 14 September 1832:

"Dick and William Greenwood came at 1 - the former finished clearing holly hedge up Lower Brook Ing and dug all [round?] the new walling at Wellroyd ready for my planting ivy. The latter barrowed ashes til 6. Then kept them an hour planting out large holly George Naylor's cart brought - that I saw lying stubbed up on Wednesday. Never expected George sending it down. It may live after the 8 or 9 pails full of water we gave it. Pickles went home poorly yesterday and came today at 2 merely to give an account of himself and then went away again. Came home at 4 for a couple of hours. <<Washed and made myself comfortable having had much of my cousin.>>¹¹ and skimmed over from p. 208 to 350 Vol. 2 Jameson's Minerology - out again, in the walk, planting out the holly from 5.50 for an hour. Charles and James Howarth had during the day finished the table and made the door of the hut ready for hanging. Dinner at 7-....."

2. Anne Lister Journal 18 September 1835:

"Ann at Cliff Hill. Fine morning at F 56° at 9-1/2 at which hour breakfast. No! Called out to Mr. Husband. The dry-wallers not satisfied. Mawson came. After much talk left them to settle the matter. The job taken at 3/. a rood, but that not enough. Desired Mr. Husband to measure off what is done & came in to breakfast at 11. The tea almost cold. Out again about 11-1/2. 18-1/2 roods done at 3/. = £2.15.6 but Mawson has paid the man £6.2.6....just looked at the Adney bridge masons & the 2 underfooting George's room & stood by Booth & his 2 masons at the farm yard gate lowside....till after 1. Then to the tail-goit. Robert Mann & his three men doing the job right. Began it yesterday. Holt came. He settled on the spot with Turner's son to give 10d. per yard running measure for springers for turning the arch on...I had ordered the drain covers to be 4 ft. long & 6 in. thick. Then settled with Holt about the Stump Cross Inn cistern. To be done with field wall-stones & well puddled instead of with single stones which from the immense size (for a cistern 8ft. x 4 inside) would cost delivered £10. Told Holt of Mr. Parker's note. It seems that by making all speed I may be ready for water on my own engine wheel in eighteen months from this time. Can't therefore agree with Keighleys & co. to let them have it [the water] for three years.....as for loosing the coal in Northowram hills I might have an acreage up to it. Told Holt to consider what he is to

¹¹Always her way of referring to menstruation.

advise me to do.....seeing that the 2 farm yard diggers would be long enough barrowing out the stuff for the dung hill went to Mark Hepworth, levelling at the Cascade Bridge, fishpond side, & at 4 got 3 of his carts as they came from Northgate. Stood in the farm yard till after 6 & John Booth & got a good deal of stuff out. Think we can finish it tomorrow. Had the clay taken for the intended new fishpond to be ready for puddling. Then staid with Booth planning about pigsties & tower. Came in at 7. Dinner at 7-1/4....William Green gave me this morning his account made out by Messrs. Parker & Adamas of monies paid to him on account of the two cottages I have bought of him....Ann wishes me to have all ready for going [to York] tomorrow if it should be so determined on our talking matters over....At accounts till 11-1/4.

3. Anne Lister Journal 30 September 1837.

"From 9.50....to now 11-3/4 examining water wheel account & estimates & wrote all but the first 15 lines of today - the tackling broke (the jenny - the cogs of the new wheel we got yesterday - no fault of the new wheel - the other large wheel out of order) when the large yew was within an hour of its place - new wheels to get. Holt, engineer, to come & look at the jenny. Parkinson to come & begin the laundry court wall this morning & have finished the terrace walls & steps except the two flags laying that are to come...Booth's men getting on with the gateway & lock-place finish....Baldwin's man here & began this morning slatting the new room adjoining the laundry. Robert Mann & co. at rough stone wall against turret passage & kitchen court & in moving large yew tree.....Jason Sharpe the mason at the jenny....the two outside York joiners putting up awkward steam-doors to cover in brewing copper.....Mr. Harper will be here in three weeks - the Northgate Hotel may be ready for a tenant to move into in a fortnight....Robert Mann's son David Mann took possession, 'flitted,' this afternoon of the Mytholm back middle cottage lately occupied by John Green collier - agreement to be signed & rent settled on Monday - then at accounts till 12.50 and went down stairs &.....told Oddy to leave a kettle of hot water & glass & teaspoon ready....."

Appendix C:

Discourse and Desire:

The Double Standard and Heterosexual Marriage Expectations Influencing Lesbian Courtship in the Early Nineteenth Century

Anne Lister Journal 4 October 1832

One afternoon as they were sitting on the sofa Anne Lister kissed Ann Walker, "<<and she returning it with such a long continued passionate or nervous kiss that we got on as far as we by day light mere kissing could. I thinking to myself well this is rather more than I expected. Of course she means to take yet on pressing the hardness of my case in having to wait six months and begging her for a less length of probation she held out saying her mind was quite unmade up and I must not hope too much for fear of disappointment. Yet she asked me to dine with her at five and stay all night. I promised the former very very sorry could not do the latter while my father was unwell and my sister absent. Thought I I see I shall get all I want of her person if I stay all night....Back at five to dinner. She had put on an evening gown.....Afterwards drew near to each and she sat on my knee and I did not spare kissing and pressing she returning it as in the morning. Yet still I was not to hope too much. She said I was infatuated. When the novelty was over I should not feel the same and might not find her a companion for me. I waived all this fancying all her scruples were of this sort. On leaving the dining room we sat most lovingly on the sofa.....we were so affectionate we let the lamp go out. Long continued mumbling moist kissing. I prest [sic] her bossom [sic] then finding no resistance and the lamp being out let my hand wander lower down gently getting to queer. Still no resistance. So I whispered, surely she could care for me some little. Yes. Then gently whispered, she would break my heart if she left me. She then said I should think her very cold. (How the devil could I?)....all this was prettily done. Ipromised to see her tomorrow and we parted in all the *pathos duet* of the occasion.....She had said that if she once made up her mind she [thought?] herself as much as married to me for life. Well I may try her or rather let her try me and go what lengths the first night I sleep there. She certainly gulled me in that I never dreamnt [sic] of her being the passionate little person I find her spite of her calling herself cold. Certainly I should never have ventured such lengths just yet without all the encouragement she gave me. I shall now turn sentimentally melancholy and put on all the air of romantic hopelessness...I scarcely know what to make of her....>>"¹²

¹²AL Journal 4 October 1832.

List of Abbreviations

AL, Anne Lister

CDA, Calderdale District Archives, Halifax, West Yorkshire

FW, Papers of Frederick Walker, Son and Dickie, Solicitors, held at CDA.

PRO, Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London

RAM, Papers of Phyllis Ramsden held at CDA

THAS, Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society

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- MAC: 73/1-23: Papers dealing with Anne Walker's committal.
MAC: 88-89: Anne Walker and the Lister heirs.
RAM: 1-76: Papers of Phyllis Ramsden.
FW: 120: Records of Frederick Walker, Son & Dickie, solicitors.
HAS/B:2/9/47: Small street plan. Southowram 1839.
HAS/B/20/47: Map of Halifax 1827.
MP/4: Southowram roads, 1832.
MIC/1/13. TW Hanson papers. In MIC:13 there is a brief history of the life of Anne Lister written anonymously in the 1950s-1960s. The manuscript is actually held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford.
SH:1: Mss. relating to Shibden Hall, Northgate House and other property of the Listers. Individual properties and farms, 1420-1906.
SH:1/SHA: Shibden Hall Accounts, 1661-1925.
SH:2: Mss. relating to the Shibden Hall estate as a whole.
SH:2/SHE/1-17: Accounts, rentals and bills of the Shibden Hall Estate, 1702-1933.
SH:2/SHE/18-26: Estate, general, certificates for Land Tax, acreage of the estate, etc., 1798-1910.
SH:2/M/1-6: Shibden Hall Estate, maps of farms, plans of Anne Lister's proposed alterations at Shibden Hall, Listerwick Mill, engines, etc.
SH:2/CM: Coal mining agreements, bonds, leases, tenders, etc., 1633-1914. (Divided into four sub-sections.)
SH:2/SQ/: Stone quarries on the Shibden Hall estate.
SH:3: A class of papers relating to the Listers, as distinct from those relating to their property. Nine subdivisions.
SH:3/L: Misc. documents, 1366-1936. Lists of births and deaths, agreements concerning pew rents, wills, travelling expenses, old cookery recipes, etc.
SH:3/LAW: Law cases, 1658-1905.
SH:3/LF: Lister family, extracts from court rolls, 1406-1884.
SH:3/FN: Funeral notes, lists of guests at Lister funerals, 1662-1905. [Anne Lister's funeral guest list is missing.]
SH:3/S: Notes of sermons preached by local clergymen, 1642-1822.
SH:3/AB: Account books, diaries, receipts, bills, etc., 1654-1865.

- SH:3/AB/21: Sixteen volumes of the diary of Caroline Wyvill Walker of Waterclough, Southowram from 1812-1830. Volume 14: Nov. 1828-Jan. 1829, Volume 15: May-Oct. 1829; Volume 16: October 1829-April 1830.
- SH:3/AB/22: Journal of Samuel Lister (son of Captain Jeremy Lister) Ensign of the 84th Regiment, b. 21st May 1793-d. 19th June 1813.
- SH:3/B: Household bills relating to Shibden Hall, 1609-1933.
- SH:3/R&W: Roads, waterways and railways, Calder and Hebble Navigation plans, share certificates, etc.
- SH:3/MS: Misc. Lister school and college notebooks, a diary, photograph albums, etc., 1673-1889.
- SH:5: Various non-local deeds relating to property owned by families related to the Listers by marriage 1473-1880 (ten subdivisions).
- SH:7: Lister letters, 1649-1929, (twenty-three subdivisions.)
- SH:7/ML/1-ca.1100: Correspondence between Anne Lister and her friends, 1800-1840.
- SH:7/ML/A: Correspondence between Anne Lister and Eliza Raine, ca. 1806-1814.
- SH:7/ML/B: Correspondence between Anne Lister and James Lister, J.P., Nevile John Dawson and William Radcliffe of the College of Arms, etc., 1812-1825.
- SH:7/ML/C: Business letters of Anne Lister (rough drafts), 1826-1838.
- SH:7/ML/D: Correspondence between Anne Lister and John Harper re: the Northgate Hotel, 1835-1839.
- SH:7/ML/E + M: The journals of Anne Lister, Volumes 1-24, 1817-1840, including printed extracts 1887-1892, brief notes 1806-1810 and two exercise books 1816-1817. (Total ca. 4 million words)
- SH:7/ML/F: Anne Lister's school books and other note books, 1805-1833.
- SH:7/ML/EX: Extracts of books read by Anne Lister, Volumes 1-11.
- SH:7/ML/AC: Account books and day books of Anne Lister, 1815-1840.
- SH:7/ML/TR: Anne Lister's travel notes, 1827-1839, including a map of parts of France and a map of Norway.
- SH:7/ML/L: Anne Lister's lecture notes, 1829-1831.
- SH:7/ML/MISC: Misc. items belonging to Anne Lister, including poems, address book, passport, catalogue of books, autograph album, inventory and French books.
- SH:7/DRL: Letters of Dr. John Lister, 1817-1884, including items about the Walker vs. Lister court case.

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