

Linguistic Identity in Nineteenth-Century Tyneside Dialect Songs

by

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others

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Abstract

This thesis examines the social meanings and identities conveyed by the use of local dialect in nineteenth-century Tyneside song. It is deliberately a hybrid of literary and linguistic approaches, and this dual methodology is used to raise questions about some of the categorical assumptions that have underpinned much previous discussion of this kind of material. The thesis argues that there is a recent tendency amongst scholars of dialect song to oversimplify links between its language and 'solidarity', particularly in respect of large-scale concepts of class 'identity' and geographical 'allegiance', or community 'values'. The relationship between language and identity is not disputed here; however, I examine ways in which songs differentiate, and even play out, antagonisms between identity categories *within* both the locality and a notion of the working / labouring class. The result is an investigation that reveals more nuanced understandings of how dialect song of this period connected those who wrote, performed, or heard it. By employing the linguistic concept of *indexicality* to examine the relationship between language and social meaning, I trace a wider range of semiotic associations than has been previously offered.

The combined literary and linguistic approach permits an analysis which, while tracing the common cherished features of local dialect, also reveals linguistic, social, and cultural differences in voice types within and between certain songs – and convergences in others. 'Social meaning' in language is seen to encompass varied audience or reader responses to both individual and group character. This permits satiric representations of pitmen and keelmen early in the century, but also more celebratory responses to the labouring class, particularly as the century progresses.

The thesis complicates a widespread view that language in Tyneside song is simultaneously a symbol of local or regional identification, and the expression of a broad labouring-class identity. I use my literary / linguistic approach, which includes matters of character, persona, and performance, to observe intricacies of meaning in the use of even the most iconic of regional words. It is only once we recognise the complexities of meaning afforded to the dialect in performance, including its most cherished and resonant forms, that we can understand the varied ways in which local patriotism is constructed through song across time. Shifts in meaning are an essential part of this whole process.

A significant dimension to this thesis is the electronic corpus of printed songs, which I have created (see the attached disc), which allows me to investigate language at multiple levels, and locate linguistic, social, and cultural differences in voice types within and between songs.

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Abbreviations and Symbols

Abbreviations

a.	adjective
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
conj.	.....	conjunction
<i>EDD</i>	.....	<i>English Dialect Dictionary</i>
int.	.....	interjection
n.	.....	noun
OE	.....	Old English
<i>OED</i>	.....	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
pron.	.....	pronoun
RP	.....	Received Pronunciation
sb.	.....	substantive
StE	.....	Standard English
v.	.....	verb

Symbols

- *.....Marks songs that are not in the electronic corpus
- #.....Marks songs that feature non-standard dialects other than that of Tyneside

Chapter One

Theoretical Approach and Context

1.1. Introduction

Tyneside dialect song, with its familiar terms and sounds, and its well known writers and performers, is a central feature of popular culture in nineteenth-century Newcastle and wider north-east England. Performers sing of local events, characters and places, in language that is itself at the heart of social, cultural and literary meanings. This thesis is inter-disciplinary, and combines analysis that works between the literary and the linguistic. In this way it will reveal the subtle range of meanings afforded by the songs and their language across time. In doing so the thesis aims to challenge over-simplified scholarly assumptions about connotations of solidarity and local or 'working-class' identity in song – a point upon which I elaborate shortly.

In choosing to focus upon songs and the popular writers of such pieces, I explore a range of work which I contend merits treatment in its own right. In addition to the significance of print, the meanings emerging from performance, and built into song with performance in mind, are of central importance. Because my topic is Tyneside song, I will not be considering in any detail other material written in Tyneside dialect, or indeed those writers, such as Thomas Wilson, most famous for penning such texts. His works, including the long poem, 'The Pitman's Pay', for example, are not included in this study. I do not deny the importance of such writers, nor do I discount the close relationship between poetry and song in the North-East – a factor noted by Goodridge (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol. III, xx, 145). The primary interest of this thesis, however, is in the large body of work produced in the area during the nineteenth century, which was intended to be sung, and on those authors most famous for writing such material.

The relationship between performance and print is crucial. A significant element of this thesis is the creation of an electronic corpus of printed Tyneside songs, which I subject to both linguistic and literary analysis. An account of the creation of the corpus and the

more linguistic aspects of my analysis is given in Chapter Two. I do not restrict myself, however, to an examination of this body of work, and throughout the thesis wherever I refer to other songs they are marked with an asterisk.

The function of language in the material can be seen to operate as part of a process known in linguistic disciplines as *indexicality*. In general terms this notion

involves the creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings ... In identity formation, indexicality relies heavily on ideological structures, for associations between language and identity are rooted in cultural beliefs and values – that is, ideologies – about the sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language.

(Bucholtz and Hall 2005:594)

Such 'social meanings' may cover a range of concepts. Language may be perceived to reveal some or all of the following about speakers: gender, social class, age, and place of origin (national, regional and local). However, perceptions about language might also be associated with certain character types or specific groups. While the notion of *indexicality* emerges from linguistic fields, it is not an alien concept in literary study. It is a commonplace, for instance, that characters speaking with non-standard voices in the novel, at least until the time of Dickens, are identified with a set of (generally negative) behavioural stereotypes (Toolan 1990:277; cf. Blake 1981:13, Fowler 1996:188, Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:13).

In this thesis I contend that social meaning and identity are manifested through language in representations of character, occupational group, collective experience in particular types of performance environments, the locality, and in terms of an emerging sense of social class. My main interest is the manner in which these various *indexicalities* are represented and the way various audiences respond to those depictions.

None of the categories that might be portrayed are fixed and stable in the real world, and groups are constantly under a process of construction. Here we can differentiate between 'essentialist' and 'constructionist' approaches to identity. The former take for granted the *a priori* existence of socio-demographic categories, such as region, ethnicity, social class, or sex, while a more dynamic constructionist approach emphasises identity

as a process by which individuals construct 'belonging' for themselves and for others with whom they come into contact (Joseph 2004:83-84, Cameron 1995:15-17).

This thesis takes a constructionist perspective, by understanding groups to be fundamentally the product of individual perception. Several scholars have developed ideas of this kind. In the 1980s notable publications in book form were produced by the historian, Benedict Anderson, and also by Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, working in the field of language evolution. I refer to second editions by these commentators. Anderson (1991:6; cf. Bailey 1998:5, Russell 2004:8) maintains that 'all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined'. Likewise, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (2006:4-5; cf. Le Page 1978, Johnstone et al. 2006:99) argue that 'groups or communities and the linguistic attributes of such groups have no existential locus other than in the minds of individuals, and that groups or communities inhere only in the way individuals behave towards each other'. Communities or groups (and their associated varieties of language) then, are constructed and exist as defined entities only in the minds of those perceiving them.

Of course, belief in the existence of certain groups, be they based on social class, nationality, region, or locality, can be intense and highly emotive, the material for what Joseph (2004:90) refers to as an 'essentialising myth'. Nevertheless, essentialist approaches in scholarly fields such as sociolinguistics have their dangers. In reality, after all, individuals may create belonging for themselves through language at a range of levels in multiple groups (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:237, 248; cf. Joyce 1995:82). Among the risks for sociolinguistic studies with an essentialist approach, therefore, is the possibility that linguistic behaviour is analysed and explained in accordance with specific categories that are pre-conceived by the researcher (Mendoza-Denton 2002:477). In the case of much recent scholarship on non-standard dialect song or literature in the North, I contend that similar pitfalls exist and that scholars tend to give too much weight to issues of solidarity, and large-scale 'essentialising myth[s]'. This thesis has grown out of a dissatisfaction with commentaries on such material by linguists, social historians, and literary scholars, which focus too heavily on issues of solidarity at the levels of locality, region, a 'working class', or smaller communal categories. This may occur even in highly nuanced studies where other loyalties are acknowledged.

The identities that I discuss in this thesis are those represented or projected by authors and performers, and those experienced by audiences or readers. At times there may be overt reference in song to local identity, at times to national identity, and sometimes to a category of 'working' people. At other points what may be observed is a manifestation of particular character traits that are associated by the author or performer with specific social or occupational groups. Crucially, audiences may experience a sense of cultural differentiation, even antagonism, towards certain figures or groups depicted in songs or external to them. In reality, nevertheless, such individuals or groups might live in the same locality, and even share similar economic, social or linguistic backgrounds with the audience or reader.

At all times I will consider what such representations or perspectives imply for the meaning of Tyneside dialect. Meaning will emerge from a *dialogue* with other linguistic and cultural systems and ideologies, and may be variable, depending on the cultural and linguistic knowledge of an audience or readership. This idea will be explained in greater detail later. However, it is in alignment with the work of Bakhtin (1934-5, 1981 edn.:276, 281; cf. Mannheim and Tedlock 1995:15), who argues that the meaning of an utterance arises from a *dialogue*, as it brushes up against what he terms 'thousands of living dialogic threads'; thus, he says, the utterance 'is understood against the background of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgments ...'. For Bakhtin (1934-5, 1981 edn.) language varieties are inextricably bound up with ideology. More recently Giles and Coupland (1991:56) have argued that linguistic varieties on the one hand, and people's attitudes about language on the other, are linked symbiotically. As Ochs (1992:338) notes, Bakhtin's ideas have been highly influential in the study of *indexicality* in language; for, she adds, the 'voices of [the] speaker/writer and others may be blended ... and become part of the social meanings indexed within the message'. All of these points imply that for those listening or reading, an utterance might invoke multiple, often contradictory, attitudes towards the figure producing the expressions, the language used, and its theme.

The point about *dialogism* indicates that my own approach needs to be contextualised within existing scholarly commentary on a range of relevant issues. These include the

following: regional and local identity; dominant or highly vocal nineteenth-century cultural discourses about correct behaviour; attitudes towards Standard English (StE), high prestige speech, and local dialect; existing interpretations of dialect literature and song; performance contexts; and theories of linguistic identity. A consideration of regional identity in general, and local identity on Tyneside, is a useful starting point.

1.2. Regional Identity

1.2.1. Regions and the North

The definition of regions can be imprecise, as can the factors taken to contribute to a region's existence and a sense of belonging to it. This issue is summed up by Lancaster:

Geography, culture, the economy, language, consumption, politics all make up the region but they are all in a constant state of flux, often at very different tempos and directions.

(Lancaster 2007:37-8)

Lancaster's points on the factors constituting regional identity are echoed by Russell (2007:272), who says that along with regional 'culture ... Landscape, family and kinship ties, economic structures and occupational patterns all have enormously important parts to play in building and negotiating territorial allegiances'. Russell (2007:274) adds that local, sub-regional and regional identities constantly cross-cut and cross-fertilise. Of course, national identities, or a developing relationship with the nation, also play a part, as Lancaster (2007:24, 34-5) indicates.

It is clear that regional identity will involve a process of construction. This, however, is not to deny the historical longevity of beliefs about regions. There has been, for instance, a long history of antagonism between North and South, and of concomitant beliefs about cultural differences. Jewell (1994) makes a convincing case for the ancient origins of a North-South divide, and she claims that industrialisation merely magnified pre-existing differences. There is also a case for arguing that regional employment patterns, economic structures, even character traits, are related to environment (cf. Pollard 1998:22-23, Phythian-Adams 2007a:8). However, this does not alter the fact that, as Castells and Walton (1998:76-7; cf. Coupland 2001:369) put it, regional identities are also the 'discursive products of the collective invention and re-creation of traditions'.

Discourses of regionalism will be central to this process, and can operate at different levels. This will, of course, include the political. In Bourdieu's (1991:221-23) terms, regionalist 'discourse is a *performative discourse*', and, as part of political struggle, may

have the power to '*make and unmake groups*'. For Bourdieu (1991:223) the degree to which the discourse will be performative is directly proportional to the authority of the speaker. As noted by Joseph (2004:90), the implication of Bourdieu's position is that essentialism and constructionism (see section 1.1.) are not as mutually exclusive as they are sometimes assumed to be, since what is being constructed is an 'essentialising myth'. In other words, once beliefs about the world are created they have reality for the believers.

It may be that in the nineteenth century the North of England should be thought of as a 'cultural' rather than a 'political' region (cf. Lancaster 2007:36). Nevertheless, Russell (2007:279) argues that cultural representation is the most important element in the construction of most territorial identities. By the 1850s, he says, a set of Northern self-images are well established:

The people of the "North" (usually coded as masculine) saw themselves as, *inter alia*, hard-working and hard-playing, physically tough, blunt, shrewd, homely, unpretentious, independent of outlook, assertive and possessed of a strong spirit of justness and fairness. An ill-defined "South" that usually equated with London and what became known as the Home Counties, provided the significant "other", a place of over-weening ambition that absorbed the wealth that the North created. The familiarity of this litany should disguise neither the longevity nor the power of such notions ...

(Russell 2007:273-4, cf. Russell 2004:37)

This is, of course, a product of representation and discourse. Russell (2007:280) argues that the cultural representations which allow communities to be imagined can take literally any form; but he says that in the North, from about 1840, dialect literature was an important internal source. Local dialect, as will become clear, is often held to be central to the promotion of a regional or local identity. The extent of this, and the manner in which Tyneside dialect song does indeed carry cultural messages, is the central issue of this thesis. However, a wide range of related issues need to be dealt with first, including identity within the North-East itself.

1.2.2. North-East England and Tyneside

Among historians the North-East is recognised as a distinctive area. Colls and Lancaster (1992:ix) classify it as the land covering the old counties of Northumberland and Durham (cf. Phythian-Adams cited in Berry and Gregory 2004:5). Russell (2004:17-18) identifies a 'far North', stating that the North-East is a distinctive area within it. Linguists, furthermore, detect a distinctive dialect area corresponding to the region or a 'far North' (cf. Beal 2004:113-15).

As with the wider North, continuities can be seen from the distant past. Phythian-Adams (2007b:341, 357) points to a fundamental historical persistence relating to geography, settlement patterns, and 'built culture', from well before 1200. Political history too plays a part in North-East culture. As Phythian-Adams (2007b:341) further notes, battles against the Scots have been the very stuff of regional memory. There are further continuities from the medieval period through to the industrial period, with major employers being the descendents of significant families in the Anglo-Scottish wars (Tomaney 1999:77). Beynon and Austrin (1994:10), in their discussion of mining, claim that in no other industry 'was the "Great arch" of cultural continuity so manifestly important'. In fact, Sombart says that at the end of the eighteenth century the conditions of labour in the North-East mining areas 'smacked of feudalism' (cited in Beynon and Austrin 1994:9).

I have briefly dealt with distant history in order to make clear that certain facets of regional identity are long lasting. Nevertheless, the process of construction is ongoing and responds to changing circumstances. Industrialisation and urbanisation, of course, play an important part. Colls (1992:3) believes that the North-East found its modern identity in the 1860s. This occurred, he argues, amid a re-evaluation of what it meant to be English (Colls 1992:3). Lancaster (1996:1) also believes that 'Geordie' consciousness is built on the experience of families and communities over the last two centuries.

My particular focus is upon Tyneside in this thesis, and on its abundance of songs. I accept that industrialisation has played a large part in the construction of *Geordie* consciousness. However, I do not intend to use that well known term to refer to Tyneside identity in the nineteenth century, or to the dialect. It is especially important to make this

point, given the particular power of the term nowadays. Beal (1999:48), for instance, influenced by comments from the former Newcastle United Football Club chairman, Sir John Hall, refers to a 'Geordie Nation'. This term, the more light-hearted *Geordieland*, now a commonplace in the media, and even *Geordie*, can carry connotations of a local or regional unity subsuming difference. Perhaps nobody expresses this more eloquently than the twentieth-century poet, Dorfy (1969:7), in her piece, 'Between Ye an' Me*', in which she writes: 'A big "Geordy" fambly – that's us. / W' care nowt at aall about "status" or "class"'. Such comments might contribute to 'essentialising myths' (cf. Joseph 2004:90). However, it is important to consider whether nineteenth-century Tynesiders commonly thought of themselves as 'Geordies'.

There is considerable uncertainty regarding the origins and early use of *Geordie* to describe a general group and a dialect. The word is a diminutive or familiar form of the personal name *George*. Griffiths (2005:68), in his dictionary, notes its use during various but sometimes overlapping periods to refer to the name 'George', 'King George', 'a guinea', 'a North East miner', 'Tynesiders', 'a pit lamp', 'a collier brig', and the 'Tyneside dialect'. Griffiths (cited in Wales 2006:134; cf. Griffiths 2005:68) also suggests that *Geordie* referred to workers on the side of the Hanoverian dynasty, but no dates are given. Heslop (1892:321), in his dictionary of 1892, says *Geordie* is 'the name by which Tynesiders are known outside the district'. For further elaboration we are referred to the definition of *Cranky*:

The pitman formerly was called *Cranky*, or Bob *Cranky* ... The term *cranky* given by outsiders to the pitman was in later times replaced by "Geordy". The men who went from the lower Tyneside to work at the pits in South Tynedale were always called "Geordies" ...

(Heslop 1892:196)

I shall say a great deal more about the eponymous song-hero, 'Bob Cranky', later in this chapter and thesis (see sections 1.5.4. and 5.2.1.). However, Heslop's comments suggest that it is the people of South Tynedale, further inland, who first use the term *Geordies* to refer to the incoming Tyneside pitmen (cf. Colls and Lancaster 1992:x). Wales (2006:133-5), however, thinks that it is unlikely that the term was first applied by outsiders, emphasising instead the possible role played in the word's development by its use in song to refer 'affectionately' to miners or keelmen. She rightly points out that

Geordie is one of the commonest personal names given to pitmen and keelmen in songs (Wales 2006:134). Brockett (cited in Griffiths 2005:68), in fact, comments in the 1829 edition of his dictionary, that *Geordie* is 'a very common name among the pitmen'. Wales (2006:134-5) notes that the renowned travelling showman, Billy Purvis, used to address pitmen in his audience with the term, 'Geordy', and that the music hall performer, Ned Corvan, referred to this banter with the use of the word in relation to pitmen. Wales argues that 'by the mid-nineteenth century at the latest the miner and keelman had become industrial icons of the region, and the label *Geordy* affectionately and proudly reflected this'.

We shall see shortly, however, that the pitmen and keelmen could be both satirised and celebrated in songs, and the degree to which either perspective applies may depend upon the point of view of various audiences. It seems possible that some audiences could see the repeated use of the name *Geordie* as part of the satire, but that it could also be viewed affectionately. In addition, while Billy Purvis did indeed use the term 'Geordy', with good-humoured mockery to address pitmen, and while Corvan and another writer, Robson, also used it, the latter two individuals appear usually to have done so in specific mimicry of Purvis's *idiolect*. This implies certain limitations on its use.

In only one song have I been able to identify a use of the word, which is not related to Billy Purvis's *idiolect*, to refer to group membership. The use occurs in Corvan's song, 'The Sandgate Lass' (1850s:Song Book 1, 22), in which the lass says: 'Wivoot a young man aw's a poor hordy gordy, / For aw'll nivver be yable to make a young Geordy'. Thus, while this could refer to a pitman, keelman or simply a Tynesider more generally, my broader point is that use of the term in song to refer to an individual as a member of any group is very rare.

Wales (2006:135), herself, believes that the first unambiguous citation of the word *Geordie* in *OED* (3.a.) that refers to a 'native of Tyneside' occurs as late as the mid-twentieth century. Colls and Lancaster (1992:x-xi), too, point out that from 1905 to 1924 'the Newcastle press used every other description but "Geordie" to report the triumphs of Newcastle United and its supporters'. The same applies, they say, to troops in the First World War, and to the Jarrow marchers of 1936.

I agree with Colls and Lancaster (1992:xi) that the term gained real popularity among Tynesiders, as referring to themselves, only in the twentieth century. In this regard I contend that it should not be used to refer generally to nineteenth-century Tynesiders or their dialect. As we shall see, on the other hand, authors frequently refer to the 'Tyneside dialect' or 'Newcastle dialect' throughout the nineteenth century, and song collections are increasingly described as 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' songs (see sections 1.7.5. and 6.3.1.). We need to see dialect song, in performance and in print, as part of an ongoing process in the construction of cultural belonging, but we should be attentive to what the songs themselves tell us they construct.

Discourses surrounding *Geordie* identity can be powerful. Colls and Lancaster (1992:xii), the editors of the collection of essays, *Geordies: Roots of Regionalism*, at the time of publication declare an overtly federalist agenda. Lancaster (1992:57) claims that the North-East is a region in the European sense, because Newcastle has no rivals for the status of capital; and he argues that having 'historically been allowed to impose its cultural imperialism' on the area, the city facilitates the 'tenacious regionalism of the Geordies'. Sociability appears to be a central part of Lancaster's arguments:

The "Bonny Toon" with its "characters", heavy drinking and good-natured sociability was central to the popular culture that emerged in the nineteenth century.

(Lancaster 1992:59)

This link between sociability and popular culture is heavily based on a particular iconography. A night out in the Bigg Market, Newcastle's main drinking area, is a ritual going back to the early nineteenth century and beyond, according to Lancaster (1992:61), when a typical protagonist, the 'Bonny Pit Laddie', was 'always a flashy dresser' and usually surrounded by an 'aura of hardness'. Aspects of this figure survive in the Bigg Market's 'hard Geordie lads', who 'are not supposed to feel the cold' (Lancaster 1992:62; cf. Lancaster 2007:37). With such continuities, Lancaster argues (1992:59), popular culture has won out, despite attacks from local temperance campaigners and the forces of rational recreation. Lancaster (1992:65-7) claims that because modern Newcastle's 'value system, politics, myths and symbols are essentially working-class', this allows a regional identity based on labouring-class values and 'older solidarities' to dominate over class

divisions. In other words, he bases much of his claims for regional unity on 'working-class' solidarity, sociability, and an 'incredibly friendly' population – values that we can see extending back into the nineteenth century (Lancaster 1992, 2001). Similarly, for Younger (1992:177-8), 'communitarian principles' are part of Tyneside tradition.

Other scholars are not so convinced by such arguments. Rowe (1990:469) suggests that the 'much-famed "Geordie" culture is merely a carefully cultivated and preserved myth'. For him, differences between 'working-class' Tynesiders, and 'working-class' groups in other areas, are merely superficial (1990:469). Faulkner concludes that the Colls and Lancaster book is an attempt to preserve something which is fast disappearing and which may be a stereotype – grim, masculine, but caring, and incorporating values of the community and family. McCord is most scathing of Colls and Lancaster's collection:

All of the writers here seek to be committed in varying degrees to a belief in a romanticized and idealized "working class" which has never existed in reality in anything like the form in which it is worshipped by its most fervent disciples.

(McCord 1994:245)

My own view is that we need to guard against both conviction and objectivity. I have already noted the importance of 'essentialising myths' in the creation of reality for believers. Any mythology is a product of discourse and cultural representation. Songs will offer some insights on these discourses. We need to pay attention to what those songs actually say. In doing so, it will be important to consider another dimension of nineteenth-century culture that operates alongside, or sometimes in opposition to, considerations of social class and region or locality. The topic is a broad one, and it covers a range of loosely connected ideas about manners, language, social improvement, morality, self-help, and respectability.

1.3. Respectability and Self-Help

1.3.1. Good Behaviour

Respectability and self-improvement are difficult to define and difficult to distinguish from ideas of proper or genteel behaviour. Nevertheless, a persistent set of discourses obviously occurs from early in the nineteenth century and increases as the period progresses. Uglow (2006:314), discussing the engraver Bewick's work, refers to the 'respectable atmosphere that settled like a cloud during the Napoleonic wars'. The influence of respectability might have spread at different rates to various social orders or by different means, as we shall see. Agha (2003:259), for instance, indicates a gradual and related dissemination of ideas about correct speech and correct behaviour, first to the aristocracy and intelligentsia through pronouncing dictionaries prior to 1800, then to the 'middle classes' through, for instance, etiquette guides and the novel, and finally to the 'lower middle and upper working classes' through penny weekly publications. The etiquette guides and penny weeklies, particularly, promoted ideas of correct demeanour, including accent, but the weeklies, in addition to carrying such ideas, also extolled self-education. Kossick (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol. II, xv) argues that the dominant theme of the revolutionary decades between 1830 and 1860 is the 'desire for *reform*', which includes pressure for both national political change, and individual 'ethical and intellectual "self-improvement"'. Other scholars point to an ever increasing dominance after 1850 among working people of discourses of self-help, self-improvement, and respectability (cf. Janowitz 1998:190, Colls 1977:162, Joyce 1991:271). Whatever the time period of this discourse, popular and often printed publications such as Samuel Smiles's *Self Help* testify to the important image of the 'self-made man' (Goodridge in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol. I, xiv).

Colls (1977:18, 46), while recognising that polarities may cover a spectrum of behaviour, claims that 'the distinctions of respectability and unrespectability are the underlying propositions of the nineteenth-century English working class'. Best (cited in Bailey 1998:31-2), writing of the mid-nineteenth century, argues that social divisions

between respectable and non-respectable were sharper than those between 'rich and poor, employer and employee, or capitalist and proletarian'. This is, as Bailey (1998:32) notes, too absolute. Nevertheless, he recognises that respectability was a 'clearly recognised and much exalted contemporary ideal' (Bailey 1998:32).

Though difficult to define, labouring-class respectability would almost certainly include ideas of sobriety, religious belief, self-help, family ideology, and striving for an education. In a consideration of individual behaviour, it is worth taking note, as Bailey (1998:36-7) does in his assessment of the labouring-class figure, Bill Banks, of the multiple activities indulged – reading, saving money, fighting and attending the music hall. These are all capable of being labelled 'respectable' or 'non-respectable'. As Bailey (1998:9) concludes, it may be best to see figures in such a milieu as 'transient tenants of various and competing subject positions, each a multiple-self unevenly defined in collusive antithesis with the dominant cultural order'. Nevertheless, as Joyce (1991:151-2) has observed, among the urban labouring class itself, there were historically 'strictly maintained distinctions' between the 'rough' and 'respectable'. Skeggs (cited in Medhurst 2007:71-2) has argued that respectability was a 'middle-class' quality that only those seeking self-improvement could attain; the rest, or the 'rough' element, were demonised and stigmatised. These are strong terms, but it is clear that there are discourses in the nineteenth century, whether emerging from the more wealthy or the improving labouring class, that do indeed stigmatise the 'rough' types. These points will become clearer in an examination of labouring-class respectability on Tyneside and in the wider North-East.

1.3.2. The North-East Respectables

It is often taken to be the case that respectability is foisted upon the labouring classes by the 'middle class', or that it is at least initiated by the latter. Colls (1977:77, 1987:200), however, argues that, in the North-East of England, this was most fully carried through by Methodists, especially Primitives, who were strongly constituted by labouring people. Wesleyans were already established by the start of the nineteenth century, but the Primitives, who had been founded in 1811, reached Tyneside and County Durham in 1820; by 1825 they were established in the coalfield, and by 1845 their role was

considered to be central to coalfield life (Colls 1987:11, cf. Rowe 1990:468). By 1851 their membership was, as Colls (1987:147) notes, small in the national population and mining population (0.51% and 5% respectively), but he argues that members represented the 'hardcore', and their influence was much wider. While even by 1850 Primitive / Wesleyan church attendance in County Durham was only 13% (Colls 1977:178), the Primitives were highly vocal. Closely intertwined with the Methodists and particularly the Primitives in the North-East, was the Teetotal Movement, which, as Colls (1987:131) notes, grew fastest between 1835 and 1844 among artisans, in large towns and in colliery areas; by 1838 it had 11,574 members. Like the Primitives the Teetotal Movement was predominantly labouring-class (cf. Kift 1996:84, 176, Colls 1977:153).

Colls (1977:73, 135) argues that along with non-conformists, the Methodists were offering an 'alternative culture', opposed to 'popular culture', by forging standards of what became known as 'respectability'. For Colls (1977:26-7) popular culture is sublimated into the pitman figure, Bob Cranky, a drunken fighter and braggart, who is, nevertheless, a strong, hard worker, with endearing qualities (see section 1.5.4. and 5.2.1.). While he acknowledges that the drunkards and the Methodists should not be seen as polarities, Colls (1977:18, 58, 77) argues that the latter, in particular the Primitives, are Cranky's main 'persecutors', the major 'Cultural Revolutionaries' in the North-East, who split the pit communities. The Sunday School Union is, however, also crucial (Colls 1977:73).

Thomas Wilson (1874:vii-viii), author of the long Tyneside dialect poem, 'The Pitman's Pay'*, writes in his preface of 1843, of the changes that have taken place among pitmen over the previous forty years. He attributes the changes to the Sunday Schools; the spread of useful knowledge in cheap publications; and the introduction of Savings Banks. Wilson claims that on Sundays, whereas previously they might have been found gaming and gambling, pitmen can now be found at home reading, or 'if absent, they will be either at the Methodist chapel or a prayer-meeting'. However, Wilson's is not the only perspective. One pitman, a Methodist Sunday School teacher, told Government commissioners in 1842, that many of his fellows were fond of drink and 'desperately wicked' (cited in Colls 1977:57).

Joyce (1991:269-2) argues that Colls greatly exaggerates the effect of Methodism and 'bourgeois' values in instilling respectability. He argues that songs at an early time recognise the downside of the 'rake', while celebrating him, and though the tone changes, 'Geordie' identities continue to be reproduced in the material (Joyce 1991:269-2). However, given the volubility of Primitive Methodism, it seems to me that in examining the songs we need to be particularly attentive not just to Colls's arguments, but also to what might be revealed about the responses to Methodism and Teetotalism (see section 6.2.1.). Colls (1977:103, 1987:170) briefly notices these responses, and, significantly, he also cites an incident in which the Tyneside showman, Billy Purvis, in vying for the attention of a crowd, is worsted by Joseph Spoor, the 'keelman-preacher'. Purvis was left to shout at Spoor through his trumpet: 'Ah war'n thou thinks thysel a clever fellow noo!' (cited in Colls 1987:170). It will, likewise, be crucial to bear in mind the vocal opposition to popular culture, particularly when we consider the meaning of music hall, and the loud response to those attacks.

There are no polar opposites, however, and Primitivism absorbed much of popular culture, as popular culture was shaped by Methodism and other discourses of respectability (Colls 1977:18, 135-7). But Methodism is not the whole story. The increasing influence of what can be termed 'respectability' and 'improvement' had many facets, including ideas about language. An issue central to this thesis is the prominence of ideas about linguistic propriety.

1.4. The Language Varieties of England

1.4.1. Standard English

Among those factors taken in the nineteenth century to mark respectability, improvement, self-improvement or politeness was education. This involved the effort to impose or acquire a refined speech and literacy skills in StE. While the term *Standard English* may have been relatively unknown prior to the publication of the first edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* during the period 1884-1928 (Davis 1999:71, cf. Crowley 1999 271), it is clear that the concept of the current written standard language existed in the nineteenth century and earlier. Görlach (1999:9), in fact, says that the homogeneity of educated written English was largely settled by 1600.

There is an argument that suggests StE has been central to a sense of modern nationhood. Anderson (1991:6-7), as noted, claims that all communities, including nations, are imagined; and yet while the members of even the smallest nation will never meet each other, a myth of comradeship becomes so powerful that millions of people are willing to die for their country. He argues that the primary cause of this, since the Renaissance, has been the rise of national vernacular languages in print (Anderson 1991:37-46). These languages ensured that literate individuals

gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that *only those* hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed ... the embryo of the nationally imagined community.

(Anderson 1991:44)

In addition, he argues, (1991:44-5), 'print-capitalism' gave a fixity to language, which in the long run helped to build an image of antiquity central to the nation; it also created languages of power based on particular dialects, he contends, thus leading to the denigration of other related dialects, which were either unsuccessful or only relatively successful in maintaining a print form. To the patriot, Anderson (1991:154) argues, the 'mother-tongue' is held in as much affection as the eye of the lover.

It is easy, given such eloquent accounts, to overlook the actual antagonisms related to dialects that might lie beneath this. Hobsbawm, however, overtly challenges essentialist notions about national languages, claiming that these languages are

the opposite of what nationalist mythology supposes them to be, namely the primordial foundations of national culture ... They are usually attempts to devise a standardized idiom out of a multiplicity of actually spoken idioms, which are thereafter downgraded to dialects ...

(Hobsbawm: 1990: 54; cf. J. Milroy 2002:8)

Competition is strongly emphasised by Silverstein (2000:128-9), who says that the regime of language which Anderson discusses 'is a frequently fragile sociopolitical order, seething with contestation that emerges from actual plurilingualism, [and] heteroglossia'.

We need to understand the implications of the relationship between StE, prestige spoken forms, and regional dialect. There was a widespread view in the nineteenth century that spoken language should be as close to written language as possible (Mugglestone 1997:208; cf. Görlach 1999:12-13). As we shall see, however, this was tied to a widespread belief that spoken language should also emulate that of educated or élite London speech. Thus a perception could arise that both the standard written system and spoken prestige varieties were based on élite London models, even that StE orthography reflected prestige phonology (cf. Vincent 1989:80). The meaning of any song written in Tyneside dialect, or sung in Tyneside dialect, therefore, has the potential to emerge out of a *dialogue* with such beliefs.

1.4.2. Prestige Spoken English

In present times there is little doubt that in England, Received Pronunciation (RP) is the most prestigious accent. This accent appears to have emerged in the nineteenth century, perhaps not until the 1870s, and was linked to the development of public schools (cf. J. Milroy 2002:14, Honey cited in L. Milroy 1999:185). The first recorded use of the term RP in Britain, according to *OED* (*n.*), is by A. J. Ellis in 1869. While the accent is commonly perceived to be non-local and spoken throughout England, it should be emphasised that this does not entail uniformity (cf. Mugglestone 1997:318).

We need to see RP as both an accent with certain southern associations, about which I shall say more shortly, and a form *indexing* social characteristics. Agha (2003:233) argues that, while RP is a 'supra-local accent',

[the] folk-term "accent" does not name a sound pattern as such but a system of contrastive social personae stereotypically linked to contrasts of sound. In particular the accent called RP is enregistered in cultural awareness as part of a system of stratified speech levels linked to an ideology of speaker rank.

(Agha 2003:241-2)

In fact, as Agha notes, nowadays RP and non-RP speech is associated with a range of what he refers to as 'characterological' traits. In other words he is discussing *indexicality*. These traits have been assessed using language attitude tests. Agha (2003:240; cf. Giles and Powesland 1975; Giles and Coupland 1991:38-40, Edwards 1985:149, Edwards 1999:102-3) summarises the findings as follows:

- RP speakers are rated most highly in terms of speaker rank. They are also rated more highly on dimensions of ambition, intelligence and confidence, cleanliness, physical height, even good looks.
- Non-RP speakers are rated more highly in terms of being serious, talkative, good-natured and good-humoured.

The findings can be related to late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century attitudes towards dialects and accents. Mugglestone (1997:59, 242, 328; cf. St. Clair 1982) is quite clear that the ideologies which were particularly strong in this period relate to, and contribute to, attitudes persisting to the present day.

In seeking to explain how sound comes to be 'enregistered' to a social group, Agha somewhat assumes that we are dealing with a linear progression in the sound system. As we have seen, RP itself may not have emerged until the 1870s. Nevertheless, Agha's point that a range of discourses about a prestige accent may have affected various levels of society through interconnected genres and phases is useful. Based on Agha's (2003:250-59) arguments, it is possible to summarize these phases of discourse as follows:

- Between about 1750 and 1800 treatises, pamphlets and dictionaries reached the intelligentsia and aristocracy.
- By 1850 there is a well established genre of popular works, including etiquette manuals and handbooks on pronunciation, elocution and grammar. Their writers base these on the previous technical works, putting them into simple language for 'middle-class' readers.
- The novel too promotes ideas about accent among the 'middle-classes'.
- Penny weekly periodicals reach the 'lower middle and upper working classes' with massive circulations by the mid-1850s.
- Schools promote the message about prestige accents.

This outline is useful in that it shows that various groups may well have been exposed to discourses about a prestige accent at somewhat different times. Nevertheless, there may be regional variation in these discourses. Beal (1996:364), for instance, points out that even by the eighteenth century Newcastle was publishing more guides to grammar than anywhere else outside London, and that 'Geordies' might have been among those who felt most keenly the need for guides on 'correct' usage.

A more central point, however, is that many of these discourses also link 'proper' speech to other behaviour. In the case of the etiquette guides aimed, according to Agha, at 'middle-class' readers, this is clear:

The codification of proper demeanor links habits of pronunciation to habits of dress, carriage, gesture, grooming, cosmetics, and numerous other behavioural displays.

(Agha 2003:254)

The novel, as we shall see below, may have fulfilled a similar function for the 'middle classes'. But the penny weeklies also brought messages to a receptive 'upper working class' and 'lower middle class', linking accent to other behaviour or 'performable indices sought by those with social aspirations' (Agha 2003:258). Mitchell (cited in Agha 2003:257-8) says that by the mid-1850s *The Family Herald* and *London Journal* had a combined circulation of three quarters of a million, and at least one of these weeklies may have reached a third of the literate population. Read primarily by the wives of working

men, Mitchell notes that letters are sent to the periodicals, asking questions about manners and etiquette:

They want to eradicate the traces of their origin that linger in their grammar and pronunciation ... The advertisers urge them to buy textbooks, life assurance, and fashion magazines, to learn elocution, French, Italian, and music.

(Mitchell cited in Agha 2003:258)

It is striking that there are advertisements for the *Family Herald* and the *London Journal* on the front page of a song book by Ned Corvan (1850s: Song Book 4, 1), a popular Tyneside music hall singer. In fact, Joyce (1991:201) observes that dialect books and pamphlets sometimes contained advertisements for guides on how to write and speak in the 'correct' way. Clearly those wishing to 'better' themselves were receptive to the messages carried in such guides.

The attraction of improvement and 'correct' speech, however, might also be ambivalent. Agha (2003:233) underplays perceptions, in the nineteenth century and earlier, that élite and educated London speech should be the model for prestige accents (cf. Beal 1996:364, Mugglestone 1997:45). This does not mean, of course, that RP or prestige forms which preceded it, developed directly from the accent of a south-eastern or London-based élite. James Milroy (2002:14) argues that the accent may have emerged from the nineteenth-century 'middle classes', who were most affected by the expansion of public schools. Indeed, in describing the origins of local prestige accents other than RP, Beal (1996:366-7) suggests that although people in northern England and Scotland strove to emulate educated London speech, a 'modified standard' already existed in these areas by the late eighteenth century, and the models promoted by locally produced pronouncing dictionaries in relation to this 'standard' were, for instance, the local clergy and the bar.

Discourses which specifically condemn provincial speech do not begin until the late eighteenth century (Mugglestone 1997:23). Previous to this, élite London or southern speech is regarded as superior but provincial accents are tolerated (Mugglestone 1997:8-57). An early example, however, of the new intolerant ideology occurs with Thomas Sheridan's (1762:68) claims in 1762 that all accents other than that of the Court have 'some degree of disgrace attached to them'. Later in the century the emphasis is firmly

placed on London speech. John Walker (1791:106-8), in his *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* of 1791, says that his 'countreymen' the 'Cockneys', are 'the models of pronunciation to the distant provinces'. In an 1803 edition of his dictionary, Walker makes it clear that these 'models' are educated Londoners:

Accent and Quantity, the great efficient of pronunciation, are seldom mistaken by people of education in the Capital ... the great bulk of the Nation ... are without these advantages, and therefore want such a guide to direct them as is here offered.

(cited in Mugglestone 1997:31)

The speech of London's labouring classes, on the other hand, is, he says, 'a thousand times more offensive and disgusting' than that found in Scotland, Ireland, or any of the provinces (Walker 1791:108; cf. Görlach 1999:35-6).

Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* was undoubtedly popular among those who wished to adopt 'correct' usage. Agha may be incorrect to claim that it was used directly by only the intelligentsia and aristocracy. Beal (1996:370) notes that it was reprinted over a hundred times between 1791 and 1904, and that Sheldon, writing in 1947, said that Walker was the person who had had the greatest influence on English pronunciation. Mugglestone (1997:41) says that Walker became a national icon, mentioned in Dickens's novel *Dombey and Son*, and became known as 'Elocution Walker'. Likewise, he is mentioned by the Tyneside music hall performer, Joe Wilson, in his song 'Vary Canny' (c.1865:66).

These comments need some further qualification. It does seem that in the nineteenth century it began to be perceived that prestige accents were to be found anywhere in the country. Görlach (1999:39; cf. Mugglestone 1997: 2, 30, 54) says that what became RP was defined early as the English spoken by the best educated people, with as little local flavour as possible. Prescribed speech varieties, nevertheless, seem to have strong *popular* associations with the South or London. Cockneys are accused of mocking Tyneside speech in Thompson's song, 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812:316). Furthermore, in Wilson's song, 'Vary Canny' (c.1865:66), a 'sooth-country fellow' is puzzled by the Tyneside 'words', not found in 'Johnson's, or Webster's, or Walker's'.

The promotion of correct or *élite* London speech is, then, associated with social advancement. But we already have strong indications that it is bound up with that overbearing condescension perceived to emanate from the capital (cf. Russell 2004:128, 2007:273). 'Correct' speech could be both desired and resented. This will become clearer, however, if we look more closely at attitudes expressed towards provincial dialects during the nineteenth-century.

1.4.3. Attitudes to Regional Dialect

James Milroy (2002:12-15) notes that in nineteenth-century England local dialects were investigated with a view to proving the pure, Germanic origins of English, and that, in such accounts, the influence of the standard could be regarded as a corruption. The English Dialect Society published county glossaries, which, in 1892, included Heslop's dictionary, *Northumberland Words*. However, in the nineteenth century, urban dialects were also singled out for severe invective. While Görlach (1999:35) claims that this is particularly the case with lower-class London speech, it is also clear that northern dialects met with extensive condemnation (Mugglestone 1997). It is striking, then, that Brockett (1829:vii) in his *Glossary of North Country Words* declares that the reader 'will no longer hastily pronounce to be *vulgarisms* what are in reality *archaisms*'. Clearly, despite the antiquarian interest, the hasty attribution of vulgarity is common. Görlach lists words carried over from the eighteenth century to describe lower-class language. These include *barbarous, corrupt, improper, inelegant, low, uncouth* and *vulgar* (Görlach 1999:38; cf. Bailey 1996:304, Mugglestone 1997:311).

Similar messages are apparent in contemporary fiction. Toolan (1990:277; cf. Blake 1981:13, Fowler 1996:188, Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:13) makes the point that until Dickens's time, in the novel, non-standard dialect is used to convey characteristics of 'uncouthness, ignorance, stupidity or even criminality'. Agha (2003:257, 259) indicates that the 'middle classes' make up the readership of the novel. I very much suspect, however, that the messages in novels would, through various mechanisms, trickle down through literate society. The ways in which people gained access to books were clearly

many and varied. Wilson's song book of c.1865 carries an advertisement for a lending library based in a barber's shop.

It might be, however, that it was in schools where negative messages regarding regional speech were most forcefully passed on to the lower orders. Joyce (1991:210; cf. Bailey 1996:304) argues that the schooling system represented an 'unremitting' attack on the language and values of the 'labouring poor'. Meanwhile, Görlach (1997:6) makes the point that, in the nineteenth century, the 'standard language' encroached upon local dialects in an unprecedented way, especially after the introduction of compulsory elementary education in England in 1870. In addition, if we look at the figures for the proportion of the population which was in education prior to 1870, we can see that the influence of perceptions about the standard and, in all likelihood, prestige accents, was already extensive. In 1851, 43.8% of the population between the ages of five and fifteen attended school, while in the 1840s and 1850s, adult education was equally important to the spread of literacy (Görlach 1999:12-13). In 1851 Hudson reported that there were 610 Mechanics' Institutes offering education (cited in Görlach 1999:12-11).

It is obvious, of course, that, in the nineteenth century, education, and therefore literacy, were to a large degree embraced voluntarily. Thus, notions of an attack on the values of the labouring poor should be treated with caution. In addition, the ability of teachers to conduct such an attack might be limited. Vincent (1989:70) points out that teachers in private day schools were frequently former manual labourers. Furthermore, a Commissioner for Cumberland and Durham (cited in Joyce 1991:199) noted in 1861 that teaching was carried out in Sunday Schools in 'one of the most uncouth dialects it was ever my lot to hear'. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence that in schools throughout the nineteenth century, criticism of regional dialects would be common:

Sunday schools, elementary schools, training academies for teachers, private schools ... all embraced the theory that teaching the "proper" accent was to form a vital part of educational provision, and that, by such means, regional modes of utterance, regularly construed in works on education as "evils", "vices", "defects", "faults", and "peculiarities", were to be eliminated.

(Mugglestone 1997:311)

The experience for the child in the school environment could be frightening:

Children were faced with an unfamiliar vocabulary and unrecognisable syllables which they were expected to pronounce in an alien fashion ... the encounter with literacy was a strange and threatening experience.

(Vincent 1989:82; cf. Mugglestone 1997:294)

The methods of education in the nineteenth century ran the risk of alienating the child from home, family and school (Mugglestone 1997:294). In fact, one HMI (cited in Vincent 1989:73) claimed that the first lesson children should learn was to look with 'disgust, if not horror at the filthiness and abominations of their own homes'.

By whatever means it is conveyed, the message also reaches labouring people that southern speech is the model they are being taught. In 1842, the Education Committee of the Privy Council recommended Walker, that iconic exponent of educated London accents, as a tool to be used frequently in the classroom (cited in Mugglestone 1997:304). As we have seen, it is strongly suggested in Joe Wilson's song, 'Vary Canny' (c.1865:66), that his audience is aware of messages conveying the idea that Newcastle people are 'queer tawkers', who use forms different from prestige ones found in 'Johnson's, or Webster's, or Walker's'.

We have a picture of a society in which forces of respectability, propriety, and self-improvement, make themselves felt from the beginning of the nineteenth century at least. These forces influence, and are attractive to, the lower orders, including the labouring classes. There are those, including members of the labouring classes, who attempt to impose particular versions of respectability. Attitudes to language are influenced by this general process. Literacy and prestige speech can be both desired and viewed as a threat. The speech learned in the home and street is often viewed with contempt by those spreading messages of propriety. In addition, these discourses frequently carry the message that the speech of London is the polite version. It is within these contexts that I believe we must view the role of Tyneside dialect song.

1.5. Dialect Literature and Song

1.5.1. Definitions and Distinctions

Non-standard dialect literature and song are often discussed together. Of course, distinctions are difficult to maintain once songs appear in print. Nevertheless, specific meanings may emerge from performance setting and primary audience response, which we need to take into account in better understanding the material. This will become apparent as discussion progresses. However, some definition of non-standard dialect literature is helpful as a starting point for my arguments.

Shorrocks (1996:386) uses the term *literary dialect* to refer to representations of non-standard speech in works of literature otherwise written in StE, and aimed at a general readership. On the other hand, *(non-standard) dialect literature* refers to works composed wholly, or sometimes partly, in non-standard dialect and aimed essentially, though not exclusively, at a non-standard dialect-speaking readership (Shorrocks 1996:386). For Shorrocks (1996:386) the distinction is not absolute, and among the qualifications which he makes is the undeniable interest in dialect literature of the upper class, antiquarians, folklorists and local patriots. In fact, what we mean by a dialect-speaking audience also needs to be qualified, since it is clear that a range of people in the nineteenth century read dialect literature, or sang dialect songs, and that they would occupy a continuum between prestige and regional speech. Well-educated people, in the nineteenth century, as now, could code-shift or style-shift between the standard and local dialects, and between accent styles. The general distinction made by Shorrocks, nevertheless, remains a useful one, although, as we shall see in the next chapter, I apply it somewhat differently (see section 2.3.2.).

1.5.2. The Rise of Dialect Literature and Song

Outside Scotland, the use of non-standard dialect in writing had become severely restricted after the rise of the written standard at the end of the fifteenth century, although an oral ballad tradition continued, with many being published (Vicus 1974:385).

Nevertheless, Vicinus (1974:186) argues that the writing and printing of dialect songs continued unabated in Northumberland and Durham, where the influence of Scotland's separate vernacular tradition was strong. Even in this region, however, the real growth in dialect song came after 1750, she argues (Vicinus 1974:186).

Most dialect literature was produced in the North of England (Görlach 1999:30, Joyce 1991:265, Shorrocks 1996:391). The increase in popularity of this material resulted from a number of influences, including demand among the industrial labouring classes, which I will discuss shortly. However, other early factors cited by scholars are 'middle-class' antiquarianism, philology, and a growing interest in the 'authentic' voice of the peasant (Beal 2000:344, Wales 2006:129). As Wales (2004:34) puts it, 'there was constructed an image of Northern English as a respectable antiquarian curiosity, and of the labourer or peasant himself, as uncorrupted, close to "primitive" nature'. Educated northern men, she says, typically teachers and booksellers, took to collecting and printing local ballads for a voracious middle-class public well into the nineteenth century (Wales 2006:129). Thus Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* of 1765 was re-published through much of the nineteenth century. Other collections included Ritson's (1810 edn.) four volumes of *Northern Garlands*, published between 1784 and 1802. John Bell's (1971 edn.) *Rhymes of Northern Bards*, published in Newcastle, appeared in 1812.

These accounts all have merit. However, it is also clear that, in the case of Tyneside song, because modern commentators often focus heavily upon Bell's anthology of 1812 and Allan's collection of 1891, both reprinted in the 1970s, they can overlook crucial information found in intervening but rarer collections. We need to consider that various editors refer to their major collections as 'satirical', and as illustrative of the 'Manners' of 'Labouring' or 'Common people' (Marshall 1827, Fordyce 1842). Likewise, collections of songs written by Midford in 1816 and 1818 flag up their role as satires. These points are important because Marshall's collection of 1827 was in part the result of his request twenty years earlier for new songs, in return for which he offered free copies to authors of the booklets in which their songs appeared (Harker 1971:xli). Marshall, then, had been immersed in the creation or expansion of a Tyneside canon, which he nevertheless chose to call 'satirical'. The particular details of this are best dealt with in later discussion (see sections 1.5.4., 2.2.2. and 6.3.1.), but they indicate that part of the interest in Tyneside

song might have resulted from a developing tradition of satirical comedy, enjoyed by the better educated or somewhat more cultivated, at the expense of those most closely associated with the use of the Tyneside dialect – miners, keelmen, and town eccentrics.

There is, however, no doubt that dialect literature and song appealed greatly to the labouring classes. Shorrocks (1996:391; 1999:89) argues that the increase in production of dialect literature primarily met the demands of new urban populations in the North of England. Wales suggests that the literature is the reaction of a group that is becoming conscious of its social position:

It is clearly no accident that the development of a working-class consciousness went hand in hand with the intensification of the regional, the locally patriotic, as manifested in the promotion of the vernacular, symbolic of the socially excluded and marginalised.

(Wales 2002:58)

While the importance of the labouring class cannot be doubted, the interest in dialect song on Tyneside will need further explanation. A range of groups may have derived different meanings from it. Especially in the early nineteenth century, producer and consumer may not always have had the same social outlook or attitude to what was depicted in songs. I will offer further explanations of these issues shortly. It is helpful to do this, however, after giving an outline of dominant interpretations of dialect literature.

1.5.3. Commentaries on Theme

A landmark study in 'working-class' or dialect literature is that provided by Vicinus. This typifies an early strand of scholarship that seems often to reflect academic frustrations at a perceived lack of labouring-class radicalism. Vicinus sees dialect literature as failing to realise its potential for workers:

The most common function of working-class literature was reassurance: writers described and defined working-class strengths and difficulties to reaffirm the merit of their class in the face of the cultural domination of the upper classes. Writers – and readers – accepted a class-ordered society and their place in it.

(Vicinus 1974:2-3)

Thus, she argues that while many songs protest against existing conditions, they offer only 'consolation and confirmation of traditional values', and though they assert the 'autonomy of the working-class' they do not offer the possibility of a 'new world view' (Vicinus 1974:3). For Maidment (cited in Joyce 1991:436), class at this time is 'not far enough developed', or is 'confused'. Vicinus (1974:229, 279) says that both dialect literature and the late music hall, in avoiding controversy to maintain mass readership and audiences, stifled 'working-class' consciousness and political change.

Joyce (1991:266-7) identifies a pattern in the approach taken by the earlier commentators, such as Vicinus, Maidment, and Harker (whom I will consider in greater detail later with specific reference to Tyneside song). These researchers, he argues, fail to appreciate the significance of dialect literature for an understanding of popular attitudes towards society, because they deal in anachronistic notions of class consciousness against which dialect literature appears to represent inadequate forms of social outlook (Joyce 1991:266-7). Whether notions of class consciousness are anachronistic is somewhat questionable. Janowitz (1998:117) points out that, in the 1830s, the National Union of the Working Classes was a foundational organisation for Chartism. Peter Bailey (1998:4-5), while largely concurring with a subsequent point by Joyce (1995:82), that the multiple nature of identity calls into question the notion of social class as a defining category, nevertheless argues that, in the nineteenth century, the mark of class 'sticks like a burr ... and remains among the more potent vectors of difference, however indeterminate'. Joyce's criticism of a too heavy focus on labouring-class identity, and of ideological judgements about labouring-class social outlooks in the nineteenth century, is, nevertheless, sound.

Though the significance of local or regional identity was always mentioned in scholarship, there has been a greater focus upon this in recent years. Nevertheless, the dominant train of thought remains that the literature, at bottom, promotes a sense of solidarity, either at the level of social class, community, or geographical location. Such an outlook leads Taavitsainen and Melchers (1999:13) to claim that the functions of non-standard dialect literature are 'social rather than literary as it is used to strengthen patriotism and solidarity'.

I offer here a general summary of dominant commentaries on northern dialect literature that continue to fit a pattern, whether covering the whole area or more specific regions. Significant scholarship adhering to this pattern includes the following: Beal (2000:354), Hollingworth (1977:6-7), Joyce (1991:271, 277), McCauley (2001:289, 298), Russell (2004:125-6), Shorrocks (1996:394-5, 1999:96), Vincent (1989:227), Wales (2002:58, 61, 2004:35, 2006:132), and Vicinus (1974:208, 215). Not all of the values listed below are identified by each scholar, but many of them are mentioned again and again. In fact the values tend to fit into two broad categories, those of group identification, and those relating to issues of labouring-class decency, respectability or self-help. I list the categories here:

1. group values, the community, labouring-class or regional solidarity.
2. homeliness, the domestic and family; industry, work, self-reliance, self-help, and common-sense; stoicism, temperance and thrift.

This is a broad-brushstroke summary of recurrent commentaries which might be applied to northern dialect literature generally.

Among linguists there is an emphasis on the role of the dialect itself within the literature in promoting group identities and social solidarity. Thus Beal (2000:353-4, 2005) emphasises the 'Geordie' identity promoted in Tyneside song, applying the idea that region dominates over class. For Wales (2006:132) dialect is 'consciously *emblematic* of regional and social identities; and of the associated community values of common sense, stoicism, homeliness, humour and self-reliance'. Wales (2002:61) maintains that the dialect promotes 'working class' solidarity – an 'us' versus 'them' ideology. Shorrocks (1999:96) too emphasises the role of northern dialect literature in affirming for working people the value of the group, as opposed to the individualism of élite culture.

The historian, Patrick Joyce, to whose critique of earlier scholarship I have already referred, has offered the most sustained recent commentary on northern dialect literature. Despite his identification of Bob Cranky as a 'rake', Joyce (1991:269, 329-331) sees an emphasis in the literature generally, on populist rather than class ideologies, a popular radicalism based on the idea of northern England as the heart of a crusade against

privilege, and which emphasises the worth of 'decent folk'. Russell (2004:125), another historian, is largely in agreement with Joyce, though he emphasises that celebration of 'domestic pleasure was arguably the single most powerful theme of dialect literature'. He also says that even an analysis as subtle as Joyce's may not go far enough in asserting the importance of regional as well as class mentalities (Russell 2004:120). The genre, Russell (2004:120, 123) argues, 'was a far more overtly cross-class phenomenon than has generally been recognised'.

Similar responses tend to be prominent among literary scholars. McCauley (2001:289, 298) emphasises themes such as 'working-class' group unity, temperance, and self-reliance. Such interpretations are common in responses to 'working-class' poetry in general, whether written in non-standard dialect or StE. Thus Vicinus (1974:190, 208), who I have mentioned already, sees regional identity fostered through non-standard dialect, and the dominant theme of the literature being self-help, encompassing class pride against the masters, or family pride. Boos (2001:109) stresses a focus in 'working-class' poetics on fellowship and solidarity, while Janowitz (1998:12-13, 16, 143) sees a vital communitarian strand alongside individual expression in StE labouring-class poetry in the romantic tradition. Goodridge (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol I, xv) believes that the growth of regional culture along with radicalism was often central to the development of nineteenth-century labouring-class poetry. To simplify the various accounts given by himself and the other editors of the recent three-volume collection of such poetry, it develops over the century influenced by romantic self-expression, the demand for reform (whether through political agitation or individual self improvement), and the creation of regional cultures (McEathron, Kossick, Goodridge, in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol. I, xix, vol. II, xv, vol. III, xv-xvi). Particularly in the late nineteenth century, Goodridge (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol III, xvi-xxii, 145) argues, labouring-class poets, notably through dialect literature, participate in the creation of regional and local cultural identities, and in general poets could occupy communitarian roles and be spokespersons; nevertheless Goodridge does recognise a burlesque strand to song in the North-East – an issue dealt with in the current thesis (see sections 1.5.4. and 5.2.1.).

The relationship with élite and metropolitan culture is also important. Most of the interpretations of northern dialect literature, whether by linguists, literary scholars or

social historians, recognise that the dialect itself is part of the meaning, carrying the load of regional identity and cultural values (cf. Wales 2006:132, Shorrocks 1999:96, Joyce 1991:279). And it is clear that this can be construed as part of a response to discourses of improvement and correct speech:

the assault on the values of the labouring poor was so various, long lasting and unremitting (indeed almost subliminal in its many sidedness and persistence) that it is unlikely that a good deal of it would not have stuck.

(Joyce 1991: 210)

Much of this attack was believed to derive from the influence of London. Thus Joyce (1991:279) claims that northern working people regarded dialect as the central symbol of their culture. Indeed local dialect could be used 'as a badge of ... superiority over the centres of power and high culture' (Joyce 1991:210).

Scholars undoubtedly note a strong tone of anti-metropolitanism present within much northern dialect literature (cf. Wales 2004:36). For historians such as Joyce (1991:292, cf. Evans 1994:194-5) and Russell (2004:130), the standard core / periphery model often imposed by outsiders is reversed using a local voice, and region is often the prism through which England, Britain, and the Empire are seen. There is a sense in which the industrial and productive northern regions are the true England, and that London is not (Joyce 1991:293; cf. Russell 2004:130). Thus Joyce notes the place of such arguments within the literature:

The emphasis upon the integrity of the provincial might be the way in which a sense of Englishness or Britishness was achieved that united the country as a whole. But this emphasis could be a source of tension as well as agreement with the national centres of power and authority, the assertion of regional and local pride against the metropolis and the south. In turn, this implied the idea that the heart of the true nation beat in the north. This sense of the industrial north as the seat of productive activity and the obverse of southern privilege took many forms.

(Joyce 1991:315)

For Joyce (1991:312), the greatness of any region is seen as a joint enterprise tied to particular industries. Ordinary people, 'folk', particularly 'decent folk' are undoubtedly the model within the populist perspective which he identifies (Joyce 1991:313, 331; cf. Colls

1992:22-3); nevertheless, the town, the firm or the industry is a community of interest involving employers and workers.

Thus we see that within dominant critical approaches, as I have tried (perhaps too exhaustively) to summarize them, the region or locality is frequently held to be amalgamated with a concept of labouring-class solidarity, or a labouring-class model of community. Language symbolises this. Often, values are held to be opposed to the values of the metropolis. But we need to ask if this is actually what we see in nineteenth-century Tyneside song. We shall find that contemporary interpretations suggest that the songs might have a more complex relationship with their audiences than is often believed.

1.5.4. The Tyneside Debate

The focus of this thesis is primarily on songs written in the nineteenth century. For practical purposes I separate Tyneside song production in the century into two broad time-frames. There are those produced in an 'early' period before 1849, and those produced in a 'later' period, which commences at that date. The division is not absolute, but is based on a combination of factors explained in Chapter Two, and broadly reflects the time at which the transformation of various cultural institutions into the Tyneside music hall is well under way (see sections 1.6.1. and 2.2.2).

There has been, in my view, far too little scholarly attention to what was actually said about these songs throughout the nineteenth century, and especially their satiric elements. This, as I have indicated, stems in part from a too frequent emphasis on the anthologies edited by Bell in 1812 and Allan in 1891. Bell (ed. 1812 1971 edn.:3) has an antiquarian interest and describes the materials, old and new, in his large collection (with a nod at Percy) as 'Reliques of Provincial Poetry'. However, what also emerges in descriptions of songs, as the century progresses and more are produced, is the repeated use of the word *satire* in the early period and *burlesque* later. In fact, the editors of two major collections of Tyneside song offer the following comments:

Our Keelmen and Pitmen have generally been the common subjects of satire for our local Poets; but, in attempting to describe the character of these useful bodies of men, the Poets appear often to have claimed their

privilege, and given, instead of faithful portraits, only rude caricatures; – delineations not characteristic of the Keelmen and Pitmen of the present day.

(Marshall ed. 1827:i)

During the last few years, so great has been the progress of education amongst the humbler classes of society, that many of those eccentricities so often seized upon by our Local Poets as subjects of humourous satire, are fast disappearing ...

(Fordyce ed. 1842:iii)

The words *caricature* and *satire* should be noted. As early as 1816, a collection by the local writer, Midford, is called 'The Feast of Momus' – Momus being the Greek god of censure and ridicule, who was claimed by satirists throughout the centuries as their presiding deity (cf. *OED:n.* 1.a.). The title of Midford's 1818 collection identifies itself as 'Comic and Satirical, Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect'. Marshall's 1827 edition proclaims itself to be 'Comic, Satirical, and Descriptive, Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect, And illustrative of the Language and Manners of the Common People'. Likewise, Fordyce's (ed. 1842) anthology is a collection of 'Comic and Satirical Songs, Descriptive of Eccentric Characters, and the Manners and Customs of a Portion of the Labouring Population ... Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect'.

In an issue of the *Daily Chronicle* (cited in Harker ed. 1973:6) of 1861, we are told that many local singers 'burlesque our singular but picturesque *patois*'. Allan (ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii) also notes that many writers, prior to Joe Wilson in the 1860s, treat local subjects with a 'broad humour and burlesque tone'. Spence Watson (cited in Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xl) writes approvingly that Wilson 'won his popularity without any condescension to the supposed foibles of his audience'. There is, then, some indication that the late Victorians could view the burlesque with a degree of distaste.

With this in mind, I would suggest that any analysis of the meaning of nineteenth-century Tyneside dialect song must take into account the use of the words *satire* and *burlesque* by individuals with direct experience of the society and song culture in question. Marshall, for instance, had been immersed in publishing Tyneside songs since at least 1806 (cf. Harker 1971:xli), while Allan had published such material from at least the 1860s. Here, then, is a convenient definition, though a bland one, of satire:

A poem, or in modern use sometimes a prose composition, in which prevailing vices or follies are held up to ridicule. Sometimes, less correctly, applied to a composition in verse or prose intended to ridicule a particular person or class of persons ...

(*OED:n. 1.1.*)

As for *burlesque*, the nearest *OED* (*a.* and *n.* *A.adj.1.-2.*) definitions to what these commentators have in mind are as follows: 'Droll in look manner or speech; jocular; odd, grotesque', or 'Of the nature of derisive imitation'. Such definitions open up the possibility that ridicule might contribute to the humour for some performers and audiences. I would argue that this is particularly the case in what I have designated the 'early' period.

There are, despite this, some continuities through to the 'later' period. Nevertheless, when we look at the title pages and dedications offered by the later writers it is equally clear that these authors do not refer to their work as satirical. Edward Corvan's *Random Rhymes* (1850:1-2) is 'Illustrative of the Habits and Character of the Sons of Coaly Tyne', and it is dedicated to 'the Skippers, Colliers, and Working Men in general, of Tyneside and Neighbourhood'. Joe Wilson's collection of c.1865 carries the additional title and information, 'The Canny Newcassel Foaks' Fireside Budjit'; it is 'Dedycated tiv Ivrybody'; and it is 'Drawn i' wor awn awd canny toon style'. The Corvan and Wilson publications are clearly advertised in a very different tone to some substantial edited collections of the 'early' period. With the exception of the anthologies by Ritson, and Bell, the early collections are described as 'satirical', whereas the later writers actively identify with their labouring-class readers.

Popular early writers included shopkeepers, clerks, small tradesmen and artisans. Kift (1996:67) argues that in the nineteenth century, the 'old lower middle class – shopkeepers and artisans' and the 'new lower middle class, clerks and shop assistants ... chose to participate in working-class rather than exclusively in middle-class cultural activities'. However, comments by Allan in his 1891 edition suggest matters are less straightforward:

The older writers wrote for their own amusement, and sung their songs at social meetings amongst their friends; now Tyneside songs are generally launched into popularity from the stage of the concert hall

(Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v)

One assumes that the friends of the early writers would come prominently from similar circles, although we cannot say for certain that their ranks excluded members of the industrial labouring classes. Nevertheless, Allan's account does suggest a contrast between primary audiences in the early period, and those of the mid-century concert hall where the bulk of customers were drawn from the industrial labouring communities. Thus it might be that initial audiences differ for early and later writers. It is useful, at this point, to explore a commentary by David Harker, which is nowadays widely dismissed, and enquire if it is necessary to reopen the debate (see section 5.2.1.).

Harker has written specifically and extensively about Tyneside dialect song. He takes a Marxist perspective, and his analysis is based on rigid class distinctions and struggle (Harker 1985a:xi-xii, 1985b:77). Harker (1972:iii) claims that there were, in the nineteenth century, at least two song traditions or closely connected groups of traditions in the North-East, one drawing its writers from the 'middle-class' or 'skilled artisans', and the other 'working-class'. The specific debate to which I have made reference surrounds a set of early songs featuring the miner, Bob Cranky, and other early pieces featuring pitmen and keelmen. Harker (1971:xliv-v) denies that such songs could appeal to 'a working man', and he claims that 'no spokesman in song for working people' emerges until the likes of Corvan and Ridley in the 1850s. Thus, Harker (1981:41-43; 1985b:60,74) believes that the piece, 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:25-7), and an earlier manuscript form of it, are a means by which Bob is 'caricatured' and 'ritually pilloried', in a 'petit-bourgeois' song culture enjoyed by tradesmen and shopkeepers; these groups, he argues, are gradually cutting themselves off from pitmen and keelmen. He believes that the song, and a whole host of other songs which follow, are intended to cut Bob and the industrial labouring classes down to size by satirising them (Harker 1981:41-3). Thus, John Selkirk, the writer of 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday', along with his friends, score a hollow victory against 'Bob and his mates by having them fight, make fools of themselves in drink, and go home with their tails between their legs' (Harker 1985:69).

Colls, on the other hand, in what he refers to as a 'Bob Cranky Thesis', disagrees fundamentally with Harker. For him Bob is an 'Everyman', a representative of labouring-class popular culture, symbolised by the 'interchangeable' figures of the pitmen and keelmen (Colls 1977:26-7):

Both are bumpkins and 'reet charactors'; loyal, ignorant and generally drunk ... they stagger their way from pub to race meeting, brawl to pantomime, in and out of love and work, endlessly offering up their salty observations on all things from Bonaparte to black pudding. A kind of Social Fool, they are not always so foolish and their words not always in jest.

(Colls 1977:26-7)

While accepting that the earlier writers 'were not of the Tyneside *sans culotterie*, of whom, and partly for whom, they wrote', he insists that from the early century to the music hall the songs were acceptable to miners, keelmen and sailors; these groups, he says, 'must have actively enjoyed their role as celebrities, found, in fact, a self-celebration in their attested notoriety' (Colls 1977:37,51). Wales (2004:29), too, notes the jolly antics of the pitmen, as a patriotic lot, who bring home their pay, and enjoy dancing and drinking, but who are prone to fight. For her, indeed, figures such as Bob Cranky are 'literary and cultural *archetypes*' (Wales 2006:133), giving people what Joyce (1991:260) has called 'a set of representations figuring their own mythologies'.

Several notes of caution need to be sounded here. There was, in fact, as Colls acknowledges, local opposition to the songs of popular culture. The Newcastle Religious Tract Society founded in 1810 opposed the selling of 'lewd songs, silly tales, and all manner of low and vile publications'; in 1827 Eneas Mackenzie claimed that the Tract Society would 'drive foolish ballads, tales, and stories out of circulation' (cited in Colls 1977:91-2). In addition, Colls (1977:57) points out that some pitmen hated the Bob Cranky figure and the social types he might represent, even through caricature. As mentioned previously, one of them, a Methodist Sunday School teacher, told Government commissioners in 1842 that 'many of his fellows were "desperately wicked", almost heathen in their drinking and debauchery' (cited in Colls 1977:57). I have noted already Colls's (1977:58, 77) claim that the Primitive Methodists were Cranky's major 'persecutors' – the dominant 'Cultural Revolutionaries' in the North-East. These labouring

people could utterly reject Bob as a literary character along with many of the social characteristics that he represented.

Colls (1977:101) argues, however, that the hedonists were in the majority. The evidence does indeed suggest that many miners and keelmen took positively to the Bob Cranky song-figure (cf. Vicinus 1974:34-36, Bell, D., 2003:14). Marshall (ed. 1827:i), in fact, suggests that the labouring classes have read small collections of local songs of the very type found in his anthology. He adds that such material, in which the 'peculiarities' of 'all classes' are 'forcibly depicted, and in some cases humourously caricatured', may have aided in the education of the lower orders. However, a joke at another's expense is always fraught with the risk of causing an affront. The famed Tyneside showman, Billy Purvis, in his early days, certainly managed this. Billy told the story of the son of an impoverished pitman who was disturbed by a pig while 'Shiteing' and had his 'Arse' scratched (cited in Harker and Rutherford eds. 1985:93-4). This, say Harker and Rutherford (1985:94, cf. Harker 1981:39, Vicinus 1974:278), is almost certainly the incident which, in the early century, got Purvis hooted off the stage by a group of Cowgate pitmen.

The incident might seem to be an extreme case, were it not for Allan's (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:221) belief that the anonymous writer of the highly popular piece, 'Billy Oliver's Ramble'*, may have deemed it wise to lie low 'owing to his song holding the pitman so much up to ridicule'. In fact, this song spawned a satirical parody, also anonymous, which specifically depicts an artisan who is terrified of pitmen, but who, nevertheless, when they are not present, sings to 'myek o' them a gye' ('Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:25). In another song, by Selkirk, 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27-29), Bob identifies a song culture that mocks him, and he notes that town-folks often call pitmen 'gowks' or *fools*. In a further piece, by William Midford, 'Bob Cranky's Account of the Ascent of Mr Sadler's Balloon'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:42-3), pitmen are 'jeer'd' and mocked by town-folk. The issue is a complex one: 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' is, after all, written by Selkirk, author of the song about which Bob might be complaining, 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday'. Nevertheless, I shall argue in this thesis that much work by the early writers should be seen as a satirical mockery by the better educated of the supposed vulgarity of miners and keelmen. My purpose here is not

to deny that labouring people could enjoy many of these new songs written by artisans, shopkeepers and clerks – quite clearly they did. However, the use of the word *satire*, and later *burlesque*, by contemporary commentators, places an onus on modern scholars to explain why such terminology is being used. The fact that later music hall writers overtly appeal to the industrial workers, but continue some of the humour characteristic of the early writers, and thus earn the description 'burlesque' for their songs, also needs explanation.

Different audiences, and even members of the same audience, would not necessarily derive the same meaning from Tyneside song (cf Bailey 1986b:65-6, Bratton 1986:xii). Russell (2004:120), in his discussion of dialect literature, recognises that 'different classes could interpret the same item in very different ways'. Joyce (1991:257) has added briefly to the Bob Cranky debate and recognises that the 'seemingly proletarian hero ... might have a surprisingly unproletarian literary lineage, and with it a similar set of original values and associations'. This is a tantalizing point, but Joyce does not elaborate on it. With regard to satire, it is worth noting that there are several modern examples of how those being satirised can relish the very characteristics being mocked. This occurred in the case of responses by racists to the character, Alf Garnett (Ross 1998:57). The comedian, Harry Enfield, killed off his character 'Loadsamoney' after the figure was celebrated by those whom he lampooned (web page by mgriffithsuk n.d.). These recent examples are offered to show that the meaning of satire can be diverted, rather than to suggest that pitmen or keelmen could not understand that they were being satirised. I shall attempt to offer a more subtle way of understanding possible responses to song, one based upon the orientation of audiences to discourses of respectability, self-improvement and linguistic propriety. In this respect it is helpful to examine another area of scholarship that is not sufficiently integrated into our understanding of Tyneside songs – that of music hall.

1.6. Music Hall

1.6.1. Background

The music hall can be difficult to define. Russell (1997:84) notes that the term can cover a particular performance style, a sector of an industry, or an individual building. The last of these three definitions can be especially awkward prior to 1880, says Russell (1997:84), since the distinction between a public house singing-room and a music hall was not clear cut. Various names are used for the venues, the most common being 'concert room', 'concert hall' and 'music hall', but the latter appears to have won the day by the 1860s (Russell 1997:86). The Tyneside halls, as noted, were certainly appearing by the late 1840s. Their origins have been examined in detail by Harker (1981), and appear to lie in the convergence of three main strands. First, there was the urbanisation of fairground networks of travelling musicians who were transformed into the publican fiddlers. Next was the urbanisation of the itinerant 'fit-up theatre', Billy Purvis being the most significant figure in this respect. Finally, the early nineteenth-century convivial clubs were transformed into 'free-and-easies' – a source of amateur, as opposed to professional entertainment. This to a large degree reflects descriptions of the development of the halls nationally and especially in the provinces (cf. Bailey 1986a:ix, Russell 1997:84).

Both Barker (1983:60-64) and Harker (1981:46-54) give useful accounts of the opening of the Tyneside halls. Some of the earliest music saloons where singers such as Ned Corvan would have performed included the Royal Oak, Bailiffgate, Sessford's at the Lord Nelson in Trafalgar Street, and the Shades Saloon in Shields. As for the larger Newcastle venues, John Balmbra was holding weekend concerts at the Wheat Sheaf Inn prior to 1845, but seems to have started nightly concerts from 1848. Balmbra's was later to become the Oxford. The Grainger opened in 1860, and the Victoria 1861. The Royal Olympic had been created in 1853, and gave way to the Tyne Concert Hall in 1861.

Kift (1996:66-7; cf. Gregson and Huggins 1999:91, Russell 1997:92) says that the early halls were generally frequented by the 'working class and those sections of the lower middle class (artisans, tradesmen and shop-keepers, as well as their assistants and clerks)

who continued to share a common cultural context with them'. Russell (1997:122), however, indicates that the audience in Tyneside music halls is largely homogeneous, made up of pitmen, keelmen and engineers. In fact the keelmen had diminished greatly in numbers since the 1820s and 30s (Griffiths 2005:xviii, Harker 1985b:75). The general point seems sound, nevertheless, that early audiences in Tyneside halls were drawn predominantly from the industrial labouring classes.

1.6.2. The Meanings of Music Hall

Tyneside song of the mid-nineteenth century is frequently treated as literature without reference to specific meanings fostered by performance context. This is particularly surprising given Kift's (1996:177) claim that the halls represent one of the most controversial institutions of English 'working-class culture'. We need to explore what the music hall stood for, if we are to understand the material.

Looking first at national scholarly trends in the dominant music hall studies of the 1970s and 1980s, 'working-class' consciousness and political aspiration are seen as inadequate. For Stedman-Jones (cited in Medhurst 2007:64, and in Kift 1996:4), music hall takes 'the existing social order as the inevitable framework' and is simply 'the symbol of a culture of consolation'. What Vicinus says about dialect literature, she applies equally to the halls. While she notes that many songs protest against existing conditions and assert the 'autonomy of the working class', she argues that they 'offer only consolation and confirmation of traditional values', stifling 'working-class' consciousness and political change (Vicinus 1974:3, 229, 279). More recent scholarship usually sets aside such disappointment.

For Joyce (1991:216, 224-5), the broadside ballad, dialect literature, and later, music hall, represent a 'rhetorical effort to create identity', and thus the music hall can be seen as part of a cultural process in which categories are not fixed or uniform – 'a laboratory of social style and self-definition'. This is a useful concept, particularly, as will be seen, in relation to ideas of respectability and self-help. However, Joyce's (1991) claim that the

halls 'dealt in values which subsumed class differences', along with his general claim for populism, is something that needs to be tested.

Other interpretations tend to emphasise the role of the halls in affirming 'working-class' in opposition to 'middle-class' values. Kift typifies this:

The comic song in particular celebrated the culture and life-style of the 'little man' – and woman. In doing so it raised the self-esteem of a social group which at work were reduced to the status of 'hands' (i.e. to that part of their body which was necessary to dealing with tools and machinery) and who, outside work, were generally regarded as uncivilised savages and targets for middle-class reforming efforts. In the halls, by contrast, they were accepted and welcomed for what they were. Instead of having to reckon with patronising instruction they were confronted with a positive confirmation of themselves and their way of life.

(Kift 1996:176)

For Kift the basic conflict surrounding the halls is between

a hedonistic and somewhat unbridled working-class culture and middle-class social reformers organised in temperance and purity movements; industrialists, executives, the clergy, academics and Sunday school teachers. It was they who embodied at their most extreme what is commonly known as "Victorian values".

(Kift 1996:182)

The notion that the halls represent 'resistance' is a popular one. For Bailey (1994:155), what he terms the 'knowingness of popular culture', a phenomenon that was disturbing to the 'middle-class', worked to 'destabilize various official knowledges', which were being used to order common life through the 'languages of improvement and respectability'. For Medhurst (2007:67), too, the music hall is resistant to the idea that the moral and cultural mindset of the 'middle-classes' represents the ideal way of life.

A similar approach is taken by Gregson and Huggins (1999:91), who write specifically on Tyneside music hall, and the singers, Ned Corvan, George Ridley and Joe Wilson. These performers, they argue, were 'reacting against self-help and respectability', attempting to show people as they were, and expressing 'the interests, follies and ambitions of their audience' (Gregson and Huggins 1999:91).

There is something to be said for such arguments, and the concept of resistance has an obvious linguistic dimension. For, as Bailey (1994:159) says, the organs of regulation,

the factory, the office or the state-classroom, all obliged their inmates to 'speak less or to do so in standardized forms'. As we have seen, teachers were attempting to eradicate regional accents long before the introduction of compulsory primary education. Tyneside dialect song in the halls can certainly be seen as a resistance to external culturally domineering forces.

Ultimately, however, Kift (1996:183) says that the halls 'did not refute "Victorian values" as such', reserving the right instead to interpret these values in their own fashion. The audiences' struggles were struggles for 'cultural self-determination' (Kift 1996:183). Likewise, for Bailey (1994:155, 168), 'knowingness' is not negation of the 'dominant power relationships'; rather it is a 'countervailing dialogue that sets experience against prescription'. For Russell (1997:121) the music hall song 'proffered a deeply conservative world-view', though it operated as 'cultural insulation, maintaining a certain space for the expression of working-class values and aspirations against external attack'.

It is quite possible, then, to see the halls and their labouring-class audience as both resisting and absorbing values of respectability and self-improvement, selectively, and on their own terms (cf. Joyce 1991:271-2). This would likewise apply in the case of attitudes towards education and its associated dialect and accents, and reflects what we have seen already, that labouring people willingly embraced self-improvement. Presumably, however, they did not wish to be told that they were sinful, or that they were savage brutes who used a barbarous language.

Despite the relatively 'conservative' outlook, Russell (1997:122) recognises a certain radicalism in the early halls, and concludes that Tyneside was notable for this. However, more generally, a crucial point is missing from the 'resistance' model. As will have become clear, most commentators on the national music hall claim that the resistance is against the values of the 'middle-classes'. But we have noted Colls's (1977:58, 73, 77) argument that, in the North-East, the Methodists, and particularly the Primitives, were the dominant 'Cultural Revolutionaries' in colliery communities, splitting them in two as they, along with non-conformists, raised the standard of what would become known as 'respectability'. The Primitives and the Teetotal Movement, with which they were at times closely allied, were strongly labouring-class. We will see that numerous songs appear in

which ridicule, even hatred, is aimed at Ranters (as the Primitives were also known) and at teetotallers.

With respect to 'working-class' life before 1914, McKibbin (cited in Bailey 1986a:xvii) points out that, along with 'extraordinary mutuality', went 'real social distances and much hostility between members'. It is evident that Tyneside music hall song can be a vehicle of differentiation within social classes and within the locality. Bailey (1986a:xvii, cf. Bailey 1986b:65-6) notes that the music-hall experience is a 'running drama of inclusion and exclusion as songs and acts celebrated or satirised particular types or groups ... drawing their targets from inside as much as outside the audience, inviting identification or discrimination simultaneously'. This implies that, even within the audience, distinctions might occur in identification and interpretation (cf. Bailey 1986b:65-6). However, the potential for those outside the audience to be ridiculed and treated as 'other' is considerable – including those belonging to the same social class and locality.

The Tyneside halls did not represent a rejection of the values of respectability or self-improvement. As noted, Colls (1977:18) says polarities such as those between Methodists and drunks are artificial, and some people would occupy the centre of the two spheres. Bailey (1998:36), as also observed, highlights the co-occurrence in a labouring-class individual, of seemingly respectable / non-respectable attributes. In fact, as we shall see, performers to varying degrees embrace the notion of the domestic, of self-help, scholarship, and moderation in drinking; but they might also celebrate drunkenness and question the worth of learning, sometimes revelling in daftness.

Especially in their early days, in the 1850s and 1860s, the music halls fostered an intimacy among particular sections of the audience such as to imply exclusion of the extreme 'respectables'. Early halls were attended by groups who knew each other from work, or who had the same groups of acquaintances, to eat, drink, chat and be entertained (Kift 1996:72). Russell (1997:99) gives a contemporary account by an American, who claimed that everyone in the audience seemed to be on first-name terms with the performers.

The relationship between performer and audience is indeed intensely close and immediate. Davison (1982:27, 52) makes the point that the audience is invited to

disbelieve the performance, rather than suspend disbelief, and that an eager audience response makes an act. Bailey (1994:144) has shed light on audience participation, with his claim that it was the 'knowingness' of the audience that completed the circuitry of a joke, and when it worked 'the song went off like a rocket'.

Perhaps the best known feature facilitating the bond between a successful performer and the audience, however, is the shared chorus (cf. Kift 1996:70, Bailey 1994:148). This aspect of performance is recorded by the *Daily Chronicle* of 1861 in describing George Ridley's performances in the Tyneside music halls (cited in Harker ed. 1973:6). Thus Bailey (1994:148, cf. Bratton cited in Davison 1982:27, 165) notes that 'in the chorus singing (a feature characteristic of a night out at the halls)' there is a 'possessive "claiming", both of the song and the singer'. Lindley (1985:31) points out that for a group of singing people, 'the arrival of "the chorus" generates a sense of release into the known and shared, and symbolises community'. While we need to guard against seeing the music hall audience as an 'undifferentiated lump with a simple reflex role in chorus-singing and banter' (Bailey 1986a:xvii), it is nevertheless the case that this 'drama of inclusion and exclusion' can be an intense participatory experience. Where performers choose to exclude groups external to the performance event, the sense of shared purpose can be great.

The situation is a complex one. Identity might operate at various and competing levels in the halls, creating intense feelings of solidarity at times, and also hostility to certain groups within the same social class and locality. Such processes along with earlier notions of satire need to be considered in discussions of linguistic identity. Language can be a vehicle for all such functions.

1.7. Linguistic identity in Song

1.7.1. Indexicality and Song

Songs might convey satire, social antagonism, or self-mockery, but also celebration of the community or the activities of popular culture. This is dependent upon the response of audience members, but language is central to all of the arguments that I have been making. This is one point, among many others, where I fundamentally disagree with Harker, who repeatedly attempts to deny the label 'dialect' to local varieties of language. He appears to do so on the grounds that local dialects imply geographical distinctions and disunity among the 'working class'. Thus, despite briefly conceding in 1985 that the singer, Ned Corvan, celebrates 'aspects of working-class culture' through Tyneside dialect, Harker reverts in 1996 to his earlier efforts to deny north-eastern varieties of speech this status (Harker 1972:xvi; 1985b:65; 1996:110). The position taken in this thesis is that local or regional linguistic varieties are well documented, that an accepted word used to describe them is *dialect*, and that they carry social meanings, which can, at times, enhance local patriotism.

Harker's further point (1972:xxvi, 1981:43), that the dialect was written down so that the 'refined', or 'cultural outsiders', could get it right, does not stand up either. In relation to nineteenth-century north-east dialect literature, Ellis (1889:639) recognises that spelling conventions are not scientific. The English spelling system cannot represent sounds accurately (Blake 1981:15). Jaffe and Walton (2000:579) show that readers draw on a pre-packaged 'voice' in order to 'perform' non-standard orthography, while Beal (2000:354) says that Tyneside texts are aimed at insiders with a knowledge of the dialect. My argument is that certain antagonisms might exist even between such insiders. Nevertheless, it must be assumed, as noted previously, that in singing the songs people from a range of social backgrounds could code-switch or style-shift between standard and non-standard dialects or between accents.

I now return to a central point of this thesis, which is that within the songs, because of the phenomenon of *indexicality*, as described by Bucholtz and Hall (2005:594), the

dialect itself carries the weight of social meaning, based on ideas about the 'sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language'. *Indexicality* can operate at various levels. It might, for instance, relate to an identifying label that links a speaker's accent to place (Agha 2003:232), and I will deal with this shortly. However, it can also link speech to character traits or behaviour. In relation to the latter issues, meaning may emerge in song from a convergence of the following factors:

- A *dialogue* with other cultural and linguistic forms and discourses.
- Generic expectations and conventions regarding the depiction of character.
- Observation, however skewed, of behaviour in the real world.

The concept of *dialogism*, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, has become central to ideas about *indexicality*, and owes a great deal to the work of Bakhtin. In an essay written in the 1930s this Russian scholar claims that the meaning of an utterance arises from a *dialogue* as it brushes up against 'thousands of living dialogic threads'; and thus the utterance 'is understood against the background of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements' (Bakhtin 1934-5, 1981 edn.:276, 281; cf. Billig 1996:17-18, 206-7). As Mannheim and Tedlock (1995:15) put it, 'whenever we speak or write ... our discourse occurs in the context of previous (or alternative) utterances or texts, and is in dialogue with them'. Ochs (1992:338) points out that the influence of Bakhtin's notion of *dialogism* on recent work on the social meaning of language has been considerable. The implication of his thinking is that the 'voices of [the] speaker/writer and others may be blended in the course of the message and become part of the social meanings indexed within the message' (Ochs 1992:338). The application of these ideas to Tyneside song does, however, involve setting aside Bakhtin's (1934-5, 1981 edn.:285) claim that in genres that are 'poetic in the narrow sense, the natural dialogization of the word is not put to artistic use'. I will show that a *dialogue* of languages or ideologies *certainly does* affect much dialect song, where many and various external cultural discourses can add to the meaning of the local language (cf. Wesling 1993).

The meaning of local dialect in Tyneside song must derive in large degree from a *dialogue* with other modes of utterance, other cultural forms. The concepts of proper

speech, propriety, respectability, improvement or self-improvement, and their associated discourses, potentially all situate the Tyneside dialect within a *dialogic* context. Frequently this *dialogue* with such prominent discourses, be they linguistic or cultural, might provide an underlying framework for the meaning of many dialect songs or characterizations within them, whether they are intended or interpreted as satire or as a form of cultural resistance or celebration. *Dialogue* with the discourse and languages of propriety, respectability and self-help is present within each of these perspectives. I will elaborate on matters of *dialogism* shortly.

The idea that social roles can be associated with particular dialects in literature has been referred to already (see sections 1.1. and 1.4.3.). When we turn to the issue of generic expectations, it is clear that this is important in relation to Tyneside song. We need to remember that Bob Cranky, for instance, is a stereotype, and that nineteenth-century commentators variously state that labouring-class people, and local subjects, are represented through 'satire', 'rude caricatures' or a 'burlesque tone' (Marshall ed. 1827:i, Fordyce ed. 1842:iii, Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii). Such comments point to the existence of generic conventions which shape the depictions found in song. It should be no surprise then to see character or persona distorted in these representations.

In this thesis I use the two terms *character* and *persona* in their literary senses, and I distinguish between them. The definitions of the terms offered in *OED*, in this respect, are not entirely helpful. The literary *character*, according to the dictionary, is a 'personality invested with distinctive attributes and qualities, by a novelist or dramatist', and is also 'the personality or 'part' assumed by an actor on the stage' (*OED:n.* II.17.a.). There is clearly an overlap with the literary *persona*, which *OED* (*n.* 1.) describes as an 'assumed character or role' especially 'one adopted by an author in his or her writing, or by a performer'. However, it is useful to maintain a subtle distinction between the terms, and to view the presentation of *character* as more specific and rounded than a *persona*, which may be an aspect of personality or the stage 'voice' projected by a performer.

Just as it is possible to perceive a relationship between non-standard dialect and literary character or persona, it is also possible to perceive *indexical* relationships between language, social persona and character trait in the wider world. Indeed, Eckert (2005:21-

2; cf. Eckert and Wenger 2005:584, Ochs 1992; 1993, Bucholtz and Hall 2005:595-6), claims that 'linguistic choices rarely index social categories directly; rather, they index attitudes, stances, [and] activities that are in turn associated with categories of people'. For Eckert (2005:17), therefore, stylistic practice, the combination of variables 'to create distinctive ways of speaking', is key to the construction by individuals of 'personae' which she identifies as 'social types that are quite explicitly located in the social order'.

The conception of 'persona' employed by Eckert is largely distinct from ideas of the literary 'character' or 'persona' in their strong theatrical senses. In general Eckert is discussing the types of personae which individuals construct for themselves socially. Nevertheless, at this point it is worth remembering the *OED* (*n.* 2.a.) definition closest to the concept that Eckert appears to have in mind. It is the 'aspect of a person's character that is displayed to or perceived by others'. Thus social personae, incorporating speech style and general behaviour, are on display, and observers perceive associations between the speech style and that behaviour. Observation will, of course, depend on access to groups, which may be substantial or limited to certain times or activities, and it may be selective. Nevertheless, while it is important that we preserve the general distinction between 'literary' personae and 'social' personae, within performance there is inevitably some degree of complementary relationship between literary expectation about the representation of character types, and the influence of observations of social types in the outside world. Along with *dialogism*, these factors allow a complex set of meanings to build up around character in songs.

1.7.2. Dialogism and Character

I have stated already that frequently the meaning of Tyneside dialect song must emerge from *dialogue* with other cultural forms, other linguistic systems or styles. This applies whether the songs are written down or performed. Jaffe (2000:511) argues that use of non-standard orthography invokes the standard, thus discrediting both the voices represented and the spellings themselves. Whether the voices and spellings are indeed discredited is open to question, and this will need to be tested in the rest of the thesis. But the *dialogic* nature of the relationship in printed material is clear – awareness of the

standard written dialect contributes to the meaning. The *dialogism* is present in performance too. As seen in the sections on prestige accents and regional dialect, the public are frequently aware in the nineteenth century of perceived links between accent and behaviour – between 'proper' speech and 'proper' demeanour. The other side of the coin, of course, as manifest in the depiction of speakers of local dialect in the novel, and as communicated in the schoolroom, is that these local dialects can be perceived as 'improper' and 'vulgar', and their speakers lacking in the correct demeanour or behaviour.

It is worth underlining some specific comments about northern or Tyneside dialect and more general behaviour made in regional dictionaries, local song collections, and newspapers of the nineteenth century. Heslop (1892:xii), in his dictionary of 1892, says that Northumbrians have an 'almost passionate regard' for their dialect. However, this needs to be tempered by what is said earlier in the century. Brockett (1829:vii) in his glossary of 1829, while being equally an exponent of northern dialect, nonetheless, hopes that the reader will 'no longer hastily pronounce to be *vulgarisms* what are in reality *archaisms*'. By invoking the word *vulgarisms* Brockett, as noted already, despite his enthusiasm, shows how easily the attribution of negative stereotypes could be attached to the language (see section 1.4.3.).

Editors of song collections, too, recognise the possibility that language and behaviour might be viewed with distaste. In his 1842 edition of songs, Fordyce is mindful of this:

Should an occasional coarseness of language meet the eye, let not the fastidious reader forget, that such were the modes of expression used by the parties described ...

(Fordyce ed. 1842:iii)

Fordyce's collection is advertised on the title page, as 'descriptive of eccentric Characters, and the Manners and Customs of a Portion of the Labouring Population', and he argues in his preface that 'elegance of language' would be out of place in such material (Fordyce ed. 1842:iii). Robson also offers 'some apology' for

presenting the public with a book of Songs of a description which may be termed by the fastidious reader to be vulgar and decidedly ungentle. – The somewhat coarse dialect of Northumbria as spoken by the lower classes of its population, has been stigmatised as a "bastard Scotch – a mongrel compound of high dried Welsh, scented with Gaelic Rappee."

(Robson ed. c.1849:v)

Unfortunately the source of those comments is not given. Robson (ed. c.1849:v), however, defends the songs, saying that they are 'part and parcel of the Northumbrians themselves'.

To some degree these apologies by Fordyce and Robson are disingenuous. Quite clearly they, and many of their local readers, were not unduly 'fastidious'. The very mention, however, of such matters of delicacy, indicates the sheer power of ideas about correct behaviour and language in the nineteenth century. It is precisely from the *dialogue* with these potent discourses that the songs gain much of their meaning and humour. This applies, of course, to the early songs, but clearly crosses over to music hall in the mid-century and beyond.

Thus, in the case of music hall, even where the songs are cleared of any impropriety or 'coarseness', there is an implicit element of reassurance. The *Daily Chronicle* (cited in Harker ed. 1973:7), in its account of a performance by Ridley, indicates that while 'the dialect is easily and naturally given, there is nothing coarse in the rendering of these songs'. Of Wilson's work, in 1875, an article in *The Newcastle Daily Journal* (cited in Allan ed. 1890:xxxv) says the following: 'Often rough and racy – necessarily vulgar in language – there is no approach to impropriety'. The absence of attributes of wider behavioural or linguistic 'vulgarity' is often favourably mentioned, as if the commentators are assuming that such associations might be expected. These associations, nevertheless, could be articulated, especially by those who believed urban language and song to be impure. Prior to the publication of the book *Northumbrian Minstrelsy* of 1882, Stokoe (cited in Harker 1985a:148), one of its editors, expressed a hope in the *Newcastle Courant* that the volume would replace 'music hall vulgarities and drawing room inanities'. This is an extreme view, but the meaning of Tyneside music hall songs for many who actually enjoy them emerges from a relationship with discourses of 'respectability' such as this.

Thus Tyneside dialect is always associated, potentially, with linguistic and wider behavioural 'vulgarity' or with a lack of 'respectability'. We need to recall this at all times in a consideration of *indexicality* and character. This will also impinge upon an

understanding of *indexical* relations in terms of the attribution of character trait to groups. It also suggests that it is helpful to examine group identity at a variety of levels, to understand the socially and culturally nuanced manner in which a range of associations are applied to various groups and their speech.

1.7.3. Group Identity

The ways in which linguistic identity can be analysed are numerous. I have dealt already with the manner in which linguistic form may be taken to *index* character trait. Nevertheless, individuals can and do identify with groups. A now highly influential formulation is that developed by Le Page in his Acts of Identity Theory, which first appeared in book form in 1985, jointly authored by Tabouret-Keller, and is now in its second edition. The fundamental hypothesis is that

the individual creates for himself the patterns of his linguistic behaviour so as to resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he wishes to be identified, or so as to be unlike those from whom he wishes to be distinguished.

(Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006: 181, cf. Le Page 1978)

The theory is aimed at explaining individual linguistic performance – what people actually say (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:245). But it offers insights into the way in which the performer and the audiences may behave or feel (and I include here, the strong theatrical sense of the words). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (2006:181, 248) note that language is a 'very overt symbolization of ourselves and of our universe'. Thus, they argue that when speaking, an individual in search of solidarity will project 'his inner universe, implicitly with the invitation to others to share it, at least insofar as they recognise his language as an accurate symbolization of the world, and to share his attitude towards it'.

In terms of dialect song in performance before an audience, this view of language needs some modification. As Coupland (2006:23; cf. Wray et al. 2003:53-4) points out, projecting a social identity 'is not the same as feeling or living a social identity with personal investment in it and full ownership of it'. Performers might project a linguistic

identity but not feel it. Nevertheless, it is clear that projections can indeed stir an audience to respond, reflecting back the identity and sentiments uttered, as for instance through the joint singing of a chorus. Where the conceptualisation of 'groupness' operates at the level of local patriotism, this can give an extremely powerful sense of a shared 'universe' through shared language. However, the most obvious way in which we would need to question the extent of social ownership of an identity is in those songs where the singer speaks from within a character who is the subject of satire. Here, depictions of language and character can be given in burlesque form. It might be that both the performer and audience derive a sense of group solidarity through projections of language, and an ideology or 'universe', which emphasise and exaggerate the difference between themselves and the subjects of the satire.

We need an understanding of group identity that can operate both at the level of large-scale socio-demographic categories, such as locality or social-class, and below such categories, at the levels of sub-groups within them. Certainly, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (2006:248) are clear that group association might occur at many levels. However, another useful means of viewing group identity is that of the community of practice. Eckert (2005:16-17) argues that it is this group concept that mediates between individual personae and larger social categories:

A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together on a regular basis to engage in some enterprise (writ large). A family, a linguistics class, a garage band, roommates, a sports team, even a small village. In the course of their engagement, the community of practice develops ways of doing things – practices. And these practices involve the construction of a shared orientation to the world around them – a tacit definition of themselves in relation to each other, and in relation to other communities of practice.

(Eckert 2005:16; cf. McConnell-Ginet 2003:71, Meyerhoff 2002)

The phenomenon, as noted, provides a link between individual behaviour and larger categories such as class, gender or ethnicity (Eckert 2005:16-17, cf. Eckert and Wenger 2005:585, Meyerhoff 2002:533). Language plays a central role in this, as it is part of the group behaviour or practice (Eckert 2005:17).

It might be possible to describe specific groups of pitmen or keelmen, worshippers at a church, or a regular crowd at a music hall as communities of practice, or at least to

recognise similarities between these groups and the concept. As a manifestation of identity built upon persona construction and shared behaviour, the community of practice offers a way of viewing groups, who might have similar or very different orientations to the world, to other groups, and towards 'practices' or activities associated with self-help, self-improvement, decency, religion, and respectability, or indeed towards drinking and popular entertainment.

These linguistic approaches to identity are intended for the analysis of human behaviour where data is obtained by field-workers carrying out ethnographic studies. My own corpus of data consists of printed material which does not reflect speech directly. Clearly, then, these concepts cannot be applied rigorously to the songs in a study such as mine. But we do need to look at group identity within both large-scale socio-demographic categories (particularly those of the locality or social class), and within groups below those levels, in addition to examining language at a level relating to character trait.

1.7.4. Levels of Learning and Meaning

It is with the knowledge that social meaning in song needs to be studied at a range of levels that I turn specifically to the work of Coupland, who, while working in the field of sociolinguistics, offers an analysis that has obvious implications for my own research into song. He asks whether it is possible to identify genres which shape rather than merely reflect *indexical* relationships between language and community, and he states that

it seems possible to argue that certain classes of communicative events have a special role as sociolinguistic norm enforcers. There are, in a certain sense, "pedagogic" environments for sociolinguistic learning and affirmation.

(Coupland 2006:26)

This follows Max Weber's argument that ritual performance events are particularly implicated in maintaining social norms (cited in Coupland 2006:26). Coupland (2006:26) further hypothesizes that 'the cultural meanings of dialect styles are actively promulgated by a relatively small set of individuals', who, following Giddens (1996: 63), he calls *guardians of culture*. These considerations lead him to examine the speech patterns of a

pantomime dame. However, it is clear that, as Coupland (2001:369-70, 2006:46) acknowledges, cultural belonging is both reproduced and mutable, and that the meaning of language styles may be variable. According to Giles and Coupland (1991:56) our judgements about how people speak and sound can be processes of constant redefinition and social construction. Garrett et al. (1999:346), a collaboration which includes Coupland, make the point that it might be necessary to move beyond the 'fiction' of discrete dialect varieties with bounded social meanings, and to embrace the notion of evaluations of speech performance and dialect in discourse, assessing the meaning according to context. Coupland (2006:26-43) argues that certain discursive frames may determine the types of meanings which can or cannot be made available to speech styles. These frames bear significant similarities to the various levels at which I have argued that *indexicality* can be analysed in Tyneside song. I list them as, firstly, the 'interpersonal' (micro-social), which involves how speakers 'structure the very local business of their talk', and position themselves in relation to each other; secondly, the 'generic' (meso-social), which deals with genres, 'typically sustained by particular communities of practice'; and, finally, the 'sociocultural' (macro-social), which has to do with large-scale categories such as class or ethnicity. Coupland (2006:43-4) adds that the 'interpersonal' and 'generic' frames relate to 'communicative roles and traits of personality'. The frames, of course, are in line with the ideas, put forward by Eckert (2005:16; cf. Moore 2006), that see identity categories being constructed outwards from individual character trait, to communities of practice, and, finally, to large-scale categories. Coupland, then, posits a view of *indexicality* which takes into account the varying influence of the discursive frames:

The sociolinguistics of "style" might in fact be defined as analyzing how indexical linguistic resources are deployed and interpreted in the light of what particular contextual frames afford and preclude as realizable and relevant social meanings.

(Coupland 2006:46)

My own analysis, of course, unlike Coupland's, does not focus on pieces of discourse moment by moment. As indicated, however, the discursive frames to which he refers are broadly analogous to my emphasis on literary character trait and persona; on sub-local identities as manifest, for instance, through the genre of music hall or the depiction of

specific occupational groups; and the analysis of identity in relation to socio-demographic ('sociocultural') categories, particularly those of locality and the labouring class. These points are not mutually exclusive and may operate concurrently in terms of providing meaning, or some may have more significance at particular times according to the song content or performance context. It might be added that only a literary approach focused upon language will facilitate analysis of printed song at these various levels.

The performer / writer and venue may share qualities with those figures or communicative events that Coupland (2006:26) suggests foster or shape sociolinguistic and cultural learning. What is learned, however, may also vary according to what the language *indexes* at any given time. As we shall see, the context of song delivery, whether in print or performance, is fundamental to meaning.

1.7.5. Enactment Contexts

Dialect might *index* both character and group identities at various levels. What I would term the *context of delivery* will contribute to the meaning. This context might include various modes of print or performance. In fact, meanings are altered or changed by the delivery of songs in new media, performance dynamics, or environments (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990:76-8, Mannheim and Tedlock 1995:13). The meaning of a music hall song, for instance, would depend, as Bratton (1986:xii) points out, on the rest of the act, the previous turn, and the one expected to follow. However, it would also depend on

the mix and mood of each individual audience. Moreover the song would be carried away from the hall and used, perhaps with quite different meanings, by members of the audience singing it at home, in the streets or at other gatherings ... The performance would differ considerably in meaning and effect from hall to hall, and outside the playing spaces a flourishing specialist press and a market for published songs refracted and altered the meaning of music hall to suit its own purposes, and in doing so created a myth which fed back into the performance experience ...

(Bratton 1986:xii)

The delivery of a song in a local dialect, whether orally or in print, does not necessarily imply that the dialect will carry the same meanings on each occasion. Inevitably there will be variation due to what Bauman and Briggs (1990:75-6) call 'decontextualization

and recontextualization'. Sometimes this might entail subtle generic changes. But the power of publishing to create myths is also highly relevant. To adapt a more general argument by Bauman and Briggs (1990:76-8), the translation of songs into print, and their being given geographical labels, may help in the development of a sense of tradition or identity in Tyneside song, which applies in both written and oral contexts (cf. Griffiths 2001:363).

The production of material in print that is labelled 'Tyneside song', and public discussion of it, may, in fact, contribute to a belief in the very existence of a 'Tyneside dialect'. The popular belief in the existence of discrete dialects is, as Johnstone et al. (2006:99; cf. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:4) indicate, a cultural construct. Thus, in their discussion of the linguistic variety now known as 'Pittsburghese', Johnstone et al. (2006:87, 93-96) claim that dialect dictionaries and websites, have established a perceived link between a specific local identity and a regional speech variety that is actually more widespread, a process which they refer to as 'enregistration'. This, they claim, might make 'other indexicalities less and less available for identity work' (Johnstone et al. 2006:94-5). The process, they say, has the effect of standardizing certain words and structures, which are mentioned again and again (Johnstone et al. 2006:96). The phenomenon of 'enregistration', and the role that dialect literature might play in it, has been applied by Beal (2007) to 'Geordie' dialect. She says that features used widely through the North have been 'enregistered' to the 'Geordie' dialect (Beal 2007). As noted, I do not feel that sufficient evidence exists to indicate that a widespread sense of 'Geordieness' exists in the nineteenth century. However, I shall argue that the gradual focus in song books on a 'Tyneside dialect' does help to construct not only a concept of Tyneside dialect song, but also ideas of a Tyneside dialect itself (see section 6.3.1.). For present purposes, however, we can see that the 'myths' created by publishing (cf. Bratton 1986:xii) might well feed back a sense of local identity into song-performance in the music hall, and into other venues prior to that. In other words, it will strengthen the possibility for interpretations along socio-demographic lines of local linguistic identity. Nevertheless, performance context is highly significant. The intimacies involved, for instance, in performances by early writers to their friends, or later in music hall performances, may well preclude or significantly modify meaning, channelling it through

very particular perspectives, and perhaps excluding some groups even as local identity is celebrated.

1.8. Summary

The central issue of this thesis is *indexicality*, the 'creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings' (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:594). I conduct analysis in terms of literary representation at three major levels: those of character trait and persona; activity or practice-based group identities; and identity based on large-scale socio-demographic categories, particularly those of locality and social class. These levels for social meaning in linguistic forms are inter-related. At all times, when we interpret Tyneside dialect song, whether delivered in performance or print, I also contend that we must be alert to meanings that might emerge through *dialogue* with other cultural and linguistic forms. That *dialogism* may be the result of a sense of geographical 'groupness', enhanced by ideas, for example, of London and its population as 'other', and a supposedly élite metropolitan speech. It might arise from an awareness of vigorously promoted, or dominant and perhaps officially sanctioned models of respectable behaviour, morality, and standard or correct language. The behaviour of most labouring-class individuals will include a range of roles in 'collusive antithesis' (Bailey 1998:9) to those dominant or energetic discourses that condemn activities of popular culture, as 'vulgar', coarse, 'ungenteel', even immoral. We should not therefore think in terms of dichotomies between respectable and non-respectable individuals. However, I believe that songs throughout the century – whether or not they are thought of broadly as 'satire' or 'resistance' – produce much of those meanings in a *dialogue* with precisely those dominant or energetic discourses.

Here, then, I return to my main point that *indexicality* in Tyneside song must be understood at the levels of character trait; the representation or enactment of practices associated with particular groups (such as pitmen and keelmen, or a music hall audience and singer); and large-scale socio-demographic categories, for instance, of locality. These ways of approaching *indexicality* in literature are in line with, or analagous to, major theories of linguistic identity. Meaning, however, must also be seen as emerging from expectations inherent in literary genre as to the representation of certain characters or groups, and from a *dialogue* with other cultural discourses and forms.

One level of *indexicality* or identity might be seen to contribute to the next. Depictions of character trait feed into the representation of groups engaged in a specific range of activities or practices. Discourses and antagonisms between groups, over activities associated with, or held to be in conflict with, respectability, improvement, or self-improvement, operate at this second level of analysis. It is here that we can situate the depiction of pitmen and keelmen, and the amusement taken by satirists and their primary audiences or specific industrial labouring-class audiences. If we ignore this level of identity, or focus most upon large-scale categories to which it may contribute (for instance, locality, region or social class), we risk missing real internal divisions within these large-scale categories.

My approach to *indexicality* necessarily combines literary and linguistic approaches. But overall, my perspective is closest to ideas of the progression of social identity from character and persona, to the community of practice, and large-scale socio-demographic categories as envisaged by Eckert (2005:16-17), and also to the use by Coupland (2006:26-28) of the concept of 'discursive frames'. We need to understand, also, that not only will meaning depend on all of the categories of *indexicality* that I have outlined, but that their importance might be influenced particularly by the *context of delivery*, whether in performance or print. Where a song is sung will matter, as will the media of oral delivery or print. Meanings will change accordingly, but print in particular might have an effect of enhancing the importance of the socio-demographic category of local identity. This, nevertheless, will then feed back into performance contexts.

We need a way to examine all of these issues. Analysis of both theme and language is essential. It is important to understand the social meaning of linguistic forms in the songs at a range of levels. Relationships between language, character, specific occupational groups or audiences, and local identity or social class, along with oppositions and developments in these relationships, are central to the remainder of this thesis.

Chapter Two

Authors, Materials and Methodology

2.1. Introduction

Nineteenth-century Tyneside produced a large body of local songs and singers who were celebrities in their own time. Yet many of the songs and performers are now generally forgotten. In this chapter, therefore, I will introduce the authors to whom I give most attention in the thesis. In addition, I will describe the creation of an electronic corpus of songs by these writers – a body of work which is subjected to both literary and linguistic analysis. I will also offer an account of the methodology for the more linguistic aspects of my research. The corpus and its analysis will provide valuable evidence relating to the treatment of language in song by these highly popular figures, the literary effect to which it is put, and its cultural impact.

In choosing to concentrate on the nineteenth century I am fully aware that songs were produced in previous centuries, and have continued to be since then. However, as will become apparent, there is an increase in production and printing of local songs in the 1800s and the label 'Tyneside song' becomes a more specific subject of discourse during this period. It is this overt identification of songs with a Tyneside provenance – which only increases as the century progresses – upon which I base my choice of authors. The works of these writers are representative of a canon of 'Tyneside song'. A reminder of their popularity and contribution to this canon, then, is essential to an understanding of their influence on the meaning of the dialect in performance or print. Again, songs not included in my corpus are marked with an asterisk.

2.2. The Songwriters

2.2.1. Biographical Details

In this section I offer brief biographical accounts of the individual authors included in my electronic corpus, and on whom I focus in the thesis, to indicate their histories and occupations, and to give an idea of their popularity. Following this, I will provide some interpretation of these historical accounts, and relate them to the approach taken in my thesis as a whole. Much of the detail given about the authors is taken from the short biographies offered in Allan's edited collection of 1891 (1972 edn.), each of which is referenced as a whole. My accounts are supplemented by further details on individual authors, where available, found in other publications by Allan, information given by other commentators, entries by authors in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and *Folk Archive Resource North East* (Gateshead Council 2004).

John Shield (1768-1848)

John Shield was born in Broomhaugh, near Hexham, but by the time he was 30, he had moved to Newcastle, where he and his brother ran a large wholesale and family grocery business (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:58-69). By 1806, when some of his songs appear in the *Northern Songster*, he had an established reputation. Along with Thomas Thompson and John Selkirk, Shield is considered by Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:84, 132) to be one of the 'three founders of Tyneside Song'. What Allan means by this, and its implications, is dealt with shortly in a consideration of various groups of authors.

Thomas Thompson (1773-1816)

Tommy Thompson, as he was known, was born and spent his childhood in the Bishop Auckland area. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:34-44) says that his father was an officer (presumably in the military). He was sent to school at Durham after his father's death but

settled in Newcastle in about 1790, where by 1801 he was a general merchant developing a timber and raff-yard. At about the age of 23 he joined the 'Newcastle Light Horses', subsequently becoming Captain. His dialect songs first began to appear in Bell's 1812 volume. In 1816 an anonymous obituary in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* noted Thompson's popularity as a dialect songwriter:

There are few in this neighbourhood who have not been interested with his local songs, written by himself in the pure Newcastle dialect, and sung by him with a playfulness and humour that transported every genuine Northumbrian.

(cited by Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:40)

In any collection, Thompson's songs were considered among the best.

John Selkirk (c.1783-1843)

Selkirk was born in Gateshead but, as Allan's notes show (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:84-7), his father was probably a well-to-do hairdresser in one of the best business areas of Newcastle. The younger Selkirk appears to have worked as a clerk on the Quayside before moving to London as a merchant. However, his life ended in poverty. Having returned to Newcastle, he took to sleeping amongst the wood-shavings of a joiner's shop, and at this time drowned in the river Tyne. His songs are first traced with a definite date in the *Northern Minstrel, Or, Gateshead Songster* 1806-7. It is clear that Selkirk's contributions to the category of what I term 'Bob Cranky songs' were highly popular.

William Midford (1788-1851)

Midford was born at Preston, near North Shields but, according to Allan's account (ed. 1891, 1972 edn:132-6), on the death of his parents he moved to Newcastle with his uncle when he was between the age of three and four. He grew up to become a shoemaker in a fashionable part of the town. His songs first come to light in 1816, and he was subsequently able to give up his shoemaking business and open a pub, the North Pole, in the Leazes area of Newcastle, as a singing landlord. Later he moved to another pub, the Tailor's Arms, at the 'Head of the Side' where it appears he continued to perform his

songs. His activities as a pub landlord are recorded by another writer, Watson, in the song, 'Newcastle Landlords – 1834'*:

M stands for Mitford [sic] – he kept the North Pole,
 Just over the Leazes – a dull-looking hole;
 Now our favourite poet lives at Head of the Side –
 Here's success to his muse – long may she preside.

(‘Newcastle Landlords’ in Fordyce ed. 1842:251)

Robert Emery (1794-1871)

Emery was born in Edinburgh but his family moved to Newcastle when he was very young (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:284-90). He served his apprenticeship with the bookseller and printer, Angus, in the Side, and afterwards worked as a journeyman at the various printing offices around Newcastle. He finally set up a business in his own right in about 1850. Though he did not publish a volume of his own songs, they are scattered in various collections and are among the most celebrated on Tyneside (cf. Gateshead Council 2004).

Robert Gilchrist (1797-1844)

Gilchrist was born in Gateshead but his father was a Newcastle-based sail-maker, and the young Gilchrist was also apprenticed into this trade (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:169-77). He took over the family business when his father died in 1829, but was not very successful in this respect. His fame rests upon an 1824 volume, *A Collection of Original Songs, Local and Sentimental*.

William Armstrong (b. 1804)

Armstrong, as shown by the brief biographical details that exist (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:215), was born in Newcastle, the son of a shoemaker. Known as Willie Armstrong, he was apprenticed as a painter, and afterwards worked as a journeyman. However, he left Newcastle for London in about 1833-4, and nothing more is known of him.

Armstrong's songs first appear in 1823, the rest being published in the collections edited by Marshall in 1827 and Fordyce in 1842. At convivial meetings his performances made him a 'general favourite'.

Robert Nunn (1808-1853)

In his 'life' of Bobby Nunn, Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:319-23) shows that Nunn was a Newcastle man who initially worked as a slater, but after being blinded in a work accident he earned a living as a musician. He was able to do so because of the large number of benefit societies, each holding annual meetings, at which he could perform for money (cf. Harker 1972:xii). In Emery's song, 'The Sandgate Lassie's Lament'* (cited by Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:320), the lassie remembers: 'Head-meetin' days were spent in glee when Bobby tyuk the chair'.

Joseph Philip Robson (1808-1870)

Robson was the son of a teacher in a catholic school, but both his father and mother died by the time he was eight years old (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:345-8; cf. Myers 2004). Despite starting an apprenticeship with a plane maker, a work injury led him to turn to the career of schoolmaster. A writer of Standard English (StE) poetry, Robson (cited in Harker 1981:46) was, by his own account, persuaded by Bob Sessford to write a dialect song which the latter performed, first at the Marine Association Annual Dinner, and then at Balmbra's music hall. The song was 'The Pitmin Milisha' and, as Robson (cited in Harker 1981:46) put it, finding that the piece was so successful, he 'went on scribbling in the same lingo'. It appears that this was a source of additional income for him and, despite Harker's (1981:46) protests to the contrary, there seems little reason to doubt that pitmen and keelmen were among those enjoying the songs at venues such as Balmbra's. In c.1849 Robson edited a large collection, *Songs of the Bards of the Tyne*, which contained over 80 of his own songs. The publishers of the book (P. France & Co. c.1849:iii) expressed the hope that 'the poorest working man' might afford it, and Harker

(1972:xvii) reluctantly concedes that it sold. Robson was not a performer himself, but his songs were popular as performed in music halls by other entertainers.

Edward Corvan (1829-1865)

Ned Corvan was born in Liverpool, but his parents, who were of Irish descent, moved to Newcastle when he was just four years old. According to Allan's account (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:387-94; cf. Palmer 2004), Corvan's father died three years later, and the family had to rely on his mother's earnings. Corvan initially began work as a sail-maker before joining the travelling Victoria Theatre run by Tyneside showman Billy Purvis. Subsequently, he left Billy in about 1850 to join the Olympic concert hall. At the age of nineteen Corvan became the first full-time professional singer and songwriter in the North-East, and the first who dressed up in character – both male and female (cf. Gregson 1983:1, Harker 1972:xvii). He subsequently travelled the concert halls of the North before settling in South Shields, where he opened a pub, Corvan's Music Hall. However, after about four years, with the attractions of drink apparently taking their toll, he gave this up and returned to his local singing in other halls. Like Ridley and Wilson who followed him, in the 1860s he appeared in the Tyne concert hall which accommodated audiences in their thousands (Harker 1972:xxi, Arthey 1978:16). In the 1850s Corvan produced *Random Rhymes*, and *Corvan's Song Books 1-4*. Later, Allan published song books in penny numbers containing pieces by both Corvan and Ridley, and these appear to have sold very well (Harker 1972:xix-xx; 1981:52).

George Ridley (1835-1864)

'Geordy' Ridley was author of the present-day Tyneside anthem, 'The Blaydon Races'. Ridley was born in Gateshead and went to work aged eight in a local pit, but in about 1856, while working as a wagon-rider, he was seriously injured, and he turned afterwards to singing to earn a living (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:446-9, Gregson 2004). He performed in several Newcastle music halls including the Tyne, and cheap editions of his songs had large sales. Despite its current status, 'The Blaydon Races' was not particularly

popular at the time of its composition; in comparison, 'The Bobby Cure' and 'Johnny Luik-Up the Bellman', perhaps his greatest successes, were both sung by children in the street (Allan cited in Harker ed. 1973:4). In 1862 Allan bought the rights to a good number of Ridley's songs and, as Harker (ed. 1973:9) puts it, was then 'more or less managing the affairs of the hottest property in Tyneside show business'.

Joseph Wilson (1841-1875)

Joe Wilson was the last of the great 'stars' of early Tyneside music hall. This outline of his life is based primarily on Allan's account of 1890 (1970 edn:xvii-xlii; cf. Goodridge in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol.III, 145-6, Colls 2007). Allan's account includes a sketch of Wilson's career by the singer himself. Joe, whose father was a joiner and cabinet maker, was born in Newcastle and became a printer after attending the charity-run St Andrew's School. He eventually wrote hundreds of dialect songs and some of them, such as 'Keep Yor Feet Still!', are still known today. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:475) calls him 'the most successful of Tyneside song-writers'. He first performed professionally in 1864, soon making appearances at the Oxford Music Hall (Balmbra's) and Tyne Concert Hall, and at venues in most of the towns in the North. Subsequently, despite some early sympathies with the temperance movement, he became a pub landlord for about a year before returning to the music halls, alcohol having taken its toll. He was now Teetotal and extolled this in his songs. However, Harker (1972:xxii) says that it is the songs written in the period 1864-6 on which his reputation lies. On his death the *North of England Advertiser* referred to the thousands of people on Tyneside who would have heard him sing. Wilson's early penny or sixpence song books also sold in thousands to 'working-men'.

2.2.2. Authors and Audiences

The writers and performers listed in the previous section are undoubtedly the most famous, and often the most prolific, of the nineteenth-century producers of Tyneside song. In fact, it is possible to go further and say that these authors are central to the

building of a concept of 'Tyneside song' itself, and a 'canon' of that material. There was production of local or regional songs prior to the nineteenth century, with links to border and Scots traditions, but the extent to which the focus is on 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' in describing such works before the nineteenth century is debatable. In the collections by Ritson of 1793 (1810 edn.) and Bell of 1812 (1971 edn.) emphasis is given on the title pages to wider counties of the North-East alongside Newcastle.

Allan (ed. 1891 1972 edn.:132, 84) clearly believes that Shield, Thompson and Selkirk are the 'founders of Tyneside Song', and he refers to them as the 'famous three', who gave to 'what, up to that time, had been considered as less than "airy nothings" – "a local habitation and a name"'. Allan, although he does not acknowledge it here, is echoing comments that the earlier editor, Marshall, made at the start of the century. Marshall (cited in Harker 1971:xli), combining an allusion to Gray's 'Elegy' and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, offered to give 'every mute inglorious Milton' a 'local habitation and a name'. In his large 1827 anthology Marshall (ed. 1827:i) again acknowledges that some would designate its contents to be 'airy nothings', but repeats the desire to give the songs a firmer foundation – that 'local habitation' and 'name'.

Of course, the description 'airy nothings' merely reflects the attitudes of certain sections among the educated. Quite clearly those enjoying songs in the regional dialect valued them. In addition, in this period Ritson and Bell had been collecting material with an antiquarian enthusiasm. Thus Bell (ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:3) hoped to rescue 'from the yawning jaws of oblivion the productions of the Bards of the Tyne; and by so doing, hand them down to future ages as Reliques of Provincial Poetry'. But Bell's method, as Harker (1985a:62) approvingly puts it, exemplified the 'vacuum-cleaner' approach, collecting old and new material from throughout the North-East for his *Rhymes of Northern Bards*. Thus, had it not been for those producing new songs, and publishers such as Marshall, Fordyce, and Allan, who selected and issued them, and increasingly designated them 'Tyneside songs' or 'Newcastle songs', they might not have been conceptualised in such a specific geographical manner as the century progressed. These issues are dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter Six (see section 6.3.1.), but it is important to appreciate the increased emphasis on 'Tynesideness' in songs, and the association between this idea and the set of canonical authors to whom I have already referred.

There are, nevertheless, differences between certain groups of songwriters and associated primary audiences. Allan, as noted in the previous chapter (see section 1.5.4.), draws a distinction between what I will term the 'early' and 'later' authors. His comments, originally made in an 1872 anthology, are reprinted in the 1891 edition:

The older writers wrote for their own amusement, and sung their songs at social meetings amongst their friends; now Tyneside songs are generally launched into popularity from the stage of the concert hall

(Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v)

Immersed as he was in song-publishing from the 1860s, and having undoubtedly witnessed performances, the implication of Allan's comments might be that social and cultural differences exist between audiences as the century progresses.

Too much categorising is not always helpful and might obscure similarities. However, it is useful to make some distinctions here. Following Allan, I take the early songwriters to be those producing material prior to the significant growth of the music hall. This can be difficult to date. Nevertheless, while Fordyce (ed. 1842:275-7) includes a song called 'The Music Hall' in his edition of 1842, it seems that 1849, the approximate date of Robson's edition, provides a more clear dividing line. Authors on whom I focus, who were producing work prior to that time, either wrote well before the growth of music halls, or performed mainly in settings which pre-dated them. On the other hand, while Harker (1972:xix, 1981:47) says that the development of Tyneside halls was 'spectacular' in the 1850s, he is clear that the absorption of various cultural institutions into these venues was well under way by the late 1840s. This is largely in line with Kift's (1996:1) belief that the music hall began in Britain's major industrial centres at about mid-century.

Thus, I group authors into two broad categories, based on the time period when they became prominent, and when significant numbers of their songs were first published:

- 'Early' period (pre-1849): Shield, Thompson, Selkirk, Midford, Emery, Gilchrist, Armstrong, Nunn
- 'Later' period (1849 onwards): Robson, Corvan, Ridley, Wilson

This division is only used strictly on occasions when statistics are required. Nunn and Robson in particular remain difficult to categorise absolutely. Nevertheless, in broad

terms, physical and cultural differences frequently do exist between the early and later contexts that I have specified for the emergence of Tyneside song. If Allan is correct in stating that (most) of the early writers performed among friends, while the later writers' songs were performed to concert-hall audiences, then it may be that primary audiences do frequently differ. We see that the early popular writers are in the main shopkeepers, merchants, clerks, and skilled artisans. It is fair to assume that many of their friends would be from similar backgrounds. While some of the later writers, too, would seem to fit such categories, we shall see that their primary audience almost certainly belongs largely to the industrial labouring class.

Harker makes much of the performance context of early song. For him, with the exception of Nunn, the early songwriters from Shield to Armstrong (to which he adds Robson) are part of a burgeoning culture of convivial and trade-based clubs and societies which developed into the free and easy; members of such clubs meet in the backrooms of inns, he says, where the pitmen and keelmen, of whom they are frequently terrified, can be satirised in safety (Harker 1972:ix, xii, 1981:44-6, 1985b:64, 73-4). For Harker (1985b:60), such groups are gradually separating themselves off culturally from the industrial labouring classes.

Kift makes a clear challenge to such an interpretation. She claims that in the nineteenth century across the nation, the 'old lower middle class – shopkeepers and artisans' and the 'new lower middle class, clerks and shop assistants ... chose to participate in working-class rather than exclusively in middle-class cultural activities' (Kift 1996:67). Nevertheless, when we consider Allan's account, and when we disentangle historical evidence from Harker's heavily Marxist perspective, it can be seen that numerous early songwriters were indeed involved in convivial gatherings and societies, which would certainly consist largely of members with similar social backgrounds. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:230) comments that social meetings of Newcastle's tradesmen held in public houses after business hours were at this time 'the rage'. On Thompson's death, a correspondent to the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* of 1816 (cited in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:40) noted that he had 'so often charmed the social circle ... It were unnecessary to say how much his presence was courted wherever humour and vivacity were considered an ingredient contributing to social recreation'. The tone of the comment suggests that the

correspondent has a somewhat 'polite' and 'refined' social set in mind. Midford's first collection of 1816 is entitled 'The Feast of Momus; Or, Oddfellows Cabinet', and is dedicated by 'Brother' Midford to the 'Loyal Union Lodge of Oddfellows' (cited in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:133). The Oddfellows appear to have arisen among artisans in the medieval period, but they developed a role in the nineteenth century as mutual benefit societies (Oddfellows n.d.). Emery's songs first appear in a collection of pieces 'mainly by Oddfellows' (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:289). While I have assigned Robson to the later period, his StE song, 'A night with a jovial set'*, is telling in relation to the early song performance culture:

A night with a jovial set,
A song with a merry crew,
For Oddfellows here are met,
In the bands of friendship true.

('A night with a jovial set' in Robson ed. c.1849:502)

This, and another Robson song, 'Hail, hail to the Order'* (in Robson ed. c.1849:512), suggests that Robson was involved with the Oddfellows in some way. But more importantly 'A night with a jovial set' seems to indicate that, in addition to their functions as mutual benefit societies, such organisations operated as convivial clubs where song played a vital part. Clearly, Robson crosses between such a culture and the developing music hall. Emery somewhat mocks the 'Oddfellows' in his song, 'The Mechanics' Procession' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:221), but this is only to praise mechanics' lodges instead. From evidence in this piece, and the brief details about the author given for 'The Skipper's Account of the Mechanics' Procession' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:271), it seems clear that Emery belongs to the mechanics' 'Nelson Lodge', about which he sings in the former song. Armstrong, meanwhile, was a member of a social club, the Stars of Friendship (whose members also included a silver-smith), in which he was 'highly esteemed' as a writer and performer of songs (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:215).

It seems, then, that the initial or primary audiences of most of the early songwriters shared similar backgrounds with the authors themselves. We should remember also that the early writers frequently satirise pitmen and keelmen (see sections 1.5.4. and 5.2.1.). This is indicated by Midford's 'Feast of Momus' and comments made by Marshall (ed. 1827:i; cf. Fordyce ed. 1842:iii, Midford 1818).

Here a comparison with the music hall audience is instructive. Russell (1997:122) indicates that the audience in Tyneside music halls is largely homogeneous, made up of pitmen, keelmen and engineers. In fact, the keelmen as a class had declined greatly in numbers since the 1820s and 30s (Griffiths 2005:xviii, Harker 1985b:75). However, it is clear that Robson, Corvan, Ridley and Wilson, are among those songwriters and entertainers providing material for venues whose audiences were dominated by the industrial labouring class. These audiences were large. Arthey (1978:16-17) notes the capacity of various Newcastle halls: the Tyne held 2,840, Balmbra's, once it became The Oxford, held between seven and eight hundred, while The Grainger held between three and four hundred.

There are, nevertheless, some important points to be made in relation to the early / late division that I have established. Firstly, as I have stressed already in this thesis, I am not suggesting that material by the bulk of the early writers failed to appeal to the industrial labouring classes. There is certainly evidence that it did have such an appeal (cf. Colls 1977:37, 51, Vicinus 1974:34-36, Bell, D.:2003:14). The fact that Midford was able to make a career as a singing pub landlord suggests that his material would have wide popularity. In addition, while Robson appears to have more in common educationally and culturally with the early writers, his songs appear to have been performed at both convivial meetings and music halls.

On the other hand, an author who does not comfortably fit the pattern among the early writers is Bobby Nunn, who tended to perform semi-professionally at various labouring-class benefit society meetings (Harker 1972:xi-xii). This seems to be somewhat different from the early song culture enjoyed among the groups of friends described by Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v, 320), and the convivial club culture that I have discussed. Undoubtedly, however, there was considerable cross-over between various institutions. Evidently, Emery was a friend of Nunn, and knew his act. As we have seen, Emery's song, 'The Sandgate Lassie's Lament', specifically highlights Nunn's performances (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:319-20).

Despite these difficulties of categorisation, I believe the distinction I suggest remains legitimate. Early writers tend to belong to a class of tradesmen, shopkeepers, clerks and

skilled artisans. They entertain friends in convivial meetings. The later writers are often professional performers, and provide material and entertainment for audiences in the music hall which are dominated by members of the industrial labouring classes.

It is with a notion of 'Tynesideness' in the songs, but also taking into account contrasts in the social backgrounds of singers and primary audiences between the early and later periods, that I have designed my linguistic approach. I will identify a set of features in print that occur prominently in the songs and convey local linguistic identity. However, I also intend to make linguistic comparisons between various voice types in the material across the two time periods, an approach influenced by ideas that song culture and audiences could differ between the two periods, that early songs frequently satirise the industrial labouring classes (cf. Marshall ed. 1827:i, Fordyce ed. 1842:iii), and that later audiences are heavily made up of that group. Both types of analysis are based upon an electronic corpus constructed using the works of the writers that I have specified in this section.

2.3. Building an Electronic Corpus

2.3.1. Policy on Texts

The construction of my electronic corpus is based on the work of the twelve authors already listed, their attested popularity being the criterion for inclusion. For reasons that I explain below, I have opted to use the earliest accessible and substantial sources of material by authors. The outcome is that I have created the first authentic and sizeable electronic corpus of nineteenth-century Tyneside song that can be subjected to computer-based linguistic searches and analysis.

It would, of course, have been more straightforward to use the large anthology of Tyneside song edited at the end of the century by Allan (1891, 1972 edn.). It contains material by all of the most popular writers. However, in some cases, other earlier anthologies and collections of works by individual authors contain more songs per writer than Allan's collection. This makes them attractive because I wish to use sources that contain substantial numbers of songs by authors.

An equally important issue, however, is that Allan's editorial practices are, to say the least, invasive. Not only does he change spellings from his sources, but, more seriously, he removes what he regards as 'indecent' words, and wherever he feels justified he changes or removes entire verses (cf. Harker 1972:xxvi, Gregson 1983:4). This contrasts with other editors, who remove letters from 'indecent' words, replacing them with dashes, but leave the words recognisable. Harker (1972:xxvi) notes that texts are changed by Allan in ways for which no printed precedent is to be found. At the very least we can say that Allan has a preference for the most 'decent' versions of his songs. For example, in one piece, 'Ma' Canny Hinny'*, Allan, citing Bell's edition as his source, changes 'stannin p----n on the brig' to 'lukin' ower the brig' (in Bell ed.1812, 1971 edn.:9; in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:116). We can also compare Allan with another source, Marshall's edition of songs in 1827. In 'The Glister', by Armstrong, a doctor tells a pitman's wife that she has incorrectly administered an enema to her husband:

'Stead of making him better, you've sure made him warse,
For you've put in his mouth what should gone up his a--e.

(*'The Glister'* in Marshall ed. 1827:69)

Allan, despite claiming to use Marshall as his source, changes the lines:

"Stead of makin him better, poor Tommy must go,
For you've put in his mouth what we put up below."

(*'The Glister'* in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:219)

Likewise, Allan appears to remove a verse and change another in Armstrong's song, *'The Skipper in the Mist'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:220) because his source (Fordyce ed. 1842:319-20) twice uses the word *bog*, simply meaning 'swamp'. Various other examples could be given of Allan's preference for more polite versions of songs. However, one further instance will have to suffice. In the case of Nunn's *'Drucken Bella Roy-O'*, Allan claims to use the author's edition, but whether by his own or Nunn's doing, entire verses are missing from the text that are found in Fordyce (ed.:1842). Thus in Fordyce we have the following:

Believe me, friends, these are her words:

She says – Get hyem, ye w----'s birds,

Else aw'll bray ye as flat as t---s,

Cries drucken Bella Roy, O!

(*'Drucken Bella Roy, O!'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:273)

Allan clearly has an editorial preference for the more 'decent' versions of songs and, on occasions, will alter or re-write them to achieve that 'decency'.

In the case of the songs that I have just discussed which appear in the electronic corpus, I use Fordyce's edition of 1842 as my source. Indeed, given that I wish to examine the most important non-standard orthography, and that this thesis takes as a central issue the *dialogue* that occurs between songs and discourses of propriety in the nineteenth century, it is essential to use early versions that are as little changed as possible. In the construction of my electronic corpus I therefore use the earliest or most accessible sources that contain substantial numbers of songs. This might involve using collections by individual authors, or early anthologies by editors, such as Fordyce, whose concern for propriety does not, on the face of it, lead them to re-write texts.

2.3.2. Song Types and Quantity

Authors might produce songs that fit into three broad categories, all of which can occur in a single collection or anthology. Some pieces are entirely in StE orthography and are not considered in this thesis in any great detail. The focus is upon the two other categories which I have established based on a distinction made by Shorrocks (1996:386). As with the time periods for Tyneside song, my analysis will not be bound by these categories. Instead, they are used only when helpful. Shorrocks (1996:386; see also section 1.5.1) employs the term *(non-standard) dialect literature* to refer to 'works composed wholly (sometimes partly) in a non-standard dialect, and aimed essentially, though not exclusively, at a non-standard-dialect-speaking readership'. On the other hand, he uses the term *literary dialect* to refer to 'the representation of non-standard speech in literature that is otherwise written in standard English ... and aimed at a general readership' (Shorrocks 1996:386). For the purposes of this analysis, I have adapted Shorrocks's definitions, making some significant changes. Based on orthography, I make distinctions between two categories of song, even where *both* might be aimed at a 'non-standard-dialect-speaking readership'. Thus my categories are as follows:

- *Non-standard dialect songs*. This category includes songs in which all voices are non-standard, and those songs which have a non-standard narrative voice, but may include characters using StE.
- *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. These usually have a StE narrative voice and include characters using non-standard dialect, or they contain a minimal amount of non-standard dialect.

The electronic corpus contains songs by the twelve authors that I have discussed which fit into either of these categories. In the general analysis and the literary discussion conducted in subsequent chapters, the distinction is not always maintained. Nevertheless, the two song categories are useful for statistical analysis, which will show, for instance, that in the early period differentiation between voices occurs in both types of songs, particularly between pitmen and keelmen on one side as compared to other male voices.

Authors produce varying numbers of songs. The quantity included per author in the electronic corpus is simply the number from the source texts that fit into the two

categories of song that I have established. Thus, in the case of Thompson, there are only three songs, while there are 88 pieces by Wilson. Full details of the songs used in the electronic corpus, and of the categories into which they fit, are given in Appendix A. Altogether, the corpus comprises 285 songs and contains over 100,000 words. In the early period there are 59 *non-standard dialect songs*, and 16 *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. In the later period there are 205 *non-standard dialect songs*, compared to just five in the category, *StE featuring literary dialect*. From the perspective of corpus linguistics this collection of songs might seem relatively small. However, Sinclair's (1991:19) claim that a corpus should contain 'many millions of words' need not cause concern. My purpose is to analyse material by highly popular songwriters, chosen specifically because it contains non-standard orthography in addition to other regional features. In this respect, the corpus does represent a sizeable proportion of the most popular Tyneside songs of the period. My analysis works between the literary and the linguistic, and it is therefore appropriate to be selective both in choice of authors and in the features that I intend to consider. The songs in the electronic corpus will be my primary focus, but particularly in my literary analysis I will also use material from outside the corpus wherever necessary.

2.3.3. Minor Groups of Song

A small number of songs (thirteen in total) are included in the corpus even though it is clear, from their language, themes or titles, that they represent or contain other non-standard dialects. In particular, they represent 'Scots', although some convey 'Irish' speech, or even non-standard 'gentrified' features. Of these, only one song appears in the early period, and twelve are found after that. In the later period, ten are by Robson, and two by Corvan. Eight pieces represent 'Scots' voices. More details of the distribution of these texts in the *non-standard dialect songs* and *StE songs featuring literary dialect* can be found in Appendix A.

The material is included in the corpus for several reasons. Despite a 'Scots' quality, at least two songs by Robson undoubtedly have a narrator who appears to hail from Tyneside or the North-East. A more general point is that Scots and Tyneside English have common roots and significant similarities (Beal 1993:189-90). To some degree this

is reflected in a shared range of orthography and words. This can be observed through even a casual comparison of songs that are indisputably intended to represent the English of industrial Tyneside and, for instance, the work of Burns (cf. Kinsley ed. 1968). For practical reasons, then, relating to setting, and on linguistic grounds, exclusion of the 'Scots' pieces would be inappropriate or problematic. The most simple policy is therefore to include any song that features non-standard orthography.

In the analysis in subsequent chapters, none of the features which I highlight as examples of Tyneside English in print arise wholly from this small group of songs, and the great majority of occurrences arise from the rest of the material (see section 2.4. and Chapter Three). Likewise, when I come to look at contrasts or convergences between voice types, statistical analysis is not compromised by the inclusion of these songs (see sections 2.5. and 4.2.). The focus linguistically and thematically will be on Tyneside, its language and the meaning of that language in the bulk of the songs.

2.3.4. Transcription

The electronic corpus itself was created using a professional transcription service run jointly by the Royal National Institute of Blind People and the University of Leeds. Texts were transcribed into Microsoft Word, and proofread to appear (page formatting aside) as they do in the originals. Therefore typographical errors which occur in the source texts are retained. While short titles and stage / performance directions are included, they are not considered for statistical purposes. It is helpful at this stage to outline what that statistical analysis will involve.

2.4. Local Linguistic Identity

2.4.1. Initial Comments

This thesis, as noted already, works between linguistic and literary analysis. The linguistic approach will permit some of the statistical rigour often found in that field, while the literary will allow selective use of material and features for particular focus, and flexibility of interpretation. As a result, I do not intend an exhaustive analysis of every feature that might be deemed non-standard or regional in written form. In Chapter Three, which examines features important to local linguistic identity in print, analysis is based on the electronic corpus as a whole, without making use of the distinction between *non-standard dialect songs* and *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. As will be seen, however, this distinction is helpful in subsequent analysis.

2.4.2. Non-Standard Orthography

A brief glance at many of the songs in my electronic corpus shows that the most common means of conveying a local dialect is through non-standard orthography. This accords with Blake's finding in relation to mainstream literature, that the most

important aspect of non-standard language in literature is the use of spelling to suggest a deviant pronunciation. This is instantly recognizable as non-standard precisely because spelling has been standardized for so long.

(Blake 1981:15; cf. Chapman 1984:84-5)

It is important to understand, however, that non-standard spellings cannot represent sounds accurately. Ellis (1889:639; cf. Blake 1981:16, Chapman 1984:60) recognised this as far back as 1889 in a discussion of north-east dialect literature, and he called the conventions used 'unscientific'. We should never lose sight of this fact in a consideration of non-standard spellings in Tyneside song.

It may be, nevertheless, that authors do attempt to represent what they hear and perhaps speak, but that they also work within certain non-standard traditions. We shall see that

patterns of spelling frequently correspond to known and attested phonological contexts. In fact, this may be one reason why the spellings are important. As Jaffe says:

Orthography is a tool in the symbolic fusion of language and identity: in Decrosse's terms, it is orthography that creates the idea of the 'Mother Tongue': a potent metaphor of self and community united in a shared primordial attachment to a language ...

(Jaffe: 2000:503)

Jaffe (2000:504) argues that once individuals step out from the framework of standard orthographies that have categorical authority, they often show a desire to have their linguistic identities recognised by that orthography. Thus non-standard orthography may have a role similar to that fulfilled by national vernacular languages in print, in the national Imagined Community envisaged by Anderson (1991:37-46).

When considered in conjunction with discourses that identify and reinforce an idea of 'Tyneside songs', orthography becomes a key feature in the building of a sense of locality. As I have suggested in the previous chapter, the use of the phrases *Newcastle songs* or *Tyneside songs* on title pages plays a role in an ongoing process that constructs associations between orthography, recognised phonological contexts, and place (see sections 1.7.5. and 6.3.1.).

2.4.3. Analysis of Orthography

Recognition of non-standard orthography is straightforward. As noted, Blake (1981:15) points out that the attempt to depict what he terms a 'deviant pronunciation' is instantly recognisable because the spelling system has been standardized for so long. Görlach (1999:9; cf. Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:16) adds that the homogeneity of what became the current educated written English was largely settled by 1600. As noted, then, identification of non-standard orthography is quite simple.

In Chapter Three I use the computer package *Oxford WordSmith Tools* to detect those words that are spelled at least fifty times using non-standard orthography. These can then be categorised by taking into account the following:

- Broad groups that share non-standard spellings.

- The StE spellings with which sub-groups of these words alternate, and the pronunciation of those sub-groups in modern Received Pronunciation (RP).
- The phonological history of these sub-groups in terms of the development of traditional local or regional pronunciation in the North-East.

A brief example will show how this works. The non-standard spelling <ee> provides an orthographic category. This category includes two sub-groups, realised in the corpus through the following words:

- <neet>, <reet> *night, right*
- <weel>, <heed> *well, head*

The words belong to separate sub-categories based on the StE spellings with which they alternate, their different pronunciations in modern RP, and the separate linguistic histories of the two sub-groups, which, nevertheless, result in each case in the traditional regional pronunciation /i:/. It should be noted that comparisons with modern RP are merely used here as a tool for the creation of categories based on relevant contrasts in phonological history. This is done in full awareness that RP may not have emerged until relatively late in the nineteenth century (cf. J. Milroy 2002:14, Honey cited in L. Milroy 1999:185).

I will give an account of the words that occur at least fifty times, and highlight the category to which they belong. In doing so, I do not intend to be exhaustive. I shall list those categories that seem to be most important either because single words occur with non-standard spellings very often, or because a particular non-standard spelling occurs in a range of words. This is informed by a close reading of texts. While it must be stressed again that spellings do not represent sounds in any one-to-one manner, Tyneside orthography often does coincide with attested phonological contexts. It frequently represents attempts by writers to convey certain pronunciations, or might reflect traditions in respect of this.

2.4.3. Tyneside Words

Along with the identification of non-standard orthography in Chapter Three, I shall also draw attention to some of the most commonly occurring and iconic words in the corpus, that are considered to be part of the Tyneside dialect. Dialect dictionaries are used to confirm local use. In the case of these lexical items I intend to be highly selective. Features will be among those that occur at least fifty times, but the decision to list them is based on my intimate literary knowledge of these texts and of the cultural resonances of the words. In this respect, taking into account the literary analysis relating to certain words that I intend to conduct in the final chapters of this thesis, I will highlight an even smaller group of words that are especially cherished, or which have particular resonances in performance contexts on Tyneside. They will play a central part in subsequent exploration of the meaning of the dialect.

This section has outlined the methodology for Chapter Three, which focuses on features central to local linguistic identity in printed songs. The mere use, however, of local words or of non-standard spellings is not taken in this thesis to be an unqualified expression of such identity. These representations need to be interrogated further. I wish to explore the way in which features might actually demonstrate contrasts and convergences in voice types across the early and later periods.

2.5. Voices, Linguistic Range, Character

2.5.1. Voice Types

In Chapter Four I compare the proportions (expressed as percentages) of non-standard and StE spellings that are used in the representation of different types of voice across the two time periods identified. This needs to be understood within a more general approach in this thesis – that of focusing upon those groups which are overtly identified and well defined in the songs. It also relates to an emphasis on the relationship between language and character in certain groups that will be explored as the thesis progresses. Therefore the following categories, which are extremely helpful for statistical purposes, must be seen as only part of a wider interpretive approach, which focuses on those groups that are most visible in performance contexts and culturally prominent on Tyneside. The voices are as follows:

- Pitmen and keelmen
- Their wives and sweethearts
- Other male voices
- Other female voices
- Mixed or ungendered voices

While pitmen and keelmen are not in reality a homogeneous group, the similarity in the way that they are treated in songs is obvious. Especially in the early nineteenth century, they are the most conspicuous representatives of the labouring classes in these pieces and in the locality generally (cf. Colls 1977:26). Thus, one way or another, they are iconic or symbolic of industrial Tyneside (cf. Wales 2006:135, Joyce 1991:284). They are, of course, also of interest precisely because of the claim that they are the subject of satire among the early writers (cf. Marshall ed. 1827:i; see also sections 1.5.4. and 5.2.1.). In the songs pitmen / keelmen always appear as characters or first-person characters / narrators. Apart from their wives and sweethearts, other groups are far less clearly

defined in the songs. Other male voices, in particular, may include a range of functions as characters or narrators (both first and third-person), and reflect a variety of social backgrounds. The mixed / ungendered voice group is also diffuse, in that it is employed to organise those voices represented when, for instance, crowds speak, or when inanimate objects such as a bridge hold forth. In the literary discussion later in the thesis I will not be bound by these categories. As noted, however, they are helpful for statistical purposes in order to identify patterns of contrast and similarity in voice type.

2.5.2. Comparison through Orthography

In order to identify the patterns of language use among various voice types, I employ a number of approaches. As a starting point, I will use single words, treated as 'linguistic variables' to compare use of StE / non-standard spellings in representing these various voice categories. The 'variable' is a commonly used tool in sociolinguistics, being an abstract linguistic entity that has variant forms (Chambers 1995:17). In this thesis specific words will act as 'variables' and have both StE and non-standard forms of spelling. I will use three words that are among the most frequently occurring in non-standard form in the corpus. Preference is given to those words that display a relatively narrow range of variation in spelling rather than those with many different non-standard forms. Analysis of these features is carried out separately on *non-standard dialect songs* and *StE songs featuring literary dialect*.

Particularly among the early writers this analysis of the proportions of StE / non-standard orthography relates to the evidence that pitmen and keelmen are the subject of satire in song (Marshall ed. 1827:i; cf. Fordyce ed. 1842:iii). If there is linguistic differentiation between these groups and the voices of others, then it will be important to consider why that might be. The analysis is also intended to shed light on the relationship of narrator / performer and primary audiences or readers, and their attitudes towards the industrial labouring classes in each time period.

2.5.3. The Role of Expletives

I have stressed in the previous chapter that the meaning of the songs, whether they are considered to be satire in the early century or a form of cultural resistance later, may emerge from a *dialogue* with discourses and ideologies of respectability, propriety, and correctness (see section 1.7.1.). Thus satire may be targeted at those represented as lacking the 'proper' attributes, while in the later period, depictions of character or persona might be based on resistance to such qualities, or their adoption only selectively. A careful reading of the corpus shows that oaths or expletives are commonplace. In respect of the orientation of voices to discourses of propriety, an examination of these would be particularly fruitful. Some straightforward definitions will be helpful at this stage. Thus in *OED* (*n.* 2.) an *oath* is 'a profane or blasphemous utterance, a curse. Now (also): any strong expletive expressing anger, frustration, etc., often with substitution for, or omission of, a sacred name'. Likewise the noun *expletive* often applies to 'a profane oath or other meaningless exclamation' (*OED:a.* and *n.* B.*n.*1.b). For Biber et al. (2002:457) an *expletive* is 'a "swearword", a taboo or semi-taboo expression used as an exclamation'. Whether such words are ever 'meaningless', as *OED* puts it, is doubtful, and it is clear that these words are worth consideration in a period when discourses of respectability are so powerful.

In addition, then, to the analysis of the proportions of StE / non-standard spellings by voice type offered in Chapter Four, I will present a statistical analysis of the use of two specific expletives (irrespective of song type) by each of these voice categories. This will involve investigating the number of occurrences (expressed as percentages) of these expletives used by various types of speaker in both time periods (see section 4.2.4.).

2.5.4. Linguistic Contrast and Convergence: a Literary Approach

The purpose of the statistical analysis in Chapter Four is to provide a basis for a more general literary discussion in that chapter, looking at the contrasts and convergences in language that occur between certain voice categories across the two time periods. Of particular interest are the voices of pitmen / keelmen and other males. This analysis will

involve a far more discursive consideration of a range of songs, taking into account proportions of StE / non-standard spellings, the use of expletives, oaths and swearing, and also the use of French / Latinate words. My aim is to recognise what are, at some times stark and at other times subtle, contrasts in language that can occur both between songs and within individual songs in the early period. Linguistic similarities in voice type in the later period are also of great importance. All of this will be fundamental to a consideration of character and language in the material.

2.5.5. Language, Character, Audience, and Locality

The social meanings of language are a central concern of this thesis. Those meanings, upon which the concept of *indexicality* is based, operate at various levels. One of the most important of these is the relationship between language and character trait. The statistical details that I obtain in relation to language and various voice types, along with the literary analysis of contrasts and convergence in voices, informs a discussion in Chapter Five of the relationship between language and character as it applies to pitmen and keelmen. However, I will go further, and consider the role that specific linguistic features play from the early century to the later period in the representation and development of character trait in these groups, and in the labouring class community more generally.

This thesis takes account of the idea that songs might be satirical, and that the dialect, when written down or performed, is frequently associated with comedy. Pitmen and keelmen are said by Marshall (ed. 1827:i) to be the subjects of satire. Frequently, as will be seen, this satire involves the implication that they lack intelligence. An ideal means of assessing satire and comedy in language is the consideration of malapropism. This is especially helpful in an examination of dialect song, which is so often held to be a symbol of local identity and pride, and of the representation of groups – again the pitmen and keelmen – who are so often claimed to be iconic of Tyneside (cf. Wales 2006:135, Joyce 1991:284). The question will arise as to why the malapropisms that I identify are there at all. A more detailed rationale and description of my approach is given in Chapter Five itself.

My analysis does not simply take as axiomatic the notion that 'Tyneside song' is a straightforward symbol of the locality, local linguistic identity and community. This, however, is a common assertion. As such my approach implies a significant qualification of those arguments that maintain that certain well known lexical features are emblematic of Tyneside and of communal values. In this respect, in both chapters Five and Six, I propose to consider the semantic nuances and functions of a small number of words that have undoubted cultural resonances on Tyneside. My purpose will be to show that features commonly taken to be emblems of local identity or community, and of a set of (frequently positive) character traits, might be steeped in irony within specific songs, or that they might be the subject of struggles over their very definition and application to particular groups, character types, and indeed audiences. Only once these more complex issues, and the potential reaction of audiences to the use of the words, are taken into account, will it be possible to consider their role as vehicles of local identity. The words will be identified in the chapter that follows.

2.6. Summary

This chapter has provided a brief account of the most popular writers of Tyneside song in the nineteenth century, and of the broad, though necessarily imperfect, division that can be made between early and later authors. I have also described the manner in which I have constructed a unique electronic corpus of texts that can henceforth be subjected to computer-assisted analysis.

The thesis works between the linguistic and literary. Therefore, in the next chapter I shall investigate some of the most significant non-standard or local features in the songs, and some of the literary and creative uses to which they are put. However, despite the relevance of the dialect to a sense of local linguistic identity, I intend to show subsequently that differences or convergences in the levels of certain features used by various voice types are highly significant – whether StE / non-standard spellings or oaths and expletives. These statistics, together with patterns in use of French or Latinate words and malapropisms, combine to indicate distinctions or similarities between particular *social* or *cultural* types. My aim is to use the analysis of the dialect generally, and certain iconic words, as a basis for a more literary analysis in the thesis as a whole. It is an approach which will be attentive to the subtle manner in which texts may be satirical and celebratory: at times undermining social and local solidarities, at other times enhancing them. At the most straightforward level, however, those local solidarities are represented by a range of linguistic features which must be identified before their function is problematised.

Chapter Three

Tyneside Features in Song

3. 1. Introduction

The sounds of the Tyneside accent, along with local words that are heard in the home, at work, or in the street, are frequently crucial to a sense of linguistic identity in the area. Songs contain non-standard spellings that are found where recognised pronunciations occur in speech, and they contain words that are deemed to be part and parcel of the lives of ordinary people on Tyneside.

In this chapter I will identify some of the most common features of Tyneside dialect as represented in print. The analysis is based on my electronic corpus as a whole, and covers both *non-standard dialect songs* and *Standard English songs featuring literary dialect*. Throughout the analysis I intend to be selective. My focus, as suggested, is upon Tyneside spellings and local words. In addition, while I concentrate on those elements of dialect that occur at least fifty times, I highlight what I deem to be most relevant, based on my intimate knowledge of the texts, and in terms of subsequent literary analysis.

There is always potential for the material to be perceived in locally patriotic terms, and an understanding of those linguistic features which facilitate such perceptions is essential. So too is an initial consideration, to be elaborated later in the thesis, of the literary uses of these spellings and words, and their cultural resonances. In this chapter, as elsewhere in my analysis, the discussion will include some songs which are not part of the electronic corpus, and these are marked with an asterisk.

3.2. Non-Standard Orthography

3.2.1. Overview of Non-Standard Spelling

The sounds of the dialect and the spellings used to convey them are of central importance in this section. It must be reiterated, however, that orthography does not represent phonology directly. Discussion of Tyneside pronunciation should be understood as an account of major sound patterns (subject to variation) in particular groups of words in the locality, not as an absolute reflection of the pronunciation that writers might attempt to convey. Nevertheless, the fact that groups of non-standard spellings coincide with attested phonological contexts does permit us to suggest (strongly in some cases) that certain spellings are considered appropriate for the representation of particular sounds. Wherever this is the case, it is indicated. When I discuss pronunciation on Tyneside, it is also the case that such traditional pronunciation may be far more widespread, in the North, Scotland, or further afield.

The way in which non-standard spelling is analysed has been explained in greater detail in Chapter Two (see section 2.4.3.). It should be observed that this orthography alternates with Standard English (StE) in the corpus, in both the *non-standard dialect songs* and the *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. In addition, the spellings listed for each category are not necessarily the only non-standard spellings for that category.

Headings are listed alphabetically, and are further divided according to the sub-groups of words that they describe. As noted in the previous chapter, these categories are based on shared non-standard spellings and, as further organising principles, the StE forms from which they differ, and comparisons of the historical development of sound in Received Pronunciation (RP) and the traditional dialect. Pronunciations given for modern RP are based on *Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English* by Upton et al. (2003).3.2.2.

3.2.2. Tyneside <a>

Lang, Alang (Long, Along)

The variant spelling <a> before <ng>, where StE has <o>, is well represented in the corpus. The texts include the following words: <lang> *long*, <alang> *along*, <sang> *song* and <amang> / <'mang> *among*. In such words, Old English (OE) /a/ before nasal *ng* has developed into RP /ɒ/, or /ʌ/ in the case of *among*. The traditional pronunciation on Tyneside, though not stable since the OE period, has the older quality /a/ (cf. Viereck 1968:67, Wakelin 1977:90-91, Wright 1905:26-27, Orton et al. 1978:introduction).

3.2.3. Tyneside <aw> / <a'> / <au>

I deal with the following groups of words as an over-arching category. This is because of evidence that, with some variation, the words that they contain, when spoken in the traditional Tyneside dialect, may carry the vowel quality /a:/ (Wells 1982: 375, Heslop 1892:xviii-xix, Wright 1905).

Aw, Maw (I, My)

In this group, with some variation, <aw> alternates with StE <i> or <y>. There are many occurrences of <aw> *I*, either alone or in abbreviations, such as <aw'd> *I would*, <aw've> *I have*, and <aw'll> *I will*. Also prominent is <maw> for *my*. Whereas OE ȝ has given rise to /ʌ/ in RP, Tyneside English often has /a:/ in these words (Griffiths 2002:29, 2005:111, Heslop 1892:xviii, 2, Wright 1905:127-9, 535). In the case of the possessive determiner *me* can also occur where StE has *my*. The former might simply reflect pronunciation, but is sometimes described as if it represents inflexional morphology (cf. Wales 1996:16, Beal 1993:205).

A' (All)

The spelling <a'> alternates with StE <all> in this category. In addition to the word *all* – though the following items do not occur fifty or more times – the corpus also includes <ca'> *call*, <fa'> *fall*, <sma'> *small*, and <wa'> *wall*. The OE forms of these words included 'eal' (Wright 1905:34-5; cf. Viereck 1968:70). From this, the pronunciation in RP developed into /ɔ:l/; on Tyneside, however, the traditional pronunciation is frequently /a:/, and the /l/ may be vocalised – or absorbed into the vowel (Wright 1905:34-5, Wells 1982:375; cf. Heslop 1892:xviii, Jones 1997:319).

Aud (Old)

The spelling <au> alternates with in this category. While <aud> *old* is the only word in the group to appear at least fifty times, other words included in the corpus are <caud> *cold* and <haud> *hold*. The words derive from OE forms containing 'eal' + 'd' (Wright 1905:36-8). This has developed into RP /əʊl/. Frequently /l/ vocalisation has occurred on Tyneside, and, again, the traditional vowel can be /a:/, though sometimes /au/ (Wright 1905:36-8; cf. Wells 1982:375, Wales 2006:81, Jones 1997:319).

knaw (Know)

The spelling <knaw> *know* is worthy of note, as is <blaw> *blow*, though the latter occurs less than fifty times. In these words, which derive from forms that contained OE 'āw' (Wright 1905:100; cf. Viereck 1968:69), the RP vowel quality is /əʊ/, whereas the traditional Tyneside pronunciation is again /a:/ (Wells 1982:375).

Summary of <aw> / <aʰ> / <au>

These spellings are rightly treated together. Heslop (1892:xviii), using his own semi-phonetic spelling system, refers to the 'Northumberland *aa* (or *aw* as it is sometimes written)'. The words that he cites in these contexts clearly include many of those dealt with in this section. While I would stress, yet again, that I am making no claim that spelling represents sound accurately, these spellings do correspond to well attested phonological contexts. It is also worth noting that there is variation involving these spellings across sub-groups. The form <aw> in particular is used across categories, appearing, for instance, in <aw> *all*. As with most other words for which non-standard spellings are available, both Tyneside and StE spellings are used, often within the same songs. Nevertheless, the categories are crucial elements in the representation of Tyneside dialect. The fact that certain non-standard spellings cross categories reinforces this impression.

3.2.4. Tyneside <e>

Se, Ne (So, No)

The spellings <se> and <ne> occur for the words *so* and *no*, both of which are pronounced with /əʊ/ in RP. Emerging from OE 'swā' and 'nān', there is a traditional Tyneside vowel quality approximating to /i:/ in *so* and in the adjective *no* (Wright 1905:97, Griffiths 2005:121, 159, *OED*:etymologies in *so*, *adv.* and *conj.*, in *no*, *adj.*, and in *none*, *pron.*, *adj.*, and *adv.*). However, the existence of unstressed /ə/ in *so* should also be born in mind (Wright 1905:608). Less frequently, the spellings <sae> and <nae> are found.

3.2.5. Tyneside <ee>

Neet, Reet, Leet (Night, Right, Light)

Tyneside <ee> alternates with StE <igh>, in the words *night*, *right* and *light*. Beal (2000:349; cf. Wells 1982:357) is clear that this spelling is used to represent the traditional pronunciation /i:/. In RP such words have the vowel quality <ʌɪ>. Based on accounts by Beal (2004:125, 2000:349), the different pronunciations can be explained as follows. The consonant /ɣ/ was retained longer in the North than the South, where it was lost before the Great Vowel Shift. This meant that in the South the preceding vowel was lengthened and then diphthongised during the Vowel Shift. In the North, by contrast, where the /ɣ/ was lost after the Shift, the original 'i' vowel was simply lengthened to /i:/.

Weel, Heed (Well, Head)

In this group of words, <ee> alternates with StE <e> or <ea>. In addition to <weel> and <heed>, the group also includes <fareweel> *farewell*, and <deed> *dead*, though the latter do not occur on fifty or more occasions. Accounts of the development of the vowel in these words differ, but authors agree that the traditional Tyneside pronunciation is /i:/ (Viereck 1968:71-2, Griffiths 2002:31). In RP, of course, the vowel developed to /e/.

3.2.6. Tyneside <oo>

Noo, Doon, Oot (Now, Down, Out)

The Tyneside spelling <oo> alternates with StE <ow> or <ou> in this group. In addition to the words in the heading, the following also occur at least fifty times: <aboot / 'boot> *about*, <toon> *town*, <hoo> *how*, <hoose> *house*. The spelling is intended to represent the sound /u:/, which persisted in traditional dialects of the far North, having not been subjected to the Great Vowel Shift (Beal 2000:348, 2004:124, Wells 1982:359). In

more southerly areas where the shift did occur, the vowel in RP is now /aʊ/. Wells (1982:359) points out that the pronunciation of such words provides an important division between a linguistic 'middle north', and a 'far north' where /u:/ persisted. In a more limited study than my own Beal (2000:348-9) identifies <oo> as the most commonly used non-standard spelling in nineteenth and twentieth-century Tyneside dialect literature. While this is not the case in my own more substantial corpus, there is no doubt that <oo> is of great importance.

3.2.7. Tyneside <ye>

This section describes three sub-categories of words which have been grouped together because of the shared historical development of relevant vowels from Middle English /a:/ or /ɔ:/ (Viereck 1968:69, Orton et al. 1978:introduction). While Viereck (1968:69, 76) tends to describe the traditional vowel found in many of these words as /jɛ/, there are some differences among scholars as to the sound, and these are described in individual entries.

Myek, Tyek (Make, Take)

In this category <ye> alternates with StE <a>. Along with <tyek> *take*, and <myek> *make*, <myed> *made* also has this non-standard spelling. The development in RP for these words has been into /eɪ/. On Tyneside Viereck (1968:69) indicates that the vowel developed to /jɛ/, though it is described as /iə/ and /ɪə/ respectively by Beal (2004:123) and Wales (2006:132). There is an additional pronunciation of *make* and *take* in the traditional dialect, where the short /a/ occurs (Wright 1905:41-2, Griffiths 2002:29). In the corpus spellings appear occasionally to reflect this with the use of <mak> *make* and <tak> *take*.

Hyem, Byeth (Home, Both)

In *home* and *both* <ye> alternates with the <o> of StE. In RP the vowel in these words is /əʊ/. Again, however, there is some disagreement as to their pronunciation in traditional Tyneside dialect. Both Viereck (1968:69) and Orton et al. (1978:introduction) list /jɛ/. However, Wales (2006:132) indicates that the sound is /ɪə/, while for Beal (2004:123) the vowel quality is /uə/. To a far lesser extent in the corpus some words spelled <oa> in StE, also have Tyneside <ye>, such as <yek> *oak* and <syep> *soap*.

Yen, Gyen (One, Gone)

The alternation in spelling is again between <ye> and <o> in this category, which also includes <yence> *once* and <nyen> *none*. In words such as *one* an /ʌ/ vowel occurs in RP, but I have included <gyen> *gone* in this group (cf. Wright 1905:105), even though its vowel in RP is /ɒ/. There are some differences as to the nature of the North-East vowel, but, in several of these words, Orton et al. (1978; cf. Wright 1905:107) say that in Northumberland the pronunciation is /jɛ/.

Drawing <ye> Together

The spelling <ye> is of great importance in the corpus, and crosses a range of contexts. As with most other categories, however, variation occurs, both between StE and the non-standard, and between different non-standard spellings. Thus, for instance, in the *make* group, as noted, the spellings <mak> and <tak> may occur; in the *home* group, <hame> and <baith> are found; and in all categories a <ey> spelling also appears. Nevertheless, by far the dominant non-standard form is <ye>. The disagreement among scholars as to the pronunciation of words in the <ye> category probably reflects variation within the traditional dialect. It also seems that the spelling <ye> refers to pronunciations that, in some words, have been lost.

3.2.8. Linking Prosody

Within the corpus there is strong evidence for the influence of what Wales (2006:132) terms 'linking prosody', or what Heslop (1892:xx) calls 'euphony'. Taking the following prominent examples from the corpus, the system can be described, broadly, according to Heslop's account (1892:xx, individual entries):

- *With*: <wi'> before a consonant or close vowel / <wiv> before an open vowel.
- *In*: <i'> before a consonant / <iv> before a vowel.
- *To*: <te> or <ti> before a consonant / <tiv> before a vowel.

Among other words, <de> / <div> *do*, <fra>, <frae> / <frev> *from*, and <hae> / <hev> *have*, all follow the same general pattern. However, some forms might occur less than fifty times. While Heslop does not include it in the system, the word *of*, with forms including <o'> and <ov>, can be added to this list. Authors do not adhere to the rules rigidly, but these patterns do correspond to known phonological contexts.

3.2.9. Consonants

An' / An (And)

In the case of the single word *and*, the spellings <an'> or <an> are found very frequently. These represent the unstressed or weak form of the word, which can be transcribed phonologically as /(\ə)n(d)/ or /(\ə)n/ (*OED:conj.*¹, *adv.*, and *n.* pronunciation). It is clear from *OED* (see *an, conj.* and *n. A.conj.1.*) that the spelling is widely used in print to represent various regional dialect pronunciations of the word. Nevertheless, despite a more widespread use, in the electronic corpus the spelling must be taken as a conscious attempt by authors to represent Tyneside speech.

Runnin, Mornin (Running, Morning)

A further spelling which is very common is the <n'> / <n> ending in verbs and nouns, where StE has <ing>. Examples are <runnin> *running* and <mornin> *morning*. This may reflect a form of pronunciation used in almost every English speaking community (Wells 1982:262). In fact, it was the fashionable form in the eighteenth century, but began to be proscribed by the end of it (Wells 1982:262, Beal 2004:127). As with non-standard spellings of *and*, the fact that such uses are always highly conscious, indicates that this spelling must be seen, usually, as part of the effort to represent Tyneside speech. This is the case even though such written forms and pronunciations are more widespread.

3.2.10. Orthography Writ Large

I have drawn together some of the most important non-standard spellings to be found in the electronic corpus. The great majority of these forms are in evidence in both the early and later songs, thus spanning the periods before and after 1849. This suggests a degree of continuity and tradition in the use of these spellings. The list of features is not exhaustive, and there are some further areas that could have been covered.

I have, nevertheless, listed some important orthographic features, which songwriters deploy in a conscious manner to represent the Tyneside dialect. It must be said that by working within traditions authors clearly have models to emulate. Their efforts are not necessarily 'one-off' phonetics. However, influenced by Coupland (2001:369-70) and Giddens (1996:63-4), I contend that tradition and culture are active ongoing processes of both construction and reiteration. Thus barely codified non-standard spelling systems will be subject to processes in which conscious efforts to represent speech combine with pre-existing models.

The spellings highlighted in this chapter are summarised in Table 1. They are among the orthographic features that are most noticeable and prominent for readers. Although the spellings do not represent sounds, they do occur in phonological contexts that readers with knowledge of the dialect would recognise. As representations of the dialect, they have great potential to act as symbols of local loyalty and identity. Frequently, the

publications in which these spellings appear are labelled as 'Newcastle' song books or 'Tyneside' song books. In line with Johnstone et al. (2006:87, 93-6) and Beal (2007) I argue that these publications frequently tie the orthography to the locality, whether or not the use of that orthography, or indeed of particular sounds, is geographically more widespread (see sections 1.7.5. and 6.3.1.). The potential to enhance local identity is therefore great.

Table 1: Non-Standard Orthography and Phonological Contexts

Non-standard spelling	Sample words	Likely Tyneside Pronunciation
<ang>	<lang> <i>long</i> , <alang> <i>along</i> , <sang> <i>song</i>	/ɑ/
<aw>	<aw> <i>I</i> , <maw> <i>my</i>	/ɑ:/
<a'>	<a'> <i>all</i>	/ɑ:/
<au>	<aud> <i>old</i> , <caud> <i>cold</i>	/ɑ:/ or /ɑu/
<aw>	<knaw> <i>know</i> , <blaw> <i>blow</i>	/ɑ:/
<e>	<se> <i>so</i> , <ne> <i>no</i>	/i:/ or unstressed /ə/ in <i>so</i>
<ee>	<neet> <i>night</i> , <reet> <i>right</i>	/i:/
<ee>	<weel> <i>well</i> , <heed> <i>head</i> , <deed> <i>dead</i>	/i:/
<oo>	<noo> <i>now</i> , <doon> <i>down</i> , <oot> <i>out</i>	/u:/
<ye>	<myek> <i>make</i> , <tyek> <i>take</i>	/jɛ/, /iə/, or /ɪə/
<ye>	<hyem> <i>home</i> , <byeth> <i>both</i>	/jɛ/, /iə/, or /uə/
<ye>	<yen> <i>one</i> , <gyen> <i>gone</i>	/jɛ/
Linking prosody	Various	Various
<an> / <an'>	<an> / <an'> <i>and</i>	/ (ə)n(d) / or / (ə)n /
<n> / <n'>	<runnin> <i>running</i> , <mornin> <i>morning</i>	/n/

3.2.11. Orthography and Literary Effect

Building upon this discussion of orthographic features, it is clear that they have a strong literary effect. With this in mind, I offer here a short account of the literary use to which such non-standard spelling can be put, as a vehicle of local identity. The reason for this brevity is that claims regarding such a function need to be heavily qualified. In subsequent chapters I shall show that groups represented in the corpus, particularly in the early period, can be differentiated from each other through their voices; that non-standard orthography and the dialect in general can be employed as part of the satirical representation of pitmen and keelmen; and that even when voices appear to converge, as in the later period, the songs might be the site of cultural debate and contestation at a local level. In order for songs to function simply as vehicles of local identity primary meaning may need to be forgotten or overlooked, and this issue is dealt with more thoroughly in the final chapter (see section 6.3.1.). Nevertheless, I offer here some specific examples of the ways in which orthography and pronunciations are celebrated in the songs.

There can be no better example from the early nineteenth century of a celebration of non-standard orthography and local pronunciation than the anonymous song, 'Weel May the Keel Row'*. Whatever the current status of 'The Blaydon Races', the former song was the 'Tyneside National Anthem' in the nineteenth century (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:1). The song's original version has the following chorus:

Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row,
Weel may the keel row, that my laddie's in.
(*'Weel May the Keel Row'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:5)

The spelling <ee> in the word *well* undoubtedly represents the pronunciation /i:/. The piece spawned two new versions by Thomas Thompson, both sometimes called 'The New Keel Row'. I refer to them as 'A' and 'B'. The choruses of versions 'A' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:5-7), and 'B'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:114) both contain those original lines.

Various spellings are, nevertheless, relevant to Tyneside linguistic identity in print. Frequently there is an intermixture of elements within the material, all contributing to the non-standard quality of pieces that are labelled 'Tyneside song'. An example from one of

Robson's most popular pieces, 'The Pawnshop in a Bleeze', will suffice here. The first-person narrator and his wife have been disturbed by a noise:

An' marcy! shoots o' "Fire!" aw heers –
 Aw myeks yen lowp down a' wor stairs,
 An' smash, aw seed a queerish seet,
 Yel thousands crooded i' the street;
 It was the Pawnshop bleezing.

The wimmin folk 'twas sair to see,
 Lamentin' their distresses;
 For mony a goon, an' white shemee,
 Was brunt wi' bairns's dresses ...

(*'The Pawnshop in a Bleeze'* in Robson ed. c.1849:339)

This quotation provides a good example of various spellings in the electronic corpus to which I have already drawn attention. We have <aw> and <a'> in realising the words *I* and *all*; the spelling <ee> occurs in *sight*; <ye> is used in the words *whole* <yel>, *one* <yen>, and *makes*; <oo> is found in *shouts*, *thousands*, *crowded*, and *gown*; <an'> occurs for *and*; finally, <i'> and <wi'>, in the words *in* and *with*, provide examples of linking prosody. The account is not exhaustive, but shows how all of these spellings can be associated with the dialect in a popular comic piece. The song can be construed as a celebration of the dialect – at least for those whose worldly goods were not destroyed during this historical event of 1849 (cf. Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:363).

The range of spellings and (perhaps sounds) enjoyed in song clearly can be wide. Nevertheless, the chorus of Ridley's piece, 'Johnny Luik-Up', makes particular use of Tyneside <oo>:

Johnny luik up! Johnny luik doon,
 Johnny gans wandrin roond the toon,
 He'll find yor kid for half-a-croon,
 Will Johnny Luik-up, the bellman.

(*'Johnny Luik-up'* 1973 edn:19)

This is a satire on the eponymous bellman of the song, but it is simultaneously a blatant celebration of Tyneside pronunciation. Ridley works the spelling and pronunciation, <oo> and /u:/ respectively, to their maximum potential. Sung by children in the streets, this was one of his most successful pieces (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:447). The chorus

reflects back on Tynesiders, in an exaggerated form, one aspect of their own linguistic behaviour. While the tune can be the making of a song, it appears that the Tyneside public were also highly receptive to such play on phonology. By the late century, Heslop, the writer of the dictionary, *Northumberland Words*, who also wrote songs, overtly celebrates in his piece, 'Newcastle Toon Nee Mair', both the spelling <oo>, and the phonological context which it represents. This occurs amid a lament at Newcastle having become a city:

We like the soon' o' "Canny Toon."

We like wor aad Toon sair;

But ivverything is upside doon,

Newcastle Toon nee mair!

(*'Newcastle Toon Nee Mair'* in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:532)

In this instance, the spelling <oo>, and the 'soon' or *sound* /u:/, are central to an overt expression of local linguistic identity. 'We like the soon', he says, confirming that the orthographic and phonological dimension of local patriotism are crucial.

I would stress, nevertheless, that a range of spellings is highly important in building up a non-standard and local quality in printed songs. All of this is reinforced when forms or songs have the labels 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' attached to them (cf. Johnstone et al. 2006:87, 93-6, Beal 2007). Local or regional words, too, reveal powerful resonances, even iconicity, in the area. While my purpose later in the thesis is to problematise, or seriously qualify, the functions of both non-standard spellings and local words, the latter features, too, need to be considered here.

3.3. Tyneside Words

3.3.1. Overview

Tyneside words can be looked upon with great affection. Some of them continue in common use today, and in the nineteenth century they add to the intensely local *feel* of songs. The use of the term 'Tyneside words' should not be taken to imply that items appear in that area only. Words, or their local meanings, are frequently shared across Scotland, Ireland and the English regions – especially, though not exclusively, northern ones. This short section will focus on those items that local writers / singers consider to be essential and use repeatedly in the representation of Tyneside speech. In each case, the local or regional character of these words is verified by reference to Heslop's (1892) *Northumberland Words*, the *English Dialect Dictionary (EDD)*, and Griffiths's (2005) *Dictionary of North East Dialect*.

The selection of words is based on my own intimate knowledge of the texts and their language, although as a general rule I list items that occur fifty times or more. My familiarity with the songs will permit me to be further selective, and to give particular attention to four words that have a special cultural resonance or iconicity on Tyneside. These four specific items provide a basis for more wide-ranging literary discussion in later chapters.

3.3.2. From *Gan* to *Man*

In the electronic corpus several verbs and their inflections, when considered as lexical features, are of clear importance. These are *gan* 'go', *ken* 'know', and *mun* 'must'. The adjectives include the word *bonny*, meaning 'Beautiful, handsome, pretty, fine, pleasant to look at' (*EDD:adj., adv., and int. adj.1.*). Among the nouns are *bairn*, meaning 'a child', and *folks*, with an additional non-standard spelling, <foaks>. This word needs no explanation, but is considered by *EDD (sb.)* and *OED (3.a.)* to be either a dialect or colloquial feature. *Wife* and *wives*, in this case, simply meaning 'woman' or 'women'

(Griffiths 2005:187) is also worthy of note. The word *keel* refers to 'a large flat-bottomed boat, used for carrying coal on the Tyne and Wear' (*EDD:sb.*¹ 3.). To this we would need to add *keelman / keelmen*. The *skipper* being 'the leading hand on board a keel' (Heslop 1892:649) also figures prominently in the corpus. Likewise, *pit*, *pitman* and *pitmen*, taken together, are undoubtedly relevant. Finally, *claes*, which means 'clothes' can be mentioned as a noun. This might convey a pronunciation, but I would argue that to some degree it has been lexicalised (cf. *OED*, Griffiths 2005:32). We will see something similar in the case of the word *hinny*. The pronoun *nowt* 'nothing' (cf. *OED:in nowt*, *pron.*, *adj.*, *adv.*, and *n.*² *A.pron.*, *EDD:in nought sb.*, *adj.*, *adv.* and *v. sb.1.*) is likewise notable, as is the interjection or adverb, *aye*, 'yes' (cf. *OED:int.*, (*adv.*), *n. A.1.*, *EDD:adv.*² 1.).

Before going on to examine the four words that form a central part of literary discussion in later chapters, the vocative / interjection *man* (cf. *OED:n.*¹ (and *int.*) IV.16.b.) needs particular consideration. The *OED* (*n.*¹ (and *int.*) IV.16.b.) tries to pin down the sense of the word, indicating that it is used to 'address a person (in many varieties of English, irrespective of sex) parenthetically without emphasis to indicate familiarity, amicability, or equality between the speaker and the person addressed'. In contrast to *OED*, the *English Dialect Dictionary* (*sb.*¹ and *v. sb.8*) records its use at the end of sentences, thus giving it 'special emphasis'. In fact, *man* is the most common Tyneside word in the whole electronic corpus, appearing over five hundred times, not least *because* it is used in ways that give it such end focus, particularly at line ends to provide rhymes. This undoubtedly gives a very strong sense of the local dialect, and the fact that it is very frequently addressed to the audience might foster a sense of familiarity. Nevertheless, in some songs the word can also add to the satirical quality. A few examples will be helpful here. In Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27), the pitman, Bob, bemoans the fact that his visits to see the Assize Judge's procession, which takes place in Newcastle, prompt somebody to write a mocking 'sang man'; however, as to the length of the piece, he 'can't tell how lang man'. In Armstrong's song, 'The Skipper's Mistake', a skipper and his crew are lost in mist on the Tyne. However, one of them has the idea of using a 'Reading-Easy', to find out where they are:

They studied hard, byeth lang and sair,

Though nyen o' them could read, man,
 When Geordy on a sudden cries,
 Aw hev 'er in my heed, man.

(*'The Skipper's Mistake'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:302)

His plan is that they should pray. These passages, which highlight a lack of numeracy and literacy in pitmen and keelmen, and in which *man* is used as a rhyme, are some of the most suggestive examples of satire in the corpus. However, various other examples could be given that show the word used in a similar manner, in a context where these groups are being satirised. There are, nevertheless, instances in which this use of the word *man* seems far more celebratory. This is the case in Corvan's song, 'The Shades Saloon', in which the chorus sings the praises of the concert room mentioned in the title:

Whe wad think't but smash it's truth man,
 It bangs them aw byeth north and south man,
 The landlord tee desarves a crown man,
 For bringin' concerts to wor toon man.

(*'The Shades Saloon'* 1850:15)

Despite this exuberance, the use of the word *man* frequently has a satiric quality. It is noticeable that Ridley, who, according to the *Chronicle* (cited in Harker ed. 1973:6), does not, like other writers, indulge in 'burlesque' of the dialect, also avoids use of *man* to end his lines. Wilson, who is cleared by Allan (ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii) of treating local subjects with 'burlesque', uses the interjection *man* in this position only twice. The implication is that these two writers have moved away from this highly formulaic use of the feature, perhaps because they are aware of its associations with an older satirical tradition, with which they have become somewhat uncomfortable.

I have given an account of these words because they all are of cultural significance on Tyneside. Along with non-standard orthography and other features, they provide a highly local quality to the language in the songs. By the same token, the increasing tendency in the nineteenth century to describe material as 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' songs heightens the likelihood that those words will be perceived in ever more local terms (cf. Johnstone et al. 2006:87, 93-6, Beal 2007). Such factors give songs great potential to act as vehicles of local linguistic identity, even where their initial function might be satirical. As mentioned already, I now intend to give particular attention to four words that have

intense cultural significance, and which are central to the lines of enquiry pursued in the rest of the thesis.

3.3.3. Words for Special Focus

Canny

The word *canny* is treasured in nineteenth-century Tyneside and its use and status continues today. However, as a traditional dialect word it is geographically widespread in Scotland and the North (*EDD:adj., adv. and int.*). Its connotations can include the potentially negative, such as 'frugal', 'sparing', 'careful', 'knowing' or 'shrewd', but also far more straightforward and favourable meanings (Heslop 1892:130-31, *EDD:adj., adv. and int. adj.1.-6.*; cf. Wales 2006:133). I would argue, in fact, that the latter give the word a set of cherished 'core' values on Tyneside (see section 5.3.3.). The *EDD* provides a helpful, though somewhat bland, definition, relevant to such usage in the area:

Agreeable, pleasant, nice, good; comely, dainty. Applied as a [general] term of approbation or affection to persons and things.

(*EDD:adj., adv. and int. adj.6.*)

This, however, does not capture the resonance that the feature has in the North-East. In the nineteenth century writers of local dialect dictionaries wax lyrical about *canny*. Heslop (1892:376) calls it 'one of the choicest of our local terms'. As early as 1825, Brockett, in his dictionary, had referred to it as

a genuine Newcastle word, applied to any thing superior or of the best kind. It refers as well to the beauty of form as of manners and morals; but most particularly is used to describe those mild and affectionate dispositions which render persons agreeable in the domestic state. "Canny Newcassel," *par excellence*, is proverbial.

(Brockett 1825:37)

Heslop is yet more effusive, and says that the word is

an embodiment of all that is kindly, good, and gentle. The highest compliment that can be paid to any person is to say that he or she is *canny*. As "home" expresses the English love of the fireside, so in Tyneside and Northumberland does *canny* express every home virtue. All that is good

and loveable in man or woman is covered by the expression, "Eh, what a *canny* body!"

(Heslop 1892:130)

The term, then, can be closely related to 'core' values which cover positive evaluations, issues of the domestic, and the communal. It also has associations with the locally patriotic. These assertions, of course, will need to be tested later in the thesis. Nevertheless, two highly popular pieces, both by Thomas Thompson, demonstrate the word's status. Firstly, 'Jemmy Joneson's Whurry' provides a good example of the term's use in expressing a favourable assessment of people. With a burst of enthusiasm the narrator heads off to Shields, alongside 'some varry canny chiels, / All on the hop, an' murry' ('Jemmy Joneson's Whurry' in Marshall ed. 1827:10). Here, then, the friends or *chiels* are described with great warmth. We have seen also that Brockett says 'canny Newcassel' is 'proverbial'. The chorus of Thompson's song, 'Canny Newcassel', probably influenced that statement:

'BOUT Lunnun then div'nt ye mak sic a rout,
 There's nouse there ma winkers to dazzle,
 For a' the fine things ye are gobbin about,
 We can marra iv canny Newcassel.

('Canny Newcassel' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.314)

Use of this phrase, and the related 'canny Toon', continues in popular song through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They clearly have strong emotive potential.

My aim in this thesis, however, is not simply to show the status of the word *canny* in enhancing the sentimental, or local linguistic identity. Nor is it to make unqualified claims for its role in song as a symbol of communal solidarity and individual virtue. In subsequent chapters, in addition to assessing its use in relation to Newcastle, I intend to examine the way that *canny* is used to describe particular groups or character types, and in addressing certain audiences. As will be seen, the word can be the subject of irony or debate as to its very meaning, part of a process of inclusion and exclusion at sub-local group levels.

Hinny

The endearment *hinny* literally emerges from a pronunciation of *honey* (*EDD*:in *honey*, *sb.* and *adj.*, *OED*:in *honey*, *n.* (*a.*) *A.n.5.a.*), but it is treated here as a word in its own right. It seems clear that with its distinctive pronunciation it at some point became lexicalised. Brockett (1825:96) calls it 'a favourite term of endearment.' For Heslop, the word is

a term of kindly regard, generally applied to women and children. Like the word *canny*, this is one of the choicest of our local terms, and they are often used together ... It is applied in the purest and most lovable sense to sweetheart, wife, or bairn.

(Heslop 1892:376-7)

These definitions require some qualification. The term is also used between men, as Griffiths (2005:84) shows, and such uses are indeed quite common in the electronic corpus. It is therefore striking that Heslop should avoid any overt recognition of this fact. I shall argue later in the thesis that this has implications for semantic nuances and humour in the songs. Nevertheless, like *canny*, the word *hinny* appears often to be associated with, or to carry, a set of 'core' values, implying positive evaluations, familiarity and friendliness.

As Heslop indicates, the two words, *canny* and *hinny*, are sometimes found together. The anonymous song, 'Ma' Canny Hinny'* , provides a perfect example of this:

WHERE hast'te been, ma' canny hinny?

An where hast'te been, ma' bonny bairn?

('Ma' Canny Hinny' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:9)

Joe Wilson, too, uses the combination in 'Wor Geordy's Welcum te Garibaldi' (c.1865:3), and Geordy therefore offers the greeting: 'WELCUM! maw canny hinny ... '. The same performer also addresses the audience as 'maw canny hinnie' in 'She's Gyen te Place at Jarrow' (c.1865:60). More commonly, however, the word *hinny* is used on its own. It has undisputed local importance and I will consider its use on this basis in later chapters. As with *canny*, however, we will see that there are potential ironies in the representation of its social and communal functions. These do not necessarily make the word less significant for local culture, but they do need to be understood.

Lads and Lasses

The words *lad(s)* and *lass(es)* are used frequently in the corpus, and for reasons which will become apparent I consider them together here. Among *EDD*'s (*sb.*¹ and *v.* *sb.*3.-5.) definitions of *lad* a number of relevant senses are given as follows:

- A familiar or affectionate term for a man; a husband, son, or boon companion, a fellow.
- A bachelor, an unmarried man.
- A male lover, sweetheart.

These uses are not restricted to the North-East, and *EDD* (*sb.*¹ and *v.* *sb.*3.-5.) indicates their occurrence also in Scotland and the North of England more generally. Heslop (1892:435) gives a separate entry for the plural *lads*, which is a 'following; a company of comrades'. As for the word *lass*, *EDD* (*sb.* 1., 2. and 5.) offers useful definitions that are relevant to the electronic corpus:

- A girl, a young woman. Also used as a term of address.
- A sweetheart, female lover.
- A woman, wife. Also used as a term of address by a man to his wife.

I intend here to focus upon the plural forms *lads* and *lasses*, in order to show the special resonances that the words have for a sense of group belonging at various levels on Tyneside, including the sense of identification that might be projected or felt within specific performance contexts. An insight into the manner in which the words may have particular cultural importance among the labouring classes, can be found in a recollection of the patter of the Tyneside showman, Billy Purvis (d. 1853), as he attempted to attract customers into his travelling theatre tent. In an anonymous account from *Chater's Illustrated Annual* of 1881 (cited in Vicinus 1974:242) Billy makes important distinctions between two broad social types and their language. We are told that he would use 'good English' to address those he termed 'ladies and gentlemen', inviting them to enter the show, only to turn and address the more lowly crowd, as 'ye, lads an' lasses, whe know thor muther tongue se weel', and to advise them that they could enter the show by his 'backside' – a rear door. Vicinus does not explore the point that here the 'lads' and 'lasses'

are being contrasted linguistically and culturally with 'ladies' and 'gentlemen', whom Billy, talking conspiratorially to the crowd, calls 'ignorint stuck-up gonials'. There is a clear indication that the 'lads' and 'lasses' are protagonists in a popular culture that includes somewhat crude or 'vulgar' entertainment, and which utilises dialect (and a degree of scatological linguistic humour) as part of its code of belonging. I will argue later in the thesis that the terms *lads* and *lasses* have particular resonance in nineteenth-century Tyneside song culture, with performers praising Tyneside's 'lads' and 'lasses', and addressing their audiences in such terms (see section 6.5.). This might be part of a process of inclusion and exclusion at levels below the local. Nevertheless, it can foster sentiments of loyalty to Tyneside. Thus the special resonance of the words continues into the twentieth century and beyond, and is attested in the chorus of the current Tyneside anthem, 'The Blaydon Races':

O lads, ye shud only seen us gannin,
 We passed the foakes upon the road just as they wor stannin;
 Thor wes lots o' lads an' lasses there, all wi' smiling faces,
 Gan along the Scotswood Road, to see the Blaydon Races.

(*'The Blaydon Races'* 1973:34)

This song was not particularly significant when it was first performed by its writer, Geordy Ridley, in 1862 (Gregson 2004). However, although the chorus as sung nowadays has changed somewhat from that given in the quotation, I shall argue that its current popularity stems, in part, from the power of the words *lads* and *lasses* on Tyneside (see section 6.5.). The song became anthemic only in the twentieth century, but that power could be felt as it was popularised in the music hall early in the 1900s, and when it was sung by troops in both World Wars. It continues to be felt on the terraces of St James's Park, the home of Newcastle United Football Club, where the chorus is sung by crowds fifty thousand strong. This, more generally, is local identity roared out loud: the sounds and the words of the Tyneside dialect sung with a keen sense of language as a vehicle of loyalty to place and club. It is a manifestation of allegiance to Newcastle at its greatest heights.

3.4. Summary

The major non-standard spellings that occur in the electronic corpus often coincide with attested pronunciations on Tyneside. While it is important to insist that spelling cannot represent phonology accurately, there is no doubt that this orthography would often prompt those readers familiar with the Tyneside dialect to apply sounds to it.

In addition to non-standard spellings, local or regional words also evoke a quality of 'Tynesideness' in the great majority of songs. By the same token, the fact that songs are frequently conceived and advertised in local terms reinforces an association between these features and Tyneside speech. Many of the words identified have cultural resonances on Tyneside. Nevertheless, I have focused on four words in particular – *canny*, *hinny*, *lads* and *lasses* – which have intense cultural significance, even iconicity in the area. Local dictionary writers of the nineteenth century enthuse about such words and songs often celebrate them.

Language has social meaning at various levels. Tyneside dialect and Tyneside dialect song has great potential to symbolise the locality. Sounds, spellings, and words all perform that function. Nevertheless, as we shall see, statements such as this need serious qualification. It is also the case that linguistic differences are found in song between groups or voice types within the locality, that such differences are paralleled by cultural contrasts, and that songs which are so often claimed to reflect local patriotism might create the impression of cultural and linguistic hierarchies on Tyneside.

Chapter Four

Language Differentiation and Convergence

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter focused upon those linguistic features that can be used to represent the Tyneside dialect in print. To write in non-standard dialect is always a highly conscious activity. So dominant is the Standard English (StE) spelling system that for literate individuals it is impossible to deviate from it without making a clear choice. However inadequate the conventional alphabet may be for the representation of sounds, in general terms, local spellings and words demonstrate the extent to which writers respond to the linguistic patterns of the area. The fact that the title pages of song books frequently label material as 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' song, also helps to make the particular forms used within them relevant as expressions of local linguistic identity (cf. Johnstone et al. 2006:87, 93-96, Beal 2007).

It must be recalled, however, that in the case of various early collections of these songs, the material is also labelled 'satirical' (Marshall ed. 1827, Fordyce ed. 1842). Furthermore, pitmen and keelmen are specifically identified by the editor, Marshall (1827:i; cf. Fordyce ed. 1842:iii), as the targets of such satire and of 'rude caricatures'. This suggests that within songs the depiction of character, and audience response to it, may be of great relevance. It is important to take account of the initial performance environment of much of this material. As noted previously, Allan (1891, 1972 edn.:v, 230) in his edition, remarks that social meetings held by tradesmen after business hours were, at the time, 'the rage', and at such meetings friends of the early writers formed the audience (see section 1.5.4. and 2.2.2.). The possible implications of such performance contexts for the emergence and meaning of early nineteenth-century Tyneside song should be taken seriously, as should the fact that book titles and editorial prefaces contribute to contemporary discourses that label the songs 'satirical'.

The analysis that follows works between the linguistic and the literary, and is the result of prior close readings of the texts. This reading has resulted in a strong interest in the relationship between language and the representation of character trait in song, especially where it applies to pitmen and keelmen and the industrial labouring classes more generally. That relationship is key to the meaning of the songs. In this regard a clear impression arises when reading the material, that among the early writers the songs exhibit linguistic differentiation between various voice types. In particular, the voices of pitmen and keelmen appear to be differentiated from other male voices, such as third-person narrators, or specifically identified artisans. This pattern seems to alter in the work of the later writers, so that there is a greater linguistic convergence of voice types. If these observations are correct, and are supported by an intermixture of statistical and literary analysis, then they will need explanation in relation to character depiction. This, in fact, is what we do see, and the next chapter will address such issues. At present a comparison of voice types and their language is essential.

4.2. Voices, Songs and Variables

4.2.1. Voice and Song Types

I have already indicated my intention, in considering material from the early period, to focus upon differentiation in the songs between the voices of pitmen / keelmen and other males. In the later period the convergence of these and other voices will become important. Statistical analysis is one element of this investigation, and a reminder of the voice categories created to allow this analysis is helpful here. They are as follows:

- Pitmen and keelmen
- Their wives and sweethearts
- Other male voices
- Other female voices
- Mixed or ungendered voices

These broad categories, as noted, must be seen as only part of a wider interpretive approach, which focuses on those groups that are most visible in songs, and that are culturally prominent on Tyneside in general (see section 2.5.1.).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, based on a division put forward by Shorrocks (1996:386), but with some changes, I have established two categories of song for analysis: first *non-standard dialect songs*; and second, a far smaller category of *StE songs featuring literary dialect* (see section 2.3.2.). For reasons which I will explain soon, the main statistical focus, when I consider orthography, will be on the former category. Nevertheless, the *StE songs featuring literary dialect* are, as we shall see, central to literary discussion.

4.2.2. Song and Voice Numbers

There are a total of 285 pieces in the electronic corpus. Of these, only 21 belong to the category *StE songs featuring literary dialect*, and in this group sixteen appear prior to 1849, and five later. Owing to the small number of songs here, and the obvious point that linguistic contrasts will occur in these pieces (at least between third-person narrators and characters) I focus my statistical analysis of orthographic forms mainly on the *non-standard dialect songs*. Of the 264 items in this latter category, 59 appear prior to 1849, and 205 after that. I should stress that among these *non-standard dialect songs*, the pieces written in various 'other' non-standard dialects (see section 2.3.3), to use a general term, account for only one song prior to 1849, and only eight after that. They will not unduly affect the analysis of Tyneside voices, and in any case some of them certainly represent such voices. Full details of song numbers across time periods, and of voice numbers within their various categories, are provided in Appendices A and B.

A total of 148 voices are found in the *non-standard dialect songs* before 1849. The five voice categories are represented as follows: pitmen / keelmen 33%, their wives and sweethearts 8%, other male voices 49%, other female voices 7%, and mixed or ungendered voices 3%. As specifically identified groups pitmen and keelmen are by far the most prominent. The picture begins to alter after 1849. In the later *non-standard dialect songs* there are 417 voices, and the categories are represented as follows: pitmen / keelmen 13%, their wives and sweethearts 2%, other male voices 63%, other female voices 17%, and mixed or ungendered voices 5%. As can be seen, the voices of pitmen and keelmen are represented proportionately less among the later writers. However, this needs to be qualified, since in the songs of both Robson and Corvan they are fairly well represented. In fact, it is probable, especially in the work of these writers, that I have underestimated the number of pitmen / keelmen. This is due to my identifying them as such only where evidence is strong. It is in Wilson's songs that a major shift occurs, with only one voice from the pitmen / keelmen category being used. As we shall see, however, this general shift away from pitmen and keelmen may represent a tendency to project individuals from the industrial labouring community in a less specific manner. It may also reflect the growing importance of factory-based employment on Tyneside. What emerges, nevertheless, is that pitmen / keelmen and other males are the two voice

categories that are most prominent in the early period. Other male voices remain important after 1849, while other females also become relatively more prominent.

4.2.3. Voices and Variable Use

In the early period linguistic contrasts exist between voice types in the *non-standard dialect songs*, whereas there is greater convergence in the later period. That contrasts should exist is not obvious in songs where the very language is so frequently held, by modern scholars, to be a vehicle of local or communal solidarity. I will show, however, that such differentiation in the work of the early writers can be observed through the proportions of non-standard variants used to represent particular groups or voice categories.

The variables chosen are as follows: *and*, *I* and *with*. They have been chosen because of their highly conspicuous and frequently occurring non-standard forms – detected from a word-list created using the computer software, *Oxford WordSmith Tools*. Occurrences of words within abbreviations are not taken into account. The variables *I* plus *and* provide the two most commonly occurring non-standard spellings in the electronic corpus. The word *with* is also very common in non-standard form. I have opted to use this rather than the words *of* or *to*, which have non-standard variants occurring slightly more often. Each of these words, however, has at least six possible non-standard forms. A simple focus therefore on *with* as a variable, and on its forms <with> / <wi'> / <wiv'> is far more straightforward. While variables were chosen because in the corpus they have highly conspicuous or frequently occurring non-standard forms, no account was taken prior to analysis of the actual proportions of non-standard / StE spellings that occur for any of them, either in terms of voice-type or time period.

There are some differences in the overall proportions of non-standard / StE variants that appear among the individual variables, and total occurrences are detailed in Appendix B. Nevertheless, it is legitimate to offer percentages of non-standard and StE variants for all three words taken together. These proportions are summarised in Table 2 (see also Appendix B). As can be seen, in the period up to 1849, pitmen / keelmen are the only

category with over 50% non-standard forms. Their use of such forms is 61%, and the closest other category, other males, are represented with just 44% non-standard variants, a difference of 17 percentage points. Wives and sweethearts and other females are both represented using 33% non-standard variants. Mixed or ungendered voices do not use any of the variables. It does seem then, that in print when compared with other categories including other male voices, pitmen and keelmen are particularly associated with these non-standard forms.

Table 2: Proportions of All Three Non-Standard and StE Variants in Non-Standard Dialect Song

	Pre 1849			Post 1849		
	% non-standard	% StE	Total variants	% non-standard	% StE	Total variants
Pitment / Keelmen	61%	39%	468	86%	14%	984
Their Wives / Sweethearts	33%	67%	63	86%	14%	94
Other Male Voices	44%	56%	631	85%	15%	3004
Other Female Voices	33%	67%	51	90%	10%	610
Mixed / Ungendered Voices	0%	0%	0	94%	6%	16

The pattern changes noticeably in the later period. The most striking point is that across the board there is an increase in the use of the non-standard variants, so that all voices are represented using at least 85% non-standard spellings for these variables. Pitmen and keelmen, along with their wives and sweethearts, are represented using 86% non-standard forms. Other males are very close to this, at 85%, while other female voices are represented with 90%. The mixed or ungendered category has 94% non-standard variants. The numbers in the latter case, however, are very small. In this thesis I contend that these figures, along with other factors, demonstrate a greater identification by the

later writers with the industrial labouring class, or at the very least a commitment to a language acceptable to sections of this class, to which they have to appeal to earn a living (see section 4.3.4.).

While I do not offer such detailed statistical analysis for the *StE songs featuring literary dialect* as a discrete category, it is the case that in the earlier period, pitmen and keelmen are represented using high proportions of non-standard variants – 84%. These occupational groups do not feature after 1849. In both time periods, other male voices use at least 95% StE forms. This is hardly surprising, since the narrators of such songs in the main use StE. As already mentioned, although these songs are not analysed as a category for statistical purposes, they will be of central importance in my later literary discussion. Full details of variable use in the category are given in Appendix B.

It is worth observing that my definition of non-standard dialect material is more conservative than that put forward by Shorrocks. This is because Shorrocks (1996:386), defining literature of this type, says that it is 'composed wholly (sometimes partly) in a non-standard dialect, and aimed essentially, though not exclusively, at a non-standard-dialect-speaking readership'. Songs that I have said belong in the category *StE featuring literary dialect* would fit this definition, since it must be accepted that frequently they are aimed at the same audience. Shorrocks's definition is unsatisfactory in this respect, since contrast between a StE narrator and non-standard character, as we will see, can be very meaningful. Had this thesis followed his definition strictly, however, then the contrasts between the voices of pitmen / keelmen and other males within *non-standard dialect songs* would have been all the more stark.

My analysis is, nevertheless, the first indication that the pitmen and keelmen are particularly associated in song with the local dialect, and that in the work of early writers they are differentiated linguistically from other groups. However, I do not intend to view the analysis of these variables in isolation. Other features that are equally part of imputed linguistic repertoire can shed more light on differences, and indeed subsequent convergences, in voice type.

4.2.4. Oaths, Expletives and Swearing

Swearing and oaths can be as much part of linguistic identity as any other structure in the language of individuals or groups. Daly et al. (2004:952, 954), in a study of various groups of factory workers, have found that swearing can act as a solidarity device. Heslop (1892:268-70), in his dictionary, *Northumberland Words*, has a special entry on what he terms 'Exclamations', and this includes many common oaths. Though he is somewhat apologetic in tone, Heslop says that some of the exclamations 'enter so frequently into the common speech that to omit them would be to leave a blank in the collection of Northumberland words'. Trudgill (1992:66, 72, 1999:19-21) makes a theoretical distinction between slang as an aspect of style (within which he includes the word *bloody*) and non-standard or StE dialects. However, such distinctions seem irrelevant for present purposes. Where groups are represented in the songs as swearing, then it is appropriate to examine this as part of their imputed linguistic behaviour, and to assess its implications.

The use of swearing and oaths is bound up with perceptions of social position, character, and questions of 'respectability'. McEnery (2003:83-4, 114-16) gives evidence of discourses emerging from the 'middle classes', beginning in the late seventeenth century and continuing throughout the Victorian period, which built up associations between 'bad language' and immorality, lower-class origins, and lack of education; conversely, he argues, lack of 'bad language' itself became associated with being 'middle class'. A number of difficulties arise here. Firstly, McEnery does not take into account how far matters of 'respectability' were initiated by the labouring classes themselves. Secondly, I do not use rigid class terminology in this thesis, and it is not clear to me that, as McEnery (2003:83) would have it, shopkeepers automatically belong to a 'middle class'. Nevertheless, we would have to assign pitmen and keelmen to the lower classes, or to an emerging industrial labouring class. It is evident in the early songs that swearing is attributed particularly to the pitmen and keelmen, and this can draw overt comment. The piece, 'Song on the Flight of the young Crows'* (in Bell ed. 1812, 1972 edn.:78) envisages a remarkable future in which 'keelmen, in *manners*' will become 'quite polite, / No *cursing* at morn, nor *much* drunk over night!'. In the song, 'The Half-Drowned

Skipper'*, the narrator takes a boat trip and pulls alongside a keel, expecting to hear swearing from the skipper, whose looks, he remarks, would have 'frighten'd the Deil':

So thinks aw, wi' the keel we'll gan a' the way,
 And hear a few words that the skipper may say,
 For aw was sure if ought in the keel was deun wrang,
 The Skipper wad curse, aye, and call every man.

(*'Half-Drowned Skipper'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:186)

It is noticeable that the narrator, despite being represented through non-standard orthography, and presumably using a local accent in performance, nevertheless expects to hear language that will differentiate the otherworldly keelman from himself. Of course, he hopes to be titillated by this language, and the idea is appealing to the song's audience. However, the behaviour is attributed to an 'other', a move I shall discuss later. The two examples given so far are not in the electronic corpus. Nevertheless, the close association between keelmen and swearing is seen clearly in the corpus too, and continues into the later period. Corvan's song, 'Yer Gannin' to be a Keelman' (1850:11), for instance, employs many of the stereotypes of the keelman figure, and includes the line: 'When there is a gale of wind, ye'll begin to curse and sweer'.

While the keelmen draw the most frequent overt comments in song in relation to their swearing, the use of such language by pitmen too is clear from the electronic corpus. As we shall see shortly, pitmen are singled out by Brockett (1825:197), in his dictionary, as users of the oath *smash*. Furthermore, it is no accident that Wilson (c.1865:17), in his song, 'What Gud Can Sweerin De?', says that swearing causes the speakers to look 'trashey', whether the 'pitmen or the peer'. Leaving aside the language of peers, pitmen are known to swear.

The features for which I provide statistical information are by no means the most extreme examples of oaths or swearing. There are instances of words, usually with letters replaced by dashes, which appear in early publications, but which the editor, Allan (1891, 1972 edn.), expunges from songs completely. This occurs in pieces that include the words *arse* and *piss*. One song by Emery, 'The Fishwife and Mustaches; Or, Sandhill Oratory'* (in Gateshead Council 2004), printed on an early broadsheet, clearly contains the word *cunt*. Needless to say this song does not appear in Allan's 1891 collection (ed. 1891, 1972

edn.). The word *bugger* was evidently intended in several songs, but is changed to *beggar* in Allan's collection. These words are quite rare in the songs, and those using them tend to be pitmen or keelmen, drunken women, and fishwives. While the words for which I provide statistical information appear to be milder, they are far more common. These are *smash* and *Gox / Gocks*, words which Allan is happy to retain without replacing letters with dashes. As we shall see, however, their patterns of use are revealing.

The word *smash* is the most frequently used of such features in the electronic corpus, and is described by Brockett (1825:197) as a 'kind of oath among the pitmen near Newcastle'; indeed he adds that nothing 'energetic can be said without it'. Heslop (1892:661) calls it a 'characteristic expletive', which is 'used in many combinations, and is expressed to give vigour or emphasis'. The word appears alone or in compounds such as *od smash / odsmash* and *Gad smash*. Likewise, it appears in verb form within expressions such as 'od smash my pit sarik', 'smash his byens', or 'smash yor brains'. If, as Heslop (1892:269) believes, *od smash* derives from *God's Mass*, it seems likely that so too does *smash* itself, rather than deriving from *By the Mass*, as Heslop suggests. Whether contemporary users understood this is less clear, and the oath is a fairly mild one. Nevertheless, it clearly has the potential to be regarded as vulgar, and its compound expressions immoral and blasphemous.

In the electronic corpus as a whole, the word *smash* in its various manifestations occurs 48 times in the early period, and 63 times in the later period. Among the early writers, pitmen / keelmen account for 90% of all uses, other male voices 8%, and mixed or ungendered voices 2%. In the later period pitmen / keelmen contribute 44% and other males 56%. Clearly, in the early period there is a particularly strong association between the word *smash* and pitmen or keelmen. In fact, when it is considered that this category contributes only 13% of voices in all songs during the later period, it is apparent that they continue to be associated with the use of the word. It must be said that the category of other males probably includes the voices of some pitment and keelmen, whom it is simply not possible to label as such from the texts alone. Nevertheless, it is clear that other male voices align with imputed labouring-class language in the later period. Performers in stage persona, for instance, use the expletive as they entertain their audience drawn primarily from the industrial labouring class.

While the word *smash* is used liberally in both time periods, *Gox / Gocks* is not common among the early writers and it appears most often in the later period. It is described by Heslop as

a common oath. This appears to be the local version of *cocks*, as heard elsewhere in the exclamation *cocks-wunters*, *cocks-body*. It is really a corruption or purposed disguise of the name of God.

(Heslop 1892:338)

In the corpus as a whole, among the early writers with only 8 occurrences of the word conclusions cannot be drawn. In the later period when the word occurs 62 times, other males account for 61% of its appearances and pitmen / keelmen 37%. We need again to recall that the latter group make up only 13% of voices in the later period. It is also likely that many of the other male voices are, in fact, pitmen or keelmen. Thus these groups remain closely associated with the word. Wives and sweethearts account for the other 2% of occurrences.

In the early period swearing or oaths are associated with the industrial labouring class, particularly pitmen and keelmen. In the later period this continues, but narrators or stage personae are more aligned with an audience heavily constituted by members of that class. This is reflected in the use of oaths within the category of other male voices. The pattern is in line with more general contrasts and convergences in language that can be seen in a literary discussion which explores wider cultural and linguistic issues.

4.3. Contrasts and Convergence

4.3.1. The Significance of Contrast

Collections of Tyneside song are often held to be expressions of local patriotism and labouring-class solidarity. After all, the non-standard dialect itself within much northern dialect literature is said by language scholars to be a symbol of regional or class identity, solidarity, and of communal values (cf. Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:13, Beal 2000:353-4, 2005, Shorrocks 1999:96, Wales 2002:61, 2006:132). If such interpretations are upheld without qualification, then it is not obvious that within the songs contrasts in voice should occur at all. And yet, in collections of Tyneside song a wide variety of material is found. This includes *StE songs featuring literary dialect* alongside *non-standard dialect songs*. In the case of the former song-types, contrasts in voice are, by definition, inevitable. A third-person StE narrator will differ from a character represented through non-standard orthography. However, contrasts also occur in the *non-standard dialect songs*. We have seen that among the early writers pitmen and keelmen are represented through higher proportions of non-standard spellings in these songs. And in all early songs they use far higher proportions of oaths. This evidence shows that authors vary their written style in print. In performance, of course, it is possible that all voices could be performed with a uniform accent. However, I contend that style shifting occurs in performance too, even within individual songs. Certainly, the contrasts in the use of oaths suggest this, and I shall show that further linguistic and cultural contrasts can be detected within single pieces. I maintain that such contrasts are intentional and meaningful. It is, therefore, worth considering what differences between StE and non-standard dialect are taken to convey in the case of much nineteenth-century fiction.

In the novel those represented using non-standard dialect are most likely to belong to the lower classes (cf. Fowler 1996:187). Toolan (1990:227; cf. Blake 1981:13, Fowler 1996:188, Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:13) makes the point that until Dickens's time, in the novel at least, non-standard dialect is used to convey characteristics of 'uncouthness, ignorance, stupidity or even criminality'. Frequently, as Blake (1981:13)

notes, the non-standard dialect users, and their language, are the object of humour emerging from feelings of superiority on the part of the reader.

Thus variety and difference in the language of much literature can relate to character depiction and is more broadly meaningful. Fowler (1996:188) contends that non-standard and StE voices in fiction usually convey the contrasting 'world-views' of speakers. This interpretation is analagous to Le-Page and Tabouret-Keller's (2006:181) observation that in everyday life the use of a linguistic variety implies the projection of an 'inner universe'. By definition, this implies the existence of alternative 'inner universes' conveyed through linguistic choice. Setting aside the extent to which stage performers *own* or *feel* social identities associated with the range of linguistic styles they might inhabit (cf Coupland 2006:23), the projection of linguistic contrasts in Tyneside song also implies a drama of contrasting ideologies, 'world-views', or 'inner universes'. In order to see how cultural and ideological contrasts might be realised linguistically, I will examine the way that pitmen and keelmen are differentiated from other voices in early Tyneside song – particularly other male voices. The latter, as noted, may be first or third-person narrators, or characters in their own right. This analysis is fundamental to the account of the relationship between language, group character trait, and cultural outlook, which I offer in Chapter Five. The current discussion will include consideration of contrasts between the use of French / Latinate StE words and traditional Tyneside dialect features. I rely heavily on *OED* for the etymologies of StE items, while definitions of Tyneside words are taken primarily from Heslop's dictionary of 1892.

4.3.2. Pitmen and Keelmen Set Apart

Pitmen and keelmen are, as indicated, the most common identifiable voice category in the entire electronic corpus. They appear as both first-person narrators and as characters – though never as third-person narrators. As indicated, a more complete account of the association between character trait and language among these literary figures is given in the next chapter. I offer here some examples of the specific contrasts in language that are demonstrated in individual songs particularly between these occupational groups and other male voices as first or third-person narrators or characters.

In the category, *StE songs featuring literary dialect*, it is obvious that contrasts will be found, especially in written form. In Midford's text, 'The Pitman's Courtship' (1818:15-17), a very well known piece according to the editor Allan (1891, 1972 edn.:135), the narrator having noticed the pitman and his sweetheart consciously draws attention to the language that he expects to hear:

Quite soft blew the wind from the west,
 The sun faintly shone in the sky,
 When Lukey and Bessy sat courting,
 As walking I chanc'd to espy.
 Unheeded I stole close beside them,
 To hear their discourse was my plan;
 I listen'd each word they were saying,
 When Lukey his courtship began.

Last hopen thou won up my fancy,
 Wi' thy fine silken jacket o' blue;
 An smash! if their Newcassel lyedys
 Cou'd marrow the curls o' thy brow ...
 My Grandy lik'd spice singing hinnies,
 Ma comely, aw like thou as weel.

(*'The Pitman's Courtship'* 1818:15)

The first two lines of the song use a poetic register derived from eighteenth-century pastoral. The writer's purpose in using French or Latinate words such as *espy*, *discourse*, and *courtship*, is deliberate, and sets up a contrast with the subsequent heavy Tyneside dialect used by Lukey, the pitman. The narrator is a voyeuristic outsider, with echoes of the pastoral eavesdropper, consciously expecting to hear language and ideologies different from his own more 'cultured' perspective. Next we have Lukey's voice represented through elements of non-standard orthography, and the use of Tyneside words such as *hopen*, a 'festival' or fair, the verb *marrow*, meaning 'to equal', and *singing hinnies*, or currant scones. In addition, there is the expletive *smash*, and use of the personal pronoun *thou*. In traditional regional dialects the latter frequently conveys familiarity (Wales 1996:76, Wright 1905:272). Lukey's world is that of the pit-village bumpkin. He thinks of Newcastle as the centre of high culture, sophistication, and gentility, and he compares his true love with a currant scone.

A further example of these narrator / pitman contrasts occurs in another Midford song, 'The Royal Archdukes' (1818:43-5). The immediate satire here may be upon the Austrian Archdukes, then on a tour through England, but it is the pitmen who stand out linguistically, precisely because of their uncouthness in such a scene:

At th' Interpreter's face, how the pitmen did gaze!
 Cries yen, "Smash! here's Nebuchadnazer;
 "Wy, may aw be skin'd, but the barber's been blind,
 "Or else he's had a bitch of a razor."
 At the pitman's jocose observation, he shewed some signs of vexation ...
 ('Royal Archdukes' 1818:44)

There could hardly be a sharper distinction. The pitman's language breaks in upon the activities of the nobles. The author may intend us to laugh with the pitman here. But, as with other songs, the narrator has recourse to French / Latinate words – *jocose*, *observation*, *vexation*. This stresses the contrast with the pitman, who amplifies the linguistic differences with his use of the words *smash* and *bitch*.

Similar distinctions are set up in song between the narrator or other characters and keelmen. In Midford's 'Tyne Fair' the keelmen consider what they can do to earn some money while the river Tyne is frozen:

When one of them offer'd a project so nice,
 "'Od smash ye! let's heave out wor planks on the ice."

I was going, 'mongst the rest, the amusement to share,
 When "Pay for the Plank, Sir!" says one, with an air;
 Slipt my hand in my pocket, without e'er a frown,
 And this Knight of the Huddock led me careful down.

('Tyne Fair' 1818:3)

The author uses 'sophisticated' French / Latinate words such as *project* and *amusement*. In contrast, the very first utterance from any of the keelmen is the expletive *Od smash ye!* The subsequent high mannered tone of the next of them who speaks 'with an air' is unexpected and linguistically incongruous (cf. Ross 1998:7-8). A *huddock* is 'the cabin in a keel'. Hence, the narrator's use of the ironic epithet, 'Knight of the Huddock', brings further linguistic and social incongruity. The narrator does not expect such a high mannered tone and language from a keelman, nor is it to be expected in this genre of song. This piece creates a picture of a festive occasion, when everyone, from the

'Member of Parliament down to the Sweep' participates. Nevertheless, specific contrasts both linguistic and social are set up.

The language expected of keelmen within the genre is highlighted in Shield's well known song, 'My Lord 'Size' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:23-25). In this piece, about the supposed drowning of an Assize Judge, several linguistic contrasts are apparent. A butler, giving evidence at a hastily convened inquest, uses words such as *terrace*, *studying*, *examin'd*, *compos'd*, *inspected* and *survey'd*. This, and the language of the narrator, is sharply differentiated from that of other witnesses – drunken Betty Watt, and also a keelman:

Next a keelman was call'd on, *Bold Archy* his name,
 Who the book as he kiss'd shew'd the whites of his eyes;
 Then he cut an odd caper, attention to claim,
 And this evidence gave them respecting *Lord 'Size*.

"Aw was *setten* the keel, wi' *Dick Stavers* an' *Mat*,
 An' the Mansion-hoose Stairs we were just alangside,
 When we a' three *see'd sumthing*, but didn't ken *what*,
 That was *splashing* and *labbering* about i' the tide.
 "It's a *fluiker!*" ki Dick; "No," ki Mat, "it's owre big ..."
 Kiv aw – for aw'd getten a gliff o' the wig –
 Odds marcy! Wye, marrows, becrike its *Lord 'Size* ..."

(*My Lord 'Size* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:24)

As with the words of the butler, *attention*, *evidence*, and *respecting* are of French or Latinate origin. Earlier in the song the narrator has even used the French phrase *tête a tête* (*My Lord 'Size* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:23). The contrast set up with the keelman is, however, not just linguistic. Archy's coal-blackened face is suggested by the whites of his eyes, and his 'odd', almost childlike 'caper' does indeed draw attention to him. Archy is nevertheless represented through non-standard spellings, and local or trade-specific words. We have *ken* meaning 'to know', a *fluiker*, which is a 'flounder', *gliff*, 'a glimpse', and *marrows*, being 'workfellows'; to *set* a keel is to propel it 'by thrusting it along with a pouy'. The forms *ki* and *kiv*, both inflections in a system of linking prosody, meaning 'quoth', are also noteworthy. Finally, of course, we have Archy's use of the expletives *Odds marcy* and *becrike*. The contrast between the language of the narrator, the butler,

and Archy is stark. This song undoubtedly satirises the pomp of officialdom and the Assises, but the keelman is a tool in that satire, and is himself an object of laughter.

When we turn to the *non-standard dialect songs*, it is clear that differentiation persists between the voices of pitmen or keelmen, and others. A prime example occurs in one of Emery's most popular songs, 'Hydrophobie'. This begins with the voice of a non-standard narrator, who nevertheless makes an overt reference to the harsh language of a keelman:

As Skipper Carr and Markie Dunn,
 Were gannin, drunk, through Sandgate –
 A dog bit Mark and off did run,
 But sair the poor sowl fand it;
The Skipper in a voice se rough –
 Aw warn'd, says he, its mad enough –
 Howay and get some doctor's stuff,
 For fear of Hydrophobie! [my italics]
 ('Hydrophobie' in Fordyce ed. 1842:63)

Thus far in the song, in print at least, there seems little to differentiate the narrator linguistically from the skipper. Even a doctor, who patches Markie up, is represented through non-standard orthography ('Hydrophobie' in Fordyce ed. 1842:63). However, given that this is a performance piece it seems fair to assume that Emery would engage in some form of style shifting in his accent. After all, he specifically highlights the 'rough' voice of the skipper. Nevertheless, the song-writer reserves the greatest emphasis on the skipper's linguistic difference until later. This allows Emery to draw maximum impact by having the skipper swear following a somewhat archaic StE speech by a Quaker. The latter has taken a ride in the keel, and the skipper teases him that they will be bitten by Markie:

Said Quack – I hope this can't be true,
 Nay, friend, thou art mistaken;
 We must not fear what man can do –
 Yea! I will stand unshaken!
 The skipper, to complete the farce,
 Said, Maister Quaker, what's far warse,
 A b-----g dog bit Markie's a—e,
 And browt on Hydrophobie!
 ('Hydrophobie' in Fordyce ed. 1842:64)

The Quaker uses StE, but his language also reflects a particular speech style, or register, which Emery associates with the man's religious order. Writing in the nineteenth century, Blunt (1874:468) refers to Quaker 'archaisms of dress and language'. In the song we have the expressions *Nay* and *thou art*, and also *Yea!*. The retention by Quakers of *thou* occurred for reasons of religious ideology, rather than through adherence to the patterns of variation in *thou*, and *you* or *ye*, seen in traditional regional dialects; thus any use of the word would sound religious and archaic here (Wales 1996:76; cf. Baugh and Cable 2002:242, Crystal 2003:71). The Quaker is the subject of satire for Emery and his audience. However, my focus here is upon the way that the keelman is distinguished not just from the Quaker, but also from the narrator. Thus 'Quack', though a subject of mockery, also provides a foil for the Skipper's 'voice se rough', and in particular for his swearing.

I have already shown that across all songs, particularly in the case of the early writers, pitmen and keelmen are heavily associated with the use of oaths. We have seen that they swear in the *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. In the *non-standard dialect songs* their tendency to swear is one of the most striking means by which contrasts in voice are achieved. It is important to recall various overt textual references to swearing by keelmen seen earlier in this chapter, and the association made by Brockett (1825:197) between pitmen and use of the word *smash* (see section 4.2.4.). The prime examples of the use of this word by a pitman are found in Midford's song, 'X Y Z at Newcastle Races, 1814' (1818:5-8). The song is about the racehorse, X Y Z, four times winner of the Gold Cup, then the most prestigious trophy at Newcastle Races. The pitman narrator begins: 'SMASH! Jemmy, let us buss, we'll off, / And see Newcassel Races' ('X Y Z' 1818:5). In all but two of the song's choruses, either *Gad smash!* or *Od smash!* is used. For instance, we have "'Gad smash!" says I, "X Y's the steed, / He bangs them a' for pith an' speed"' ('X Y Z' 1818.6). We shall see in the next chapter that Bob Cranky, a stereotyped representation of the pitman figure, is a liberal user of the word *smash*, particularly in Selkirk's song, 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:25-27; see section 5.2.1.). In such songs, even where the narrator is a pitman, we have to consider whether the ideology of the performer and the primary audience is that of the pitman character being portrayed. Nevertheless, it is when we find contrasts in voice within

single songs, that it becomes quite clear, as in Emery's 'Hydrophobie', that this is not necessarily the case. The keelman in the latter song might be a vehicle by which men such as Emery satirise the Quakers, but the keelman himself is also a satirical figure. The same can be said of the pitman in Emery's 'Newcastle Wonders' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:65-6). The pitman, Geordy, is accosted by a coachman who uses respectful StE. Geordy's reply is less than gracious:

Wey, smash noo – whe's thou, man? – How, what dis thou mean? –
 I drive the best coach, sir, that ever was seen. –
 To ride iv a coach! Smash, says Geordy, aw's willin' ...
 ('Newcastle Wonders' in Fordyce ed. 1842:66).

Further oaths follow from Geordy, who again uses *Od smash*, and also *hell*, which is written as 'H-ll'. The pitman is not just differentiated from the coachman, but from the narrator also, and swearing is crucial in this. A reliance on such language also occurs in Armstrong's songs about keelmen. In the piece, 'The Jenny Hoolet' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:9), a keel becomes grounded, and the skipper mistakes the hoot of an owl for laughter. So we are told: 'Iv a raving mad passion he curs'd and he swore, / "Aw'll hoo-hoo thou, thou b----r, when aw cum ashore!"' ('Jenny Hoolet' in Fordyce ed. 1842:9).

The primary audiences for these songs (artisans, shopkeepers and small tradesmen) enjoy this language, of course, as they take their drinks at various Newcastle convivial clubs (cf. Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn. v, 230). Furthermore, the swearing can be extreme indeed. This section focuses on pitmen and keelmen, but, to a far lesser extent, women (usually drunkards and fishwives) swear too. In the Emery song, 'The Fishwife and Mustaches; or, Sandgate Oratory'* (in Gateshead Council 2004), a fishwife calls a colonel 'awd c—t fyece!'. One can imagine such songs being sung to hoots of delight. However, to use Coupland's (2006:23) terminology, projecting a social identity 'is not the same as feeling or living a social identity with personal investment in it and full ownership of it'. The fact that, on the whole, it is pitmen and keelmen, and sometimes lowly women, who swear, indicates a vicarious pleasure among the early writers and their primary audiences, even some degree of linguistic and cultural identification. But this identification is ambivalent, and the songs also reveal social distance from those depicted as using oaths.

The writers of these pieces also have the option, in representing non-pitmen / keelmen narrators, of using both a lighter touch of Tyneside features, and also of deploying a more erudite language. This can be seen in Armstrong's song, 'The Skipper's Mistake' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:301-2). The narrator introduces the piece as follows:

Two jovial souls, two skippers bold,
 For Shields did sail one morning,
 In their awd keel, black as the Deil,
 All fear and danger scorning.
 The sky look'd bright, which prophesied
 A fair and glorious day, man ...

('The Skipper's Mistake' in Fordyce ed. 1842:301)

In the final verse the narrator waxes lyrical: 'May vict'ry round Britannia's brow / Her laurels still entwine, man' ('Skipper's Mistake' in Fordyce ed. 1842:302). The contrast with the language of the keelmen is stark. Lost in mist, one of them says 'Smash! marrow, ye hae been at skuel, / Come find our latitude, man' ('Skipper's Mistake' in Fordyce ed. 1842:302). Despite use of the Latinate word, *latitude*, we are told that none of the keelmen can read. Although the narrator, like this keelman, uses the vocative / interjection *man* at line ends, the classical references to 'Britannia' and 'laurels', and the French or Latinate words, all distinguish him from the oath-prone keelman and his equally illiterate 'marrows'. This example will suffice at present, but others could be given.

It is clear, then, that even in the category, *non-standard dialect songs*, contrasts are evident which demonstrate the linguistic distance of narrators from the voices of pitmen and keelmen. In these examples differences are implied between the outlook of third-person narrators, and the imputed ideologies of these occupational groups. These contrasts in outlook can, in turn, facilitate precisely the satire of pitmen and keelmen to which the editor Marshall (1827:i) refers. As we shall see in the next chapter, the distinctive manner in which pitmen and keelmen's language can be represented also has a satiric tendency, in songs where individuals belonging to these groups are first-person narrators. I turn now, however, to a consideration of voices in those songs in which pitmen and keelmen do not appear, so as to offer a more complete account of the

contrasts in the early period between the voices of these occupational groups and other males.

4.3.3. Other Male Voices – Sophistication and Distance

In the *StE* songs featuring literary dialect the voice of the narrator will use either minimal non-standard dialect or none at all. In some of the *non-standard* songs, however, where pitmen and keelmen do not appear, use of Tyneside dialect can be heavy. This is the case in Thompson's songs, 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314-16) and 'Jemmy Joneson's Whurry' (in Marshall ed. 1827:10-12). In both of these the occupations of the narrators are unknown. Heavy dialect and swearing also occur in Selkirk's 'Swalwell Hopping' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:45-7), in which the narrator appears to be an iron foundry worker. On the whole, however, in these songs we often find voices that simply sound (or look) different from the voices of pitmen or keelmen. Firstly, I turn to 'Gilchrist's piece, 'The Quack Doctors':

WOR laureate may sing for his cash,
Of laws, constitution, and proctors,
Contented aw'll blair for a dash
At the slee, understrapping quack doctors.

('The Quack Doctors' 1824:12)

We are told, with irony, that it is possible to get advice from these quacks 'free gratis for nowt' ('The Quack Doctors' 1824:12). This satire uses a sophisticated mixture of French / Latinate words such as *laureate*, *constitution*, *proctors*, and *gratis*, and those belonging to regional dialect: *wor* or 'our', *blair* / *blare*, meaning 'to shout loudly', and the word *nowt*. There is also the informal or slang word *quack*. Non-standard spellings are light. The French / Latinate words give an air of erudition superior to the Quack doctors, while use of non-standard dialect counters the sophistry being satirised. The word *nowt*, especially, provides a note of demystification.

The use of French and Latinate words is again evident in the opening of Midford's song, 'The High Wind' (1818:47); this, despite using Tyneside dialect, includes in its opening verse the lines 'if te my harmony you are inclin'd, / I'll sing you what happen'd, one very

high wind'. The words *harmony* and *inclin'd* assist in creating a more assured literary tone. This is also found in Gilchrist's song, 'A Voyage to Lunnin' (1824:8-10), in which a ship is 'Skelp'd on by noisy Boreas'. The verb *skelp* here means to 'cause ... rapid movement'. Finally, in the song 'Northumberland Free o' Newcassel', written on the Duke of Northumberland being given the freedom of the town, Gilchrist deploys elaborate poetic metaphors, while still using non-standard orthography:

May it please Heav'n to grant that the sweet Flower o' Wales,
 Wi' Northumberland's roses entwini',
 May its fragrance shed forth i' celestial gales,
 In glory unceasin'ly shinin'.

(*'Northumberland Free o' Newcassel'* 1824:14)

The 'Flower o' Wales' is the Duchess of Northumberland, and the metaphor refers to her marriage to the Duke. The non-standard spellings sit strangely alongside the French / Latinate words and the highly poetic style, not least in the term 'celestial gales'. It need hardly be said that this is a long way from the non-standard dialect with which the voices of pitmen and keelmen are depicted. This again implies ideological distance from the voices of these groups when they appear in other songs by Gilchrist.

I wish to touch briefly on the manner in which the voices of specifically identified Tyneside artisans may be represented. The number of these voices in the electronic corpus is small. It is mainly in the *StE songs featuring literary dialect* that they appear. Such voices are found particularly in Midford's work. In 'The Tyne Cossacks' (1818:21-3), for instance, one unidentified character has a non-standard voice, but a butcher, a tanner and a tailor are either represented in StE, or their words are recounted using it. Midford's piece, 'The Tailor's Defence', on the other hand, provides a good example of the light touch with which local features may be applied to characterise such voices:

THERE liv'd a Tailor, stout and strong,
 Who'd been in bed not very long,
 When something, he thought, was going wrong,
 So rose to make resistance:
 "I'm sure, just now, I heard a noise,
 "Some miscreant thief my rest destroys;
 "Or, if I've spoke against the laws,
 "I'm mebbys now in Sidmouth's claws:
 "Be who it will, Ize daud his jaws,

"For aw'll fight for my existence!

(*'The Tailor's Defence'* 1818:52)

The Sidmouth to whom the tailor refers is Henry Addington, Home Secretary (1812-22), who in this period, along with Castlereagh, was regarded by popular radicals as the 'architect of repression' (Cookson 2008). In this song not only does the narrator use StE (or at least minimal non-standard orthography), but the tailor also is represented with light dialect. In addition to the narrator's using French or Latinate words, we encounter such language from the tailor, who is depicted as having some education, perhaps an involvement in radical politics, but little courage. He uses *miscreant*, *destroys*, and *existence*, but this is balanced by the Tyneside features. It may be that his pretensions to courage are bolstered by his use of non-standard 'Ize daud his jaws'. The verb *daud* / *dad* means 'to strike', and as we shall see, dialect itself can be associated with physical toughness, especially when used by pitmen or keelmen (see section 5.2.1.). The tailor, however, is terrified by the noise which, it turns out, is made by his cat (*'The Tailor's Defence'* 1818:52). This lack of courage, as we shall see, is something that often marks artisans in these songs.

In other pieces the use of Tyneside dialect to represent artisan voices may be equally light, or even non-existent. Thus in another of Midford's songs, *'The Pink of Chowdon'* (1818:50-52), while the wife of 'the Pink' (a Newcastle shoemaker) uses some non-standard dialect, both he, the narrator, and a tailor use StE. Again, in Midford's *'Duel Extraordinary'* (1818:25-27) a blacksmith and a shoemaker both make bombastic speeches in StE. The narrator uses a StE mock epic style – in the first line addressing his song to 'Criticks, vers'd in Tragick Muse' – and he describes the duellers in the following terms:

The one a son of Vulcan is,
 With face as black as soot, Sir;
 The other Crispin's darling son,
 His name poor Johnny Boot, Sir ...

(*'Duel Extraordinary'* 1818:25)

The allusions to a classical literary culture set up incongruities with the colloquial, informal, and familiar. The shoemaker, 'Crispin's darling son', is actually 'poor Johnny Boot'. Performed at Newcastle's Theatre Royal, the song is a satire on pretensions to

gentility. The narrator uses only one non-standard spelling (for the word *sweat*) saying that Johnny was 'rather in a sweet' (1818:26). The latter occurs at precisely the moment when the shoemaker's cowardice is highlighted: the spelling strips his pretension away, along with his courage.

It should be noted that there is also an element of self-satire in these songs. Midford is, after all, a shoemaker. And yet the satirical representation of artisans by the early writers usually differs from that to which pitmen and keelmen are subjected. The mockery aimed at pitmen and keelmen may target social pretension, but it often highlights their imputed low intelligence or lack of culture, and it is they who are given the heaviest non-standard dialect (see sections 4.2.3., 5.2.1. and 5.3.2.). Artisans are depicted as being relatively more familiar with high culture, and they often use either light Tyneside dialect or none at all. Frequently, however, the artisans have their pretensions cut down too, and their bravery questioned. The difference in approach is sometimes one of degree. Pitmen and keelmen, too, can be frightened, especially when ghosts, real or otherwise, are involved!

The issue of courage among artisans is, nevertheless, important. In this respect, as I turn again to the *non-standard dialect songs*, Emery's piece, 'The Mechanics' Procession; Or A Trip to South Shields', is of interest:

LET gowks about Odd Fellows brag,
 And Foresters se fine –
 Unrivall'd the Mechanics stand,
 And long will o'er them shine; –
 With belts of blue, and hearts so true,
 They far outrival every Order –
 Their praise is sung by every tongue,
 Frae Lunnin toon reet ow'r the Border.

(*'The Mechanics' Procession'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:221)

A *gowk* is 'a simpleton', but despite launching so quickly into the Tyneside dialect, the non-standard orthography is very light in this song. This is the world of the artisan trade society and the lodge. There is much bragging by members of various orders that they will take up the battle whenever 'Mechanics are oppress'd'; and there is the assertion that they would 'crush a foe at ev'ry blow, / Until that they had satisfaction' (*'The Mechanics' Procession'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:222). However, the whole episode turns out to be a jaunt to Shields to enjoy some 'yel' or beer. Again, then, there is an element of self-satire.

Emery, a printer, is a member of the 'Nelson Lodge', as revealed in the author details given for another song, 'The Skipper's Account of the Mechanic's Procession' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:271). In the former piece the satire draws on the literary register of mock epic, supported by the use of more 'sophisticated' French or Latinate words, such as *unrivalled*, *oppress'd* and *satisfaction*. The mixture of the non-standard and more formal or consciously 'literary' language assists in creating the impression of self-mocking pretentiousness.

It is noticeable, on the other hand, that in the anonymous song, 'A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble'*², the coachmaker, Willy Dixon, an embodiment of the song culture that mocks pitmen, is himself remorselessly represented using non-standard dialect. Willy, who runs in terror whenever he sees a pitman approach, nevertheless enjoys ridiculing them:

On Pay-day neets aw gan to the Cock,
 When the Pitmen's aw gyen hyem,
 Then aw begins to rair and sing,
 And myek o' them a gyem.

('A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble' in Fordyce ed. 1842:25)

Whoever wrote this song reminds Willy and his like of their own relatively humble position, by having the coachmaker use such heavy local dialect. To underline his lowliness, at the end of the song Willy is depicted whistling his way to work on Mondays at six in the morning ('A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble' in Fordyce ed. 1842:25-6). It is clear, then, that artisans can have linguistic satire based on the Tyneside dialect turned back upon them.

I have shown in this section on the early writers that stark contrasts can be seen between the voices of pitmen / keelmen and others, particularly those of other males. These two voice categories are by far the most important in the early period. We have seen that *StE songs featuring literary dialect* set up explicit linguistic and ideological contrasts, between the narrators and pitmen or keelmen as characters. It should be remembered that these songs appear in the same collections as the *non-standard dialect* pieces. Authors write both types of songs, and their audiences would indeed hear them sing both types. In fact, linguistic and ideological differences can be detected in the *non-*

standard dialect songs too, between pitmen / keelmen and other male voices such as narrators. These members of the industrial labouring classes are subjected to satire in both types of song. Male voices, in songs that do not feature pitmen or keelmen, are frequently distinguishable from these groups. Finally, while artisans may also be the subject of satire, they are usually far less closely associated with the dialect.

4.3.4. Convergence of Voices

When Ned Corvan wrote 'The Shades Saloon', one assumes that the song provided a useful advertisement for the concert room in question:

Aw winna jaw nor preach a sarmin,
 Nor freetin' folks wiv ought alarmin';
 So haud yor jaws and aw sit doon man,
 Tiv aw tell about wor shades saloon man.
 Whe wad think't but smash its truth man,
 It bangs them aw byeth north and south man ...

('The Shades Saloon' 1850:14-15)

Setting aside the specific issue of resistance to religious respectability, which I discuss later in the thesis (see section 6.2.1.), a number of things need to be noted here. Firstly, there is heavy use of non-standard spelling. Also, there is the obvious repetition of *man* – a continuation of a practice used by earlier writers. In addition, the word *smash* occurs in the chorus and is therefore repeated. This is comparable to the repetition of the word by the pitman in the chorus of Midford's 'X Y Z at Newcastle Races, 1814' (1818:5-8). But the voice here is not a miner. These are the words of an overtly projected stage persona, the voice *of* the performer, *as* performer. In addition, while divisions may not be absolute, we have now left the milieu of the convivial club, in which performers sing for their friends. This is instead the world of the professional music hall singer, who sings to an audience made up largely of the industrial labouring class. As I have suggested in Chapter One, and will argue later in the thesis, these two spheres of performance may facilitate two contrasting, though probably over-lapping, sets of meanings for primary audiences. The first is satire, the second is related to cultural resistance or autonomy.

Performers in the music or concert hall often have to appeal to the audience for their very livelihood. In other words, they have to court popularity for a living. Whatever the social backgrounds, ideologies and loyalties of the performers, we should never lose sight of that fact. Given that the industrial labouring class is strongly represented in the music hall audience, it should not be a surprise if, in their performances or publications of 'Tyneside songs', the writers or performers project cultural and linguistic identities that frequently align with those of their audience.

We have seen that, in the work of the later writers, all voice categories use higher levels of non-standard orthography than the voices depicted by early writers. Of course, the orthography is not direct evidence for the delivery of language in performance. However, it might demonstrate a greater commitment on the part of author and reader to that orthography and to the accent more generally. Among the later writers, Robson, Corvan and Ridley all use heavy non-standard orthography. However, the greatest commitment to Tyneside spellings is found in the work of Joe Wilson. In a popular song, 'The Gallowgate Lad!', the performer gives an account of a chance meeting with a young woman:

One morn neer the grand Central Stashun,
 'Mang croods that wes hurryin bye,
 Aw happin'd te see Meggy Bensin,
 An' sairly the lassie did cry.
 Say aw – "canny lass, what's the matter?"
 Says she, quite dejected, "aw's sad,
 Aw's greetin for Jack, that's me luvor,
 Maw bonny bit Gallowgate Lad!"

"Ye'll knaw him, Joe, issint he hansum?
 As clivor a lad as ye'll see,
 He wes striker at Stivvisin's Factory,
 But lately he's been on the spree ... "

(*'The Gallowgate Lad!'* c.1865:9)

The narrator is Wilson as stage persona or performer. Both he and Meggy are represented through the use of heavy non-standard orthography, to the extent that on occasions we are in the realm of 'eye dialect'. This form of dialect writing does not actually convey any phonological dialect differences (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 1998:308). The line between 'eye dialect', and representation of such phonological variation may be unclear.

Nevertheless, it does seem that <shun> in <Stashun> represents 'eye dialect', and that it occurs in <issint>, <hansum>, and <Factry>.

I do not wish to suggest that the early writers and their primary readers or audiences take no pleasure in the representation of dialect, or in hearing the Tyneside accent. We have seen in the previous chapter (see section 3.2.11.) the importance of the spelling <ee> and the pronunciation /i:/, in the song 'Weel May the Keel Row'* (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:5), and also in Thompson's two 'New' versions of it ('The New Keel Row', 'A' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.5-7, and 'B'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:114). Likewise, in the song, 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:316), Thompson also follows a reference to mockery of the Northumbrian burr by 'Cockneys', with the lines: 'honest Blind Willy shall string this iv rhymes, / And aw'll sing'd for a Christmas Carol'. This conveys real pleasure in the articulation of *r* on Tyneside as uvular [ɣ]. Nevertheless, I would argue that the later writers have a less ambiguous attitude towards those making the heaviest use of the dialect. This is seen again and again in songs.

In addition to the heavier use of non-standard orthography across voice categories, the use of the oaths *smash* and *Gox* is distributed more widely than in the early period. While pitmen and keelmen continue to use the words, other male voices (in various manifestations) use them at levels and in ways that are simply not found in the work of the early writers.

In a favourite song by Robson, 'The Wonderful Tallygrip' (in Robson ed. c.1849:17-22), the pitman narrator uses *smash* on six occasions, and *Gox* four times. Nevertheless, other male voices can also be heard using these oaths in Robson's work. Also, as we have seen, *smash* is used repeatedly in Corvan's song, 'The Shades Saloon', in which the voice is that of the stage performer. Similarly, in his theme song, 'Cat-Gut Jim, the Fiddler'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:444), Jim sings to his audience, 'Gox! where thor's ony fun or sport thou's sure te fynd me there'. Corvan performed this song 'upwards of 3,000 nights' (Allan cited in Harker 1981:54), so that his audiences would be accustomed to him using the word *gox* in the piece. In fact, Corvan also makes use of a further oath, *gosh*, or *gosh cap*. It is clear from the electronic corpus that this is used only by him, but it appears 26 times. It is repeated in the chorus of the song, 'Hairy Gobs an' fine Moosecatchers'

(1850s:Song Book 2, 17), within the lines 'Goshcap what a spree, the lasses they'll watch us / When walkin' thro' the toon wi' hairy gobs an' fine moosecatchers'. Restricted to Corvan it may be, but Heslop (1892:269, 335) says that this oath, derived from the name *God*, is very common in Northumberland. It seems, then, that Corvan's audience must have expected to hear oaths as an integral part of his stage-turn.

Other types of oath or swearing are also in evidence. Corvan, in another popular song, 'The Rise in Coals' (1850s:Song Book 1, 7), while making a joke about the result of the high cost of coal, also expresses his sympathies with 'poor folk'. At the sight of the crowds at the 'depot', the narrator says

They fowt like fair deevils aw's sure an' far warse,
For they ken'd what it was for ti hev a caud a—e ...

('The Rise in Coals' 1850s:Song Book 1, 7)

The swearing is integral to the humour, and the audience must laugh here. The difference between the use of oaths by early writers to their audiences (a frequent occurrence when, for instance, they employ first-person pitmen narrators), and that by later writers, as characters or overt stage personae, is subtle. However, the present example does not foster laughter at a language being attributed to others, but at both language and ideologies that the audience may embrace more fully as its own. This is in part a result of the direct manner in which the stage persona is projected to that audience (cf. Davison 1982:27, 52).

Swearing and oaths, nevertheless, can be problematic within labouring-class culture. Wilson, as already noted, writes of this issue in his song, 'What Gud Can Sweerin De?':

Let men be drest se flashey,
The pitmen or the peer,
It myeks them luck but trashey
If once they hap te sweer ...

('What Gud Can Sweerin De?' c.1865:17)

In Wilson's c.1865 edition, oaths and swearing are strikingly rare. In fact, those who swear, or who are associated with swearing, tend to be drunkards, as in 'The Noodle an' Rifleman's Dispute' (c.1865:47-9; cf. 'The Row iv a Public Hoose c.1865:75-7). Nevertheless, risqué language could certainly appeal to audiences. In 'The Row Upon the

Stairs' (c.1865:28), a popular song of Wilson's, Mistress Todd calls her neighbour a 'brazind-lucking slut'. In one version of 'Keep Yor Feet Still!' (cited in D. Bell. 2003:23), Bob Johnson, complaining to Geordy about being wakened from dreams of his wedding day, says: 'ya bliddy feet completely spiled the rest!'. The version in the electronic corpus has 'clumsy feet' ('Keep Yor Feet Still!' c.1865:90). Gregson and Huggins (1999:89) argue that Wilson tailored his act to his audiences in a wide variety of venues, from mechanics institutes to pubs and music halls. It may be that he tailored the language in this way too. Nevertheless, the rarity of oaths and swearing in his own collection is striking. It is worth remembering that Wilson wrote at a time when labouring-class 'respectability' was on the increase (cf. Janowitz 1998:190, Colls 1977:162, Joyce 1991:271). Wilson is not simply denying one group such language and attributing it to others (except for drunkards). He restricts it in all voice categories. In fact, I would argue that the rarity of pitmen and keelmen's voices in Wilson's songs is in part the result of the strength of the generic demand for swearing in the representation of these voices – a demand that Wilson does not wish to satisfy. His commitment to labouring-class language generally, however, is undiminished.

The humour is initiated with an 'insider' perspective in the mid-century Tyneside music hall (cf. Harker 1972:xix, 1981:48-9). This can involve manipulation of French or Latinate words that are used in a manner which, to adopt Bailey's (1994) terminology, emphasises 'knowingness', a tactic that includes rather than excludes audiences of industrial workers. We will see the implications of this for the use of malapropism and its relationship to comedy in the next chapter (see section 5.3.2). However, the use of French or Latinate words in a more 'correct' manner also aids the humour in much of the later material. Corvan, in his song, 'The Soup Kitchen', makes ironic (even sarcastic) use of such words. In a spoken section he talks of the pleasures of consuming the soup:

Begox! its run intiv the channels o' the corporation, an' noo aw feel like an alderman efter a good feed. It's a fine institution; it suits maw constitution; an' tiv any poor soul in a state o' destitution its a charitable contribution.

(*'The Soup Kitchen'* 1850s:Song Book 4, 5)

Corvan puts himself in the position of one who relies on the soup kitchen. Again, this is comedy, but it is a humour that must be shared with his labouring-class audience, and

which carries them along, when they detect the ironies in phrases such as 'fine institution' and 'charitable contribution'. Unlike earlier singers, the French / Latinate words are not used to differentiate his performance or authorial voice from the voices of industrial workers.

Similarly, in much of Wilson's work we see that the humour must be shared between Wilson and his labouring-class audience. In one of his drolleries, 'Billy Turn-bull's Adventors at the Grand Regretta' (c.1865:63), Billy mentions that he has borrowed an umbrella, and his origins are presumably humble. However, he appears to be a newspaper sports correspondent who is covering the boat race:

the time-gun boomed throo the air – an' shoots frae the stentorian lungs o' the multitude drew me attenshun te the noble forms o' the champions as they war seen embarkin, wi' the most magnannymus anniemosity tewards each uther, te dare the dangers o' the tretchorous deep – it wes high tide ye know.

(‘Billy Turn-bull's Adventors’ c.1865:63)

Wilson's drolleries are an early form of 'stand-up comedy' (Colls 2007). We form the impression that Billy is entirely unaware that his tone is mock epic or over-blown. The term *stentorian* is derived from the Homeric character Stentor, while the 'noble forms' of his 'champions' again conjure up heroic imagery. The words *magnanimous* and *animosity* are Latinate. The first of the two may mean either 'generous' or have an archaic sense meaning 'nobly brave or valiant'. But Billy is unaware of the possible incongruity or oxymoron in 'magnannymus anniemosity' (cf. Ross 1998:7-8, 32). Finally, his words on the dangers of the 'tretchorous deep' represent hyperbole, and are followed by the incongruous, almost conversational afterthought, 'it wes high tide ye know'. This shift in register is used skilfully by Wilson, but Billy's attempts at heroic language are in any case comically undermined, when the author strains the StE and French / Latinate words to the limits with non-standard orthography. The use of such words, the mixing of register, and the use of heavy Tyneside orthography or a local accent, can 'reassure' audiences or readers of their own 'competence', to adopt Bailey's (1994:151, 160) terms again. They understand the language and perceive Billy's limited competence. The overall impact renders the dialect itself part of the humour, but this is a humour that can be shared directly with a labouring-class audience or readership. Wilson signs himself 'Tyneside

Bard' in his c.1865 volume ('Me Muther's Warnin!' c.1865:2), while the book as a whole has the additional title, 'The Canny Newcassel Foaks' Fireside Budjit', and is 'Dedycated tiv Ivrybody'. As we shall see, it would be inaccurate to say that Wilson aligns himself unambigously with all 'types' of working people. Nevertheless, his popularity with labouring-class audiences indicates that his use of language has a direct appeal.

4.4. Summary

Linguistic differences can be found among a range of voice types in the work of early writers. This is not surprising in *StE songs featuring literary dialect*. However, such a finding might not have been expected in *non-standard dialect songs*. After all, such pieces, and the non-standard dialect within them, are frequently taken to be expressions of local, communal or labouring-class solidarity. Nevertheless, my statistical analysis clearly shows that in these songs pitmen and keelmen use higher levels of non-standard orthography than other groups in the early period. Also, in the wider corpus in this period they use far higher levels of the oath *smash*.

My particular focus has been on the contrasts between the voices of pitmen / keelmen, and other male voices, including first and third-person narrators, characters, and, to some degree, specifically identified artisans. Further analysis, including an examination of the *StE songs featuring literary dialect*, confirms that pitmen and keelmen are differentiated from such voices. French and Latinate words, a lack of swearing and oaths, and a lighter touch in non-standard orthography, or none at all, are seen frequently among other male voices. These points imply that in performance there will be differences in the voices of pitmen / keelmen and other males between songs, and I contend that they also make style shifting to convey contrasts in such voices inevitable *within* certain songs. Literary commentary and sociolinguistic research into linguistic identity, respectively, indicate that differences in the representation of language use in the novel, and in choice of linguistic varieties by individuals, imply contrasts in 'world-views' (Fowler 1996:188), or 'inner universe[s]' (Le-Page and Tabouret-Keller's 2006:181). I maintain that this also applies in the representation of voice and ideology in song.

It is important to remember that despite the mention of butlers, Quakers or artisans in this chapter, it is pitmen and keelmen who are by far the largest identifiable groups in the corpus. In the next chapter I will explore in more detail the relationship between character trait and language in relation to the latter groups, who are represented as the heaviest users of Tyneside dialect.

I have also shown that in the representation of all voices in *non-standard dialect songs* the later writers employ a far higher proportion of non-standard orthography than do the

early writers; that, in addition to their continued use by pitmen and keelmen in the corpus generally, oaths become common among other male voices; and also that the use of French or Latinate terms becomes part of a confirmation for industrial labouring-class audiences of their own linguistic competence. In effect, voices converge linguistically and ideologically to a much greater degree in the later period.

All of these linguistic issues have significant implications when considered alongside the representation of character. The relationship between language and a 'world-view' or 'inner universe', after all, must be inextricably bound up with ideology, character trait, and a wider array of behaviour. The two issues, language and character, should not be considered in isolation in the songs, and therefore a consideration of character in those groups most closely associated with the Tyneside dialect will be highly instructive.

Chapter Five

Character and Tyneside Dialect

5.1. Entertainment and the Meaning of Tyneside Dialect

Character and the social meaning of language are inextricably linked in Tyneside dialect song. It is apparent from even a cursory reading of the material that certain character types appear again and again. It is impossible, for example, not to notice the violent drunkard in the early songs or the family man, particularly in the songs of Joe Wilson later in the century. Certain characteristics (such as swearing, drinking, and imputed low intelligence) are recurrent among two specific groups – the pitmen and keelmen. We have also seen that in the electronic corpus these figures are the heaviest users of Tyneside dialect. This raises important questions as to the relationship between language and character in the representation of these working people.

I have given a detailed description of my approach to the relationship between Tyneside dialect and character trait in Chapter One (see section 1.7.1.). In general my ideas are based on the theory of *indexicality*, which involves 'the creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings', and also the building of ideologies about the 'sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language' (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:594). Of course, such social meaning might convey local or regional belonging, but associations with character trait too are involved in this process. The emergence of such meanings in song in relation to character is, nevertheless, complex and I contend that it results from a convergence of the following:

- A *dialogue* with other cultural and linguistic forms and discourses.
- Generic expectations and conventions regarding the depiction of character.
- Observation, however skewed, of behaviour in the real world.

The notion of *dialogism* is central to my arguments. Here I am influenced by Bakhtin's (1934-5, 1981 edn.:276, 281; cf. Mannheim and Tedlock 1995:15) claim that the meaning of an utterance arises from a *dialogue*, as it brushes up against 'thousands of living

dialogic threads'; thus he contends that the utterance 'is understood against the background of other concrete utterances on the same theme, a background made up of contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements'. As the anthropologists, Mannheim and Tedlock (1995:15) put it, whenever we write or speak 'our discourse occurs in the context of previous (or alternative) utterances or texts, and is in dialogue with them'. Ochs (1992:338) notes that Bakhtin's concept of *dialogism* has had a considerable influence on recent work on the social meaning of language. The implication of his thinking is that the 'voices of [the] speaker/writer and others may be blended in the course of the message and become part of the social meanings indexed within the message' (Ochs 1992:338). Therefore, despite Bakhtin's (1934-5, 1981 edn.:285) claim that in genres which are 'poetic in the narrow sense, the natural dialogization of the word is not put to artistic use', I contend that the concept can be central to an understanding of the social meanings *indexed* in song by the Tyneside dialect (see also section 1.7.1.).

The response by audiences to character and to songs is crucial here. It should be recalled that I have made a broad distinction between an early period prior to 1849, and a subsequent later period, encompassing the initial phases of music hall. I have stressed in Chapter One (see section 1.5.4.) that, in the early period, contemporary discourses identify the representation of the labouring classes and especially pitmen and keelmen in song as satirical (cf. Marshall ed. 1827:i, Fordyce ed. 1842:iii). The primary audience for such pieces may have been tradesmen, clerks and artisans, but, despite the satire, evidence suggests that pitmen and keelmen could enjoy this material (cf. Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v, 230, Colls 1977:51). As for the later period, modern scholarship on music hall frequently emphasises the role of songs in a culture offering some resistance to dominant ideologies of respectability and self-improvement (cf. Kift 1996:176, 182, Russell 1997:121, Gregson and Huggins 1999:91, Medhurst 2007:67). I argue that in both periods meaning may be multiple and depend to varying degrees on the knowledge of audiences regarding discourses of respectability, self-improvement, good manners and linguistic propriety, and form a *dialogue* with such discourses.

When I discuss the relationship between language and character trait, then, this aspect of *dialogism* must be taken into account at all times. Nevertheless, as already suggested,

the role of generic expectation and the conventions within which authors work are also crucial. Certain character types or personae appear again and again in early songs, especially in the satirical representation by early writers of pitmen and keelmen. The two terms *character* and *persona* are used most commonly in their literary senses in this thesis. I view the presentation of *character* as more specific and rounded than *persona*, which may be an aspect of personality or the stage 'voice' projected by a performer. The more important point here, however, is that these representations frequently adhere to literary traditions.

Such literary representations, nevertheless, do not occur in a socio-cultural vacuum insulated from the outside world. Authors and performers like other people hold ideas about language, and they make associations between particular types of people and particular language varieties. Such beliefs frequently are the result of preconceived ideas, but they also stem to some degree from observation of actual behaviour. Eckert (2005:21-2; cf. Eckert and Wenger 2005:584, Ochs 1992, 1993, Bucholtz and Hall 2005:595-6) claims that 'linguistic choices rarely index social categories directly; rather, they index attitudes, stances, [and] activities that are in turn associated with categories of people'. For Eckert (2005:17), therefore, speech style is a 'practice' and is key to the construction by individuals of 'personae', which she identifies as 'social types that are quite explicitly located in the social order'. While it is useful to maintain a general distinction between the concepts of social 'persona' and literary 'persona' or 'character', there is also some degree of complementary relationship in performance. Literary expectation about the representation of character types can be influenced by observations, however limited or partial, made by authors or performers, of social types in the outside world.

My conception of *indexicality*, as it applies to Tyneside dialect song in relation to character trait, stems from my dissatisfaction with various interpretations of dialect literature and song, be they by linguists, literary scholars or social historians. Such responses frequently portray the material as reflecting (usually positive) aspects of social solidarity and belonging, and stress its importance to linguistic identity at the levels of community, and ultimately to large-scale socio-demographic categories related to the 'working class', the 'region' or 'locality'. A literary *and* linguistic approach which focuses upon the relationship between character and language below the latter social levels will

reveal the multiple nature of meaning, and both the satirical and celebratory aspects of the song.

It is my further contention that at times the songs play their part in both reflecting and constructing *indexical* relations within performance, but also more widely outside that context. It is possible to argue that, as performers, certain individuals promulgate ideas about the cultural meaning of Tyneside dialect among their audience, an idea which Coupland (2006:26) in his research into Welsh English applies to a pantomime dame. With reference to Coupland (2006:26, 2001:369-70), I argue that performance settings are at times "'pedagogic" environments for sociolinguistic learning and affirmation', and are part of an active reconstitutive cultural process. In other words, such environments can function more widely as part of an active ongoing process of *indexicality* formation. This notion is given greater weight when we consider Barnouw and Kirkland's (1992:52) point that entertainment is 'attentive to the norms, myths, and fears of its audiences, but also serves to shape and reshape them; it reflects social trends but also nudges them into being'. Thus Tyneside song in performance is one context (among others, of course) in which social trends, character trait, linguistic usage, and therefore the social meanings of language, are subject to processes of reiteration and development. Those meanings, I would stress, however, may be multiple and (as is implied by the use of satire) not necessarily positive.

I return now to the specific issue of the meaning of Tyneside dialect as it applies to character in those groups most closely associated with that speech. Pitmen and keelmen, as shown in the previous chapter, are represented through the heaviest use of non-standard spellings (see section 4.2.3.). They are also iconic of the locality and are the most visible representatives in song of the Tyneside industrial labouring class. We need to understand the relationship between character and language as it applies to these groups, before approaching this issue in respect of the wider Tyneside labouring class as the century progresses. Developments and change in the relationship are given specific attention. As I deal with these matters, the chapter will move into an analysis of aspects of language which are closely associated with character trait through their particular functions or semantic content. An examination of malapropism will permit an understanding of associations between character and imputed linguistic behaviour that

might at times be negative. These features, after all, frequently indicate low intelligence, illiteracy and lack of linguistic competence. On the other hand, as seen in Chapter Three (see section 3.3.3.), the words *canny* and *hinny* have intense cultural resonances on Tyneside, and they are associated by writers of local dictionaries with particular types of behaviour or value judgements, usually with an emphasis on positive aspects of the domestic and communal. Malapropism and the words *canny* and *hinny*, therefore, will provide a means of assessing two broad aspects of personality trait that are observable in song: the comic and sometimes stupid on the one hand, and the communal, domestic and solidary on the other. This analysis will underline the intensely close relationship between specific aspects of language and character trait, which can act over and above, but also influence the more general relationship that I have already described.

The starting point, nevertheless, must be a character analysis of pitmen and keelmen. More than any other groups they embody the dialect in song, and we need to understand the manner in which audiences might respond to them in order to better appreciate the *indexical* relations of the Tyneside dialect in those songs.

5.2. Pitmen and Keelmen

5.2.1. The Early Period: Introducing Bob Cranky

The pitman formerly was called *Cranky*, or *Bob Cranky* ... The term *cranky* given by outsiders to the pitman was in later times replaced by "Geordy".

(Heslop 1892:196)

So comments R. O. Heslop in his 1892 dictionary, *Northumberland Words*, apparently recording historical usage. However, the pitman, Bob Cranky, is also the eponymous hero of several well known songs by the early Tyneside writers. These points suggest strongly that in such pieces Bob is a stereotype, a stock figure. As such, of course, he must be central to any discussion of the *indexical* relationship between Tyneside dialect and character in the material, because Bob and his like are highly prominent figures within it. Along with the pitmen, however, another group are equally prominent in song – the keelmen. In fact, modern commentators have suggested that pitmen and keelmen are interchangeable as song characters (Colls 1977:26), or that together they are iconic of the region (Wales 2006:135; cf. Joyce 1991:284). Undoubtedly there are differences between the groups; nevertheless, from the early nineteenth century at least, both categories are singled out for comment as representatives of the 'common' population of Tyneside (Marshall ed. 1827:i). Within song their antics form a specific genre, a fact recognised by Corvan in his song, 'The Pitman and the Kipperred Herrin' (1850s:Song Book 1, 13). As we shall see in the next section, this implies continuities between early songs and the music hall of the 1850s and 60s. Nevertheless, I also offer the first detailed analysis of the way that, in song, character trait in Bob Cranky and his like develops along increasingly respectable lines as the century progresses. This point is overlooked by Colls (1977:51) and only briefly touched upon by Joyce (1991:268-71).

Pitmen and keelmen are the groups represented as making the heaviest use of the Tyneside dialect in the material. Given the relationship I have emphasised between representation of language and character trait, it is essential to outline the characteristics attached to them. In this respect I offer a quotation at length from Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday', in which the pitman, Bob, goes to see the pomp of the Assize procession:

HO'WAY and aw'll sing thee a tune, mun,
 'Bout huz see'n my Lord at the town, mun,
 Aw seer aw was smart, now
 Aw'll lay thee a quart, now
 Nyen' them aw cut a dash like Bob Cranky.

When aw pat on my blue coat that shines se,
 My jacket wi' posies se fine see,
 My sark sic sma' threed, man,
 My pig-tail se greet, man!
 Od smash! what a buck was Bob Cranky.

Blue stockings, white clocks, and reed garters,
 Yellow breeks, and my shoon wi' lang quarters,
 Aw myed wour bairns cry,
 Eh! sarties! ni! ni!
 Sic verra fine things had Bob Cranky.

Aw went to awd Tom's and fand Nancy,
 Kiv aw, Lass, thou's myed to my fancy;
 Aw like thou as weel
 As a stannin pye heel,
 Ho'way to the town wi' Bob Cranky.

As up Jenny's backside we were bangin,
 Ki' Geordy, How! where are ye gannin?
 Weyt' see my lord 'Sizes,
 But ye shanna gan aside us,
 For ye're not half se fine as Bob Cranky.

Ki' Geordy, We leve i' yen raw, weyet,
 I' yen corf we byeth gan below, weyet,
 At a' things aw've play'd,
 And to hew aw'm not flay'd,
 Wi' sic in a chep as Bob Cranky.

Bob hez thee at lowpin and flingin,
 At the bool, foot-ball, clubby, and swingin:
 Can ye jump up and shuffle,
 And cross owre the buckle,
 When ye dance? like the clever Bob Cranky.

Thow naws, i' my hoggars and drawers,
 Aw'm nyen o' your scarters and clawers:
 Fra the trap door bit laddy,
 T' the spletter his daddy,

Nyen handles the pick like Bob Cranky.

So, Geordy, od smash my pit sarik!
 Thou'd best had thy whisht about warik,
 Or aw'll sobble thy body,
 And myek thy nose bloody,
 If thou sets up thy gob to Bob Cranky.

Nan laugh'd – t'church we gat without 'im;
 The greet crowd, becrike, how aw hew'd 'em!
 Smasht a keel-bully roar'd,
 Clear the road! Whilk's my lord?
 Owse se high as the noble Bob Cranky.

(‘Cranky’s ‘Size Sunday’ in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:25-26)

Having seen the procession they retire to an ale house with a few ‘hearty lasses and fellows’:

Aw gat drunk, fit, and kick'd up a racket,
 Rove my breeks and spoil'd a' my fine jacket:
 Nan cry'd and she cuddled
 My hinny, thou's fuddled,
 Ho'way hyem now, my bonny Bob Cranky.

So we stagger'd alang fra the town, mun,
 Whiles gannin, whiles baith fairly down, mun:
 Smash, a banksman or hewer,
 No not a fine viewer,
 Durst jaw to the noble Bob Cranky.

(‘Cranky’s ‘Size Sunday’ in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27)

Careless of his torn suit, Bob is confident that he will be able to buy ‘far bonnyer’ clothes at the next binding (‘Cranky’s ‘Size Sunday’ in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27).

While Wales (2006:133) views Bob as a literary and cultural *archetype*, as noted, I prefer to think of him as a *stereotype* – a stock figure composed of various oversimplified behavioural characteristics (cf. *OED:n.* and *a. A.n.3.b.*). It is with this in mind that I outline the characteristics that are on display in the extract. Bob is a swearer and prone to oaths. We saw this of pitmen and keelmen generally in the previous chapter (see section 4.2.4.). He is impolite and blunt; bragging; proud with delusions of nobility and education; spendthrift; prone to threats of violence; a heavy drinker and drunkard, resulting in violence; tough and energetic; proud of his abilities at work; a flamboyant

dresser; sexually confident; pleasure-seeking and convivial; and a lover of dance and sport. This image could, as we shall see, mean different things to different audiences, and the character traits are open to development but also open to rejection by authors.

The type represented by Bob is confirmed in the popular song, 'Billy Oliver's Ramble Between Benwell and Newcastle'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:23-5). In this piece the eponymous pitman hero, Billy Oliver, is virtually interchangeable with the pitman, Bob, of 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday'. Billy boasts of his ability at pit work, his success with women, and his fine looks and clothing. On visiting Newcastle, he says

aw walks wi' sic an air,
That, if the folks hev eyes,
They a'wis think its sum greet man ...

('Billy Oliver' in Fordyce ed. 1842:24)

With the words 'sic an a cliver chep am aw' repeated in the chorus, he nevertheless gets into drunken fights when singing in 'the Cock', if the 'folks' say 'Haud yor tongue, ye cull ...' ('Billy Oliver' in Fordyce ed. 1842:23-25).

I have made clear already my belief that such character traits could mean different things to different audiences. In the first instance, however, within new songs belonging to a genre increasingly referred to as 'Newcastle' or 'Tyneside' song (see section 2.2.2.), pitmen and keelmen are frequently satirical figures. This view is based on contemporary discourses about the songs, such as comments by the editor Marshall in his collection of 1827:

Our Keelmen and Pitmen have generally been the common subjects of satire for our local Poets; but, in attempting to describe the character of these useful bodies of men, the Poets appear often to have claimed their privilege, and given, instead of faithful portraits, only rude caricatures; – delineations not characteristic of the Keelmen and Pitmen of the present day.

(Marshall ed. 1827:i)

This is not simply a scholarly opinion. The statement is made in the 'Editor's Address' for the collection. On its title page the book is labelled 'satirical', and it is stated that songs are by the likes of Thompson and Shield. As seen in Chapter Two (see section 2.2.1.), the editor Allan (1891, 1972 edn.:84, 132) calls these writers, along with Selkirk, the

'founders of Tyneside Song'. The accuracy of Allan's remark is not the issue here. However, Marshall's comment and title page are advertisements and work within a discourse which sees much popular 'Tyneside song' as satirical. Marshall's is not the only collection to label songs in this manner. On their title pages, the author Midford (1818) and the editor Fordyce (1842) do the same. The satirical quality of material has much to do with the culture in which the 'new' Tyneside songs by early writers were produced. It is important to recall that many of the early writers were shopkeepers, tradesmen, clerks and artisans. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v, 230) says that such writers performed at social meetings for their friends; these meetings, he adds, held in public houses by 'tradesmen' after business hours, were at the time 'the rage'. In this respect the anonymous piece 'A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:25-6) is telling. The hero of the song, Willy Dixon, who is 'flaid' (or frightened) of pitmen, appears to embody a song culture which mocks them:

On Pay-day neets aw gan to the Cock,
 When the pitmen's aw gyen hyem,
 Then aw begins to rair and sing,
 And myek o' them a gyem.

('Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble' in Fordyce ed.1842:25)

Thus Marshall's comments and 'A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble' provide evidence for a song culture based on mockery of pitmen. It can be assumed that the friends of the early writers who made up their audience would have similar social backgrounds – that they too would be tradesmen, artisans and clerks. It is this song culture from which Billy Oliver and Bob Cranky emerge. It is important to make these points because very little scholarly commentary has been given in relation to the collections of songs edited by Marshall (1827) and Fordyce (1842), which make the identification of satire so explicit, and, where such attention has been given, political ideology has often obscured the full implications of issues emerging from them.

In this respect it is also important to address a crucial debate which developed in the 1970s and 1980s around Bob Cranky and other representations of the pitmen and keelmen in Tyneside song. Harker, who takes a rigidly Marxist perspective, certainly refers to both Marshall and Fordyce. He denies that songs of the Bob Cranky type could appeal to 'a working man', and claims that 'no spokesman in song for working people'

emerges until the likes of Corvan and Ridley in the 1850s (Harker 1971:xliv-v). Thus, Harker (1981:41-43, 1985b:60, 74) believes that 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' and an earlier manuscript form are a means by which Bob is 'caricatured' and 'ritually pilloried', in a 'petit-bourgeois' song culture enjoyed by individuals who were gradually distancing themselves from pitmen and keelmen. Noticing the satire, he believes that the song and a whole host of other pieces which follow are intended to cut Bob and the labouring classes down to size (Harker 1981:41-3). Thus Selkirk and his friends score a hollow victory against 'Bob and his mates by having them fight, make fools of themselves in drink, and go home with their tails between their legs' (Harker 1985b:69). Colls (who has also studied various early song collections in detail) disagrees with Harker's analysis. He recognises the figure of the pitman or keelman, whom Bob represents, as a 'kind of Social Fool' – a drunken fighter, frequently in and out of 'love and work' (Colls 1977:26-7). However, while accepting that the earlier writers 'were not of the Tyneside *sans culotterie*, of whom, and partly for whom, they wrote', he insists that from the early century to the music hall period the songs were acceptable to miners, keelmen and sailors, who 'must have actively enjoyed their role as celebrities, found, in fact, a self-celebration in their attested notoriety' (Colls 1977:37, 51).

Neither of these arguments is satisfactory. Colls's claim that the songs appealed to the miners is reinforced by other commentators (Vicinus 1974:34-36, Gregson 1983:10, Bell, D., 2003:14). The editor Marshall (1827:i) indicates that his previous song collections have been read by the 'labouring classes'. And yet, as we have seen, he and his contemporaries make clear that songs could be regarded as satirical of those very classes. While Marshall suggests that this satire has helped in the education and improvement of the 'labouring classes', it is equally likely that these groups might simply have taken pleasure in the songs as entertainment.

We need to understand how songs can be both satirical and afford that 'self-celebration' to which Colls (1977:51) refers. The depiction of character trait is central to this issue. Those characteristics I have outlined in relation to Bob Cranky (swearing, drunkenness, violence, flamboyance among them) are qualities that any audience might observe and find entertaining. However, such qualities need not be interpreted and enjoyed in the same manner by *all* who perceive them. We might, of course, question whether the

audiences of tradesmen and pitmen or keelmen were always separate. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:v, 230) certainly suggests that the early performers (tradesmen, clerks, and artisans) entertained friends, and that such friends shared similar backgrounds. However, the social mix may have been wider at times. Within mixed audiences, nevertheless, there can be considerable variation in the interpretation of material. A lack of uniformity in the reception of material has been recognised in relation to dialect literature generally and in the swell song of the London music hall (Russell 2004:120, Bailey 1986b:65-6; cf. Bratton 1986:xii).

Joyce (1991:257) has added very briefly to the Bob Cranky debate, by recognising that the 'seemingly proletarian hero ... might have a surprisingly unproletarian literary lineage, and with it a similar set of original values and associations'. Joyce does not sufficiently elaborate on what these original values and associations might be. Yet it seems important to consider what Bob might symbolise for both the primary audiences and for the pitmen and keelmen, and what values both groups might bring to the songs. Both categories of listeners are, after all, equally relevant. If meanings differ between audiences or audience members, then the perceived *indexical* relations of the dialect, as spoken by pitmen or keelmen, and as it relates to character trait, may also vary for different groups.

The *dialogism* with culture and language outside the songs is crucial here. Agha (2003:250-259) describes a gradual dissemination of related ideas about correct speech and correct behaviour reaching the aristocracy prior to 1800, followed by the 'middle classes' and subsequently the 'lower middle and upper working classes' by the mid 1850s. However, Uglow (2006:314) refers to the 'respectable atmosphere that settled like a cloud' as early as the Napoleonic wars. Such discourses gradually bring to the middling and lower orders ideas about correct speech, etiquette, and the virtues of education, self-help and self-improvement.

I do not adhere to strict class terminology in this thesis. Nevertheless, as noted, prominent among the early writers of Tyneside dialect song were shopkeepers, clerks, artisans and small tradesmen – people who might believe themselves to be more cultured and sophisticated than pitmen or keelmen. The first printed version of 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' appears with musical notation and carries the mock instruction 'Allegretto

Pitmanale' (cited in Harker 1985b:66). The songsheet also carries the title information: 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday, A Favorite Comic Song, The Words by a Gentleman of Newcastle' (cited in Harker 1985b:66). The mock musical instruction suggests that Bob is to be taken as a type, a stock character, and the claim that the song is by a 'Gentleman' also implies a contrast between Bob and the writer (or writers, as it turns out, since the song collector Bell had added some verses to Selkirk's piece). These points indicate a degree of interaction or *dialogism* between the representation of the miner and his utterances (low culture) and the world of high culture, signalled by the mock Italian and the word 'Gentleman'. Whether the primary author Selkirk, a clerk, is indeed a gentleman, is unclear, but Bob, at least from this perspective, certainly is not. These cultural distinctions are crucial in the Cranky songs, and more widely in the songs about pitmen and keelmen. Robson (ed. c.1849:v), a schoolmaster, writer of Tyneside songs, and editor of the c.1849 collection *Songs of the Bards of the Tyne*, apologises in this anthology for presenting a collection of songs which 'may be termed by the fastidious reader to be vulgar and decidedly ungenteel'. The apology is, of course, somewhat disingenuous, since those who are not too 'fastidious' clearly enjoy and buy the songs. However, it is from the *dialogue* between representation of the pitmen and keelmen, and discourses of gentility or respectability that much of the meaning and humour of pieces like 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' emerges. These potential meanings in song are, of course, dependent upon knowledge of propriety and etiquette, and on education. But for Selkirk and his primary audience, with their superior education and perhaps their own self image of gentility, the eponymous miner's delusions of being 'noble', 'a buck', 'fine' and 'clever' in 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:25-27) are quite laughable. Equally so are his 'vulgar' and 'ungenteel' activities – bullying, bragging, drunken fighting and staggering drunkenly through the streets with his sweetheart.

Given that songs were viewed by certain groups as vehicles of satire, we need a means of explaining the evidence that the pitmen and keelmen took positively to the character of Bob Cranky and his like (Colls 1977:37, 51, Vicinus 1974:34-36, Gregson 1983:10, Bell, D., 2003:14). The targets of satire can sometimes react by appropriating it and, in doing so, revel in the characteristics being satirised. This occurred in our own era in the case of the character Alf Garnett (Ross 1998:57) and also comedian Harry Enfield's character

'Loadsamoney' (web page by mgriffithsuk n.d.). It would be unwise to say that the pitmen and keelmen did not understand the jokes at their own expense or, in fact, that in appropriating songs they could not view them as forms of self-satire. Nevertheless, when they did feel that they were being mocked, there is evidence that they could take offence (see section 1.5.4.). Also we should not ignore the songs which overtly refer to tensions between the pitmen and keelmen on the one hand and those initiating the song culture which satirises them on the other. The anonymous song, 'A Parody on Billy Oliver's Ramble'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:25-26), which I have dealt with already, and Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27-29) are revealing in this respect.

It is important to reiterate, then, that the interpretation of character is dependent upon audience response. I contend that the following types of response to Bob Cranky might be possible, though the list is not exhaustive or mutually exclusive. Audiences might view Bob as a target of satirical mockery and laugh from an assumed position of cultural superiority; they might enjoy his character traits, either in defiance of, or as a respite from, contemporary discourses of respectability (cf. Uglow 2006:314). Finally, audiences might enjoy for their own sake Bob's exuberance, his drunkenness, swearing and violent tendencies. This suggests a continuum of possible responses which are available to clerks, shopkeepers and tradesmen, and also to the pitmen or keelmen. This will have an impact on the perceived *indexical* relations of the dialect to character trait in the groups concerned, since it will affect the manner in which behaviour is viewed in performance. Different types of audience will perceive different *indexical* relations between the pitmen, keelmen and the Tyneside dialect, according to their attitude towards those groups, as depicted in song, and the nature of the *dialogism* involved, which partly depends upon the cultural discourses they bring to the texts.

This approach raises serious questions regarding many recent interpretations of Tyneside dialect songs and other northern dialect literature, as to whether these responses can be applied to the early songs prior to 1849. Their uniform application to the later songs is also problematic, for reasons which will become apparent. Most commentators on the literature to some degree emphasise themes or functions of solidarity, whether regional, class-based, social, communal, or domestic (see section 1.5.3.).

Among linguists there is an emphasis on the role of the dialect itself within the literature in promoting group identities and social solidarity (cf. Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999:13). Thus Beal (2000:353-4, 2005) emphasises the 'Geordie' identity promoted in Tyneside song, applying the idea that region dominates over class. For Wales (2006:132) dialect is 'consciously *emblematic* of regional and social identities; and of the associated community values of common sense, stoicism, homeliness, humour and self-reliance'. Dialect in northern songs and poetry promotes 'working class' solidarity, she argues (Wales 2002:61; cf. Shorrocks 1999).

We have seen the crucial debate between Harker and Colls, both social historians, on the Cranky figure. More recently, however, the historian, Patrick Joyce, has offered the most sustained commentary so far on northern dialect literature. Despite his identification of Bob Cranky as a 'rake', Joyce (1991:269, 329-331) sees an emphasis in the literature generally on populist ideologies rather than class ideologies, a popular radicalism based on the idea of northern England as the heart of a crusade against privilege, and which emphasises the worth of 'decent folk'. Russell (2004:125) is largely in agreement with Joyce, though he emphasises celebration of 'domestic pleasure' in dialect literature. In a discussion specific to the North-East, Lancaster (2007:30, 38) has suggested that 'working-class' song is one element of a concerted 'regional self consciousness' in the Victorian period.

Similar responses can be found among literary scholars in interpreting labouring-class poetry in general, whether written in Standard English (StE) or non-standard dialect (cf. Vicinus 1974:190, 208, Boos 2001:109, McCauley 2001:289, 298). Goodridge and the fellow editors of the recent collection of nineteenth-century labouring-class poetry, on the other hand, track complex developments in such material across the century. While Goodridge (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol III, xvi-xxii, 145) argues that, particularly in the late century, dialect literature could help in the creation of regional and local identities, in the case of the North-East he also acknowledges Allan's claim that Corvan and Robson employ a burlesque style. This is important, but what equally needs to be acknowledged is that Allan (ed 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii) says Corvan and Robson were following an older pattern. Whether Allan is correct in so closely associating Corvan with

the early singers is questionable, but it is also crucial to understand that this early style was described in its time as satire.

Other than Harker, and far more briefly Griffiths (2000:17), most scholars do not appear to recognise the satire, or the explicit contemporary discourses about it in the early period. As I have indicated, this may be because they do not use the rare song collections by individual writers such as Midford (1818), and the editors Marshall (1827) and Fordyce (1842), or, if they do, they overlook discourses within these collections specifically identifying the material as satirical.

Most of the interpretations of northern dialect literature, of course, recognise that the dialect itself is part of the meaning, carrying the load of regional identity and cultural values (cf. Wales 2006:132, Shorrocks 1999:96, Joyce 1991:279). However, we must return to my point that different audiences could interpret the songs in different ways. We need an analysis that recognises a range of audience responses to character type in particular. This at times will be at odds with the emphasis by scholars on solidarity, whether local, regional, labouring-class, communal or domestic.

A further examination of the Cranky songs is a useful way of elaborating my approach. Bob's violent, drunken, bragging, sexually confident tendencies might well appeal to some, but it is also helpful to see how the satire might work, and consider whether his behaviour fits the most frequent interpretations of dialect literature. For a start we need to consider whether Bob really is so community-orientated. Returning to Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:25-27), it is clear that Bob has his convivial side. However, on being asked by Geordy where he and Nancy are going, Bob tells him, 'ye shanna gan aside us, / For ye're not half se fine as Bob Cranky'. Geordy reminds Bob of their commonality, when he says they live in 'yen raw', meaning one row of houses, and adds that they are lowered into the pit in 'yen corf', or one basket. He says that they have played sports together and work together. Bob responds by bragging about his own superiority at sport, dancing and work, and threatens Geordy with violence, before describing how he 'hew'd' the crowd in the town. Having got into a fight he again brags of being a danger to those working in his own trade, when he says 'a banksman or hewer, / No not a fine viewer, / Durst jaw to the noble Bob Cranky'. As Heslop (1892:34,

76, 374) notes in his dictionary, a *banksman* was the man controlling the shaft top in a pit, a *hewer* a pitman who worked coal, while a *viewer* was a pit's chief manager. Bob is himself a hewer, and so he is threatening his own kind, whilst calling himself 'noble'. This is not, on the face of it, a conspicuous example of communal solidarity. Bob variously refers to himself as 'smart', cutting 'a dash', a 'buck', 'fine', 'clever', and 'the noble Bob Cranky', and these points are simply not in accordance with Joyce's (1991:331) general claim that northern dialect literature is part of a crusade against privilege. In fact, for both artisans and tradesmen, such points might call into question whether Bob's type can be trusted in any such crusade. Indeed the notion of such a crusade might not even occur to some audiences. It is crucial to remember that Bob can be viewed in various ways. Audiences might laugh alongside the bragging, drunken bruiser, or laugh (possibly contemptuously) at the mess he makes of himself, at his pretensions, or they could laugh at all of these together.

This spectrum of possible responses is facilitated even by Bob's name. Bob is a stereotype, but this does not mean he will be interpreted in the same way by all audiences. While the origin of the name *Cranky* is important, so too is its range of available meanings – the nuances that might be detected by audiences or applied by them, particularly in the light of Bob's behaviour. For Heslop (1892:196; cf. *EDD:adj.*² and *sb.*, Wales 2006:135) *cranky* refers to the checked clothing worn by pitmen as a 'swagger costume', and he argues that it is first used by outsiders to denote the pitman as 'Cranky' or 'Bob Cranky'. Harker (1985b:59) makes much of Heslop's statement that the term is used in this way by 'outsiders'. This, of course, is important to his Marxist approach to these songs, based on class conflict. However, in taking this line he misses the important range of meanings or interpretations offered by the name. As an adjective used in StE *cranky* can mean 'Of capricious or wayward temper, difficult to please; cross-tempered, awkward; "cross"' (*OED:a.*¹ 4.), but such connotations are found also in north-eastern and other dialects (*EDD:adj.*¹ 3.). Certainly in Tyneside dialect, *cranky* could refer to 'one whose mind is off the balance – a flighty person' (Heslop 1892:196). A further meaning in northern dialect noted in Brockett's dictionary (1825:48), however, is 'sprightly, exulting, jocose'. In fact, whoever first used the term to apply to pitmen in general, there seems little doubt that the latter group also employed *cranky* early to refer positively to

certain individuals. Brockett says that a specific person in pit villages can be called 'the Cranky':

That man in the village, who is most conspicuous for dress, or who excels the rest of the villagers in the sports and pastimes held in estimation amongst them, is called, by way of pre-eminence, the *Cranky*.

(Brockett 1825:48)

There are then two broad conceptions of *cranky* relevant to the song, and these coincide with two ways of perceiving Bob's characterisation. The name can convey, on the one hand, crossness and unpredictability, even mental imbalance and, on the other, pre-eminence, flamboyance, exultation, exuberance and confidence. It seems no accident that these two conceptions can apply to Bob Cranky equally. Bob is indeed *cranky*: high-spirited, exuberant and brash, convinced of his own pre-eminence, but swings easily towards anger, threat and violence. The audiences will determine which of these ways of looking at Bob is most important, which of them, according to their cultural perspective, will prompt their laughter, and whether that laughter is ironic or not. These potential responses will influence a range of different associations built up by audiences between Bob, his character traits, and the dialect that he speaks.

Consideration of a few more Cranky songs should further clarify the manner in which the satire and *dialogue* with other cultural forms can operate. In Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27-29), Bob continues to be prone to threats of violence, saying of the author of songs that mock him: 'A'll mak him sing the wrang side o' his gob'. Again Bob brags of his finery, since he likes to show 'town folks who 'se oft ca' us gowks / They ar'n't se fine as Bob Cranky' ('Cranky's Complaint' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:28). He concludes defiantly that he will uphold the tradition of going to see the 'Assize procession, despite the mockery ('Cranky's Complaint' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:28-9). Nevertheless, Bob strongly hints at his own illiteracy, getting words wrong, and remarking that he cannot 'tell' or count how long the song is that ridicules him ('Cranky's Complaint' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27-8). This suggests that Bob might indeed be perceived as a *gowk* or fool among Selkirk and his audience.

In Shield's 'Bob Cranky's Adieu', Bob is still a braggart as he contemplates a period of permanent duty, saying that when he gets to Newcastle

The foulks's een aw'll dazzle, –
 Prood, swagg'ring i' my fine reed claes.

(*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:31)

For Bob the swagger and boast is a virtue; his finery, as in the other songs, is the full extent of what he imagines nobility to be, just as in Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday', he imagines that skill at dancing makes him 'clever'. Likewise, reckless spending for Bob is part of his brashness, a source of pride, as he fully intends to drink and eat his way through the pay he receives for his soldiering (*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:32). Undoubtedly Bob has a tender side, as he consoles his 'comely pet' (*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:31). However, his advice to her is

Come, ho'way get a jill o' beer,
 Thy heart to cheer

...

Cheer up, ma hinny! leet thy pipe,
 And take a blast o' backy!

(*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:31)

Referring to Bob's suggestions, Robson (c.1849:vi) comments in his edition of songs: 'What unbounded affection! What a tender appeal!' and 'Soothing request!'. These remarks, ironic as they are, point to the manner in which such works could be received in the early nineteenth century among those more educated than Bob. His manners, speech and exhortations to his 'comely pet' are entirely at odds with the potential meanings set up by the French element 'Adieu' in the song's title. Robson (ed. c.1849:vii) singles out 'Bob Cranky's Adieu' as the 'perfection' of local songs, offerings by his brothers in the "gentle craft", at which he has 'laughed to tears'. As noted, frequently the content of songs is not 'gentle' or genteel. It is precisely this knowledge which facilitates laughter among those who think they understand the rules of gentility, propriety, and self-improvement.

At one level Harker makes similar claims. However, his arguments are based on class conflict, and he believes that the Cranky songs and those like them would not appeal to a 'working man' (Harker 1971:xliv). In addition, despite briefly conceding in 1985 that Corvan celebrates 'aspects of working-class culture' through Tyneside dialect writing, Harker in 1996 reverts to earlier efforts to deny the label and status of dialect to north-eastern varieties of English, presumably as an obstacle to 'working-class' unity (Harker

1972:xvi, 1985b:65, 1996:110). My own counter-claim is that early songs could appeal to pitmen and keelmen in addition to the clerks and tradesmen, and that *dialect* is an accepted label for Tyneside English. This language is integral to the meaning of the songs, wherever the audiences' responses might emerge on the continuum of possible interpretations put forward earlier.

At this point it is useful to summarise again the main characteristics that emerge from the Bob Cranky 'type', and to reiterate that there is an *indexical* relationship between this behaviour and his language. The character traits will not appear in all songs, but they certainly apply to Bob and to Billy Oliver as stereotyped figures. This 'type' is:

- lacking in gentility, uncouth, vulgar
- impolite and blunt
- bragging, with delusions of nobility and education
- proud
- spendthrift
- a heavy drinker and a drunk, often resulting in violence
- competitive and aggressive, even towards fellow pitmen
- tough and energetic
- a hard worker
- sexually confident, frequently tender
- a flamboyant dresser
- convivial and pleasure-seeking
- a lover of dance and sport
- liable to linguistic errors and malapropism
- prone to swear

These characteristics could mean different things to different people. I contend that much the same can be said of numerous other songs featuring pitmen and keelmen.

The keelmen are similar to miners in many respects. Again, in pieces featuring the former group we can think in terms of a *dialogue* with discourses of good manners and respectability. This often provides a central part of the meaning. The piece, 'Song on the Flight of the young Crows'* (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:78), specifically describes an improbable future in which 'keelmen, in *manners*' will become 'quite polite, / No *cursing* at morn, nor *much* drunk over night!'. As with the pitmen, the keelmen in much Tyneside song are indeed prone to swearing (see section 4.2.4.). Frequently, they are drunkards, often illiterate, or depicted as lacking intelligence, and liable to mistakes, mishaps and misunderstandings. There are also violent tendencies. There is little to redeem the keelman in 'The Sandgate Girl's Lamentation'*. Listing the types of man to whom she had hoped to be married, she says she has married a keelman, a 'loon', who kicks her down the stairs ('Sandgate Girl's Lamentation' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:48-9). The chorus emphasises the point:

And I have married a keelman,
And my good days are done.

('Sandgate Girl's Lamentation' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:48-9)

Other forms of violence or aggressive language are also apparent. The skipper kicks his 'Pee-dee' overboard in 'The Half-Drowned Skipper'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:186). A *peedee* is the boy who works aboard a keel (Heslop 1892:528), and in song is often the target of beatings. The threat of violence by keelmen to their wives is apparent in Nunn's piece 'Sandgate Wife's Nurse Song' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:243). Likewise, in Armstrong's 'The Jenny Hoolet' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:9), the skipper 'maist fell'd the Pee Dee', before threatening an owl with 'Aw'll hoo-hoo thou, thou b----r'.

So far, I have focused on songs in which the depictions of pitmen and keelmen are to some degree satirical or caricatures, because among the songwriters popular in the early period these depictions are in the majority. However, it would be incorrect to say that more positive depictions do not exist. Famously, the anonymous 'Weel May the Keel Row'*, and Thompson's various 'New' versions of it provide some of these images.

The original piece is very straightforward and includes the following lines sung by a lassie:

Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row,
 Weel may the keel row, that my laddie's in.
 ('Weel May the Keel Row' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:5)

This provides choruses, though with variation, for the two new versions of the song by Thompson, which I have termed 'A' and 'B'. Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:45) concludes that 'The New Keel Row A' is the oldest and by far the most popular of the adaptations. This is the version of the song that appears in the electronic corpus. In the piece a young woman sings of her keelman sweetheart:

He's foremost 'mang the mony
 Keel lads o' Coaly Tyne;
 He'll set or row so tightly,
 Or in the dance so sprightly,
 He'll cut and shuffle sightly,
 'Tis true — were he not mine.

...
 He's ne mair learning,
 Than tells his weekly earning,
 Yet reet frae wrang discerning,
 Tho' brave, ne bruiser he;
 Tho' he no worth a plack is,
 His awn coat on his back is,
 And nane can say that black is
 The white o' Johnny's ee.

('New Keel Row A' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:5-6)

This is not the bruiser we have seen elsewhere, and his moral understanding sets him above the keelmen in other songs. He has virtues of skill at work and is a fine dancer – esteemed attributes. However, even this song is somewhat ambiguous. The voice is that of the female sweetheart, who despite her claims to the contrary might be partial. Owning one's own coat could be a virtue, but that does not prevent Bob Cranky's assertion, 'Ma blue coat and pigtail's my awn', from being part of the ironic mockery in Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:28). We are told that each pay day 'nearly / He takes his quairt right dearly', then talks 'latin O' and boasts about himself and Nelson beating the French (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:6). Thus he does brag, and thinks himself intelligent when drunk. In a rather complicated section, she also curses any queen or woman who would not 'for Johnny's kisses, / Luik upon as blisses, / Scrimp meals, caff beds, and dairns' ('New Keel Row A' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:7). *Scrimp meals* are

'scanty meals', a *caff bed* is the bed commonly used when feathers cannot be procured, and *dairns* 'small, unmarketable fish' (Heslop 1892:607, 123, 217). She is actually saying that Johnny is worth the poverty that marrying him will bring, after he takes his 'quairt right dearly'. This can be taken as an assertion of dignity in poverty or as being ironic, perhaps both. Meaning is again multiple.

In version 'B'* the voice is that of a keelman, and the image we are given is of a far more domesticated, family-orientated (and in this sense, respectable) man. The keelman sings 'Weel may the keel row, that gets the bairns their breed', and highlights homely virtues and pleasures:

Our canny wives, our clean fireside,
Our bonny bairns, their parents' pride,
Sweet smiles that make life smoothly glide,
We find when we gan hyem ...

('New Keel Row B' in Fordyce ed 1842:114)

Gone is the drunken fighter and braggart. This is much closer to the type of image which Russell (2004:125) highlights when he argues that celebration of 'domestic pleasure' is 'arguably the single most powerful theme' in northern dialect literature. It seems, however, that Bob Cranky and his like have a long way to go before they are quite so tamed as this. The image given here is in fact closer to the picture of the working man which Joe Wilson will promote some fifty years later. However, the Cranky figure seems to be dominant in the work of the early songwriters. It is therefore important to examine how the genre develops later in the century, accepting nevertheless that alternative images already exist.

5.2.2. Development of Character: Rogues and Respectables

Among the later writers in the 1850s and 1860s there are striking continuities in the songs representing the character of pitmen and keelmen. This is significant, because by the 1850s at least the music halls are important venues for performance, and the audiences are derived mainly from the industrial labouring classes. Kift (1996:66-7; cf. Gregson and Huggins 1999:91, Russell 1997:92) indicates that in general the halls were

frequented by the 'working class' and a 'lower middle class'. Russell (1997:122), however, indicates that the audience in Tyneside music halls was largely homogenous, made up of pitmen, keelmen and engineers. In reality the keelmen as a class had declined greatly in numbers since the 1820s and 1830s (Griffiths 2005:xviii, Harker 1985b:75). However, it seems that the bulk of the audience would indeed belong to industrial communities.

The significance of audience composition lies in the fact that the genre of the pitman and keelman song, and the depiction of character and language within it, was acceptable to this clientele. It seems that from the outset some among these groups enjoyed the lack of respectability represented by Bob Cranky, or at least his exuberance. But to gain a more complete understanding of the music hall and of the developments in the *indexical* meanings of Tyneside dialect within song, it is essential to take into account the discourses of respectability which had become increasingly dominant by this time (see section 1.3.1.). Scholars tend to argue that the halls were spaces which celebrated the lives of working people, and were an escape from, or represented resistance to, ideas of self-help, respectability and 'middle-class' efforts at social reform (Bailey 1994:155, Kift 1996:176, Gregson and Huggins 1999:91, Medhurst 2007:67). This has been discussed in Chapter One (see section 1.6.2.). Such claims, particularly those that emphasise the role of the 'middle classes', need to be balanced against what we know of the ever more dominant discourses of self-help and respectability among working people themselves after 1850 (cf. Janowitz 1998:190, Colls 1977:162, Joyce 1991:271). The dates for such cultural movements are difficult to pin down, of course, and Kossick (in Goodridge et al. eds. 2006:vol. II, xv) argues that the desire for individual 'ethical and intellectual "self-improvement"' is among the most dominant themes in the period 1830-60. Nevertheless, the link between language and such movements for cultural change continues to be strong (see section 1.4.). Throughout the nineteenth century schools embraced the idea that teaching a 'proper accent' was a vital part of education, while regional modes of speech were regularly described in works on education as 'evils', 'vices' and 'defects' (Mugglestone 1997:311). By the mid 1850s penny weekly periodicals with huge circulations reached the 'lower middle and upper working classes', carrying messages linking a 'standard' accent to other behaviour relating to social advancement (Agha 2003:257-8). We also need to acknowledge the local character of labouring-class

respectability (see section 1.3.2.). Colls (1977:58, 73, 77) argues that in the North-East the Methodists, and particularly the Primitives, were the major 'Cultural Revolutionaries' in colliery communities, splitting them in two, as they and the non-conformists raised the standard of what was to become known as 'respectability'. Fundamentally, then, these points suggests a strong foundation for ideas of respectability within sections of the labouring community itself.

The two broad perspectives under discussion (issues of respectability, morality and linguistic propriety, on the one hand, and resistance to them on the other) need to be balanced when interpreting music hall song and the depiction of character within it. This idea is supported by recent commentary on nineteenth-century 'working-class' subjectivity. As Bailey (1998:9) notes, it may be helpful to think of individuals as 'transient tenants of various and competing subject positions, each a multiple-self unevenly defined in collusive antithesis with the dominant cultural order'. Ideas about the 'respectable' and 'non-respectable' remain useful, but we must not think of them as referring to absolutes. Something similar can be said in relation to music hall. After all, as Kift (1996:183) notes, the halls reserved the right to interpret 'Victorian values' in their own fashion rather than rejecting them altogether. It should be no surprise to find multiple perspectives in the halls, then, or even in character depiction within song.

Moving to a consideration of performance material, traditions in the depiction of pitmen and keelmen as characters are acknowledged by Corvan in his piece, 'The Pitman and the Kipperred Herrin':

'Boot pitmen an' keelmen thou's hard some queer jokes,
 What wi' blunders, misteykes, an' thor funny queer spokes;
 But when we get a drop beer we're a' full o' glee,
 Gosh, we meyke mony a blunder when we gan on the spree ...

(*'Kipperred Herrin'* 1850s:Song Book 1, 13)

We see blunders, drinking and the 'spree' in many of the early songs, and we will see shortly the importance of malapropisms, which presumably count as 'queer spokes'. Corvan is drawing attention to the genre, along with the character depictions that it involves, and he is countenancing it. However, if these are continuities then we need to acknowledge some of the other continuities too. The violent type also survives from the

early century in Corvan's songs. In 'O, maw bonnie Nannie O' (1850:19) a keelman engages in reciprocal spouse-beating. In 'Bella Gray' (1850s:Song Book 3, 4) a keelman tosses the peedee overboard. Furthermore in 'Asstrilly's Goold Fields' (1850s:Song Book 1, 17) the skipper gives the peedee's backside a kick for no apparent reason, and we are told 'aw spang hewed him weel'. This is comedy and people laughed at it. In fact, violence to the peedee proves to be a generic expectation, as for instance in 'The Curds and Cream-house Ghost' (1850:8), included in Corvan's *Random Rhymes* though it might be by Emery, and 'Yer Gannin to be a Keelman'. The latter song emphasises the conventional low intelligence of a keelman, the hard work, and the violence, as established in this extremely popular genre (1850:10-11). The first and final verses are written by J. Bagnall, but Corvan includes it in *Random Rhymes*, with a middle verse added by himself. Here the voice is that of a friend, and his opinion is blunt in the extreme:

Yer gannin to be a keelman, ye great big slaverin' cull ...
 With yor legs half down the huddock, and the pipe stuck in yor mouth,
 Ye'll be gannin' doon the river, and ye'll not know north frae sooth.

The skipper he will byest ye sair, when he gets ye in his paws ...
 ('Yer Gannin to be a Keelman' 1850:10)

Keelmen, as noted, had declined in numbers by Corvan's time (Griffiths 2005:xviii, Harker 1985b:75). The audience, nevertheless, is able to laugh at aspects of itself and exult in a genre which could be viewed as a celebration of low intelligence, roughness and uncouthness. Nevertheless, in the work of the later writers changes do occur in their representation of pitmen and keelmen. In some cases they introduce an element of nostalgia for the past, in others offer a more positive assertion of virtues, perhaps in response to the growing influence of respectability among working people.

The schoolmaster Robson is perhaps closest to the earlier authors in making the depiction of character type in pitmen a source of humour. However, he also hints strongly at the reality of change, while depicting many of the stereotypes. This can be seen in 'The Pitman's Happy Times':

When aw was young maw collier lads
 Ne man could happier be;

For wages was like sma' coals then,
 An' cheps could raise a spree.
 Wor pay-neet cam' wiv drink an' dance
 Wor sweethearts luik'd se fine ...

(*'Pitman's Happy Times'* in Robson ed. c.1849:77)

With humour we are told that on his wedding night celebrations there was the pleasure of fighting, though he says 'fights we had but ten' (*'Pitman's Happy Times'* in Robson ed. c.1849:78). Previously spendthrift and careless (*'Pitman's Happy Times'* in Robson ed. c.1849:79), this is very similar to the description of loss given by a pitman in Corvan's *'The Sword Dancers' Lament'*. The spree, the fuddle, flashy clothes, dancing, sport, and betting are a mere memory, and hard times have come (*'Sword Dancers' Lament'* 1850s:Song Book 4, 23). It is as if there is a longing for the days and ways of Bob Cranky. In *'Tom Johnson'* (1850:23-24), a third person narrative also by Corvan, it must be said that the Cranky figure is alive and well. Tom excels all others at sport and dancing and is a success with women. In addition, he steals from gardens and farms, wakes colliery people up when they are asleep by whistling and, when drinking in Newcastle, flattens those who object to him having 'a bit crack' with their 'lasses'.

The effects of education are mentioned in all three of these songs. In the Robson piece the pitman says 'Noo, ivery bairn can read an' write, / Extonishin' to me' (*'Pitman's Happy Times'* in Robson ed. c.1849:79). Despite his Cranky-like qualities, Tom Johnson has some learning. He has 'a'wus been clivver since he went to skuel, man, / An' was learnin when aw other lads was at play' (*'Tom Johnson'* 1850:23). There is, however, given Tom's behaviour, some indication that education has done him little good. He is still a pitman and a thief after all. So it seems that we might link this to *'The Sword Dancers' Lament'*, in which the pitman comments on the limited benefits of schooling:

Noo people's gettin' wiser an' poorer ivery day;
 If thats the worth o' knowledge ye rich 'uns hez the pull,
 For sowl he's gettin' thinner ivery day is poor John Bull.

(*'Sword Dancers' Lament'* 1850s:Song Book 4, 24)

This resembles some of Corvan's more political material, which in places echoes the concerns of the Chartist poets. School education, and what Bailey (1994:155) calls 'official knowledges', do not supply the needs of the pitmen and keelmen nor end their

hunger. The nostalgia for the Cranky-figure seems to represent a longing for better times, imagined or real, when pitmen had money or 'kelter in galore', whatever their state of education ('Sword Dancer's Lament' 1850s:Song Book 4, 23).

Thus the writers and audiences of the later period retain a full knowledge of the old stock image. However, while industrial workers may be able to laugh at that image, laughter from others might not be so palatable. In Robson's song, 'The Keelmen o' the Tyne' (in Robson ed. c.1849:80), the keelman observes that some 'dandy folks may crack their jokes, / An' ca' us skippers daft'. The keelman, however, has a riposte:

We're honest bodies' bairns; ...
 Frank an' free an' jenick tee,
 We eat the breed we buy;
 We drop a croon to marrows doon,
 An' help wor neebours nigh.

(*'Keelmen o' the Tyne'* in Robson ed. c.1849:80)

This is reminiscent of 'The New Keel Row B' and Corvan's song, 'The Folks of Aud Shields' (1850:27), in which the keelman says: 'tho' rough, we are true to a friend in distress'. The dignity of labour, honesty, community spirit and mutual support are virtues, which, I would argue, only appear forcefully among the later songwriters. They represent an assertion of decency, which constitutes a move of resistance to negative definition by outsiders. Furthermore, these assertions of decency can accompany claims for the right to conviviality and the 'spree', activities which are regarded as non-respectable by many 'middle-class' groups or labouring people outside the music hall (cf. Colls 1977:153, Bailey 1998:37, Kift 1996:176). It is in the Corvan song, 'The Happy Keelman', that we see being explored the full possibilities of a vindication of the lifestyle of pitmen and keelmen. This includes family life, work, friendship and revelry. The keelman is capable of reasoning for himself how he should lead his life in the face of external improving forces:

He hates aw teetotaler bodies,
 That runs doon guid whisky and yell,
 And he swears that good eating and drinking,
 Brings ony man out of his shell;
 He's fond of aw sorts of enjoyments,
 Keelman-like, gox, they're aw rummy blades,
 For he oft calls to hear the fine singing,

And hev a good gill at the Shades.

Now rich folks may slight a poor keelman,
 And say, ignorance myeks him a brute,
 But he mebbies knaws mair then they think on,
 Though little of grammar ne doubt;
 Great scholars and cockneys may scoff us,
 But true friendship we never conceal,
 We dee as we like to be dune te,
 Tho' we work for wor bread in a keel.

The keelman, the pitman, and trimmer,
 Through this world like the rest they mun pass,
 And if poor, what the odds, smash my hoggers,
 They can still treat a friend wiv a glass;
 Nae ambition nor pride their mind troubles,
 For they toss aw sic stuff to the deil,
 They love their bit wives and their bairns,
 Their marrows, their beer, and their keel.

(‘Happy Keelman’ 1850:12)

The critics of the way of life of many working people are the teetotallers, the rich, the scholars and the Cockneys. Whether it be those opposed to drinking, those who see the pitmen and keelmen as beasts, or those who appear to scoff at their manner of speech, this song answers such attacks. It is one of the clearest examples of a piece that is in *dialogue* with those discourses outside the music hall, which are set up against the lifestyle of large sections of the working community.

Less overtly, the song is also in *dialogue* with the earlier song tradition. The keelmen, pitmen, and trimmers toss ‘pride’ to ‘the deil’. How different this is to Selkirk’s self-proclaimed ‘noble Bob Cranky’ (‘Cranky’s Size Sunday’ in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27). Likewise, Corvan’s working men love their ‘marrows’ (friends or workmates), in contrast to Bob Cranky’s threats to others working in the pits (‘Cranky’s ‘Size Sunday in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:26-7). In the Corvan song there is far greater emphasis on domesticity, industriousness and self-help, since Geordie ‘toil’d hard day and neet’ for his ‘bairns’, and there ‘was nane like poor Geordie could feel’ (‘Happy Keelman’ 1850:11). The song asserts the virtues of a lifestyle and character based on community, family and work, but also on drinking, sociability and entertainment. It does so in the language of large sections of working men, oaths and all. In so doing it challenges imputations of linguistic

and cultural vulgarity, whether from 'scholars', 'rich folks', 'cockneys', or from an earlier genre to which Corvan has himself contributed, but which fails to tell the whole story. In telling a more complete story, the song is overtly held up against those reformers and educators who would impose other versions of respectability upon the industrial labouring community. The keelmen have knowledge outside 'official knowledges', to adopt Bailey's (1994:155) term once more. These, as we have seen, do not keep labouring people fed, and are used to attack their way of life and the way they speak. If non-standard dialects are associated with the vulgar among the educated, then this song asserts the alternative view, that non-standard dialect is actually associated with communal virtues. This also demonstrates the *indexical* process that links language to character in subtle flux within performance, as the songs have not always carried such meanings. Previously, Bob Cranky, in his vulgar and 'decidedly ungentle' way, had played his part in the process linking the dialect to a bullying, bragging, violent, potentially community-threatening character type. Some audiences might have perceived such associations with a degree of contempt, others with exultation. Corvan's 'The Happy Keelman' comes closest among the pitmen and keelmen songs to associating the dialect with the communal and domestic themes emphasised by so many recent scholars. However, in other songs, Corvan himself invests the pitmen and keelmen with all the comedy, caricature, drunkenness, violence and 'vulgarity' which 'The Happy Keelman' sets aside. The shift is in 'degree', as Joyce (1991:268-71) notes. But Joyce fails to recognise the implications of this, that the somewhat haphazard evolution in theme or character also involves uneven developments in the social meanings of the Tyneside dialect itself. In the music hall, the pitman and keelman genre does not entirely break away from celebration of the drunken fighter, nor from the comic and non-respectable. Thus the *indexical* relationships between language and character within performance are not changed decisively, but there are developments – subtle shifts in emphasis.

5.3. Language, Character and the Labouring Community

5.3.1. Diction, Daftness and Solidarity

Personality trait and the Tyneside dialect, as seen already, are intimately linked for audiences listening to songs about the antics of pitmen and keelmen. The representation of character in these groups reinforces ideas about the social meaning of the dialect as used by them in song. Contrary to the dominant strain in scholarly commentary, it seems that we must not rely on the assumption that non-standard dialect songs and the characters within them are, somehow by definition, manifestations of the communal or of solidarity, of the domestic and homely, the common-sensical and the decent (see sections 1.5.3. and 5.2.1.). Songs may have multiple meanings, connoting different things to different audiences. Characters may be satirical and exuberant, ironic and appealing. The use of Tyneside dialect in the songs does not necessarily imply communal and domestic, common-sense values. An emphasis on these virtues by scholars seems often to be based upon notions of labouring-class respectability and decency, which may be set aside deliberately in the songs. That the dialect does not necessarily operate as such a symbol, that its very use can contribute to ironies, and that it is instead subject to shifts in its relationship with character-depiction, can be tested further by examining the use of a specific set of linguistic structures. This will take us a long way towards tracking the development of the relationship between Tyneside dialect and character-depiction, beyond a focus on the pitmen and keelmen, and to other representations of working people.

We have seen two main strands in the depiction of miners and keelmen: there is the comically brash, illiterate, sometimes violent drunkard, prone to mistakes; and there is the community-orientated man or family man. The two are certainly not mutually exclusive, but this division does suggest two avenues of enquiry which will help in the further consideration of character trait. In terms of examining the comic figure, a consideration of malapropism and other related linguistic 'mistakes' is useful. Malapropism is a device used frequently by nineteenth-century (and earlier) writers for

comic effect and to show a character's lack of education and low social status (Görlach 1999:38-9). In a genre of literature so frequently claimed to be a vehicle of regional linguistic identity, pride and solidarity, it is crucial to examine why malapropisms are used at all. Given that they can imply a comic intellectual inferiority, we need to consider what impact they have upon the meanings of songs and on depiction of character for the early writers, and for their primary audience of clerks, shopkeepers and tradesmen. However, we also need to understand their impact for industrial labouring-class groups who enjoyed the early songs, and who later comprised the bulk of the audience in the music hall.

The communal and domestic strand of song suggests the importance of specific words that are strongly associated with human warmth, closeness and intimacy. In this regard *canny* and *hinny*, two of the most cherished and iconic words on Tyneside (see section 3.3.3.), are obvious choices for investigation. For dictionary writers of the nineteenth century, these words have special status, and they can be bound up with precisely those functions of familiarity and intimacy, and related evaluations of character that I wish to explore (cf. Heslop 1892:130-31, 376-7, Brockett 1825:37, 96). As with the examination of malapropism, the focus is upon audience response to the features within their literary contexts, and on how their use might reflect attitudes at different times. My electronic corpus is the primary source of data for this analysis.

5.3.2. Low Intelligence, Malapropism and Mistakes

Character is revealed strongly through language itself in the form of supposed linguistic 'mistakes'. The most obvious of such 'errors' found in the corpus is the malapropism, or partial 'blunder' of this type. In *OED* malapropism is defined as the 'ludicrous misuse of words' especially 'in mistaking a word for another resembling it'. Wales (2001:242) describes malapropisms as 'lexical deviations due to ignorance of the true word'. In the case of Mrs Malaprop in Sheridan's play, *The Rivals*, this is typically due to the muddling of polysyllabic or Latinate words (Wales 2001:242). Of course, as Ross (1998:7-9, 11) notes, Mrs Malaprop's blunders can be understood in terms of structural ambiguity at the

phonological and lexical level, with words being used with a 'similar sound but an inappropriate meaning'.

In literary and dramatic works a key element in the humorous effect of malapropism is that, in simplistic terms, writer, performer, reader and audience are aware of the imputed mistake. The character making the 'mistake' on the other hand is unaware of it. This certainly occurs in Tyneside song. There are nevertheless occasions, depending upon the extent to which the entertainer is relating directly to the audience as a stage persona and performer, when it is difficult to tell whether the change in words is to be construed as accidental or deliberate. The extent to which these changes should be viewed as malapropisms, or puns which, as Wales (2001:327) notes, are very deliberate, can therefore be difficult to gauge. The important issue is the degree to which the audience laughs *at* a character or laughs *with* a performer as a stage persona.

A further factor in the way that the malapropisms may be interpreted is the cultural perspective and position of the audience in relation to the characters or personae depicted. I have emphasised that the primary audience for the early writers may have been clerks, shopkeepers and artisans, and that the songs they listen to frequently satirise pitmen and keelmen. By contrast the later writers entertained an audience drawn mainly from the community of industrial workers. We saw in Chapter Four the implications of this for the 'correct' use of French / Latinate words (see section 4.3.). Among the early writers, these could be used to distance other male voices such as third-person narrators from those of pitmen and keelmen. The later writers, however, could use such words as part of an act of linguistic solidarity with industrial workers. I shall show that a similar function is evident in the 'misuse' of usually polysyllabic French / Latinate words. It is crucial to see this in terms of the social meanings attached to language through its use by particular characters or performance personae, and their relationship to the audience. The orientation of the audience to those uttering malapropisms may help to determine *indexical* relations between these 'speakers' and the dialect more generally.

The existence of malapropisms in Tyneside song has been noted by other scholars (Harker 1972:ix, Colls 1977:25-6, 39), but it has never been examined systematically. In this section I identify two main groups of malapropism or partial malapropism. The first

group involves use of Tyneside words or Tyneside words combined with StE words to create the supposed mistake. I will refer to Heslop's (1892) dictionary *Northumberland Words* to explain the Tyneside elements fully. Occasionally, Heslop cites a malapropism in his definitions of words. Where this is the case, I acknowledge it, but on the whole the analysis of these malapropisms is my own. The other group of 'errors' involve muddling of one StE feature for another.

In Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:28) Bob says that the 'viewer', or manager of his pit, has suggested he write a 'story cull letter' *historical letter* in response to jokes about him. A *cull* is a 'fond, stupid, simple fellow' (Heslop 1892:209). Bob, struggling with the French-derived word *historical*, has inadvertently said he should write a fool's letter.

There are also such 'mistakes' to be found in Midford's 'The Pitman's Skellyscope'. This relies on misunderstanding of the word *kaleidoscope*. The refrain 'Gleediscowpey o' is used at the end of each verse, while 'Skellyscowpey o', perhaps also playing on the word *telescope*, occurs in the chorus. To be 'gleed' is to be 'squinting', while to 'skelly' is to 'squint' (Heslop 1892:328, 647). Thus Heslop says:

From the effort required by an inexperienced observer, the telescope is facetiously called a *skellyscope*. Similarly, a kaleidoscope is humorously called a "gleediscoup" ...

(Heslop 1892:647)

Heslop implies that this records actual use, but the only evidence he gives is from Midford's song itself. Whatever the truth, the pitman does not seem to be aware of the facetiousness.

In Emery's 'Paganini the Fiddler' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:256-7) the pitman repeatedly uses the refrain 'the great Baggy Nanny'. The precise meaning of this imputed error is difficult to determine. A swede turnip is a *bagie* or *baggie*, but the *baggie* can also mean 'the belly'; to be 'baggy' is to be 'corpulent'; and, finally, *nanny* can be either a name for 'Ann' or a 'nanny-goat' (Heslop 1892:29, 30, 492, Geeson 1969:41). Connotations of turnips, obesity and goats are thus all possible. The Tyneside words create humorous semantic shifts verging on the nonsensical, but the point is that the pitman is represented as being oblivious to his 'mistake'.

The implication of semantic shifts caused by malapropism is clearer in other songs. In Gilchrist's (1824:11) 'The Skipper's Erudition', keelmen are taking coal to a ship called the 'Amphitrite', but they cannot remember the name. The skipper, who 'hungry was always most bright', thinks the name might be 'Empty Kite' ('Skipper's Erudition' 1824:11). The *kite* is the stomach (Heslop 1892:427). Of course, the skipper is not very bright at all, and thinks with his stomach. Further mixing of Tyneside features in the representation of the exotic occurs in Armstrong's 'The Baboon' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:23), in which a costumed baboon is spotted by three pitmen who have no idea what he is. One of them, Tom, suggests

He's owther a spy, or Bonnypairty's awnsell:
Iv a crack the High Fellin was in full hue and cry,
To catch Bonnypairt, or the hairy French spy.

(*'Baboon'* in Fordyce ed. 1842:23)

The word *bonny* need not always be used positively. Indeed, Heslop (1892:78) notes that it can convey 'the reverse of anything good'. We have the impression that the pitman and his community simply mangle the name *Bonaparte*. However, the audience, able to rise to the linguistic sophistication of the idiom 'hue and cry', can laugh either at ironies in the attribution of the positive epithet *bonny*, or at an inadvertent attribution of a bogeyman name, the *bonny party*.

Having Tyneside words used instead of polysyllabic StE words (frequently French or Latinate in origin) or instead of unfamiliar exotic names brings certain implications. Clearly it suggests difficulty in coping with StE, but it also implies an inability to deal with unfamiliar concepts, or with a culture and language beyond what is known. In this respect, and turning to the use of StE malapropisms, it is worth looking again at Gilchrist's song, 'The Skipper's Erudition'. Two of the keel's crew are sent by the skipper to find out the correct name of the ship they are seeking. On hearing a 'buck' in a public house use the word *appetite*, the keelmen 'like maislins' or *fools* think that this is the name of the vessel:

The Appetite, Geordie! smash dis thou hear that?
The verry outlandish, cull nyem we forgat.

(*'Skipper's Erudition'* 1824:11)

Having discovered the ship, the keelmen discuss the names 'Empty Kite' and 'Appetite', when 'the skipper discover'd (mair wise than a king) / Though not the syem word, they were much the syem thing' ('Skipper's Erudition' 1824:12). Here the title 'The Skipper's Erudition' is of course ironic. The skipper is not at all erudite, and the Latinate word *erudition* contrasts with the language of the keelmen, and their inability to handle the French word *appetite*, which is to them 'outlandish'.

The pitmen and keelmen struggle with French or Latinate words in a way that can suggest an inability to deal with political concepts. In Emery's 'Steam Soup' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:245) a keelman fears that 'resurrection faws' have tampered with some soup, clearly producing a malapropism of *insurrection*. The term *faa* could range in meaning from a 'gypsy or a vagabond' to a mugger (Heslop 1892:270). But it is in Gilchrist's song, 'The Collier's Keek at the Nation', that an imputed ignorance of politics is most keenly attributed to miners. The pitman says he has been told that his

brains sairly wanted *seduction* –
Without *animal* Parliaments suen,
We wad a' gan to wreck and *construction*.

('Collier's Keek' 1824:5)

The pitman struggles with the Latinate words *education* and *destruction* and the concept of *annual parliaments*. Gilchrist (cited in Allan ed, 1891, 1972 edn.:177) commented in 1829 that the song was written 'in reprobation of the attempts of many designing individuals to stir up a spirit of Republicanism in the minds of those honest, well-meaning, and industrious members of the community'. The pitmen are depicted as inarticulate, and a group who should not trouble themselves with politics for which their intelligence is not suited; in fact the pitman wishes that each be 'content in his station' ('Collier's Keek' 1824:6).

I now turn to the later writers' representation of malapropism by pitmen and keelmen. In Robson at least this can involve use of Tyneside words. For example, the place-name *California* becomes 'Callerforney' in 'The Wonderful Tallygrip', 'Callerforney – A Dialogue' and 'Mally's Voyage to Callerforney' (in Robson ed. c.1849:20, 49-51, 74-7). It seems possible that the element 'caller' could be a play on *caller* which can mean 'fresh',

'cool' or 'cold' (Heslop 1892:126, Griffiths 2005:26). The fantastical descriptions of the gold rush countries in music hall song might make such a play on words available.

It is not clear whether Tyneside elements are part of the often repeated formation 'tallygrip', with which a pitman replaces *telegraph* in Robson's 'The Wonderful Tallygrip' (in Robson ed. c.1849:17-22). On this occasion the meaning may be nonsensical. Equally ludicrous, though more explicable, is the use of a StE malapropism in the song, 'Gutta Percha' (in Robson ed. c.1849:52), in which the substance named in the title becomes 'Guts o' Pershuns'. Finally, in Robson's 'Days and Deeds of Shakespere' (in Robson ed. c.1849:99-102) numerous linguistic contortions occur. This song is narrated by Bob Stackers (who I deem to be a keelman on the basis that he is so in another Robson song). In this piece it is difficult to determine whether linguistic 'accidents' should be attributed to the local poacher and playwright, 'Bill Shakespere', or to Bob, who has been instructed by a ghost to translate Bill's work into the 'vulgar tongue'. Indeed, the fiction is so elaborate in this song that neither the words *malapropism* nor *pun* may be adequate to describe the wordplay. Nevertheless, only the performer and audience hear the *literal* Shakespearean echoes. Giving an account of the characters that Bill has created, Bob mentions 'Dissymolly' *Desdemona*, 'Prossyjoie' *Prospero*, and 'Callerbran' *Caliban*, who is very partial to 'jemmykay' or *Jamaica rum!* Some of these features may involve insertion of Tyneside elements for comic effect. Hence to 'pross' is to 'gossip' (Griffiths 2005:135); *caller*, as noted, can mean 'fresh', 'cool' or 'cold', and *bran* 'a boar' or 'male pig' (Heslop 1892:126, 91, Griffiths 2005:26). The overall impact of these features, along with the use of diminutive names, is simply ludicrous. However, the audience understands the jokes, and perceives a comic quality in the character and language of the keelman uttering them, which fulfils generic expectations of such a labouring-class figure.

The malapropisms or 'mistakes' with words by miners and keelmen are seen in Corvan's songs too. Manipulation by the performer of StE is prominent. Thus in 'Asstrilly, or The Pitman's Farewell' (1850s:Song Book 1, 9) the pitman has 'conswaded' Geordie Hall to travel to Australia with him. Then there is 'Asstrilly's Goold Fields, or Tommy Carr's Letter' in which a letter is dated 'Octember the 35th', and is 'Frev your confectionate brother / TOMMY CARR' (1850s:Song Book 1, 17-18). In 'Stage Struck Keelman' we have a keelman who is adept at 'silly quissin" *soliloquizing*, has studied 'Shakemspear',

and can do 'Hamlick', offering up to his audience 'Angels an' ministers of grease confend us' (1850s Song Book 2, 13-15). While words such as 'conswaded', 'Octember' and 'confend' are intended to convey morphological 'errors', there is again clear malapropism in 'confectionate' and 'grease'.

It is apparent, then, that malapropism, morphological insertions, and other linguistic 'accidents' continue to be given to the pitmen and keelmen. These groups also continue to be depicted as if unaware of their 'blunders'; or, rather, generic demands with which the audience is familiar appear to dictate that they should be viewed in this manner. The joke is to be construed as one enjoyed between performer and audience, based on the imputed linguistic and intellectual limitations of the generic pitmen and keelmen characters.

When voices other than pitmen and keelmen are considered, it is apparent that women are hardly ever represented as uttering malapropisms. Nevertheless, such 'mistakes' are traceable among other male voices. Among the early writers it must be said, however, that the depiction of supposedly unconscious 'errors' is rare, and there is no evidence, in the electronic corpus at least, of Tyneside words replacing StE words. In Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314), the narrator / character uses 'noration' for either *narration* or *oration*, and 'accydavy' for *affidavit*, suggesting inability to handle Latinate and legal terminology. The narrator / iron foundry worker in Selkirk's 'Swalwell Hopping' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:47) revels in fighting, saying that Petticoat Robin took a knife intending to 'mercykree huz a". In a comic substitution *massacre* has had *mercy* inserted into it. On the whole, however, in early song, imputed unconsciousness of 'mistakes' is a particular characteristic of miners and keelmen.

Among the later writers, it is possible that some of the following examples from Robson's works are taken from the voices of pitmen or keelmen, who are not overtly identified as such. We do have the use of Tyneside elements in the case of Robson's song, 'Polly's-Nick-Stick' (in Robson ed. c.1849:35-9); here there is the oft repeated 'Polly's Nickstick' for the *polytechnic* exhibition. According to Heslop (1892:501) a *nick-stick* was a 'stick on which *nicks* ... were cut in order to keep a reckoning'. As for other songs, a landlord in 'The Pitman Pilgrim' says that antiquaries are going to 'howk Anty's Quarries' (in Robson ed. c.1849: 258). As the narrator is a pitman, it is possible that it is he who is

responsible for the malapropism in recalling the landlord's words. In other songs there is morphological play. The illiterate narrator / character in 'The Kittlin' Legacy' (in Robson ed. c.1849:55-6) uses 'extonish'd'. This is also used by the identified character, Billy Purvis, a well known entertainer ('Billy Purvis's Bundle' in Robson ed. c.1849:295).

Most of the examples given so far, whether by pitmen, keelmen or others, seem to be represented as unconscious or 'accidental'. However, there are instances in which the malapropisms and 'mistakes' by first or third-person narrators appear more deliberate, or where the directness of the performer's relationship with the audience makes the enjoyment of the wordplay seem overt and mutual (cf. Davison 1982 27, 52). Among the early writers, the third-person narrative voice is crucial here. The technique tends to assume or draw attention to a consciousness of the purported mistake. In Midford's 'Cappy', for instance, the use of a morphological replacement by the narrator is prompted by a comic empathy with the pitman, whose dog, Cappy, has been bludgeoned. Thus 'Ralphy, *extonish'd*, Cap's fate did repine' ('Cappy' 1818:9). Note the use of italics (in print at least) to highlight the deliberateness of the purported mistake by the narrator, who is nevertheless competent to use 'repine', and later 'transactions' ('Cappy' 1818:9-10). Much the same can be said of Emery's 'Hydrophobie' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:63-4), in which the narrator and a doctor use 'hydrophobie'; the word is used as a refrain, but is initially used, and therefore prompted, by a keelman. Likewise in Armstrong's 'The Baboon' (in Fordyce ed 1842:23) the narrator's use of 'Bonnypairt' mimics use of 'Bonnypairty' by a pitman.

Among the later writers the overt sharing of the joke with the audience continues. In fact, Davison (1982 27, 52; cf. Bailey 1994:144) stresses the directness of the relationship between performer and audience in the music hall, making the sharing of the humour all the more of a joint enterprise. Thus there is much collusion between the industrial labouring-class audience and the performer in Tyneside music hall. This is evident in the use of malapropism in various of Corvan's songs, but I will focus upon 'Hairy Gobs an' fine Moosecatchers' (1850s:Song Book 2, 17-20). Corvan ensures that the audience laughs *with* his stage persona by satirising the upper classes or those with pretensions to fashion. The main joke again relies upon using Tyneside features to create new meanings.

The word being replaced is *moustaches*. In this case the Tyneside vowel /u:/, commonly represented as <oo>, permits the malapropism 'moosecatchers', representing the Tyneside pronunciation of *mousecatchers*. The performer uses the malapropism repeatedly, and establishes the joke at the outset:

Noo, dinnet think aw's daft or fond, but patronise maw plan,
For aw cultivates moosecatchers like a fashionable man ...

('Hairy Gobs' 1850s:Song Book 2, 17)

The 'moosecatchers', we are told, make the man appear 'dandified', 'genteel' and 'respectable', although the other reasons given for wearing them include providing a 'summer-hoose' for 'lops' and are less respectable ('Hairy Gobs' 1850s:Song Book 2, 17-20). The satire is clearly directed at those who might have pretensions and those who are supposedly genteel (cf. Bailey 1994). The performer as stage persona asks for patronage, 'cultivates moosecatchers', and is competent to use Latinate words, but indulges in malapropism. He and the audience share the joke in an openly negotiated manner. Similarly they share the joke when he says servant girls should have 'moosecatchers' to save them 'frae presumption when brushin' oot the dust' ('Hairy Gobs' 1850s:Song Book 2, 18-19). Here *consumption* has become 'presumption' – perhaps the presumption of sexual interest from employers. The impact of these malapropisms is to create intimacy with the audience through mockery of self and the 'respectable' classes. But this intimacy is also created by prompting the audience to use its own intelligence. Corvan does this in the very act of gently mocking the pitmen. For instance, he says that pitmen should wear 'moosecatchers' to keep coal dust out, since he knew a pitman whose head caught fire whilst he was 'howkin' the stuff 'oot on his lugs with a philosopher match' ('Hairy Gobs' 1850s:Song Book 2, 19). The phrase 'philosopher match' is a malapropism of *phosphorus match* or *Lucifer match*. Of course, there is nothing wise or philosophical about setting fire to one's head like this, but there is something self-satisfyingly wise about understanding the malapropism. There can be little doubt that this kind of wit had the pitmen, prominent members of Corvan's audience, laughing. They would be laughing with Corvan in stage performance persona, understanding the jokes, and laughing in a manner very similar to the self-congratulatory laughter which Bailey (1994: 147-8, 159) says arises from the 'knowingness' of popular culture. This, it seems, is another reason

why the pitmen can laugh at these 'errors', even when they are depicted as the characters uttering them. They are reassured that they are 'nobody's fool', to use Bailey's (1994:160) term.

Ridley does not appear to employ malapropism; and its use by Wilson is minimal, at least in the c.1865 edition of songs contributing to the electronic corpus. However, in the latter's song, 'The Cockney's Lament' (c.1865:14), we are told in a section spoken to the audience, about a song by an old Cockney with 'a fyece as lang an' lemoncolly as a lemonade bottle'. As with Corvan's malapropism, the play on words is clearly meant to be enjoyed by performer and audience together, as their relationship is foregrounded by the direct address. The Cockney is long- and sour-faced because of the defeat of London oarsmen by Tynesiders. The idea of sourness lies behind the change of *melancholy* into 'lemoncolly'. It is perhaps with this direct relationship between performer and audience in mind that we should view the use of a further partial malapropism, 'regretta' for *regatta*, in the song itself. Although the original of the song is supposedly sung by a Cockney, the performer says 'a weel eddycated man' has translated his 'ootlandish twang' into the 'Newcassel dialect' ('Cockney's Lament' c.1865:14). This malapropism is in fact a running joke in Wilson's work. It appears in 'Billy Turn-bull's Adventors at the Grand Regretta' (c.1865:63), a drollery, and in the title at least of 'The Tyne Regretta, or Shuv Ahead' (c.1865:64), a song. In the latter piece the narrator tells his wife, Mally, that if she does not see the boat races 'ye will REGRET AW say, ye diddent gan wi' me' (c.1865:64). It can be argued that because the malapropism itself occurs in the title only, the character is not responsible for it. His words elaborate the potential meaning, but he does not utter it in the form used in the title. Rather it seems the writer or performer takes ownership of the malapropism and draws attention to its deliberateness, and the audience can respond as if it has heard a pun.

The occurrence of malapropism and other 'errors' with words in these songs is significant to the depiction of character, and for the attitude of audiences to the voices making the utterances. Such 'errors' are used by pitmen and keelmen throughout much of the period examined, and this reinforces a generic notion of their illiteracy or stupidity. They seem utterly oblivious of the linguistic 'mistakes' that they make. At times the implication is that these groups are not equipped to deal with language, concepts and

culture beyond the immediate. New meanings emerging from the intrusion of Tyneside words imply stupidity, at times brutishness. Bob Cranky risks being a 'cull' or *fool*. In Gilchrist's 'The Skipper's Erudition' (1824:11), the skipper 'whee hungry was always most bright', thinks with his stomach, itself an empty 'kite'. Gilchrist's mention of '*animal* Parliaments' in 'The Collier's Keek at the Nation' (1824:5) carries this potential implication of brutishness too. Often, 'errors' by characters bring forth new meanings for the audience, setting them at a distance from the low intelligence of those characters and drawing them towards the performer in mutual enjoyment and understanding. This dynamic could foster group solidarity for the early writers (clerks, artisans, shopkeepers, tradesmen) and the friends who were their primary audience, setting them apart linguistically from the pitmen and keelmen. We saw something similar in the discussion of the 'correct' use of French / Latinate words in Chapter Four (see section 4.3.).

I have stressed, nevertheless, that pitmen and keelmen too could enjoy the work of the early writers, and that the pitmen / keelmen genre (malapropisms and all) persisted into the music hall. In this respect it may be that the response of these groups to early songs depicting them as characters is similar to that of the labouring-class music hall audience generally. Self-satire aside, it is clear that there is an enjoyment of exuberance and daftness, or resistance to externally defined concepts of respectability and self-improvement. It is possible, of course, that a feeling of self-satisfied 'knowingness' in understanding malapropism is also part of the pleasure for industrial labouring-class audiences of both the early and later songs (cf. Bailey 1994). These factors may contribute to a sense of solidarity among such groups. Certainly, this is in evidence when the labouring-class music hall audience perceives the multiple linguistic 'errors' made by the hero of Corvan's piece, 'The Stage Struck Keelman' (1850s Song Book 2, 13-15).

Song characters, as noted, are not the only figures who utter malapropisms. When a third-person narrator makes supposed 'blunders', as in the earlier writers, or later when a music hall performer within his stage persona makes 'errors', there is such a direct relationship with the audience that the latter cannot doubt that it is supposed to laugh collusively with the performer. This is again an aspect of 'knowingness', to use Bailey's (1994) term. The wit is shared and the impression is of comic accomplishment rather than stupidity. The audience is drawn to the performer or to other audience members. Again,

however, the implications of this depend on the context of the performance. The early writers may inspire solidarity within the ranks of artisans, clerks and tradesmen who make up their primary audience. On the other hand, the sense of belonging, inspired by performers for most music hall audiences, may be to an industrial labouring-class culture. Perhaps the same could also be said of pitmen and keelmen listening to performances of the early songs. The similarity of these arguments to my discussion of the 'correct' use of French / Latinate words in Chapter Four should be apparent (see section 4.3.). Both 'correct' and 'incorrect' use of language can foster exclusion or inclusion, depending on the composition of an audience and its relationship to the performer. All of these points will impact upon the audience's perception of a relationship between language (including the Tyneside dialect) and character trait. For some audiences characters are to be laughed at for their low intelligence. At other times, however, or sometimes simultaneously, the audience sees the performer or a stage persona, along with itself, as wittily collusive, and thus comic but not stupid.

There is, nevertheless, a sense in which the repeated manipulation of the dialect to create comedy builds up associations between Tyneside English (along with characters or performers using it) and the comic. This occurs whether it be through malapropism involving Tyneside dialect words, the general depiction of character types or stage personae using the local dialect and making linguistic 'mistakes', or simply through foolish or comic figures using Tyneside speech. Perhaps the clearest evidence of this comic association is in the Wilson song, 'The Cockney's Lament'. As noted, we are told that 'a weel eddycated man' has translated the Cockney's 'ootlandish twang' into the 'Newcassel dialec' ('Cockney's Lament' c.1865:14). However, the translation includes the malapropism 'regretta', which is also used in other songs by Wilson. Of course, this is a joke, but it also creates a fiction that linguistic 'mistakes' are part of the local dialect. Furthermore, this fiction does emerge from a particular version of reality, that of the repeated use of such 'blunders' in performance. In this sense it is no surprise to the audience to find the malapropism present. Whether the wordplay conveys daftness or wit, the audience expects the dialect to have comic potential among those characters or personae using it in performance.

The comic contributes to one of the paradoxes of Tyneside dialect song: It can both foster local and regional linguistic identity, as will be seen in the next chapter, and also play its part in the wider social process of the downgrading of non-standard dialect in the nineteenth century (cf. Mugglestone 1997). In performance contexts the dialect, and characters or performers speaking it, build up comic connotations through repetition and generic expectation. This might have implications outside performance settings. Hadaway (1992:85-91), for instance, writing of Tyneside English, gives his piece the title 'Comic Dialect', while recognising that there is nothing inherently funny in any dialect.

Within the tradition of popular entertainment, however, the comic potential of the dialect, when in a *dialogic* relationship with StE, prestige accents, and higher culture, has long been exploited. Hadaway (1992:88) briefly notes with some disapproval, that present-day entertainers may exploit such comic potential by the mere utterance of individual Tyneside words. But, as we shall see, this tradition can be traced back to the nineteenth century at least. The influence of comedy, or the comic potential of even the most cherished or iconic of Tyneside words, must be taken into account in an analysis of the social meaning of the Tyneside dialect in performance.

5.3.3. *Canny and Hinny*

Core Values and Literary Contexts

Aspects of character are revealed in the displays of familiarity and affection which are prominent among figures represented using the dialect. In this respect, two words in particular, *canny* and *hinny*, have a central role (see section 3.3.3.). The word *canny* has a wide variety of meanings in the North and Scotland, ranging from 'kindly, good, and gentle' to 'frugal', 'sparing', 'careful', 'knowing' or 'shrewd' (Heslop 1892:130-31, *EDD:adj., adv. and int. adj.*1.-6.; cf. Brockett 1825:37, Griffiths 2005:27, Wales 2006:133). Thus over a wide geographical area meanings can range from the highly positive to the potentially negative. Brockett (1825:37), nevertheless, identifies *canny* as 'a genuine Newcastle word' applied to 'any thing superior or of the best kind', and he emphasises its relationship with home, saying that it is used 'particularly ... to describe

those mild and affectionate dispositions which render persons agreeable in the domestic state'. Heslop (1892:130) too emphasises a special relationship between Tyneside or Northumberland and the word *canny*; he says that it is an 'embodiment of all that is kindly, good, and gentle', that it represents the 'highest compliment that can be paid to any person', and 'expresses every home virtue'. Use of the word *hinny* too conveys familiarity and affection. For Brockett (1825:96) *hinny* is 'a favourite term of endearment', while Heslop (1892:376-7) describes it as a term of 'kindly regard, generally applied to women and children', which is used 'in the purest and most loveable sense to sweetheart, wife or bairn'. Along with *canny*, he says, *hinny* is one of the 'choicest of our local terms'. Heslop is guilty of an important omission when he fails to record that *hinny* can be used between men, as it certainly is (cf. Griffiths 2005:84). I argue later that this omission is significant and may be relevant to specific meanings of the word between men.

These definitions of *canny* and *hinny* have various implications. The words are not restricted to the North-East, but both Heslop and Brockett indicate that they are cherished – even iconic – on Tyneside, and they seem to attribute a set of 'core' values to the features as used in the locality and region. These values relate to the fact that both *canny* and *hinny* can carry positive evaluative content. In addition, however, wider theoretical considerations suggest that *canny* as a compliment and *hinny* as an endearment may well serve particular interactive functions, building up solidarity or intimacy when used in real exchanges between individuals. The concept known as Politeness Theory is not central to my analysis. Nevertheless, scholars of the theory have observed, with some qualifications, that compliments and endearments frequently do foster solidarity (Maybin and Mercer 1996:9, Daly et al. 2004:947, Holmes 1998:118, McConnell-Ginet 2003:85, Brown and Levinson 1987:107). Certainly as a familiar vocative, *hinny* may carry a solidarity function (cf. Dunkling 1990:9, 12, Wales 2001:7, 405-6).

Previous scholarship regarding use of the words *canny* and *hinny* in Tyneside song often emphasises the positive evaluative content of the words and their solidarity functions. For Colls (1977:26-7, 51), who sees pitmen and keelmen as almost interchangeable, 'the pitman' is 'an oft hilarious but always a canny lad'. Wales (2006:132-3), as we have seen, believes that dialect in songs is 'emblematic of regional

and social identities' and of the 'associated community values of common sense, stoicism, homeliness, humour and self-reliance'; thus despite carrying a load of connotations difficult to pin down, she believes that the repeated use of *canny* 'creates and confirms a community's self-image', functioning in 'exactly the same way' as characters like Bob Cranky. Likewise, Joyce (1991:284) claims that pitmen and keelmen are symbols of the regional industrial identity of Tyneside, and are intimately linked to words such as *canny* and *hinny*, in a rhetorical creation of communal values. In all of these descriptions, to varying degrees, we can detect a focus on a semantic of communal or labouring-class solidarity, common in responses to the literature generally (cf. Wales 2002:61, 2006:132). Yet, while Wales equates the function of the word *canny* with that of Bob Cranky, we have seen that for many people Bob may be a satirical figure, and that his community spirit and the values that he represents are highly questionable. As with Bob, the use of these iconic words as they relate to character, needs far more detailed analysis to appreciate the different levels at which they might function.

The words *hinny* and *canny* will be examined in a number of ways, making use of the computer software package *Oxford Wordsmith Tools*, to locate examples of the words in the electronic corpus within their concordance contexts. Statistical analysis is, however, not necessary in this chapter. The current discussion relates to character, but in the next chapter *canny* will be considered in relation to praise of place, and both words analysed in terms of their use to address the audience (see sections 6.3.4. and 6.4.1.).

In the current discussion, particularly in the case of *hinny*, I want to examine how the word is used when directed to a second person. This is most likely to demonstrate the representation by performers of the solidary use of the word, though, of course, the performer might not conceptualise it in this manner. At one level, as we shall see, use of both *canny* and *hinny* within texts frequently does reflect the 'core' values or meanings emphasised by both Heslop and Brockett. However, the songs and their characters are fictional, and any use of the words *canny* and *hinny* is ultimately appraised by the audience within highly contrived literary contexts. Thus it is essential to consider how primary audiences in particular might interpret or respond to the use of the words, over and above any perception on their part of their solidarity enhancing functions in relation to character.

Hinny

Bob Cranky in Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Adieu' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:31-2) uses the word *hinny* five times to his 'comely pet'. His utterances include 'Ma hinny! wipe them e'en, sae breet', 'Cheer up, ma hinny! leet thy pipe, / And take a blast o' backy', and finally:

But hinny! if the time seems lang,
And thou freets about me neet an' day; ...
Seek out the yell-house where aw stay ...

(*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:32)

It is the audience's perception which matters here. The audience hears Bob's intimacy and tenderness, but we must remember that Robson (ed c.1849:v-vii) singles out this song as being the perfection of a type which has made him laugh to tears; Bob is thoroughly 'ungenteel', to adapt Robson's own term. This song is entitled an 'Adieu', a word from French connoting the language of refined romantic love. But Bob does not say *adieu*, he says 'fareweel'; and all of the Tyneside dialect in the song, including *hinny*, contributes to the incongruity (cf. Ross 1998:7-8) between the title and the content. Bob's encouragement of his 'hinny' to smoke and join him on the 'fuddle' merely compounds this, marking out their relationship as humorously vulgar (*'Cranky's Adieu'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:31-2). The word *hinny* itself, recognised by the audience as a tender endearment, becomes bound up in ironies and implications of non-gentility, non-respectability. It is not part of the language of 'polite society', or the language of refined romantic love, which a relatively cultivated audience may believe itself to understand.

The wives or sweethearts of pitmen are equally capable of tenderness. But again the audience can be aware of ironies. Thus in Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday', Nan cajoles Bob whose suit is in tatters after a drunken fight:

Nan cry'd and she cuddled
My hinny, thou's fuddled,
Ho'way hyem now, my bonny Bob Cranky.

(*'Cranky's 'Size Sunday'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27)

The audience, or Selkirk's primary audience, can see Nan's affections ironically. Bob is a drunken mess, with two black eyes – hardly 'bonny' in a conventional sense – and the word *hinny* is also subjected to those ironies ('Cranky's 'Size Sunday' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:27). Similarly, in Selkirk's 'Bob Cranky's Complaint' (in Bell ed 1812, 1971 edn.:28) Nan consoles him, saying: "'Hinny, din't mind the cull fellows sang'". However, the expression of intimacy with Bob must be seen in the context of his previous unconscious condemnation of himself as an illiterate 'cull' ('Cranky's Complaint' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:28). Nan's words sound like a mother consoling a child, but she too sounds naively childlike as she promises Bob that their schoolmaster will take his part, if another mocking song appears. Thus the expression of love and solidarity is between two laughable illiterates.

These points are further illustrated when we look at the use of the word in the second person outside romantic relationships. Again, the instances of the word reflect the way that *hinny* might be used familiarly even intimately. However, the ironies must also be recognised, along with the comic potential of the manipulation of the word itself. In the Armstrong song, 'The Skipper in the Mist' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:320), a skipper, his keel and those aboard it lost in the mist, roars, becomes enraged, curses and swears; and it is in that context that we must understand his request: "Now hinnies, my marrows! come tell's what's to dee". The use of the potentially tender and intensely solidary *hinnies* is immersed in humorous ironies and incongruities, when perceived alongside the keelmen's violent tendencies, their swearing, and their lack of education ('Skipper in the Mist' in Fordyce ed. 1842:320).

There are continuities from the early period into the music hall of mid-century, in the representation of the use of *hinny* by communities of pitmen and keelmen, and their wives or sweethearts. However, the primary audience is now drawn from the industrial labouring classes. While Allan (ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii) believes that Robson and Corvan continue an older 'burlesque' comic tradition, the humour in Corvan at least seems far more celebratory than the satirical tone seen previously.

In Robson's 'Callerforney – A Dialogue' (in Robson ed. c.1849:49) Mally plies her affections on her husband ('Oh, hinny, Geordy, canny man'), telling him that for his love

she turned down 'baggy Crooks' among others. The names 'Geordy' and 'baggy Crooks' are familiar and informal and also sound 'ungenteel', to use Robson's own phrase again. In fact, this use of *hinny* by Mally, and a subsequent use, both conventional tenderesses, help in the setting up of Geordy's response 'Hoots, Mally! haud yor whinjin gob' ('Callerforney – A Dialogue' in Robson ed. c.1849:49). Thus the use of *hinny* is again immersed in comic ironies when used between pitmen and their wives.

Corvan keeps up the humour. In his work the full potential of Tyneside words to become comic in themselves and in relation to character is very clear. As noted, however, there is a great deal of celebration in this. In 'Asstrilly's Goold Fields' (1850s:Song Book 1, 18) a letter full of nonsense is written in Tyneside orthography and includes reference to the addressee as 'hinny Bob'. The use of Tyneside English adds to the comedy here, since letters are conventionally written in StE. Thus expectations are overturned, lending humour to the word *hinny* itself through incongruity (cf. Ross 1998:7-8). Corvan also exploits the incongruity of such a potentially tender word in the mouths of rough pitmen and keelmen. Thus in 'The Pitman and the Kipper'd Herrin' (1850s:Song Book 1, 13-14) the pitman, who has been tricked into drinking a laxative by workmates, makes a long and bathetic death speech, including the line 'Aw's deein, aw's deein, gox, aw's deein Geordie Carins'. No matter how affectionate or solidary his subsequent use of the word *hinny* to his cousin, Geordie, its use emerges amid the comic ironies of the intense emotional state of this rough stock figure. Much the same can be said of a further song, 'The Curds and the Cream-House Ghost'. This piece may belong to Emery, but Corvan includes it in *Random Rhymes*. Keelmen have been frightened by their peedee, who is pretending to be a ghost, leading the skipper to tell them: 'pray hinnies, pray' ('Curds and Cream-House' 1850:7). Dropping to their knees, we are told they 'blubber'd and cried, we'll de owt that ye please, / Nobbit leave us alyen, hinny ghost, man!' ('Curds and Cream-House' 1850:7). Both of these uses show the familiar and solidary function of the word turned to humorous effect. The use of the word *hinny* again coincides with heightened emotions of fear in the song. The keelmen, like the pitmen, so renowned for aggression, become afraid, and in the process of behaving in a less conventionally 'manly' fashion, they resort to use of a word which can have intensely intimate connotations. It should be recalled that Heslop (1892:376-7) seems reluctant to admit that the word can be

used between men, though it certainly is (Griffiths 2005:84). The intense levels of the intimacy function manifested at these times may be considered incongruous and comic in such rough characters. Its use to a supposed ghost is, of course, equally amusing.

There are moments when disparities in social status provide the humour in the use of the word within these communities. We can see this in its use by wives or sweethearts of pitmen or keelmen. In Robson's song, 'The Lovesick Collier Lass' (in Robson ed. c.1849:170), the lass refers to a doctor as 'Oh! maw hinny doctor'. Again, in 'Nanny Jackson's Letter to Lord Morpeth' (in Robson ed. c.1849:236), Nanny refers to the Peer, saying: 'Noo, hinney, maw comely'. Both songs are actually monologues, but clearly there are expressions of familiarity and intimacy in the use of the word. The difference in social rank along with the disjunction between the language and culture of the uneducated and the educated lends the word comic effect.

I have focused thus far on the use of *hinny* by pitmen and keelmen or their wives and sweethearts, and it is clear that in both the early and later period ironies and incongruities exist, which frequently implicate the word in comedy. This occurs despite characters displaying affection, solidarity or communal values when using the word. When we turn to other voices we see something similar in the early period. Thus *hinny* is used by a somewhat boastful Tynesider / provincial bumpkin to a 'Cockney' in Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314). In Emery's 'The Fish-wives' Complaint' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:71-2) fishwives repeat it in a chorus: 'O! hinnies, Corporation! / A! marcy, Corporation!'. Finally, it is used repeatedly by an abusive drunken woman singing about her husband, 'Jocker', in Nunn's song of that name (in Fordyce ed. 1842:268). Often used by or addressed to the lowest social orders, the word is bound up in humour. Fishwives after all are notoriously uncouth whatever tender appeals they might offer!

Incongruities and ironies continue among the later writers. In Robson's 'Hamlick – Prince of Denton' ('Part 3' in Robson ed. c.1849:150) the hero's mother enquires about the poisoned cup: "'Oh, hinny, Clawde, what's this, my lad? / This porter's queerly fettled'". This is, of course, parody and burlesque (cf. *OED*:in *parody*, *n.*² 1., and *burlesque*, *a.* and *n.* B.*n.*1.-2.) which, while making *Hamlet* itself the source of humour by mimicking it,

exploits the incongruity between the original and its language, and Tyneside working people's culture and language.

The range of ironies can be wide. In Corvan's 'Lad's o' Tyneside', the lass singing the chorus gives an account of the courting technique of the 'Tyne laddies'. She sings that they will coax her to go 'doon the burn Jinny, maw canny hinny', adding: 'then they'll caress ye, an' so cosey they'll press ye' ('Lads o' Tyneside 1850s:Song Book 2, 16). The lass may have a keel lad, but the exuberant celebration of the endearment and of Tyne lads in the plural also smacks of the somewhat non-respectable. It is worth noting a single citation in *EDD* (in *canny, adj., adv. and int. adj.1.*) which suggests that *canny hinny* may denote 'a smooth sinner, especially in affairs of gallantry'. I contend, however, that first and foremost, the endearment and the positive aspects of the phrase are being used with exuberant irony here.

Ironies and humour continue when we consider occurrences of the word between males. This can include uses which again seem somewhat incongruous among men. In the Wilson song, 'Keep Yor Feet Still!', the scene is set with 'Wor Geordey an' Bob Jonsin' sharing a bed in a lodging house; but Bob is wakened by Geordey's foot, leading to the lines of the chorus:

"Keep yor feet still! Geordey, hinny, let's be happy for the neet
For aw maynit be se happy throo the day ... "
(*'Keep Yor Feet Still!'* c.1865:89)

Certainly for Bob, the awakening is an interruption of a suggestively erotic dream in which he has kissed his sweetheart, and has just been married; however, he tells Geordey that his 'clumsy feet completely spoil'd the rest!' (*'Keep Yor Feet Still!'* c.1865:90). So Bob awakens to find the *hinny* next to him is not his wife but Geordey. As with the use of the word between pitmen and keelmen, the potential tenderness lends incongruity to the situation. This again calls to mind the relevance of Heslop's (1892: 376-7) failure to mention the use of the word between men. It might be that for any audience aware of the lack of such an endearment in StE, the word must be in *dialogue* with restrictions on such linguistic intimacy between males. Alternatively, men may well be aware of its function as an endearment to sweethearts, emphasised by Heslop (1892:376-7), and its

connotations between males may be subtly but potentially threatening at certain times, thus aiding the humour in this song.

The exploitation of disparities in social status can also be seen to continue from the early songs. This is apparent in Wilson's mock letter, 'Wor Geordy's Welcum te Garibaldi'. Not a pitman or keelman, Geordy nevertheless clearly belongs to the labouring community. In this piece we have 'WELCUM! maw canny hinny, a hundrid thoosand million times welcum! ... It's mony a lang day since aw saw ye noo hinny ... ye've gyen throo a storm o' trouble since then, hinny ...' ('Wor Geordy's Welcum' c.1865:3). Garibaldi had visited Tyneside in 1854. More importantly the endearment itself is comic. There is a disjunction between the social status of Geordy and Garibaldi, the lives of labouring people and the machinations of foreign politics; also between Tyneside English, StE, and indeed Italian.

The ironies or incongruities surrounding the use of the word *hinny* take a range of forms and there are continuities from the early period to the mid-century music hall. While the word *hinny* addressed to or in relation to characters may reflect values and functions of solidarity and the communal, those ironies frequently make the relationship of the word to character humorous. Nevertheless, changes do occur, most strikingly in the 1860s in the work of Wilson, who begins to focus on characteristics and values associated with the domestic (cf. Zlotnick 1991:9), and to problematise particular aspects of labouring-class culture or certain social types within it. Thus in 'Cadjin for Beer' the narrator is accosted by a man who claims to know him, and who requests beer money:

So hinney stand a gill,
Or len us just threehappince,
An' aw'll pray for ye aw will.

('Cadjin for Beer' c.1865:68)

He later tries his 'swindle' again, saying: 'cum here maw canny man, / What are ye gan te stand ...' ('Cadjin for Beer' c.1865:69). It is important to see the imputed manipulation of these intimacies in the context of Wilson's morality, and of the increased influence of labouring-class respectability. The narrator as character tells the beggar to try 'wark'; he then asserts to the audience that he likes the man who takes a drink and 'decency hads dear, / But oh; the man disarves contempt, / That cadjis for his beer' ('Cadjin for Beer'

c.1865:69). Here the ironies behind the manipulation of the words *hinny* and *canny* are so overt that the audience is intended to respond with contempt to their use by the man. In this case the attempts to assert solidarity lie *outside* the bounds of communal values rather than being *emblematic* of them.

Thus far I have shown the ironies surrounding the use of *hinny*, whether it be between spouses, sweethearts, acquaintances or strangers. These ironies frequently cause the audience to view the use of the word from multiple perspectives. The result is that the solidary, familiar and intimacy-enhancing functions, which might relate to the communal or domestic and associated personality traits, can be undermined or at least made comic. However, in Wilson's work the domestic connotations of the word are emphasised and endorsed, reflecting, I would argue, the ever increasing influence of labouring-class respectability in the 1860s. For instance, the song, 'Pride' (c.1865:45), appears to feature the voice of a male talking to his wife or sweetheart, and saying: 'Cum an' give us yor cumfort, maw hinny, / An' ease a poor mind that's distrest'. It is precisely the pride of those in the outside world which has caused the distress. Then there is the wife in 'Ungrateful Bill' (c.1865:69-71), who consoles her 'hinny' in the face of the ingratitude and unreliability of supposed friends in 'this world'. Thus the home and the 'hinny' can be an antidote to the world. Likewise, in 'It's Time te Get Up' (c.1865:58-9), in which 'young Mary Broon' urges her husband, or 'hinny', to go to work, the emphasis is on the disturbance to domestic harmony which the husband's drinking has caused. It is equally clear that celebration can be achieved in the setting of the home. Hence in 'Aw Wish Ye a Happy New Eer' the centre of communal enjoyment is domestic:

The aud wife hands refreshmint roond,
"Cum hinnies, let's be glad!"

('Happy New Eer' c.1865:65)

It seems that in Wilson's songs the ironies begin to fall away from the solidary and intimacy enhancing functions of the word *hinny*, as he focuses increasingly on character types oriented towards the homely and domestic. This, then, is an indication that even among words so frequently held up as tokens or symbols of particular values, we see an evolution in their use in performance, and in their meaning for audiences. This will be all

the more apparent when we consider uses of the word *canny*, which will culminate again in a particular emphasis on the connotations of the word in Wilson's songs.

Canny

In the case of the word *canny*, carrying as it does obvious evaluative content, it is all the more likely that the audience will make judgements about the person or character type to whom it is directed. The word is used in the second and third person, and these are of equal interest. The use of *canny* in the second person follows various patterns. It is used between sweethearts or spouses, between acquaintances and strangers, and to the audience itself. The latter issue is considered in the next chapter (see section 6.4.1.). However, in terms of the audience's response to the use of the word as a familiar marker of solidarity usually between characters this can vary greatly. For instance, in Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' the narrator / character specifically draws attention to the solidary functions of the word, in extolling the virtues of Tyneside friendliness:

Aw lift the first latch, and baith man and dame say,
 "Cruck your hough, canny man, for ye're welcome."
 ('Canny Newcassel' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:315)

The phrase 'cruck your hough' means sit down, and thus the couple make their house open to the stranger, and in so doing highlight the social and domestic virtues with which the word can be associated. Of course, such use of the word need not be so unselfish, as we see in Corvan's 'The Rise in Coals'. In this piece the crowd, trying to get coal, fight like devils, the old women being worst as they scream for fuel:

Canny man gis a pennorth ti warm wor aud skins,
 Au've teties ti boil, says another aw've stew,
 Canny man, put your shuil in and gis a wee few.
 ('Rise in Coals' 1850s:Song Book 1, 8)

The demands are screamed, and the assertion of familiarity through use of the compliment *canny* is foregrounded by its very stridency and seeming insincerity. Thus the audience is able to see comic ironies in the depiction of the relationship, and the word becomes part of that irony. A similar lack of adequacy because of apparent insincerity

has already been noted in the use of *canny* in Wilson's 'Cadjin for Beer' (c.1865:69). The potential solidarity enhancing functions of the word are beyond question. However, these functions are undermined, and the audience perceives this.

My main focus in this section, nevertheless, is on the more evaluative dimension of the word, again with an emphasis on the way that the audience responds to these evaluations in relation to character depiction. When we look at instances in which pitmen are referred to as being 'canny', the context, including the *dialogic* context of other cultural perspectives, such as nineteenth-century ideas of propriety and respectability, frequently makes use of the word humorous or ironic for the audience. The pitmen in Midford's song, 'The Royal Archdukes' (1818:44), are described by the StE narrator as 'canny', but they are also extremely uncouth, swearing in earshot of an interpreter whom they insult. In Emery's 'Paganini' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:256-7) a pitman and his 'neighbours se canny' demonstrate their lack of sophistication and their boorishness. In Nunn's 'Sandgate Wife's Nurse Song' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:243-4) a wife is devoted to her 'canny' keelman husband, but she acknowledges that 'his black fyesce' is 'like the de'il', and that he threatens her with a knife when he is drunk. The 'canny' keel lad who calls a girl his 'jewel and his hinny' in Nunn's 'The Sandgate Lass on the Ropery Banks' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:246-7) is opposed as a potential husband by the parents of the girl, and there are hints that she may be pregnant.

Among the later writers, the keelman in Corvan's song, 'O, maw bonnie Nannie O' (1850:19), engages in reciprocal spouse-beating. Subsequently, the keelman describes how Nannie comes to coax him out of the pub, saying: 'It's then aw treat her wiv a drop, what a canny man, folks cry' ('O, maw bonnie Nannie O' 1850:19). This is a comic song, but clearly the audience is invited to see the irony of the word *canny*, just as in Nunn's 'Sandgate Wife's Nurse Song' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:243-4). Thus there are continuities from the early period onwards.

There are, nevertheless, some differences in the use of *canny* to describe the wives and sweethearts of pitmen and keelmen in comparison with their men. There is greater emphasis on the domestic from the outset. In 'The New Keel Row B'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:114) the keelmen refer to their 'canny wives' in terms of domestic virtue. In

Corvan's 'Asstrilly's Goold Fields' (1850s:Song Book 1, 18), a keelman says: 'Noo contented an' happy at heyme aw'll still be, / Wi' Bessie maw cannie bit bride'. The association between women and home is clear. However, the application of the word *canny* may still occur amid a context of humour and the 'ungenteel'. In Emery's 'Newcastle Beer Versus Spaw Water' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:304) the beer loving pitman, who has been introduced to spa water by some Quakers, says he

cramm'd some o' their drink into wor canny dyem,
But scarcely had she drunk this liquor so divine,
Till she began to bowk, and sair her jaws did twine.

('Newcastle Beer Versus Spaw' in Fordyce ed. 1842:304)

To 'bowk' is to belch or vomit (Heslop 1892:87). Clearly this 'canny' and homely woman is not to win salvation as easily as the Quakers might imagine. She is as 'ungenteel' as her husband.

Outside the communities of the pitmen and keelmen other 'canny' men are visible, but they too may be surrounded by ironies. Thus a lament for 'cannie aud Blind Willie' (William Purvis) is the refrain at each verse-end in 'Blind Willie's Death' by Nunn (in Fordyce ed. 1842:294). However, the initial announcement is made by 'drucken Bella', who tells the narrator: 'he's as deed as bacon' ('Blind Willie's Death' in Fordyce ed. 1842:294). This is not respectful language. It reminds us of the Gilchrist song, 'The Lamentation of Bold Archy and Blind Willie on the Death of Captain Starkey' (1824:16); in this piece Bold Archy says the old man "'hez fairly kicked the bucket', adding: 'My good shag hat ne mair aw'll wave his canny fyece to see"'. In both songs *canny* is used in contexts that treat the subject with incongruous levity. This is in line with the treatment of the town eccentrics as 'ornamentals', as the Gilchrist song puts it ('Lamentation' 1824:17). Even in death these 'canny' ornamentals remain the subject of comic humour.

Continuities can be seen in the early music-halls of the 1850s and 1860s. In Corvan's song, 'Deeth o' Billy Purvis' (1850s:Song Book 2, 12), the narrator makes use of a well known joke: 'aw wad beg, borrow, or steal to get a luck at aud Billy's backside, poor canny aud fellow'. The famous showman, Billy Purvis (no relation to William Purvis) used the invitation 'ye can get in by Billy's backside!' to direct people to enter the back door for his show (Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:414). Billy's own contribution to a tradition

of humour therefore leads to the joke being made within a genre of song that would be regarded as vulgar by some (see sections 3.3.3. and 6.5.1.). Thus even in death, the paying of the 'highest compliment', can occur far outside the conventions of respectful mourning.

In the music hall certain nuances may be detected which can be understood only in relation to the cultural perspective of the performer and audience. This may lie outside conventional notions of both 'middle-class' and labouring-class respectability. Again, in Corvan's 'Deeth o' Billy Purvis' (1850s:Song Book 1, 12), the narrator / character wistfully refers to his school days: 'we had ne humbuggin pollis then, nobbit canny aud watchmen, that yen might hev knocked doon wiv a pipe stopple'. It may be that the 'canny aud watchmen' are a symbol of freedom from the controlling influence of state regulation and respectability. Their virtue appears, after all, to be their ineffectiveness. We need to take this into account in considering Corvan's song, 'O, ha'e ye seen wor Jimmy' (1850s:Song Book 3, 21-3), where a drunken mother repeatedly refers to her son as 'canny':

He's the only son aw've hadden,
A mother's eys ti gladden,
An', marcy, he's a bad un,
O, maw canny Jim!

('ha'e ye seen wor Jimmy' 1850s:Song Book 3, 22)

The audience is clearly invited to take a multiple perspective. Jim is, from the outset, to be seen as a ridiculously loveable rogue, thus imbuing the word *canny* with subtle nuances of admirable non-respectability. This non-respectability is most evident in the lines in which his mother says, a 'good heart beats within him / For he knocks the pollis doon' ('ha'e ye seen wor Jimmy' 1850s:Song Book 3, 22). There is no doubt that this is intended to provoke laughter among an audience which may be caught between mistrust and respect for law and the 'humbuggin pollis' or *the police*. The 'pollis' is not 'canny' in these songs, and Ridley too ridicules the police in his piece, 'The Bobby Cure' (1973:20-23). In the case of Corvan's 'canny Jim', then, part of his appeal, his very *canniness*, may be precisely his symbolising a freedom from constraint, his non-respectability.

Labouring-class females in general can also be surrounded by ironies when they are described as 'canny'. In Emery's song 'The Fish-wives' Complaint' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:72) the fishwives apostrophise 'Sir Matt', asking him to tell the king 'what canny folks' they are. But fishwives are, of course, notorious for swearing; they already have powerful associations which might seem incongruous to the application of the word *canny*. In Corvan, despite the domestic associations of the 'canny' woman, there are also more humorously disreputable versions. For instance, in 'The Factory Lass or Pally Jones' (1850s:Song Book 1, 23), Pally sings: 'Oh! maw mother's sic a canny body her mouth hads three pennorth o' rum, / An' feyther likes his whisky toddy, but aw like beer begum'. The audience is aware that drinking, and certainly drinking among women, is frowned upon by some. They are aware of the Temperance movement, but this is music hall, where the strictures of 'middle-class' morality and even labouring-class respectability are laughed at. The ironies of calling the mother 'canny' are clear to the audience, but it is an irony that is celebrated.

Another side of the 'canny' woman which might not adhere to conventional concepts of respectability or 'goodness' is that of sexual activity or sexual suggestiveness. We have seen this already in Corvan's 'Lad's o' Tyneside' (1850s:Song Book 2, 16-17), in which the female narrator / character is referred to in the chorus as 'maw canny hinny', by 'bonny Tyne laddies' in whom she exults. This is reminiscent of Corvan's 'The Sandgate Lass' (1850s:Song Book 1, 22), in which the lass sings 'aw'se canny, coosy, an' sweet, / Hoo canny aw'd dee for a caud winter's neet'. In both songs the sexual suggestion is strong, and *canny* as adjective or adverb must be seen as broadly attributable but also subject to ironies. The lass in the latter song may be looking for a husband, but she, as performed by Corvan, is certainly advertising her wares. This is celebration of the risqué, and as such *canny* is in *dialogue* with concepts of propriety.

I now turn to a further consideration of Joe Wilson and his use of the word *canny* as part of character depiction. Before taking to the professional stage Wilson performed as an amateur in the early working men's clubs, which held concerts to counter the lure of the public house free-and-easies (Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xx). While Gregson and Huggins (1999:89) argue that the singer later tailored his material to audiences, allowing him to perform in venues that included the working men's clubs, mechanics' institutes and

music halls, there is no escaping the tone of labouring-class respectability which the songs in his c.1865 collection articulate. To some degree, he must have carried this influence into his music hall performances.

In Wilson's c.1865 edition, of the 88 songs contributing to the electronic corpus, overtly identified voices of pitmen and keelmen are featured only twice, and their wives and sweethearts not at all. The voices in this writer's songs emerge from the labouring-class community, but specific occupations are rarely mentioned. Of course, engineering had grown in prominence on Tyneside by Wilson's time (Hepple 1976:126-7). Also the keelmen as a community were disappearing (Griffiths 2005:xviii, Harker 1985b:75). However, the omission of specifically identified pitmen and keelmen from the songs, despite the existence of an established genre, seems significant. I contend that Wilson is uncomfortable with generic expectations regarding such songs, which frequently involve celebration of the non-respectable. Spence Watson (cited in Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xl) writes approvingly, that Wilson 'won his popularity without any condescension to the supposed foibles of his audience'. In addition, Allan (ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii) says that the singer dropped the 'burlesque' treatment of local subjects, which Corvan and earlier writers had emphasised. Wilson's response to the influence of labouring-class respectability is, of course, a personal one. However, he was undoubtedly popular. Thus his contribution to discourse within the labouring class, which so often emphasises the importance of home and community, is crucial.

Previous writers deploy the word *canny* in relation to character depiction in full awareness of what I have termed 'core' values, but the word is frequently immersed in irony and celebration of values that may breach conventions of respectability. Wilson, however, seeks to define, and narrow down the acceptable semantic boundaries of *canny*, perhaps even to appropriate it to the cause of labouring-class ideas of respectability. In fact, he attempts a definition of the word, and a phrase (or perhaps an idiom), *vary canny* 'very canny', in the song of that name. In relation to character type the phrase appears to encompass virtues of moderation or self-control. The initial definition that 'Joe', as first-person narrator offers, takes the example of a lass who is

not ower gud, or she's not te call bad,
She's just what we call "vary canny."

('Vary Canny' c.1865:66)

The phrase also bestows respect and respectability upon those who strive without achieving great things, those who rely on their 'awn humble noshins'; and thus the narrator subsequently tells himself: 'Ye manynit [sic] de owt like sum greet bleezin star, / But yor reet if ye de "vary canny"' ('Vary Canny' c.1865:67). Likewise community virtues are promoted in the song:

The man that 'ill just lend a kind helpin hand
Te ease sum poor fellow's distresses,
Is a real canny chep that the world 'ill respect ...

('Vary Canny' c.1865:67)

Here the communal and solidary aspects of the word itself are indisputable, having a clear provenance in the lives of working people, and in labouring-class respectability. This notion of proper behaviour can encompass sociable drinking. The narrator tells the 'sooth-country fellow', to whom he is speaking, that he would think him 'vary canny' if he invited him for a 'gill' ('Vary Canny' c.1865:66-7). However, the word is also used euphemistically when the narrator says: 'But if wi' that gill ... aw show'd signs o' bein on the fuddle, / The foaks they wad say Joe's canny just noo ...' ('Vary Canny' c.1865:67). This is important. It acknowledges that drunkenness falls short of the most ideal behaviour, but the use of the word *canny* seems to indicate solidarity, tactfully ameliorating the fault. The whole song recognises striving, and accepts failings, the respectability of achieving a little and the right to get a little drunk. Nevertheless, I would argue that the domestic, the family, the respectable, and the avoidance of drunkenness begin to win through in the depiction of character in Wilson's early songs. Certainly in the piece, 'Canny Man!'^{*} (1890 1970 edn:180), the male in question is fond 'ov enjoymint', 'likes a joke', 'lens a helping hand te them he thinks 'ill need it', and, thinking of 'hyem ... minds the cumforts weel o' them that's roond aboot him' ('Canny Man!' 1890, 1970 edn.:180). There is, however, no mention of drinking at all in this song. The chorus drives home the point about the man Wilson is describing:

He's a canny man, canny man, he's a canny man, yis, a canny man,
Canny man, canny man, he's a canny man, yis he is!

('Canny Man!' 1890, 1970 edn.:180)

Thus conviviality and communal or domestic values are all part of the character of the 'canny man'. This is very different from the aggressive and spendthrift bruiser, Bob Cranky, who, according to Wales (2006:133), functions in exactly the same way as the word *canny* and, who as a type, Colls (1976:51) claims, is 'always a canny lad'. In fact, in Wilson's work, when characters display Cranky-like qualities or when the homely and communal values are in danger, then the word *canny* may be denied to them or in some way problematised. We see this in the song, 'Aw Wish Yor Fethur Wes Here', in which 'Aud Mary' demands of her son

"Are ye me canny lad?...
Aw's sure yor nowt like the syem,
For the fearful life ye lead's
Eneuff te brick yor muther's heart ...

(*'Aw Wish Yor Fethur Wes Here'* c.1865:11)

This rant could be viewed with humour: the old chastising the carefree young can easily amuse. However, for Wilson and his audience it also constitutes part of a debate about what or who is *canny*. Mary accuses her son of drunkenness, of failing to bring his wages home, and playing cards with 'fightin Jim'; and she asks: 'What is he, that myeks ye desart / Yor canny hyem for him?'. The cost of the spree to home and family is well known, as Joyce (1991:271) points out. Thus the audience is left in no doubt of the competing claims and responsibilities facing a working 'lad'. With the increased emphasis on labouring-class respectability, there is a sense that the domestic, responsible version of the 'canny' man is urged in Wilson's early songs, though the debate is not necessarily won (cf. Joyce 1991:271). Thus in 'Bob Hobson's Advice Tiv His Son – A Recitashun' (c. 1865:5-6) which, according to the editor Allan (1890, 1970 edn.:xxv), was written in 1860 before Wilson took to the music hall, there are ironies surrounding Bob. He is a 'pictor ov a gud aud sire, / That can give or tyek a joke', resembles a 'mortal wisdom croon'd', and winks 'slyly' at his son ('Bob Hobson's Advice' c.1865:5). So Bob has some waggishness about him, as he gives advice intended to ensure that the lad remains 'canny':

Maw canny lad, ye've noo arrived
At a wild unsartain age ...

(*'Bob Hobson's Advice'* c.1865:5)

Through his waggishness Bob avoids seeming to preach. Nevertheless, the advice is firmly rooted in notions of labouring-class decency or propriety, and includes urgings to save money, avoid debt, stick to friends, and to be 'careful, – if ye want te rise, / Be canny wi' the beer' ('Bob Hobson's Advice' c.1865:6). Being 'canny wi' the beer' probably has idiomatic qualities here (cf. *EDD*:in *canny adj., adv. and int. adj.*4., Griffiths 2005:27), and for Bob it is one facet of the 'canny' man. It is unambiguous, and contrasts with the euphemistic 'Joe's canny just noo', used in 'Vary Canny' (c.1865:67) to ameliorate the acknowledged though forgivable failing of being 'on the fuddle'. Similarly, while there is no condemnation in the song, 'Keep the Kettle Boilin!' (c.1865:94-5), of 'canny foaks' who 'injoy a spree', the first-person narrator is firmly on the side of moderation, of putting home and family first: enjoying a 'pipe' and a 'gill' he never means to 'run a bill / Te stop the kettle boilin!'. The resemblance to the character type seen in 'Canny Man!'"* (1890, 1970 edn.:180) is unmistakable.

Orientation towards the domestic, as we have seen, could be an important aspect of the 'canny' woman from the outset. However, in Wilson's work it becomes a vital part of the semantic. In 'Aud Nelly's Advice Tiv Her Dowtor! A Recitashun', the demands placed upon women are quite clear:

Attend yor hoosehold duties wi' heart byeth leet an' cheerful,
An' let yor gud man's cumforts be yor studdy a' throo life, ...
Thor's nowt te man so cheerin as a true an' canny wife!

('Aud Nelly's Advice' c.1865:21)

This is, of course, ventriloquism emphasising male demands and, as Allan (ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxiv) notes, it was written in 1860 prior to Wilson's music hall career. Nevertheless, in Wilson's pieces more widely there is a view, as in 'The Draper's Appeal' (c.1865:19), that the place of a respectable married woman is at home sitting 'cannily' beside her husband. This song is comic, but the image is an important one. Hence in 'Aw Wish Ye Happy New Eer', the setting being a party at home, we have the following scene:

The aud man tyeks a quiet draw,
Beside his canny mate ...

('Happy New Eer' c.1865:65)

For Wilson the juxtaposition of the old family man smoking his pipe next to his wife is no idly contrived image. In 'Thor's Cumfort Iv A Smoke' (c.1865:58) the narrator says that the 'emblim o' domestic peace / Is a quiet frindly draw!'. The image at the New Year celebration is therefore a quintessentially domestic one, and the 'canny' wife is quintessentially domestic.

It is no surprise to find that in Wilson's early work women, like men, are encouraged either to drink in moderation, or not to drink at all. In 'Bonny Sally Wheatley' (c.1865:7) it seems that there is some comic irony in the love-struck narrator's praise of Sally's moderation – this after he states that she 'cud toss a pot o' whisky ower sweetly'. Certainly this behaviour contrasts with the prerequisites set out for being a 'canny wife' by Nelly in 'Aud Nelly's Advice Tiv Her Dowtor!'. The old woman says to the girl 'dinnit gan a drinkin, / A drunken wife's the plague o' life ...' ('Aud Nelly's Advice' c.1865:21). This is not the final word on the subject, but it does strongly indicate an increasingly important view. Nelly's 'canny wife' certainly should not be able to hold 'three pennorth o' rum' in her mouth, as can the 'canny' mother in Corvan's 'Factory Lass' (1850s:Song Book 1, 23).

There are also shifts in the application of *canny* to women who are courting. Nelly tells her daughter 'Cawshus i' yor luv affairs, yor shoor te fettle canny' ('Aud Nelly's Advice' c.1865:20). Here the word is an adverb meaning 'favourably'. The true 'canny lass' is indeed likely to display caution. So in 'Mally Dunn' (c.1865:44) the first-person narrator accosts Mally, offering gifts and calling her 'maw canny luckin lass'; but he is told that a stranger shall 'nivor buy, wi' paltry toys / Me fancy at the Fair!'. This is certainly not the exuberant, sexual suggestiveness which we have seen in Corvan's 'canny' lasses. Rather, Wilson emphasises the pleasures of courting with a view to marriage, as in 'She's Gyen te Place at Jarrow':

A lad wes nivor myed te be withoot a lass,
 Or a canny lass te be withoot a lad!
 The sweetest time o' life's when yor luckin for a wife ...
 ('She's Gyen te Place at Jarrow c.1865:59)

The respectable trajectory is marriage, and while there is no overt condemnation of Meggy in 'The Gallowgate Lad!' (c.1865:9-10), whom 'Joe' refers to as 'canny lass', the audience, suspecting she is pregnant, is invited to judge her.

We see in Wilson's material the influence of ideas of respectability, an emphasis on the domestic, the family, communal values, moderation with alcohol, and caution in love. All of these contribute to a sense of the respectable and approved character traits of the 'canny' individual. I have used Wilson's c.1865 edition of songs in the electronic corpus, and most of the discussion of his work has referred to these pieces. However, changes do occur later. Whatever Wilson's relationship with alcohol during his early career, he appears to have developed a problem with it when he subsequently became a singing pub landlord (Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxvii). As a result he turned teetotal and increasingly wrote temperance songs. Whether such pieces would appeal in the music halls is questionable, but Wilson certainly performed them at other venues such as school rooms (Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxix). In these particular songs the application of the word *canny* is far more circumscribed. Thus in 'A Drunken Man!'^{*} the domestic associations of the word and the application of it to the drunk are held to be incompatible:

He'll tell ye that he's canny an' croose,
Wiv a cumley wife an' a forst-rate hoose, ...
But ye munnit believe a drunken man!

(*'A Drunken Man!'* c.1890, 1970 edn.:402)

At this point in Wilson's career, the word *canny* is denied to the drunk altogether. For those who share his views, this denial might seem appropriate. This new rigidity in attitude, however, represents only one position within the wider range of concepts of labouring-class respectability. There is no doubt that Wilson had also articulated a particular version of the 'canny' individual to which the music hall audience was willing to give ear. This emerged from other less stringent characterisations of respectability.

The application by Wilson of the word *canny* to individuals is, in the main, strikingly similar to those meanings emphasised by the dictionary writers, Brockett (1825:37) and Heslop (1892:130). Wilson and these men clearly envisage a set of 'core' values attached to the word on Tyneside, many of which coincide with notions of respectability, and virtues perceived to promote domestic or communal harmony. In fact, writers and

audiences are aware of these values from the start of the century. However, while there had from the outset been strongly domestic and communal characters in song, *canny* had frequently been applied with irony to far less respectable individuals, sometimes in an exuberant and celebratory manner. In Wilson's work that irony falls away, as he celebrates and extols characteristics associated with a tamed, communal, and domesticated version of the 'canny' Tynesider.

5.4. Summary

Throughout this chapter, written from a more literary perspective, we have seen the link between language and character in performance. Within these contexts it is clear that 'the building of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings', to use Bucholtz and Hall's (2005:594) expression, is an active, ongoing process, involving generic expectation, response to wider socio-cultural developments, and *dialogue* with other cultural and linguistic forms.

While I have focused on the treatment of labouring-class groups, particularly the pitmen and keelmen, this has been in part to emphasise that the songs cannot be regarded as inherently or uniformly emblematic vehicles of solidarity, whether at the level of socio-demographic categories, such as region or class, or smaller categories such as community. Instead, particularly in the case of the early writers, my analysis shows that social, cultural and linguistic contrasts can be detected in the songs, at the levels of character and theme, and that audience reception is crucial in determining meaning. Meaning is multiple and variable and depends upon performance context.

Pitmen and keelmen are iconic figures and, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, among a range of voice types they are most closely associated with the Tyneside dialect in both the early and later time periods (see sections 4.2. and 4.3.). However, the specific associations of the dialect, as it relates *indexically* to pitmen and keelmen in performance, move only erratically away from the bragging, illiterate, drunken brawlers, who are satirised or celebrated according to audience response, towards more domesticated, family and community orientated figures. In the later period, as contrasts in voice types reduce, so they all become more emphatically labouring-class (see sections 4.2. and 4.3.), but they remain poised between the respectable and non-respectable. The domestic and communal orientation and its association with the dialect is taken further by Wilson, as he divests his material of overtly identified pitmen and keelmen.

The material analysed here shows that in Tyneside dialect song the social and cultural meaning of language, as it relates to character, is subject to variation and development at several levels. This can be said, for instance, of the social meaning of the local speech generally. As we have seen, malapropism may emphasise the stupidity of characters

using the dialect but, especially in the music hall, it also allows celebration of the 'knowingness' of dialect speaking audiences. The words *hinny* and *canny* have perceived 'core' domestic and communal functions or connotations, but are also frequently surrounded by ironies, which fall away significantly only in the work of Joe Wilson. It must be stressed that shifts in meaning are not decisive or emphatic, but it is essential that such linguistic and thematic processes are recognised. Because of the prominent function of this form of entertainment and its tendency towards reiteration, processes involving the creation of meaning may influence meaning in the outside world. This could also have implications for the humorous potential of the dialect, as seen in the section on malapropism.

At one level the meanings of Tyneside dialect song might actually foster social division, particularly in the early period. However, it is also the case that perhaps *all* of the material has the *potential* to promote a sense of regional or Tyneside linguistic identity, local pride, and social solidarity. In some pieces, especially those specifically praising 'canny Newcassel', the potential is obvious. However, we have seen how meanings in song are unstable. Changes in performance context might also result in a piece *gaining* locally patriotic connotations, especially where that work contains Tyneside dialect. These processes of change are among the most important issues considered in the final chapter, which deals with Tyneside dialect songs and the fostering of local linguistic identity.

Chapter Six

Tyneside Dialect Song and Local Identity

6.1. Introduction

Noo a' ye lads that's Tyneside born, just cock yor lugs an' lissen,
Aw'll gie yor canny toon a turn, an' myek yor goggles glissen ...
(‘Tyneside Lads for Me’ in Wilson c.1865:51)

The music hall performer, Joe Wilson, has captured something important in this pair of lines. He draws a link between singing his Tyneside dialect song and an overt dewy-eyed local patriotism experienced by the audience. In the chorus of another piece, ‘Aw’ll Sing Ye a Tyneside Sang’* (1890, 1970 edn.:141), he says that it gladdens his heart to ‘sing or hear a lokil sang’. My focus in this chapter is again upon audience reception of songs. Clearly, within the two pieces by Wilson the dialect itself is represented as having powerful effects, stirring shamelessly sentimental feelings of local loyalty. I wish to argue that *all* of the non-standard dialect songs with which I am dealing have the *potential* to function in a manner which fosters strong feelings of local linguistic identity: however, this function is not an automatic one, and we should not focus upon that potential to enhance local solidarity to the exclusion of other sometimes antagonistic cultural and social identities experienced by audiences.

Linguistic identity at local level is an aspect of *indexicality* – a concept that has been explored in Chapter Five in relation to character and representation of group behaviour below the level of locality. In fact, we should remember that linguists often claim that identity is multiple and emerges in individuals below the level of large-scale socio-demographic categories such as class, region, or locality (cf. Mendoza-Denton 2002:490, Eckert 2005:16-17, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:175, 181). Social historians have come to similar conclusions regarding this multiple quality of identity and its operation at the level of the individual (Joyce 1995:82, Bailey 1998:5, 9).

There is a risk, seen in the previous chapter, that in applying ideas about linguistic identity to Tyneside dialect song and dialect literature in general, scholars have focused

too heavily upon group identity at the relatively large scales of the 'working class', or locality and region (see section 5.2.1.). A focus on local Tyneside identity or north-east regional belonging can be particularly attractive given the widespread recognition of a modern 'Geordie' identity and dialect (cf. Beal 1999:33-48, Colls and Lancaster 1992:ix-xvi, Joyce 1991:283). It is my contention, explained in Chapter One (see section 1.2.2.), that the use of the term 'Geordie' to describe identity on nineteenth-century Tyneside is anachronistic, and carries a risk that scholars ignore social distinctions within the area and within its labouring class. As we shall see, this discussion does not seek to deny the strong local allegiance which can be manifest in the songs. The Wilson pieces referred to at the start of this section clearly declare their power to foster such allegiance. However, it will become apparent that this local loyalty is expressed towards Tyneside and Newcastle – not in terms of 'Geordieness'.

We need to accept that identities of individual audience members (or readers) are multiple, overlapping and sometimes antagonistic. While these identities may, as we shall see, result in hostility to others (particularly Londoners) outside the locality, individuals may also experience antagonism towards certain people and groups *within* Tyneside. Nevertheless, certain socio-demographic categories such as regional or local belonging can be extremely powerful. Anderson's concept of the Imagined Community is helpful here. Although his focus is on national identity, Anderson (1991:6; cf. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:4-5) maintains that 'all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined'. The crucial point for this author is that people who have never met each other can come to feel an intense shared sense of communal belonging (Anderson 1991:6-7). His concept has proved popular in that it permits scholars to consider the ways in which consciousness of communities at various levels, including the local or regional, might be constructed. Indeed it has been used by Colls and Lancaster (1992:xii) to describe the building of 'Geordie' identity, and also by Russell (2004:8, 127) in describing northern identities.

Anderson (1991:44), of course, emphasises the role of print languages in the imagining of national identities (see section 1.4.1.). Crucially, for purposes of this thesis, Russell (2004:127, 2007:280), while recognising that the 'representations that allow communities to be imagined and loyalties forged can come from literally any cultural form', also

identifies dialect writing as an important internal source for the building of loyalty in sub-regions of the North. The model can certainly be applied to Tyneside dialect song, but it needs to be done with some circumspection and qualification. It is important to acknowledge some of the other social and cultural loyalties or antagonisms which audiences are invited to 'imagine' within Tyneside through the songs. Only after such an assessment, which I shall conduct shortly, should we talk of broad concepts of local identity in the material.

It may be, in addition, that in considering the manner in which a sense of local identity is brought to the fore or enhanced in song, whether in print or performance, a range of processes needs to be taken into account. These will include the following:

- Specific discourses that identify the locality, its songs, and the dialect used in the delivery of those pieces.
- Locally patriotic statements in the material.
- Specific solidarity devices, with particular words functioning in ways relating to individual performance settings or contexts, but having the potential to enhance solidarity in new contexts or environments.
- A process of change and emergence in the meaning of songs, arising from the delivery of pieces in new environments or media.

I will consider discourses which create an idea of Tyneside literature itself, and indeed processes involved in the creation of a local literary canon, along with a belief in its very 'Tynesideness'. Expressions of local loyalty must, of course, foster such allegiance. As suggested by the extract from the Wilson song, 'Tyneside Lads for Me', given above, the iconic word *canny* has a special function in describing Newcastle or the 'Toon'. This needs to be explored further in relation to its ability to express local loyalty. However, the Wilson piece also indicates the importance in song of addressing the audience, in this case by the use of the plural *lads*. I will show that *canny*, *hinny / hinnie*, *lads* and *lasses*, when addressed to the audience may call forth loyalties below the level of the local. We need to understand how such identities operate and the manner in which they might be transformed. In the case of *lads* and *lasses*, therefore, the discussion will facilitate a wider

analysis of 'The Blaydon Races'. My aim is to shed light on the manner in which meaning can emerge in a range of venues, and, in this extreme case, transform a relatively unimportant music hall song of the 1860s into the current anthem of Tyneside. I will show that the words *lads* and *lasses* have particular resonances in the area, and may have functions which operate to enhance solidarity in specific performance settings, but which also shift across time. In the investigation of specific words my electronic corpus is again subjected to analysis using *Oxford WordSmith Tools*.

Scholars place great emphasis on the ability of Tyneside songs to enhance local or regional solidarity. This, however, needs to be qualified. A reminder of the contemporary discourses operating around, and within, the material is therefore instructive. Thus before discussion of the very real potential of songs to foster local identity, my starting point is an analysis which gives much attention to local antagonisms and disunity.

6.2. Identities and the Audience

6.2.1. Social Difference and Antagonism

It was seen in Chapters Four and Five that within the songs of my electronic corpus pitmen and keelmen are represented as the heaviest users of the Tyneside dialect, and are differentiated both linguistically and culturally from other voices, especially those of other males. These points are particularly the case among the earlier writers, even where third-person narrators, for instance, are represented using non-standard dialect. This brings to mind what Fowler (1996:188; cf. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:181, 248) calls contrasting 'world-views', suggested in the genre of the Standard English (StE) novel through differences between characters who speak non-standard dialect on the one hand, and the 'Standard English framing narrative', or voices of 'cultivated, educated, characters' on the other. To this we must add that the reader may be able to perceive such contrasting viewpoints, and at least appreciate the outlook of the 'cultivated' and 'educated' StE voices. In the case of the early Tyneside dialect songs in my corpus, whether in print or performance, linguistic differences between voice types are indisputable and would involve style shifting even within single songs. It may be that this included shifts by performers in terms of accent so as to further enhance those contrasts in speech and outlook. Satirical as these early songs frequently are, it is possible that both the primary audience (of clerks, shopkeepers and artisans) and the performer have 'world-views' somewhat different to those of pitmen and keelmen, either in reality or as depicted in song. In other words, their identities differ at a level below that of locality, related to differences in social standing or cultural perception.

This is not to say that local people, be they clerks, shopkeepers, keelmen or pitmen, are unaware of the importance of the coal-trade and its centrality to local or regional identity. Songs were composed in praise at the opening of collieries. Most telling, however, is the piece, 'The Coal Trade'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:146-8), which states that the nation is duty bound to 'prize those who work under ground'. Likewise, in this text there is a sense of a community of interest, which relies on pitmen, keelmen, sailors, and owners. The wealth

of the nation and the locality depends upon these men, although the labouring classes are elevated most particularly. Thus discourses of a community of interest circulate within popular culture and I will return to this point shortly. There is also no doubt that songs collected from pitmen and the poor by editors such as Bell (1812) and Ritson (1793, 1810 edn.) could be popular among all classes. Nevertheless, it is legitimate to maintain that the pieces within my electronic corpus, upon which I focus, draw attention frequently to both linguistic and cultural distinctions at levels below the local. These pieces are among the most popular in the locality, and, as we will see, play a central role in the construction of the very concept of 'Tyneside song' – a canon (see sections 6.3.1. and 2.2.2.).

In the case also of the music hall songs of the 1850s and 1860s, identification might be at a level that appears to conflict with over-arching local solidarity. In fact, Corvan in particular seems at times to offer an antagonistic identification for himself and the audience with something approaching social class, even though this concept may be problematic (cf. Joyce 1991:267, 1995:82). This is particularly the case in the song 'Sweating System':

Working men are still opprest,
 For they're made slaves at the best,
 But still they've got true British hearts, and what's reet lads they hae'd;
 Sweating system we'll put doon,
 We'll make cheap maisters frown,
 They've robbed the working man of all his poor bit daily bread:
 It's plain to see, what Burns has said, which ever way ye turn,
 "Man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thousands mourn ... " ...
('Sweating System' 1850:21)

Joyce (1991:266-7, 336) has argued that what he terms 'consciousness of class' is an anachronistic concept as applied to the nineteenth century, and that dialect literature of the later century instead represents 'the expression of fragments of a class coming together'. He places town and regional consciousness as prior to class and locates them among these fragments (1991:336). Joyce (1995:82; cf. Bailey 1998:4-5) has subsequently concluded that social class as a stable defining category is highly problematic; identities are instead discursive constructs that are multiple, pressing in and reacting with one another. This is a view with which Bailey (1998:4-5) largely agrees; he nevertheless argues that in the nineteenth century the mark of class 'sticks like a burr ...

and remains among the more potent vectors of difference, however indeterminate'. Corvan's song certainly declares its identification with the 'working man'. We cannot know exactly how he conceptualised this figure. Nevertheless in his song, 'Snooks the Artist', the concern aroused over the Day of Humiliation is at the loss of wages by 'workin' men' and 'poor folks ... throughout the nation'. This reference suggests a national consciousness regarding labouring people, which transcends regional or local division. Returning to the song, 'Sweating System', this is evidence for an antagonism towards the masters and the employment practice known as 'sweating'. It offers a sense of a wider humanity through the reference to Burns who, Janowitz (1998:72, 141) says, came to be toasted as the 'patron saint and martyr' of the communitarian or collective poetic tradition in the nineteenth century, and who was claimed by the Chartists, in spirit at least, as one of their own. There are echoes of the sentiments expressed in 'Sweating System', in Corvan's StE song, 'Perils of the Mine, or the Collier's Death'* (1850s:Song Book 4, 10), in which the miner is the 'slave' of the 'wealthy'. We are told of the pitmen: 'There's nought left but slaving, their wages are poor' ('Perils of the Mine' 1850s:Song Book 4, 10). Corvan, in his songs, insistently identifies with working men. Thus in 'Work for 1,000 Men' (1850s:Song Book 4, 12), the chorus includes the lines 'when poverty besets us, employ us ye who can, / For want should niver be the lot of an honest workin man'. Ridley too overtly identifies with labouring people in this manner, and is capable of suggesting the injustices that working men face. In his song, 'Chambers' (1973:42), which is undoubtedly locally patriotic, he says of the famous Tyneside oarsman, that he 'waddant de an unjust thing / To hurt poor working men'. Likewise, in the song 'Bullerwell and Summer's Race' (1973:30), more patriotic towards the village of Blaydon, the narrator wishes 'success ti thi workin' man', hoping that he may 'niver want a frind'.

My purpose is not to engage in a dispute as to the existence or otherwise of genuine cross-local or national class-consciousness in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, I have highlighted this identification with working people because it is so overt in some of the later songs. In fact, in Corvan's work the identification can result in antagonism towards employers. As a result, in our interpretations we need to guard against over-emphasising a local patriotism in the songs or in wider Tyneside society, which subsumes social antagonisms and divisions (see also sections 1.2.2., 1.5.3. and 5.2.1). There is, for

instance, a modern scholarly discourse, articulated most clearly by Lancaster (1992:66), that sees Newcastle as facilitating a 'dominance of regional over class identity'. From the nineteenth century in the city, he argues, there is a sense of collective belonging, to which dialect contributes (Lancaster 2001:332-3; cf. Colls 1992:22-23). Lancaster (2007:38) now appears to have shifted his position to accept the 'differential' in perceptions that can exist among people regarding space, culture and everyday life within the same region. Nevertheless he maintains that the 'popularisation of dialect' in the North-East in the Victorian era, through 'middle-class' antiquarianism and 'working-class' song, represents a period of convergence in regional self-consciousness (Lancaster 2007:30, 38). Lancaster's earlier ideas have influenced Beal (2000:353-4, 2005) who emphasises the cross-class 'Geordie' identity and solidarity promoted in much Tyneside dialect writing. Joyce (1991:269, 329-331) also discusses an emphasis in dialect literature generally on populist rather than class ideologies, a popular radicalism based on the idea of northern England as the heart of a crusade against privilege, which emphasises the worth of 'decent folk'. For Joyce (1991:292), in Tyneside song, the greatness of the Tyne is associated with the greatness of its firms. More generally in popular culture he believes that the town and the firm or the industry is a 'community of interest':

Such communities of interest involved employers as well, non-conflictual notions of capital and labour – drawn from many sources – being uppermost.

(Joyce 1991:313)

While making similar points to Joyce, Colls (1992:22-3), referring to north-east culture, identity, and dialect writing, argues that although Trade is presented as a 'community of interests', this ideology is initiated by the 'workers', and others are merely invited to share it. However, even this is not a sufficiently cautious description of popular discourses. Certainly, songs do express pride in local employers and their ventures. Nevertheless, Corvan's songs often insistently stress the plight of labouring people, the working man, in opposition to the owners or masters. My purpose is not to deny that the local or regional is crucial in the songs – it certainly is – but, at a level that challenges interpretations which claim that local unity subsumes social division, the emphasis can be on identification with working people and on condemning those within the area who employ them (cf. Vicinus 1974:208).

Although something approaching class loyalty or antagonism in song appears at times to undermine notions of populist local solidarity, we need to avoid the assumption that labouring-class identity provides a bedrock of meaning. Divisions may be perceived within the ranks of the working community itself. This is evident in the music halls of the 1850s and 1860s in which the audience is derived primarily from sections of the labouring class. It is crucial to understand that these settings offered a particular type of entertainment which had vocal opponents. Kift (1996:177) claims that the venues were one of the most controversial institutions of English 'working-class culture'. Early halls were attended by groups who knew each other from work, or who had the same acquaintances, to eat, drink, chat and be entertained by performers with whom they might be on speaking terms (Kift 1996:72, Russell 1997:99). Social reformers were particularly disturbed by alcohol consumption. Russell (1997:25, cf. Kift 1996:177) points out that by the 1840s complaints against the public house singing room or concert room had become a commonplace of investigative literature, and that a dominant theme up to the end of the century was the need to curb these places, the music halls that grew from them, and the drinks industry in general.

Kift (1996:176-7) argues that, while the halls upset 'middle-class' values, opposition to the venues crossed class lines. In Newcastle, as elsewhere, anxieties were expressed about the halls and the consumption of alcohol within them. The anonymous writer of the song 'Music Hall'* (in Fordyce ed. 1842:277) refuses even to describe the 'Bacchanalians' who frequent such venues. He does, however, mention that the profit-driven owner opens his doors to meetings of the opponents of drinking (perhaps the Teetotallers), 'Who'd keep us dry, and thus decry / All liquors in the nation' ('Music Hall' in Fordyce ed. 1842:277). It seems that the venue itself is held to be immoral. In 1854, the Newcastle Temperance Society (cited in Colls 1977:153) condemned casinos and music saloons on the grounds that 'they blend the fascinations of music, with the meretricious decorations of artistic skill, and the pernicious influences of intoxicating liquor'; and, it added, even the decor was 'calculated to deprave the taste, to intoxicate the senses, and stimulate the passions'.

The class provenance of such comments is difficult to ascertain. However, as seen already in the thesis (see sections 1.3.2. and 1.6.2.), in the nineteenth century much of the

effort in the North-East to impose more rigid codes of morality and improvement emerged from within the labouring class itself (Colls 1987:200). Colls (1977:58, 77) argues that social reformers, or 'Cultural Revolutionaries' in the area, were primarily Methodist (Wesleyan and Primitive); he adds that the Primitives, who were strongly 'working class', became the major 'persecutors' of the Bob Cranky type, and effectively split colliery communities in two. The Temperance Movement also known as Teetotallers, set up in the 1830s, was also important, and drew most of its support from the 'working classes' (cf. Kift 1996:84, 176, Colls 1977:153). Teetotalism and Primitive Methodism were closely linked in the North-East (Colls 1987:151, 158). Along with non-conformists, the Methodists were offering an 'alternative culture' opposed to 'popular culture', by forging standards of what became known as 'respectability' (Colls 1977:73, 135).

For the music hall audience the Primitives, known as Ranters (*OED*:in *ranter*, *n.* 2.b.), and the Teetotallers, represent an attack on a popular culture based on entertainment and alcohol. The important point here is that many in the music hall audience could perceive themselves to have an identity that was separate from these 'Cultural Revolutionaries', or at least distanced from them. It is only when we look *below* the level of large-scale socio-demographic categories (of locality, region or social class) that we see these social and cultural divisions *among* labouring people.

To date there has been very little scholarly consideration of those Tyneside songs that overtly acknowledge or oppose the Methodist, Temperance and Teetotal movements, or another group which could be added to the list, the Quakers. Colls (1977:103), however, does point out that in song the 'chapel respectables', as he calls them, 'are quite frequently the subject of spite'. Thus, among other songs, he notices a piece from 1844, 'Fish Betty's Account of herself'* (cited in Colls 1977:103), in which chapel-goers are 'nasty stinking varmint'.

Even before this, however, and well in advance of the early music hall period of the 1850s and 1860s, John Shield, in the StE song, 'Oxygen Gas'* (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.66), refers to 'Quakers, and Methodist parsons' in whom 'dormant the risible faculty lies'. Likewise, Emery, in 'Newcastle Beer Versus Spaw Water; Or, The Pitman and the

Temperance Society', reveals the topical nature of campaigns against alcohol. Unsurprisingly, the pitman narrator having tried spa water comes out in favour of beer: 'Let Quakers gan to heav'n, an' fill their kites wi' Spaw, / Give me Newcassel Beer, content aw'll stay below' ('Newcastle Beer Versus Spaw' in Fordyce ed. 1842:304). In this song the Temperance Society is associated with Quakers, well known opponents of popular culture (cf Allen 2004:112-13). The miner in another Emery song, 'The Pitman's Ramble' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:288), intent on revelry, makes an ironic allusion to Methodism when he declares that 'Us Ranters' will 'bang Brunswick [Methodist] Chapel'. As noted, the Primitives were known as 'Ranters', but the word as a singular could also designate a 'noisy, riotous, dissolute person ... a rake' (*OED:n.* 3.a.). Likewise, a *rant* could be both a 'riotous scene or occasion ... a spree', and also a 'lively, noisy ... tune' (*OED:n.* 2). Here, then, the revelry of the 'spree' may be set up against Methodism.

While Emery and Shield are among those early writers who could satirise the pitmen, the music hall performer, Corvan, who is far more closely aligned with the industrial labouring classes, has no difficulty in expressing an antagonism toward those, religious or otherwise, who oppose drinking. In his song, 'The Happy Keelman' (1850:12), he has to assume that many in his audience will have some sympathy with the narrator's hatred of 'teetotaler bodies / That runs doon guid whisky and yell'. Inevitably there is identification with those who enjoy the pleasures of the music hall and public house, with their 'yell' *ale* and whisky. Thus the keelman often goes to 'hear the fine singing, / And hev a good gill at the Shades' ('Happy Keelman' 1850:12). In numerous other songs we see this conflict, which involves the identification of performer and audience with group behaviour that might be termed 'non-respectable' in comparison to religion-orientated respectability and Teetotalism. In Robson's 'The Use and the Abuse; Or, The Pitman and the Preachers' (in Robson ed. c.1849:109-110), the pitman narrator rails against the 'TEETO'LEERS' and the 'ranterfied preest', who are opponents of the music hall and of drinking. It is true that this is not the whole story: the pitman rejects those who, like 'pigs ... / Gan gruntin' an' guzzlin' for iver' ('Use and Abuse' in Robson ed. c.1849:110). In addition, the keelman in Robson's 'Bob Stacker's Secret' (in Robson ed. c.1849:212-13) turns Teetotal. However, the strain of complaint against Ranters and Teetotallers is too clear and consistent to be ignored. In Corvan's piece, 'Billy Purvis Turned Ranter Preacher' (1850:5-6), the prospect

of the religious conversion of the Tyneside entertainer suggested in the title is viewed with mock indignation. Likewise, in 'The Shades Saloon' (1850:14-15) the narrator says he 'winna jaw nor preach a sarmin, / Nor freetin' folks wiv ought alarmin", before praising the concert room of the title.

In the Wilson songs there is a playing out of identities across a spectrum of respectability. Some voices condemn preaching, though it is left to the audience to decide whether it agrees with such criticism. Thus the eponymous speaker in 'Jimmy Jonsin the Barber' (c.1865:79; cf. Newgate Street c.1865:56) says he was 'doon at the Consart last neet, an' the singin wes a' that a fellow cud want; – / What a shem that the Madgistrates lets noisy Davis annoy a' the foaks wiv his rant'. Wilson performed in various settings, but in all of these venues, including the music hall, he would be in a position in which he needed to appeal to the identities of audiences. Nevertheless, he does have allegiances to the more 'respectable', as we have seen in Chapter Five (see section 5.3.3.), and this is clear in the contrasts between character types or personae in songs. He bestows approval on the domesticated, self-controlled figures represented in the pieces, 'Canny Man!'"* (1890, 1970 edn.:180) and 'Keep the Kettle Boilin'" (c.1865:94-5). It is no accident that in Wilson's c.1865 edition 'Keep the Kettle Boilin'" is followed immediately by 'Recknin' for the Pay!' (c.1865:96). In these printed versions Wilson intends a contrast between the family man of the former song, who never runs up a bill ('Keep the Kettle Boilin'" c.1865:94-5), and the spendthrift, who has lost track of his debts, has fathered an illegitimate child, and who celebrates pay day with the chorus: 'aw's sure te hev a spree, / Aw always myek't that way' ('Recknin' for the Pay!' c.1865:96). Wilson, whether in print or performance, presents his audience with identities they are welcome to enjoy, laugh at, judge or even reject. As has been stressed in the previous chapter, his stance in the music hall leans towards the more 'respectable', but it is a respectability that is conditional upon the audience's willingness to listen. It remains legitimate to insist that many in the music hall audience, however confident of their own decency, might feel considerable antagonism to those more closely orientated towards religious respectability or Teetotalism. Those frequenting the halls may share an identity by virtue of that activity, an identity under attack by others.

The evidence shows that, to adapt Anderson's (1991:6) concept, early and later writers frequently invite their audiences to *imagine divided communities*, whether conceptualised as primarily local, labouring-class, or both, in their ideological foundations. This involves addressing an audience's orientation to the world and its relationship with other groups; nevertheless, it is clear that the experience of audiences hearing non-standard songs and singing along to them may be part of the construction of their sense of local identity (cf. Eckert 2005:16-17; see also section 1.7.3. for discussion of the 'community of practice'). That sense of local belonging, however, will be channelled through particular cultural perspectives revealed, in part, within the performance context. Certain aspects of audience experience will weigh against a sense of local (or indeed labouring-class) loyalty that subsumes social differences and antagonisms. Given these points, we need to understand the various and sometimes ambiguous mechanisms by which local patriotism and solidarity might be fostered through song.

6.3. Print, Performance, and Identity

6.3.1. Canon, Language, and Place

Discourses of geographical identity are crucial in the construction of a sense of belonging to place. Groups and communities are imagined, existing only in people's minds (cf. Anderson 1991:6, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 2006:4). Of course, this makes their existence no less 'real' for those who perceive them, but it does alert us to the need to understand processes by which this 'reality' is created. In the case of Tyneside local identity, it is likely that one, among many other cultural activities contributing to these processes, is the performance and publication of local song and the creation of a canon of such material.

It may be, nevertheless, that during the nineteenth century, this process is paralleled by, and relies upon, discourses which construct the very idea of 'Tyneside song'. Indeed, this may be related to the building of concepts of the 'Tyneside dialect' itself. If groups or communities are imagined, and exist only in the minds of individuals, then it follows that, as Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (2006:4) observe, the linguistic attributes of groups or communities have 'no existential locus other than in the minds of individuals'. Furthermore, Johnstone et al. (2006:99) argue that 'dialect' and 'place' are 'cultural constructs' that 'shape each other in speakers' imaginations'. Thus, in their discussion of 'Pittsburghese', Johnstone et al. (2006:93-96) claim that dialect dictionaries and websites have established a perceived link between regional speech and local identity, a process which they refer to as 'enregistration'. They have found, in the case of 'Pittsburghese', that features which are actually more geographically widespread have become linked to the more specific and localised area of Pittsburgh (Johnstone et al. 2006:87, 93-6). Influenced by such arguments, Beal (2007) makes similar claims regarding music hall song, local dialect literature, and dialect dictionaries in nineteenth-century Tyneside, which she relates to the emergence of ideas of a geographically bounded 'Geordie' dialect. As noted in Chapter One, I do not use the term 'Geordie' in this thesis because it is not prominent in my electronic corpus and is largely anachronistic (see section 1.2.2.).

In contrast, as we shall see, authors and editors regularly refer to the locality and to a 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' dialect. However, the arguments put forward here do indicate that along with a notion of 'Tyneside song', the concept of a 'Tyneside dialect' may be emergent in the nineteenth century. Thus both issues need to be understood in relation to the fostering by song of local identity and the building of a local literary canon.

Discourses surrounding songs regarding their 'Tynesideness' might be transmitted orally, but written evidence suggests that such ideas are not fully developed in the early 1800s. The discourses, however, do increase rapidly as the century progresses. My contention is that, in the very early century at least, listening to a locally produced non-standard dialect song does not necessarily invoke a strong feeling of Tyneside identity. In print, on the other hand, the songs are highly likely to be associated with the locality, especially where pieces are overtly referred to as 'local', 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' songs, and where they appear in orthography that differs from StE, the national taught written system. This specific association is, of course, restricted to literate individuals, or to those to whom they might read.

Print and performance have a mutual influence. Meanings, as Bauman and Briggs (1990:76-8) note, alter according to changes in context, such as translation into print. This process helps in the development of a sense of tradition in 'Tyneside song', which applies in both written and oral contexts (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990:76-8, Bratton 1986:xii). Once individuals have a firm concept of 'Tyneside song', then any performance or reading of the material has the potential to confirm a sense of local identity.

One factor, therefore, which influences the perception that a specific category of 'Tyneside' or 'Newcastle' songs exists in the nineteenth century is the publication of collections of material specifically claiming to be representative of the locality, and flagging their allegiance. These include small chapbook collections by individual authors or small groups of authors, and large anthologies containing the works of a variety of local writers. Harker (1985a:3, 96-7) notes that broadsides and chapbooks had been central to labouring-class culture for centuries. However, there is a definite increase in production of printed dialect material during the nineteenth century. Songs are published

again and again, and the cumulative effect is to create a local canon of writers or works, an idea that is central to the construction of a belief in a tradition of 'Tyneside song'.

Several edited collections of material were produced in the eighteenth century but, as noted, many more large anthologies appeared throughout the nineteenth. Thus, collections from Yorkshire, Durham, a less specific 'North-Country', and Northumberland / Newcastle were produced by Ritson between 1784 and 1802. Large collections came from Bell in 1812, Marshall in 1827, Fordyce in 1842, Robson in c.1849, Bruce and Stokoe in 1882; and from the 1860s to the 1890s Allan produced six editions. Initially in collections, as we shall see, equal weight can be given on title pages to wider north-eastern counties alongside Newcastle or Tyneside, but gradually the emphasis falls ever more on the latter two ways of labelling the material.

While popular taste contributes to the creation of a canon, the process also involves selection, inclusion, and exclusion by editors, part of what Harker (1985a:xiii) calls 'mediation'. Harker (1972:iii, xxi-xxiii) accuses Allan, for example, of attempting to create a single tradition out of two separate streams of song, one emerging from the 'middle class' and the other from 'working communities'. While he acknowledges that the two streams were in any case closely related, Harker (1972:iii) is committed to maintaining this distinction on ideological grounds. My own findings in Chapters Four and Five have indicated that, between the early period and the time of the first music halls in the 1850s and 1860s, differences in attitude do indeed exist among prominent performers and their primary audiences. Early writers satirise pitmen and keelmen, while music hall writers are far more closely aligned with the industrial labouring classes.

Even before Allan began the work of selection which resulted in his large collection of 1891 (1972 edn.), however, the process of creating a concept of 'Tyneside song' and therefore a canon was well under way. Bell (ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:3), despite the use of the word 'northern' in the title of his book, and his inclusion of songs from the North-East in general, states his desire to 'rescue from the yawning jaws of oblivion the productions of The Bards of the Tyne; and by so doing, hand them down to future ages as Reliques of Provincial Poetry'. Already, too, there were commercial pressures at work in the construction of a Tyneside canon, and the production of new songs played a major part in

this. As early as 1806, Marshall (cited in Harker 1971:xli), in a chapbook of 'modern' songs, had promised those sending him new pieces free copies of subsequent booklets in which they appeared. Marshall's (cited in Harker 1971:xli) stated aim of giving 'every mute inglorious Milton' a 'local habitation and a name', is echoed in his large 1827 anthology:

In editing a more extended collection of local Songs, descriptive of the language and manners of the common People of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Neighbourhood, the Editor claims little merit beyond that of giving to what some will designate "airy nothings, a local habitation and a name".

(Marshall ed. 1827:i)

Marshall sees the commercial potential of creating 'local' Miltons, and of giving 'a local habitation', even fame, to songs and poems which some might dismiss as insignificant, or 'airy nothings'. Whatever the comments reveal about debates as to the worth of contemporary local song, Marshall's collection and earlier chapbooks are evidence that many locals did indeed value such pieces. Commercial publishers involved in the building of a Tyneside canon rely upon establishing an ever stronger relationship between songs, dialect, and 'a local habitation'. Identified Tyneside writers producing new material helped to strengthen that relationship. Thompson, Shield and Midford are, for instance, named on the title page of Marshall's 1827 volume. As the urban market for songs grows, their stated provenance on title pages becomes increasingly restricted to Tyneside. Thus, while wider north-eastern county labels carry as much weight as Newcastle on the title pages of Ritson (ed. 1893, 1810 edn.) and Bell (ed. 1812, 1971 edn.), among collections by most subsequent editors this tendency shifts. With the exception of the Bruce and Stokoe edition, *Northumbrian Minstrelsy*, editors including Marshall (1827), Fordyce (1842), Robson (c.1849), and Allan (1891, 1972 edn.), regardless of sometimes wider content, focus, in their title pages on Newcastle, Tyneside and the nearby surrounding area.

The emphasis on songs and their language belonging to Tyneside or Newcastle is not simply part of a 'middle-class' chauvinist tradition identified by Harker (1972:xiii, xvii, xxvi). Marshall (ed. 1827:i) suggests that chapbooks of local songs in the early century are read by the 'labouring classes'. Later, Corvan calls a small volume of his own work,

Random Rhymes, Being a Collection of Local Songs and Ballads, Illustrative of the Habits and Character of the "Sons of Coaly Tyne". Of course, there are differences between Corvan and his predecessors. The earlier writers and editors often draw attention on their title pages to both the local and satirical character of texts (Midford 1818, Marshall ed 1827, Fordyce ed. 1842). Corvan's own emphasis is on labouring people as the heirs and representatives of 'Coaly Tyne'. Harker (1972:xx-xxii) notes, with considerable disapproval, that editions of Allan's collection of local songs steadily grow over a thirty-year period, so as to include much material by earlier writers. The initial editions, however, dominated as they are by the works of Corvan and Ridley, are called 'Tyneside Songs'. Wilson's c.1865 collection of his own material is billed as comprising 'Tyneside Songs ... Drawn i' wor awn awd canny toon style'. These collections of the work of well known music hall performers were bought by labouring people, who were just as keen as earlier readers to see songs written in the 'Tyneside dialect'.

The discourses under present discussion may, as suggested already, contribute to and rely upon an emerging sense of the existence of a 'Newcastle' or 'Tyneside' dialect. We have seen that very early editors can give equal weight to Newcastle and wider north-eastern counties in describing collections of songs. It is noteworthy also that Brockett (1825) writes *A Glossary of North Country Words*. This dictionary is 'notable for its familiarity with Newcastle usage' (Griffiths 2001:363); nevertheless, the town is not as significant as region. On the other hand, as is the case with Midford's small collection (1818), title pages of anthologies edited by Marshall (1827), Fordyce (1842) and Robson (c.1849), proclaim the collections to be 'Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect'. Marshall's (ed. 1827) collection is also illustrative of the 'Language and Manners of the Common People on the Banks of the Tyne and Neighbourhood'. Also, the c.1865 collection of Wilson's songs is, as just seen, in the 'canny toon style'. In this way, combined with statements about the provenance of songs, the dialect itself is assigned a 'local habitation' (cf. Beal 2007). Newspaper articles too make reference to local speech. One article of 1862 (cited in Harker ed. 1973:6), for instance, refers to the 'genuine' Newcastle dialect. It is true, however, that Robson (ed. c.1849:v), despite the information on his title page, also refers in his preface to the Northumbrian dialect, as if the two are interchangeable. Heslop's (1892) dictionary is, of course, *Northumberland Words*, and on a map he merely

represents Tyneside as one of four dialect sub-divisions. Nevertheless, it does seem that in nineteenth-century popular culture there is an ever increasing discourse simply emphasising a 'Newcastle' or 'Tyneside' dialect (cf. Johnstone et al. 2006:87, 93-6, Beal 2007).

In Chapter Three it was seen that a range of non-standard spelling is common in my electronic corpus (see section 3.2.). While there is not necessarily a consistent approach to the non-standard orthography used, authors frequently work within known phonological contexts. Orthography can have great power to foster a sense of belonging and shared identity (cf. Jaffe 2000:503). Once readers are informed that songs are written in 'Newcastle' or 'Tyneside' dialect, or once they believe that such a tradition exists, these individuals come to identify the songs in those terms. When pieces are repeatedly published and thus divorced from their initial contexts, meanings may be altered, overlooked, diminished or lost altogether. The focus may thus turn ever more to their geographical associations. Pieces once viewed as satirical could lose those meanings and be cherished simply for their local provenance. All could be embraced as fine examples of local song, written in 'Newcastle' or 'Tyneside' orthography and sung in 'Tyneside dialect'. The construction of a unified Tyneside identity through song might become a process, in which orthography plays its part, of forgetting social division.

6.3.2. The Power of Performance

The interaction of written local songs and a consciousness of 'Tynesideness' in their performance is ongoing, and is in evidence at least from the start of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the existence of material in print is only part of the construction of identity. The music hall singers of the 1850s and 1860s, Corvan, Ridley and Wilson, were extremely popular, performing sometimes to audiences of thousands. Bourdieu (1991:223) stresses that the effectiveness of an utterance in regionalist discourse is directly proportional to the authority of the person making an assertion. Taking into account the popularity of the music hall performers, we might recall Coupland's (2006:26) suggestion that the cultural meanings of dialect styles are actively promulgated by what he calls *guardians of culture*, and that certain communicative events are

"pedagogic" environments for sociolinguistic learning and affirmation'. The early Tyneside writers and performers may have taught their audiences that pitmen and keelmen along with their speech were comic targets of satire. However, where special attention is drawn to the dialect used in performance as something to be cherished, or where locally patriotic discourse is particularly strong, Tyneside songs may have a specific function in fostering meanings of local linguistic identity. In this way music hall certainly could be called a 'pedagogic' setting for sociolinguistic 'affirmation'. In addition, the venues might be in competition with the more conventional tools and environments of teaching and learning: the written grammar or pronouncing dictionary, and the school. We have seen in Chapter One (see section 1.4.3.) that, in the nineteenth century, teachers were encouraged to eradicate 'regional modes of utterance' (Mugglestone 1997:311, cf. Vincent 1989:82). This must be understood, in the nineteenth century, as one aspect of a wider drive towards moral and social 'improvement'. Yet it is precisely such values which music hall often destabilises or sets aside. Kift (1996:176, cf. Bailey 1994:155, Gregson and Huggins 1999:91) argues that, in the music hall, instead of 'patronising instruction', labouring people were offered 'a positive confirmation of themselves and their way of life'. While we should not forget the frequently comic associations of the Tyneside dialect in these venues too, it seems that its use can be part of that 'positive confirmation'. In this respect Corvan's song, 'The Happy Keelman', is telling:

Now rich folks may slight a poor keelman,
 And say, ignorance myeks him a brute,
 But he mebbies knaws mair then they think on,
 Though little of grammar ne doubt ...

('The Happy Keelman' 1850:12)

Corvan is asserting a view that opposes the official line. Just because the keelman knows little of prescriptive modes of linguistic knowledge, this does not make him a 'brute'. He follows these lines with the statement that keelmen may be scoffed at by 'Great scholars and cockneys' ('Happy Keelman' 1850:12). Significantly, in another song, 'Wor Tyneside Champions'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:430), Corvan expresses a belief that the mockery by such Cockneys can be on linguistic grounds. In addition, we saw in Chapter One (see section 1.4.2.) that, in the nineteenth century, high prestige speech was popularly believed to emerge from the educated classes of London. Thus it is quite easy

to see that in the face of efforts at reform, and perceived slights from Londoners, the dialect in performance could be viewed as an assertion of group belonging, and of a locally patriotic linguistic identity.

In accepting the power of local linguistic attachment, however, we should always remember that the 'pedagogic' environment of music hall could draw attention equally to social distinctions within the locality. Songs might express hostility to other groups such as employers, or to the Primitive Methodists who, as Colls (1977:133, 1987:169-71) points out, could exploit local dialect in their preaching. The shared use of linguistic variants even among labouring-class Tynesiders does not automatically result in fraternity and a convergence of ideologies between them.

Meaning arises in Tyneside songs from what they actually say, and from discourses surrounding or arising from them. In this respect specific themes of strong local patriotism become all the more important in fully understanding the development of local identity in the material. It may be that some pieces, in their initial or early performance contexts, carry more local identification than others. They might, however, contribute to the construction or amplification in song generally of a sense of local pride.

6.3.3. Local Patriotism

There is a tradition within the material of praising Tyneside or Newcastle by name. Frequently, as already suggested, there is also a voicing of overt hostility to London. This is perhaps best represented in Thompson's well known song, 'Canny Newcassel', with its blunt anti-metropolitan chorus:

'Bout Lunnun then div'nt ye mak sic a rout,
 There's nouse there ma winkers to dazzle,
 For a' the fine things ye are gobbin about,
 We can marra iv canny Newcassel.

(*'Canny Newcassel'* in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314)

The specific function of the phrase *canny Newcastle* is dealt with shortly. However, this chorus reflects two aspects of identification. On the one hand, there is a sense of native, perhaps organic, belonging to the locality, and what the narrator calls his 'canny calf

yaird' ('Canny Newcassel' in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:316). In a characteristically sentimental style, Heslop (1892:125) says that the 'Northumberland man' (which here includes the Tynesider) always looks back with 'tender regard to his "*caff-yaird*," the dwelling-place of his infancy'. In contrast, another side of identity creates a sense of unity or bonding on Tyneside through hostility towards the politically, culturally and economically dominant capital. In practice these aspects of belonging are intimately related. Thus, in the Thompson song the discourse is clear: Londoners may brag of their 'fine things', but the blunt and proud Tynesider is confident that Newcastle can 'marra' *equal* or, in fact better, whatever the metropolis has to offer.

Sport is frequently bound up with a general rivalry, and the tradition extends through to songs by Ridley, Corvan and Wilson. For instance, Ridley, in the chorus of his song, 'Chambers' (1973:41-2), jeers at the 'Cockneys', who lose their bets because of the Tyneside oarsman's superiority. Likewise, in Corvan's 'Wor Tyneside Champions'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:430-2), already mentioned, local sporting prowess along with pride in supplying the Cockneys with coal cuts the London people down to size.

As suggested earlier, the Corvan piece includes evident linguistic rivalry with the capital:

The Cockneys say uz keelmen cheps hez nowther sense nor larin',
An' chaff about wor tawk, the fuils; but, faix, they've got a warnin' ...
(*'Wor Tyneside Champions'* in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:430)

Something similar is seen in Thompson's earlier song, 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed.1812, 1971 edn.:316), referred to above, when the narrator says: 'Aw knaw that the Cockneys crake rum-gum-shus chimes / To maek gam of wor bur, and wor 'parel'. Thompson, of course, is referring here to the pronunciation of *r* known as the 'Northumbrian Burr' and realised as uvular [ʁ]. Given that the two songs are written and delivered in Tyneside dialect, they clearly represent both linguistic and thematic ripostes. The retaliation can be directed at both the labouring-class Cockneys, and at those Londoners using a prestige accent popularly perceived to have roots in the capital.

There is little need to dwell on the well rehearsed accounts of the dislike of London. As Russell (2004:128, cf. Joyce 1991:293-4, 315, Lancaster 2002:331, Wales 2004:36)

notes, '[t]he "chirpin", condescending cockney had been a target ... at least since Tommy Thompson's "Canny Newcassel"', and this was a common theme across northern dialect literature. There is, nevertheless, a degree of irony in the criticism aimed at the Cockney in the Thompson song (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314), given that the narrator is a comically naive figure prone to malapropism. Thus, the writer is himself making 'gam' of a speaker of the Tyneside dialect. Likewise, Corvan, by adding a verse to Bagnall's piece, 'Yer Gannin to be a Keelman' (1850:11) and including it in *Random Rhymes*, participates in a well-established genre, as the keelman-figure is labelled 'stupid as a goose'. The anti-metropolitanism in songs is real, but we need to be alert to the manner in which Tyneside writers run the risk of reinforcing pre-existing stereotypes in relation to the local dialect (cf. Russell 2004:271). If this can foster condescension from outsiders, we should remember that Wilson in 'The Cockney's Lament' (c.1865:13-14) offers a mock translation into 'Newcassel dialec', which includes the malapropism 'regretta'. This does not imply that Tynesiders are depicted as stupid here, nor does it negate the Cockney's reluctant admission that 'the BEST MEN'S on the Tyne' ('Cockney's Lament' c.1865:15). However, it does reinforce, along with so many other songs, the associations perceived by Tynesiders themselves between non-standard dialect and the comic (cf. Shorrocks 1999:93, Russell 2004:124, Hadaway 1992).

Despite the self-mockery, there is an obvious local patriotism in many songs. In fact, praise of Newcastle can become formulaic in a manner that does, nonetheless, 'pull at the heart strings'. This is evident in the use of the phrases *canny Newcassel* (as in the chorus of Thompson's song of that name), and *canny toon*, iconic terms which resonate with local attachment.

6.3.4. Canny Places

We saw in the previous chapter that the word *canny* is often used in references to character (see section 5.3.3.). Frequently this might be ironic. Nevertheless, there seems to be far less ambiguity in describing Newcastle as 'canny'. Brockett (1825:37), in his dictionary, says the word *canny* is 'applied to anything superior or of the best kind ... "Canny Newcassel," *par excellence*, is proverbial'. The song of that name probably

played its part in ensuring that the phrase retained currency. Thompson's piece was printed repeatedly in song collections. In a newspaper contribution of the 1850s, 'Local Poets of Newcastle', W. H. Dawson (cited in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:43) asks: 'who that is "native and to the manner born" knows not the tune of "Canny Newcassel[?]"'. There is a longevity in the power of the phrase itself to evoke strong local sentiment. It appears in Newcastle United Football Club's official FA Cup Final song of 1974, by the Barrie Brothers, 'Howay the Lads*', now available on a CD of that name (in *Howay the Lads* n.d.:track 5); the chorus of this piece includes the words, 'Howay Newcastle, canny Newcastle, that's our name'. Here, city and football team are virtually interchangeable, and it is clear that the phrase *canny Newcastle*, despite this song being comic, has a strong emotional appeal as late as the 1970s. This is the case, even though in the electronic corpus the phrase has a relatively low occurrence.

Some use of statistics is helpful in this chapter. There is frequent use in the corpus of the general formula *canny / cannie* + identified place. It occurs in 55 or 29% of the 189 appearances of the word *canny*. The great bulk of these incidences refer to places, settings or buildings on Tyneside. Despite *canny Newcassel / Newcastle* occurring only 4 times, *canny toon* is used to refer to the city 12 times and *canny town* once. Other towns can also be 'canny', such as 'canny aud Sheels'. Nevertheless, the place most frequently described as 'canny' is Newcastle along with its more specific settings or built structures – accounting for 32 of these expressions.

Stretching from Thompson's highly popular 'Jemmy Joneson's Whurry' (in Marshall ed. 1827:10) to Wilson's song, 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:51-2), the 'canny toon' is invoked. In the latter song, as seen at the beginning of this chapter, the overt link is made with dewy-eyed local patriotism:

Noo a' ye lads that's Tyneside born, just cock yor lugs an' lissen,
Aw'll gie yor canny toon a turn, an' myek yor goggles glissen ...
(Tyneside Lads for Me' c.1865:51)

The praise of Tyneside is effusive in this song. However, the clearest statement about the sentimental value of *canny toon* is given in Heslop's song, 'Newcastle Toon Nee Mair'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:532). The first line of the chorus of this song has the words: 'We like the soon o' "canny Toon"'. In this piece Heslop, better known for his dictionary,

Northumberland Words, is drawing attention to the sounds of the Tyneside accent, and expressing affection towards the use of the phrase itself (see section 3.2.11.).

Writers from Thompson to Corvan and Wilson all use the phrases *canny toon* and *canny Newcastle*, in ways that can be associated with those sentiments that, as Wilson puts it, make the 'goggles glissen'. The assertion by Brockett that *canny Newcassel* is proverbial, and the claim that *canny toon* has special appeal, indicate that they can have a significant role in discourse about Newcastle, a deeply felt cultural resonance and iconic status.

It remains the case, however, that among all the writers local identification might be of a particular type. Early authors (clerks, shopkeepers, tradesmen and artisans), in performing their songs, may foster bonding between people from similar social backgrounds. In the music hall too solidarities can be of a particular type. In Corvan's 'Asstrilly, or the Pitman's Farewell' (1850s:Song Book 1, 9), the pitman, lamenting that colliers can no longer raise their beer money, is reluctant to leave: 'Gosh, aw waddent leave wor canny toon, but aw's forced ti gan away'. In 'Tommy Carr's Adventures in Asstrilly' (1850s:Song Book 2, 11), a keelman bemoans his plight in Australia, wishing to be 'seyf back in canny Newcastle at Balmbra's, hearing the singing'. The mental landscape of 'canny Newcastle', with which the audience is encouraged to identify, is often based on popular cultural activities and venues which, as we have seen, have their opponents. It is therefore crucial to examine the strength of solidarity within such settings. We will see that *canny*, along with other words that are undoubtedly iconic on Tyneside, is bound up with specific strategies of bonding used by performers within those venues.

6.4. Intimacy and Entertainment

6.4.1. The Canny Hinnies of the Audience

We need to understand the intense feelings of solidarity that can be inspired by certain performance contexts or environments. The sense of group belonging inside an intimate performance space might be just as powerful as a wider feeling of local identity. The effect may be to compete against the latter, enhance it, or refract it through the prism of very particular cultural solidarities. In the light of these points, the current section focuses on use of the words *canny* and *hinny* in addressing the audience. Later I will consider the plurals *lads* and *lasses*, and again I will discuss their use to the audience. The purpose is to show the cultural perspectives that parallel the functions of these iconic and resonant words (see section 3.3.3.).

It is important, nevertheless, to acknowledge that the word *man* is a frequently employed vocative / interjection used to address the audience (cf. *OED:n.*¹ (and *int.*) IV.16.b., *EDD:sb.*¹ and *v. sb.*8.). In fact, in the electronic corpus it is used over four hundred times in this way. As a familiar vocative it may be that *man* often carries a solidarity function (cf. Dunkling 1990:9, 12, Wales 2001:7, 405-6). I will not repeat arguments made in Chapter Three regarding the status of this word (see section 3.3.2.). Nevertheless, the frequent placing of *man* at line ends to provide rhymes, and to reflect its appearance in sentence or clause final positions in speech (cf *EDD:sb.*¹ and *v. sb.*8.), can be bound up in the work of the early writers with satire of pitmen and keelmen. Often, in such cases, for instance, the voices of narrators are representatives of such groups, but they use the word to address a literal audience made up of clerks, artisans, shopkeepers and tradesmen. Also third-person narrators may use the technique when giving an account of the antics of pitmen and keelmen. The impact might be to encourage solidarity within the audience enjoying the satire. I do not deny, however, that *man* as a familiar vocative can be used in ways that increase bonding with the audience in a more straightforward manner. Certainly this could be the effect when the industrial labouring-class music hall audience is addressed in this way. The chorus of Corvan's song, 'The

'Shades Saloon' (1850:15), demonstrates this abundantly. Nevertheless, I have stressed my suspicion that the reason for Ridley and Wilson all but dropping this use of *man* at line ends to the audience is precisely its associations with a satirical tradition.

I have decided, as noted, to concentrate here upon the words *canny* and *hinny*. This is because of their iconic status (cf. Brockett 1825:37, Heslop 1892:130-31, 376-7), my broader focus upon them in this thesis, and their attested functions in relation to intimacy. I shall examine the way in which their use to audiences might both reflect and enhance the intimacy experienced in specific performance settings, particularly the music hall.

In previous chapters we saw that the word *canny* may have a range of meanings, some positive and some negative. Nevertheless, I also argued that both *canny* and *hinny* potentially carry a set of 'core' values relating to positive evaluations, and functions which enhance communal or domestic solidarity (see sections 3.3.3. and 5.3.3.). For Heslop (1892:130), *canny* is the 'highest compliment that can be paid to any person', while *hinny*, for Brockett (1825:96), is a 'favourite term of endearment'. As noted in the last chapter, Politeness Theory is not central to my analysis. Nevertheless, scholars of the theory have observed, with some qualifications, that compliments and endearments frequently foster solidarity between individuals (Maybin and Mercer 1996:9, Daly et al. 2004:947, Holmes 1998:118, McConnell-Ginet 2003:85, Brown and Levinson 1987:107). Certainly as a familiar vocative, *hinny* may aid a sense of closeness (cf. Dunkling 1990:9, 12, Wales 2001:7, 405-6). Such functions, of course, are not inherent within linguistic structures, and will depend upon context of use (McConnell-Ginet 2003:79, Dunkling 1990:9, 12, Holmes 1998:117). Nevertheless, these points suggest that there is great potential for strong semantic associations to emerge between the words and familiarity or intimacy. The strongly convivial environments in which performances take place, the skills of singers who exploit the dynamics of those settings, and the close relationship of singer and audience, can all reinforce the function of solidarity associated with these two words.

In music hall there is an intensely close and direct relationship between performer and audience (Davison 1982:27). Bratton (cited in Davison 1982:27, 165) has argued that the comic song belongs to the audience as much as the performer, a point which implies that

the pleasure of the audience derives from a sense of joint enterprise and participation. We have seen already that the early halls of the 1850s and 1860s would be attended by groups who knew each other from work or who had the same acquaintances, and that these people gathered to eat, drink, chat and be entertained by performers with whom they might be on speaking terms (Kift 1996:72, Russell 1997:99). These factors indicate the strong possibility that references to the audience will be very familiar and received as such.

The word *canny* occurs just seven times in the electronic corpus in direct reference to the audience, but these instances, all in music hall songs, are telling. Robson makes use of the word twice in his 'Song of the Old Tyne Bridge' (in Robson ed. c.1849:103-4), when the bridge refers to the audience as 'maw awn canny lads'. More familiarity is achieved by Corvan in 'The Toon Improvement Bill; or, Nee Pleyce noo to Play' (1850s:Song Book 1, 12), in which the singer, in schoolboy's costume, addresses the audience and draws attention to the setting: 'Noo a' ye canny folk that's here ... cheer poor Bobby Snivvelnose by gean him yor applause'. Despite the pretence of the projected persona, and the complicity of the audience in that pretence, the latter is never in any doubt that it is also Corvan himself who calls its members 'canny'. The familiarity is quite clearly expressed also in the song, 'Peep at Newcassel' (1850s:Song Book 3, 16), in which Corvan, as character and performer, asserts to the audience: 'What pleases me the best of all, in this and other places, / No alteration to be fund in yor canny smilin' face [sic]'. The setting, 'Balmbra's', and even the landlord 'Mr B', are openly referred to in the song. The audience is firmly located within the music hall, and addressed familiarly, as if the acquaintance is a regular thing. The technique is also seen in Wilson's "Aw Wish Ye A Happy New Eer" (c.1865:66) in which the singer draws his song to an end with the words 'Give us yor hand – maw canny frinds, / An' ye that arnot greet'. The request for applause is directed to 'frinds', and those of humble origin. It draws attention to the solidarity facilitated by the performance space. Music hall performers did not try to achieve the realism being sought on the legitimate stage in the mid-nineteenth century (Davison 1982:44, 51). Rather, in all of these pieces, where the performer might occupy a stage persona not his own, and where the audience may be complicit in the maintenance of that persona, the direct address and compliment both draw attention to the song as

performance, and to the intimate space of the music hall. This space is of a particular type, its occupants enjoying a conviviality which can put it in opposition to other more disciplined spaces: the Chapel, the Sunday School, the Temperance meeting, the factory or the mine (cf. Kift 1996:8, 176, 182, Colls 1977).

A similar process can be seen in the use of the word *hinny* / *hinnies* to the audience. Such uses account for 27% of the 98 appearances of the word in the electronic corpus. The majority of these, 24, occur in the music hall. The collaborative role of the audience in maintaining the stage persona is even clearer here. This can result in the use of the word being surrounded by humour and irony, but the intimacy of the performance space and the relationship between performer and audience is undiminished. The participatory role of the audience is best seen in the spoken sections of Corvan's song, 'The Cullercoats Fishwife', in which the performer addresses his listeners:

Fine caller cods, hinny; thor's nought like a bit fresh ... Can aw put ye that bit skeyt in cheap. Come, hinny, the sea hes been up this last week, else ye should had it for yor awn money.

(*'Cullercoats Fishwife'* 1850s:Song Book 3, 12)

The audience members are asked to put themselves in the role of customer. Corvan evidently exploited this to maximise the humour, appearing in character and imitating the cries of the fishwives. After further singing the fishwife speaks again, this time in more general terms, making the participation of the audience less specific, but no less important:

Aye, hinny, thor's neyne in this world can gain a livin' wivoot a struggle; an' aw can assure ye, poor fisherman struggle hard for theirs, an' their wives an' bairns.

(*'Cullercoats Fishwife'* 1850s:Song Book 3, 12)

Even in these participatory moments, the audience always understands that it is experiencing a comic performance. Use of the word *hinny* and its potential to foster intimacy are part of the comedy, the overall impact being the shared creation of meaning, and the bonding of performer and audience through laughter. Something similar happens in 'The Rise in Coals' (1850s:Song Book 1, 7-8) in which, as an impoverished young lad, Corvan sings the refrain 'O, what a price for sma' coals, hinny how, [sic] they've raised

wor sma' coals'. The topical issue of the cost of coal sees a conversational comment turned into song.

The lack of a clear boundary between stage persona / character and performer is exploited in Robson's 'A Cut at Wor Toon'. The performer specifically refers to the stage setting:

When the curtains draws up, why aw elways draws to ye ...
 Noo aw've browt ye a sang that yor sartin to laff at
 ('Cut at Wor Toon' in Robson ed. c.1849:434)

Despite this overt reference to the performance space, the performer then says that the song was inspired by a bet with 'Geordy, the brakesman', whilst 'on the fuddle' ('Cut at Wor Toon' in Robson ed. c.1849:434). Thus he is simultaneously both a street character – *one of us* – and stage performer. Calling the audience 'hinnies', he asks them in advance for applause ('Cut at Wor Toon' in Robson ed. c.1849:434-5). Those listening are in no doubt that the vocative is aimed at them *as* the music hall audience, but, through humour, both facets of the persona offer familiarity and solidarity. The relationship with the audience always remains poised between the actual and fictional, but in both worlds the solidary and participatory are necessary for meaning to emerge.

Wilson too exploits the familiar vocative in his mock fashion guide, 'What Ye Shud Weer A' Throo The Eer! As Reccommended be Wor Geordey an' Wor Peg an' A" (c.1865:83-4, 93-4). This appears to be one of the performer's drolleries, an early form of stand-up comedy (cf. Colls 2007). For the month of 'Jennywhory' *January*, Geordey advises the men, 'Noo's the time, hinnies, for yor wrappers an' coats' ('What Ye Shud Weer' c.1865:83). Peg's advice to the women for the same month is similarly familiar: 'Noo lasses, maw hinnies, luck weel te yor feet, / An' divvint heh corns on yor toes te luck neet' ('What Ye Shud Weer' c.1865:83). To appreciate this, the audience must possess some knowledge of fashion guides, and put itself in the position of receiving such advice, while retaining a full awareness of comic ironies and incongruities. As a rule, such guides do not generally include Tyneside dialect! Nevertheless, despite the ironies and incongruity, the audience can receive the familiar vocative with good humour and a sense of solidarity.

It should be clear by now that this endearment and vocative has a special place in the music hall and, when addressed to the audience, becomes an integral part of the comedy and of communal sentiments. This is not new. The narrator in Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:315) repeatedly refers to his audience as 'hinnies'. Listeners, it seems, can view this provincial bumpkin with affection. As noted, however, most examples do occur in music hall song, and rather more straightforward uses can be found. Ridley, for instance, uses the word in the chorus of 'The Sheels Lass for Me' (1973:36), when he addresses the 'lasses' with the words 'the truth aw'll tell ye hinny, / Tyneside's the place where the lasses are se bonny'. Finally, we might consider Wilson's song, 'She's Gyen te Place at Jarrow' (c. 1865:60), in which the love-struck but somewhat 'unmanly' stage persona bemoans his plight to the audience, and calls them 'maw canny hinnies'. There are ironies here, but the audience can be in no doubt of the intimacy being projected towards it, with the 'highest compliment' reinforcing the endearment!

This section has focused on the strength of the relationship between performer and audience, particularly in the music hall, and the way this can involve manipulation of the potential meanings or functions of certain iconic words. If intimacy in early performance settings is of a type which might distance the primary audience from the industrial labouring class, we also must view the solidarity felt in the music hall of the 1850s and 1860s as potentially competing with cultural identities inhabited by other more 'respectable' Tynesiders. Thus such intimacy and solidarity may shape local identity on its own terms. Issues of this kind need to be taken into account in an examination of the evolution of 'The Blaydon Races' into the current Tyneside anthem. In a consideration of this development it is helpful to understand how meaning changes across time. Again the analysis focuses upon two specific words, *lads* and *lasses*, which can enhance intimacy within the particular cultural perspectives of music hall, but also contribute to shifts in the potential of the song to foster solidarity and familiarity in new contexts.

6.5. The Blaydon Races

6.5.1. Lads and Lasses of the Tyne

O lads, ye shud only seen us gannin,
 We passed the foakes upon the road just as they wor stannin;
 Thor wes lots o' lads an' lasses there, all wi' smiling faces,
 Gan along the Scotswood Road, to see the Blaydon Races.

(‘The Blaydon Races’ in Ridley 1973:34)

So wrote ‘Geordy’ Ridley in 1862 to provide a chorus for ‘The Blaydon Races’, a song which, at the time, was not considered one of his better pieces, but has since become a Tyneside anthem. It was revived and popularised by the comedian and singer, J. C. Scatter, in the Tyneside music hall of the early twentieth century; it was also sung by soldiers from Tyneside in both World Wars, and the chorus was adopted early in the same century by crowds supporting Newcastle United Football Club (Tynemouth 1962:5-6, Harker ed. 1973:12, Lancaster 2001:333-4). Many reasons might be put forward for the song’s current status: the power of the chorus, the melody, the use of Tyneside dialect in general, the reference to people and places. The use of words from local or regional dialect, and of the Tyneside accent, has clear potential to foster group identity at geographical level. Likewise, one need only hear the chorus to experience the gusto with which singers can deliver the phrase, ‘Scotswood Road’. The mention of place-names in any Tyneside song is likely to give it a ‘local habitation’, to adapt Marshall’s (ed. 1827:i) use of that term. This is in line with the importance of place-names, seen in the novels of the Imagined Community (cf. Anderson 1991:27-32). Nevertheless, in this section I focus on the employment of the words *lads* and *lasses* in the chorus of ‘The Blaydon Races’, traditions in the use of these words, and the importance of changing performance contexts to the evolution of the song.

The meanings of songs are part of a process, and can change according to what I have termed the *context of delivery* (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990:75-6; see also section 1.7.5.). This occurs from performance to performance and through the creation of traditions and myths in print (Bauman and Briggs 1990:75-8, Bratton 1986:xii; see also section 6.3.1.).

As Mannheim and Tedlock (1995:13) point out, in performance, meaning emerges not just from the text, but from the actual social event, involving all participants. The evolution in particular of a song into an anthem, undoubtedly requires what Bauman and Briggs (1990:73-6), have termed 'decontextualization and recontextualization', in which, to simplify their arguments, new performance contexts transform a text and contribute to new meanings. This is, of course, also a *dialogic* process (cf. Bakhtin 1934-5, 1981 edn.:276, 281, Mannheim and Tedlock 1995:15). The text gains meaning from new contexts, other voices, from a tradition of praising Newcastle in song, and from knowledge of the association between the dialect and 'Tynesideness'.

It is my contention that the use of the words *lads* and *lasses* within the chorus of 'The Blaydon Races', and the way audiences respond to the words, have been central to this whole process. We shall see that their use stems from a tradition within Tyneside song of deploying these plural forms, and that they have strong local resonances. This section therefore explores the tradition of referring to 'lads' and 'lasses', particularly where they are praised in relation to Tyneside. I also examine a further tradition of using these features as vocatives in the songs, either to sportsmen, or to the audience. We will find that the words have an important role in the evolution of 'The Blaydon Races' into an anthem through new performance contexts.

The sense of the word *lad(s)* in the electronic corpus which I shall focus on at present is that described by *EDD* (*sb.*¹ and *v. sb.*3.; see also section 3.3.3.), as a 'familiar or affectionate term for a man; a husband, son, or boon companion, a fellow'. This use is not restricted to the North-East, but *EDD* (*sb.*¹ and *v. sb.*3.) clearly indicates its use in regional dialects. In *OED* (*n.*¹ 2.a.) it is clear that in the senses dealt with here the word is deployed 'familiarly or endearingly'. Heslop (1892:435), in his dictionary, gives a separate entry for the plural *lads*, which is a 'following; a company of comrades'. This sense is crucial to my purposes, conveying the concept of a group bound by feelings of solidarity. A closely related word *laddie(s)* carrying the meaning of a 'young lad, a lad' (*OED*), is also found in my electronic corpus. This is used to a far lesser degree, but where relevant, I will refer to it. The senses of *lass(es)* which I focus upon are best dealt with by *EDD* (*sb.* 1. and 5.), which notes that the meaning can be a 'girl', a 'young woman', a 'woman' or a 'wife', and that in these senses the word is also used as a term of

address. According to *OED* (1.a.), *lass* is used in northern England and the Midlands. The semantic of familiarity is not stated by *EDD* (*sb.* 1. and 5.), but is frequently clear within my own electronic corpus. While neither *lad(s)* nor *lass(es)* is restricted to Tyneside, it appears that these words and the potential functions associated with them have special resonances or status within the locality. In that sense, regardless of their use elsewhere, they may become important to Tyneside linguistic identity.

The association between *lads* and *lasses* in the plural, popular entertainment, and popular culture on Tyneside, has been noted in Chapter Three (see section 3.3.3.). We saw that the Tyneside showman, Billy Purvis, as he coaxed audiences into his show at fairs and race meetings, made a distinction between the figures of 'genteel' culture and those of popular culture. This is illustrated in an anonymous account of his banter from *Chater's Illustrated Annual* of 1881:

"Walk up, ladies and gentlemen ... Or there is a side door behind, where any lady or gentleman may enter, who does not choose to cross the public stage". This was said in as good English as could be desired – and few could do it better when it suited his purpose. Then again, turning about, he added in the broadest vernacular, "We hae te tawk to thor ignorint stuck-up gonials se as they knaw what yen says, but *te ye, lads an' lasses, whe knaw thor muther tongue se weel*, aw hev oney to say, that ye that are ower shemfyced to cum up the lether, can get in bi the door in Billy's backside". [my italics]

(Anon. cited in Vicinus 1974:242)

Shows such as those given by Purvis were a central part of labouring-class culture prior to the music hall era, and indeed fed into it (cf. Harker 1981). The quotation clearly suggests a contrast made by Purvis between 'ladies and gentlemen' and 'lads and lasses'. The latter participate in a popular culture which involves the 'broadest vernacular', an intimate sense of belonging to the locality through knowledge of the 'muther tongue', and risqué or 'vulgar' humour, which includes the scatological. It is telling that in a song by Watson, 'Newcastle Races' (in Fordyce ed. 1842:81), a tailor's sweetheart, while her own pretensions are the subject of mockery, comments that a show looks 'so vulgar and so low'. All of these points suggest that we need to understand more clearly where the 'lads' and 'lasses' of Tyneside are situated within the popular discourse of song and the dynamics of performance.

I am interested in the way that the words *lads* and *lasses* are used to address the audience, but also the manner in which they can be used to refer generally to non-audience figures in song. This is important particularly where the singer praises them in relation to geographical space. Some statistics are helpful here. Of the 181 occurrences of the plural form *lads* there are 29 uses prior to 1849, and of these only 7% are used to address the audience, with references to others accounting for 93%. However, after 1849, of the 152 uses of *lads*, 51% are used to address the audience and 49% for other references. Clearly the use of *lads* to address the audience becomes very important after 1849. As for other referents or addressees, we will see the relevance of praise of Tyneside 'lads' shortly.

The word *lasses* is used 79 times. Only 11 of these occurrences appear prior to 1849 and 68 occur after that. There are no references to the audience prior to 1849. After that date 19% of references are addressed to the audience and others make up 81%. Again, as we shall see, particularly in the case of praising Tyneside or its *lasses*, the other references can be revealing. Nevertheless, it is clear that 'lasses' are less likely to be addressed as audience members. The difference between the number of times males and females are referred to within the audience may reflect the fact that the majority of the primary audiences for early singers, and the music hall audiences were male (Gregson and Huggins 1999:83).

There is often a close association between the word *lads* and Tyneside. A recognisable pattern emerges within the electronic corpus, by which writers collocate the word *lads* with the words *Tyneside* or *Tyne*, and praise these 'lads'. In fact (along with the word *lasses*) *Tyneside / Tyne side* is the noun most frequently collocated within 5 words either left or right of *lads*, the pattern occurring 16 times in the corpus. In addition, there are 7 occurrences of *Tyne* within these collocation parameters.

In the representation of the word *lasses* there is no such frequent collocation with any specific place. It is true, however, that in Ridley's song, 'The Sheels Lass for Me' (1973:36), the chorus has the following lines: 'Tyneside's the place where the lasses are se bonny' and '[t]here's a Sheels lass for me'. On the whole, nevertheless, 'lasses' are not so closely linked with the locality in this way.

It is clearly helpful to examine some of the collocations of *lads* and *Tyneside* and the images made available by them. It may be that positive statements about Tyneside 'lads', as with the invocation of 'canny Newcassel' or the 'canny toon', work to reinforce locally patriotic feeling. The narrator in Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314), for instance, tells a Cockney: 'Ye're a gouck if ye din't knaw that the lads o' Tyne side, / Are the Jacks that maek famish wor navy'. This tendency to praise Tyneside's 'lads' can be seen in other early writers. Hence in Gilchrist's 'A Voyage to Lunnin' (1824:9), the narrator, passing collier vessels on his voyage, is effusive: 'Hail, Tyneside lads! in collier fleets, / The first in might and motion'. Likewise, in 'Northumberland Free o' Newcassel' (1824:14) the narrator claims that 'the lads o' Tyneside', are the 'glory an' pride o' their nation'. Thus local patriotism allows for national loyalty, despite a current of anti-metropolitanism found in songs such as 'Canny Newcassel' (cf. Wales 2004:36-7). Turning to the later writers we see that it need not be for military prowess or as the glory of the nation that Tyneside 'lads' are praised – though this does occur. In Corvan's 'Lads o' Tyneside' (1850s:Song Book 2, 15-17) the stage persona is a 'lass', who sings in a refrain that her 'heart beats alone for the lads o' Tyneside', and for 'the bonny keel laddies o' canny Tyneside'. The chorus ends 'O! the bonny Tyne laddies for ever for me' ('Lads o' Tyneside' 1850s:Song Book 2, 15-17).

There is, then, a well established pattern of praising Tyneside 'lads'. It should be noted, however, that these occurrences often appear amid ironies. For instance, in the song, 'Canny Newcassel', the narrator who praises the town and its 'lads' is a comic figure and is prone to malapropisms (see section 5.3.2.). The 'lass' who praises the 'lads' of Tyneside in Corvan's song *is* literally Corvan. The audience could be preoccupied with his comic and coquettish antics during the performance. In addition, local pride is not necessarily to the fore when Corvan, in aggressive tones, advises the 'lads of coaly Tyne' to give up 'baccy' in response to its price being raised ('The Rise in Baccy' 1850:14). Likewise, in his song 'Sweating System' (1850:22) he addresses the 'lads of Coaly Tyne', urging that when they buy new clothes, they should 'pass the slopping shops', in order to show allegiance to 'workingTailors' and to protect workers wages.

Thus, even in these overt discourses equating 'lads' with locality there are ironies and alternative or additional identity categories, which make matters more complicated.

Nevertheless, the association of these 'lads' with Tyneside and their river is significant, suggesting a possibility of comradeship, to adapt Heslop's term (1892:435), based on local geographical position. By the time of Wilson's 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:51-2), the song with which I introduced this chapter and which, the performer predicts, will make the 'goggles glissen', we have a summary of the various heroes of Tyneside, including architects, industrialists, engineers, and oarsmen. Thus the audience is urged to celebrate them:

So pass the glass, an' chant a stave, an' join it's chorus sweetly,
I' praise o' Tyneside lads, se brave, they bang the world completely,
An' sing this sang wi' voices strang, – let it echo far an' wide,
The greet renoon o' wor canny toon, and the heroes o' Tyneside.

('Tyneside Lads for Me' c.1865:52)

In this case the term *lads* is at its most inclusive and there is no doubting the local patriotism of the song. It should be noted, however, that the 'lads' of the audience are being invited to celebrate with alcohol. In this way, as we have seen before, nuances of behaviour or identity can be seen at a cultural level below that of locality or indeed class. It is nevertheless the case that, whether at geographical or other levels, the words *lads* and *lasses* can strongly enhance a sense of belonging. In this respect it is helpful to look at the use of these features specifically as terms of address. It is here that both the strongly locally patriotic meanings invested in the words, and their potential to enhance solidarity at various levels can come clearly to the fore.

6.5.2. Howay the Lads

The vocative function of the words *lads* and *lasses* should be taken into account as terms that can convey solidarity and familiarity (cf. Wales 2001:7, 405-6; Dunkling 1990:9). This resembles the friendly use of words such as *guys* (McConnell-Ginet 2003:85: cf. Brown and Levinson 1987:107-8). As with the words *canny* and *hinny*, such functions are not inherent in a particular linguistic structure (cf. McConnell-Ginet 2003:79, Dunkling 1990:9, 12, Holmes 1998:117). However, it will become clear from the following discussion of the vocative *lads* used to apostrophise or address sporting heroes directly, that such uses can be highly solidary.

Sport and the music hall have an intimate relationship nationally and on Tyneside. As Gregson and Huggins (1999:83-5) point out, sporting heroes appeared as attractions on stage in the music halls, while many songs were written about sports events, taking spectatorship and betting for granted. Such songs, they argue, appear to show that the audience shares the values expounded by writers (Gregson and Huggins 1999:91-2). In addition to the very obvious promotion of alcohol in the halls, these values are ones that have vocal opponents among the nonconformists, the Sunday School movement and other sections of the 'middle and working-class' (Gregson and Huggins 1999:93). Methodists, of course, need to be added to this list (Colls 1977). In Wilson's 'Newgate Street' (c.1865:56), betting men protest at 'Dayvis, the preecher, that meddlin aud feul', who disturbs their pursuits by 'ravin' with a 'sanctified crew'. This seems to be the 'noisy Davis' who, as an opponent of music hall, in the song, 'Jimmy Jonsin the Barber' (c.1865:79), annoys all 'the foaks wiv his rant'. While Wilson does not endorse those who condemn Davis, the reference makes it quite clear that the audience is familiar with the opposition to activities central to popular culture. Nevertheless, the solidarity fostered within popular culture is also well attested, and is just as vocal as its opponents.

Use of vocatives by spectators to sporting heroes is beyond question, and in the nineteenth century this appears to influence music hall song. On Tyneside, in this respect, the vocative *lads* is of interest. In Wilson's piece 'The Greet Boat Race' (c.1865:37), the exhortation to the 'Champion[s] o' the Tyne' is 'Pull, lads, pull!', and it is repeated three times in each chorus. In his song, 'The Tyne Regretta, or Shuv Ahead', the Tyne oarsmen are urged on:

Gan on maw bonny Tyneside lads, an' let the cocknies see,
 What Tyneside lads when fairly meant, upon the Tyne can de.
('Tyne Regretta' c.1865:64)

Again the collocation with 'Tyneside' enhances the link between locality and the 'lads'. Of course, in these examples the oarsmen themselves are not being addressed in the music hall performance. However, there is little reason to doubt that Robson's song, 'Harry Clasper' (in Robson ed. c.1849:58), reflects an actual chant used by spectators of rowing competitions to the eponymous hero: 'Haud away, Harry! canny lad, Harry!'. In Heslop's piece, 'The Tyneside Chorus'* (in Allan ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:537) we are told that the

'cheer' was once heard of 'Hadaway, Harry, lad! Hadaway, Harry!'. These references are, of course, in the singular. A further significance, however, of this close positioning of the exhortation *hadaway* and the vocative *lad(s)* is that a similar chant 'Howay the lads' has been sung in the twentieth century and beyond to Newcastle United's football teams. Griffiths (2002:84, 2005:87) suggests that *howay* may, in fact, derive from *hadaway*, or at least that the first elements of each word are pronunciations of *hold*. It appears that the modern football chant has evolved from a tradition which involves use of *hadaway* / *howay* as exhortation, and *lad* / *lads* as vocatives to sporting heroes.

The chant is widely known. In order to discuss it, I step outside the electronic corpus. Littlejohn (2007), in *The Daily Mail*, writes of the Labour Government's take-over of Northern Rock bank (and by default, sponsorship of Newcastle United) under the punning headline: 'Howay the lads – it's Newcastle Brown!'. Clearly the association between the chant and Newcastle United has national recognition. As already noted, Newcastle United's FA Cup song of 1974, by the Barrie Brothers, was 'Howay the Lads!'; this is available on a CD of that name, and the expression is repeated four times in each chorus (In *Howay the Lads* n.d.:track 5). The chant itself is sung to the tune of the 'Auld Lang Syne' chorus: 'Howay the lads, howay the lads, howay the lads, howay! Howay the lads, howay the lads, howay the lads, howay!' (Newcastle 24-7). Dialect dictionaries show that at some point it was felt sufficient to label the football team representing Newcastle as simply 'the lads' (Todd 2001:42, Griffiths 2005:103). Use of the stand-alone phrase 'the lads' to refer to the team occurs in spoken parts of both the 1951 'FA Cup Final Song', and the 1974 song (In *Howay the Lads* n.d.:tracks 13, 5). The actual chant may appear bland in print, but among a crowd numbering tens of thousands the effect is anything but that. Fans may be singing to the football players, but in the sharing of a communal chant the distinction between fans, team and geographical space is blurred.

The use of the vocative *lads* by sports spectators, or a music hall audience joining a chorus, enhances the feeling of solidarity felt by the individual singers. In both settings the category 'lads' also becomes expansive and inclusive. We might expect this to be the case too, when the words *lads* and *lasses* are used in music hall songs to address the audience, and it is to such uses that I now turn.

6.5.3. Lads and Lasses as Audience

As already noted, there are numerous examples of performers referring to the audience as 'lads', but fewer incidences of such reference to 'lasses'. These vocative uses might be one-off occurrences in songs, or appear in a chorus or refrain. For reasons which will become apparent, I will focus on those occasions when the references occur within choruses. It is useful, first, to reiterate the point that in music hall there is an intensely close relationship between performer and audience (Davison 1982 27), and that the comic song is a joint enterprise between audience and performer (Bratton cited in Davison 1982:27, 165). Thus we have strong indications that the audience is willing to receive the terms of address *lads* or *lasses* as solidarity signals. This is particularly evident in their use in choruses. In Robson's 'There's a Grand Time Comin'" (in Robson ed. c.1849:56), the performer, in character as a pitman, sings (ostensibly) to other pitmen:

There's a grand time comin' lads,
A grand time comin';
There's a grand time comin', lads,
Wait a wee bit langer.

(*'Grand Time Comin'"* in Robson ed. c.1849:56)

Corvan, too, in 'Newcastle Pluck; or, Recruiting for Delhi' includes the word *lads* in his chorus, with patriotic urgings:

Then 'list ye, lads, alang wi' me, 'mang Indian wars what fun ye'll see,
Sepoys i' dozens, one, two, three, we'll tan thor hides for Delhi, O.

(*'Newcastle Pluck'* 1850s:Song Book 4, 3)

The chorus of Wilson's song, 'Thor's Cumfort iv a Smoke!' includes the following lines:

Oh, lads, thor's cumfort iv a smoke!
Let Rennilds lector throo the world
Or let him had his jaw ...

(*'Cumfort iv a Smoke'* c.1865:57)

In addition, Wilson's chorus in the song, 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:51) expresses intense local patriotism:

Then sing me lads wi' glee, an' happy may ye be,
Whack-fal-the-daddy, O! – the Tyneside lads for me.

('Tyneside Lads for Me' c.1865:51)

While the music hall audience is most frequently referred to as male there is no doubt that females did visit the venues. In fact, Ridley, in one of his most popular songs, 'Johnny Luik-Up' (1973:19), explicitly urges the 'lads' of his audience to give their 'lasses a treat', and again bring them to see him perform. Furthermore, in the chorus of 'The Sheels Lass for Me' Ridley uses the vocative *lasses* to females in the audience:

Oh, ye lasses all, the truth aw'll tell ye hinny,
Tyneside's the place where the lasses are se bonny,
An' if ever aw get married,
There's a Sheels lass for me.

('The Sheels Lass for Me' 1973:36)

As with the earlier praise of Tyneside's 'lads', there are tonal complexities in each of these songs. The Robson song looks to a levelling time when employers and judges are humbled ('Grand Time Comin' in Robson ed. c.1849:56-7). In Corvan's piece the 'lads' may be pillars of the Empire (with some ironies), but the final line states 'gie us Tynesiders Mackey's beer – sowl, we'll finish them i' Delhi, O' ('Newcastle Pluck' 1850s:Song Book 4, 3-5). Corvan is addressing a category of Tyneside 'lads' who might sympathise with the hatred of 'teetotaler bodies' expressed in his song, 'The Happy Keelman' (1850:12). Ridley's 'The Sheels Lass for Me' (1973:36-7) celebrates music hall song and drinking, as to some degree does Wilson's 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:52). Meanwhile, the 'Rennilds' mentioned in Wilson's 'Thor's Cumfort iv a Smoke!' is the evangelical anti-smoking campaigner, Thomas Reynolds who, Hilton (2000:60-61) notes, lectured in Town Halls and Mechanics Institutes around the country. In all, then, the songs address a particular type of 'lads' and for that matter 'lasses': the 'lads' and 'lasses' of labouring-class popular culture who, to reiterate, may give short shrift to religious or temperance-driven forms of respectability.

It should be clear by now that the singing of a chorus brings into play an additional dimension of group solidarity, as suggested in the Wilson song, 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:51-52), in which the performer urges choric singing. The audience would indeed join in choruses in the music hall, as a *Daily Chronicle* reporter reviewing Ridley's repertoire noted (cited in Harker ed. 1973:6). Bailey (1994:148, cf. Rutherford 1986:140)

observes that in music hall the audience's participation in the chorus represents a 'possessive "claiming", both of the song and the singer'. In addition, Lindley (1985:31) points out that for a group of singing people, including a music hall audience, 'the arrival of "the chorus" generates a sense of release into the known and shared, and symbolises community'. It is in this context that we need to consider the use of the words *lads* and *lasses* especially within the chorus. A pair of words which are frequently perceived to have connotations and functions of familiarity are placed in a physical setting and a musical context that foster solidarity. The result is that the performer does not simply address the audience as 'lads' or 'lasses', but the audience members sing along with each other: 'lads' and 'lasses' singing to 'lads' and 'lasses', in a complex web of community feeling. It might also be that in choric contexts the non-specificity of the terms of address creates a more expansive and inclusive reference, transcending the physical setting of the performance.

We cannot, however, conclude that in the process of arousing a feeling of solidarity, Tyneside identity is the only or primary sense of belonging that is felt. Even in Wilson's 'Aw'll Sing Ye a Tyneside Sang'* we must take into account who the 'lads' addressed in the chorus might consider themselves to be:

An' oh, me lads, it myeks me heart se glad,
 Te sing or hear a lokil sang;
 An' aw always like te see iv a cumpny, or a spree,
 Sum canny lad te sing a Tyneside sang.

(*'Aw'll Sing Ye a Tyneside Sang'* 1890, 1970 edn.:141)

This is locally patriotic. However, although we know that Wilson performed in a variety of settings, including those where alcohol was discouraged, this song, like 'Tyneside Lads for Me' (c.1865:52) clearly envisages an alcohol-fuelled conviviality. The 'lads' to whom he is singing might well be drunk or accustomed to having a 'spree'. In some senses 'lads' might feel Tyneside in their 'heart', but they are not uniformly defined across Tyneside, and might not perceive such uniformity. Again, it must be concluded that 'Tynesideness' can be channelled through particular cultural conduits. We shall see that this affects our understanding of 'The Blaydon Races' in its primary performance contexts. It will be just as important to consider who is excluded from, as well as included in, the earliest performances of the song.

6.5.4. The Birth of an Anthem

Most Tynesiders will know only the chorus of 'The Blaydon Races', but they can be extremely fond of it. In fact, many singing the song might do so with some variation in the words. Here, then, is a reminder of the chorus as written by Ridley:

O lads, ye shud only seen us gannin,
 We passed the foakes upon the road just as they wor stannin;
 Thor wes lots o' lads an' lasses there, all wi' smiling faces,
 Gan along the Scotswood Road, to see the Blaydon Races.

(*'The Blaydon Races'* 1973:34)

I intend to focus upon this chorus. A fundamental point which needs to be made here, nevertheless, is that in the nineteenth century 'The Blaydon Races', written in 1862, was not the Tyneside anthem. In fact, Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn:1) comments that 'Weel May the Keel Row' holds this position. Therefore it is helpful to examine the song within its contemporary context, and in terms of a process of *becoming*. It is difficult to say for certain why the piece became anthemic. However, I would argue that the use of the vocative 'lads' within a choric context, and the invocation of 'foakes', along with 'lads an' lasses ... all wi' smiling faces', are essential to an understanding of the song's significance for bonding audiences, and encouraging a still ongoing process of its popularisation.

The piece was first performed at a retirement benefit concert, held at Balmbra's Concert Room for the Tyneside oarsman and local hero, Harry Clasper (Lancaster 2001:333). It describes, however, a trip by 'bus' from Balmbra's to the Blaydon Races, a horse race meeting that was to be held on an island on the River Tyne four days later. The song also functioned as an advertisement for Ridley's own show, which was held at the Blaydon Mechanics Institute after the first day of racing (Lancaster 2001:333, Harker ed. 1973:8). The occasion of Harry Clasper's retirement would have been one in which feelings of local pride were prominent. Races involving Tyneside's champion oarsmen were watched by enormous crowds (Lancaster 2001:329). A contemporary newspaper advertisement (cited in Tynemouth 1962:6) shows that several of the oarsmen were to appear at the concert in rowing costume, together with boats designed by Clasper.

Thus the context of local patriotism in the very first performance cannot be doubted. Nevertheless, it is striking that a reporter from the *Daily Chronicle* felt the need to vindicate Ridley's performance at the Balmbra's concert:

While the dialect is easily and naturally given, there is nothing coarse in the rendering of these songs, but they are such as the most refined audience might hear and be amused withal.

(*Daily Chronicle* 1862 cited in Harker ed. 1973:7)

This is a reassurance, recognising that the 'refined' or more respectable might have expected coarseness, perhaps worse. We have seen how much controversy surrounded the music halls. Only thirteen years earlier, in Robson's song 'The Use and the Abuse' (in Robson ed. c.1849:109) a pitman narrator defends the culture that Balmbra's represents, in the face of lies from the 'ranterfied preest':

Whei, its deeth, mevies warse, if to Balmbra's ye gan,
For a glass an' to hear the fine singin' ...

('Use and Abuse' in Robson ed. c.1849:110)

Historical evidence suggests that the pitman is reflecting upon real opposition to the halls. But criticism was also related to concepts of vulgarity, both in taste and language. In his anthology, as noted, Robson (ed. c.1849:v) somewhat disingenuously says the 'fastidious' reader might find the contents of the book 'vulgar and decidedly ungenteel', and he relates this, in part, to the dialect. Certainly, some did disapprove of popular urban songs. Stokoe (cited in Harker 1985a:148), joint editor of *Northumbrian Minstrelsy*, is intent on expelling from the 'poor man's piano' what he terms 'music hall vulgarities and drawing room inanities'. We need to bear these various attitudes in mind to understand the very first performance of 'The Blaydon Races'. Balmbra's is a site of cultural contestation.

The races themselves coincided with 'Blaydon hoppings' (a fair), and took place on the Whit Monday holiday of the 9 June 1862 (Tynemouth 1962:7, 20). The race event had been revived only a year earlier. Lancaster (2001:333) notes that it was rarely graced by 'The Fancy', and that two 'large beer tents on the island set the tone'. These proved to be useful given that in 1862 the races were hit by a rain storm. A *Daily Chronicle* reporter (cited in Lancaster 2001:333), with ironic delicacy, noted that within the tents a few of the 'gentler sex were safe under the guidance of their natural protectors', but were forced

by the pressure of the crowds to 'cling closely to the said protectors'; both, however, seemed 'resigned to the situation, which the exigencies of limited space had forced upon them'. For 'natural protectors' and 'gentler sex' we can read 'lads an' lasses', the type of 'lads an' lasses' who might well have heard Ridley's song previously at Balmbra's, and might have gone on to hear it sung again at the Mechanic's Institute. Clearly the races and the 'Blaydon hoppings', of which Ridley's concert was part (Tynemouth 1962:7), were labouring-class affairs, in which alcohol played a large part. This aspect of popular culture had its opponents, as we have seen (see section 6.2.1.). The *Daily Chronicle* for 10 June (cited in Tynemouth 1962:21) commented that 'the lower-classes are making rapid strides in moral and social improvement', and it hoped that they would continue to acquire 'the solid virtues of life ... merrily and wisely enjoying their seasons of holiday'. However, it is significant that, while concerts continued to be held at the Blaydon 'Mechanics Haall', adverse criticism from 'many church people' eventually closed the hall down (cutting cited in Harker ed. 1973:8).

Thus 'The Blaydon Races', in its early performances, is sited in a cultural milieu which has its vocal opponents. Music hall is frequently viewed as 'non-respectable'. But Mechanics institutes might symbolise a labouring-class self-help culture. After all, Blaydon and Stella Mechanics Institute, to give it its full name, was purpose built in 1852, and Whellan (1855:386) describing the hall, said it contained 'a reading-room, library, and a large lecture-hall'; the latter, he added, was 'used as a school during the week, and as a place of worship by the Wesleyan Methodist Reformers on Sundays'. Nevertheless, after 1862, the hall, which was behind The Red Lion public house (Blaydon Library, personal correspondence, cutting cited in Harker ed. 1973:8), facilitated entertainment that was opposed by the more religious citizens. The cross-over between performance in a music hall and performance in a Mechanics Institute, in fact, illustrates the difficulty in neatly classifying labouring-class institutions, groups or activities, as 'respectable' or 'non-respectable' (cf. Bailey 1998:30-46). Nevertheless, the 'lads an' lasses' who first listen to and sing the chorus of 'The Blaydon Races' are placed in a popular culture that is the subject of contestation.

While the song is now, without any doubt, the Tyneside anthem, as late as 1891, Allan (ed. 1891, 1972 edn.:1, 447), besides giving that title to 'Weel May the Keel Row', says

that Ridley is best remembered for his pieces, 'Johnny Luik-Up', and 'The Bobby Cure'. Thus, 'The Blaydon Races', if it was to be taken up as the Tyneside anthem, had to undergo a process of *becoming*, of 'recontextualization' to adopt Bauman and Briggs's (1990:72, 75-6; cf. Bratton 1986:xii) term, with new meanings and functions emerging from new contexts.

Harker (ed. 1973:11) notes that after Allan's substantial collection of songs in 1891, the only works by Ridley to be published in subsequent anthologies are 'The Blaydon Races' and 'Cushy Butterfield' – that is, until Allan is reproduced in 1972, and Harker's own edition of the singer's material in 1973. It is true that recordings of 'The Bobby Cure' and 'The Sheels Lass for Me' now exist on the twenty CD *Northumbria Anthology* (2002:*The Bonny Gateshead Lass* track 13, *The Day we Went to the Coast* track 10). Nevertheless, the majority of recordings also have been of 'The Blaydon Races' or 'Cushy Butterfield', and it is only they that are heard regularly (cf. Harker ed. 1973:11, Tynemouth 1962:4). As noted, 'The Blaydon Races' was revived and popularised in the early twentieth-century music hall by J. C. Scatter; it was sung by troops from Tyneside in both World Wars; and early in the same century its chorus was taken up by crowds following Newcastle United (Tynemouth 1962:5-6, Harker ed. 1973:12, Lancaster 2001:333-4). Newcastle United squads can be heard singing the chorus, or adaptations of it, on their FA Cup Final songs of 1932 and 1951, while the song by the Barrie Brothers for the FA Cup team of 1974 begins with the tune (in *Howay the Lads* n.d.:tracks 15, 13, 5). Even the carillon at Newcastle Civic Centre plays a version of it, along with 'Keep Yor Feet Still!', 'Cushy Butterfield' and 'Weel May the Keel Row' (Beal 2000:345). The 'Blaydon Races', then, undoubtedly has recognition across social groups as an anthem.

There are, no doubt, many reasons why the song gained its current status, but there is little question that the use of the Tyneside dialect is one factor. A range of theories of language and group identity are, after all, well established (cf. Mendoza-Denton 2002, Joseph 2004). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's (2006:181) Acts of Identity Theory, first published in book form in 1985, has been briefly applied by Beal (2005) to Ridley's famous piece. Anderson's (1991:37-46, 145) theory of the Imagined Community is also well known, with its stress on the importance of language in print. In fact, Anderson (1991:145) contends that 'there is a special kind of contemporaneous community which

language alone suggests – above all in the form of poetry and songs'. For him national anthems foster a sense of what he terms 'simultaneity' and 'unisonality', no matter 'how banal the words or mediocre the tunes' (Anderson 1991:145). There are some problems here. Songs are not 'language alone': as he himself suggests, they frequently involve rhythm, rhyme, and melody. In addition, any judgement regarding banality or mediocrity is entirely subjective. Therefore we cannot discount the possibility that for an audience or group of singers the words have deep meaning. This also calls into question Kelen's (2003:161) comment that an anthem is 'phatic communion on the grand scale: a people greets itself by means of words it has remembered well enough to forget to understand'. Both Kelen and Anderson are justified in stressing the solidary power of anthems. Anderson is also correct to recognise the important function of language. As already observed, the link between language and group identity is well established, and this can certainly foster a sense of local loyalty. However, I have shown throughout this chapter that identification may occur at levels competing with, below, or alongside the local. An equally important point is that individual words may enhance solidarity and have cultural significance within specific performance contexts. These words nevertheless might fulfil communal functions, and enhance geographical loyalty, across time in other performance environments.

In the chorus of 'The Blaydon Races', the vocative 'lads' with its potential to build solidarity, along with the invocation of the familiar 'foakes', and 'lads an' lasses ... wi' smiling faces', all resonate strongly with group identification in music hall contexts and more widely. While not automatic, this sense of belonging has power to foster local loyalty on Tyneside, as is the present case. The relevance of the words, *lads* and *lasses*, and their potential function and meaning, have spanned time, offering not a semantic constant but, within the choric context, an extremely firm anchorage within the solidary. A similar case is represented by another song that has stood the test of time – 'The Lambton Worm'* (in Seattle ed. 2001:31); this piece contains the same familiar vocative in its chorus: 'Whisht, lads! haad yer gobs'. In the case of 'The Blaydon Races', new performances permit the vocative 'lads' and the invocation of 'lads an' lasses', framed within a shared chorus, to have shifting meaning within each new context. However, across time the meanings have enhanced solidarity.

The song was not an anthem at the outset, but by the time of its popularisation in the music hall of the early twentieth century by J. C. Scatter, it was on its way to becoming one. Whether Harker (1972:xxvi-xxvii) is correct in claiming that the music halls of this later period provided entertainment for white collar workers, that they were a 'betrayal', and that working people went back to singing in pubs is somewhat questionable. After all, labouring people certainly picked up the song from Scatter's performances. However, it is true that across the country the later halls offered a different experience from their predecessors (cf. Kift 1996:68-9). The audiences in the early halls would sit at tables, with waiters bringing them drinks and food; but increasingly from the 1870s they sat in rows of seats facing the stage, and alcohol was only available in the bar (Kift 1996:68-9, Russell 1997:96). In addition, Kift (1996:2, 67, 175) argues that while the halls were primarily sites of entertainment for the 'working class' and 'lower-middle class' until about 1890, after that date they appealed to society as a whole on a cross-class basis. For Russell (1997:88) this was part of a shift from the popular and somewhat 'risqué', to mass recreation, driven by an ideal of 'respectable entertainment'. It was, as noted, a markedly different experience.

The early music halls fostered an intimacy which made reference to 'lads' and 'lasses' very direct. Nevertheless the later halls could do so in another way, perhaps ensuring that the 'lads' and 'lasses' achieved a more generalised sense of unity, one that might well have begun to cross social, moral and cultural divides. Soldiers singing 'The Blaydon Races' took the song into a new context, perhaps evoking memories of home and fostering a sense of fraternity. And in St James's Park, supporters of Newcastle United roar the song *to* each other and *at* the opposition, often in an effort to out-sing them. It would be an exaggeration to talk of the song as a 'Toon Army' war-cry, but its use by football fans certainly demonstrates its role in identity construction through opposition.

The early twentieth-century music hall audience, soldiers on the march keeping up their morale, a football crowd supporting Newcastle United – all transform the song. For each, the 'lads' addressed, and the 'lads an' lasses' invoked, may mean different things, but use of the words invariably fosters a sense of solidarity. At another level, in the twentieth century, it does not matter who the 'lads' and 'lasses' are. The references become

expansive and inclusive, and I would argue that for 'The Blaydon Races', that is one part of the construction of anthemic status.

It is essential to stress that the use of the vocative 'lads' and the references to 'lads an' lasses' are not the whole story. Beal's brief application of Acts of Identity Theory to 'The Blaydon Races' is no doubt relevant also. Likewise, the melody of the song's chorus will have played its part. Nevertheless, there is undoubted evidence for the role of the words *lads* and *lasses* in many songs, in an ongoing process of identification at various levels including the local on Tyneside. The anthemic status of 'The Blaydon Races', while by no means attributable to this process alone, may be its apotheosis.

6.6. Summary

Local identity is just one way in which experience is expressed in Tyneside dialect song. This is in line with theories which stress that identity, including linguistic identity, is multiple and cross-cutting. To this we might add that identities may be conflicting. There is a tendency in scholarship, dealt with more thoroughly in previous chapters (see sections 1.5.3. and 5.2.1.), to emphasise, within dialect literature, themes of solidarity at large-scale socio-demographic levels of the locality / region, and that of the 'working-class'. Locality either subsumes social difference, or equal emphasis is placed on the solidary values of 'working-folk' or 'labouring' people. In these readings non-standard dialect is held to be symbolic of such solidarity and community.

We have seen, however, that according to the degree of social status or cultural self-perception among early songwriters, satire is frequently the hallmark of depictions of pitmen and keelmen. Among the early music hall writers of the 1850s and 1860s, too, there can be hostility towards those perceived as harming the 'working man', and there is also antagonism toward certain labouring-class groups intent on social improvement. We saw this particularly in the case of reaction to the Teetotal Movement and Methodism. These findings indicate that, if songs do promote a sense of local linguistic identity, then for primary audiences they often do so in a very particular, even socially exclusive manner.

From the start of the nineteenth century at least, nevertheless, discourses regarding the local provenance of songs appear to increase. This is central to the construction of a concept of a Tyneside canon, with its emphasis on locality rather than a wider North-East. A similar process may well be at work in the construction of an idea of the Tyneside dialect itself, and the use of non-standard orthography specifically claimed to be local is a crucial element in this. None of these points should be taken to mean that people could not think in local terms prior to the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, during that century discourses relating to the 'Tynesideness' of song and dialect do become more consistent.

The process whereby pieces come to be conceptualised firmly or primarily as 'Tyneside song', may require 'recontextualization', to employ Bauman and Briggs's (1990:72, 75-6) term once more. Especially where works have revealed elements of satire or social antagonism, these themes may need to be overlooked or forgotten. The construction of a print canon using non-standard orthography assists in the transformation of meaning. Some songs are more locally patriotic than others and include those pieces which expound anti-metropolitanism. The latter should not be taken to imply a lack of national loyalty in the material. This is in fact common.

At all times, when considering a song's earliest meanings, we need to retain an awareness of primary performance contexts in order truly to understand the complex identities experienced by audiences. Local loyalty would be felt by those listening to songs prior to the music hall era, but this might sit alongside a sense of cultural superiority towards other Tynesiders, namely the pitmen and keelmen. In the halls themselves local identity might be channelled through a popular culture whose adherents are fully aware that their language, moral outlook, and choice of leisure are criticised by vocal opponents, from various directions, but often from within the ranks of the labouring-class. Thus, while the experience of Tyneside dialect song in the music hall can be seen as an affirmation of local labouring-class linguistic behaviour in the face of discourses of 'correct' speech, this is merely one dimension of the group identity and affirmation offered in the halls in defiance of wider pressures towards self-improvement, 'respectability', and religious morality. This is not to say that music hall audiences do not consider themselves to be 'decent'. However, the venues offer a degree of independence from those who refuse to see that 'decency'.

When we consider the sense of audience identity, it is crucial to understand the intense feelings of group solidarity that could be fostered in specific settings. In the music halls, for instance, this solidarity can be manipulated by performers at specific linguistic levels. Individual words, when addressed directly to an audience – *canny*, *hinnies*, *lads*, and *lasses* – have a role that demonstrates and intensifies the collective sense within the performance space. Such intense solidarity can set the audience at odds with other Tyneside dialect users, and will force feelings of local patriotism to be of a particular kind, mediated through the cultural attitudes within the performance environment.

Throughout the period examined the evocation of 'canny Newcassel' or the 'canny toon' undoubtedly promotes local sentiment and local patriotism, in a manner similar to that achieved by praise of 'lads' and 'lasses' of Tyneside. In the music hall especially, praise of the latter categories frequently connotes a particular type of 'lads' and 'lasses', claimed by performers and audience as their own. Both sport and the music hall have cross-cutting roles, in that they foster expressions of pride in local 'lads'. Eventually, even though the word *lads* is widespread in the North, its use can be linked to a football team, to Newcastle, and to a sense of 'Tynesideness'.

Despite the specific functions of words when addressed to the primary audiences, it is beyond doubt that songs can and do transcend their original performances. This is part of the process of 'recontextualization' (Bauman and Briggs (1990:72, 75-6), which frequently results in changes in meaning. The now classic example is 'The Blaydon Races'. In its early days the song is merely one among many that demonstrate the uses of vocative *lads*, to assert solidarity with and amongst the audience. Nevertheless, this vocative function, replete with traditions of use and cultural resonances in Tyneside song, continues to function in new contexts. The socially inclusive music hall of the twentieth century, camaraderie among soldiers in the World Wars, and chants on the football terrace based on collective pleasure and hostility – all are able to realise the unifying potential of vocative *lads*.

My overall conclusion is that meanings in song are highly complex and changeable. Thus meaning depends on some or all of the following: writer, performer and audience attitude; discourses within texts and external to them, of sub-local cultural antagonism, the local provenance of songs or dialect, hostility to the capital, and local (or national) patriotism; setting and medium; and the passage of both time and memory. Varying intensities of identity, including the local, will be experienced according to different contexts, at different times. It is important to avoid generalisations. Within Tyneside songs local patriotism is often prominent, and can be intense, aided by the use of the dialect. However, we should never assume that at local level, within primary performance contexts, over-arching solidarities such as Tyneside identity or labouring-class unity subsume social or cultural differences and antagonisms.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

7.1. From Satire to Solidarity

Tyneside dialect song and the language within it can mean many things to many people. It can involve mockery of those groups most closely associated with the dialect, along with their imputed character traits, but can also be a celebration of their lifestyle and culture. It can reveal cultural differences, even hostilities and antagonisms, between Tynesiders, and within the labouring class. Yet it can be emblematic of labouring-class pride and community, and foster local identity and hostility towards London. All of these connotations are possible, even in single songs.

The concept of *indexicality* has been central to this thesis. This, as observed, refers to a process involving the 'creation of semiotic links between linguistic forms and social meanings', and in identity formation it relies on ideas 'about the sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language' (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:594). Such ideas operate at various levels. Character trait, relatively small or particular groups such as an occupational category, and large socio-demographic categories, such as locality or class, may all be *indexed* by particular types of language.

The non-standard dialect within Tyneside song must carry the weight of social meaning. Current scholarship tends to emphasise the role of dialect literature in general (and northern material in particular) in fostering solidarity at the levels of locality, region, community or a 'working-class' (see sections 1.5.3. and 5.2.1.). The emphasis, then, is upon large-scale socio-demographic categories or communal values and solidarity. However, while pitmen and keelmen are arguably iconic of the Tyneside industrial labouring class, contemporary discourse shows that Tyneside dialect song of the early nineteenth century is regarded frequently as satirizing these groups (cf. Marshall ed. 1827:i, Fordyce ed. 1842:iii). And even though the later writers in the music hall of the 1850s and 1860s may be more aligned to the popular culture of the industrial labouring

class, they might express hostility or antagonism towards others in the locality. This can include employers, but also those members of the labouring class who attempt to impose a religious or Temperance-driven version of respectability upon that class. All of these issues must be taken into account if we are to avoid over-simplified claims as to the function of songs and the language within them in enhancing communal, local, or 'working-class' values or solidarity.

Language does, nevertheless, reflect local linguistic identity. We saw in Chapter Three that a set of key orthographic features are used by both early and later writers, which coincide with attested sound patterns (see 3.2.). This is the case regardless of the fact that the conventional alphabet cannot represent sounds accurately. Using a selective approach, I also pointed in Chapter Three to a range of words that are iconic of the dialect or have special resonances on Tyneside (see section 3.3.). In particular, the words *canny*, *hinny*, and the plurals *lads* and *lasses*, were singled out for attention as features that could be interrogated in later chapters within a broader literary perspective. This was intended to reveal the complexities of the representation of language in song, and of the social meaning of even the most cherished words in performance. All of the features identified in Chapter Three are vital to the representation of the 'Tyneside dialect'. What must be accepted, however, is that any list of linguistic structures (orthographic, phonological, lexical or otherwise), and an insistence on their function as reflecting communal, local or 'working-class' solidarity, will not provide the whole story.

The deployment of language in Tyneside song and its social meaning reveal cultural divisions, perhaps antagonisms, among Tynesiders, and even among those enjoying the same songs. We often see linguistic strategies and cultural representations in the material which can emphasise the existence *within* Tyneside of contrasts between social groups or types, as much as similarities (see Chapters Four and Five). Early writers, for instance, give pitmen and keelmen the highest proportions of non-standard orthography in the *non-standard dialect songs*, and by far the highest use of oaths and expletives in the songs generally. Their voices are contrasted particularly with those of the category designated 'other male', which includes various first-person and third-person narrators, and identified artisan voices. These other male voices are represented through lower levels of non-standard orthography and a rarity of swearing. However, they can be further

differentiated from pitmen and keelmen by the use of more 'sophisticated' French / Latinate words. Pitmen and keelmen, by contrast, are represented as prone to malapropism and incompetence in the handling of French / Latinate words. Satirical representation of these groups is, then, both thematic and linguistic and occurs in both *non-standard dialect songs* and *StE songs featuring literary dialect* (see section 2.3.2. for definitions). It is inevitable in many cases that the contrasts found in print will be reflected in performance through style shifting.

Among later writers, in the initial music hall period of the 1850s and 1860s, it may be that 'burlesque' representation of local people and the Tyneside dialect continues (cf. *Daily Chronicle* 1861, cited in Harker ed. 1973:6, Allan ed. 1890, 1970 edn.:xxii). However, these writers are far more aligned with the voices of the industrial labouring classes (see Chapters Four and Five). There is greater convergence in voice types, with all categories, including that defined as 'other male', coming to be represented through far higher proportions of non-standard orthography in the *non-standard dialect songs*. Likewise, in general, these other males become much more likely to use oaths and expletives in the songs, bringing them closer linguistically to representations of the pitmen and keelmen. The marked exception to this occurs in Wilson's work, where overtly identified pitmen and keelmen are also rarely found. It should be said that other writers continue to depict the latter groups as uttering malapropisms in an incompetent manner. In contrast, however, as stage performance personae, entertainers may produce malapropisms in a more overtly signalled fashion. This permits highly collusive laughter on the part of the labouring-class audience (cf. Bailey 1994). Likewise, entertainers may use French / Latinate words in a 'correct' way, which implies manipulation of a shared understanding with their audience.

Such contrasts and convergences in language are meaningful. Language style or variety is bound up in everyday communication and in fiction with group identity and associated ideologies. Thus in real life the use by individuals of one linguistic variety or style among others will imply the projection of their 'inner-universe' (Le Page and Tabouret Keller 2006:181, 248), while in the novel contrasts in voice frequently imply differences in 'world-views' (Fowler 1996:188). Once we understand that contrasts in voice occur particularly within early Tyneside song that is labelled satirical (cf. Midford 1818,

Marshall ed. 1827, Fordyce ed. 1842), then claims that the dialect in such material is emblematic of solidarity at any level require serious qualification. Contrasting voices in literature *do* imply differences in outlook, and this implies the representation of contrasting social or cultural identities. The later writers are typified by convergence in voice through language. This implies a projected alignment with the language, ideologies and identity of an industrial labouring class. Even this, however, needs to be qualified to take into account a frequent leaning towards a somewhat less 'respectable' end of popular culture.

Of equal importance in an assessment of the social meaning of language in song is the relationship of writers or performers to primary audiences within performance (see section 2.2.2). There is strong evidence that often the initial audiences of much popular early material were, like its authors, clerks, artisans, shopkeepers and tradesmen. The later writers of music hall song, by contrast whatever their own social backgrounds, were frequently providing entertainment for primary audiences drawn from an industrial labouring class. The hallmark of pieces by early writers is often satire of the character traits of pitmen and keelmen (iconic of the industrial labouring class). The representations of character by later writers, on the other hand, are aligned ideologically far more with that class or the activities of popular culture enjoyed by many of its members.

A study of the depiction of character trait among those belonging to certain groups, particularly pitmen and keelmen, therefore proves to be central to understanding the meaning of many Tyneside songs and the dialect within them (see Chapter Five). This involves setting aside assumptions about solidarity at levels such as class and locality. Even among the later writers, where discussion of character in a generalised industrial 'labouring class' becomes more helpful, it is also necessary to discard assumptions that the songs foster unity in any straightforward or unqualified manner.

In the representation of a link between language and character in particular groups, we see that these *indexical* relations arise in performance from generic expectations of song, sometimes skewed observation of actual behaviour, and, crucially, a *dialogue* with other cultural discourses (see sections 1.7.1. and 5.1.). In this respect, the pitman figure, Bob

Cranky, is central to an understanding of the relationship in much early song performance between language and character trait, and the social meaning of the dialect (see section 5.2.1.). He is also crucial to an understanding of subsequent developments in this *indexical* relationship. Bob Cranky is a stereotyped depiction of behaviour found often in representations of pitmen and keelmen. He is a drunken, illiterate fighter, prone to swearing and boastfulness; but he also has a convivial, exuberant and tender side. For primary audiences he is a satirical 'type' seen again and again in song. Such satire of pitmen and keelmen by early writers frequently relies on a *dialogue* with the audience's knowledge of more 'refined' discourses, modes of behaviour, or speech.

It is nevertheless true that pitmen and keelmen could enjoy such material. This has led me to posit a continuum of responses to early songs available to clerks, artisans and tradesmen, and also to the pitmen or keelmen themselves. The continuum is based on perceptions of qualities in song ranging from the satirical, to the resistant or celebratory. An audience's response may depend on its knowledge, or otherwise, of discourses of respectability, improvement and linguistic propriety. I do not claim that pitmen and keelmen were incapable of perceiving the satire and of appropriating it for purposes of self-mockery. Nevertheless, a common interpretation of music hall later in the century – that of a somewhat selective resistance to discourses of respectability, refinement, and a 'correct' speech – may represent a continuation of some earlier labouring class responses. Thus it appears that whether the meaning of Tyneside song for audiences is satire, as is often the case with the early songs, or resistance and celebration, as for many in the industrial labouring class across time periods, much of the meaning and humour arises potentially from a *dialogue* with the discourses already mentioned. In consequence, the social meaning of language too as it relates to character within the songs must frequently arise from *dialogue* with those discourses.

The *indexical* relations of language in songs, then, are bound up with a complex process of characterization or projection of personae that relies on audience response. We see two major strands of meaning from the outset in representations of pitmen and keelmen. There is the comically brash drunkard, lacking in intelligence or education on the one hand, and a more caring, responsible community-orientated family man on the other. These characterizations are in development in song as the century progresses. At general

and very specific levels the development in the relationship between language and character is also seen.

Malapropisms, not commonly thought to be part of Tyneside dialect, can appear integral to it within songs, and influence the overall social meaning of their language (see section 5.3.2.). These 'errors' imply low intelligence or daftness in the characterization of pitmen and keelmen. However, when used by an overtly projected stage persona the collusive nature of the 'joke' can lead, in effect, to both performer and audience viewing themselves as knowing or witty (cf. Bailey 1994). For primary audiences of early song this self-characterization might foster solidarity with fellow tradesmen, artisans and clerks. Such self-perception would also lead to bonding among audiences from industrial communities, of course, and this seems highly likely in music hall settings. Self-celebratory this may be, but the comic potential of the dialect is well established in the nineteenth century. In this regard even some of the most iconic and emblematic of Tyneside words acquire socio-cultural meanings within song which can render them ironic and humorous.

Among Tynesiders in the nineteenth century the words *canny* and *hinny* potentially carry a set of perceived 'core' values, relating to characteristics or functions which promote solidarity at the domestic or communal levels (cf. Brockett 1825:37, 96, Heslop 1892:130, 376-7; see also section 3.3.3.). The use of these words between characters, or in relation to them, nevertheless, frequently makes these very 'core' values the subject of comic irony for both early and later writers (see section 5.3.3.). Often those ironies also play on a lack of respectability or cultivation among the characters using the words or at whom they are directed. Of course, a focus on these linguistic features alone would be limiting, and I have shown that regardless of developments in their use a greater emphasis on labouring-class respectability and decency in character is found in the later writers. Nevertheless, in Joe Wilson's work we see a falling away of ironies in the use of these particular words. This in large degree reflects Wilson's response to the ever increasing discourse of labouring-class respectability. Wilson's 'canny man' is likely to avoid alcohol, or to drink in moderation, and to put home and communal values first, calling forth precisely those connotations of the word *canny* that are emphasised by

Brockett and later Heslop. This 'canny man' is markedly different from the Bob Cranky figure of the early century.

Tyneside dialect, then, can entail communal and domestic characteristics. But it can also imply the satirical (sometimes celebratory) Cranky-like qualities seen already – those of the drunken fighter and illiterate braggart. It can connote identification with the 'workin' man' in antagonism to the masters, and a degree of resistance to religious or Temperance-driven respectability, or to linguistic propriety. Pieces frequently reveal antagonisms and differences at local level based on particular aspects of group identification or behaviour.

All of the songs, nevertheless, have great potential, as seen in Chapter Six, to act as vehicles of Tyneside linguistic identity and local pride. Indeed such meanings may be present alongside the satire or criticism of fellow Tynesiders. In some songs, however, locally patriotic connotations might need to be brought into being or enhanced, while others that emphasise antagonisms may need to be forgotten or diminished. The *context of delivery* of songs and changes in such contexts are crucial in this respect (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990:72, 75-6). The creation of a local printed canon of 'Tyneside song', and the existence of discourses which increasingly describe such material and the dialect in which it is written, as representing 'Tyneside', help to reinforce an idea of *locality* in both the song and dialect (see sections 1.7.5., 2.2.2. and 6.3.1.). This feeds back into new performance contexts (cf Bratton 1985:xii).

Awareness of criticism of the dialect may lead to ambiguous attitudes towards it, but these include linguistic loyalty to the locality. A perception that such criticism is linked to notions of the superiority of educated speech in the capital can also enhance this feeling of loyalty in responses to songs. All such linguistic patriotism may be reinforced by recognised figures identified as performers of 'Tyneside song', who, to adopt Coupland's (2006:26; cf. Giddens 1996:63) terminology, might act as *guardians of culture*.

Numerous pieces, of course, contain strong discourses of local loyalty and anti-metropolitanism, and some of these make overt comments regarding the perceived negative attitudes of Londoners to Tyneside speech. Tynesiders have a cherished retort to the criticism as seen in Thompson's 'Canny Newcassel' (in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.:314).

For Brockett (1825:37) "'canny Newcassel," *par excellence*, is proverbial'. We have seen that *canny* collocated with place-names certainly enhances discourses of local loyalty to Newcastle or Tyneside (see section 6.3.4.). Strong overt threads of local loyalty therefore exist in many pieces.

The attribution of locally patriotic meanings to many songs is possible from the moment they are first written or performed. However, when taking into account initial performance or written contexts, the need to balance scholarly responses between an emphasis on sub-local, sometimes antagonistic, cultural allegiances and local identity is ever present. This ambiguity is in evidence in the use of iconic words to the audience, which might, nevertheless, enhance solidarity.

Audiences are addressed with vocatives in both early and later songs, and this fosters community within performance settings (see sections 6.4.1. and 6.5.3.). Yet the effect of direct remarks to those experiencing performances often needs to be understood in relation to particular cultural perspectives. Most occurrences of the words *canny* to describe the audience, or *hinny / hinnies* to address it vocatively are in music hall. The performance setting along with the use of the words themselves (with some ironies and humour) may foster intense feelings of solidarity, but the 'canny hinnies' of the audience are often of a particular type. They participate in a popular culture which faces vocal opposition. Thus their feelings of local loyalty may be channelled through very particular cultural perspectives, which can also involve an implied or overt exclusion or hostility towards other Tynesiders. The same ambiguous position applies to the 'lads' and 'lasses' who first listened to the current Tyneside anthem, 'The Blaydon Races'. Again the balance or tension between the particular cultural perspective of music hall performance and a wider local patriotism is striking.

Meaning, nevertheless, does change in song, and 'The Blaydon Races' is a prime example of this. It has been transformed from a relatively unimportant work of the 1860s into an anthem sung with locally patriotic fervour. A focus on the specific words *lads* and *lasses* in various songs allows insights into the internal tensions implied by Tyneside music hall, but also into the subsequent evolution of that particular piece (see section 6.5.). The words *lads* and *lasses*, whatever their importance elsewhere in the country,

have strong cultural resonances on Tyneside. Sometimes when used in praise of Tynesiders, for instance sporting heroes, there is an obvious local patriotism. However, there is also a claiming of these 'lads' and 'lasses' for the performer and audience, as they are appropriated for popular culture. It is, nevertheless, in the vocative use of *lads* and *lasses* to the audience, particularly in choruses, that the full potential of the words to promote solidarity within specific settings is realised. This, as noted, may imply group feeling of a very particular kind, fostered by the words themselves, the musical context of shared singing, and the physical space of the performance settings, each of which can add to a sense of community and familiarity. Again, we must insist that local patriotism may be viewed from very particular perspectives within a popular culture that has vocal opponents. Nevertheless, in the case of Ridley's 'The Blaydon Races' (1973:34), the vocative 'lads' and the invocation of 'lads an' lasses ... all wi' smiling faces' are among the most potent elements in the song's ability to foster solidarity in new contexts. This process eventually resulted in its anthemic status. 'Lads' and 'lasses' can sing to 'lads' and 'lasses' in any setting, in the joint creation of a richly communal sentiment, which extends beyond the performance space.

I wish to stress, here, that 'The Blaydon Races' is merely one example of the manner in which the meaning of song is multiple and changeable. The semantic range of a work might include locally patriotic sentiments from the outset. Nevertheless, many pieces do foster antagonism or cultural distance at local level. Meaning, however, is a *process*, and perhaps any 'Tyneside song' might, as Wilson puts it, come to make the 'goggles glissen' ('Tyneside Lads for Me' c.1865:51). In understanding this we must not ignore the fact that, often, songs and the language within them may have had very different or far more complex early meanings, and might have been situated within highly controversial contexts. The dialect in general, and even its most iconic, emblematic and resonant manifestations, such as *canny* and *hinny*, or *lads* and *lasses*, is frequently involved in a tension between meanings, poised between local patriotism and internal antagonism and difference. Performance pieces, nevertheless, replete with the potential of the dialect to foster various levels of identification, are eminently available to be transformed, purged of social and cultural dissonances, and to sound ever more clearly, even harmoniously, as *canny Tyneside songs*.

Appendix A

Detailing the Electronic Corpus

Corpus, Sources, Contents

In this section of the appendix, I detail the pieces included in the electronic corpus (see the attached CD 'Appendix D'), and the sources from which they are taken. In addition, I give details of the number of songs used. In all cases I have tried to use single volumes as sources for songs. As stated in Chapter Two, the criteria for selection of sources are that they should be the earliest accessible volumes containing substantial quantities of an author's work (see section 2.3.1.). I have made exceptions for Thompson and Corvan. In the case of Thompson, two songs are from Bell's collection of 1812 (1971 edn.) and one from Marshall's collection of 1827. In the case of Corvan, where two early collections were available, I have used *Corvan's Song Books 1-4* (1850s) and *Random Rhymes* (1850). Details of sources are given after the list of songs.

The list of songs is broken down into two sections. The first of the two contains *non-standard dialect songs* and the second is based on *Standard English songs featuring literary dialect*. In both lists certain songs also belong to a category which I have simply designated 'minor groups of song' (see section 2.3.3.). They are written in or contain elements of non-standard dialect other than that of Tyneside (such as Scots or Irish) or they contain non-standard but gentrified features. These songs are marked with the symbol #.

Contents of the Electronic Corpus by Author

Songs are listed in the order that they appear in the actual electronic corpus.

Non-Standard Dialect Songs

Shield

(in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.)

'The Bonny Geatsiders - 1805'

'Bob Cranky's Adieu'

Thompson

(in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.)

'The New Keel Row A'

'Canny Newcassel'

(in Marshall ed. 1827)

'Jemmy Joneson's Whurry'

Selkirk

(in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.)

'Bob Cranky's 'Size Sunday'

'Bob Cranky's Complaint'

'Swalwell Hopping'

Midford

(1818)

'X Y Z at Newcastle Races, 1814. Or, Pitmen's Luck'

'Cappy; Or, The Pitman's Dog'

'The Local Militia-Man'

'The Mayor of Bourdeaux; Or, Mally's Mistake'

'The Masquerade; Or, The Pitman turned Critick'

'The Eagle Steam Packet; Or, A Trip to Sunderland'

'The Wonderful Gutter'

'The Bewildered Skipper. A Parody'

'The Pitman's Ramble; Or, Newcastle Finery'

'The Devil's Disaster. A Parody'

'The High Wind'

'The Pitman's Skellyscope'

Emery*(in Fordyce ed. 1842)*

'Hydrophobie; Or the Skipper and Quaker'

'Newcastle Wonders; Or, Hackney Coach Customers'

'The Fish-Wives' Complaint, On their Removal from the Sandhill to the New Fish Market, on the 2d of January, 1826'

'The Owl. Written Feb. 1826'

'Come up to the Scratch! Or, the Pitman Haggish'd'

'The Pitman's Dream; Or, A Description of the North Pole'

'The Pitman's Dream; Or, His Description of the Kitchen'

'The Mechanics' Procession; Or, A Trip to South Shields'

'Steam Soup; Or, Cuckoo Jack's Petition'

'Paganini, the Fiddler; Or, the Pitman's Frolic'

'The Oyster-wife's Petition, On the Removal of the Oyster-tub from the Quay'

'The Skipper's Account of the Mechanics' Procession'

'The Pitman's Ramble'

'Newcastle Beer Versus Spaw Water; Or, the Pitman and Temperance Society'

'The Newcastle Blunderbuss! Or, Travelling Extraordinary'

'The Miraculous Well; Or, Newcastle Spaw Water'

Gilchrist*(1824)*

'The Collier's Keek at the Nation'

'Bold Archy Drowned. Composed on hearing a false Report of the Death of that celebrated Character'

'A Voyage to Lunnin'

'The Skipper's Erudition'

'The Quack Doctors'

'Northumberland Free o' Newcassel. Composed extempore on the Duke of Northumberland being presented with the Freedom of Newcastle'

'Blind Willie Singing'

'The Lamentation of Bold Archy and Blind Willie on the Death of Captain Starkey'

Armstrong*(in Fordyce ed. 1842)*

'The Jenny Hoolet; Or, Lizzie Mudie's Ghost'

'The Glister'

'The Baboon'

'The Keelman and the Grindstone'

'The Newcastle Worthies'

'The Skipper's Mistake'

'The Skipper in the Mist'

Nunn*(in Fordyce ed. 1842)*

- 'Sandgate Wife's Nurse Song'
- 'The Sandgate Lass on the Ropery Banks'
- 'St. Nicholas' Church'
- 'Lukey's Dream'
- 'Jocker'
- 'Drucken Bella Roy, O!'
- 'The Bonny Clock Fyece'
- 'Blind Willie's Death'

Robson*(in Robson ed. c.1849)*

- 'The Wonderful Tallygrip'
- 'Polly's-Nick-Stick'
- 'Callerforney – A Dialogue'
- 'Gutta Percha'
- 'The Kittlin' Legacy, or the *Claws* in the Will'
- 'There's a Grand Time Comin''
- 'Harry Clasper'
- 'Mally's Voyage to Callerforny'
- 'The Pitman's Happy Times'
- 'The Keelmen o' the Tyne'
- 'The Militia'
- 'Days and Deeds of Shakespere'
- 'The Pitman Candidate'
- 'Song of the Old Tyne Bridge'
- 'Maw Wonderful Wife'
- 'The Use and the Abuse; Or, the Pitman and the Preachers'
- 'Pigeon's Milk; Or, a Shy at the Quacks'
- 'Hamlick, Prince of Denton, Part First'
- 'Canny Aud Sheels'
- 'Hamlick, Prince of Denton, Part Second'
- 'Hamlick, Prince of Denton, Part Third'
- 'The Skipper's Almanac'
- 'Betty Beesley and her Wooden Man'
- 'The Lovesick Collier Lass'
- 'Jenny Lind; Or, the Pitman in Love (1)'
- # 'The Irish Lawyer'
- 'Bob Stacker's Secret; Or, How to Prove Your Friends'
- 'Nanny Jackson's Letter to Lord Morpeth'
- # 'When we were at the Skuel'
- 'The Pitman Pilgrim; Or, a Keek at the Roman Wall'
- # 'Lays of the Tyne Exile. No. 3, "Banks o' Tyne"'
- 'Billy Purvis's Bundle; Or, a Corker for the Geordies'

'Billy's Grand Show'
 'The Pitman's Draw'
 'The Pawnshop in a Bleeze; Or, the Spout without Water'
 'The Stars o' Hartlepool'
 # 'The Auld Wife's Plaint'
 'The High Level Bridge'
 'The Ether Doctor'
 'A Cut at Wor Toon; Or, Billy Thompson's Smiddy'
 'The Collier's Farewell'
 'Newcastle in a Stoure'
 # 'The Contented Player'
 'The Queen's Visit to Newcastle'
 # 'Young Donald'
 'Jenny Lind; Or, the Pitman in Love (2)'
 # 'The Wail o' the Fallen'
 # 'Isabel'

Corvan

From Corvan's Song Books 1-4 (1850s)

'Swaggering at the Races'
 'The Keel on Fire'
 'The Rise in Coals'
 'Asstrilly, or the Pitman's Farewell'
 'The Toon Improvement Bill; Or, Nee Pleyce noo to Play'
 'The Pitman and the Kipperred Herrin"
 'Warkworth Feast'
 'Asstrilly's Goold Fields, or Tommy Carr's Letter'
 'The Unfortunate Man'
 'The Sandgate Lass'
 'The Factory Lass or Pally Jones'
 'He wad be a Noodle'
 'Maw Stepmother or Billy Bag the Glutton'
 'Tommy Carr's Adventures in Asstrilly'
 'Deeth 'o Billy Purvis'
 'Stage Struck Keelman'
 'Lads o' Tyneside'
 'Hairy Gobs an' fine Moosecatchers'
 'Trip to Marsden Rock'
 'Gallogate Hoppin"
 'Bella Gray'
 'The Queen's second Visit'
 'Prince Albert's Babby Hoose, or the greet Exhibition of 1851'
 'The Cullercoats Fishwife'
 'Peep at Newcassel'
 'Widow Winks'

'Snooks the Artist'
 'O, ha'e ye seen wor Jimmy'
 'Newcastle Pluck; Or, Recruiting for Delhi'
 'The Soup Kitchen'
 'Nan Todd on Gossipin''
 'The Sunday Morning Fuddle'
 'Work for 1,000 Men'
 'Jimmy Munro's Troubles; Or, a Hit at the Times'
 'The Pea Straw'
 'Tom Sayers'
 'Bobby Walkstraight's Visit to the Greet Leviathan'
 'The Sword Dancers' Lament'

From Random Rhymes (1850)

'Billy Purvis turned Ranter Preacher'
 'The Curds and Cream-house Ghost'
 'Yer Gannin to be a Keelman'
 'The Happy Keelman'
 'The rise in Baccy'
 'The Shades Saloon'
 'The Goose Club'
 'O, maw bonnie Nannie O'
 'Sweating System'
 'Tom Johnson'
 'Campbell's Grand Saloon, North Shields'
 'The Folks of Aud Shields'
 'The New Mayor of South Shields'
 'South Shields Corporation'
 'Blyth in a Bleeze'

Ridley

(1973 edn.)

'Joey Jones'
 'Johnny Luik-Up'
 'The Bobby Cure'
 'The Blaydon Keelman'
 'The Rifleman'
 'Hogg and Foster's Race'
 'The Cabman'
 'John Spencer'
 'Newcastle Celebrities'
 'Bullerwell and Summer's Race'
 'Teasdale Wilson, The City Champion'
 'The Blaydon Races'
 'The Sheels Lass for Me'

'The Stephenson Monument'
 'Chambers'
 'Cushy Butterfield'

Wilson

(c.1865)

'Me Muther's Warnin!'
 'Wor Geordy's Welcum te Garibaldi'
 'Acrostic'
 'Wor Peg's Invitashun! – Not Accepted'
 'Disappointment – Fareweel te Garibaldi'
 'Joe an' Tom Wilson, Twin-Bruthers; Born Nov. 29th, 1841'
 'Wor Peg thinks ...'
 'Bob Hobson's Advice tiv his Son – A Recitashun'
 'Wife'
 'Bonny Sally Wheatley'
 'Ne Wark'
 'The Gallowgate Lad!'
 'Aw wish yor Fethur wes Here'
 'Brickin the Bank'
 'Wor Geordy's Accoont o' the Greet Boat Races, biv Elegtrick Tallygraff'
 'The Cockney's Lament'
 'Sunday Neets at Jesmond Gardens'
 'What Gud can Sweerin de?'
 'The Drapers' Appeal'
 'Aud Nelly's Advice tiv her Dowtor! A Recitashun'
 'Maw Bonny Gyetside Lass!'
 'Wor Geordy's Advice tiv Ivrybody, an' Nebody i' Porticklor'
 'Lang Peter'
 'Wor Peg's Trip te Tynemouth, A Reglor Cawshun'
 'George Stephenson'
 'A Frind i' Need'
 'The Row upon the Stairs'
 'Champions o' the Tyne'
 'Contradicshun'
 'The Chep that knaws Nowt'
 'Oblige Ivrybody'
 'Jesmond Pic-Nic'
 'Bessie Walker'
 'Chambers and Cooper'
 'Wor Geordy's Cumplete His-story o' the Matches'
 'The One Mile Race – July 1863'
 'The Greet Boat Race, For the Championship o' the Tyne an' £400, Sept. 5 & 6, 1864'
 'Prepare for what's te cum!'
 'The Jiggin doon the Shore'

'Cobwebs ov Cumfort'
 'Aw wish Yor Muther wad cum; Or, Wor Geordy's Notions about Men nursin Bairns'
 'Whisperin'
 'Mally Dunn'
 'Pride'
 'Meggie Bell'
 'The Noodle an' Rifleman's Dispute'
 'Keep't Dark! Or, the Wife that knaws Ivrything'
 'Tyneside Lads for Me'
 'The Day o' Life'
 'Delightful'
 'Canny Aud Chrismis!'
 'Its Muther's cum!'
 'Newgate Street'
 'Thor's Cumfort iv a Smoke!'
 'It's Time te get up!'
 'She's gyen te Place at Jarrow'
 'The Day that we got married'
 'Billy Turn-bull's Adventors at the Grand Regretta'
 'The Tyne Regretta, or shuv ahead'
 'Aw wish ye a Happy New Eer'
 'Vary Canny'
 'Grainger Street'
 'Cadjin for Beer'
 'Ungrateful Bill'
 'When Gud Luck shows its Fyece'
 'Sally Wheatley's Comments on the Luv Letter she gat frae Charley Black, the Keyside Clerk'
 'The Row iv a Public Hoose'
 'Careless Jack'
 'Jimmy Jonsin, the Barber'
 'Bella Ramsey's Lad'
 'The Neet the Bairn wes Born'
 'What ye shud weer a' throo the Eer! As reccommended be wor Geordey an' wor Peg an' a' (1)'
 'A Welcum! Te Bob Chambers efter his Defeat for the Championship'
 'The Lass that leeves Next Door!
 'The Return o' the Gallowgate Lad!
 'Cum Hyem i' gud Time!
 'Keep yor Feet Still!
 'Dinnet let Sords myek ye sad!
 'Give a Thowt te them that's gyen'
 'Wor Jinny's fell oot wiv her Lad!
 'What ye shud weer a' throo the Eer! As reccommended be wor Geordey an' wor Peg an' a' (2)'
 'Keep the Kettle Boilin!'

'Recknin' for the Pay!
 'Here's a Tip!
 'The Day his Wife wes barred
 'Hannah's Black Eye!
 'Hoo te leeve at Lodjins!
 'An Acrostic, written on the victorious Career ov Jimmy Taylor'

Standard English Songs featuring Literary Dialect

Shield

(in Bell ed. 1812, 1971 edn.)

'Blackett's Field'
 'My Lord 'Size; Or, Newcastle in an Uproar'

Midford

(1818)

'Tyne Fair. In Commemoration of the Frost, in Winter, 1813-14'
 'The Pitman's Courtship'
 'Staffordshire Ware'
 'The Tyne Cossacks'
 'Fire and Water; Or, Nervoni Disappointed'
 'Duel Extraordinary'
 'A Cock and Bull Song'
 'The Custom-House Tree; Or, The Sea Gulls defeated'
 'The Royal Archdukes; Or, a Tour through England'
 'The Hangman and the Calf'
 'The Pink of Chowdon'
 'The Tailor's Defence'

Emery

(in Fordyce ed. 1842)

'Sandgate Pant; Or, Jane Jemieson's Ghost'
 'Acrostic, On the Death of a celebrated eccentric Character of Newcastle upon Tyne'

Robson

(in Robson ed. c.1849)

'Newcastle Improvements'
 # 'Britannia's Reproach'
 # 'The Systems of Life'

Corvan

From Corvan's Song Books 1-4 (1850s)

'Days when I was Hard Up'
 # 'Our Mary Ann, a Parody on My Mary Ann'

Source Material

I list the source texts here in abbreviated form. Full details are given in the References section.

- Bell, ed., 1812, 1971 edn. *Rhymes of Northern Bards*.
- Corvan, 1850s. *Corvan's Song Book nos 1-4*.
- Corvan, 1850. *Random Rhymes*.
- Fordyce, ed., 1842. *The Newcastle Song Book; Or, Tyneside Songster*.
- Gilchrist, 1824. *A Collection of Original Songs, Local and Sentimental*.
- Marshall, ed., 1827. *A Collection of Songs, Comic, Satirical, and Descriptive, Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect*.
- Midford, 1818. *A Collection of Songs, Comic and Satirical, Chiefly in the Newcastle Dialect*.
- Ridley, G., ed. by D. Harker, 1973. *George Ridley: Gateshead Poet and Vocalist*.
- Robson, ed., c.1849. *Songs of the Bards of the Tyne*.
- Wilson, c.1865. *Joe Wilson's Tyneside songs, ballads and drolleries*.

Song Quantities in the Corpus

Table 3: Number of Pieces in the Electronic Corpus by Category

	Pre 1849	Post 1849
Non-standard dialect songs	59	205
StE songs featuring literary dialect	16	5

Appendix B

Voices, Variables and Oaths

Voices and Variables

Table 4: All Voices in Non-standard Dialect Songs

	Pre 1849	Post 1849
Pitmen / keelmen	33%	13%
Their wives / sweethearts	8%	2%
Other male voices	49%	63%
Other female voices	7%	17%
Mixed / ungendered voices	3%	5%
Total voices	148	417

Table 5: All Voices in StE Songs Featuring Literary Dialect

	Pre 1849	Post 1849
Pitmen / keelmen	19%	0%
Their wives / sweethearts	0%	0%
Other male voices	73%	89%
Other female voices	6%	11%
Mixed / ungendered voices	2%	0%
Total voices	53	9

Table 6: Overall Percentages for All Three Variables in Non-standard Dialect Songs

	Pre 1849			Post 1849		
	% non- standard variants	% StE variants	Number of variants	% non- standard variants	% StE variants	Number of variants
Pitmen / keelmen	61%	39%	468	86%	14%	984
Their wives / sweethearts	33%	67%	63	86%	14%	94
Other male voices	44%	56%	631	85%	15%	3004
Other female voices	33%	67%	51	90%	10%	610
Mixed / ungendered voices	0%	0%	0	94%	6%	16

Table 7: Overall Percentages for All Three Variables in StE Songs Featuring Literary Dialect

	Pre 1849			Post 1849		
	% non-standard variants	% StE variants	Number of variants	% non-standard variants	% StE variants	Number of variants
Pitmen / keelmen	84%	16%	50	0%	0%	0
Their wives / sweethearts	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0
Other male voices	5%	95%	215	2%	98%	112
Other female voices	11%	89%	9	0%	100%	5
Mixed / ungendered voices	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0

Table 8: Individual Variables in Non Standard Dialect Songs

	<i>I</i>				<i>And</i>				<i>With</i>			
	Pre 1849		Post 1849		Pre 1849		Post 1849		Pre 1849		Post 1849	
	Nst	StE	Nst	StE	Nst	StE	Nst	StE	Nst	StE	Nst	StE
PK	143	14	353	3	75	162	379	123	68	6	118	8
WS	9	9	24	0	6	33	45	13	6	0	12	0
OM	75	28	856	56	111	305	1193	382	94	18	492	25
OF	12	0	201	25	1	32	267	32	4	2	84	1
MU	0	0	5	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	4	0

In this and the next table, for reasons of space, the voice categories are abbreviated as follows: PK = Pitmen / keelmen; WS = Their wives / sweethearts; OM = Other males; OF = Other females; MU = Mixed / ungendered.

Oaths and Voices

Table 10: The word *Smash* in All Combinations

	Pre 1849	Post 1849
Pitmen / keelmen	90%	44%
Their wives / sweethearts	0%	0%
Other male voices	8%	56%
Other female voices	0%	0%
Mixed / ungendered voices	2%	0%
Total no. of occurrences	48	63

This table covers all song types

Table 11: The Word *Gox / Gocks* in All Combinations

	Pre 1849	Post 1849
Pitmen / keelmen	50%	37%
Their wives / sweethearts	0%	2%
Other male voices	38%	61%
Other female voices	0%	0%
Mixed / ungendered voices	12%	0%
Total no. of occurrences	8	62

This table covers all song types

Appendix C

Words for Special Focus

All of the following tables combine figures for Non-Standard Dialect Songs and StE Songs Featuring Literary Dialect.

Canny and Hinny

Table 12: Use of the Word *Canny / Cannie*

Reference to:	Pre 1849	Post 1849	Total Words
Characters / non-audience reference	61%	59%	113
Audience reference	0%	5%	7
Places	27%	30%	55
Other	12%	6%	14
Total	100% (51 words)	100% (138 words)	189 words

Table 13: Use of the word *Hinny / Hinnies* etc

Reference to:	Pre 1849	Post 1849	Total Words
Characters / non-audience reference	93%	65%	72
Audience reference	7%	35%	26
Total	100% (30 words)	100% (68 words)	98 words

Lads and Lasses

Table 14: Use of the Word *Lads* (plurals only)

Reference to:	Pre 1849	Post 1849	Total Words
Characters / non-audience reference	93%	49%	101
Audience reference	7%	51%	80
Total	100% (29 words)	100% (152 words)	181 words

Table 15: Use of the Word *Laddies* (plurals only)

Reference to:	Pre 1849	Post 1849	Total Words
Characters / non-audience reference	100%	100%	12
Audience reference	0%	0%	0
Total	100% (3 words)	100% (9 words)	12 words

Table 16: Use of the Word *Lasses* (plurals only)

Reference to:	Pre 1849	Post 1849	Total Words
Characters / non-audience reference	100%	81%	66
Audience reference	0%	19%	13
Total	100% (11 words)	100% (68 words)	79 words

There are no examples of plural *lassies*

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For specific details of texts and source publications used in the electronic corpus see Appendix A

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